

Implementation of Selected Theories for the Research of *Pantun* in Malay Language Education

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Abstract

Pantun is one of Malay oldest literary poems. *Pantun* was studied from various perspectives, including linguistic and semantic fields using qualitative text analysis. However, the number of *pantun* research in Malay language education with other approaches is still limited. Thus, Social Constructivist Theory and Malay Poetic Theory are discussed in this concept paper as two selected theories that can be used to study *pantun* in Malay language education. As a suggestion, a researcher can apply these theories through the Design and Development Research (DDR) approach to create models, modules, guidelines, frameworks, instruments, and product innovation for *pantun* in Malay language education.

Keywords

Social Constructivist Theory, *Puitika Sastera Melayu*, Design and Development Research (DDR), *Pantun*, Malay Language Education

1. Introduction

Pantun (pronounced puhn-tone) is a traditional Malay poem composed of wonderful *pembayang* and *maksud* written in four lines as a stanza (Winstedt & Wilkinson, 1961). The first two lines, called *pembayang*, which contain elements of nature and human life, serve as a hint. The meaning is in the final two lines called *maksud*, which depict the advice, satires, jokes, or messages to be communicated to the public. The aesthetic of *pantun* as one of the oldest conventional poems in Malay history (Piah, 1989; Keating, 2020; Sew, 2018; Za'ba, 1965), reflects the subtlety of the intellect of the Malay community when manifesting with nature and culture around. This concept paper was introduced because the sustainability of *pantun* was successfully recognized on December 17th, 2020, in the listing of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by the United Nations of Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in France (Bernama, 2020). A huge recognition of *pantun* has proven that all parties should strengthen *pantun* messenger in preserving *pantun* from time to time for the younger generation. Therefore, one of the most crucial fields responsible for preserving *pantun* among the younger generation is education. *Pantun* was previously used to educate children in informal education. Moral values can be smoothly instilled in children through *pantun*, resulting in well-behaved children who adhere to Malaysian society norms (Zakaria et al., 2017).

Malaysia's Malay language curriculum has undergone various transformations from the past to the present, as evidenced by the Primary School Standard Curriculum (MOE, 2016). Even as the curriculum evolves to reflect this, the advantage of *pantun* remains complementary in the Malay language of primary school as a medium of appreciation of language aesthetic in the formation of the younger generation's skills.

Problem Statement

Because *pantun* requires extensive vocabulary control, teachers must be creative in relating prior knowledge to this traditional poem as Malay identity (Mohamed et al., 2020). However, according to Hamzah et al. (2019), teachers were forced to teach *pantun* according to their wisdom. Also, student's prior knowledge is less frequently used in class (Purwo, 2019). This problem caused university students did not fully master *pantun* (Tohar, Halim, & Samsu, 2017). Mahamod and Bahari (2017) added that several public university students have the slightest understanding, appreciation, and practice of Malay identity. Therefore, this problem must be solved by diversifying *pantun* research in education.

It is necessary to expand the study of *pantun* in education to include the development of new products that can positively impact education to ensure the long-term viability of *pantun*. The situation of the former researches shows that previous studies on the *pantun* in Malaysia have focused on qualitative text analysis of linguistics in *pantun* (Karim & Alizuddin, 2016) and semantics in *pantun* (Ishak, 2018; Ghani & Mohamed, 2020). Besides that, other studies of *pantun* also find the moral value in *pantun* (Juki, 2018; Abd Majid, 2017; Zakaria, 2015), patriotism values in *pantun* (Ahmad & Radzi, 2021), and high-level thinking in *pantun* (Osup & Taisin, 2019; Sudirman & Hamid, 2016; Zakaria et al., 2019). Based on the listed studies, fewer studies produce new products on *pantun* in education. Therefore, it is time to broaden and intensify educational research to preserve the tradition for the benefit of the next generation.

In general, we know that the world of research evolves. Many researchers are now adopting a new approach to research, such as design and development research (DDR) (Richey & Klein, 2007). This situation demonstrates that the world of research is dynamic and requires practitioners to change. DDR is one of the design approaches that conceptualizes problem-solving solutions in the research (Jamil & Noh, 2020). The key is distinguished by the final production of research products suitable for education, such as models, modules, instruments, frameworks, guidelines, and innovation products (Siraj, Abdullah, & Rozkee, 2020). These findings can be used by educators, curriculum developers, and stakeholders to improve the pantun in Malay language education.

DDR as a chosen approach in a study is desirable because it belongs to the pragmatism philosophy, which tests theory and confirms field practicability (Sahrir, Alias, & Ismail, 2012). As a result, to ensure that the new product is on the right track, the researchers must select the appropriate theory to underpin the study (Noh, 2020). The teaching and learning aspect in Social Constructivist Theory and the features of *pantun* such as *maksud*, *pembayang*, the relationship between *pembayang* and *maksud*, rhyme, syllable, and *pantun* recitation in Malay Poetic Theory are seen as appropriate for creating the new outcome for the sustainability of *pantun* in education. This situation demonstrates that the world of research is dynamic and requires practitioners to change.

2. Social Constructivist Theory (1978)

Constructivist is defined as knowledge built on real-world experience linked to new information so that the combination of both produces an understanding of one's mind (Gheisari & Jamali, 2014). Dixon-Krauss (1996) first stated that constructs occurred when students could connect new information to prior knowledge. Bruner (1966) also emphasizes that active learning occurs when students construct new knowledge based on current and previous knowledge.

However, constructivists are not a linear learning process in classrooms because teaching and learning are closely related to the individuals surrounding them (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). Teachers should plan the link between existing knowledge and new information using teaching patterns that consider the zone proximal developmental (ZPD) space, a branch of Social Constructivist Theory (1978).

2.1. Zone Proximal Development

Vygotsky (1984) emphasizes interaction as a critical factor in developing children's learning. External factors that cause children to learn something are referred to as interaction (Wood, 1988). ZPD also implies that the intellectual potential in children's minds is derived from interactions with adults or their peers. According to Ismail and Sim (2016), this social interaction process makes humans transform mental functions from time to time based on their potential. Furthermore, Vygotsky insists on a ZPD in this situation, a zone between information owned by children and information they will earn through guidance.

According to Figure 1, children in the top zone cannot learn new information

because they believe the learning process is challenging to implement despite being guided (Malik, 2017; Azizan & Hussin, 2017). The second zone is a ZPD that shapes the potential of children's abilities through the guidance of adults or friends. To maximize ZPD, teachers must plan active activities that are student-centered and fun uses of learning aids while taking into students' prior knowledge (Clapper, 2015; Malik, 2017; Shaaruddin & Mohamad, 2017). An active activity will maximize the students' ability to master the topic of a teacher-led lesson. The scaffolding process will be used for the ZPD-based guidance against the student.

2.2. Scaffolding

Wood, Bruner and Ros (1976) define scaffolding as an adult's role in guiding the one that initially exceed the child's ability, allowing children to concentrate and solve the problem based on their abilities. Van de Pol, Volman and Beishuizen (2010), Malik (2017) discovered this dynamic process involves three principles: 1) contingency, 2) fading (fading), and 3) responsibility (responsibility). Figure 2 illustrates these three principles.

Based on **Figure 2**, the contingency necessitates teacher planning to adapt the student's prior knowledge. This concept is intended to prevent students' ability to cause unintended consequences from being misinterpreted. Previous scholars made suggestions such as teacher's observation (Garza, 2009), formative assessment (Shepard, 2005), and a diagnostic test (Palinscar & Brown, 1984) to identify student development records before planning to teach.

Thus, the arrow at the top of **Figure 2** also refers to the second principle of gradually fading the teacher's scaffolding. According to Van de Pol et al. (2010), the scaffolding rate is determined by the student's level of development and mastery. Consequently, teachers' roles in providing guidance change over time, depending on student mastery of the lesson's contents.

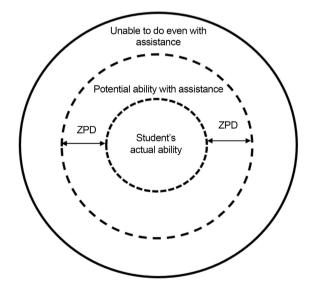


Figure 1. A visual summary of ZPD (Malik, 2017).

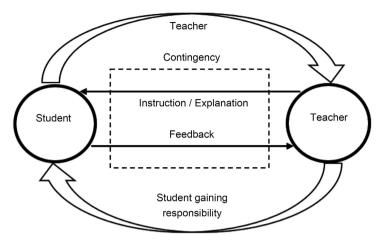


Figure 2. A visual summary of scaffolding (Malik, 2017).

When the teacher's role is fading in **Figure 2**, it refers to the third principle of responsibility, depicted with arrows at the bottom of the figure. As teachers' roles deteriorate, students gradually take over responsibility for mastering the contents of learning (Malik, 2017). As a result, once students began to understand and master the lesson's content, they took responsibility for applying or conceptualizing new information in their unique way.

It can be concluded that the role of teachers in Social Constructivist Theory (1978) is broad enough to embrace teaching and learning *pantun*, which can stimulate students' existing knowledge through active activities. Social interactions among teachers, students, and peers allow students to share their knowledge and improve their mastery of new information, particularly in the field of *pantun*.

3. Malay Poetic Theory (1989)

Malay Poetic Theory is so close to the Malay world that it is based on aesthetics as the primary source of inspiration for creating *pantun*. Thus, one of these theoretical components corresponds to the aesthetic characteristic of the *Yang Indah-Indah* to express the beauty of the *pantun*. Ismail (2019) emphasized that this theory is synonymous with *pantun* because the conceptual beauty of *pantun* in the *Yang Indah-Indah* is detailed with six features that are so close to *pantun* such as 1) *Dunia Luas yang Dipadatkan*, 2) *Kiasan dan Saranan*, 3) *Dunia Berjodoh*, 4) *Muzik Seiring Kata*, 5) *Sama Ukuran*, 6) *Sesuai dan Patut*. That is why Hussain (2016) and Romtie, Amat and Samad (2019) chose this theory as the basis for their pantun research.

3.1. Dunia Luas Yang Dipadatkan

To illustrate the message of *pantun*, the descriptions of the world are condensed into a small idea with a few lines and words. To convey meaning, one stanza of *pantun* has a theme such as advice, satires, or jokes to describe the world. For example, in the Malay language primary school textbook (MOE, 2019), *Pantun* 1

encourages readers to think first, use their intellect, and not be influenced by their emotions before buying something.

Di bawah jeti airnya surut, Biduk berlalu berselang-seli, Hajat di hati usah diturut, Fikirlah dahulu sebelum membeli. Under the water jetty, The canoe passed alternately; Don't always follow your heart, Think before buying.

(1)

3.2. Kiasan Dan Saranan

Pantun is well known for its sophisticated ability to create meaning in front of the reader's eyes (Salleh, 2000). Although some words and verses are direct, the aesthetic of *pantun* is played figuratively to force readers to describe the message of *pantun* with their eyes. Furthermore, Za'ba (1965) acknowledged this, insisting that *pantun* can be seen from the hint in the first and second lines that describes the meaning of *pantun*'s third and fourth lines. The hint is contained in a *pembayang* wrapped with natural elements. For example, the first and second lines of *Pantun* 2 from Winstedt and Wilkinson's (1961) collection were linked to the expected paddy, but the paddy land was replaced by pineapple. When creating a metaphor with third and fourth lines, this *pantun* shows the attitude of someone who prefers gold over one's noble traits.

Puas sudah kutanam padi,Nanas juga ditanam orang;Puas sudah kutanam budi,Emas juga dipandang orang.Satisfied already, I plant paddy,People also cultivate pineapple;Satisfied I have helped people,People also seek gold.(2)

3.3. Dunia Berjodoh

The creation of *pantun* was based on the harmony of the two natures. There are two types of nature: the realm and human nature. Both characters are complementary cleavages that must be merged in the structure of *pantun* for the two to be cross-referenced. The first and second lines of this *pantun* have a close relationship with the third and fourth lines in terms of symbols and metaphors. This one-of-a-kind relationship exemplifies the aesthetic of *pantun* (Hassan, 2020). The stanza of *Pantun 3* in Salleh (2000), for example, has a couplet of *pembayang* depicting a White-breasted Waterhen bird preparing the wings to fly, which means getting ready to move. He makes a loyal person feel sad with his departure in the third and fourth lines.

(3)

Ruak-ruak di Pasir Tuntung, Berkurai-kurai bulu dadanya; Abang bertolak beradu untung, Jatuh berderai air matanya. White-breasted Waterhen at Pasir Tuntung, Decrease in his chest hair; My lover departs for profit, Fell off her tears.

3.4. Muzik Seiring Kata

The final rhyme at the end of *pantun* line does not have to be the same as the letters with the correct syllable, but the sound of rhyme should take precedence (Za'ba, 1965). Hassan (2012) supports this statement, who does not require the same syllable in the final rows of *pantun*. Many *pantuns* in ancient times did not precisely equalize the rulers of the end with the same syllable. Pantun 5 shows that *tai* on the first line does not correspond precisely to the *kai* syllable on the third line. The *kai* syllable is used to represent the sound of the mention. The same thing happens in the second and fourth lines.

However, even in the *Pantun* Competition, the teaching of *pantun* emphasizes the element of the end rhyme being equal to the words exactly. The *Pantun* Competition's judicial scoring judge will award the highest scores if participants create a *pantun* with the same syllable at the end (MOE, 2013). Nonetheless, Hassan (2020) has insisted that finding the best is a difficult task in the competition. As a result, it is sufficient if the people can create a *pantun* with the same syllable as the *pantun*'s rhyme. However, equating the sounds only when teaching *pantun* rhyme, especially for primary school students, is not incorrect because *pantun* recited verbally by ancient societies prioritizes sound over the word (Salleh, 2016).

3.5. Sama Ukuran

Balance is a critical component to produce a high-quality *pantun*. The number of syllable balances the stanza when the poet recites *pantun*. However, Salleh (2000) does not deny that the public agrees with the sum of eight to twelve syllables in each *pantun* line. However, he does believe that *pantun* should be balanced between eight and ten syllables to make it easier for the poet to recite *pantun*. His claim was supported by Za'ba (1965), Aminurashid (1968), and Hassan (2020), who all defined the perfect *pantun* as having a syllables balance of no more than ten. For example, *Pantun* 4 in Piah (2001) has nine syllables balance in each line. As a result, it appears parallel and matches to reciting when

reading it. This is referred to as a "balance."

Pu-lau-Pan-dan-ja-uh-ke-te-ngah, = 9 syllablesGu-nung-Da-ik-ber-ca-bang-ti-ga; = 9 syllablesHan-cur-ba-dan-di-kan-dung-ta-nah, = 9 syllablesBu-di-yang-ba-ik-di-ke-nang-juga. = 9 syllables(5)

3.6. Sesuai Dan Patut

The appropriate reciting *pantun* should be in the right place and prioritized in the creation of *pantun*. *Pantun* is an oral poem once used to communicate in the Malay community (Ming, 2010). *Pantun* is used to present the figurative, sarcasm, satire, and jokes correctly. All poets can use various forms of rhythm, but when reciting *pantun*, style and performance should not be overdone to the point where it sounds rough and out of tune with the *pantun*. According to Hussain (2018), when a poet recites *pantun* in front of everyone, the movement can impress the audience's hearts. From the standpoint of habit, the poet's action should be polite, gentle, and still maintain the aesthetics of *pantun*.

4. Implementation of Theory

The combination of Social Constructivist Theory and Malay Poetic Theory will be a novelty in developing knowledge for the research of *pantun* in education. This principle of existing knowledge requires ZPDs, and scaffolding through social constructivists can be applied in *pantun* teaching. The *pembayang*, *maksud*, relationship between *pembayang* and *maksud*, rhyme, syllable, and reciting *pantun* should be within the student environment to learning *pantun*. Teachers who teach *pantun* must ensure ZPD and scaffolding activities through the relevance of the student's existing knowledge, as proposed by Vygotsky (1984).

Teachers are still overseeing this process to monitor and guide all student behavior. This type of guidance is known as observation, and it is one of the principles of social constructivism. The teacher's guidance process will be reduced due to this scaffolding until students can create their plans or have the autonomy to apply existing skills in their way. As a result, teachers can be implemented as facilitators through student-centered learning, actively run by preparing appealing and appropriate learning aids with students.

Furthermore, various activities should be created with creativity, such as project-based learning (Tonge & Mahamod, 2020), art-based hands-on activities (Rahman & Mahamod, 2019), language games (Hirakawa et al., 2018; Yudintse-va, 2015), cooperative learning (Mahamod & Somasundram, 2017) and gamification (Aziz et al., 2019). The constructive activity will undoubtedly improve the students' vocabulary and *pantun* skills. The teacher's role as a facilitator who strengthens student-centered learning can provide active learning based on ZPD and optimize the learning objective for students to learn *pantun*.

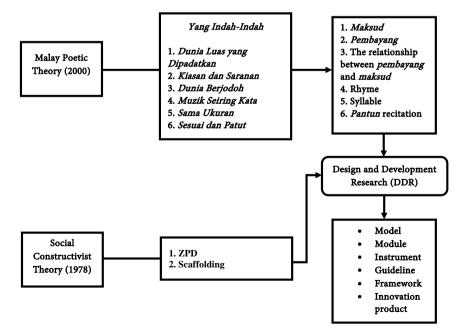
According to the principles of this theory, the importance of creating some-

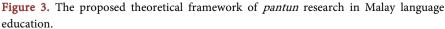
thing new is easier to realize with DDR. DDR is a design concept that solves problems as they arise (Richey & Klein, 2005). The solution is distinguished by final products such as models, modules, guidelines, frameworks, instruments, and anything related to *pantun* education innovation. The most recent DDR trend has made it well-known in information technology, engineering, and education (Siraj et al., 2020).

Based on Social Constructivist Theory and Malay Poetic Theory, the most basic example of an activity that can be developed into a module or guideline is when teachers teach *pembayang* for the first and second lines of *pantun*. Teachers will associate a *pembayang* with a situation they want to create using their students' prior knowledge, such as a child's experience picking a rose. The teacher asked the students to imagine themselves in a situation where they could put the roses in their pockets. *Pantun* 6 is an example of the student's *pembayang* results.

Bunga mawar cantik berseri,Mari dipetik letak di saku;Beautiful rose are radiant,Let's pick and put it in the pocket;(6)

To summarize, there is a Malay Poetic Theory (1989) with six components, according to the proposed theoretical framework in Figure 3 of Yang Indah-Indah: 1) Dunia Luas yang Dipadatkan, 2) Kiasan dan Saranan, 3) Dunia Berjodoh, 4) Muzik Seiring Kata, 5) Sama Ukuran, and 6) Sesuai dan Patut. These six components exemplify six pantun aesthetic features such as maksud, pembayang, the relationship between pembayang and maksud, rhyme, syllable, and pantun recitation. The integration of Malay Poetic Theory (1989) and Social





Constructivist Theory (1978), which emphasizes ZPD and scaffolding through Design and Development Research (DDR), will lead to the future of *pantun* products such as models, modules, instruments, guidelines, frameworks, and other innovative products in Malay language education. It is hoped that educators, curriculum developers, and other stakeholders will use these findings to improve the *pantun* in Malay language education in the future. Therefore, the continuation of the *pantun* through the development of a new one in the field of education will breathe new life into this traditional poem.

5. Conclusion

This concept paper discussed both theories and indirectly established their contribution to Malay Language Education. Social Constructivist Theory is wellknown in education, whereas the Malay Poetic Theory focuses on literature and culture. By implementing these theories, researchers can fill the gap in literary education studies or Malay language education.

Malay Poetic Theory was frequently applied to literary analysis and criticism (Salleh, 2000). Based on the *Yang Indah-Indah*, it is clear that this theory is appropriate for use as a platform in educational research due to its correspondence with the features of the Malay *pantun*. Sikana (2009) and Hussain (2018) both recommended that this theory be used in education to provide the benefits and sustainability of *pantun* to the younger generation. In response to the suggestion, the Social Constructivist Theory was proposed as a theory in suitable education in conjunction with Malay Poetic Theory.

In addition to theoretical aspects, methodological aspects are included in this concept paper using DDR. Literary studies previously conducted qualitatively can be improved using DDR, synonymous with creating something new. This variety contributes to developing new ideas for preserving *pantun* as traditional poetry recognized by UNESCO. Researchers must be more creative to see the other side of the study space as a suitable location for solving existing problems and positively impacting the study.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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