



Poetry and the acquisition of terminology in English as a foreign language

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Abstract

The present research aims to try evaluating the significance of teaching poetry for EFL students, likewise, it aims to know to what extent teaching poetry contributes in fortifying, emphasizing and reinforcing terminology for students. Twenty Saudi students, who study 'Appreciating Poetry' of Level Five in the First Semester (1436/1437 AH - 2015) in Department of English, Faculty of Science and Arts - Al Mandaq, Al Baha University are estimated to be the samples of the task. The sample is subjected to two tests of three multi-various questions – a pretest and a posttest –for assessing language enrichment. The researcher employs SPSS to scrutinize the given data.

The study opens with an introduction about the importance of poetry; supporting it with some definitions by some poets or critics, and then it is followed by literature review after that it, briefly, tells about the methodology used in the study. The main part deals with data analysis and discussion. The study concludes with the conclusion and recommendations. The findings of the study bring about some recommendations clarifying that studying poetry helps students in widening their background with significant terms and vocabulary. It enriches the skills of students and fortifying them to use different sources of language. The researcher, at the end of the study, puts forward several important recommendations that the study has resulted in.

Keywords: EFL, language, poetry, reinforcement, studying, vocabulary

Introduction

It might be said that studying poetry is of great importance for students of English. Poetry has the ability to enlarge and widen the background of students with vocabulary, phrases and idioms, and it critically opens the minds of students to acute thinking. Poetry urges the creativity and imagination of learners as well as enjoying the musical melodies, which play a good role of entertaining and amusing as well as edifying and enlightening.

Poetry is considered to be one of the most unsatisfying courses for the widely held of Saudi students, majoring in English. They disappointingly and undesirably feel that studying poetry is difficult and problematic but in fact, the notion is not fully true. "Zelenkova (2004) highlights the conviction that learners might have difficulties in understanding literature due to linguistic and cultural vagueness, which influences the use of literature (poetry) within the teaching process" (Çetinavcı, and Tütüniş, 2012) [2]. Life, in a manner of speaking, is inseparable with experience; experience has multi faces such as acquiring, learning, studying, searching, and obtaining. Similarly, poetry has multi aspects in life. Poetry has several purposes for a huge number of learners such as entertaining, amusing, edifying, instructing, enlightening, educating as well as teaching. For such comparison, one might say, studying and poetry are integrated and combined. Poetry is of great importance for studying a language, in particular students of major English. Poetry rouses the interest of the learners and provides them with endless package of terminology the time they read, think of the meaning or analyze it.

From the very beginning, poetry is attached to pupils' minds and hearts in different forms such as harmonious humming, singing, chanting, reciting and enjoying lyrics with its gorgeous rhythm, beat, regularity, tune and cadence. It is involved with the whole knowledge and appreciation of man. It is about the deep areas of practice of the relationship of the man about contentment, learning and talent.

Students are supposed to obtain and acquire terminology via understanding, participation, contribution and experience. Such investigational knowledge is unsurpassed technique of didactic poetry. It is a knowledge that rests on a planned chance to work out and use the language in a process that was not offered in a conventional language class. This procedure includes employing the language to procure and acquire it, which is a vital target of teaching language. Generally poetry has several reasons on the one hand it instructs, enlightens and trains, and on the other, it entertains, gratifies, and creates a sort of pleasure. Poetry provides learners with a chance and a prospect to take particular trips via acquiring energetic tentative knowledge. It might produce amusement, inclination, enthusiasm and inspiration. "There was no art without an artist. Chambers insisted that creative inspiration was the essence of all the arts. He posited poetry as the archetypical art, but he did not separate creative arts from the arts in general" (Schatzberg, 2012) [11]. Besides, it affords different probabilities for the practice of language and is advantageous in the process of studying through curriculum affluence. The certainty of the importance of poetry proposes that some characteristics are illuminated by placing and manipulating oral singing agreement.

Literature review

Poetry and its significance

Poetry uses an elevated and preeminent literary language over everyday language; it is not the speech of the tongue only but it is the language of the heart, mind, feeling, and sentiment. Moreover, it can be said that poetry is a piece of music. Additionally, surely give the process of learning more advantage. There are, so to speak, countless definitions on poetry, the same availability of poets. According to Cuddon who says that poetry is a broad term that “can be taken to cover any kind of metrical composition. However, it is usually employed with reservations, and often in contradistinction to verse ... The implications are that poetry is a superior form of creation; not necessarily therefore, more serious” (Cuddon, 1999: 682-683) ^[3]. The core of the previous definition leads readers to comprehend and grasp that poetry is a grander arrangement of design; it means that its influence on acquiring a language is fundamental and crucial. It is a grander system of constructing and building knowledge. On the other hand, S. T. Coleridge demands that young poets might remember his definition about prose and poetry saying that prose is “words in their best order; - poetry; the best words in the best order” (Rhodes, and Stone, 1981: 211) ^[10], realizing that poetry has advantage over prose. Here we have a prodigious representation and a great portrait of comparison presenting the superiority of poetry over prose.

The reader here apprehends that the benefit from prose is worthy but using poetry for the same objective is superior. The best words in the best order mean that poetry has a privilege over prose in learning and acquiring because of the opportunities that poetry owns over prose. Additionally, Arnold (2009) shares the idea confirming that poetry is the most “impressive, and widely effective mode of saying things, and hence its importance” (Mahoney, 11). Effectiveness, beauty, attraction are modes standing beside and supporting poetry over prose as an advantage in the process of acquiring and learning. He believes that poetry owns numerous influences to allure and appeal learners to the process of learning, such as the miscellaneous and multi modes of expressing, beauty, impressiveness, importance, and effectiveness. All these roles play a great deal on the side of using poetry in learning and studying.

Poetry is a genre of art that a language is used for its artistic and appealing qualities along with its semantic content. It involves oral or written works that a language is used in a style that is felt by the spectators to be at variance from the commonplace style of prose. It is the turn of Auden, as quoted from (Bogel, 2013: 29) ^[1], to divulge his thought about poetry; he says that the poet is a “person who is passionately in love with language”. Academics believe that the best and successful learning can be fulfilled best with desire and love; if a learner loves his sort of study then surely the result will be of great success. On the other hand, if a learner does not like his field of study the result might fail. On such argument, Auden tells us that poetry and language have a bondage, which we describe as love. In addition, language is easily acquired if it is supported by the idea of affection.

If the reader wishes to stimulate his/her feeling and emotion, he/she needs to deal with poetry. Poetry shows “the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin

from emotion recollected in tranquillity” (Waugh, 2006: 53) ^[17]. Wordsworth, in the previous citation, shares his judgment about poetry informing us one of the best sayings about poetry in which poetry deals with extemporaneous and natural moods, sensitivity and emotions. He mentions the abundant influential sensation and mood resulting from dealing of poetry. Its derivation is linked with serenity and quietude. Spontaneity, overflow, power, and feeling are the heart of poetry; what a beautiful selection of expressive and justified terminologies.

Moving to Shelley, he intensifies that poetry is an evidence of the “happiest moments of the happiest and best minds” (Varner, 2015: 97) ^[16]. What we need to concentrate on about poetry is that, as stated by Shelley, it refreshes listeners with happiness and contentment. He also adds one of the unsurpassed and heart-touchable definitions of the meaning of poetry. Shelley also says that poetry is divine and is the centre of knowledge. According to Shelley, poetry comprehends all science. It is the root of all systems of thought. Poetry is conveyed via rhythmic choices of the language like sound, thought and meaning in an attempt to arouse a responsive response, which stand as imaginative consciousness of experience.

Poetry, to a good extent, is a natural means of expression and it deals with vigor, emotion, fervor, passion, and luminosity. Poetry has a spiritual and divine quality. “It seems to me that perhaps one ideal way of liberating the poets of the republic would be by founding fellowships in creative poetry through the general democratic subscription of all poetry-lovers” (Schauffler, 1914) ^[12]. Poetry also has countless images of meandering staircases and twisting circles. It helps developing accurate and elaborate symbols strengthening a rich personal experience. One of the most important points in understanding and raise the value of poetry for learners is to be able to configure what the poem is about.

If the reader goes back to Webster’s Complete Dictionary of the English Language (1886) ^[18], he/she is convinced that “poetry is the blossom and the fragrance of all human knowledge, human thoughts, human passions, emotions, language” (p. 1004). What is more, Rita Dove, the poet laureate of the United States famously said, “Poetry is language at its most distilled and most powerful” (Mokhtari, 2015: 67) ^[8]. Here the reader has the ability to make great association between poetry and language.

Paul Engle contributes shedding light on the significance of poetry confirming that, “Poetry is boned with ideas, nerved and blooded with emotions, all held together by the delicate, tough skin of words” (Strachan, and Terry, 2011: 190) ^[15]. In unison, Christopher Fry affirms that poetry “is the language in which man explores his own amazement” (Johnson, 2003: 113) ^[5].

The word poetry means sentimental melody and cadence, and it is as old as the existence of humanity. In the arguments of Wordsworth, “poetry is the first and last of all knowledge” (Greene, 2012: 1214) ^[4]. Poetry aids to reinforce sentence structure and vocabulary via communication. It is an approach of communication, which relies typically on oral diction and speech. Every poem tells a tale and it can be presented through enunciation, recital or enactment. Poetry was used in antique times, and still, as a proper process to convey an

anecdote, signify a situation, or to form a rhythmical idea.

As a formula of literature, poetry has occupied the consideration of many critics, and numerous concerned with poetry. It is one of the furthestmost prevalent, exciting, and captivating of the literary genres. One of its purposes is to symbolize life with all its pictures such as glory, beauty, grandness on the one hand, and depression, dejection, sadness and grief on the other hand. Poetry owns a miscellany of ambitions such as spiritual, mystical, religious, political and social. It, with assurance, appeals, as Eliot said, to a collection of people for a miscellany of motives. Poetry old or new deals with celebrations and the rituals of singing and chanting. Poets, through poetry, try to solace the spectators and listeners. Poetry, like any other literary genre, exemplifies unending portraits of good and evil and supports good and well against evil and devil.

Poetry connotes a sort of activity where students can be asked to expose themselves or somebody else to a make-believe or imagine a situation. It can be defined to mean an educational movement that stimulates a good practice of language in life as well as involves an extent of imaginative state. Poetry is a distinct skill in itself and is presented as a course in secondary schools. Yet, poetry is also an implement, which is springy, flexible, multipurpose and relevant among different ranges of the syllabus in classrooms. It enables learners, individuals or groups, to discover, outline and symbolize ideas, moods and to signify their magnitudes in symbolic or poetic arrangement. As it is known of symbolism and because symbolism is a key element of poetry, one might opine that poetry is a mode of conveying so much by so little, on such base, learning through symbolism is crucial.

Poetry intensifies and consolidates the development of learning through

- enlarging and widening the background of learners through enriching their experience with new words, vocabulary and idioms
- affording better milieu for learning language
- helping to get satisfactory intonation, accent, and pronunciation
- increasing the power of inventive personal expression through imagination
- reinforcing performance in learning
- solving problems and making decisions
- putting different terminologies in context
- appreciating the world as well as the individual
- utilizing of imagination
- creating a mood of reverence and concern for others
- appreciating foreign culture appropriately to consolidate language
- motivating for terminology learning to make involving with words pleasant
- and building up self-assurance to speak confidently

Creative poetry

Creative poetry is known by human knowledge, such knowledge or experience is centered around the learner by a process of leadership. Creative poetry involves partakers and guiding them by a pioneer to make use of reflection,

reproduction of thoughts, enacting and imagination. “Samuel Taylor Coleridge saw the imagination as the supreme poetic quality” (Luebering, 2011: 135) ^[6]. Poetry is filled with countless descriptive expressions to help students enriching their background of language. It supports the utilization of creativity as the favored expression for poetry experience, which is considered for progress of participants.

Certain terminologies of poetry are used for learning purposes such as creative poetry, informal poetry, and educational poetry. Furthermore, creative poetry is spontaneous because it is not engraved to be fashioned only. The learners may perform a story that they already studied by means of their self-style and vocabulary, or a conversation or a discussion, either the matter is an innovative plot or taken from an eminent poem. The most significant is that learners need to be essentially engaged in producing poetry.

Benefits of employing poetry in classrooms

One of the key-interests in acquiring second language is to determine methods of building for the learners a more attractive and accepted learning milieu. The class is one of the greatest places to get influence with a foreign language. Learning a foreign language retains a crowning quality. It is habitually displayed in creative poetry. It is believed by several critics that; it is somehow intolerable to do a significant training without manipulating or applying poetry.

Poetry is an appreciated addition to the teaching process in class. It enhances students’ linguistic skills by reinforcing them to use sources and stores of language and provides a context for significant production in language. Consistent with Shrouf, and Dwaik (2013) ^[13], as for memory widening, “poetry provides opportunities of enhancing the capabilities of human memory since it provides good examples of memorable language that can be stored as chunks to be analyzed in future usage”. From this citation, the reader understands the significance of poetry in reinforcing the learners with necessary terminology.

Poetry and terminology learning

It is believed that presentations done by students and learners are of the greatest methods and procedures to make learners acquire English better. Students, who are requested, for instance, to prepare or to work on a presentation on a selected poem, will surely obtain tangible knowledge because of their preparations, practices, repeated rehearsals – individual or collective – and then doing the presentation orally. As stated by Nasr, poetry usually (2001), “generates multiple meanings”. On such way, teaching poetry has an advantageous preference than any other course because learners can be easily attracted and appealed to participate actively through presentations. Likely literary scholars may notice that fortification is found in poetry in which poetry constitutes the major substance of literary materials. “There have also been positive remarks by scholars who consider poetry an effective tool for multi-skill development in language learning” (Çetinavcı, and Tütüniş, 2012) ^[2]. Consequently, the outcomes of the study indicate that teaching terminology to university learners of major English by means of poetry is undoubtedly operative.

Methodology

Tools of Data Collection

Population

The population of this research are twenty Saudi EFL students who study a main course of level five, Appreciating Poetry, as a central subject in Department of English - Faculty of Science and Arts, Al Mandaq - Al Baha University.

1. The investigator employs content inquiry and SPSS program to examine the collected data through pretest and posttest.
2. The entire study method is experimental and analytical.
Pretest Posttest

Analysis and discussion

Table 1: Pretests Analysis

Result of the Pretest, question 1					
S1	√	X	S2	√	X
	S3	7		3	S4
S5	3	7	S6	8	2
S7	7	3	S8	9	1
S9	3	7	S10	5	5
S11	4	6	S12	10	0
S13	8	2	S14	4	6
S15	9	1	S16	5	5
S17	8	2	S18	6	4
S19	3	7	S20	8	2
	6	4		5	5

Five students only have failed the above first pretest question. Two students only scored full marks, S2 and S10.

Table 2: Result of question 2

Result of the Pretest, question 2					
S1	√	X	S2	√	X
	S3	5		5	S4
S5	1	9	S6	7	3
S7	2	8	S8	5	5
S9	2	8	S10	1	9
S11	3	7	S12	4	6
S13	2	8	S14	1	9
S15	10	0	S16	2	8
S17	2	8	S18	8	2
S19	3	7	S20	8	2
	4	6		5	5

Twelve students have failed the above second pretest question. Only a student scored full marks. He is S13.

Table 3

Result of the Pretest, question 3					
S1	√	X	S2	√	X
	S3	8		2	S4
S5	1	9	S6	6	4
S7	3	7	S8	6	4
S9	2	8	S10	3	7
S11	6	4	S12	3	7
S13	2	8	S14	5	5
S15	6	4	S16	5	5
S17	3	7	S18	4	6
S19	3	7	S20	10	0
	6	4		4	6

Eleven students have failed the above third pretest question. Only one student scored full marks, S18.

Table 4: Analysis of the Posttest and Pretest

Result of the Posttest, question 1					
S1	√	X	S2	√	X
	S3	10		0	S4
S5	6	4	S6	10	0
S7	5	5	S8	10	0
S9	6	4	S10	8	2
S11	9	1	S12	7	3
S13	10	0	S14	6	4
S15	10	0	S16	8	2
S17	9	1	S18	9	1
S19	6	4	S20	10	0
	10	0		7	3

Analysis

The core and main element of this study is the analysis of the pre-tests and the posttests. In the assessment of the first main question that encompasses ten sub-questions, look at table (1) and (4) above, the variation charted and demonstrated the following: the census of two charts shows retrogression with the outcome of three students only. They are S2, S5, and S10 for the reason that the score in the Pretest is higher than the Posttest. The outcomes of the Pretest and the Posttest for S1, S3, S4, S6, S7, S8, S9, S11, S12, S13, S14, S15, S16, S17, S18, S19 and S20 are positive variation that proves there is improvement between Pretest and Posttest. Seven students scored full marks. They are S1, S4, S6, S11, S13 and S19 whereas only two students achieved full marks in the same pretest. The regression is that the two students, S2 and S10, achieved full marks in the pretest did not protect their level missed some marks.

Table 5

Result of the Posttest, question 2					
S1	√	X	S2	√	X
	S3	4		6	S4
S5	2	8	S6	8	2
S7	1	9	S8	8	2
S9	0	10	S10	1	9
S11	6	4	S12	8	2
S13	4	6	S14	0	10
S15	10	0	S16	4	6
S17	2	8	S18	7	3
S19	2	8	S20	10	0
	4	6		6	4

Analysis

In assessing the results of table (2) and (5) above, which contain ten sub-questions, the outcome demonstrates that there is progress for ten students. The census resulted of Pretest and Posttest for S2, S3, S4, S6, S9, S10, S11, S14, S18, and S20 are positive variation that proves there is improvement between Pretest and Posttest. On the other hand, we realize that there is retrogression with the outcome of six students out of twenty. They are S1, S5, S7, S12, S16 and S17 since the score in the Pretest is higher than that of the Posttest. Whereas there are four samples that have the same marks of the Pretest and Posttest. They are S8, S13, S15, and S19. Two students, S13 and S18, achieved full marks in comparing with the same pretest where only one student, S13, scored full marks.

Table 6

Result of the Posttest, question 3					
S1	√	X	S2	√	X
		8		2	
S3	2	8	S4	10	0
S5	5	5	S6	10	0
S7	2	8	S8	3	7
S9	4	6	S10	6	4
S11	7	3	S12	5	5
S13	10	0	S14	10	0
S15	5	5	S16	6	4
S17	5	5	S18	10	0
S19	7	3	S20	10	0

Analysis

In the third question, measuring and comparing the results of

Correlative analysis of the pretests and the posttests

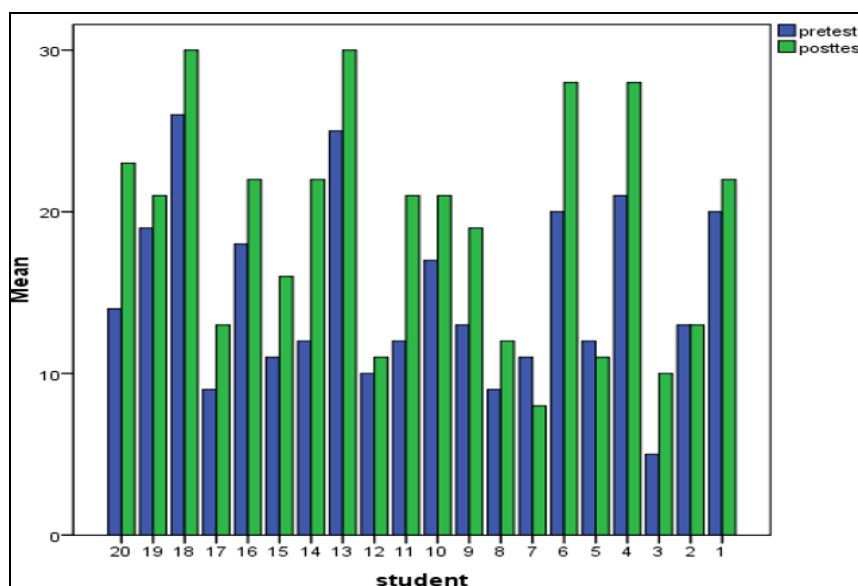


Fig 1

The outcomes in figure (1) illustrate the data are lined up in harmonious comparable ranks. It proposes that there is a positive correlation arises within the two statistics. An important fact in describing the outcomes is that students achieved progressively greater marks in the posttest.

Table 8

Correlations			
		pretest	posttest
pretest	Pearson Correlation	1	.871**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	20	20
posttest	Pearson Correlation	.871**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	20	20

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The comparative outcomes in (table 8) demonstrate that there is a statistically considerable variation between the two records. The correlation is (r= .871 p.01).

table (3) and (6), the variation recorded that there are 13 subjects procured encouraging progress in their outcomes and variation between the Pretest and the comparable Posttest. The survey above demonstrates the samples that procured progress as S3, S4, S5, S6, S10, S11, S13, S14, S15, S16, S17, S19 and S20. Thirteen students achieved positive progress out of 20 students and six subjects have unchanged marks in the final Posttest as the same as the Pretest. The subjects are S1, S2, S7, S8, S9, and S18. Only one sample, number S9, who has variation regress in his result of the two tests, the Posttest and the Pretest. It is worthy to mention that one student only, S18, gets full marks in both the Pretest and Posttest whereas six students achieved the full marks of the Posttest. They are S4, S6, S13, S18, and S20 that support positive variation.

Findings

The findings of the pre-test (table 8) show that the students' achievement is weak in learning for the first time before revealing the course of Appreciating Poetry.

In (table 8) above, the correlative analysis of the data illustrates that there is a statistically significant difference between the outcomes of the pretest and the posttest. The correlation is (r= .871 p. 01). It can be interpreted that the achievement of students is tangibly developed after they were given much tasks and time in in the course of 'Appreciating Poetry'. The outcomes come to an agreement with the outcomes of the reinforcement of teaching English as a foreign language via poetry.

Conclusion

The application of poetry in classes of major English in Faculty of Science and Arts - Al Mandaq, Al Baha University provided to enhance vocabulary learning and greatly assisted language development. The findings of the study

recommended that studying poetry effectively help in widening students' vocabulary. It enhances students' skills by reinforcing them to use sources and stores of language. "As for poetry, plenty of activities are provided probably due to the fact that [poems] are original or authentic in nature which enhances their potential for language work including vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar" (Shrouf, and Dwaik, 2013) ^[13]. The result of the tests show reality that the researcher should not deny a definite percentage of failure in the pretest for the reason that students are new introduced to the course. It is the first time for them to study a poetry course.

Recommendations

The researcher hypothesizes several crucial recommendations that the study has resulted such as

1. Thorough poetry courses have better be taught to reinforce learners' terminology.
2. Lecturers and teachers need to think of various attractive multi-methods of teaching to make learning effective.
3. Classes should be various in the process of presenting lessons, students need to be encouraged to participate once as performers, once as commentators, and once as choruses or groups of reciters according to the nature of the presented poem(s).
4. New procedures and skills ought to be generated by lecturers to deal with teaching poetry.
5. Lecturers need to create sorts of motivations to enhance the students' terminology.
6. It is recommended that there should be other similar studies and investigations on the same area in different colleges of the university.

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