



## The Creative Dimensions Of Teaching Simple Song Composition To Students Of SMK Negeri 1 Ampelgading Pemalang

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### Abstract

*Student creativity is a key competency in the Merdeka Belajar curriculum. This study aims to describe the creative dimensions of teaching simple song composition in Grade X at SMK Negeri (State Vocational High School) 1 Ampelgading Pemalang using qualitative methods. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, validated using source triangulation, and analyzed through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results show that the music education process at the school involves several stages: understanding the concepts of simple music, creating lyrics, composing simple orchestrations, and presenting the works in front of the class. This teaching process fosters original ideas, flexibility in thinking, and stimulates students' creativity.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Creativity is the ability to generate new ideas, develop innovative solutions, and express oneself uniquely. One method to foster creativity in students is through arts education. At its core, creativity refers to an individual's capacity for continuous growth and dynamic adaptation. Therefore, the first step in generating new ideas and concepts is to motivate and encourage individuals to think creatively (Sunarto, 2018).

Currently, Indonesia's education system, particularly at the elementary, junior high, and senior high school levels, is implementing the latest curriculum, known as the Merdeka Curriculum. This curriculum aims to ensure that students' character and competencies meet high standards based on the core values of Pancasila, embodied in the Pancasila Student Profile. The goal of the Pancasila Student Profile is to develop students' character and abilities so that they become high-quality, productive individuals and democratic citizens capable of competing globally and sustainably (Anisa Ababil & Jagar Lumbantoruan, 2023)

The Merdeka Curriculum establishes competency standards referred to as dimensions, with the Pancasila Student Profile serving as the primary guide that shapes education policies and provides educators with a framework for cultivating students' character and qualifications. The creative dimension of the Merdeka Curriculum is specifically designed to prepare students for dynamic work environments. Through creativity, students are given opportunities to express themselves distinctively and transform their ideas into innovative outputs. This approach enhances satisfaction and joy in learning. When students are encouraged to explore and develop their talents through innovation, they become more active and enthusiastic learners (Wahyuni et al., 2023)

Teaching simple song composition has significant potential to stimulate students' creative dimensions, as it requires them to think creatively in composing melodies, lyrics, harmonies, and messages

in their songs. The songwriting process engages creative thinking by combining these elements. However, music education in vocational high schools (SMKs) often focuses more on technical aspects, such as playing instruments and understanding music theory, while songwriting is frequently overlooked. Traditional approaches in music education are often less effective in fostering student creativity. Therefore, there is a need for innovative and interactive teaching methods that integrate music education with creativity development (Sudarman & Lubis, 2015).

At *SMK Negeri* (State Vocational High School) 1 Ampelgading Pematang, music education involves playing instruments and understanding music theory, albeit limited to only two hours per week. Despite this brief timeframe, teachers have successfully implemented lessons on composing simple songs. This practice is noteworthy and merits study, as the researchers aim to explore and describe the process of teaching simple song composition at *SMK Negeri* 1 Ampelgading. Furthermore, the researchers seek to describe how the creative dimension is manifested in this teaching process.

*SMK Negeri* 1 Ampelgading Pematang has also achieved notable accomplishments in music, such as winning choir competitions, marching band contests, and provincial-level jingle competitions. These achievements have inspired the researchers to examine the process of teaching simple song composition in Grade X. This study is significant because it aligns with the new curriculum, which has yet to be widely implemented across vocational schools, and with the Strengthening Pancasila Student Profile Project (*P5*), currently promoted by the government through the Merdeka Curriculum. The research problem centers on the process of teaching simple song composition at *SMK Negeri* 1 Ampelgading and how the creative dimension is manifested in this teaching process.

## METHOD

According to Moleong (2017), qualitative research is a type of research aimed at understanding the phenomena experienced by the research subjects, such as behaviors, perceptions, motivations, and actions. This study was conducted holistically. Generally, qualitative research uses word-based or language-based descriptions, is carried out in natural contexts, and applies various natural methods. The study titled "Creative Dimensions in Teaching Simple Song Composition to Grade X Students at *SMK Negeri 1 Ampelgading Pemalang*" is classified as qualitative research. This method involves observation, identification of research objects, data collection, data analysis, interpretation according to its components, and then compiling descriptions to solve the research problem.

The data collection techniques used in this research included observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation was conducted using an observation guide, where the researchers sought to observe and study the conditions of the music education activities, the school environment, teaching documents, the curriculum, achievements, and the creative works of the Grade X students at *SMK Negeri 1 Ampelgading*. Interviews were conducted with the principal, curriculum staff, music teachers, and Grade X students. Data collected through documentation included student achievements, the school's organizational structure, facilities supporting simple song composition lessons, student song compositions, and visual documentation such as photos of the simple song composition teaching activities at *SMK Negeri 1 Ampelgading Pemalang*.

According to Lofland (Moleong, 2017:157), the main data sources in qualitative research consist of words and actions, while additional data includes documents and similar items. The additional data in this study came from two sources: primary and secondary. Primary data refers to data directly obtained from interactions with

informants, including the principal, curriculum staff, music teachers, and Grade X students at *SMK Negeri 1 Ampelgading*. Secondary data was derived from documentation collected during the study, such as lesson plans (RPP), syllabi, the Merdeka curriculum, teaching materials, and photo attachments obtained from the music teacher's documents and archives related to the simple song composition lessons at *SMK Negeri 1 Ampelgading Pemalang*.

In the study on the Creative Dimensions in Teaching Simple Song Composition in Grade X, data validity was measured by cross-referencing the collected data for verification, to confirm the conclusions drawn from data analysis. To evaluate the data validity, the researchers applied data triangulation.

Data reduction refers to the process of refining the collected data. Over time, the researchers encountered increasingly complex and intricate data. Therefore, data analysis was necessary to filter and simplify the information. Sugiyono (2019:92) explains that data reduction involves summarizing information, selecting the most important aspects, and focusing on what is relevant by identifying themes and patterns. The goal of this process was to provide a more detailed overview. In this study, the analyzed patterns and themes were the creative dimensions in teaching simple song composition in the arts and culture subject in Grade X at *SMK Negeri 1 Ampelgading Pemalang*, with the aim of collecting and selecting data for further analysis in the research findings.

Data verification is the process of formulating the meaning of the research results in clear, concise, and easily understandable statements. This process involves re-examining the findings to ensure the accuracy of the conclusions drawn. The conclusions proposed are provisional and may change if no strong evidence is found during subsequent data collection. However, if the initial conclusions are supported by valid and consistent evidence from the field, they are considered trustworthy (Sugiyono,

2019:345). In this study, data collected from the field, such as the teaching and learning process, teaching materials, content, media, teaching facilities, and interviews with informants, were used to draw conclusions about the creative dimensions in teaching simple song composition in the arts and culture subject in Grade X at *SMK Negeri 1 Ampelgading Pemalang*.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### The Process of Teaching Simple Song Composition

One of the positive aspects of the *Merdeka Belajar* Curriculum is its flexibility in teaching, which is tailored to the individual needs of students. This curriculum allows schools and teachers to adjust the curriculum and teaching methods to suit the needs and characteristics of the students. This flexibility enables students to learn according to their abilities and interests, ultimately enhancing their understanding and satisfaction with learning. The curriculum also provides teachers with the freedom to choose the most appropriate teaching methods.

#### *The Concepts in Creating Simple Music*

At the beginning of the teaching process, students developed ideas and concepts related to music composition, choosing materials, types, and genres of music for their works. The teacher encouraged creative exploration and the expression of musical ideas in a detailed concept. The goal of this approach was to enrich the spiritual and social aspects of the students while improving their musical skills. This experiential learning promoted active participation with musical examples, such as "Jingle *SMK Negeri 1 Ampelgading*" by Ipuk Djayanti Putri. Students were introduced to musical elements such as melody, tempo, harmony, and expression in various structures and genres. The teacher observed students' attitudes and behaviors for evaluation, encouraging them to understand the function and impact of musical concepts on their roles in society.

Evaluation included both attitudes and skills, with activities such as listening, observing, reflecting, and imitating song lyrics during 2-hour lessons.

Figure 1. Learning Activity



(Source: Azhari, February 28, 2024)

#### *Creating Vocal Music (Lyrics)*

Music teaching at *SMK Negeri 1 Ampelgading Pemalang* involved the development of ideas and concepts for music composition. At this stage, the teacher introduced the concept of "Creating Simple Music," focusing on the characteristics of vocal music. Song lyrics were understood as a monologue expressed by a composer or poet through the careful selection of words (Ismiyatin et al., 2019).

Students learned about the important role of lyrics in songs, various lyric formats such as aabb, abab, abcd, and free-form, as well as writing styles based on categories such as classical, contemporary, traditional, and nontraditional music (Salafiyah & Kevin, 2021). Students imitated and sang songs using techniques they had learned, with the help of video media or teacher guidance. The teacher encouraged exploration in songwriting based on the musical genres students were interested in, to develop their spiritual, social, and singing skills using experiential and discovery-based teaching methods.

Students were encouraged to understand the role of songs in self-expression and to create music with a positive impact. Assessment focused on both attitudes and skills, with activities involving listening, observing, reflecting, imitating, and singing songs. Students recognized the importance of lyrics and

learned techniques for creating lyrics, including various rhyme schemes.

Senang mengenal dirimu  
Engkau tempat bersandarku  
Namun jarak telah memisahkan kita  
Inilah kisahku denganmu

The teacher used examples from various references in the guide to emphasize the characteristics of voice and singing techniques, broadening students' knowledge of lyric writing. Students also learned about vocal range and quality and attempted to create acrostic rhymes independently. In groups of five, students created two simple songs, one based on a school theme and the other free-form, sharing ideas and experiences. They submitted the lyrics via the WhatsApp group and examples of the songs in the form of voice notes for evaluation before finalizing their work.

#### ***Creating Simple Music Orchestration***

During this teaching activity, the teacher guided students to develop their creativity in composing music either individually or collaboratively, focusing on notation, harmonization, playing techniques, and adjusting orchestration to suit the structure and genre of the music being studied. Muntoyibah (2021) defines simple orchestration as the art of writing lyrics involving the arrangement of tones or performances by a band or orchestra using various instruments. Orchestration can also be interpreted as an ensemble or orchestra activity inspired by music notation or pieces being listened to.

Introducing music theory and arts education, especially music, is crucial in the teaching and learning process as it enhances student excitement, encourages active participation, fosters strong relationships between students and teachers, and develops self-confidence, discipline, and honesty. Music theory, which includes the study of artistic design, wise proportions, and innovative patterns in music, helps students understand and

interpret various musical phenomena. Students learned basic elements such as melody, harmony, and rhythm, as well as advanced aspects such as tempo, notation, chords, and timbre. In learning, students applied these techniques to create vocal compositions and orchestration with various instruments, aided by relevant examples from the teacher. The teacher explained the characteristics of different instrument sounds and assisted students who had difficulty finding pitches. Students also practiced singing and creating melodies using numeric notation, with the task of continuing lyric composition at home under the teacher's supervision.

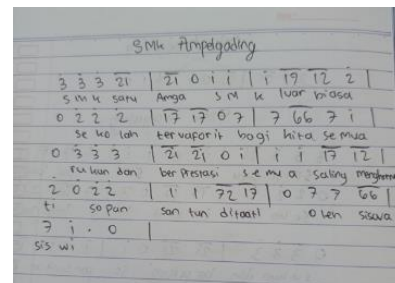


Figure 2. Example of Student Work  
(Source: Azhari, March 20, 2024)

The teacher monitored students' attitudes and behavior throughout the music creation process, teaching them to understand the impact of creating simple music on their understanding of existence as a creation of God. Students were encouraged to produce, select, and present music that would have a positive impact on society and the environment. The evaluation focused on students' attitudes and skills, and the process included listening, observing, reflecting, and imitating the creation of simple music.

#### ***Packaging the Presentation of Simple Music Works***

In the fourth stage of teaching, the teacher ensured that students mastered individual and group music techniques to present artistic works according to the chosen structure and genre. Students were encouraged to explore different ways of

presenting music, developing spiritual, social, and musical skills through experiential learning. They listened to musical examples from the guidebook to understand variations and techniques of presentation. The teacher monitored students' attitudes and behaviors to ensure they understood the role and impact of presenting music in their lives. Teaching evaluation focused on attitudes and skills, involving listening, observing, reflecting, and imitating the forms of music presentation.



Figure 31. Practice by Class X TE 4 Students (Source: Azhari, March 20, 2024)

### **Creative Dimensions in the Teaching of Simple Song Composition**

This study revealed the creative dimensions in teaching simple song composition to Grade X students at *SMK Negeri 1 Ampelgading Pematang*. The creative dimensions were identified in several aspects: the concept of creating simple music, the lyric writing process, orchestration creation, and the presentation of works. Students were asked to explore music and develop their creative ideas in song composition. Previous research by Firdaus (2023) showed that music imitation helps middle school students create new rhythms that differ from references. This evidence supports the idea that musical exploration and creative expression can be reflected in the imitation process and the delivery of original ideas in song lyrics.

#### ***Fluency***

The writing of simple song lyrics focused on school themes and free themes,

based on students' ideas, feelings, and experiences. The teacher asked students to start by creating rhymes to facilitate melody creation. According to Fauzi Rahman (2015), song lyrics are words arranged to express thoughts and feelings like poetry, but with rhythm and accompanying music. A song is considered sung poetry. The creative dimension became apparent when students could generate original ideas based on imagination and personal experience, producing lyrics that reflected their self-expression.

#### ***Originality***

The use of language style in literary works such as short stories, poetry, or song lyrics is important for making works more engaging. Teaching language style is crucial for encouraging students to be more creative in arranging words and creating aesthetic works. Teachers need to be creative in designing enjoyable and supportive teaching activities. Students who are diligent readers have a wider vocabulary, which makes their ability to process words more varied. The researchers found that the creative dimension appeared when students could produce original works.

#### ***Flexibility***

Creating simple orchestration involved writing melodies and combining vocal music with instruments. Students had to understand song forms, including motifs, phrases, question and answer sentences. Flexibility in thinking was important in finding alternative solutions when facing problems in the song creation process. Previous research showed that students must be able to think flexibly and follow music rules, rather than composing without a foundation. This ability was tested in the process of solving musical problems with various approaches.

#### ***Elaboration***

The final stage involved students presenting their music works in front of the class, which served as an evaluation of the simple song composition process. This



evaluation was important to measure how well students understood and succeeded in their learning. Evaluation in education plays a crucial role in assessing the achievement of teaching goals, gathering and analyzing information about the quality of teaching and learning, and helping teachers design better strategies. For students, effective evaluation can serve as motivation to continuously improve their abilities (Magdalena et al., 2023).

### ***Benefits of Teaching Simple Song Composition for Students***

The teaching of simple song composition supports students' artistic creativity, having a positive impact on their personal development, both physically and mentally. This creativity stimulates exploration and prepares students with values that influence various aspects of their lives. The three main elements of creativity—generating original ideas, creating unique works, and thinking flexibly—are all enhanced through this teaching and learning, contributing to the students' increased creativity (Agustin, 2021).

Creative students can produce original, meaningful works with a positive impact. Creativity involves three key elements: Generating Original Ideas: Students create ideas by listening to musical examples and combining them with personal experiences to compose songs. Creating Original Works: Students are given the opportunity to express their thoughts and feelings through unique musical works. Flexible Thinking: Students must think flexibly to solve problems by following music rules while creating songs.

The teaching of simple song composition helps students overcome challenges, such as creating lyrics and melodies, and enhances their creativity. This prepares them to be resilient individuals who can face life's challenges.

### **CONCLUSION**

Based on the research findings presented, it can be concluded that the creative dimensions in teaching simple song composition to Grade X students at *SMK Negeri 1 Ampelgading Pematang* in the 2023/2024 academic year are visible throughout the teaching and learning process. Each stage in this process incorporates elements of the creative dimension, which include: 1) understanding the concept of simple music; 2) creating vocal music (lyrics); 3) creating simple orchestration; and 4) presenting works in front of the class. These creative dimensions encompass the ability to generate original ideas and works, as well as flexibility in thinking to find problem-solving solutions. The teaching of simple song composition stimulates students' creativity, which in turn enhances their mindset and reflects the values of the Pancasila student, proving that simple song composition can be one way to foster students who embody the Pancasila learner.

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