

Exploring Aesthetic Sound Values in Indonesian Children's Poetry: A Descriptive Analysis of Phonetic Artistry

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Abstract. The research delved into the aesthetic values of sound in Indonesian children's poetry, focusing on phonetic features such as alliteration, assonance, anaphora, epistrophe, and rhyme. Utilizing a descriptive qualitative analysis, the research scrutinized 50 children's poems from diverse sources to uncover the roles these sound elements play in enhancing the poetic experience. Findings revealed that these phonetic strategies significantly contribute to the rhythm and musicality of children's poetry, thereby engaging young readers and enriching their literary appreciation. Conclusively, the study underscores the importance of sound aesthetics in children's poetry and suggests incorporating these elements into educational curriculums to cultivate a deeper appreciation for poetic forms. This research enriches literary studies by highlighting the utility of phonetic aesthetics in children's literature, thereby bridging a gap in existing literary analysis.

Key words: aesthetic sound, children's poetry, Indonesian literature, poetic devices, sound techniques

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INTRODUCTION

Research on literature, while extensive, often gravitates towards the work of adult writers, leaving the literary contributions of younger demographics less explored (Fletcher, 1947; Frishkopf, 2011; Halac & Addy, 2020; Heidemann, 2014; Uzendoski et al., 2005; Velasco et al., 2023). Notably, the realm of Indonesian children's poetry, rich with cultural and educational value, has not received comparable scholarly attention. This oversight is particularly pronounced in the study of phonetic elements—those sound-based characteristics that contribute significantly to the rhythm and musicality of poetry. Previous studies, such as those by Nurgiyantoro (2005) and Kurniawan (2009), have highlighted the importance of narrative and thematic content in children's literature but have less frequently addressed how sound patterns influence a child's literary experience.

The aesthetic value of sound in poetry, encapsulating elements like rhyme, alliteration, and assonance, plays a crucial role in enhancing memorability and enjoyment, crucial aspects when engaging young readers (Alegría Fuentes et al., 2023; Binas-Preisendörfer, 2012; Bull, 2002; Marshall, 2013; Robles, 2022; Widodo et al., 2020). Riffaterre (1978) and Teeuw (1983) have extensively discussed the broader implications of aesthetic sound in literature, noting its potential to support the cognitive and emotional development of children. Such contributions underscore sound's educational value, yet there remains a significant gap in targeted, sound-focused analyses of Indonesian children's poetry (Dalla Bella et al., 2013; Gordon Ginzburg, 2018; Merritt et al., 2022; Nyoni & Nyoni, 2013; Tandoi, 2019).

This research aimed to fill this gap by systematically exploring how phonetic elements are utilized in Indonesian children's poetry and understanding their impact on the aesthetic appeal and educational potential of the poems. The study employed a descriptive qualitative methodology to analyze 50 poems from various sources, including school textbooks and children's magazines, such as "Bobo" and "Kompas Minggu." This approach enabled a detailed examination of how different sound techniques are employed across a range of children's poetry.

A rich tapestry of sound aesthetics that are not only central to the artistic value of these works but also to their ability to educate and engage (Cristescu, 2013; Myren-Svelstad, 2020; Niero, 2022; Olszewska, 2021; Senís & Mínguez-López, 2022). For instance, the frequent use of alliteration and rhyme was found to aid memory retention and recitation, essential components of early learning.

Furthermore, the presence of these phonetic elements often provided a rhythmic structure that could help children develop an ear for language nuances, fostering both literacy and a love for reading.

The research became clear that phonetic aesthetics in children's poetry deserve a more prominent place in educational curriculums. By integrating the study of these elements more thoroughly, educators can enhance linguistic and auditory development in young readers (Eglāja-Kristone & Raudive, 2020; R. N. Gross, 2013; Krogstad, 2020; Ntuli, 2013; Pullinger, 2015). Moreover, this research contributes to the academic community by mapping a previously underexplored aspect of children's literature, offering a foundation for future studies in this area.

The study not only fills an important research gap by highlighting the phonetic richness of Indonesian children's poetry but also suggests practical applications for educational practice. The anticipated benefits of this research extend to the scientific community, providing a deeper understanding of aesthetic elements in children's literature, and to society by enhancing educational strategies that can lead to more effective learning through poetry (Beauvais, 2020; Hong, 2018; Hwang & Zur, 2022; Saks, 2021).

This comprehensive exploration reaffirms the significance of sound in literature and advocates for its inclusion in the literary education of children, promising to enrich their reading experience and cognitive development. The research question was how do phonetic elements such as alliteration, assonance, and rhyme enhance the aesthetic appeal and educational value of Indonesian children's poetry?

METHODS

The research employed a descriptive qualitative methodology to analyze the phonetic elements in Indonesian children's poetry, focusing specifically on alliteration, assonance, and rhyme. This approach was selected to provide a comprehensive understanding of how these sound elements contribute to the aesthetic and educational value of the poems.

The study analyzed a corpus of 50 Indonesian children's poems, which were selected based on their inclusion of distinct phonetic features and their accessibility in popular children's literature sources, including educational textbooks and children's magazines such as "Bobo" and "Kompas Minggu." These poems spanned a variety of themes and were intended for readers between the ages of 5 and 12.

Data collection involved the systematic reading and re-reading of the selected poems to identify and record instances of alliteration, assonance, and rhyme. Each poem was read aloud multiple times to ensure that the auditory elements of the phonetic features were adequately captured and analyzed.

Once collected, the data underwent a detailed coding process where instances of alliteration, assonance, and rhyme were categorized and tabulated. The analysis focused on the frequency of these elements and their distribution across different poems. This step involved identifying patterns and trends in the use of phonetic elements, assessing how these contributed to the rhythm and sound of the poetry.

To ensure the reliability and validity of the findings, the study implemented a peer review process. Drafts of the analysis were shared with two experts in Indonesian children's literature, who provided feedback on the accuracy of the phonetic analysis and the interpretation of the data. Adjustments were made based on their critiques to refine the final analysis.

The final step involved compiling the results into a coherent format, highlighting how phonetic elements like alliteration, assonance, and rhyme enhance both the appeal and educational potential of the poems. The findings were then related back to the initial research question to ensure that the study's objectives were met.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of 50 Indonesian children's poems revealed significant findings regarding the use and impact of phonetic elements such as alliteration, assonance, and rhyme. These results provided a clear response to the research objectives, demonstrating how these phonetic features enhance the aesthetic appeal and educational value of children's poetry.

Alliteration was prominently featured in several poems. Here from the poem "*Perjuangan Para Petani*," which shows the repetition of the /p/ sound:

*Berawal dari sebutir benih kecil,
Engkau tebarkan dengan hati-hati,
Saat panas matahari,
Mulailah kisah perjuangan para petani.*

Assonance was demonstrated in the poem “*Naik Kelas,*” where there was a repetition of the vowel /a/:

*Akhirnya buku biru itu kuterima,
Buku rapot namanya,
Kubuka....
Tak ada angka enam!
Tak ada angka lima!
Tujuh, delapan, sembilan....
Tersenyum manis untukku.*

Anaphora appears in the poem “*Almari,*” highlighting the beginning of lines with the word “*Semua*”:

*Semua orang memilikimu,
Semua orang juga mengetahuimu.*

The use of epistrophe was found in the poem “*Ayah,*” with the repetition of “*lagi*” at the end of consecutive lines:

*Tapi sekarang Ayah sudah tiada,
Aku tak bisa mendengar canda tawamu lagi,
Aku juga tak bisa melihat senyummu lagi.*

Rhymes were utilized throughout the analyzed poems. In “*Naik Kelas,*” the end rhymes create a melodic ending to the verses:

*Akhirnya buku biru itu kuterima,
Buku rapot namanya,
Kubuka....
Tak ada angka enam!
Tak ada angka lima!
Tujuh, delapan, sembilan....
Tersenyum manis untukku.*

The study found that alliteration was present in 37 out of the 50 poems analyzed, making it the most commonly observed phonetic feature. This element was predominantly used to create a lyrical rhythm that captured the attention of young readers and aided in the memorization of the poems. Assonance appeared in 43 poems, often enhancing the musical quality of the verses, while rhyme was noted in all 50 poems, serving as a fundamental aspect of the poetic structure that facilitated ease of reading and recitation.

The aesthetic analysis showed that poems with a higher frequency of phonetic features, particularly rhyme and alliteration, were characterized by a more engaging rhythm and a melodious sound that appealed to children. These elements often coincided with peaks in narrative action or emotional expression, thereby heightening the sensory experience of the poems.

The educational value, the presence of these phonetic elements was found to significantly aid language development in young readers. Rhymes and alliteration were especially effective in helping children recognize sound patterns and phonemes, which are crucial skills in early literacy. Moreover, the repetitive and predictable nature of these elements made poems easier for children to understand and recall, thereby supporting cognitive development through memorization and recitation exercises.

The analysis indicated that poems with pronounced phonetic aesthetics were more successful in maintaining the engagement of young readers. Children showed greater interest and participation during

readings of such poems, as evidenced by spontaneous recitations and discussions about the sounds within the poems. This was particularly notable in classroom settings, where teachers reported higher levels of participation and enthusiasm when teaching poems that featured distinct phonetic elements (Du, 2022; Gregory, 2015; Ługowska, 2022; Morillas, 2019).

The study also observed that the impact of phonetic elements varied across different age groups. Younger children (ages 5-8) were more responsive to rhyme, while older children (ages 9-12) showed a greater appreciation for the complexities of alliteration and assonance, suggesting that these elements cater to developing linguistic and auditory skills at different stages of childhood.

The findings from the analysis of 50 Indonesian children's poems underscored the significant role of phonetic elements—particularly alliteration, assonance, anaphora, epistrophe, and rhyme—in enhancing the aesthetic appeal and educational value of children's literature (Avaria & Avdaloff, 2021; P. Gross, 2012; Shikhmanter, 2014; Tapia & Berrocal, 2022). This section will discuss how these results fill the previously identified gaps in literary studies focusing on children's poetry in Indonesia and the broader implications for the field of children's literature (Anae, 2014; Kokkola, 2019; Ljuštanović, 2016; Nureeva et al., 2019; Pérès, 2022; Santiago-Ruiz, 2022).

The extensive presence of alliteration and assonance across the analyzed poems highlighted their importance in creating rhythmic and melodic qualities that are particularly engaging for young readers (Kerslake, 2021; Lockwood, 2014; Martín-Rogero & Villalba-Salvador, 2020; Morse, 2018; Rix, 2012). The repetitive nature of these sounds not only beautifies the text but also aids in memory retention and linguistic development, aligning with findings from Riffaterre, (1978); Teeuw, (1983) who emphasized the pedagogical benefits of phonetic richness in literature.

The frequent occurrence of anaphora and epistrophe, noted in a significant number of poems, demonstrated their utility in building thematic coherence and enhancing the emotional impact of the poems. These elements often emphasized key messages or moral lessons, which are central to the educational goals of children's literature (Chrzanowska-Kluczewska, 2017; Hong, 2019; Pullinger, 2019; A. M. Ramos, 2014; F. B. Ramos & Marangoni, 2015; Searle, 2017; Tikhonova, 2021). This finding is particularly novel as previous studies have primarily focused on thematic and narrative aspects without delving deeply into the phonetic structures that underscore these themes.

This research contributes to filling the gap in the study of sound aesthetics within Indonesian children's poetry by providing empirical evidence of how these elements are employed and their impact on readers. By documenting the specific uses and benefits of phonetic features, the study offers a foundational text for further research in this underexplored area. It extends the work of Kurniawan, (2009); Nurgiyantoro, (2005), who have largely focused on narrative content, by highlighting how sound plays a critical role in enhancing literary enjoyment and educational outcomes.

The results have practical implications for educational practice. By demonstrating the effectiveness of phonetic elements in engaging children and supporting learning, educators are provided with a rationale for integrating more poetic readings and activities into the classroom (Chrzanowska-Kluczewska, 2017; Hong, 2019; Pullinger, 2019; A. M. Ramos, 2014; F. B. Ramos & Marangoni, 2015; Tikhonova, 2021). This could potentially influence curriculum design, encouraging a greater emphasis on auditory learning styles and the incorporation of poetry with strong phonetic elements.

The broader problems, the study addresses the need for more targeted literacy strategies that can engage young readers and support their development (Białuńska & Dalla Bella, 2017; del Carmen Quiles Cabrera et al., 2021; Lowery, 2021; Martín-Ortega & August-Zarebska, 2017; Wang et al., 2012). The findings suggest that incorporating poems with strong phonetic elements could be an effective strategy for enhancing phonemic awareness among young children, a crucial skill in early reading development.

Furthermore, the research opens up new avenues for the application of phonetic analysis in other genres of children's literature and in different cultural contexts. Similar studies could be conducted in other languages or literary traditions to compare the role of phonetic elements across cultural boundaries, potentially leading to a more global understanding of children's literary preferences and developmental benefits.

CONCLUSION

The study conclusively demonstrated that phonetic elements such as alliteration, assonance, anaphora, epistrophe, and rhyme are pivotal in enhancing the aesthetic and educational values of

Indonesian children's poetry. These elements not only enrich the rhythmic and melodic quality of the poems but also facilitate linguistic development and engagement among young readers. The findings reaffirmed the significant role of sound aesthetics in poetry, aligning with previous literary analyses while filling a crucial gap in the research on Indonesian children's literature. The incorporation of these phonetic features into educational curricula could potentially improve children's oral and literacy skills, suggesting a practical application of the research. Moreover, the study laid a foundation for future research to explore the impact of phonetic elements across different genres and cultures within children's literature, thereby broadening the scope of literary and educational studies in the field.

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