

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**

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e ISBN 978-967-2072-43-0



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



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International Conference of Research on Language Education 2023
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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.

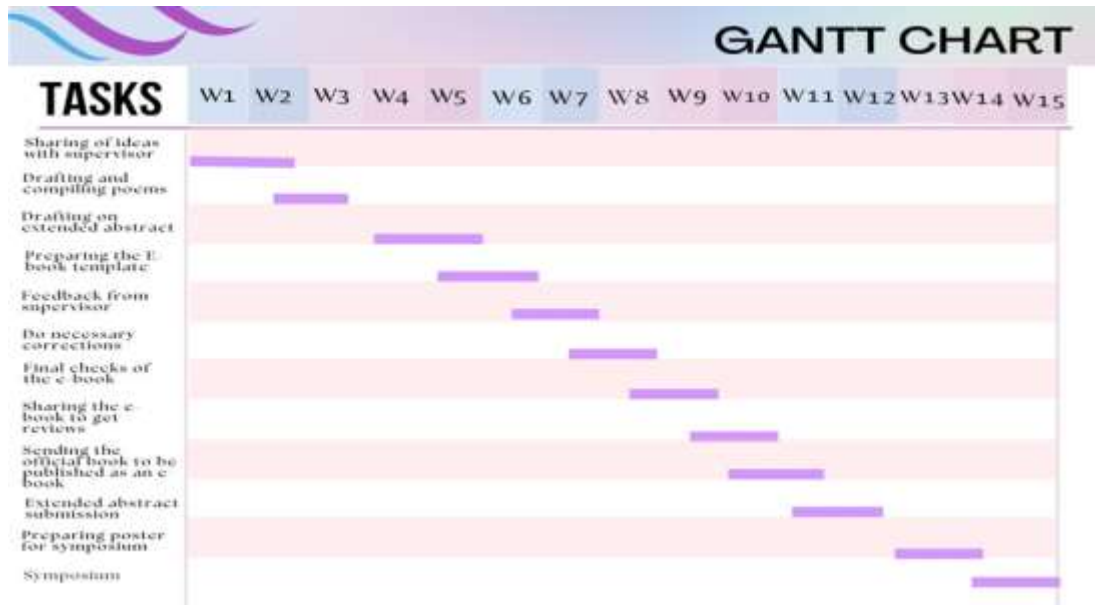


Figure 1: Gantt Chart of the process planning of the project

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.

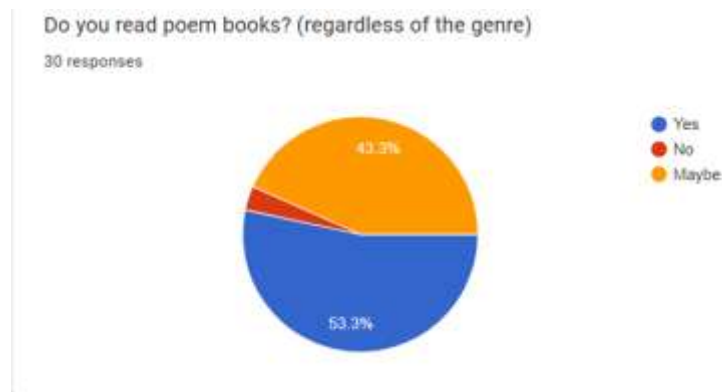


Figure 2: Pie chart of respondents' responses

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

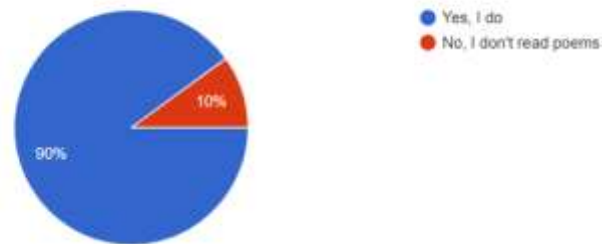


Figure 3: Pie chart of respondents' responses

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.

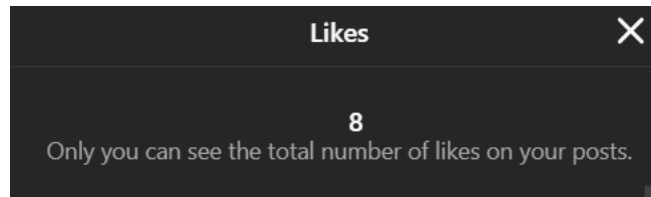


Figure 5: The number of likes of an Instagram posts when the e-book was officially released

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

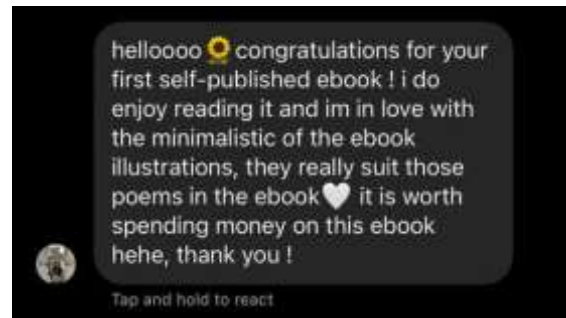


Figure 6: Feedback on the e-book based on the illustrations.

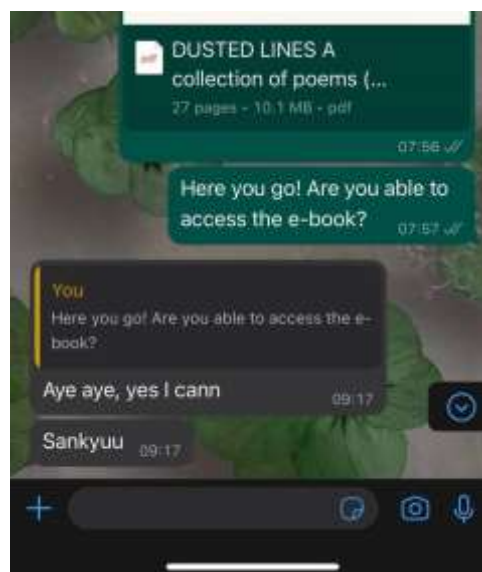


Figure 7: Feedback based on the accessibility of the e-book after purchasing it.



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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