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I-RoLE 2023

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF
RESEARCH ON LANGUAGE EDUCATION 2023

**EMBRACING CHANGE:
EMANCIPATING THE LANDSCAPE
OF RESEARCH IN LINGUISTIC,
LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

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Table of Contents

No.	Title	Page Number
1.	Galaxy Tense A+: The Effectiveness of English Tenses Board Game Among Tertiary Students	6
2.	Graphic Design Website: Exploring Market Needs for Services	14
3.	Beyond What Eye Saw	21
4.	Creative Writing: Through Her Eyes - Tales of The Heart	28
5.	Let's Play Phonetic Charades	34
6.	A Visual Novel Game on Social Anxiety	40
7.	Skin Care with Fisha: New Media Content Creation for Basic Skincare Education	48
8.	e-Book of Poem Collections	55
9.	Toodles: Flashcards for Children	61
10.	Digital Flashcards (Tenses)	68
11.	Investigating Students' Concerns on The Development of Masterly!	74
12.	Googly Eyes: A Game to Improve English Usage Among Teenagers	80
13.	Providing Subtitles for Malaysian YouTuber	86
14.	Read and Play: Improving Adolescent's Reading Skills Through Video Games	91
15.	Thoughts by Her Soul Bookmark	99
16.	The Comedy of Errors Simplified: "Egeon's 18Th Reasons Why"	105
17.	Oliver Green: Improving Homonyms Understanding Through Comics	112
18.	PWSP: Phonetic Word Search Puzzle Book	117
19.	Floriography	121
20.	A Preliminary Study on The Young Adult's Perception of Learning English Using the Website: Swifties Read	126
21.	A Place for Poets: An Online Poetry Recitation Series	133
22.	Say It Right with Ya	140
23.	Don't Touch My No-No Square	150
24.	Templatify: An E-Book Collection of Ecards Templates	158
25.	Short Story: Disease Takes Happiness Away	164
26.	Dusted Lines: A Compilation of Self-Written Poems	170
27.	'What's Your Philosophy?' An Edutaining Card Game	177
28.	Be Cool, Not Cruel	185
29.	Grammar Made Fun with TikTok	192
30.	Interactive Journaling as A Mental Health Coping Strategy for Youths	201
31.	Learned – Spoken: Manglish	212
32.	Lost in the Labyrinth of My Mind	218
33.	Translation of Abqorie's Fardhu Ain Module for Smart Tahfiz & Transit Abqorie	225
34.	Poetry for Us: Expressing Feelings Through Creative Writing	231
35.	Lyacomms' Proofreading and Editing Service	238



No.	Title	Page Number
36.	The Effectiveness Of ‘Master the Verbs’ Instagram Flashcards Among Year Six Low Proficiency Level Students	244
37.	My Malay Fables	252
38.	Talking Story: eBooks to Improve Reading Comprehension Skills	259
39.	Exploring Creative Writing as A Tool to Enhance Mental Health	272
40.	Movie Moo	281
41.	English Pitstop	288
42.	Upin Ipin Reding Kit	294
43.	Seventy-Two Beats a Second	301
44.	Knowing Kristang	308
45.	Creatorslation: The Role of Technology in Translation Service	313
46.	Travel Guide as a Medium to Improve English Comprehensiveness	319
47.	Posterlance	328
48.	Crossfunetics	336
49.	The Effectiveness of Board Games to Promote Student Attention and Enjoyment in English Subject	342
50.	The Use of e-Books and Social Media in Introducing Malaysian Folklores Among Children	352
51.	Creepypodcast YouTube Channel	357
52.	Mastermind’: English Board Game	363
53.	한국어 In Melayu!	369
54.	Triple P with Sang Kancil: Pronunciation, Phonetics, and Playbook	376
55.	"So, She Reads" Book Blog	383
56.	Abbyfication: A Grammar-Based Word Game	389
57.	Klick! A Content Writing Service	396
58.	The Love Levanter Podcast	403
59.	Let’s Talk Feelings Podcast	409
60.	Grafixmoon: Poster Designing Service	415
61.	The Circle of Life	422
62.	Hops the Dwarf	430
63.	Malay Corner: Learning Malay Through Discord	435
64.	Movie: This and That	441
65.	Phone the Phonetics: Phonetic Flashcards	449
66.	And What If?	455
67.	Interrupted: Life in A Podcast	458
68.	@Phoneticisfun	463
69.	Culinary and Creative Writing: When Two Worlds Collide	468
70.	Talk in Senses	473
71.	Piano Pleasure Course	480
72.	Step by Step: A Motivational Instagram Account	486
73.	Figurative Language! An Educational Autobiography	492
74.	Of Power, Devotion and Betrayal: A Collection of Malaysian Princesses’ Folklores	499
75.	Tell Me, How’s Everything? An Anthology of Poems to Increase the Understanding of Figurative Language	505



No.	Title	Page Number
76.	Oh, Lendu Youth	513
77.	Living the Hard Life	520
78.	Mirror, Mirror, on the Wall, Who Is the Best of Us All?	528
79.	Beyond the Crowded Space: The Use of Podcast in Improving Psychological Well-Being	535
80.	Samdil: Same Music, Different Language	541
81.	Bejalai: A YouTube Journey	547
82.	Mind Your Language	552
83.	Pop Music Podcast: A Bop or A Flop?	560
84.	Exploring The English Language Teachers' Beliefs And Practices In Implementing CEFR-Aligned Formative Assessment In Malaysian Primary Schools	570
85.	Pencapaian Ucapan Bayi Sejak Lahir Hingga Dua Belas Bulan	575
86.	Mengkaji Makna Bahasa Lukisan Kanak - Kanak Muda Usia 0-3 Tahun	585
87.	Penelitian Terhadap Kesiediaan, Motivasi Dan Faktor Persekitaran Murid Bukan Penutur Natif Terhadap Pembelajaran Dan Pemudahcaraan Karangan Respon Terbuka Di Sekolah Antarabangsa Kuala Lumpur	599
88.	Pengaruh Bahasa Ibunda Dalam Kalangan Murid Bukan Melayu Tahun 5 Semasa Menulis Karangan: Satu Kajian Kes	610
89.	Meningkatkan Penguasaan Penulisan Karangan Naratif Murid Tahun 6 Menggunakan Kit Ikan Karang	619
90.	Pengaruh Dialek Kedah Terhadap Fonetik Dan Leksikal Kata Soal Pelajar Pispmp: Satu Kajian Kes	633
91.	Tahap Pengetahuan Guru Pelatih Mempengaruhi Kekekapan Pelaksanaan Kemahiran Berfikir Aras Tinggi (Kbat) Dalam Pengajaran Dan Pembelajaran Subjek Bahasa Melayu	643



DUSTED LINES: A COMPILATION OF SELF-WRITTEN POEMS

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ABSTRACT:

Poetry is the art of words, where it conveys the beauty and sometimes humour in life (Borges, 2002). It is a great way for young people to find their creativity and expand their vocabulary which helps them with self-expression and language. It is also a great tool to reflect one's passion in life to express their unexplained emotions or experiences (Rolfs, 2021). With the innovations of technology at our finger tips, just about anybody can write and share their original poems through various social media platforms. Thus, the creation of digital poetry e-book, *Dusted Lines* was formed. *Dusted Lines* is seen as an anthology of the author's poetic self-journey in her teenage years to her adulthood where her experiences and thoughts are written alongside creative illustrations in the e-book. Based on a pilot survey, e-books and poetry are still popular among the younger generation. This e-book is purchasable and downloadable by just directly messaging the author through Instagram to receive a downloadable link. After an initial launch of just two weeks, positive reviews were received which shows that poetry reading and writing has the potential to attract a vast number of young readers.

Keywords: poetry, e-book, illustrations, anthology

1. INTRODUCTION

Dusted Lines is an e-book consisting of self-written poetry complemented by graphic illustrations that depict the themes of melancholy and sentimentality. The poems reflect the feelings, emotions and views of a young personage as she undergoes the growing pains and joys of living in the current modern yet hectic life.

From time immemorial, poetry writing has often been used as a form of self-expression. According to Rolfs (2021), the act of poetry writing has always been seen as an effective tool to express one's passion for life or even as a therapeutic strategy to release negative experiences or emotions. Baker (2021) in her research on poetry states that poetry is a way of knowing and being and becoming. She goes on to explain that it is a form of creative expression that helps individuals to better understand their own emotional health and well-being. Therefore, poetry is a tool for individuals to share a truth, an insight, or a feeling that can be especially helpful for young people to address their fears, stress, apprehension, confusion about life or about the world around them.

The title of this e-book "Dusted Lines" was chosen to resonate the concept of old unread books that are left on a bookshelf over a period of time, dusty as if untouched or unread by anyone. Similarly, this e-book is a compilation of the author's own collection of poems that were written over the years to express her own feelings and bottled-up emotions as she progressed through life as a teenager into adulthood. For her, it was like a coping mechanism to address the

stress of an uncertain future as she overcomes the growing pains of life. Thus, it is hoped that through this e-book, she is able to inspire and encourage young people like her to use poetry as an outlet to express or narrate about their own feelings particularly stressful events, the emotions they experienced, and what they thought and did as they face life's challenges. Rolfs (2021) also concurred that poetry writing can be a good form of therapy for people in modern societies where life can be full of mental stress and anxiety.

Overall, the genre found in this collection of poems is non-fiction and it is categorised as local literature. The creation and design of this e-book was inspired by an art gallery located in Jonker Walk, Malacca. The author was attracted to a compilation of paintings illustrated in a sketchbook where each painting was accompanied by a selection of poems. Together, they formed a poetic and artistic description that is mesmerising and impressive. Therefore, this e-book is a form of auto-ethnography narrative that both depicts and reflects the author's life-story as she experienced life as a young adult while growing up in modern society. Alongside each poem, illustrations are designed to personify the themes of the poems and inspire the readers connect and relate to the author's feelings and emotions expressed in each poem.

1.1 Project Objective / Purpose

The overall purpose of this e-book is to inspire and to create awareness that poetry writing or poetry reading is a good form of expression and relaxation for the mind, body, and soul. It is also aimed at sharing a compilation of self-written poems that reflect the author's own feelings, thoughts and emotions in the hope of helping young people like her to cope or address similar life's challenges. It is also hoped that this e-book will encourage readers to read and appreciate literary works particularly young and local writers. Therefore, the objectives of this e-book are:

- a. To create an e-book consisting of inspiring poems of various themes
- b. To compile an anthology of self-written poems to share the author's experiences and emotions as a young person facing life's challenges
- c. To generate interest in poetry writing or poetry reading as a good form of expression for the mind, body, and soul

Regarding the knowledge gained from the years in the diploma course of English for Professional Communication in the Faculty of Language Studies, the writer can display the comprehension of the related subjects that leads to the production of the project. Furthermore, producing this e-book is to encourage readers of young adults to support and appreciate literary works and graphic illustrations by a local writer. According to Bracegirdle (2011) as cited in Lazarus (2021), writing poetry improves one's creativity and acceptance of emotions emerging from areas unknown in life, therapeutically. In return for the support, the writer can credit the subjects of the diploma course, which are New Media Language (ELS105) and Creative Writing (ALS252) and plays a part in the writer's competence.

1.2 Entrepreneurial Opportunities

This project has potential to make entrepreneurial opportunities in the long run since e-books are trending nowadays. According to Davidson (2016), electronic copies are far more popular than printed books as they are easier to update and can be connected to other online sources, be it for recreational or academic sources.

Since e-books are popular nowadays, this e-book should appeal to many young readers today. Should the customers be interested to buy the product promoted via social media platforms such as Instagram, customers will buy the e-book through the link at the profile. The

price of the e-book is affordable as it is only RM10.00. Thus, in the beginning of selling this product the writer expects to sell at least five copies, since it is only a book in digital form. A way to expand the product further is by using Instagram posts to promote its content frequently. Through Instagram's story feature, it can also help increase publicity alongside Instagram highlights as it can help users seek information regarding the e-book itself.

2. METHODOLOGY

Several steps were undertaken to create, publish and publicise this e-book. The steps done to create the e-book are mentioned below:

1. Gauge readers interest in e-books and poetry
2. Collect and compile all the poems that were composed by the writer.
3. Create an e-book cover template.
4. Design the background to suit the theme of the e-book.
5. Publish the e-book.
6. Post on social media to create publicity and to allow previews of the cover page and introduction page will be viewed to create interest to the public.
7. Allow readers to directly message the author on Instagram if they are interested in buying the e-book.
8. Provide details of payment and upon payment, the readers will be given a link to download the e-book.
9. Obtain reviews and feedback of *Dusted Lines*

At the outset, an online survey was carried to gauge young readers' interest in reading or writing poems. The survey questionnaire in the form of a google form was administered to 30 respondents whose ages ranged between 18 and 21 years old. Apart from the respondents' demographic information such as age and gender, the survey comprised questions to source information about their interest in poetry and the types of genres the respondents would like to see in an e-book. This was deemed necessary to gauge young readers interest in an e-book of poems as well to test its potential for entrepreneurial opportunities in the future.

The next step involved the compilation and re-drafting of the author's collection of self-written poems to form an anthology. Then, preparations were done to create and design the e-book template, the cover page as well as the background illustrations to complement the poems. As illustrated in the Gantt Chart (see Figure 1), the process began by choosing a book cover template for the e-book through Canva. After choosing a suitable template and doing several changes, the writer started adding in my poems into the pages of the Canva template. In addition, the writer added some of their own illustrations in some pages to make the e-book more appealing to readers.

Finally, the e-book was ready to be published and posted on social media particularly on the Instagram platform. Over the next two weeks, reviews from interested readers were obtained and collated.

2.1.Gantt Chart

Figure 1 is the Gantt chart of the entire semester spent to complete the E-book using *Canva*. It took about 10 weeks to complete the process of the e-book. However, the most difficult process of the e-book was the illustrations and drafting the poems for the e-book.

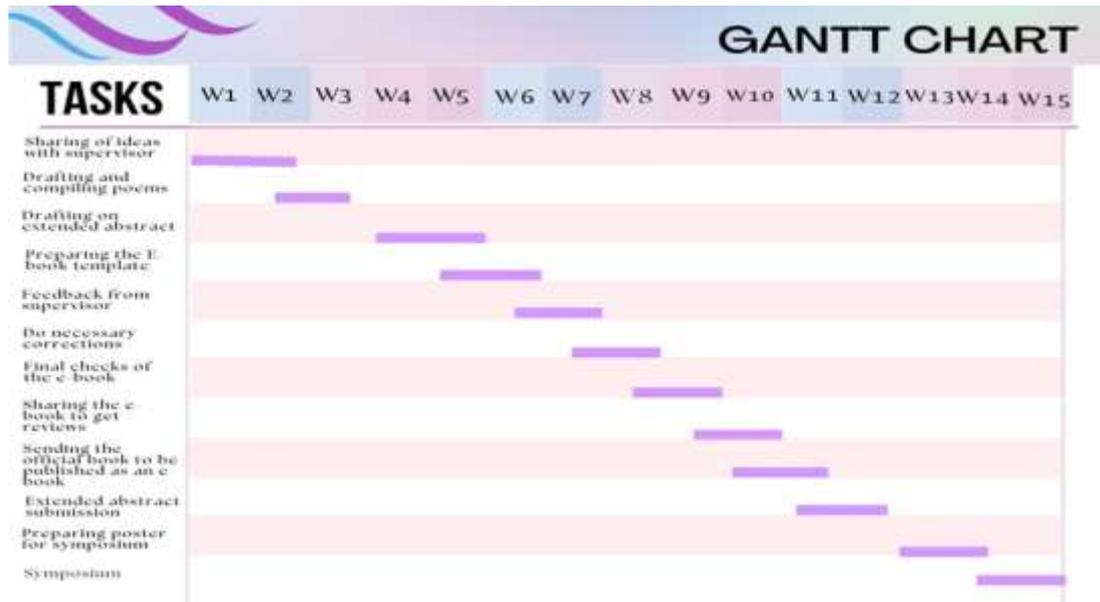


Figure 1: Gantt Chart of the process planning of the project

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Survey on readers interest about e-books and poems

Below are the results from the survey that was conducted at the outset of the project in phase 1. The aim was to gauge young readers interest in an e-book of poems. The results also helped the author understand the potential for entrepreneurial opportunities for publishing the e-book.

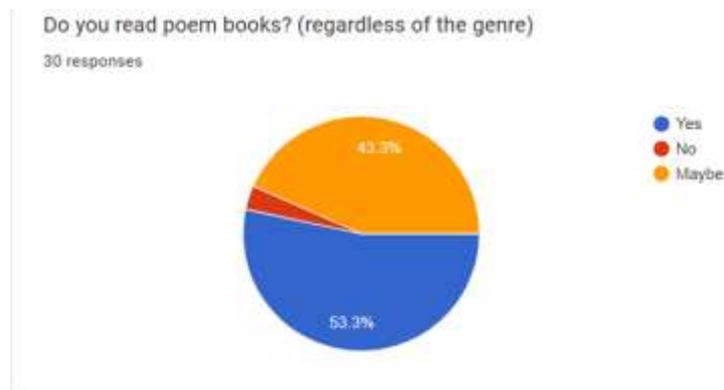


Figure 2: Pie chart of respondents' responses

According to the pie chart, 53.3% of respondents answered that they read poem books, while 43.3% of respondents answered that they are unsure, and the remaining respondents do not read poem books.

Do you enjoy reading poems from various writers?

30 responses

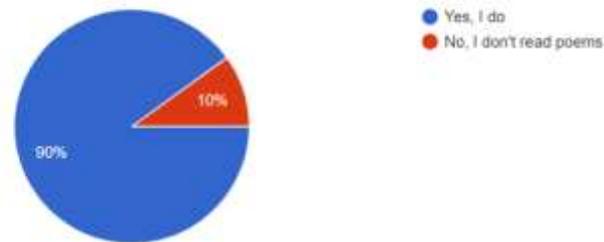


Figure 3: Pie chart of respondents' responses

According to the pie chart in Figure 3, 90% responded that they enjoy reading poems from various writers, while only 10% of respondents responded that they do not.

What other kinds/genres of poems would you like to see?

30 responses



Figure 4: List of poem theme suggestions from respondents

Overall, the results show that an e-book on poetry still appeals to young respondents. Many responded that they enjoy reading various genres of poems depicting a variety of themes such as poems about romance and love and happiness, life's challenges and motivation. This implies that there is a potential market for e-books that interest young readers even in this modern era. Thus, this has motivated the author's concept to create an e-book showcasing an anthology of her poems written over the years. For her, it is time to shake off the dust and share her feelings, thoughts and emotions to the words in an e-books aptly named "Dusted Lines".

3.2 Readers' reviews about the e-book "Dusted Lines"

Dusted Lines was released publicly on Instagram on 30th December 2022 to gain publicity on social media. Readers who were interested have directly messaged the author upon which they would receive a PDF file of the e-book itself. Positive reviews were given on the quality and creativity of the e-book itself. Below are several screenshots of reviews and feedback from readers who have purchased the e-book.

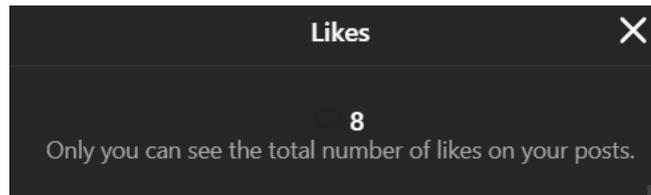


Figure 5: The number of likes of an Instagram posts when the e-book was officially released

The number of likes on the Instagram post shows the interest and support for the e-book's official release to the public.

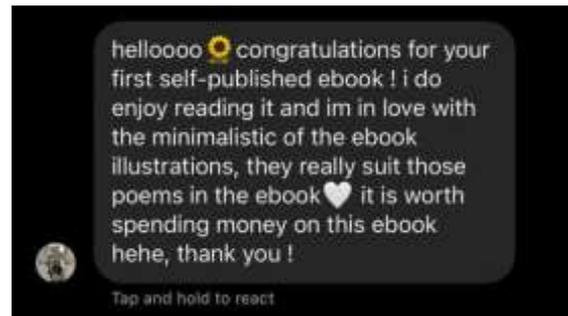


Figure 6: Feedback on the e-book based on the illustrations.

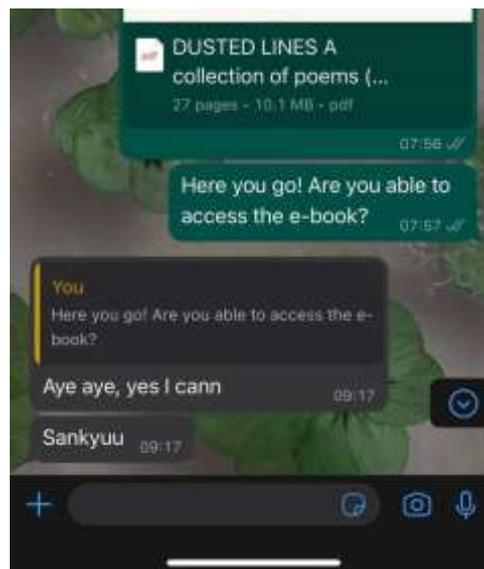


Figure 7: Feedback based on the accessibility of the e-book after purchasing it.



Figure 8: Feedback on the e-book based on the interest of the poems.

Based on the feedback given from readers who have purchased the e-book, they are impressed at how the illustrations complimented each poem in the e-book, which personified the feelings and emotions reflected in the poems. They also found the poems inspiring as they find the themes touching and relatable.

4. PROJECT LIMITATIONS

For this project, it is limited to be published publicly to worldwide e-book sites as it is only an internal project. Furthermore, the e-book only has 10 poems and plans are in the pipeline to expand the e-book for entrepreneurial opportunities.

5. CONCLUSION

Overall, the e-book received positive feedback from the pre-release and the official release of the e-book to the public. The project goals and objectives were met and delivered to readers who purchased and read the e-book. The project was deeply inspired by a small art gallery in Jonker Walk, Malacca. Essentially, the e-book is to reach out to those who are also going through life's trials and experiences as written in the anthology of poems.

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