# Creative Writing Lessons in Junior High School: An Ethnographic Study

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## Abstract

There are four language skills, namely speaking, listening, reading, and writing. These four abilities are interconnected and cannot be separated from each other. In writing skills, there is a branch of knowledge, namely creative writing. Creative writing is a writing process that has never been done before, is unique and attracts attention. Putting what you think and what you know in written form can make it enjoyable to read. This research uses an ethnographic method, Ethnography is a qualitative research strategy, involving a combination of fieldwork and observation, that seeks to understand cultural phenomena that reflect the knowledge and systems of meaning that guide the lives of cultural groups. There are three types of ethnography, namely: realist, critical, and case study. The type of ethnographic research that will be carried out by the researcher is realist ethnography because this research explains a perspective and reflects an opinion from a third person, recording facts found in the field. This study found that creative writing is a way to express one's thoughts and activates the imagination. Developing the writer's imagination and ideas based on his own experience produces creative writing that is equivalent to producing beautiful writing. Write creatively and convey ideas, feelings, and emotions, not just provide information. By trying to express experiences, knowledge and emotions in a way that requires imagination and creativity and produces writing that is beautiful and meaningful to read, creative writing encourages students to reach their maximum cognitive and creative potential.

## Keywords
Creative, Writing, Junior High, Ethnographic

## 1. Introduction

Every human being possesses the ability to communicate with other humans using signs such as words and or gestures. In general, the four fundamental skills of language are speaking, writing, listening, and reading. Language plays an important role in everyday life in facilitating relationships between humans and others because humans are social beings who cannot live alone and require the assistance of others. Language is a tool for communication that everyone uses on a daily basis to convey information and arguments to others (Austin, 2021). Language is an ability possessed by every human being which is useful for communicating with other humans by using signs, such as words and or gestures. In general, there are four basic skills in language namely speaking, writing, listening, and reading.

Because English is so important in education, it is natural to want to learn more in this age of globalization, where language is used for both receptive and productive communication. Furthermore, we are currently confronted with twenty-first-century issues, in which a large proportion of English is used in language learning in a global environment. As a result, English language education must be considered and developed further. To succeed in today's highly competitive world, English proficiency is required (Kralova & Dolezelova, 2021).

The first skill is speaking, which is defined as a person's ability to express or transmit ideas, thoughts, and information to others through words. Speaking is an art form, and students must be conversant and respectful in their

greetings and other statements in order to master it (Batdı et al., 2021). When it comes to greetings and other declarations, speaking is an art form, and students must be fluent and respectful.

Listening is the process of capturing, understanding, and recalling as much as possible what he has heard or been told by others. Listening is more commonly thought of as a passive action when compared to the voice or language, which are linked with the act of writing, reading, or speaking (Wiberg & Nyberg, 2017). When compared to sound or language, which is associated with the act of writing, reading, or speaking, there are times when listening is more generally considered a passive act?

The following skill is reading. Reading is the content of what is written that can be seen and understood orally or simply in the heart, when considered in a narrow sense. When it comes to learning, reading is typically a vital component of course design and instruction (Deale & Lee, 2021). Reading is frequently a significant component of course design and instruction when a student arrives to learn in the classroom. There are two forms of reading: word reading (which emphasizes phonic decoding) and comprehension reading (emphasized the importance of vocabulary and grammar).

Writing is an activity of creating a written product done recursively. It requires a wide range of knowledge and the ability to produce an intelligible text. Knowledge about writing plays an important role as a source in the writing process and product (Rofiqoh et al., 2022). Writing is the final skill. Writing is a manifestation of mind at work, of reasoning, but also of curiosity, intelligence, sharpness, and wit; words should be ignited by the fire of intelligence because writing is a manifestation of mind at work, of reasoning, but also of curiosity, intelligence, sharpness, and wit; words should be ignited by the fire of intelligence because writing is a manifestation of mind at work, of reasoning, but also of curiosity, intelligence, sharpness, and wit (Ferreira, 2020). Writing is a manifestation of both an active mind and a curious mind. Because the other side of writing is the mind at work, words must be sparked by intelligence. Writing stimulates active and critical thinking, which is important for both teaching and learning.

Writing is one of the most significant skills that language learners should learn because it is a vital component of their academic practice as well as their professional lives later. Creative writing is one aspect of writing abilities (Moolman, 2015). A creative writing study focuses on the development of new works, the scientific process, and the idea of an activity that propels a project forward.

If we wish to understand the significance of learning, we must first understand what learning is. Learning can be defined as a process or endeavor that creates a pillar, foundation, or foothold in everyone's education. The goal of learning is for everyone to go through a variety of changes as a result of their education, including changes in behavior, knowledge, thinking, skills, and other elements of their lives. Learning should, in the end, yield desirable and helpful outcomes. Individuals can learn from their surroundings at school, at home, in a social/community setting, in laboratories, in museums, and in other settings.

Education's main purpose is to prepare people to fully participate in communal activities and to use those experiences to promote their own personal development. Both expressive and interpretive movements are used in this piece. Learning is an educational interaction activity based on the existence of goals in the form of knowledge, attitudes, and abilities between teachers and students (Behlol & Dad, 2010). Education's major goal is to prepare people to fully participate in communal activities and to use these experiences to further their own personal growth. Gestures are used for both expressive and interpretative purposes.

The goal of creative writing, in general, is to entice readers. Producing original writing also necessitates the ability to pique the reader's interest. Research and writing skills are also required for good creative research. Aside from that, creative writing is a technique of expressing and organizing creative ideas so that they can be turned into good, enjoyable writing. In a fast-changing authors' world, creative writing is a performative act with measurable, assessable outcomes and highly transferable skills (Williams, 2020).

Creative writing is a performative act with measurable, quantifiable consequences and highly transferable qualities in the continually changing world of writing. To summarize, any creative research effort can be separated into five distinct elements: originality and imagination, language use, structure, theme expression, and stylistic character strength. However, it is the same discipline as composition, literary studies, and other university-level courses. We concluded that any creative writing effort may be divided into five basic elements: Originality and Imagination, Language Use, Structure, Theme Expression, and Style are all important factors to consider (Weldon, 2010).

The term "creative" has a lot of the term "creative writing" refers to writing that is out of the ordinary. It contains a new level of uniqueness and invention. Creative research is described as writing that does not follow systematic, standardized rules outside of established research organizations (journals, news, and academic works). Character development, views, and non-formal language techniques are all addressed in this creative study project. Literary writing, often known as creative writing, is a type of writing that falls into this category. The goal of creative writing, in general, is to entice readers. Producing original writing also necessitates the ability to pique the reader's interest. Research and writing skills are also required for good creative research with different definitions. Just a few definitions include the ability to be inventive, industrious, and imaginative, as well as expressiveness and originality. Creative research fiction is typically defined as research fiction in which the researcher constructs events, scenarios, characters, and even the world. Creative research can also be defined as writing that is original, exaggerated, or unconventional in its approach to a topic. Academic, technical, and news research, on the other hand, is frequently dry and objective.

## 2. Research Methodology

The researcher conducted qualitative research in this study. A qualitative research approach, in general, is a research method that focuses on the collecting, analysis, and interpretation of comprehensive and visual (i.e., non-numerical) narratives to acquire insight into a specific phenomenon of interest. Qualitative research is an inquiry approach useful for exploring and understanding a central phenomenon (Creswell, 2012).

The researcher employs an ethnographic research design for this study. Ethnographic research is a sort of research that investigates patterns of life, culture, human behaviour, and other socio-cultural issues. A qualitative research method in which researchers watch and interact with the topic under investigation in their natural surroundings, which is commonly employed in anthropology and other social sciences. Ethnography is frequently viewed as a distinct type of qualitative research to be compared to or contrasted with others, such as life history work or discourse analysis; nevertheless, even the two are not mutually exclusive (Hohti, 2015).

Ethnography is frequently regarded as a distinct type of qualitative inquiry to be compared or contrasted with others, such as works of living history or discourse analysis. Ethnography is a method of producing and communicating knowledge (about society, culture, and individuals) based on the ethnographer's personal experiences. (Coles & Thomson, 2016). An ethnographic study is the process of creating and representing knowledge about society, culture, and individuals based on the ethnographer's personal experience. Ethnography is just one method among many for telling stories about the social environment, stories that do not have to be epistemically competitive. (Hammersley, 2017). Finally, ethnographic research is just one method of telling stories about the social world, and it does not have to be seen as epistemically competitive.

Finally, ethnographic research is only one way of telling stories about the social world, and it does not have to be regarded as epistemically competitive (Creswell, 2012). There are three types of ethnography, namely: Realist ethnography is an anthropological technique that seeks to accurately represent participants' cultural environments through information gathered directly from them at the research site and presented in the third person. A realism ethnography describes, analyses, and interprets common cultural concepts such as "family life, professional life, social networks, and status systems." It is written in a neutral tone (Geoffrey E. Mills, 2019).

Critical ethnography is a subset of ethnographic research that advocates for the social liberties of the oppressed. In this case, researchers are more likely to be critical of a situation; in fact, this type of research is typically conducted by politically motivated individuals seeking to challenge inequality and dominance. A researcher may publish a highly politicized type of ethnography known as critical ethnography in order to confront societal injustices and the dominance of specific groups (Mills & L.R.Gay, 2016). Ethnographic case studies are specific examples that are frequently used to illustrate broader concepts. An ethnographic case study seeks to describe the activities of a specific group as well as the shared behavioral patterns that emerge over time (Geoffrey E. Mills, 2019).

## 3. Research Focus and Sub Focus

The research focused on understanding, examining, and exploring how the process of English Creative Writing Learning in Junior High School (Ethnographic Research at SMP LabSchool Kebayoran). The sub-focus is as follows English Creative Writing Learning Process, Approaches, methods, and techniques utilized by teachers, Materials developed by teachers, The role of teachers, Students' role, Facilities, and media utilized by teachers, The assessment system used, School culture that supports and Curriculum used in supporting English Creative Writing Learning at SMP labschool Kebayoran.

Spradley's model was used for data analysis in this study, which included domain analysis, taxonomy analysis, componential analysis, and theme analysis. The following are the steps taken If described in the following way:

*Domain Analysis,* the process of obtaining a broad and comprehensive picture of the research items or social context under investigation is known as domain analysis. Following observations and interviews, the first stage is carried out.

*Taxonomic analysis* is a type of research that focuses on specific domains that are useful in defining the phenomenon or problem under study.

*Component Analysis* refers to the development of components that is systematically correlated with their quality based on categories.

*Theme Analysis* is a set of procedures for gaining a thorough understanding of the landscape under consideration.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Domain Analysis

To get a complete picture of the social context of the object under study at this domain analysis stage, the researcher first conducted initial interviews and observations. Meeting the Foundation representative—in this case, Prof. Dr. Achmad Sofyan Hanif, M.Pd—was the first step in describing the school that was the subject of the study. In essence, the researcher requested permission to conduct research at SMP LabSchool Kebayoran Baru. The researcher first met with a representative of the UNJ Foundation before meeting with Mrs. Yati Suwartini, M.Pd., the principal of SMP LabSchool Kebayoran Baru. On this occasion, the researcher disclosed that she had come to the school to conduct research on

English creative writing at SMP Lab School. The principal provided some information regarding learning English. We continued our meeting with the English teacher, Mrs. Sri Utami, S.Pd., after our initial encounter with the LabSchool principal. One of the English instructors at LabSchool Junior High School for the past 21 years is Ms. Tri. In this meeting, the researcher questioned Ms. Tami about English instruction generally. She responded that English instruction at LabSchool Kebayoran Baru Junior High School consists of 4 hours of instruction per week in addition to 2 hours of instruction from native speakers.

## 4.2 Taxonomic Analysis

In the process of learning English creative writing, the researchers found that the students wrote short stories, song lyric and biography. The biography that is meant here is that students write their biodata in a Canva application. From the results of the biodata, they produced it contained about their family, which was explained by students about their father, mother, younger siblings, and older siblings. The second learning method used by teachers in learning creative writing is Discovery learning, in essence discovery is a learning that inspires students to conduct their own investigations, find and build on previous experiences and knowledge, use intuition, imagination, and creativity, and seek new information to find new facts, correlations, and truths. The last learning method used was using Project Based Learning (PBL). Problem-Based Learning (PBL) is a learning model that involves motivated students, always thinking critically and always adept at solving problems.

The materials developed in general by teachers in learning English are related to four skills or abilities in language such as Speaking, Listening, reading, and writing, but specifically for some that were found by researchers were poetry, short stories, and song lyrics. While the role of teachers in learning creative writing in English, researchers found several roles of teachers. The role of the teacher as an informator, organizer and motivator. As an informant, a teacher must be able to provide information about subject matter, in addition to subject matter, a teacher must also provide knowledge and technology in learning materials to students. As an organizer, the teacher has management and management activities in the academic field, compiling school regulations, compiling a school calendar, so that it can achieve the effectiveness of student learning itself. As a motivator, teachers must be able to encourage students to be enthusiastic and proactive in learning. To provide motivation, teachers can analyze the motivation behind students being lazy to learn and declining academic achievement.

There are three types of student roles found by researchers, namely learning seriously by listening to teacher explanations, obeying school rules, being active and proactive in classroom learning. There are several questions given by researchers to teachers regarding why students should study seriously, there are several reasons that can be obtained, namely the knowledge gained can be obtained completely and thoroughly, serious learning will make students' knowledge comprehensive and thorough. Teachers use a variety of infrastructure and media, including *language labs, e-learning, e-books, and edu charms*, as well as several auxiliary programs like *wordwall, quizizz, and kahoot*. The language lab serves as the main infrastructure. The language laboratory serves a variety of purposes, including those related to information, education, culture, comfort, and research.

In assessing creative writing in English, there are several criteria used by teachers in assessing creative writing, namely Content, Organization, Vocabulary, Language use and Creativity. The article's theme or central concept is introduced in the content section. The writing's main idea can be explained using examples, facts, supporting evidence, arguments, and reasons. The requirement for organization is the second component of the creative writing assessment system. Writing with organization allows the ideas to be expressed. Vocabulary makes up the final component of the creative writing evaluation. A person, an object, or a component of a language may have a specific set of words in their vocabulary. Receptive vocabulary and productive vocabulary are the two categories of vocabulary that are typically used to measure vocabulary mastery. The use of language as language is the fourth component that is considered when evaluating creative writing. Usage, which describes the guidelines for constructing language and the tools students employ to do so, is comparable to this. In order to accomplish their unique objectives, students can use a variety of language in their writing. The creativity component is the final component in the evaluation of creative writing. The students' intense curiosity is the first of several indicators for this creativity. The school culture found by researchers is related to Labschool's seven basic values, namely, piety, high integrity, strong fighting power, intact personality, noble character, independence, and high intellectuality.

The curriculum used in supporting the learning of English creative writing uses the independent curriculum. Merdeka Curriculum is a curriculum with diverse intra-curricular learning opportunities whose content is optimized so that students have sufficient time to deepen concepts and strengthen competencies. Teachers have the freedom to choose a variety of teaching tools to tailor learning to students' learning needs and interests.

## 4.3 Component Analysis

Component analysis is a technique for methodically looking for different characteristics connected to cultural symbols. Both before and after the field, component analysis should be performed. This will prevent the need to re-interview informants if anything is left out. A methodical search for different attributes connected to cultural symbols is called component analysis. The process of learning creative writing in English begins with a lesson, like one the teacher teaches about short stories. Teaching the components of a short story is the first step in the learning process. The teacher

introduces the basic components of a short story at this point. Teachers typically cover the following topics when teaching students about short stories: theme, characters, setting, plot, point of view, and moral message. The short story's structure is the subject of the following learning exercise. A short story's structure must take several factors into account, including orientation, the order of events, complications, and resolution. To teach students how to make a short story more measurable and focused from beginning to end is the purpose of the teacher who teaches short story structure.

The second component of the analysis focuses on the approaches, procedures, and methods for teaching creative writing in English. Teachers employ a variety of strategies, techniques, and approaches. The question-and-answer approach is the first. This method of asking and answering questions enables two-way communication between teachers and students. The second approach is discovery learning, which places more emphasis on the student than the teacher. Researchers identified the following steps in discovery learning: The teacher starts by stimulating the class; at this point, the students are exposed to something that confounds their understanding of poetry. Secondly, giving students the chance to find and evaluate a problem can help them get used to the process of doing so. The gathering of data is the third step. Students have the chance to collect (collect) a variety of pertinent information at this point. Data processing, also known as coding or categorization, serves as concept formation and generalization in the fourth step. The fifth stage is proof. It is hoped that by allowing students to learn a concept, theory, rule, or understanding through examples from their own experiences, the learning process will proceed smoothly and creatively. PBL, or project-based learning, is the third approach. PBL, or problem-based learning, is a type of instruction that involves students who are very motivated, always have an open mind, and are skilled problem solvers.

The material covered in English learning is the subject of the following taxonomic analysis. The material taught takes the form of material from the provided books, material about oneself, emails about favorite bands, texts about cities, descriptions of friends or family members, emails to English families about food they like and do not like, paragraphs for school magazines about TV programs they like, emails about friends and photos, emails about sports, holiday postcards, emails about festivals, emails about past holidays, paragraphs for school magazines, etc.

Poetry, short stories, and song lyrics all fall under the category of creative writing materials. You need to start reading and comprehending short stories in order to come up with short story material. Theme, plot, setting, characterization, point of view, language style, and message are some of the elements that are inherent in short stories. The outcomes of group work on the extrinsic components of short stories, such as moral, social, cultural, religious, educational, and economic values, are analyzed and presented.

The role of the teacher in teaching English creative writing is the subject of the following taxonomic analysis. Informing, organizing, and motivating are the responsibilities of the teacher. A teacher acting as an informant must be able to impart knowledge on the topic. In addition to teaching the subject matter, a teacher must also provide students with knowledge and technology in their learning materials. A teacher needs accurate and useful information to give his students learning materials.

The second teacher's job in creative writing instruction is to serve as an organizer. To ensure the effectiveness of student learning, teachers engage in management and management tasks in the academic realm, such as creating school calendars and regulations. A teacher in this position must be able to plan lessons, organize instruction in accordance with the curriculum, and establish ground rules for the classroom. Based on school policy, these classroom regulations were created. The next taxonomic analysis looks at how students learn to write creatively. Three types of student roles were identified by researchers: those who take their studies seriously by paying attention to the teacher's explanations, those who follow school rules, and those who actively participate in their education.

The infrastructure and resources that support the study of creative writing are the subject of the following taxonomic analysis. Teachers use a variety of resources and tools, including language labs, as well as programs like E-learning, E-books/edu, and different auxiliary programs like wordwalls, quizzes, and kahoot. The infrastructure includes a significant amount of language laboratories. Language laboratories primarily serve informational, educational, cultural, practical, and research purposes. The next component analysis looks at the writing-related school culture. The researchers discovered that the seven core values of Labschool—piety, high integrity, strong fighting power, complete personality, noble character, independence, and high intellect—were linked to the school's culture. Curriculum is the subject of the last taxonomic analysis for creative writing. The used curriculum is independent, and both students and teachers can benefit from independent curriculum in several ways. The benefit for students is that they are not required to take courses they find boring. They have the freedom to pursue any course of study that suits their interests and abilities. Because each stage is tailored to the student's level of proficiency, learning is more enjoyable. No one pushes or rushes students to master a subject. Students will become accustomed to applying critical thinking skills through project-based learning with the Pancasila Learner Profile.

## 4.4 Theme Analysis

Theme analysis is carried out following the taxonomic analysis. A series of techniques known as theme analysis are used to develop a thorough understanding of the landscape being studied. According to this analysis, ethnographic researchers must follow seven steps (Spradley, 1980) Immersion, Create a Componential Analysis of Domain Cover Terms, Look for a More Comprehensive Domain That Covers the Cultural Scene, Look for similarities between the contrast-related

dimensions, Determine the Organizing Domains, In order to create a summary overview of the cultural scene, look for universal themes.

There are several cultural aspects discovered by researchers during learning English creative writing, the cultural aspects found include:

### Write Short Stories from Experiences

After the teacher has finished teaching about the elements of a short story, such as theme, characters, setting, plot, point of view, and the message or moral message of a short story, students write short stories based on their own experiences. Short story structure is taught to students as the second lesson after long story structure. A short story's structure needs to consider several elements, such as orientation, the order of events, complications, and resolution.

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### Write Simple Poetry Every Week

After learning creative writing in class, researchers found that there were several students who wrote poetry in their diaries. Every week there is a poem written in a note. The researcher asked the student why he liked writing poetry, he answered that when he wrote poetry, he could express all the feelings he felt when something made him happy or sad. In relation to writing poetry, there are several benefits that students can feel, such as increasing creativity. Writing poetry can help students increase their creativity, especially creative in processing words.

### Write Lyrics to Songs That Students Have Heard

In a lesson about songs, there are several steps taken by the teacher to the students. Starting by listening to songs chosen by the teacher, there are several song titles prepared by the teacher. The choice of this song is based on the message of the lyrics which are good and have good meaning. The song titles are Heal the World from Michael Jackson, Pray from Justin Bieber, Titanium from David Guetta, Beautiful from Christina Aguilera, Never Enough from Lorren Allred. No Way-Out from Phill Collins, Count on Me from Bruno Mars, Remember Me Soundtrack Coco Movie.

There is a crucial element in these songs, namely the singers' desire to communicate a message or written message. Researchers discovered that writing the lyrics of songs that students had listened to had several benefits or added values. The benefits include developing a broad vocabulary, improving hearing, fostering creativity, letting go of strong emotions, participating actively in class, and not being afraid to voice one's opinions.

## 5. Conclusions

This study uses ethnography method to describe the planning, implementation, and evaluation of learning, as well as students' appreciation of English creative writing learning approaches and models, and can be concluded from several sub-focuses of research and several stages of analysis of ethnographic research on creative writing. The researcher found that creative writing is a form of thought expression that also stimulates the imagination. Creative writing is equivalent to the growth of the writer's imagination and ideas on their own experiences to produce beautiful writing. Creative Writing that expresses ideas, feelings, and emotions as opposed to merely conveying information. Writing creative helps students reach their full cognitive and creative potential because they attempt to express experiences, information, and feelings in a way that calls for imagination and creativity and results in writing that is beautiful and meaningful when read. The practice of language use in written communication is another benefit of creative writing. and is helpful for expressing viewpoints on a phenomenon that is happening.

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