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Making Use of Poems to Teach English

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Abstract: This study was motivated by the fact that there is a tendency to see poetry as being remote from language teaching contexts. Thinking that this is partly because of the lack of training in teaching literature given to English language teacher trainees, an experimental group of 3rd year Uludag University English Language Teaching (ELT) Department students taking the “Poetry Analysis and Teaching” course were taught about new poetry-centered techniques and activities compiled from the related literature and they were asked to design a lesson using them. The control group continued to take the course without any changes. At the end of the term, both groups were given a questionnaire on their attitudes towards the use of poetry in EFL and statistically significant differences were found between the groups showing that the experimental group favored poetry more strongly as a multi-purpose and multi-functional tool to teach a foreign language.

Key Words: poetry, language teaching, EFL, poetry analysis, teacher training, poems

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1. Introduction

The world of teaching English as a foreign or second language has come up with numerous approaches, methods and techniques to make teaching and learning English in classroom environments as effective and enjoyable as possible (Bushman & Bushman, 1994). However, poetry and poems have not been favored much in language classrooms, and teachers have not considered the benefits of using poetry in teaching the language. According to Denman (1988), poetry is the most neglected component in language curriculums, which is confirmed by Duff & Maley (2007) noting that literature in a broader sense was ignored in the world of language teaching starting from the end of the eminence of the grammar-translation model until the beginning of the 2000s.

Several views have been expressed about the reason why poetry is seen distant to EFL and ESL contexts. According to Brindley (1980), the greatest barrier is the elliptical, metaphorical and highly allusive language of poetry. From this perspective, it has little to offer to the EFL classroom, especially at the middle school and high school levels. 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. The other factor is seen to be the absence of concrete methodological instruction regarding the use of poetry in language learning classrooms (Štulajterová, 2010). This neglect emerging from lack of knowledge and/or consideration has surely had its consequences on teachers and learners. Lockward (1994) maintains that “poetry is the genre most English teachers seem least comfortable with” (p. 65) as they neither enjoy nor read

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poetry on their own and they see poetry as a “difficult and often unfruitful task” (Rogers, 1985, p. 296). As for students, Denman (1988) concludes that some are “turned off to all forms of poetry, thinking that all poetry has to be heavy with some sort of deep, hidden meaning that they, for the life of them, cannot see” (p. 87).

There have also been positive remarks by scholars who consider poetry an effective tool for multi-skill development in language learning. According to Hess (2003), through its drama and emotional context, a good poem is suitable for a close “reading”, with much good language practice. Hedge (2000) also believes poems as authentic materials can be used to develop especially the receptive skill of reading. Another claim is that reproduction of poetry – memorizing, rewriting, reporting and translating – can exercise the productive skill of “writing”, which is not an easy task to teach (Alber-Morgan Sheila; Hessler, & Konrad, 2007). When considered in terms of the skill of “speaking”, as the themes of poetry (e.g. love, death, nature, beliefs, despair etc.) are universal among all human beings (Maley & Duff, 1989), and because each person’s perception is different, poems can initiate a fund of interactive discussion and create the atmosphere for a genuine exchange of ideas. Besides, poetry can also be a very good way to help children understand the “phonics of English” and work with rhyming words (Collins, 2008). Along with the skills development, the memorability feature of a poem can support the natural ability to unconsciously absorb language, which enables the learner to “retrieve grammatical and lexical information” when needed (Ainy, 2008).

Bearing all this in mind, it seems that the issue is the appropriate choice of literary text for use in teaching language. As Riverol points out (1991), such a choice will provide the learners with examples of many features of the language—the structure of sentences, the variety of form and the different ways of connecting ideas. When a teacher comes to select the poems, he or she will need to consider which poems are suited to the learners’ interests, language and maturity levels. According to McKay (1986), conceptual difficulty of a literary text is also a variable to be considered carefully. The difficulty level of a poem should approximate the level of competence of the learners (Bex, 1994). Therefore, teachers need to ensure that the students are given as much help as possible in understanding the language of the poem (Lazar, 1993).

William Carlos Williams’s “This is Just to Say” can be given as an example for the ideas put forward so far in that it is a poem with simple language appropriate for use in language teaching; it is also highly interesting with its words and content about an experience so “human”, so “us”, so “everybody”, which can make an English class a victory:

THIS IS JUST TO SAY

I have eaten
the plums
that were in
the icebox

and which
you were probably
saving
for breakfast

Forgive me
they were delicious
so sweet
and so cold (Williams, 1951, p. 354)

As Ainy (2008) indicates, this poem can well be used to invite learners to make use of their experience and knowledge of the world. A fruitful speaking session can be stimulated with questions like: “Have you ever felt tempted about eating/doing something? What did you do? Do you think it is

okay to behave this way? Have you done something similar? What was the reaction to the incident? Do you think you should replace the fruit next time you turn up? Why/why not? How would you have felt if someone had done the same to you? Why would you have to apologize if you eat the fruit without permission, when the host is your friend or someone very close to you?" Inviting students to be "in the poem" and internalize it like that, teachers can also find the chance to investigate issues relevant to their backgrounds, experiences, and attitudes (Moore, 2002, p. 44).

On the other hand, it is a fact that poems, as selected authentic texts, were not originally intended for teaching language (Nasr, 2001). Therefore, teachers may often need to "supplement, adapt and develop" their own materials to suit the levels and teaching purposes (Brinton, Snow & Bingham, 1989, p. 89). In this respect, some techniques have been developed to involve and interest (Brindley, 1980) learners "at all levels" and help them express themselves in the target language through poetry (Finch, 2003; Moulton & Holmes, 1997).

Many of those techniques to mention can be haiku (Lida, 2008), picture poems, cinquain poems, diamante poems, wish poems, hero poems, biopoems, alphabet poems, acrostic poems, catalog poems, adverb poems, "I" poems and blotz poems (Ainy, 2008; Finch, 2003; Moulton & Holmes, 1997). Most of them can be cited within the category of pattern poems, which give learners a sense of support and allow them to complete a poem fairly fast (Kazemek & Rigg, 1995). According to some predefined rules, students write poems to describe and/or contrast things while at the same practicing some particular constructs such as participles, adjectives, adverbs and so on. What is more, they give teachers to delve into their students' inner worlds represented by their hopes, desires and aspirations in the poems they write.

1.2. Problem Statement

The way of running the undergraduate course "Poetry Analysis and Teaching" in the pre-service language teacher education program was a major rationale behind the present study. It is a course of 4 hours per week, two allocated for literary analysis of poetic devices and techniques while the other two are used to introduce various language production activities to be used in foreign language teaching. The problematic situation about the course was that its focus was predominantly literary and, though being quite interesting and creative, most of the poems and related activities in the book chosen for the pedagogical dimension (Maley & Moulding, 1985) were too complex and demanding for learners who are below intermediate level. As an example, in one of the activities students are first asked to find as many abstract nouns as they could in the target poem and then write a poem with those nouns taking a poem as the model.

Like Edwards and Owen's study (2005), which examines whether one particular offering of a course in a teacher education program was perceived as beneficial by its recipients, this study aimed to investigate if the curricular and pedagogical intervention (detailed further in the text) introduced to the "Poetry Analysis and Teaching" course had been valued by the course participants. In this regard, the present study can be considered a piece of classroom research to do no more than any good course provider should, i.e. conducting quality control (Edwards & Owen, 2005). Accordingly, the research questions were formulated as follows:

- 1) After the instruction and work on their assignment, what will be the experimental group teacher trainees' views on using poetry to teach English as a foreign language?
- 2) In what ways will their views differ from the control group of students who completed the course without any curricular change?

2. Methodology

2.1. Participants and Setting

The participants of the study were 3rd grade Uludag University Education Faculty ELT Department students who took the course of “Poetry Analysis and Teaching” in the fall term of 2010-2011 academic year. The numbers of the students constituting the experimental and control groups were 53 and 47 respectively, thus their total number was 100. Both groups consisted of one day and one evening class, i.e. two sub-groups, who were all taught by the same researcher. All the students had already been randomly assigned to their classes in their first year after entering the department with scores close to one another in the university entry exam, and all had fulfilled the fundamental requirements to take the “Poetry Analysis and Teaching” course in their third year. Therefore, the researchers did not have the right and opportunity to form an experimental and control group specifically for this study.

2.2. The Curricular Intervention and Treatment

Holding the belief that the course “Poetry Analysis and Teaching” would end in nothing as teacher candidates were not planning to use poetry in their career in any way, the course content was changed after the midterm exam and one experimental and one control group was determined among the students taking the course. The experimental group was taught how to make use of poetry in language teaching contexts with exemplifications and peer teaching while the control group went on to study the prescribed syllabus planned at the beginning of the academic year. Both groups were taught the course allotting the same time per week (2 class hours) for the pedagogical dimension of the course. Furthermore, as the control group already had their course book with printed procedural information and examples about the activities it offers, the experimental group was provided with a pack about the newly introduced techniques and activities giving theoretical and procedural information with examples of implementation based on some selected poems. The classroom techniques and activities in question were based on the use of some particular grammatical structures and lexical items. An example is “I” poems, which can be used to enable students to write about themselves in a controlled way and practice especially adjectives and stative verbs. Its rules are as follows:

- I **am** (two special characteristics you have)
- I **wonder** (something you are actually curious about)
- I **hear** (an imaginary sound)
- I **see** (an imaginary sight)
- I **want** (an actual desire)
- I **am** (the first line of the poem repeated)
- I **pretend** (something you actually pretend to do)
- I **feel** (a feeling about something imaginary)
- I **touch** (an imaginary touch)
- I **worry** (something that really bothers you)
- I **cry** (something that makes you very sad)
- I **am** (the first line of the poem repeated)
- I **understand** (something you know is true)
- I **say** (something you believe in)
- I **dream** (something you actually dream about)
- I **try** (something you really make an effort about)

I **hope** (something you actually hope for)

I **am** (the first line of the poem repeated)

As the last component of the treatment, every experimental group student was asked either to integrate a poem or poems into a particular unit of a course book of English or to design an independent lesson or lessons based on a poem or poems. They were asked to aim at a particular learner group to whom they are likely to teach in their career. As the pertinent literature suggests (Brinton et al., 1989), the teacher trainees were free to adopt or adapt already existing poems or write their own teacher poems. They were to submit it as a project assignment before the end of the term.

2.3. Data Collection Tool

The participants were given a questionnaire in Turkish (see the Appendices). The Cronbach's Alpha for the measurements carried out with the questionnaire was .74 for the control group and .45 for the experimental group, which can be considered reliable and moderately reliable respectively. It aims to elicit the teacher trainees' views on poetry as a motivating language teaching tool to achieve multi-skills development with different age and proficiency groups of learners. The items were formulated according to these uses and functions of poetry in EFL, which are all mentioned in the related literature exemplified above. The first six are close-ended while the last one is an open-ended one. Among the six close-ended items, the first three are Likert-scale questions. They gave the voluntary respondents 4 options of answer. The underlying reason is echoed by McKay (2006) postulating that if there is an odd number of options, it may be that students consistently choose the middle option as a way to avoid taking a clear stand on a topic. The other three close-ended items have a checklist format, which gives respondents also the chance to make more than one choice. The open-ended item aims to enable respondents to add any relevant information not covered by the close-ended ones.

2.4. Procedure

The administration of the final version of the questionnaire was after piloting the initial version with another fifteen 3rd year students who took the same course so that the problems about the layout, instructions and question wording could be alleviated. In the end, the data were collected via the questionnaire from 53 students forming the experimental group and then 47 students constituting the control group in their class hours within the same week.

2.5. Data Analysis

While analyzing the data, the questionnaires giving distorted information were eliminated. For example, the ones saying that poetry can be used with young learners first and then with advanced students only in the following item were excluded from the data. The responses to the close-ended questionnaire items were analyzed with SPSS 13.00 and related descriptive analysis, frequency analysis and t-test results are provided. Before doing that; the responses to the first three Likert-type items were appointed points ranging from 4 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree), and each response combination in item 4, 5 and 6 was given a point. The response "None" makes 0 point in every item. "All" makes 3 points in item four and five and it makes 4 points in item six. Single responses like "adults, advanced, reading etc." make 1 point in every item. Double responses make 2 points in every item. In item 6, triple responses make 3 points. The idea of multi-responses making higher scores is based on the aim of the curricular intervention and treatment, which was to help the students see that poetry can be a multi-purpose and multi-functional tool in EFL.

On the other hand, in the way McKay (2006) describes, the responses to the open-ended item were analyzed with a holistic view in terms of the reoccurring themes and topics within the transcribed

texts. The whole data were gone over for several times by two researchers independently and a negotiated and agreed summary is provided based on those reoccurring themes with selected exemplary quotations characterizing most of the responses given.

3. Results

3.1. Close-Ended Questionnaire Items Results

Corroborated by the item-by-item mean differences between the groups in favor of the experimental one (see Table 1), test results with a holistic look indicate that the average questionnaire score of the experimental group ($\bar{X}_{exp} = 18,47$) is significantly [$t_{(98)} = 4.926, p < 0.01$] higher than the average questionnaire score of the control group ($\bar{X}_{cont} = 15,74$), which means that there is a statistically significant difference in favor of the former between the ways the groups consider poetry overall as a tool in language teaching. The results can be seen in table 2.

Table 1. Item-by-Item Descriptive Group Statistics

		Number	Mean	Std. Deviation
ITEM 1	EXP.	53	3.68	0.47
	CONT.	47	3.36	0.67
ITEM 2	EXP.	53	3.53	0.54
	CONT.	47	3.02	0.64
ITEM 3	EXP.	53	3.64	0.52
	CONT.	47	3.38	0.80
ITEM 4	EXP.	53	2.55	0.64
	CONT.	47	1.89	0.87
ITEM 5	EXP.	53	2.26	0.81
	CONT.	47	1.72	0.90
ITEM 6	EXP.	53	2.81	0.98
	CONT.	47	2.36	1.11

EXP: experimental group CONT: control group

Table 2. Overall Group Statistics

	Number	Mean	Std. Deviation
EXP.	53	18.4717	2.20667
CONT.	47	15.7447	3.28016

EXP: experimental group CONT: control group

As for the Item-by-Item Independent Samples Test Results, for Item 1 (Through the use of poetry, it is possible to create language teaching activities that can increase student motivation), test result indicates that [$t_{(98)} = 2.700, p < 0.01$] there is a statistically significant difference between the average questionnaire score of the experimental group ($\bar{X}_{exp} = 3,68$) and the average questionnaire score of the

control group ($\bar{X}_{\text{cont}}= 3,36$), which suggests that the former has a more positive attitude towards poetry's function to develop language teaching activities boosting student motivation. This shows that they found the poem-based language activities that they had studied more interesting and motivating.

About Item 2 (Poems can help to teach and practice grammatical structures), test result indicates that [$t_{(98)}= 4.285$, $p<0.01$] there is a statistically significant difference between the average questionnaire score of the experimental group ($\bar{X}_{\text{exp}}= 3,52$) and the average questionnaire score of the control group ($\bar{X}_{\text{cont}}= 3,02$), which suggests that the former favor poetry to teach grammar more strongly. This can be because the poem-centered activities that they had studied were suitable to present and practice some particular grammar points and the techniques that were taught show that we do not have to use poetry only to teach about some complex grammatical structures.

As for Item 3 (Poems can help to teach and practice vocabulary), test result indicates that [$t_{(98)}= 1.895$, $p>0.05$] there is no significant difference between the average questionnaire score of the experimental group ($\bar{X}_{\text{exp}}= 3,64$) and the average questionnaire score of the control group ($\bar{X}_{\text{cont}}= 3,38$), which suggests that both groups seem to believe in the use of poetry to teach about the lexicon of English. This might be because they experienced that poems can contain a wealth of words used in memorable and/or repetitive lines in carefully created contexts. The slight difference for the experimental group can be attributed to the fact that they saw how especially pattern poems help teachers and students write simple poems with a focus of using different word groups not necessarily at a high level.

When it comes to Item 4 (For which learner group do you think is poetry suitable as a language teaching tool?), test result indicates that [$t_{(98)}= 4.253$, $p<0.01$] there is a statistically significant difference between the average questionnaire score of the experimental group ($\text{exp}= 2,54$) and the average questionnaire score of the control group ($\text{cont}= 1,89$), which means that there is a statistically significant difference in favor of the former in terms of the extent to which they verify the use of poetry as appropriate for all learner groups. The book (Maley & Moulding, 1985) that the control group studied declares itself that it is accessible to upper-intermediate and more advanced students, who would normally be teenagers or adults in an EFL context. On the other hand, while teaching the experimental group about the additional activities and techniques, the intention was to show that poems can be for any learner group. This might have contributed to the results obtained as above.

About Item 5 (For which proficiency level do you think is poetry suitable as a language teaching tool?), test result indicates that [$t_{(98)}= 3.155$, $p<0.01$] there is a statistically significant difference between the average questionnaire score of the experimental group ($\bar{X}_{\text{exp}}= 2,26$) and the average questionnaire score of the control group ($\bar{X}_{\text{cont}}= 1,72$), which shows that the former are closer to the consideration of poetry free of the monopoly of the advanced level. This might be because of the researcher's, who was the lecturer as well, instruction and emphasis that poems can be adopted, adapted or developed as texts adjustable according to the proficiency level of learners.

As for Item 6 (To which skill's development do you think can poetry as a language teaching tool contribute?), test result indicates that [$t_{(98)}= 2.132$, $p<0.05$] there is a statistically significant difference between the average questionnaire score of the experimental group ($\bar{X}_{\text{exp}}= 2,81$) and the average questionnaire score of the control group ($\bar{X}_{\text{cont}}= 2,36$), which suggests that the number of those in the former who viewed poetry as suitable for multi-skill development was significantly higher. We see that over 60% of the control group responses include reading and/or writing, which is likely to be the result of the unchanged content that mainly asked the students to write their own poems after reading and understanding the model ones in the book used. The results can be seen in table 3.

Table 3. Item-by-Item Independent Samples Test Results

	Exp. Mean	Cont. Mean	t	p
ITEM 1	3.68	3.36	2.700	.008**
ITEM 2	3.5283	3.0213	4.285	.000**
ITEM 3	3.6415	3.3830	1.895	.062
ITEM 4	2.5472	1.8936	4.331	.000**
ITEM 5	2.2642	1.7234	3.155	.002**
ITEM 6	2.8113	2.3617	2.148	.034*

EXP: experimental group

CONT: control group

*= p is significant at .05 level

**= p is significant at .01 level

3.2. Open-ended Questionnaire Items Results

Among the responses to this item in the control group, the ones that were given more than once deal with the indirect benefits of poetry in EFL/ESL contexts like familiarizing with the culture of the target language and having an artistic taste and sense of aesthetics. A characterizing response is as follows:

“Education and life without poetry should be out of the question. We do not want generations distant from arts.”

In the same group, the theme around which the most overlapping responses clustered was the appropriate choice of poems to use. The responding control group students seem concerned about the fact that there is always the risk of dislike for poetry, and poems usually contain complex linguistic and syntactic features and relatively deep meanings and messages to discover with hard work. Some characterizing responses are as follows:

“The poem to be used should be selected so carefully. Otherwise, you may have just the opposite of what you intended.”

“Poems are OK but we should also take account of students who do not like poetry.”

“I think that poems can help us especially when teaching some complex linguistic structures.”

Among the responses from the experimental group, we can mention that there are ones in accord with those from the other group dealing with the indirect benefits of poetry in language classroom like developing a positive attitude towards the language and the culture it represents. What distinguishes them is that they do not include any one conceptualizing poetry as reserved for advanced learners and they frequently make mention of some immediate benefits of it within the actual processes of teaching and learning. Some characterizing responses are as follows:

“Using poems can provide ‘contextualization’ for what to teach.”

“Poems are inherently interesting and enjoyable to listen, read and write. They can give students the chance to learn grammar and vocabulary indirectly and subconsciously, thus more effectively.”

“Poems can help us to break the routine and create a different, motivating atmosphere to teach in.”

“When a student can understand a poem and write one of his/her own, that can boost his/her self-confidence.”

The interesting point about the experimental group responses is that nearly half of them contain a phrase like “As a result of the assignment I did, I saw that ...” and, besides the ones above, there are some responses not frequent but worthy of note:

“I had never thought that poems can be used to teach English. As a result of the assignment I did, I saw that it can work. I even tried my sample lesson with my roommates at a roughly intermediate level and got very positive feedback.”

“If I can, I plan to work on ‘poetry and language teaching’ for my master’s degree.”

4. Discussion

This piece of classroom research was based on a change in the content and way of teaching of an undergraduate course. It was done midway through the first term and the study aimed to assess its outcomes in comparison with another group who carried on in the way they had started. According to the findings, the experimental group students gained an additional positive viewpoint on poetry in that their responses as a whole point to their consideration of poetry as a multi-purpose and multi-functional tool to teach English as a foreign language. With statistically significant differences in comparison to the control group students’ responses, the experimental group participants declared to be favoring poetry as an asset that can be used to improve the language skills of elementary, intermediate and/or advanced learners in different age groups in a motivated way.

Considering the findings reported in the earlier sections and summarized above, it is possible to think that the results are promising and encouraging and they lend support to the findings in the relatively narrow pertinent literature. Having received instruction on a variety of new techniques and prepared sample lessons with related poem-centered activities; most of the students seem to have seen that poetry as a literary genre can be used to facilitate language learning by reducing anxiety and increasing motivation (Bagherkazemi & Alemi, 2010) and it is eligible to help the development of more than one skill in learners (Nasr, 2001) at any age and proficiency level. This kind of positive attitude development is indicated also by Akyel (1995), who added a different component to a teacher training literary course and reported that the student teachers found the new poem-centered activities easily and successfully applicable in EFL classrooms for practice teaching. Findings like these support the argument that literary works will increase all language skills because literature will extend linguistic knowledge by giving evidence of extensive and subtle vocabulary usage and exact syntax (Povey, 1972 cited in Mc Kay, 1986).

It should be mentioned here that the control group students did not have a negative attitude towards poetry in EFL either. However, the results suggest that the experimental group’s belief and motivation is superior to varying extents in every comparison except for the one based on vocabulary

and it is thought to be stemming from the theoretical instruction and exemplification that they had received about the new techniques and the lessons that they duly designed.

It is another fact that the control group students seem to favor poetry more for the development of the reading and writing skills of learners at an upper-intermediate proficiency level or higher. This is likely to be the result of how the book that they studied presented the use of poetry in language classroom.

The main significance of this study is believed to be giving ideas about how to modify the literary courses in EFL teacher training programs to help prospective language teachers more with the variety of students that they will be teaching in EFL contexts. It is confirmed by also their practicum experiences that a considerable number of the teacher trainees will be working at elementary education level with relatively low proficiency pre- or early teenage learners. Given this fact and approaching critically to the course content and the way it had been offered; it was seen that the practical dimension of the course was based on the manipulation of some complex poems with impractical techniques of pedagogical use while the theoretical part was predicated solely on studying the art of poetry. Thinking that this would render a service to the presupposition that poetry is some kind of specialist job unarguably distant from teachers and language teaching, the relatively narrow pertinent literature was benefited to frame the curricular and pedagogical intervention to the course so that the teacher trainees could develop a new perspective on poetry beyond enjoying it as an art form and add it in their repertoire of language teaching techniques for as varied learner profiles as possible. This is also believed to be in accordance with the notion of reflective practice, being critically self-aware as an acquired skill (Hockly, 2000; Moran & Dallat, 1995), which calls for reflection on 'borrowed' routines (Hobbs, 2007, p. 406) and pre-conceived understandings (Moore & Ash, 2002).

Among the limitations of the study, the primary one would be the fact that none of the groups were given a pre-test at the beginning of the semester or an earlier time. This prevented the researchers from determining the extent to which the experimental and control groups differed before the treatment in terms of the attitudes investigated. What is more, it must be mentioned that the curricular change and intervention was made after the mid-term exam and all the additional techniques were introduced and practiced in six weeks' time. If it had begun earlier and if the experimental group students had been asked to design more lessons for varying learner groups, proficiency levels and skills, their responses to the 4th, 5th and 6th item of the questionnaire could have included more "all". Besides this, it is a fact that the control group students responded to the items based on their assumptions as they were not asked to design lessons with poem-centered activities teachable to students that they will encounter in their career. If they had been, they would probably have questioned the practicality of the course in a different way and the comparison might have taken a different form. Another limitation, which is a methodological one, is that the qualitative side of the study could have been strengthened through interviews with the participants to get more in-depth and illuminating information about their responses. To conclude, it must be stated that the teacher trainees who participated in this study expressed their espoused theories, i.e. what they claim to believe in (Ur, 1992). Considering the research findings which suggest that discrepancies between espoused ideals and actual practices are common (Argyris & Schön, 1974; Samuelowicz & Bain, 1992 cited in Ho, Watkins & Kelly, 2001), it is important for a further study to investigate if or how language teachers will use poetry in their career to convert those espoused theories into theories in use, i.e. the actual beliefs held and displayed in one's behavior in practice (Ur, 1992).

5. Conclusion

This study is the product of a reaction set off by the authors' belief that the "Poetry Analysis and Teaching" course had been taught with an excessively literary focus and the pedagogical activities it had introduced would not work with most of the learners to whom the trainees are to teach in their career. The major concern based on a specific curricular and instructional intervention was to make the course more effective in meeting more of the needs of the prospective language teachers in the

contexts they will be working. The results are encouraging in that the experimental group's attitudes and motivation were found significantly more positive compared to the control group's results, which can also be viewed as establishing that the course was valued by its participants. In a broader sense, the aim of the study was in accord with the requirement that curricula and courses be developed, designed and/or revised realistically according to the professional and personal needs of teacher trainees (Karacaoğlu, 2009), which is an issue suitable for further research with bigger samples and different perspectives as based on the argument that the "logic" behind teaching literature to prospective language teachers should really be "logical".

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Appendix 1 (The Questionnaire)

Değerli öğretmen adayları,

Bu anket "Şiir İnceleme ve Öğretimi" dersinin sizlere mesleki açıdan ne kazandırdığını, sizin görüşleriniz ışığında değerlendirmek amacıyla oluşturulmuştur. Soruları lütfen dersin size olan katkısı ve çalışacağınız ortamlardaki koşullar bağlamında yanıtlayınız. Ayırdığınız zaman ve yardımlarınız için çok teşekkürler...

1) Şiir kullanarak, öğrencide motivasyonu artıran dil öğretim aktiviteleri oluşturulabilir.

- a) Kesinlikle katılıyorum b) Katılıyorum c) Katılmıyorum d) Kesinlikle katılmıyorum

2) Grammer konularını öğretme ve pekiştirmede, şiirler yardımcı olabilir.

- a) Kesinlikle katılıyorum b) Katılıyorum c) Katılmıyorum d) Kesinlikle katılmıyorum

3) "Vocabulary" konularını öğretme ve pekiştirmede, şiirler yardımcı olabilir.

- a) Kesinlikle katılıyorum b) Katılıyorum c) Katılmıyorum d) Kesinlikle katılmıyorum

4) Dil öğretiminde şiirin en çok hangi öğrenci grubu için uygun olabileceğini düşünüyorsunuz? (Cevabınız "Hepsi" veya "Hiçbiri" değilse, birden fazla seçim yapabilirsiniz)

- a) Çocuklar b) Ergenler (teenagers) c) Yetişkinler d) Hepsi e) Hiçbiri

5) Dil öğretiminde şiir kullanmanın en çok hangi düzey için uygun olabileceğini düşünüyorsunuz? (Cevabınız "Hepsi" veya "Hiçbiri" değilse, birden fazla seçim yapabilirsiniz)

- a) Beginner/Elementary
b) Pre-Intermediate/Intermediate
c) Advanced
d) Hepsi
e) Hiçbiri

6) Dil öğretiminde şiir kullanmanın en çok hangi beceriye katkısı olabileceğini düşünüyorsunuz? (Cevabınız "Hepsi" veya "Hiçbiri" değilse, birden fazla seçim yapabilirsiniz)

- a) Listening b) Reading c) Writing d) Speaking e) Hepsi f) Hiçbiri

7) Diğer eklemek istediğiniz hususlar varsa lütfen yazınız.

Appendix 2 (Translated Version of the Questionnaire)

Dear Teacher Trainees,

This questionnaire was prepared to elicit your views to evaluate what the “Poetry Teaching and Analysis” course gives you in professional sense. Please respond to the items considering the contributions of the course to you and your prospective working environments in your career. Thanks for your time and cooperation.

1) Using poetry, language teaching activities that would enhance learners’ motivation can be designed.

a) Strongly agree b) Agree c) Do not agree d) Strongly disagree

2) Poems can help to teach and consolidate grammar knowledge.

a) Strongly agree b) Agree c) Do not agree d) Strongly disagree

3) Poems can help to teach and consolidate vocabulary knowledge.

a) Strongly agree b) Agree c) Do not agree d) Strongly disagree

4) In language teaching, for what learner group do you think is poetry most suitable? (If your response is not “All” or “None”, you can choose more than one option)

a) Children b) Teenagers c) Adults d) All e) None

5) In language teaching, for what proficiency level do you think is poetry most suitable? (If your response is not “All” or “None”, you can choose more than one option)

a) Beginner/Elementary
b) Pre-Intermediate/Intermediate
c) Advanced
d) All
e) None

6) In language teaching, to what skill do you think can poetry contribute most? (If your response is not “All” or “None”, you can choose more than one option)

a) Listening b) Reading c) Writing d) Speaking d) All e) None

7) Please write any other thing that you would like to add.