

## **The Role of Poetry in Language Teaching**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This writing aims to describe how poetry is applied in Language teaching . Poetry as a branch of Literature which may not be separated from language needs application to be taught for students in Universities and teachers of language as a reference for teaching as well .The writer of this scientific paper used descriptive method in library research based on the data, which was taken as a proof collected from the library itself. The writer feels sure that by using this method, the problem being discussed will be easier to solve.While the methods of teaching used in language teaching through poetry are Communicative and Discussion Method. Teaching language in English as a foreign language through poetry indicates necessity of integrating literature because of its rich authentic model of language use. The reason why the writer uses poetry as the source of teaching language is to prove literature is authentic material and to familiarize EFL teachers with the effectiveness of using poetry in EFL instruction. It is good to expose this to the learners of language in order that they know that poetry as a branch of literature has wide field of study that can be applied in language teaching. Poetry expands language development in daily life that the learners will obtain a specific knowledge in improving language competence in the four skills such as reading, writing, listening and speaking.

**Keywords:** *applied, discussed, teaching poetry, language development, separated*

### **INTRODUCTION**

In today's time poetry is very common to be discussed by the public, especially among the writers of the poems. The role of poetry as a branch of literature is very significant to be the source of language teaching because poetry is constructed in language. As a matter of fact there are so many language teachers using poetry in language teaching. Many of them also regarded that teaching poetry in the classroom is very interesting because it will develop a language competence in understanding of choosing dictions of writing poems and reciting the poem itself. Besides, it also improve students's ability in constructing the figure of speech in the poems written by the poets and other knowledges of the language such as the semantic as well. In this scientific writing, a professional language teacher should use poetry as the arts of a poem or a poet (Hornby : 644) and apply it to students of language or literature in the classroom. Any topics of poems can be used in teaching language by the language teachers as long as the material study is poem.

This depends on what the language teachers choose the material study whether a poem written in English or in other languages. In this writing , the material study is concentrated on English poems by the famous poets like Robert Frost, William Blake , Aminur Rahman, Siamir Marulafau and others. No wonder if literature in language teaching be applied can improve students' competence in English language since it can be related to syntax, semantic, phonology, lexical , etc, which are derived from poetry as a branch of literature, and this one of the reasons

why the writer selected the topic in order that the language teachers can use this writing as a reference for teaching language using poem.

It is acknowledge that teaching language throuh poem has a wide field of teaching because it is a branch of literature. Though it is a matter of fact, the writer of this scientific paper tends to limit the discussion and he only discusses how poetry be taught and applied in language teaching. Can a poem be source of material study in language teaching in the classroom? These problems may be arise to the fact that in the modern way of teaching , these always come up and experienced by the teachers and learners of English language. It is because solving problems of teaching language through poems means as the aims of teaching that should be known whether it is successful or not.

## **METHOD**

As what has been discussed to write this scientific research that the writer tends to use descriptive method mention in abstract. He believes that this method will be able to describe the problems being discussed, especially in describing the problems related to the analysis dealing with collecting data from the library and other data which be accumulated through internet so as to make the scientific writing be more accurate and complete. Every writing has the main aim to fulfill the real goal why the scientific writing should be published. More or least it shouls be read in order to know what it is. The most important things to this scientific writing is to give a reference to the teachers of English so that they can broaden their knowledge in the problem of teaching through literature in the process of teaching language as a foreign language (TEFL) through poetry as a branch of literature.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Why is Poetry?**

In today's time, there are so many teachers of language tend to teach language based on poetry. This may be one of the reasons why is poetry to be the source of language teaching is that poetry is simple to teach and study. While others teachers or students think poetry is so complicated to teach or sudy because of its choose words. But, this has been a matter of fact that many teachers and students, who are teaching and learning poetry in University like to teach and study poetry because they enjoy it.

Poetry has a place in the curriculum. It can be taught and studied as part of reading, writing and language lesson and it fits easily into classroom themes ,projects and celebration. On the other hands, poetry can create students' listening competence in language skill.

### **Why Teach Poetry?**

The professional language teachers, who are well in language and literature, he or she should be able to formulate and determine poetry as the source of teaching material study conducted in the classroom. He or she , who has capability to choose poetry to be taught in the classroom knows that teaching poetry has a specific aim to teach and learn as has been designed before . Referring to the choose material study depends on the students' competence in mastering language, and these all should be kept in mind that the language applied , taught and studied through poetry is the language of arts, which is not as same as the common English language.

### **Build Reading**

Generally, the professional language teachers often practise teaching reading poetry to students in the classroom. So as to make students be fluent in reading the poetry loudly while other students are listening. These may be the language competence should be conducted in the

classroom. The students learn to attend to the words they hear and to think about those words mean together.

When sharing poems in the classroom, students are strengthening their reading skill and build reading fluency through repeated reading. This can be one of the teachers' tasks means to conduct the process of teaching and learning in the class. Let's see the following how a teacher of language encourages students to read one of the following poems written by Robert Frost entitled "The Road Not Taken", and "Stopping by Woods on Snowy Evening"

The Road Not Taken

By Robert Frost

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveler, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth;  
Then took the other, as just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim,  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;  
Though as for that the passing there  
Had worn them really about the same,  
And both that morning equally lay  
In leaves no step had trodden black.  
Oh, I kept the first for another day!  
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,  
I doubted if I should ever come back.  
I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.

The language teacher can ask students to read the above poem loudly in order that they can improve their reading skill and listening and identify their pronunciation and does the same in the next poem entitled "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening".

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

By Robert Frost

Whose woods these are I think I know.  
His house is in the village though;  
He will not see me stopping here  
To watch his woods fill up with snow.  
My little horse must think it queer  
To stop without a farmhouse near  
Between the woods and frozen lake  
The darkest evening of the year.  
He gives his harness bells a shake  
To ask if there is some mistake.

The only other sound's the sweep  
Of easy wind and downy flake.  
The woods are lovely, dark and deep,  
But I have promises to keep,  
And miles to go before I sleep,  
And miles to go before I sleep.

### Explore Language and Vocabulary

In terms of teaching language through poetry, teachers will get a special tool. This may bring a positive impact that students will get advantage of learning and improve their vocabulary. Students are exposed to words they have not heard before and they hear them in context. The teacher can discuss new words with the students so as to develop language skill to fulfill the target of learning dealing with TEFL in the classroom.

Poetry often contains words, and figures of speech, which can improve students' language competence in building up sentences. In short, poem can be used to teach sentence structure, part of speech, and grammar skill

### Inspire Writing

The professional teachers should be able to make students' inspire in writing through poems. Poem should be constructed by using words that be choosed. In poetry, we learn how to put word together to form meaning and context. We learn how to choose the right words.

Starting teaching writing through poetry to students of University should be applied by a certain planning. It should be kept in mind that a good writing using poem include planning and brainstorming activities. The teacher should lead students to write simple poetry forms that follow a pattern that students can easily connect to.

In case of writing poetry, the teacher should be able to make an example of writing in a simple poetry by giving a topic. What is the best topic of a poem be provided? For example :

#### HARD STORM

My boat is in the hard storm  
Is it possible to sail?

Though the sea is not calm  
But i try to do it once or twice

Let the sea birds fly and speak  
I don't care for a while

As long the sea is drying  
Till i come to wait for sun shines

The teacher can also train students to improve their vocabulary through poetry by asking them to fill in the missing words in every lines of the poem so as to encourage students to think over and over what the right words should be used to achieve the target of language skill. For Example : Read this following poem and fill in the missing words of each lines.

### BROKEN MAST

Siamir Marulafau

how can I reach \_\_\_\_\_  
with my little boat  
if the mast I used \_\_\_\_\_ is torn  
It will be impossible  
\_\_\_\_\_ the blue is bright  
with no a hard \_\_\_\_\_  
to walk on the sea would be sunk  
that my body will be \_\_\_\_\_ by whales  
I used to seeing the waves  
which may not \_\_\_\_\_ thy breath

Another strategy of developing skill in writing is that the teachers should be able to create students' competence in language skill based on the landscape, views or picture they can see. Put their attention to what they see around and start to write something based on the picture they keep in eyes to create their inspiration related to the theme, and topic of the poem that they are going to write or the teachers sometimes give a topic of the poem with a certain theme that should be written. For Example : Write a poem in English based on this following topic and theme, and not more than 24 lines.

Topic : MY CAMPUS

Theme : Something which has a correlation with campus cleanliness and management

#### Build A Love for Reading

Students of University should love reading and learn how to read. The teacher should expose them to variety of style and types of text. The students should be encouraged to read poem by action based on what they read. The more reading conducted by students, the more knowledge of reading poetry will be there as far as they concern with the reading. Consequently, they may not act to read poem like the action of drama dramatized and acted on the stage. The teacher may ask students to read the poem and present it in the classroom. For Example : Read the following poem entitled " The Sick Rose " by William Blake and keep in mind about the poem.

The Sick Rose  
By William Blake  
O Rose thou art sick.  
The invisible worm,  
That flies in the night  
In the howling storm:  
Has found out thy bed  
Of crimson joy:

And his dark secret lov

Does thy life destroy  
Reading for Appreciation

Reading poem is not only emphasized in pronouncing the words but also in understanding the meaning of the poems. The professional teachers of English encourage students to read the poem by grasping and finding out the meaning of the poem. This depends on the teachers' techniques. To understand the meaning of a poem is a must that concerns with semantic and good appreciation will create the best meaning of the poem related to the subject matter and contextual meaning of the poem. Many readers of the poem do not understand the meaning. If the students understand the meaning of the poem, they may be asked to write something about the poem using their own English language or at least they can build a good discussion by asking and answering questions to one with another in the process of teaching and learning in the classroom regarding as practice speaking. For Example : Read the poem entitled " Let Me Go Alone" and try to appreciate the following poem , and write it in a paragraph about the poem and discuss it using your own English. Then, answer these questions based on the poem.

Questions :

1. What is the subject matter of this poem?
2. What are the figures of speech found in this poem?
3. Why does the poet say "I never be back again and again"
4. What are the repetition found in this poem?
5. Is the topic of the poem concerned with the context ? Explain.

LET ME GO ALONE

So far away I burst out of traveling  
On my journey to deserted land  
Many ships welcome me  
Since you let me go alone  
But, what I say  
No one prevent my going  
All hate in my pocket  
No smile to go with me along  
If it is so,,,  
I never be back again and again  
For so long we meet  
At the end of traveling i say good bye  
No one prevents my going  
No smile attracts me  
Since time to time there is a warning  
To say good bye  
Never thinkk to be back again  
because the face is not like the moon  
,,, smiling for a while  
Where the leaves surroundings  
,,, will be crying  
To say no more tears there will be  
(Siamir Marulafau,2016: P. 60)

Another way of teaching language through poem can also be conducted by the language teachers in order to cover the language skill like sentence structure based on the word used by the poet in his poem. For Example : Read this following poem entitled “Perpetual Diary” by Aminur Rahman, and you then, (1) find out the subject, predicate ,object and adverb of each sentence, (2) Make good sentence based on the words found in the poem itself.

#### PERPETUAL DIARY

My perpetual diary’s everyday starts with you  
And at the end, you are there  
In between stories of days and Dagmar  
In between stories of coffee and cuff links  
In between stories of secularism and sexual synergy  
When you are sitting in front of me  
Looking at me with sparkling eyes  
I have touched your cheek  
Held your hair,kissed you for a long time  
Both tongue would move with the waves  
Grasped you from top to bottom  
held you tightly till the translucent torch went out  
Bit you, smashed you and ate you  
My strong presence in the uneven valley  
Flying with enormous faulty fluttering  
You were busy with pickle pamper  
I have moved myself with daring into danger  
Searching the gravity force with passion  
Searching the poetry that was unwritten  
Searching the dream dragon root  
My perpetual diay’s everyday starts with you!  
(Aminur Rahman, 2016: 60)

1. Answering Question no.(1)

1. I have moved myself with daring into danger  
S P/V O/C
2. I Have touched your cheek  
S P/V O
3. My perpetual diary’s everyday starts with you  
S P/C
4. Both togue would move with the waves  
S P/C
5. You were busy with pickle pamper  
S P/C

2. Answering Question no.(2)

- 1.touched : Has this poem touched your heart?
- 2.moved : We have moved to the new town
- 3.held : The poetry contest will be held this coming month.
- 4.starts : The class of poetry will be started at 4 p.m.

5.unwritten : The author of the work is unwritten.

## CONCLUSION

Having discussed the short story in language teaching, it is concluded that the objective of EFL teaching is to help students communicate fluently in the target of mastering language. The benefits of using poetry in the process of teaching English language as a foreign language indicating students' progress in developing language skill such as reading, writing, speaking and listening. However, the teacher should be able to select the poem as material study for students to learn before starting lesson in the class. Using the poetry in the process of teaching and learning English can be done as a reference for other teachers so as to improve students' competence in language skill.

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