CREATIVE WRITING AND INNOVATIVE PROCESS OF BEOWULF VIRTUAL DRAMA UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Karwandi
Magister Program of Language Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Sriwijaya, Palembang, Indonesia
Email: karwandis@gmail.com

Rita Inderawati (Corresponding author)
Magister Program of Language Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Sriwijaya, Palembang, Indonesia
Email: rita_inderawati@fkip.unsri.ac.id

Didi Suhendi
Magister Program of Language Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Sriwijaya, Palembang, Indonesia
Email: didisuhendi@fkip.unsri.ac.id

Margaretha Dinar Sitinjak
Magister Program of Language Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Sriwijaya, Palembang, Indonesia
Email: magiedinar@yahoo.com

Eryansyah
Magister Program of Language Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Sriwijaya, Palembang, Indonesia
Email: eryansyah@unsri.ac.id

Sardianto Markos Siahaan
Magister Program of Language Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Sriwijaya, Palembang, Indonesia
Email: mr.sardi@unsri.ac.id


Abstract: Pandemic covid-19 forced education sector to have no more face-to-face classes since 2020. Unluckily, students from drama classes no longer performed on the stage even though they have well-prepared for the performance. This article highlighted four main problems: 1) How creative were students in writing drama script for virtual drama performance? 2) What were innovative processes created by the students for virtual drama performance? 3) What were the problem faced by the students in writing drama script and performing virtual drama performance? and 4) How were the lecturers’ role for the students in writing drama script and performing virtual drama performance? To answer these questions, the study employed online observation, interview, and documentation to dig up the research questions. The result of the study showed that by using documented-limited creative writing, most of the students were able in creating the drama script collaboratively and they utilized Zoom platform and Canva application through these preliminary investigation, detailed investigation, development, testing and validation, and full production processes. As a whole, the students were creative and innovative during the process of virtual drama performance and it could make the process of teaching and learning are worthwhile because lecturers and students had collaborated very well.

Key words: creative writing; innovative process; virtual drama performance.

INTRODUCTION
The presence of the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia, in particular, has brought various bad impacts in various sectors, including the education sector. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture (2022), at least, there are three potential prolonged negative social impacts that threaten students due to the effects of the
COVID-19 pandemic. The three impacts include dropping out of school, decreasing learning achievement and violence against children and external risks.

In Indonesia, distance learning (Pembelajaran Jarak Jauh – herein after referred to as PJJ) ranging from kindergartens to universities started at the end of March, 2021 to impede and cope with the spread and transmission of Covid-19. Nevertheless, there were a lot of problems arising since the schools were required to carry out online learning without proper preparation.

There are three problems faced by the students and teachers. The first is the students’ difficulty in understanding the subject materials, the second is the teachers’ ability to use the technology in online learning (Inderawati, 2011; Inderawati; 2017; Inderawati et al., 2021; Septiyanti et al., 2020), and the third is the limitation in the learning controlling (Efriana, 2021). Consequently, the government was encouraged to issue policies supporting the schools to run the learning process smoothly, specifically by holding webinars and quota assistance for teachers and students.

The lecturers begin to innovate by participating in various online trainings and creating learning videos. In addition, they attempt to use online meetings with students in the learning process, for example using zoom meetings, google meetings, and so on (Oktarina et al., 2022; Inderawati et al., 2018; Inderawati et al., 2019).

As one of the language skills, writing is very important for students to practice and improve. Through writing, the students can express their ideas and thoughts into a written form. Creative skills plays an important role in language learning such as drama, music, storytelling, projects, and creative writing all require a lot of creativity and imagination (Pentury et al., 2020; Septianrti et al., 2021). The creative writing is an imaginative, crafted, productive and original writing process (Inderawati, 2022). It generally covers all areas of fiction, such as novels, short stories, poetry, etc., but can also include non-fiction, such as feature articles for magazines. Furthermore, the creative writing occurs when the writers (the learners) write in their own language creatively and use their own writing style (Harshini, 2020). In line with the previous ideas, when students are writing a text, they may not be afraid, they can express the ideas in their mind enthusiastically and free (Inderawati et al., 2018). In other words, the creative writing is the process of writing where the writers (learners) write their ideas creatively using their own language and their own writing style to produce a new idea (Inderawati, 2022).

Innovative process is a series of steps between the conception of an idea and its implementation. Innovation is the process of developing new solutions to defined problems (Faludi, 2015). On the other hand, the young learners respond very positively to opportunities to co-create the dramatic narratives that bring these worlds into being (Hulse & Owens, 2017), to express their ideas in performing the virtual drama. Therefore, to improve the students’ achievement there are some activities that can be conducted, one of them is by staging a virtual drama performed by the students and facilitated by the lecturers entitled “Beowulf”, the Old English Poetry.

Drama is any activity in which students are asked to describe themselves or play other people in imaginary situations (Angelinanawati, 2019). A virtual drama is a drama staging activity performed virtually, it can be conducted through an online platform such as zoom (Cziboly & Bethlenfalvy, 2020). This virtual drama entitled “Beowulf” was a collaboration between teachers and students to fulfill the final assignment of literature in English language teaching class.

In carrying out virtual dramas that are still very rarely performed by lecturers and students, the obstacles that might occur are the ability of the teachers and students to use ICT. Supporting applications also enlivened technological developments during the Covid-19 pandemic, for example google classrooms, rumah belajar, ruang guru, Canva, virtual reality and so on. However, Inderawati (2022) qualitatively focused her study on the innovative process of drama virtual performance. Based on the perpetual observation conducted by the researchers, there were no other performances conducted during the spread of Covid-19 pandemic. However, the researchers discovered that the drama existed in virtual performance on campus and also had the experience of writing the script creatively and performing virtual drama in the classroom.

To carry out virtual drama performance, deep creative writing and innovative process between lecturers and students are required because these processes require long preparation and time in order to produce a spectacular performance even during the Covid-19 pandemic where the lecturers and students could not meet face-to-face one another, instead they could only do it through virtual meetings. For this reason, the teachers and
students had to be able to understand how to use the applications used in staging this virtual drama, for example, by combining Zoom meetings and Canva. This study focused on the students’ creativity in writing drama script and the process to perform Beowulf virtual drama.

To find out the creative writing and innovative process in implementing virtual drama performance, there were several previous studies related to the preliminary study already conducted by the researcher. The first is coming from Houlihan and Morris (2022) finding that performing drama digitally can improve students’ confidence, share their ideas and increase their collaboration to each other. In addition, the drama which is performed virtually can connect the real space and the virtual space thorough desktop drama (Li, 2022). Furthermore, after learning the role playing and writing the drama script, the students become more self-confidence to act and capable to conduct drama performance (Dahlan, 2022). In conclusion, the previous related studies proved that the virtual drama could be performed and had significant effects for the students.

Based on three previous studies, the researcher conducted study entitled “Creative writing and innovative process of Virtual Drama Performance of the 4th Semester Students of English Education Study Program of Universitas Sriwijaya.” This study was conducted to find out how creative were students in writing drama script for virtual drama performance, what were innovative processes created by the students for virtual drama performance, what problems were faced by the students in writing drama script and performing virtual drama and how were the lecturers’ role for the students in writing drama script and performing virtual drama performance.

**METHOD**

A research design is a plan or strategy devised to conduct research and make it practical, so that research questions can be answered based on evidence and warrants (Cohen et al., 2018). In addition, Creswell and Creswell (2018) state that qualitative methods rely on text and image data, have unique steps in data analysis, and use multiple designs. The research adopted a case study method located within an interpretive theoretical framework. The purposes of this case study were to investigate students’ creative writing, innovative process, students’ problem and lecturers’ role in performing virtual drama performance. Therefore, the researcher used qualitative data to answer the research questions and to optimize the research findings.

The participants of this study were the 4th semester undergraduate students of English Education Study Program of Sriwijaya University for the Academic Year 2020-2021. The total number of the participants was 34 students consisting of 8 male students and 26 female students.

There are five steps in conducting this study as follows: (1) Preparing and organizing the data using fieldnotes. (2) Reviewing and exploring the data. (3) Developing a data coding system. (4) Assigning codes to the data in qualitative interview analysis, going through each participant’s responses and tagging them with codes in a spreadsheet. (5) Identifying recurring themes. Linking codes together into cohesive, overarching themes.

The data collection is obtained through observation, interview, and documentation to investigate how students were creative in writing drama script and what innovative processes are in implementing virtual drama performance.

**Table 1. Research problem and the instruments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Research Problems</th>
<th>Instruments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>How creative were students in writing drama script for virtual drama performance?</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>What were innovative processes created by the students for virtual drama performance?</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>What problem were faced by the students in writing drama script and performing virtual drama performance?</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>How were the lecturers’ role for the students in writing drama script and performing virtual drama performance?</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data were analyzed by using qualitative data analysis methods to get the results, including (1) preliminary exploration of the data by reading through the transcripts and writing memos; (2) coding the data by segmenting and labeling the text; (3) using codes to develop themes by aggregating similar codes together; (4) connecting and interrelating themes; and (5) constructing a narrative (Creswell, 2012). The interview results are qualitatively analyzed by coding: each segment (e.g., group of words) was assigned to a semantic reference category, as systematically and rigorously as possible.
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The students’ creativity in writing drama script

The creative drama script was written by the students after the lecturers divided the scenes into 34 scenes based on the total of the students. So, all the students had the same position as writers. The students started to rewrite their scenes based on the situation they got. They had to learn the characters, characteristics, plot, setting, point of view, and conflict. Besides that, they reported into their WhatsApp group. They discussed to each other to connect one scene to another. The lecturers gave the suggestions if the scenes had a mistake or did not relate to the story. They also put the supported pictures and sounds by using links to strengthen their drama scripts. All of the writing processes were carried out through their homes since the Covid-19 pandemic still exists.

The interview data showed that the students were creative in writing drama script because all the students took a part and wrote the scenes by themselves (one student wrote one scene) from their home virtually, also connected the script to another script so that it could become unity and related to each other. Besides that, they discussed the script in WhatsApp Group so that it helped them to transcribe and compose the drama script creatively.

It is supported by Yang (2022) stating that creative writing tells information in such a way that the reader can get emotional while reading it. Furthermore, he states that good writing can help writers to connect with readers through good communication, and clearly express the thoughts, ideas, and opinions of the author. Based on this information, the students were creative in writing drama script for the virtual drama performance because they could connect the writers and the readers by sharing the ideas through drama script with the new ways and valuable.

Table 2. The percentage of students’ creativity in writing drama script

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Students’ Creativity</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The students wrote the drama script by themselves</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The students could use music and background through the links</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Students discussed together (collaboration) through WhatsApp Group</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Students could give the elements of drama</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 showed that there were 34 students (100%) could write the drama script by themselves through their homes, 34 students (100%) also could use music and background to support their writing by giving the links, there were also 34 students (100%) could feel the collaborations among them because they did discussion together through their WhatsApp group and there were 34 students (100%) could understand and give the elements of drama.

This is supported by Greenawald (2021) stating that creative writing is any form of writing that uses the author’s own style or by combining several writing styles with the aim of conveying the story of a story in a new way so that it makes the reader entertained and surprised.

The innovative processes created by the students for virtual drama performance

They had discussion about the Beowulf story and its characters in the WhatsApp group supervised by the lecturers. Then they got the scene one by one from the lecturers and they started to record in the Canva application. After they recorded in the Canva application, the lecturers and the students discussed together. After all the records had been presented, the lecturers divided the characters based on the total number of the students. In this chance, the students also discussed to decide which characters were suitable for them.
These could be said as the innovative processes because the students had used the recent apps to be applied for their process in performing the virtual drama such as Canva and zoom. Besides, the recording and performing their drama virtually from their home and it was very different when the drama performed on the stage formerly. They could also use the online background and sound by using link. This findings were strengthened by Inderawati (2022) that the students were really creative as well as innovative as they could create drama performed virtually by utilizing zoom platform as the virtual stage and Canva application for the virtual setting.

Meanwhile they divided the characters, the lecturers gave the students limited time to record in Zoom meeting because the video would be combined. There were some students having 2-3 minutes for recording. They had to record based on the characters on the scene so some students could record themselves more than one especially the main characters of the story. They had to record over and over until they got the best video to be presented. The lecturers would tell in their WhatsApp group if their videos were good or not. If they were not good, they had to record again until their videos were better.

It is also supported by Olimov and Mamurova (2021) that the innovative process can be done if the process can manage the changing happened to the process itself. In addition, Silva et al. (2016) divide three main steps of innovation, namely idea of something new, development of something new, and commercialization of something new.

Figure 2, 3, 4, and 5 showed that all the students did their innovative processes by telling the story in their WhatsApp group, recording in Canva application, recording the scenes in zoom meeting, and writing their drama script through their home virtually. These could be said as innovative processes because they had used the recent apps to be applied for their process in performing virtual drama such as Canva and Zoom. Besides that, they did the process of recording and performing virtual drama from their home (online) even they had to recorded over and
over until they got the best scene (video). The background and the sound used through online indicated the process of innovation.

Figure 6. The opening of virtual drama for scene 4

Figure 6 above showed the opening for scene 4 narrated by the students. In this process, the students recorded the scene through zoom together with their pairs. The narrator (one of the students) told that the Grendel always attacked the Hrothgar’s kingdom. In the beginning of the video the students narrated the story accompanied by the sound. Besides that, the student gave the opening background by showing the sky. The sound can be seen in the link from the drama script for scene 4 below.

Figure 7. The drama script for scene 4

Figure 7 showed that the advisor gave the suggestion to the king about the contest for fighting the Grendel. It could be seen that the students did the innovative process when they used another background at the same time and scene. The background was downloaded and changed through an online platform.

Figure 8. The characters were having a conversation in scene 32

Figure 8 showed that the advisor gave the suggestion to the king about the contest for fighting the Grendel. It could be seen that the students did the innovative process when they used another background at the same time and scene. The background was downloaded and changed through an online platform.

Figure 9. The Geats wanted to meet King Hrothgar

Figure 9 showed that the Geats came to visit Hrothgar’s kingdom and the guards asked him what to do. From the picture, it could be seen that the students could use different background, characters and sound at the same time and scene. It is proved that they could do the innovative process very well in performing Beowulf virtual drama.

Figure 10. Beowulf’s dialogue for scene 4

The problem faced by the students in writing drama script

In writing drama script, there were some problems faced by the students for instance, the students got difficult to suit the condition with the story and also the setting because it played virtually, the students were also confused how to connect their scene with the other scenes because they did not meet to each other, the students also needed more vocabularies because there were some new words used to make the dialogue interesting, and the last they needed more time to write because they had to write over and over to get a good scene and related to other scenes to support the Beowulf story. Table 4 shows the percentage of students’ problems in writing drama script as follows.
Table 3. The percentage of students’ problem in writing drama script

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Students’ Problem</th>
<th>Frequency (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Adjusting the drama situation</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>32.35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Connecting the scenes</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>23.53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Lack of vocabulary</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>20.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Lack of time</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>23.53%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 showed that there were eleven students (32.35 %) had difficulties in adjusting the drama situation, eight students (23.53%) had difficulty in connecting the scenes. There were seven students (20.59%) getting difficult in creating some words because of lack of dictionary and there were eight students (23.53%) had more time in writing drama script. These were found when they did creative writing in drama script.

In addition, the observation and documentation data showed that the students had similar problems about writing the drama script. Most of them needed more time to write beside that they needed to imagine the story in order the scene that they made to be more interesting and unique. They also needed to connect between one scene and another and if it did not connect, they had to rewrite so it could be the whole scenes supporting to each other. All of the problems above could be overcome by having discussion among the students and lecturers.

The problem faced by the students to process virtual drama performance

In doing the innovative process of virtual drama performance, there were some problems faced by the students for instance, the students had difficulty to have a good connection in using Zoom and Canva applications, the students were also confused how to edit the videos because they did not meet each other, the students also got difficult to use costumes and light to support their performance, and the last they needed more time to record their scene.

Most of them needed more time to write beside that they needed to imagine the story in order the scene which they made could be more interesting and unique. They also needed to connect between one scene and another and if it did not connect, they had to rewrite so it could be the whole scenes which was supported to each other. All the above problems could be overcome by having discussion among students and lecturers.

Besides, if the area (remote or rural area) does not have enough internet access and it could disrupt the students’ preparation and performance in staging virtual drama. The result of the interview is presented in Figure 11 as follows.

Figure 11. The problem faced by the students to perform virtual drama performance

Figure 11 showed that ten students (29.41%) had bad internet signals when they recorded the scenes because they lived out of the city. Some of them lived in the village which did not have good internet signals. There were fifteen students (44.12%) having lack of editing. Some of them were still new in having a record and an edit by using Canva or Zoom. In addition, there were five students (14.71%) had difficulty to find the costumes to support their performance, and there were four students (11.76%) had difficulty to use appropriate time because they had to repeat the scenes over and over. It could be said that there were fifteen students (44.12%) having problems to process the virtual drama performances but the rest, nineteen students (55.88%) had no problem to process the virtual drama performances.

The lecturers’ role in creative writing

In the interview, the lecturers’ role gave significantly positive for the students when they wrote a drama script. They could write the script well and perfect to support the story and connect between one scene to another. The result of the interview is presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4. The percentage of lecturers’ roles in writing drama script

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Lecturers’ Roles</th>
<th>Frequency (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Giving suggestions about scenes</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>20.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Making students more understanding about writing drama</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>32.35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

907
Karwandi, Rita Inderawati, Didi Suhendi, Margaretha Dinar Sitinjak, Eryansyah, & Sardianto Markos Siahaan

Creative writing and innovative process of Beowulf virtual drama undergraduate students

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. Making students more spirit</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>26.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Making students had new experience in writing drama</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20.59%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 showed that there were seven students (20.59%) felt that the lecturers had important roles to provide them suggestions about the scenes so that they could write the drama script. Based on the scene given, eleven students (32.35%) said that the lecturers made them have more understanding about writing the drama script. There were nine students (26.47%) becoming more excited in writing the drama script and seven students (20.59%) having a new experience in writing the drama script. In other words, the lecturers’ role had important things to support the students in writing the drama script. The interview result is presented in Figure 12 below.

**Figure 12. The lecturers’ roles to perform virtual drama performance**

Figure 12 showed that all the students (100%) felt that the lecturers’ roles had positive influence to process the virtual drama performances. The lecturers could make the students use the recent applications such as Zoom and Canva. On the other hand, the students recorded the scenes spiritedly even they rerecorded to get the best video. Besides that, they understood better how to create the virtual drama performance and felt the relationship among them grew better.

The lecturers’ roles has many functions as a mentor, a mediator, an inspirator, a collaborator, a role model, a teacher plays, and a facilitator (Teacher, 2022). They could write the script well and perfect to support the story and they could connect between one scene to another. The lecturers provided the suggestion not only in their WhatsApp group but also in an online meeting such as Zoom meeting.

Performing drama can make the communication between students and teachers (lecturers) improve and they can interact to each other to give response and feedback (Bsharat, 2021). In line the with the previous information, Karaosmanoglu et al. (2022) finds that online drama is effective if it is done virtually because it gives the students and teachers space to share their ideas and expression in the limitation of the movement in the Covid-19 pandemic although there are some weaknesses found such as the students got difficult to make a circle, fluent interaction and so forth.

**CONCLUSION**

Based on the findings and discussion above, it could be concluded that students could do creative drama script writing due to some factors.

First, they were very excited in learning something new like writing drama script. Writing drama script was rare for them and it was performed virtually. They could understand about the characters, characteristics, plot and setting virtually. The drama script was usually written by one person and team, in this study, all the scenes were written by themselves (one student one scene) from their homes virtually.

Second, they learned the scenes which they got from their lecturers and they discussed each other using their WhatsApp group so they helped and supported to each other. Although they had some problems, by having discussions and lecturers’ roles, all the obstacles could be solved because their lecturers could make their scenes better and more interesting.

Third, all the students did their innovative processes by telling the story in the WhatsApp group, recording in Canva application and recording the scenes in zoom Meeting. These could be said as innovative processes because they used the recent apps to be applied for their process in performing virtual drama such as Canva and Zoom. Besides that, they could use online background and sound to support their performance. So, they had done the process of innovation. Even though the problems appeared such as the students got difficult to have a good connection in using Zoom and Canva applications, they were confused how to edit the videos because they did not meet to each other, they also got difficult to use costumes and light to support their performance, and the last they needed more time to record their scenes. All the
problems could be solved by having discussions among students and lecturers. Finally, the lecturers' roles were significantly effective to make the process of virtual drama performance better.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
This study was funded by the Anggaran DIPA Badan Layanan Umum Universitas Sriwijaya Tahun Anggaran 2022 No. SP DIPA-023.17.2.677515/2022, tanggal 13 Desember 2021 Sesuai dengan SK Rektor Nomor: 0019/UN9/SK.LP2M.PT/2022 Tanggal 15 Juni 2022.

REFERENCES
Inderawati, R. (2011). From classroom to peer comment in Facebook: Bridging learners’ literacy [Paper presentation]. The 4th International Conference ICT for Language Learning, Pixel, Italy.
Karwandi, Rita Inderawati, Didi Suhendi, Margarethta Dinar Sitinjak, Eryansyah, & Sardianto Markos Siahaan

Creative writing and innovative process of Beowulf virtual drama undergraduate students


