

STRENGTHENING LITERACY THROUGH POETRY READING SKILLS TO IMPROVE UNDERSTANDING OF MEANING IN INDONESIAN LANGUAGE LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

The low level of literacy of Indonesian students, especially in understanding the meaning of reading, is a major challenge in learning Indonesian. In a scientific context, this shows the need for an integrative approach between literacy and language skills. This study aims to examine how poetry reading skills can be used as a literacy strengthening strategy to improve students' understanding of meaning. Using a qualitative literature study method, this study collected data from various journals, books, and scientific articles. The results of the study show that reading poetry accompanied by an understanding of meaning can train students to think critically, express emotions, and understand implied messages in the text. The conclusion of this study states that reading poetry not only trains the technical aspects of pronunciation, but is also an effective medium in strengthening literacy of meaning. Therefore, it is recommended that learning Indonesian at the elementary level emphasizes more on exploring meaning in poetry as part of a sustainable literacy strategy.

Keywords: Literacy, Reading Poetry, Understanding Meaning

INTRODUCTION

Literacy is the main foundation in education that has a role to shape students' thinking and language skills. Literacy is basically not only related to the ability to read or write more than that literacy as a tool to understand, process or apply information obtained during the learning process. The government has paid serious attention to strengthening literacy among students considering the low achievement of Indonesian students in various international literacy surveys. Clear evidence of the low literacy rate in Indonesia can be seen from the results *programme for international student assessment* (PISA). The results of the study show that the ability to write, read and reason scientifically for students in Indonesia is still below the average of other countries. In fact, Indonesian students in general are not yet able to understand information in a complex way or analyze it. This is a serious concern because low literacy skills will have an impact on future human resources. One form of language activity that strengthens literacy is reading poetry.

Poetry is a literary work that contains a wealth of meaning, life values and the beauty of language that can train students' sensitivity and deep of thinking skills. In this case, reading poetry is not just pronouncing words with intonation and expression, but more than that, reading poetry requires an understanding of the implied and explicit meaning in each line. In practice, reading poetry at the elementary school level is often not done optimally to improve literacy. Students tend to memorize poetry texts without understanding their meaning. What often happens is that students tend to only focus on technical aspects such as pronunciation and appearance (Setiawan, Aji, and Aziz 2019).

Sayid Muhammad Chaeder Muthahar and Khusnul Fatonah also stated that learning to read poetry is the most important part in developing students' literary literacy. However, in reality, reading poetry among students, especially in elementary schools, still experiences many difficulties. Reading poetry is a competency taught in Indonesian language lessons. Reading poetry is not only reciting lines of poetry but more than that, namely conveying an understanding of the meaning contained in it to the listener. To achieve this, students need to understand the meaning first because understanding is the main basis for reading poetry well (Muthahar and Fatonah 2024).

Rezki Muhammad Akbar et al., also said that one of the skills to improve literacy is reading poetry. Poetry is a literary work that has been rooted in the culture of society. However, the ability to read poetry in elementary schools is still far from expectations. Reading poetry only pronounces words but does not understand the meaning in the poem. As a result, when students read poetry, they have difficulty conveying the message contained in the poem. The importance of exploring the depth of the meaning of poetry becomes a habit in reading poetry from an early age (Akbar et al. 2016).

Liza Hanayani Batu Bara et al., also said that reading skills for elementary school students play a role in shaping the intellectual and emotional development of students. Reading not only opens a window of knowledge but can stimulate imagination and enrich children's understanding of life values. In the context of language learning, elementary school children have various reading skills that have various forms of application, one of which is reading poetry. Poetry functions to train children in expressing emotions, developing creativity and more than that, contemplating the implied meaning. Learning to read poetry is important because it can guide students to understand the meaning of the poem. However, students who do have difficulty reading poetry or understanding the meaning of poetry properly and correctly (Bara et al. 2023).

Denny putri hapsari and Ahmad Kawa Qibi said that literacy skills are an important foundation in the learning process for elementary school students where. Literacy activities can enrich knowledge, hone students' thinking skills and broaden their horizons. However, the main challenge is the development of student literacy, namely reading in the ability to understand texts, is very lacking. As a solution, schools can develop a creative literacy program such as poetry reading activities. Where reading poetry is an effective approach and attracts students' interest in training students to understand language structures and can improve students' language competence. Currently, the low interest in reading elementary school students in basic literacy affects the skills of understanding the meaning of poetry. So the literary literacy program was created not only to hone pronunciation of expression but Poetry is a literary work to train understanding the meaning of beautiful language in poetry. Because, it is very important for poetry to convey messages in order to motivate readers (Hapsari and Qibi 2024).

Strengthening literacy through reading poetry is an effective strategy in improving understanding of meaning in learning Indonesian in elementary schools. The richness of figurative language diction and rhythm will encourage students to explore understanding of meaning in depth so that students can practice their ability to analyze and interpret poetry texts. Unfortunately, poetry learning in elementary schools is still limited to the aspect of pronunciation of expression without emphasizing understanding the content. As a result, students have difficulty linking elements of poetry to real-life contexts so that their understanding of the meaning of the text is limited. Therefore, further research is needed regarding how poetry reading skills in students can be an effective strategy in strengthening literacy and improving understanding of meaning in learning Indonesian.

Based on the search in the literature review section, the author refers to previous works that are relevant to the theme. There are several previous writings that discuss poetry, including, in journal entitled "Learning Poetry Reading Comprehension in Elementary School IV Students Through the Think Pair Share Type Cooperative Model", by Tri Sila Indriani and Jajang Bayu Kelana in the collage journal (Creative of Learning Students Elementary Education volume 04 number 04 of 2021). This journal contains about This journal discusses improving poetry reading comprehension in grade 4 students in

elementary school using the cooperative learning model or TPS. In this study, it is descriptive qualitative. The results of this study are that the cell model or TPS can help students better understand the meaning and vocabulary in poetry. In addition, this model also trains students' confidence to express opinions and discussions with peers in small groups. The application of this model in understanding the meaning of poetry gives positive results that increase student interaction, making learning more enjoyable (Indriyani and Kelana 2021).

Similar research in the journal entitled "Identification of Poetry Reading Comprehension of Grade IV Students of SDN Junganyar 02" in the Language Education Journal volume 11 number 1 in 2021. The method used is descriptive qualitative with the findings that students' understanding of reading poetry is still very low because students have difficulty understanding the meaning of poetry and reading with the right intonation and expression. There are several factors that cause low reading comprehension in poetry, including the lack of student interest in Indonesian language lessons, the learning methods used are less effective in teaching poetry reading, namely conventional learning methods such as lectures, there is a feeling of shame to read poetry in front of, students often assume that reading poetry is not useful so that students are less enthusiastic in learning poetry (Krismonarofah, Setyawan, and Citrawati 2021).

In a study entitled "The Influence of Poetry Declamation on Understanding the Meaning of Poetry" by Liondes Launjara in the Indonesian Language Lessons Journal volume 14 number 1 in 2024. The method is qualitative with a field approach with the aim of seeing the influence of declamation on understanding the meaning of poetry. This journal explains that poetry is a form of literary art that uses creative language to convey feelings, ideas or experiences. The definition of poetry declamation is a technique of reading poetry with intonation expressions and body movements that are in accordance with the meaning of the poem. Poetry declamation has a very positive influence in increasing understanding of the meaning of poetry. This technique allows the delivery of poetry to be more expressive so that listeners will better understand the emotions and messages that the poet wants to convey (Launjaea 2024).

In a study entitled "Using Audio Visual Media to Increase Interest and Understanding of the Meaning and Writing of Students' Poetry" in the scientific citation journal (Student Scientific Journal of FKIP, Majalengka University volume 01 number 2 in 2023). The literature study research method with the findings of this study, namely the use of audio visual media can increase interest and understanding of the meaning of poetry, namely by utilizing poetry musicalization videos. Students find it easier to understand the meaning of poetry and are involved in learning process activities.

Moreover, this method can help students in identifying elements in poetry such as diction, imagery, style of language, theme, and the meaning contained therein. With a learning approach with audio-visual media, it has a positive impact in increasing literary appreciation and understanding of poetry for students. This method can be an effective alternative in learning poetry (Putri 2023).

From several studies above that have been studied related to the discussion theme. Based on the literature review, the author explains the differences between the above research and the research that the author will study. If previous research emphasizes a particular media model or technique. The research that will be conducted has a difference in its focus, namely studying the role of literacy in Indonesian, poetry reading skills as a medium for strengthening literacy, and the impact of poetry reading on understanding meaning. Thus, this study has a contribution in combining several aspects such as reading skills, understanding meaning, strengthening literacy, in previous studies have never been discussed. This study aims to complement previous studies by analyzing based on the focus of this study, the formulation of the problem is about how poetry reading skills are a strategic medium in strengthening literacy in learning Indonesian. By answering these questions, this study can provide a significant contribution to the impact of poetry reading on understanding meaning as a literacy reinforcement in Indonesian. (Ronaldo, Putra, and Mahdijaya 2025).

RESEARCH METHOD

Research with a qualitative approach with this background that sees the current phenomenon of changes in cultural values, especially in the context of learning Indonesian. In the era of rapid modernization, the influence of foreign cultures is increasingly dominant so that it can threaten the sustainability of local cultural values. As a result of technological developments, students' interest in reading is also decreasing, this is a challenge in strengthening literacy. The importance of developing skills in student literacy where understanding meaning is a very crucial aspect. Poetry As a literary work that is rich in language and layered meaning, this poem has the potential to deepen students' ability to understand texts in a more critical or reflective way. It is very important to explore how poetry reading skills can strengthen literacy and understanding of meaning and maintain cultural identity in education. By looking at the background of the existing phenomenon of low literacy skills in understanding the meaning of poetry in learning Indonesian.

Poetry reading skills as an effort to strengthen literacy require a deep understanding of the context of meaning and students' experiences. Concerns about the low number of students' literacy abilities, especially in understanding the meaning in literary works such as poetry. Seeing the increasingly severe conditions, especially dominated by the use of increasingly widespread technology and people who consume a lot of instant content, this will reduce students' interest in literary reading and weaken students' ability to understand meaning in depth. With such a situation, it requires efforts to creatively re-instill interest in reading and literacy skills through a fun and meaningful approach. One of them is through learning to read poetry. So this study is very important to explore how poetry reading skills become a solution to improve understanding of meaning in literature while strengthening literacy among students. This study also has a real contribution to strengthening literacy in this digital era, especially in the realm of Indonesian language education.

In this study, data was collected using the library research method, namely by collecting literature related to literacy skills in reading poetry and understanding the meaning of the text. Data sources were obtained from various trusted references such as research journals, books, articles and scientific papers and trusted media with the theme. This approach allows researchers to develop a theoretical basis and explore various points of view to analyze the relationship between reading poetry and increasing understanding of meaning.

In this study, the analysis technique used is a descriptive analysis method. Where researchers examine the contents of the collected library sources and then interpret information relevant to the focus of the study. Then the data obtained is analyzed by filtering, classifying and summarizing the main ideas related to strengthening literacy through reading poetry. Furthermore, researchers will draw meaning and correlation between poetry reading, increasing the ability to understand meaning, and contributions to Indonesian language learning. The steps analyzed include,

1. Selection of literature that is appropriate to the theme
2. In-depth reading of the source content.
3. Interpretation of the meaning contained therein. Researchers will interpret the data presented, look for patterns, then themes, and meanings that emerge in relation to the influence of poetry reading skills on students' understanding of meaning.
4. Compiling conclusions based on interpretation results related to the research context.

With the steps of this method, it is hoped that the results of the research can provide a comprehensive picture of how poetry reading skills can be used as an effective means to strengthen literacy and understanding of meaning in learning Indonesian.(Azmi, Umam, and Marzuki 2025).

RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION (BOLD, 11)

1. The Role of Literacy in Indonesia

Language skills are basic competencies that need to be mastered in order to interact well and understand information in depth. Language literacy plays an important role in shaping critical thinking skills. Language literacy is not just reading or writing but more than that includes reflective thinking and understanding of social and cultural values. Literacy achievements in Indonesia are still constrained by various problems such as the lack of interest in reading books and the widespread use of global languages in the digital world. Planned steps are needed to advance Indonesian language literacy amidst the onslaught of technology. Indonesian language literacy plays a very crucial role in education and encourages the advancement of Indonesian society. Language literacy not only helps in absorbing or conveying information but plays a role in strengthening national identity. Language literacy is the basis for building critical thinking skills to face the challenges of the times. Good literacy allows individuals to absorb information thoroughly and apply it correctly. Adequate literacy allows understanding of various types of texts ranging from scientific writings to content from social media. A deep understanding of the meaning of the text is very important in making wise decisions in various situations (Pinem et al. 2025). The benefits of language literacy are enriching vocabulary, broadening horizons, obtaining new and useful information. In addition, literacy also helps in improving a person's ability to understand the meaning of information and honing analytical thinking skills and strengthening skills in composing words into clear and meaningful sentences (Oktariani and Ekadiansyah 2020).

In the digital era, Indonesian language literacy faces many challenges, including,

- a. The speed of information dissemination through digital platforms with various ease of access increases the risk of fake or hoax information, making it difficult for people to distinguish between valid and fake information.
- b. The communication style on social media tends to be informal with abbreviations and slang, which will erode understanding of standard language.
- c. There is a trend in society that prefers visual and brief content, thus reducing interest in reading long texts, thus decreasing in-depth analytical skills.
- d. Globalization and the dominance of foreign languages in the world increase the use of loanwords which have the potential to shift the original Indonesian vocabulary and change its language structure (Syahputri, Siregar, and Joharis 2025).

The role of literacy in Indonesian language lessons is,

- a. Improve reading skills.

Literacy helps students understand various types of texts such as articles and others. In reading literacy, students can analyze the content, structure and purpose of the text.

- b. Develop writing skills.

With literacy, students learn to write in Indonesian, both formally and informally, and are able to compose writing clearly, creatively and convincingly.

- c. Developing students' thinking skills.

Literacy allows one to assess the accuracy and relevance of information, distinguishing between fact and opinion, and identifying arguments logically.

- d. Improve text analysis and interpretation.

Students understand linguistic elements such as sentence structure and style and are able to interpret the meaning of the text deeply and critically.

- e. Encourage synthesis capabilities.

Students mean that literacy can help students to combine information from various sources to form a new understanding and convey ideas coherently and logically.

- f. Develop creative thinking.

By increasing student literacy, students can produce the ability to provide innovative, open-minded solutions to solve Indonesian language problems in the digital era effectively.

The role of literacy in learning Indonesian in the current era has a very broad impact on students' reading, writing and critical thinking skills. By building a strong foundation of literacy, students will become individuals who are able to understand, analyze and use Indonesian well, effectively and critically in an increasingly developing era (Rifkia, Kususmaningtyas, and Putriyanti 2023).

2. Poetry Reading Skills

At the elementary school level, reading activities are activities that are instilled from an early age. Reading is not only a tool to increase knowledge but also as a tool to build integrative critical thinking skills and understand the core message of a reading. The form of reading activity is taught in elementary school through reading poetry which is part of learning Indonesian to convey the contents of the poem to the listener so that the meaning contained in the poem is clearly received. In reading poetry, students are required to understand the contents of the poem because understanding the contents is the basis for conveying a message that is full of appreciation.

Reading poetry is different from reading texts as usual. Poetry is a literary work that has aesthetic privileges according to the selection of beautiful words, rhythm and unique language structure because poetry is an art activity that requires skills so that the meaning contained is conveyed effectively (Muthahar and Fatonah 2024). Things that need to be considered when reading poetry are as follows,

- a. Facial expressions (Expressions)

Expression aims to convey feelings and meaning contained in poetry through facial expressions that match the message in the reading.

- b. Pantomimic/physical performance

Pantomimics or body movements are body language that supports the delivery of the contents of the poem to the listener.

- c. Pronunciation

Pronunciation includes clarity and accuracy in pronouncing letters, syllables and words.

- d. Pause

A pause is a time to stop reading. This aims to emphasize the meaning in a certain part of the poem.

e. Intonation/voice tune

Intonation includes voice stress that functions to emphasize meaning and emotion in poetry. Intonation is divided into 3 as follows,

- 1) Dynamic stress is stress on words that are considered important.
- 2) Pitch pressure is the high and low pitch of a sound.
- 3) Tempo pressure is the speed or slowness of pronouncing syllables.

f. Understanding the contents of the poem.

Students' understanding of meaning is emphasized to have a comprehensive understanding of the meaning of the poem, both the explicit meaning and the implied meaning, which aims to make the reading meaningful, not just technical (Binol, Karim, and Efendi 2017).

Students who want to read poetry well need to master a number of skills in reading poetry, including:

- a. Understand the emotions contained in poetry so that they can be expressed through expression.
- b. Appreciating the content of the poem is the basis for delivery
- c. Recognizing and understanding poetry punctuation such as (/) for short pauses and (//) for long pauses.
- d. Managing intonation and poetry so that it sounds lively and not monotonous and pronounce words clearly so that the meaning in the poem is not unclear (Suryani 2020).

Reading poetry is basically a process of conveying personal interpretations of the meaning of poetry or the contents of poetry through voice and. The delivery of poetry is not done carelessly just reading but reading poetry requires deep feeling and understanding of the contents in the poetry text. The benefits of reading poetry can improve language competence including understanding messages so that they can understand explicit messages and hidden messages (Afriansyah and Yanti 2020).

3. Poetry Reading Skills as a Media for Strengthening Literacy

Poetry literature describes the poet's inner expression through imaginative, aesthetic language and meaningful conditions. The choice of words in poetry is done selectively to create beautiful sound and depth of meaning so that the message is conveyed effectively to the listener. The purpose of reading poetry is to help students shape character, improve language skills, foster self-confidence, and courage, and train the ability to express emotions appropriately. Introduction to poetry learning should be carried out early on, especially at the elementary education stage because it is hoped that students can master important aspects in reading poetry correctly so that poetry when read looks alive, clear, and not boring. So when the poem is delivered correctly, the listener will be more interested and able to understand the meaning and message contained in the poem being read (Zannah, Satrijono, and Finali 2022).

As a form of literary work, poetry provides an opportunity for students to use language creatively to explore deep meanings and convey emotions and ideas freely. Learning the language of poetry is an effective tool to train students' titration skills both in terms of reading, writing and understanding texts in poetry. Reading poetry can encourage increased literacy skills in students in conveying feelings

through beautiful language that is rich in meaning. Poetry is not just a means to express oneself but more than that, namely enriching vocabulary and deepening understanding of the meaning of words.

Reading poetry contributes positively to literacy development, especially improving writing and reading skills. The application of poetry reading learning in elementary schools can help students understand how language works and how they convey structured and poetic ideas and emotions. Students who learn and then routinely read poetry tend to have higher literacy skills. Understand the importance of language style and are able to convey clear and meaningful messages (Ningtyas et al. 2025).

Poetry reading skills as a medium for strengthening literacy is a learning approach that utilizes poetry reading activities to improve students' literacy skills as a whole, especially in understanding, interpreting, and appreciating the meaning of literary texts. In this context, reading poetry is not just about pronouncing words, but also involves experiencing expressions, intonation, stress, and gestures that are in accordance with the contents of the poem so that students are able to capture the implied messages and meanings deeply. The use of poetry as a medium for literacy has several main benefits,

- a. Learning critical and appreciative reading skills.

Students learn to recognize the elements of poetry and understand the meaning of words, symbols, and language styles used by poets, thereby improving critical and creative understanding of texts.

- b. Improve language skills.

By reading and creating poetry, students enrich their understanding, learn to choose the right words, and understand effective and aesthetic language structures.

- c. Encourage creativity and self-expression.

Reading and writing poetry activities provide space for students to express their feelings, ideas, and imaginations freely and in a structured manner, while simultaneously strengthening overall literacy skills.

- d. Increase interest and culture of literacy.

Activities such as poetry reading competitions or poetry reading training can be a trigger for students' literacy enthusiasm, while minimizing learning loss, especially in dare or limited learning situations (Sari et al. 2024).

Poetry reading skills as a medium for strengthening student literacy are not only required to understand the contents of the text, but also to appreciate and appreciate language as a means of conveying ideas, emotions, and life values. Therefore, it is important for educators to utilize poetry optimally in the Indonesian language learning process in order to foster interest in reading and improve the quality of student literacy (Halimatussakdiah and Siagian 2024).

4. The Impact of Reading Poetry on Understanding Meaning

Poetry reading skills involve expressive reading techniques, proper intonation, and appreciation of the content and atmosphere of the poem. When students are trained to read poetry correctly, they not only learn to pronounce the words, but also learn to capture the deeper meaning of the text they read. This activity trains students to be more observant, sensitive to symbols and figures of speech, and hones their critical and imaginative thinking. This ability is very important in improving the quality of understanding meaning in learning Indonesian. In the context of learning, strengthening literacy through poetry can be done with various methods, such as reading poetry together, analyzing the content of poetry, group discussions about the meaning of poetry, to writing and reading their own poetry. These

strategies aim to make students more active and involved in the learning process, so that their literacy develops naturally and enjoyably. In addition, learning with poetry also helps students understand the cultural context and moral values that are often contained in literary works (Ronaldo, Putra, and Mahdijaya 2025).

Strengthening literacy through poetry reading skills not only improves students' ability to read and understand literary texts, but also enriches their learning experience as a whole. This has a positive impact on students' language skills, both orally and in writing. Therefore, the use of poetry in Indonesian language learning is highly recommended as an effective way to foster interest in reading and improve understanding of meaning in depth. Although elementary school children do not yet fully understand the complexity of metaphors or abstract symbolism in poetry, appropriate and directed reading of poetry can provide a number of significant benefits to the development of their understanding of meaning, including:

a. Vocabulary Development

Poems often introduce new words that may be unfamiliar to children. Reading with simple explanations can enrich their vocabulary. The context of the poem also helps children understand the meaning of the words in their use.

b. Increased Sensitivity to Sound and Rhyme.

Poetry has musical elements through rhyme and rhythm. Listening to and reciting poetry helps children develop a sensitivity to the sounds of language, which is an important foundation for the ability to read and understand the text as a whole.

c. Stimulation of Imagination and Visualization.

Poetry often evokes mental images and imagination. When listening to or reading poetry, children are encouraged to imagine the situations, characters, or emotions depicted. This exercise strengthens their ability to visualize information from the text, which is essential to understanding meaning.

d. Identification and Understanding of Emotions.

Many poems express a variety of emotions in ways that are simple and relatable to children. Reading poems that emphasize emotional expression can help children recognize, understand, and even empathize with different feelings.

e. Developing Simple Figurative Understanding.

While understanding abstract metaphors may be difficult, children can begin to understand simple comparisons or personification in poems designed for their age. For example, "the clouds cried" is a relatively easy figurative concept for children to understand.

f. Improving Listening Skills.

Oral reading of poetry requires children to listen carefully. This focused listening practice can improve their ability to listen to information and understand messages conveyed verbally.

g. Memory Strengthening.

Reciting or even just listening to a poem over and over again can help strengthen children's memory of the words, phrases, and ideas contained in the poem.

h. Building Interest in Language.

Positive experiences with poetry can foster children's interest in language and literature from an early age. This can motivate them to read more and develop their overall comprehension skills (Didipu and Masie 2020).

Several strategies that can be applied to improve understanding of the meaning of poetry in elementary school students:

a. Selection of appropriate and interesting poems

Choose poems that are age and experience appropriate, such as poems with themes that are close to the world of children (nature, animals, friendship, family, daily activities). Furthermore, avoid poems with language that is too abstract or complicated concepts. Simple Language: Use poems with vocabulary that is relatively easy for children to understand. If there are new words, provide simple and contextual explanations. Choose poems that are not too long so as not to make children lose focus.

b. Expressive Poetry Reading.

Teachers as models, then, teachers read poetry with intonation, pauses, emphasis, and facial expressions that match the meaning and emotions in the poem. This helps children capture the nuances and messages that are being conveyed. After the teacher gives an example, then invite students to read poetry together, this trains pronunciation and understanding of rhythm. Dramatization of poetry, namely inviting students to act out or illustrate the contents of the poem through movement or expression.

c. Relating the content of the poem to students' lives.

Teachers can invite students to look for personal experiences or events around them that are relevant to the content of the poem. Help students find the relevance of the meaning of the poem in real life.

d. Use of visual media, namely images and illustrations

Use images or illustrations that are relevant to the poem's theme to help students understand the context and meaning. And show videos of the poem being read or interpreted, so students can see and hear how the poem is delivered.

e. Introducing the elements of poetry.

Teachers teach important elements in poetry such as rhythm, rhyme, imagery, and style of language with easy-to-understand examples. Understanding these elements helps students capture the meaning and beauty of poetry more deeply (Alfaris et al. 2023).

With this approach, students not only understand poetry theoretically but also experience poetry directly, so that their understanding becomes deeper and more meaningful. Reading poetry has a significant impact on increasing understanding of meaning in language learning, especially Indonesian. Poetry as a form of literature that is dense and full of meaning requires readers to understand elements such as diction, style, imagery, and the messages implied in it. When students read poetry attentively and with appreciation, they are trained to capture the meaning behind the words, understand the emotional context, and explore the values of life conveyed by the poet. (Julia, Septyanti, and Charlina 2025) This activity directly hones students' critical and interpretive thinking skills. In addition, reading poetry also trains language sensitivity and strengthens students' imagination. In the process, students not only understand the denotative (literal) meaning of words, but also the connotative (figurative)

meaning contained in the poem. This helps students to develop deeper and more reflective reading skills, so that they are able to connect the contents of the poem with personal experiences and social realities. Thus, poetry reading is an effective strategy in strengthening literacy and improving understanding of meaning in language learning (Azmi, Umam, and Marzuki 2025).

CONCLUSION

Poetry reading skills are part of effective literacy reinforcement in improving students' ability to understand meaning in Indonesian learning. Reading poetry not only hones the technical aspects of reading but also functions in developing students' critical, imaginative and reflective thinking. Poetry is a form of expression, literature that contains many emotional meanings, and life values that provide opportunities for students to explore implied and explicit meanings. Through reading poetry, students are not only able to express the contents of the text but also learn to connect it with personal experiences and social conditions around students. In basic education, poetry learning that focuses on the meaning of content is one solution to overcoming the low level of student literacy in Indonesia. A fun and meaningful approach to reading poetry is seen not only as an art or entertainment activity. However, reading poetry is a key strategy in strengthening students' skills amidst the challenges of the digital era. This encourages students to create more innovative Indonesian language learning methods that are relevant to the context of students' lives.

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