

Conference e-Proceedings

eISBN 978-967-2072-43-0

Physical & Online



I-RoLE 2023

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF
RESEARCH ON LANGUAGE EDUCATION 2023

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

13 - 14 MARCH 2023

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Conference e-Proceedings
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e ISBN 978-967-2072-43-0



Publisher:
Zes Rokman Resources (2131022-P)
Bandar Baru Bangi, Selangor Darul Ehsan



Conference e-Proceedings
International Conference of Research on Language Education 2023
 e-ISBN: 978-967-2072-43-0

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SEVENTY-TWO BEATS A SECOND

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ABSTRACT:

Poetry is known by many for its creative construction of ideas written in stylistic sentences with meaning for readers to infer. Initially this project intended to share written poems, with the theme of universal love, on social media but was later developed to achieve the following objectives; to publish a collection of poems on TikTok, to publish a book of poems based on posts from TikTok, and to determine viewers' perceptions of the posted poetry. The project went through 4 phases which are TikTok account creation and poem posting, poetry book publication, questionnaire development and administration, and TikTok analysis. All objectives were achieved by which a collection of poems was successfully posted on TikTok and a poetry book entitled "Seventy Two Beats A Second" was published. The survey results show that people do enjoy reading and writing poetry however they do not share their poems but are interested in what others have written stating that they are interested to buy a physical book of the poems posted on TikTok. The project hopes that aspiring poets would find the confidence in themselves to publish their poems as well as to serve as evidence that writing and sharing poems can be a successful career or at least serve as a path to express one's feeling and emotion.

Keywords: TikTok, poetry, creative writing

1. INTRODUCTION

Poetry, like other forms of literature, is written to express ideas, let out emotions, and create imagery. Poets select words based on their meaning and acoustics, then arrange them to create a meter based on how they want others to read it (Masterclass, 2022). Poetry writing can be seen through many mediums now however in the past the only medium for one to publish is through book publication. This project revolves around poetry where poems are created and shared through social media and finally published as a book of poems.

1.1 Statement of problem

People do write poems however many are apprehensive to share their creation citing reasons such as not having the courage and confidence to do so or simply because they think that their work is not good enough to be shared. In addition, before social media became a hype, sharing one's creative work publicly is limited to publishing physical books. Nonetheless, most poems shared on social media such as Instagram are dominated by western contributors thus, inspiring young writers feel intimidated to join the community. Based on these observation, this project was embarked on.



1.2. Project objective

The objectives of the project are:

1. To publish a collection of poems on TikTok
2. To publish a book of poems based on posts from TikTok
3. To determine viewer's perception of the posted poetry

2. METHODOLOGY

The project contains 4 phases which are TikTok account creation, poetry book publication, questionnaire development and administration, and TikTok analysis as shown in Figure 1.

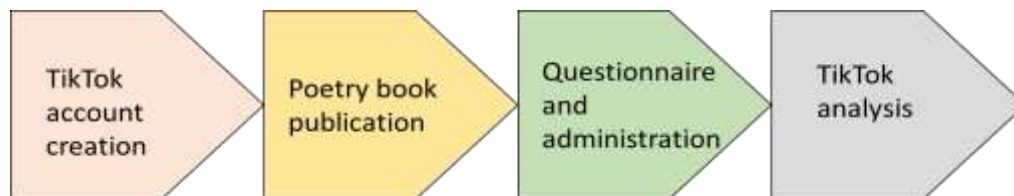


Figure 1: The project's 4 phases

2.1 TikTok Account Creation

The first phase of this project was to create a TikTok account with the username @Toby July. The posting ran for 6 weeks with one poem posted everyday. A total of 26 poems were posted with the theme of universal love. The theme was chosen because it is relatable to others since love is a shared emotion by everyone. To explain the process, it reflects what Markham, (2020) described : to find the right words is to describe an indescribable sensation, to reconcile the words in your head with the emotions in your heart is a struggle.

2.2 Poetry Book Publication

The next phase was to draft a book consisting of the poems posted on TikTok and some additional poems, a total of 37 poems were written. Then the International Standard Book Number (ISBN) from Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia (PNM) was applied. The process to apply for an ISBN was to have a front cover page, book title, synopsis, and index page. The ISBN number was obtained on 10th January 2023 through the website and the number given was 978-629-97790-0-1.

2.3 Questionnaire Development and Administration

A simple questionnaire was developed and administered on a random 47 respondents among the audience on the TikTok account. The respondents were asked if they write poems, share their poems, the reason for the previous question, interest to read other poets, expectations of poetry written by others, interest in purchasing a physical poetry book, preference of book type, preference of social media platform, and preference for the poem to be recited.

The questions were asked in the forms of Yes/No questions, open-ended questions, and multiple-choice questions. The questionnaire was distributed through a google form link on the TikTok account and results were recorded. The responses were analysed quantitatively and presented using the descriptive statistic in percentage.

2.4 TikTok Analysis

The final phase is to obtain the video analysis from TikTok. TikTok provides an algorithm for each video posted which includes total views, likes, comments, shares, and saves. TikTok was chosen for the project as it is an application that are now trending and thus can reach more people (Maria, 2022).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This project has achieved all the objectives and they are described in the following section.

3.1 TikTok account creation and poems posting

A TikTok account for this project was successfully created as shown in figure 2:

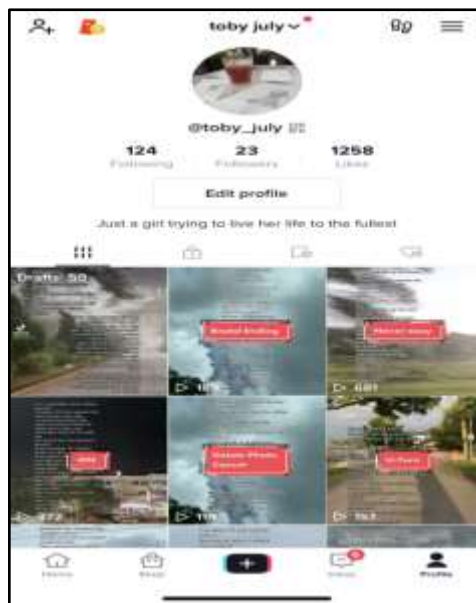


Figure 2: TikTok account @toby_july

3.2 The poetry book: Seventy Two Beats A Second

“Seventy Two Beats A Second” represents the theme of the book poem, universal love. This title was chosen because a good human heart rate beats 72 times (MedicineNet, 2022). The cover is a picture of the human heart with a steady heartbeat representing the title (refer to Figure 3). The book consists of 37 poems from TikTok and the addition of non-posted poems.

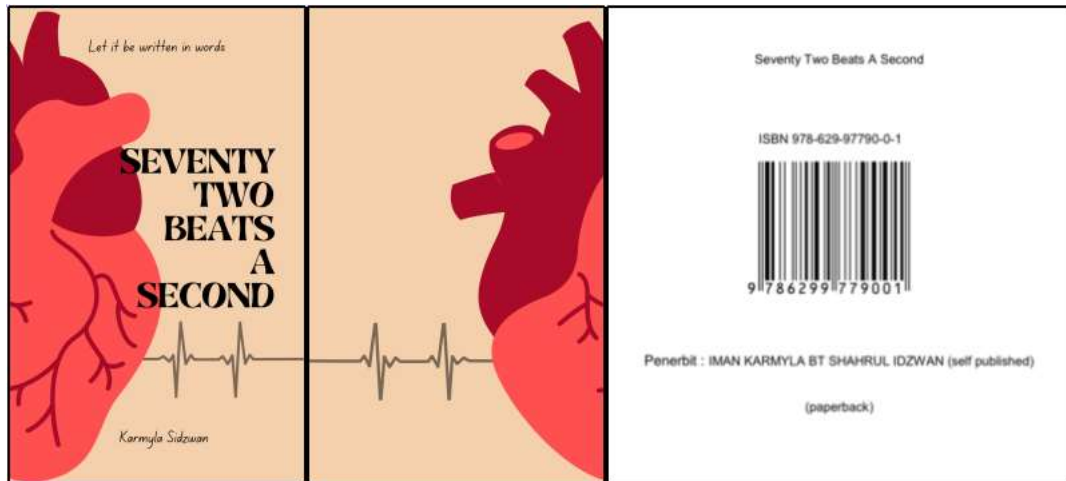


Figure 3: Front and back cover page and the ISBN number

3.3 Results of the survey

Table 1 shows the result from the questionnaire. Based on the results, it is proven that people are interested in poetry whether it is to write, share or read them. Interesting to note from the results the respondents do write (61.7%), however, 63.8% do not share their works citing that they feel their work is not good enough (31.9%) and too shy to share their work with others (21.3%).

The results also show that the respondents definitely interested to read poems posted on social media (91.5%) and they want to infer and understand the meaning behind the poem written (91.5%). 85.1% agree to purchase a book of poems and prefer it to be in the form of a printed book (78.7%). Many stated they preferred the poems to be shared through Instagram over TikTok which actually was not or this project. Lastly, 83% want the writer to recite the poems on TikTok.

NO	QUESTION	ANSWER	PERCENTAGE
1	Have you ever written a poem	Yes No	61.7% 38.3%
2	Have you shared your poem	Yes No	36.2% 63.8%
3	Please state your reason	Feel as if not good enough To shy to share To get feedback from others To spread awareness Others	31.9% 21.3% 14.9% 10.6% 21.3%
4	If someone shared their poetry on social media, would you be interested	Yes No	91.5% 8.5%
5	When you read poetry, what are you looking for?	Meaning of the poem Literary devices Others	91.5% 8% 0.5%
6	If the collection of poems posted on TikTok is turned into a book, would you purchase it?	Yes No	85.1% 14.9%

7	If you plan to purchase it, in what form would you prefer?	Printed books eBook	78.7% 21.3%
8	If I were to share my poems, which platform would you prefer?	Instagram TikTok Others	55.3% 38.3% 6.4%
9	Do you want me to recite the poems if posted?	Yes No	83% 17%

Table 1: Questionnaire results

3.4 Analysis of TikTok posts

For every video posted on TikTok, there would be an analysis produced by TikTok which are likes, viewers, gender, and region. Based on the algorithm from TikTok the video did better if posted in the morning between 9 am to 10 am as that was the recommended time by *tiktoker*, @themelissalaurie. A total of one post every day was made, in the duration of 6 weeks with a total of 27 poems posted. Figure 4 show the algorithm of the TikTok videos.

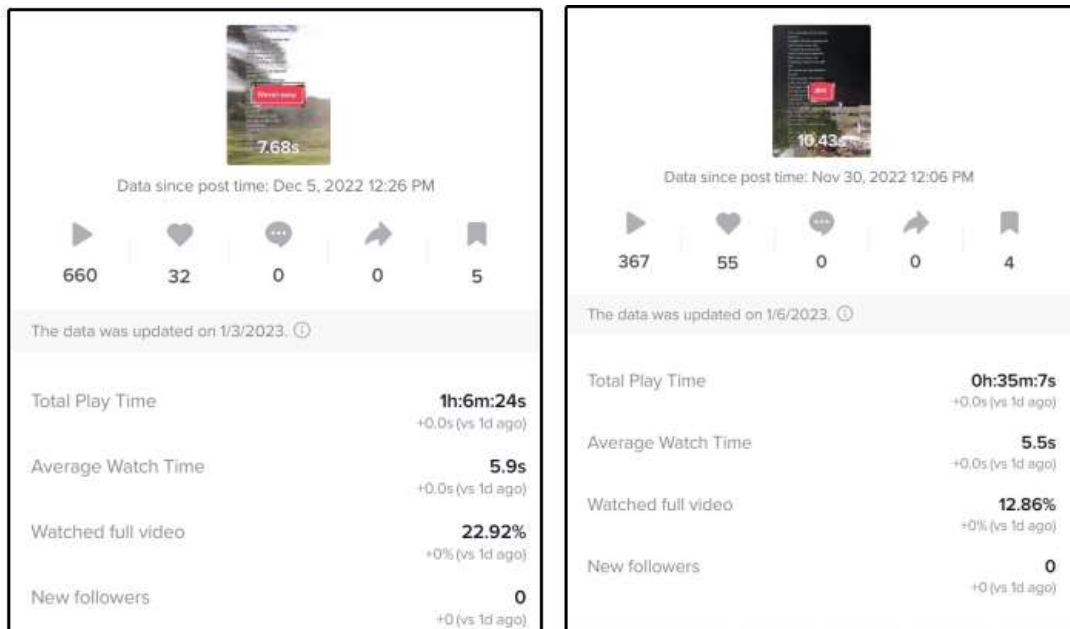


Figure 4: Algorithm of the TikTok video

The views for each video were roughly between 300 - 600 viewers. 95% of views were from Malaysia and the rest were from a mixture of different countries. The likes per video received between 30 - 50 likes. At the beginning of this project, there were 5 followers and this increased to a total of 23 followers at the time this report was written.

3.5 Entrepreneurial opportunities

TikTok is known to be the best method for authors to connect and grow their relationships with their readers (Hamilton, 2022). It opens up opportunities for aspiring poets to commercialise their work, and this can be seen through the response that the respondents would buy the book when the collection of poems was published. Next, the opportunity for financial growth through TikTok is huge as it is the most downloaded social media application (Roberts,

2021). Besides that, through this project, one is creating opportunities for others. It will give encouragement to other poets to try this method out, and explore it themselves.

Although it was hard at first, consistency and dedication ensured success. There will be people who like and will value your poems. A venture into this project has been proven successful through the publication of the book, which informs the value of the work produced. The book is priced at RM25.

4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion this project has achieved its objective to publish a collection of poems on TikTok, publish a book of poems based on posts on TikTok, and determine viewers' perceptions of the posted poetry. Based on the results it can be proven that this project is beneficial for people who are interested in poems. However, there are limitations to this project, where it would have been good if the poems published were sent out to be checked for quality. Doing so will help improve the quality of the book of poems published.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Reaching the final stage of the chapter where a journey was created leaving trails of bitter-sweet memories behind. On a final note writing a book of poems is an experience of a lifetime that I never would have imagined thinking about. 10 year old me would be laughing if she knew 21-year-old me wrote poems as I once said “who even writes poems nowadays?” The outcome of this project has exceeded my expectations from writing poems on a piece of paper to having it published through TikTok and being read and liked by many. Not forgetting it to be turned into a book that was self-published. The road was not a smooth journey with nights of writing to figure out how to make it worthwhile for others and finding a method to publish it into a book. A journey of dreams is never complete without supporters from the other side. Thank you to my supervisor, Madam Sumarni who was the first person to say “start small but go for it” and who was there since the beginning To my friends who have been there since we became petals from another mother, never stopped giving me ideas and proofreading my poems, you’re one in a million. Finally, to my family who knows I love reading and writing from the beginning, this one is filled with your love, it was impossible to write without it.

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