A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY
ON THE ROLE OF POETRY AS TEACHING MATERIAL
IN DEVELOPING COMMUNICATIVE ABILITIES
OF STUDENTS IN THE EFL CLASSROOM

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE INSTITUTE OF ECONOMICS AND SOCIAL
SCIENCES OF BILKENT UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTERS OF ARTS
IN THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

BY
NAZAN MUNZUR
AUGUST 1991
ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to determine whether poetry engendered a more communicative classroom in teaching English language to students in the university level than traditional classroom materials. The study was conducted at Bilkent University. The students in three upper intermediate classes at BUSEL were chosen as subjects for the study. A sample lesson using poetry was taught in two experimental groups and the verbal flow was observed in these classes by means of a checklist which determined how much and what kind of discussion poetry generated among the students. A post-treatment questionnaire was given to these subjects after the class time ended to get their reactions and ideas about the lesson. In the control group, a traditional approach to teaching was used and it was observed using the same checklist to see the discussion level in this class while they were following their usual lesson plan within a fifty-minute period of time. As a separate part of the study a questionnaire was administrated to EFL teachers to get their comments on the utility and value of using poetry in the EFL classroom. The findings showed that poetry engendered a more communicative classroom. The classroom was communicative in the sense that students talked more than the teacher. It was also found out
that poetry had been effective in drawing and keeping students' attention and providing motivation. They were eager to express their opinions and to discuss different ideas with each other. Teachers' responses to poetry were also positive and their positive responses (especially when coupled with the positive student responses) are strong evidence that poetry can be effectively utilized as teaching material to create a more communicative classroom suggesting that poetry should be included in EFL programs.
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MA THESIS EXAMINATION RESULT FORM

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Ali Karaosmanoğlu  
Director  
Institute of Economic and Social Sciences
To my family
For their never ending love
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I would like to express my gratitude to my thesis advisor, Dr. James Stalker for his invaluable guidance and encouraging patience throughout this study.

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I am also grateful to my colleagues, Ms. Zeynep Iskenderoğlu and Ms. Anne Polat for their kindness and cooperation.
1.1 Background and Goal of the Study

Linguists often question the role of creative literature as class material in teaching English to non-native speakers at the university level. However, in recent years teachers of EFL have shown increasing interest in using literature in the classroom with their students. It is true that many EFL teachers in Turkey are literature trained, not ELT trained, and that a foreign language is often learned to enable a student to read the literature of the language, not necessarily for more practical purposes. These teachers like to use literature in the classroom and for them banning literature from the ELT classroom is impossible. According to them, literature can be useful because it can be used to teach "additional language and cultural concepts" required by EFL students (Rahim, 1989). On the other hand, language teachers who are ELT trained often do not like literature and they argue that it is not possible to use literature effectively in an EFL classroom because they think poetry is time consuming and a 'luxury'. According to them it increases the burden upon language teachers because it is not so easy to teach a literary piece written in another language.
This study which is based on descriptive research, includes library research, questionnaires and observations using a checklist. Such a study, as of now, has not been done in Turkey and it is hoped that it will be beneficial to Turkish EFL teachers.

1.2 Statement of the Research Question

1.2.1 The Research Question

The concern of this thesis is to assess the value of poetry as teaching material in the EFL classrooms. The question to be answered in this study is: Can poetry engender a more communicative classroom in teaching English language to students in a university level English language classroom in Turkey than classrooms using non-fictional prose? The assumption behind this study is that poetry, if chosen carefully and used intelligently, can be a valuable teaching material for developing students' communicative ability in English in university level EFL classrooms. A related question explored in this study focuses on attitudes of teachers and students towards the use of poetry.
1.2.2 Definitions

 Communicative classroom: Communicative classroom is a classroom where communication is emphasized. According to Nunan (1989) in the communicative classroom "the roles of teachers and learners are in many ways complementary. Giving the learners a different role (such as greater initiative in the classroom) requires the teacher to adopt a different role" (p.87). According to Breen and Candlin (1980, ctd. in Nunan, 1989) "the teacher has three main roles in the communicative classroom. The first is to act as facilitator of the communicative process, the second is to act as a participant, and the third is to act as an observer and learner" (p.87).

 Traditional Class: For this particular study traditional classroom is defined as being a textbook, teacher-centered classroom, with the teacher neither actively discouraging or encouraging student-talk.

 Non-fictional Prose: Essays, selections from textbooks.

 1.2.3 Basic Language Issues

 This study is limited to the use of poetry to teach English to EFL students at university level.

 According to the research literature some people do not believe in the utility of using poetry in the
classroom. Lazar (1989), thinks that one of the most distinctive and problematic features of poetry is that it destroys the usual norms of language; it often breaks the rules for the grammatical structure of a sentence, but on the other hand, she says that poetry also orders and patterns the language, and she gives rhyme as an example of this because "ordinary conversation does not usually proceed in rhyming couplets, but poetic language often demands this kind of phonological organization" (p.3). There are many other objections to using poetry in language lessons. One of the reasons for not using poetry is that if the learners find poetry difficult and boring in their own language, how can they enjoy it in another one? Many poems are very difficult to understand, even for a native speaker. But Tomlinson (1986) thinks that universal topics such as youth, old age, marriage, birth, love, education and friendship have a great potential and can make poetry more attractive and understandable.

There are some scholars who think that when the purpose of most courses is reaching communicative competence—as fast as possible—poetry is not relevant, and they think poetry is a luxury, it is time consuming. They say "luxury" because they think there is no need to spend time on teaching and dealing with
its archaic vocabulary and complex sentence structure. It takes time. Instead of spending more time on exploring it, we may enhance students' communicative competence in an easier and faster way. But because it is a way of communication, poetry may improve the students' use of language and may be useful for them in expressing their feelings and ideas. Poetry can provide useful opportunities to develop students' communicative competence. According to Bengi and Kurtboke (1985), what makes poetry worth studying in foreign language classes is its endless potential for classroom discussion as a highly creative and open-ended form of literature. And also poetry is shorter than prose and can be given as a piece of discourse, both in meaning and form, in an average lesson.

The study of poetry involves all four skills so these skills can be given to the students in an integrated way using poetry. So the use of poetry can be beneficial in many ways. More detail on the issue will be given in the second chapter.

This controversy attracted my attention because I am a literature trained teacher and interested in poetry in particular. A review of the professional literature showed that there is a need for empirical studies on whether or not to use specific pieces of literature in the classroom. Although questions such
as, "why and how should poetry be taught to EFL students?" and "how can students best benefit from it?" are discussed in the literature, there is a scarcity of research that supports the opinions of writers on this topic.

1.3 Statement of the Methodological Procedure

This is a descriptive study and the intention is to evaluate the utility of literature, poetry in particular, for teaching English to university level EFL students. Based on the findings of the literature review and original data collection instruments, (a checklist and two different sets of questionnaires) the place and utility of poetry at the university level for students of EFL in the English Prep-program at Bilkent university in Ankara, Turkey was examined. This research has been conducted in six steps:

1. Literature has been reviewed to find what scholars say about the place of literature, and poetry in particular, in the EFL classroom. Some views which support or refute the utility of literature in the EFL situation were assessed.

2. A sample lesson using poetry was planned and taught in two EFL classrooms.

3. The checklist was used to observe the verbal flow, that is how much student-talk there is in the
classroom during the lessons in which poetry was used. Discussion is desirable in EFL classrooms. The checklist determines how much and what kind of discussion poetry generates.

4. The questionnaires were conducted to gather EFL students' and teachers' comments on using poetry as a language teaching aid in the EFL classroom.

5. The data were analyzed and compared with what the review of literature said to see if the data and what the scholars say match with each other.

6. Based on the results of the study, suggestions for teaching English through poetry were proposed, and some guidelines for selection and for using poems in the classroom were offered.

1.4 Plan of Organization

Chapter 2 presents the review of professional literature. It provides various views on the role of literature and poetry in particular in the advanced EFL situation.

Chapter 3 describes how the data were collected and what kind of instruments are used in the study.

Chapter 4 presents and analyzes the data.

Finally, Chapter 5 offers a summary of the study, conclusions and discussion of general implications.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction
This chapter is divided into three sections. First, the place of creative literature in the EFL classroom is discussed. Second, discussions of the particular role of poetry are reviewed, and third, activities using poetry which will develop language skills are reviewed.

2.2 Literature in the EFL Classroom
There are many publications on modern methodology for language classes, new audiovisual aids, and new teaching activities. Choosing one technique or another, preferring one kind of material to another, is up to the teachers because they think it will be the most effective for a specific class. Creative literature is one of these teaching materials and teachers are beginning to consider seriously the role of literature in language teaching. The research literature has been reviewed to find what scholars say about the place of creative literature in the language classrooms. There are not many research studies on the rationale for using creative literature in the classroom. Most of them are discussions of how to use specific pieces of literature in the classroom.
According to the research literature, there are some views which accept the utility of creative literature as a teaching aid in the EFL situation and some views which refute the idea. These pro and con arguments are reviewed in the following sections.

2.2.1 Arguments Against the Use of Literature as a Teaching Aid

There are many discussions on using creative literature in EFL classes. The major arguments against using literature as a teaching aid will be summarized here. First, there is an emphatic reaction to the place of literature in the EFL/ESL courses from Blatchford (1972). His conclusion is that "the study of English literature is a luxury that cannot be indulged during the limited amount of time allocated to English" (p. 6). Questioning the teaching of literature as a vital concern of the EFL program, Blatchford argues that "teachers are ill-trained to teach literature". Preparing teachers to be able to teach literature is an extravagance when the demand is not high and when the objectives do not call for its teaching (Rahim, 1989).

The second argument against using literature is again from Blatchford. He thinks that second language students need to learn useful language and
communicative skills, "the classroom emphasis should be on the functional use of language, not on literature" (p.6). He notes that except in a very few countries, the study of literature in the schools is subordinated to a primary emphasis upon functional command of the language and the abilities of the students to handle simple language situations involving the four basic skills (Rahim, 1989, p. 115). Topping (1968, in Rahim, 1989) agrees with this idea and says:

Literature has no legitimate place in a second language program whose purpose is to teach language skills to a cross section of students who are preparing for studies or work in a variety of disciplines. (p.113)

Another argument is that reading literary works will have no pedagogical effect, especially on one's speaking, listening, and writing skills. According to Topping (1968), the idea that literature will "represent the style that can properly stand as a model for the students" is unrealistic and erroneous (p.97). If it were to be so, "we could all become Joyces or Hemingways, or Faulkners...The fact remains that literary genius is not acquired by reading the works of the masters" and imitating those who practice artful violation of syntactic rules. Many language teachers who disagree with using literature as a teaching aid argue that students are required to study the classics without the least attention to adequate language skills.
and they argue that the writing is too difficult, the language too specialized and the subject of no practical relevance.

The final argument which is advanced by Rahim (1989) is that it is ineffective to impose foreign literature upon students who may not have been introduced even to their own literature, whose formal education may be brief and whose background in cultural understanding of the setting of literature may be deficient. Rees (1970, in Rahim, 1989) says that teachers of literature often claim that the reading of the best examples of the literature of the foreign language is valuable for its cultural insights. Rees does not agree with this statement and says "this is doubtful". He thinks it may not represent the culture of the country. Povey's statement (1962, in Rahim, 1989) that "American literature will open up the culture of this country to a foreign student in a manner analogous to the extension of the native speaker's own awareness of his culture" (p.42) indirectly implies that American literature reflects the culture of the country. This, according to Topping (1968, in Rahim, 1989), reflects a past tradition in the evolution of American literature, and a student need not to dig up the "fossils of past eras" to learn American culture (p.99).
2.2.2 Arguments For the Use of Literature as a Teaching Aid

Povey (1979, ctd. in Rahim, 1989) sums up nicely the major arguments for the utility of using literature in the classroom. His first argument is that "literature can be useful because it can be used to teach additional language" (p.110). According to him, literature will enhance the basic skills by extending linguistic knowledge in the areas of vocabulary, syntax, and style. In stating this idea, Povey disagrees with Blatchford (see 2.1.1). Elliott (1990) agrees with Povey and sees literature as a rich source of authentic material. He says:

"Literature provides students with an incomparably rich source of authentic material over a wide range of register. If students can gain access to this material by developing literary competence, then they should effectively internalize the language at a very high level. (p. 198)

Elliott (1990) also thinks that it is difficult to see what other material could be offered to an advanced student to give him or her such varied and worthwhile language input.

As a second argument Povey (1979, ctd. in Rahim, 1989) says that "literature can be useful because it can be used to teach the cultural concepts required by the students" (p.110). He thinks that literature can serve as a link to cultural context. Literature
enhances the learner's understanding of the cultural values of English-speaking people, which is part of gaining true fluency in language.

There is an argument from Marckwardt (1975) that reading literature aids language skill development particularly in reading and he sees creative literature as useful reading material and says:

Literature is being used primarily to improve the student's effectiveness as a reader, both in English and in his own language. So viewed, it could be called language-learning material. (p.75)

2.2.3 Contrasting For and Against Arguments

In summary, Blatchford (1972) thinks that studying literature is a 'luxury' and it cannot be indulged during the limited amount of time allocated to English. On the other hand, Widdowson (1975) believes in the utility of poetry and sees it as a rich resource for developing learners' ability to use language. Another disagreement is seen between Blatchford and Povey. According to Blatchford, classroom emphasis should be on the functional use of language, not on literature. He thinks that second language learners need to learn communicative skills and literature cannot do that. Topping (1968) also agrees with him. But Povey thinks that literature will enhance the basic skills by extending linguistic knowledge in the areas of
vocabulary, syntax and style. Another argument against the use of literature in the classroom is that literary works have no pedagogical effect, especially on basic skills. But Marckwardt (1975) sees literature as a language learning material and thinks that literature improves the students' effectiveness as a reader.

Widdowson (1975), in his book *Stylistics and the Teaching of Literature*, summarizes both sides of the issue and says:

There are many people who question the relevance of literature to the practical concerns of language teaching, many who regard it as an unnecessary indulgence, there are others of less practical bent who wish to dissociate it from language study in order to preserve it like a sacred relic possessing mysterious potency. It seems to me that we urgently need an attitude to literature and a teaching approach based upon it, which, while acknowledging that literature is strange and mysterious and an object of reverence also recognizes that it is a use of language and so comparable with other uses of language; and that it is only one of the strange and mysterious ways in which human beings manage to communicate with each other. (p.124)

He thinks that if one can accept that literature can provide a resource for developing learners' ability to use a knowledge of language for the interpretation of discourse, then it ought to be one element of the language course. According to him, the level of the students, their interests, their purposes in learning are also important in choosing literature as one of the elements of language courses.
2.3 Poetry in the EFL Classroom

2.3.1 Introduction

In this section, arguments for and against the use of poetry in particular as opposed to prose in the EFL classrooms will be reviewed because poetry is different from prose in both its style and form. It is a different literary genre than other kinds of literary works. Through the review of professional literature, only one empirical study by Akyel and Yalcin was found. Others were only the opinions of some professionals who are interested in the issue.

2.3.2 Arguments Against the Use of Poetry

There are many arguments against the use of poetry. In this section, some of the major arguments will be summarized. One major argument against the use of poetry in the EFL/ESL classroom is that the language is too difficult. Maher (1982) points out that:

> Few teachers will grudge the place accorded the novel or short story in expanding vocabulary, reinforcing structure, or breathing life into the body of language. The poem, however, with its obscurities and sometimes archaic expression and spelling, has a harder time defending itself as valid instructional material rather than mere decoration. (p.327)

When talking about the archaic expression and spelling, Maher is most probably talking about such poems as:
A fiery soul, which, working out its way,
Fretted the pigmy body to decay;
And o'er-informed the tenement of clay.
(Apsalom and Achitophel, Dryden, qtd. in Maher, 1982)

But if Dryden had a reader in mind when writing that poem, it was most certainly not EFL students. Maher (1982) also adds that among language teachers today the specific charge lies in the area of relevance to immediate needs, and he mentions a remark made by a teacher "I am not against poetry. Don't get me wrong. It is just that when the purpose of most courses is communicative competence --as fast as possible--poetry is just not relevant" (1982, p.327). The teaching of poetry as Moody (1971, ctd. in Maher, 1982) complains "presents difficulties, and many teachers are inclined to avoid it as long as they can" (p.327). In addition to these mechanical difficulties Denman (1988) presents content difficulties and points out as well that poetry is often not a preferred reading;

Given the choice, I suspect most children (and as well as adults) would prefer an ice cream cone to a plate of raw vegetables,... Likewise, I suspect that many kids would rather watch a television miniseries version of a novel than devote long solitary hours to reading the novel. In the same vein, if they were up to reading, I suspect they would prefer an action-packed popular book to some more serious, perhaps inspirational, poetry. It is the nature of the human critter to want initially the quickest, most immediately satisfying experience rather than a deeper, more demanding experience. (p.55)
As he mentions, poetry is demanding for both teachers and the students. They need to understand its surface and deep meaning. They also need to understand denotative and connotative meanings of words. It is not sometimes as clear and understandable as a prose.

Akyel and Yalçın's survey results (1990) support Denman. Their survey is important because it is the only empirical study available that explores the utility of literature teaching in the English departments of five selected private higher schools in Istanbul, through an analysis of students and teachers responses to questionnaires. Their goal was to determine and evaluate the present state of literature teaching in the English departments of private high schools. According to their study poetry is cited by students as not having much effect on language skill development. Students find it boring. Only in the rare case where teachers demonstrated their own interest in poetry and were able to communicate their enthusiasm to their students was poetry accepted by students as useful. But, on the other hand, they come to the conclusion that carefully selected poetry could encourage the students to read and enjoy more modern poetry. But they didn't have anything to say about its effectiveness as a language teaching device.
2.3.3 Arguments For the Use of Poetry

There are some advantages of studying poems in English language classes. A poem can do many things. First of all, as Scharer (1985) suggests, a poem says a lot in a few words. Curry (1984) also agrees with this view and says that poetry is "condensed language" (p.65). In a few words, perhaps only one or two, the poet can communicate feelings, ideas or images for example:

The Eels
I don't mind eels
Except as meals.
(Ogden Nash, 1959, qtd. in Bouchard, 1988)

It can tell a story:

'Twas the night before Christmas...
(Moore, 1971, qtd. in Sandel, 1990)

or a poem can say how we feel when we are sad or happy, things that we like or wonder about. For example the following poem "Magic" makes us wonder. To some listeners it tells a story:

Magic
Did you ever see snow go
As your finger felt it?
That's because your hands are warm
And as you touch, you melt it.
(Sandel, 1990)

Second, a poem is usually short and this can be a great pedagogical advantage because it can be given as a whole in meaning and form in an average lesson. For example in the following short poem the poet gives the
feeling of loneliness effectively:

Lone Tree
There's this tree, see,
All by itself,
Like it doesn't have any friends.

And I thought that sometimes
I feel like that tree feels.
Lonely, you know,
All alone—not even one friend
in the world.

So, I said to the tree:
"Hey, tree, let's you and
me be friends!"
(Curry, 1984)

Third, as Sandel (1990) suggests, a poem can sing
with its own music of rhythm and rhyme, and can sing
with sounds and words that are used over and over
again:

Bananas and cream,
Bananas and cream:
All we could say was
Bananas and cream...
or

The merry-go-round goes
around and round
And up and down;
around and round
And up and down...
(Baruch, 1959, qtd. in Sandel, 1990)
or

One, two, button my shoe...

Curry (1984) also agrees with Sandel (1990) and says
that since it has rhythm and sound effects, poetry has
a music all its own. Together with the music of all
language, poets choose their words carefully to help create emotional impact. The sounds of the words themselves help to communicate feelings by their being "hard", "soft", "gentle", or "strong".

Fourth, a poem can paint a picture with words:

*The snow fell softly all the night,
It made a blanket soft and white*

... (Wilkins, 1959, qtd. in Sandel, 1990)

As Denman (1988) says:

> poetry is by its nature, a type of writing different from prose. It looks different on the page. It sounds different to the ears. It uses words in different ways and ultimately gives us a different kind of reading experience. (p.73)

Leki (1986) agrees when she says "poetry has the advantage of being short and often appealing to the senses by attempting a re-creation of auditory and visual images" (p.3).

Poetry can be a refreshingly different classroom activity. Bouchard (1988) supports this view and says "Poetry can expose students to the creative use of syntactic and lexical items, as well as the unique ways of thinking in the new language" (p.53).

As Rahim (1989, p.113) indicates there are some defenders of poetry such as Arna and Allan Harris (1967), Donen (1974), McConochie (1981) and Ramsaran (1983) who advocate the teaching of poetry as an effective device in language learning by following four principles:
Select poems that would enhance self-understanding, start with the dramatic content of the poem, clarify the poem's underlying values, and help the student see how the poet treats formal linguistic resources. (Rahim, 1989)

They believe that the practice of these principles and techniques in the classroom will certainly enrich the lives of students. Lazar (1989) also supports them and claims that:

By using poetry to focus on particular features of English, we can encourage students to think about how these features operate in non-poetical contexts. (p.4)

She explains this with examples and says that if a poem ingeniously invents its own vocabulary then perhaps we can use it to encourage our students to think about word-building in general. Or if a poem is webbed tightly together, then it may provide students with an extreme example of cohesion in discourse. Poetry can be used in the classroom to expand our students' overall language awareness. We should involve our students in making their own interpretations of its meaning.

Ramsaran (1983) demonstrates how poetry may be used in language classes to develop the students' knowledge of English. She suggests that teachers choosing poems for classroom study should bear in mind the specific language points that may be illustrated through different linguistic features (phonological
matters of pronunciation, rhythm and intonation; vocabulary; grammar; and meaning).

2.3.4 Contrasting For and Against Arguments

In summary, there is an argument that the language of poetry is too difficult. Maher (1982) finds poetry sometimes obscure and its words archaic whereas Scharer (1985) thinks a poem can say a lot in a few words. Leki (1986) mentions both the advantage and the disadvantage of poetry. She says poetry has the advantage of being short and appealing to the senses by attempting a re-creation of auditory and visual images, but the disadvantage is its conciseness and the lack of linguistic redundancies that aid comprehension. Akyel and Yalçın’s survey showed that the students found poetry boring and it had no effect on their skill development, but they also come to the conclusion that carefully selected poetry can encourage the students to read and enjoy poetry.

It can be concluded that the question of whether poetry should be included in the EFL classroom will remain unresolved unless empirical evidence on both sides of the issue is gathered.
2.4 Activities with Poetry

2.4.1 Introduction

In this section some of the activities suggested to develop language skills through poetry are reviewed and the question of how poetry will serve these ends is answered.

2.4.2 Activities For Vocabulary Building

Maher (1982) suggests many activities which may help the students develop their knowledge of English. His first suggestion is 'Building a poem'. In this activity the teacher gives a word and the class must think of as many words as possible associated with that word. These are immediately put on the blackboard. Then the students must compose their own poems using the listed words. This exercise produces a useful chart of contextualized vocabulary. With the help of this exercise, the students brainstorm and have the opportunity to learn different words that they do not know from their friends. They use them in context while building their own poem and improve the chances that they will learn them. His second suggestion is a 'Discrimination exercise'. In this exercise, the teacher presents the poem with certain words blocked out. Underneath each missing word there are two possible fillers. Through this exercise, the students,
again, brainstorm in choosing the appropriate word, but they also focus on syntax and learn to distinguish, for example, prepositions or verb tenses.

Hayhoe (1988) approaches the poem in a different way. He suggests using the 'cloze procedure' and applies the procedure in an enjoyable way. For example:

The poet William Blake has had a lot of trouble finding the right adjectives for the poem overleaf, and he has sent us a copy with blanks in it. He would like us to suggest which words might fit in best with the meaning of the poem. William has a complete version of the poem at home and he will send it along later for us to compare with ours. (p.143)

Applied to poetry, the value of the technique is to get pairs and groups of students talking about the creative possibilities of language as they grapple with the text and compare the likely effects of the words they suggest. On a more practical level, this exercise also develops students' vocabulary.

2.4.3 Activities for Developing Speaking Skills

Maher (1982) suggests a good activity which gives the opportunity for the students to communicate and exchange ideas. His suggestion is 'Poem Cartoons'. In this activity a game situation is provided. Each student divides a large piece of paper into cartoon strips and fills in each frame with either a whole
picture or simply selected objects that illustrate in some way one line or phrasal image from the poem. Papers are then exchanged, and each person tries to repeat orally the gist of the poem using their friends' pictorial version. This exercise is particularly suitable for poems because each line of a poem can be illustrated in some way. Later on, looking at the pictures, students retell the poem and associate the words or sentences with the help of these illustrations. This helps the students to practice their oral skills. They learn to explain a picture in a different 'poetic' way. They also learn certain phrases or words with the help of this exercise.

Tomlinson (1986) suggests turning a poem into a short story. This activity is also useful to encourage students to communicate. Sentence structures are irregular in most of the poems. Narrating a poem and turning it into a short story help them to build up regular sentences and to use their imaginations and organize their thoughts. Through this exercise, they produce their own sentences in order to turn the poem into a story so that they improve their oral skills. Dramatizing a poem, as Tomlinson (1986) and Denman (1988) suggest, can also be a useful activity for developing speaking skills. Denman says "give them time and room to make a few poems of their own-
Shakespeare style!" (p.174).

Tomlinson (1986) suggests pre- and post-reading activities. According to him, learners can be prepared for their experience of a poem through activities such as: discussing controversial topics related to the theme of the poem; predicting the poem's content from drawings, photographs, realia, sounds, scenes from plays, etc.; pre-teaching difficult vocabulary items; and practicing structures featured in the poem. He suggests post-reading activities to give the students a chance to use their interpretation of the poem and stimulate communication. Such activities include painting group interpretations of the poem, continuing the poem, re-writing the poem from a different viewpoint, and discussing controversial statements about the poem. These pre- and post-reading activities are also useful for developing oral skills. Students talk to each other and to the teacher and express their ideas and thoughts and learn to make judgements.

Lazar (1989) presents a different activity. She suggests that the teacher can give the students a poem which is cut up into strips. In groups or pair, they put it together again. After they are finished, the teacher asks them to justify why they put it together in the way they did. This exercise also improves the students' oral skills. They brainstorm and learn to
explain the whys of something.

These activities can be adapted to almost all levels of students.

2.5 Conclusion

In this chapter the professional literature was reviewed and some arguments for and against the use of literature were presented. But as stated before, those were only the opinions of some professionals who are interested in the issue. Although there may be other empirical studies, in the sources available to the researcher only one empirical study was found. This led to the research conducted here which was designed to answer the question whether or not poetry engenders a more communicative classroom. Does it work? and how does it work?
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

It was assumed in this study that poetry can be valuable teaching material for developing students' communicative ability in English. This chapter explains the methodological procedure followed to collect data for this study. Some previous discussions have shown that poetry can be used as teaching material to improve students' knowledge of English, but there are also opposing views to these opinions. In order to see if poetry can really be used to encourage students to communicate in English, a lesson plan adapted from Tomlinson (1986) was used in two classrooms at the prep-program at Bilkent University. A checklist was used to measure the verbal flow, and two questionnaires, one for the EFL teachers and the other for the students were used to gather the comments of the students and the EFL teachers on the utility of poetry as teaching material. It was expected that the students would contribute to the lesson and express and discuss their ideas more through poetry. This chapter provides a detailed explanation of the study, subjects and data collection procedure and instruments.
3.2 Subjects

The subjects were the students in three upper-intermediate classes in the Bilkent University School of English Language (BUSEL). The first group consisted of 15 students (8 female, 7 male). Their ages ranged from 18 to 22. The teacher of this class, a Turk, was a graduate of an ELT department and at the time of the study had four years of teaching experience. The second group consisted of 19 students (9 female, 10 male) whose ages ranged from 17 to 24. Their teacher, who was British and a graduate of an English language and literature department, had sixteen years of teaching experience. The final group consisted of 27 students, 13 of whom were male and 14 female. The instructor of this class was Turkish and had been teaching for twenty-three years.

Both the teachers and the students were aware of the study. But they were only informed that the aim of the study is to evaluate the utility of poetry in the classroom. They were not given a detailed explanation in order to preserve objectivity.
3.3 Materials

3.3.1 Checklist

The data were collected by means of three data collection instruments, a checklist and two sets of questionnaires. The checklist was used to observe the verbal flow, that is how much student-talk and teacher-talk there was in the classroom and the nature of that talk during the lesson. There were eight categories included in the checklist. These particular options were settled on because they were thought to reflect the concerns of a communicative classroom. The options such as initiation of discussion and opinion and expressing agreement and disagreement are essential in communication and such utterances are required from the students in order to have a communicative classroom. The categories of content and language questions and answers were chosen to see whether the communication depended on only the question-answer type or if other adjacency pairs were used. The checklist determined which speaker (teacher or student) took a turn and what the nature of that turn was. Was it a negative or positive response, positive or negative feedback that is, things that kept conversation going? For example:

1. "That's a very good point" (positive)
2. "Do you really think so?" (negative)

Or was it a content question (question related to the
content and the meaning of the poem) or language question (questions that related to the grammatical structure or vocabulary of the poem) or was it an answer to a question? For example:

3. "Is the old lady in the poem ill?"

4. "What does thunderstorm mean?"

Or was it sentences that expressed agreement with the previous speaker or disagreement with an opinion? For example:

5. "I also agree with Murat. She wants to die that’s why she doesn’t want to be active in life. Maybe she feels alone."

6. "I don’t think that she wants to die. She wants to live but in a comfortable way. She wants her sons or daughters to help her and to wait on her."

Was it an initiation of discussion:

7. "I think the reason for her feeling alone is her family’s fault. They shouldn’t leave her alone in this age. What do you think?"

or opinion?

8. "I think she is a pessimistic woman. If she were a bit optimistic, she would love to live."

The checklist also showed which student talked and how many times they participated in the lesson (see Appendix A). In the two classes where poetry was used, the checklist determined how much and what kind of
discussion poetry generated among the students. The length of the turn was not measured and the sentences uttered by the students and the teacher were not also noted because they were not the particular focus of the study. All three classes were observed using this checklist.

3.3.2 Questionnaires

3.3.2.1 Student-Questionnaire

Questionnaires were given to students and teachers to gather comments on their perceptions of the usefulness of poetry as language teaching material. The questionnaire for the subjects was given only to the students of the two classes where poetry was used. It was a post-treatment questionnaire and was given after the class time had ended to get the students' reactions to and feelings about the lesson. There were 13 items which were scaled from 1 to 5, and the students were required to mark the number according to the degree of agreement (1 if they strongly agreed and 5 if they strongly disagreed). The statements in the questionnaire were aimed at probing their feelings about the lesson, that is, did they enjoy the lesson and the poem? Were they enthusiastic to talk about it? Did they easily use their English? If so, why and how? In the last two open-ended questions, they were
required to write their most negative and positive opinions about the lesson (see Appendix B). Students were expected to enjoy the lesson and to respond positively to the statements in the questionnaire.

The checklist observation was done to determine the amount of student and teacher talk and the nature of that talk. The student-questionnaire, though, was prepared to determine if the students really wanted to talk in the lesson or was it because their teacher wanted them to do so. Another reason was to see whether the students unwillingly participated in the lesson because their teacher wanted to do such a lesson.

3.3.2.2 Teacher-Questionnaire

The other questionnaire was given to 13 EFL teachers at BUSEL, in Ankara and 15 MA TEFL students who are all EFL teachers at various universities in Turkey to get their comments on the utility and value of using poetry in the EFL classrooms. There were 22 items in the questionnaire and the same rating scale was used for this questionnaire as in the student one in order to provide a basis for comparing the degree of agreement with the items (see Appendix C).

Both the checklist and questionnaires were prepared by the researcher. Five EFL teachers from the
MA TEFL classroom and two literature teachers at the Bilkent University English Language and Literature Department were used to pilot the questionnaires. They were asked to read the statements in the questionnaires and give their comments about them. In light of their comments some of the statements were rewritten. The statement "Poetry helps to present and practice language items" was changed into "Poetry helps to present and practice language structures and vocabulary" in order to make it more specific. They found the statement "Poetry is difficult to understand and boring for the students" unclear so this statement was reworded as "Poetry is difficult to understand and boring for the students if they can't comprehend it fully". They also advised placing the following statements in different parts of the questionnaire: "I like using poetry because I don't have to talk as much" and "I like using poetry because students do all the talking". Using synonymous statements like these enhanced the reliability of the questionnaire.

3.4 Data Collection Procedure

A sample lesson using poetry was taught in the two experimental classes. The lesson plan was an adaptation from Tomlinson (1986). A poem by John Arden describing an older woman was presented with
suggestions on how to use the poem with the students. The objective of the lesson was to practice students’ speaking, listening, reading and writing skills and to provide opportunities to communicate and exchange ideas through poetry. As a warm up activity the researcher suggested group work using Picture-Talk (1988). Pictures of old people were given to each group, and they were encouraged to talk about them. Approximately 10 minutes were given for the warm up.

The poem was recorded so, the students listened to the tape-recordings of the poem. The poem by John Arden was chosen because there were not many unknown words and the sentence structure was not complex, that is, it was easy to understand for the students. It was also expected to bring out a lot of discussion because it was describing an old woman who is left alone and wanted to be cared for and loved, and Turkish people, especially young people, respect and love old people. That is why the students were expected to be interested in the topic and to talk about it a lot. No time limit was given for the main activity. The teacher was allowed to continue the lesson until the discussion was over. A series of follow up activities was provided to be used if they had time left. Home work activities were also suggested (see Appendix D).

A total of 50 minutes was first planned for this
lesson but before the application of the lesson plan it was decided not to let the students quit after 50 minutes if the discussion was not over. Since the aim of the study was to see whether poetry engendered a communicative classroom, to limit the duration of the lesson seemed counterproductive. It was, then, left to the teacher to decide whether or not to continue the lesson.

The two experimental classes were to use the same lesson plan. EG-1 did use the researchers' lesson plan, but the teacher of the second class added a second contrasting poem to the lesson plan so that she could compare the two poems. The two classes were alike in the use of poetry as the instructional focus, but different in the number of poems used. Compared with the first one, the second poem is more lively and optimistic. It was, again, about old age but the woman in this poem wants to be active in life when she gets old as opposed to the woman in the first poem. This idea was accepted by the researcher because it promised to be a more lively and enjoyable activity to do two contrasting poems. The researcher observed the verbal flow through a checklist during the lesson. At the end of the lesson the students were given five minutes to do the questionnaire of ten questions.

The third class was labeled as a "traditional
class" by the researcher. Traditional for this study is a textbook, teacher-centered classroom, with the teacher neither actively discouraging or encouraging student-talk. The traditional class for this study was selected in consultation with teachers at BUSEL who recommended a particular class as fitting these requirements. The researcher did not know either the teacher or the students and had not previously observed the class. The particular class session that was observed was chosen by chance. A traditional approach to teaching was used in the class. The class activity was studying a reading passage called "Other People's Jobs" during the observation. The teacher first wanted them to read the passage and then asked them to do the exercises by themselves. Then they did them together. Vocabulary was written on the board by the teacher and then she gave the Turkish equivalent of those words. The teacher, then, asked questions and the students answered. It was a traditional question-answer exercise. The teacher followed the textbook Headway/Upper-Intermediat (1987) step by step without using any additional material. In this class the teacher was not required to do extra planning or additional work by the researcher. She followed her normal teaching. The class was observed while they were following their usual lesson plan within a fifty-
period of time, through the same checklist to see the verbal flow. The students in this class were not given a questionnaire.

3.5 Analytical Procedure

The data was analyzed in four steps. First, the checklists used in the three classes were analyzed one by one. The amount of student participation was counted and tabulated to see how many times the students participated in the lesson and the nature of the participation. Second, student responses to the questionnaire were analyzed using the rating scale to learn their reactions, their positive and negative opinions about the poetry lesson. As a third step, the teachers' responses were also analyzed in the same way to see the difference between the students' and teacher's reaction to poetry. Finally, overall results on using poetry as teaching material in the classroom were given.

It was hypothesized that students would react positively to the use of poetry. It was also expected that through the use of poetry the students would participate in the lesson more. It was, again, hypothesized that most of the teachers would respond positively to the use of poetry in the EFL classrooms.
CHAPTER 4
ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

4.1 Introduction

In this study it was assumed that poetry, if chosen carefully and used intelligently, can be a valuable teaching material for developing students' communicative ability in English in university level EFL classrooms. In order to measure the place and the utility of poetry in encouraging students to communicate in English three upper-intermediate classes (consisting of 15, 19, and 27 students) were used. In two of these classes a poetry lesson prepared by the researcher was taught by the teachers of these classes. The verbal flow in these classes was observed by means of a checklist which shows the amount of student and teacher talk and the nature of that talk. After the lesson the students were given a questionnaire which was aimed at probing their feelings about the lesson. Then a third class, where the "traditional" way of teaching was used, was observed through the same checklist to see the difference between this class and the other two poetry classes in terms of the level of discussion. Then another questionnaire for both native and non-native EFL teachers was administrated to gather their opinions on using poetry as teaching material in the classroom.
The data were analyzed in four steps. First, the checklists used to observe the three classes were analyzed. Second, students' responses to their questionnaire were analyzed, and then as a third step teachers' responses to their questionnaire were analyzed and finally, the researchers' checklist observations were compared with the responses on the and student and teacher questionnaires about the utility of poetry as teaching material.

4.2 Checklist Analysis

4.2.1 Control Group

First of all the control group, consisting of 27 students, was observed. The students were studying a reading passage called "Other People's Jobs" during the observation. The teacher first had them read the passage silently and then asked them to do the exercises, which focused on vocabulary, by themselves. The teacher and the students then did them together. Vocabulary of the passage was written on the board by the teacher in English, and she then wrote the Turkish equivalent of the words along with the English. Next the teacher asked questions and the students answered. It was a question-answer exercise. The questions were not the kind of questions that encourage the students to express their opinions. The teacher followed the
text book step by step. No other material was used except the text book. It was not a communicative class but rather a traditional class as these classes are defined in section 1.2.2. The teacher followed a textbook lesson plan and the students were not encouraged to talk with each other. As the data in Table 4.1 shows, student participation in the lesson was very low. Only 9 students out of 27 participated in the class activities. Table 4.1 shows the class participation of each of the students who took part and the nature of that participation. The results from the checklist indicated that students participated 17 times in the class activity whereas the teacher took the turn 20 times within a 50 minute period of time. Clearly teacher-talk dominates student-talk in this class. The kinds of interaction and the nature of the class dynamics based on those interactions will be discussed in section 4.1.4.
Table 4.1
Student and Teacher Participation in the Control Group.
N=27

<table>
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<th>LD</th>
<th>AN</th>
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<th>S/OPd</th>
<th>IN/D</th>
<th>IN/OP</th>
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S# = Student number  S/OPa = Sentence/opinion agree  
R = response  S/OPd = sentence/opinion disagree  
CO = content question  IN/D = initiate discussion  
LD = language question  IN/OP = initiate opinion  
AN = answer  T = Total number of students

4.2.2 Experimental Group-1

The Experimental Group-1, consisting of 15 students, discussed a poem by John Arden describing an old lady. The teacher followed a lesson plan which was adapted from Tomlinson (1986) by the researcher. Because no time limitation was given for the lesson plan, the teacher was allowed to continue the lesson until the discussion was over, but the lesson took only the normal class period, 50 minutes. Table 4.2 shows the participation of each student and the teacher responses and the nature of the participation. As indicated in the table only 3 students out of 15 did not take part in the lesson but the others participated...
42 times (least participation: 1, the most: 8 times). The teacher played the role of guide with a total of 11 responses. In other words, that student-talk was 4 times more than teacher-talk.

Table 4.2
Student and Teacher Participation in Experimental Group-1
N=15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Nature of Turn</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>R</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tot.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

S# = Student number  S/OPa = Sentence/opinion agree
R = response      S/OPd = sentence/opinion disagree
CB = content question  IN/D = initiate discussion
LG = language question  IN/OP = initiate opinion
AN = answer  T = Total number of students

4.2.3 Experimental Group-2

In Experimental Group-2, there were 19 students. The same lesson plan was given to the teacher to be taught together with another contrasting poem "Warning", by Jenny Joseph. Using another poem in addition to the one by John Arden was proposed by the
teacher of this class to provide variety in the class discussion. The second poem was about a lady who wants to be active in life when she gets old as opposed to the lady who is pessimistic about the rest of her life in the first poem. The poems contrast in their tone. The first one is rather pessimistic and dark whereas the second one is quite joyful and colorful. It took two class-period (100 minutes) and there was more discussion compared with the EG-1 and the TG. The data in Table 4.3 show that the students took 74 turns and the teacher 25. During the 100 minutes, students talked nearly 3 times as often as the teacher.
Because the lesson took two class periods (100 minutes), in order to insure that results were comparable from all three groups, the first period (50 minutes) was isolated. Table 4.4 shows the distribution of student participation and its nature during the first 50 minutes of the discussion. The
table shows that students participated 40 times and the teacher participated 10 times. This is evidence that students talk rather than the teacher.

Table 4.4
Distribution of Student Participation in Experimental Group-2 (in 50 minutes)
N=19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Nature of Turn</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Nature of Turn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>19</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>R</th>
<th>CD</th>
<th>LD</th>
<th>AN</th>
<th>S/OPa</th>
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<th>IN/D</th>
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<td>1</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

 Tot. | 12 | 2  | 1  | 4  | 13  | 2    | 3    | 3    | 40    |

S# = Student number S/OPa = Sentence/opinion agree
R = response S/OPd = sentence/opinion disagree
CD = content question IN/D = initiate discussion
LD = language question IN/OP = initiate opinion
AN = answer T = Total number of students
4.2.4 Comparison of Verbal Flow in Control and Experimental Groups

Table 4.5 shows the totals for each of the verbal flow (interaction) categories included in this study by class. The data clearly indicate that in the control group, interaction was mostly in questions and answers (87% of total interactions), whereas in the two experimental groups questions and answers were only 24% for EG-1 and 20% for EG-2 (in the 1st 50 mins.), clearly significantly lower. In the experimental groups there was a distribution to all different types of participation. In the control group none of the students initiated opinions or discussion and all expressed an opinion which agreed with a previous speaker. Only the teacher expressed an opinion which disagreed three times. On the other hand, interaction in the experimental groups was more intensive in initiation of an opinion or discussion and expressing opinions which agreed and disagreed with previous speakers (65% in EG-1 and 51% in EG-2 in 50 mins.). However, it is clear from the data that the majority of the participants in the experimental groups discussed their opinions mostly agreeing with each other (11 in EG-1 and 13 in EG-2 in 50 mins.) while those who expressed disagreeing opinions (7 in EG-1 and 2 in EG-2).
The most participation in EG-1 is in the category of 'initiation of opinion' (13), and in EG-2, in the category of 'sentences that express agreement' (13), and in the CG in the 'answer' category (9).

Table 4.5
Totals for Each Type of Interactions in Three Groups
(in 50 minutes)
(CG/N=27, EG-1/N=15, EG-2/N=19)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R</td>
<td>CD</td>
<td>LQ</td>
<td>AN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Group</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exp. Group-1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exp. Group-2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exp. Group-2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table:
- S0 = Student number
- S/OPa = Sentence/opinion agree
- S/OPd = Sentence/opinion disagree
- R = response
- CD = content question
- LQ = language question
- AN = answer
- IN/D = initiate discussion
- IN/OP = initiate opinion
- Tot. = Total number of students

As can be seen from Table 4.6, the traditional class was teacher-centered (54%), and interaction depended on the question-answer type activity. On the other hand, in the two experimental groups student-talk was distinctively higher (80%) than the teacher-talk, students were quite active in these classes. They mostly spoke to each other. Approximately 5 or 7 students took turns before the teacher in EG-1 and EG-2. For example, in EG-1, first, the teacher started the discussion asking a content question, then
student-10 (S-10) responded to the question and answered the question. The same student initiated a discussion and (S-1) asked a content question to the teacher and she answered the question and then, S-12 took a turn and expressed her opinions. Then the teacher broke in. She did not insist on taking the turn back but wanted them to carry on the discussion. She participated mostly giving feedback. The class followed this general pattern; mostly the students selected other students to take a turn.

In EG-2, the situation is similar. The average length of turns between teacher turns was approximately 6. For example, when a student (S-5) expressed an opinion, the other students (S-10 and -11) agreed with him and 2 students (S-12 and -15) disagreed. Then S-5 took the turn again and addressed a question to those who disagreed with him. The stretches of interchange between students and teacher comments were long. In the experimental groups the teacher became "one of the students" in the discourse structure. But in the CG, it was not the case. The teacher was dominant. She directed a question to a student and got a response. She explained the meanings of the unknown words in the passage, asked and answered questions. This pattern was maintained throughout the class period. In the experimental groups the teacher guided the discussion.
but not overtly.

Table 4.6
Distribution of Student and Teacher Talk in Three Groups
(in a 50 minutes period)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of class</th>
<th>Teacher-talk</th>
<th></th>
<th>Student-talk</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control Group</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exp. Group-1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exp. Group-2 (1st 50 min)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of the researchers' observation through the checklists showed that poetry had been useful, but a the students' and the teachers' opinions must be examined in order to confirm these data.

4.3 Student-Questionnaire Analysis

4.3.1 Experimental Group-1

The questionnaire was administrated to the students of the two experimental groups right after the lesson. It took 10 minutes to answer the questionnaire. In Table 4.7, responses of the EG-1 students to the statements in the questionnaire were given. As can be seen from the table, 14 students out of 15 (93%) enjoyed the poetry lesson and 9 students (60%) agreed that they felt their English improved through the
lesson. Ten students (66%) indicated that they felt more like talking in this lesson than the other classes. Ten students (66%) agreed with the statements "I used my English easily to express my feelings about the poem" and "I felt comfortable and confident while talking about the poem". It was also clear from the seventh and eighth statements that almost all the students liked the poem. Only one of them found the topic boring and three of them indicated that they generally dislike poems but found this one interesting. All the students generally agree that the poem was easy to understand and the topic was real and interesting.
Table 4.7
Student Responses to the Questionnaire in Experimental Group-1
N=15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I enjoyed the lesson.</td>
<td>12 2 1 - -</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I learnt about myself and the world.</td>
<td>4 5 6 - -</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. My English improved because of this lesson.</td>
<td>8 4 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I felt more like talking in this class than I usually do.</td>
<td>6 4 4 - 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I felt comfortable and confident while talking about the poem.</td>
<td>3 8 2 1 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I used my English easily to express my feelings about the poem.</td>
<td>5 4 5 - 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I disliked this poem because:</td>
<td>- - - 3 12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) I didn't understand the words.</td>
<td>- - - 14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) The sentences were too complex.</td>
<td>- - - 13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) The topic was boring.</td>
<td>1 2 - 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) I generally dislike poems.</td>
<td>10 4 1 -</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I liked this poem because:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) It was easy to understand.</td>
<td>13 2 - -</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) It was short.</td>
<td>7 4 2 1 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) The topic was real and interesting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The last two questions in the questionnaire were open-ended ones, in which the students were asked to write their most negative and the most positive opinion about the lesson. The answers confirm the positive responses gathered in questions 1 through 8. Only two students mentioned that they had a negative opinion. The focus of these negative opinions was on the duration of the lesson and its being boring. The positive opinions focused on the motivation and its
being different from other lessons.

One negative opinion was from a student who found the poem boring, so he did not participate in the lesson. The other negative opinion focused on the duration of the lesson, which the student said was too limited. He wanted to talk more about the poem. The rest of the students indicated that the lesson was enjoyable. In fact, they specifically stated that they had no negative comments. One of the students wrote that they easily concentrated on the lesson via the poem and wanted to talk about it. Most of them mentioned that the lesson was very different from others. One student wrote that she wanted to be taught more complex poems.

4.3.2 Experimental Group-2

The questionnaire results from EG-2 are shown in Table 4.8. According to the results only 3 students out of 19 (16%) indicated that they didn't enjoy the lesson. Three had neutral opinions and 13 (68%) enjoyed the lesson. Most of them found the poems easy to understand and interesting. Three students found the topic boring and the sentences too complex.
Table 4.8
Student Responses to the Questionnaire in Experimental Group-2
N=19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I enjoyed the lesson.</td>
<td>7 6 3 4 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I learnt about myself and the world.</td>
<td>3 2 3 4 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. My English improved because of this lesson.</td>
<td>2 1 7 2 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I felt more like talking in this class than I usually do.</td>
<td>5 2 5 4 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I felt comfortable and confident while talking about the poem.</td>
<td>5 1 6 2 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I used my English easily to express my feelings about the poem.</td>
<td>7 5 3 2 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I disliked this poem because:</td>
<td>1 1 4 13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) I didn't understand the words.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) The sentences were too complex.</td>
<td>2 1 3 1 15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) The topic was boring.</td>
<td>1 3 3 1 12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) I generally dislike poems.</td>
<td>1 1 4 2 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I liked this poem because:</td>
<td>13 2 3 1 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) It was easy to understand.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) It was short.</td>
<td>9 3 4 1 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) The topic was real and interesting</td>
<td>12 2 3 1 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Their reactions to the last two statements were almost similar to the reactions from the students in EG-1. As the most negative opinion, two students indicated that two class periods were too long and this tended to make the lesson become boring. They said that 50 minutes might have been enough. Three of them wrote that the first poem was pessimistic and the second one more enjoyable, but they mentioned that to compare them had been useful and enjoyable. On the
other hand the students had more positive opinions than negative ones. Two of the students said they found the lesson so interesting that they didn't realize that two hours passed so fast. Most of them agreed with the opinion that it was nice to talk about personal opinions and to be able to comment. One of the students used the word "attractive" for the lesson and indicated that he would like to attend similar lessons. Two of the students wrote that it was enjoyable to hear the tape recording of the poems. One said that the poems were "good choice" and the lesson was "friendly".

4.3.3 Total Student Responses to Questionnaire in Experimental Group-1 and 2

The responses from the students of the two experimental groups were combined and are given in Table 4.9 in order to see the general impressions of the students about the lesson.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I enjoyed the lesson.</td>
<td>19 18 17 16 15</td>
<td>5 6 7 8 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I learnt about myself and the world.</td>
<td>7 7 4 4 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. My English improved because of this lesson.</td>
<td>3 9 11 2 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I felt more like talking in this class than I usually do.</td>
<td>11 6 9 4 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I felt comfortable and confident while talking about the poem.</td>
<td>8 9 8 3 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I used my English easily to express my feelings about the poem.</td>
<td>12 9 8 2 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I disliked this poem because:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) I didn’t understand the words.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>- 1 7 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) The sentences were too complex.</td>
<td>2 1</td>
<td>- 2 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) The topic was boring.</td>
<td>1 4</td>
<td>3 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) I generally dislike poems.</td>
<td>2 3 4 3 22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I liked this poem because:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) It was easy to understand.</td>
<td>26 4 3 1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) It was short.</td>
<td>16 7 6 2 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) The topic was real and interesting</td>
<td>22 6 4</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in the table, 27 students out of 34 (79%) strongly agreed or agreed with the statement "I enjoyed the lesson". Seventeen (50%) of them thought that they felt more like talking in the lesson. Their reaction to statements 7 and 8 indicated they enjoyed the poems and found them easy to understand. Twenty-one (62%) of them agreed that they were able to use English easily to express themselves.
4.4 Teacher-Questionnaire Analysis

4.4.1 Introduction

Observations through checklists and the students' mostly positive opinions on poetry are strong evidence that from a student viewpoint, poetry can be effectively utilized as teaching material in an EFL class. What EFL teachers who are going to use poetry in the classroom think about the utility of poetry is equally important. In order to answer this question 28 EFL teachers, 13 of whom were native and 15 non-native speakers of English, were given a questionnaire. Their responses to the questionnaire were analyzed in two steps. First, all the teacher responses were tabulated according to the degree of agreement (see Table 4.10). Second, in order to see if the opinions of native speakers and non-native speakers differ from each other, the data were analyzed separately. Tables 4.11 and 4.12 show the native and non-native speaker responses to each statement in the questionnaire.

4.4.2 Total Group Responses

The total group responses indicate that EFL teachers agree on using literature as teaching material (Q-2) and also agree that poetry can be a supplementary teaching material (Q-7). But they are not sure whether poetry motivates students (Q-11). Most of the
teachers agree that poetry generates discussion (Q-14). Except for one teacher, they all agreed that the selection of specific poems for a particular group of students is important (Q-15), and they also agree that poems which have universal topics can be more enjoyable for the students (Q-19), and using it with drawings, photographs, and music can make it more beneficial (Q-17). They disagree with the statement that they like to use poetry because they do not have to talk as much (Q-4). They also disagree with a similar kind of question that they like to use poetry because students do all the talking (Q-9). A teacher writes a comment to this statement that nothing can make the students do all the talking. They seem to be neutral on the statement that poetry helps to lower students' anxiety level (Q-12). They also have no preference towards using poetry instead of prose (Q-3). So the data show that the EFL teacher would like to use poetry, and they think that it may be a very good supplementary material. But they have some doubts as to whether it motivates the students and helps to lower the students' anxiety level or not.
Table 4.10
Teacher Responses to the Questionnaire
N=28

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>I use different kinds of materials in addition to the text books to teach English in the classroom.</td>
<td>17 10 - 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Literature can be used as teaching material</td>
<td>14 9 3 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>I prefer using poetry rather than prose to teach English.</td>
<td>1 2 15 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>I like using poetry because I don't have to talk as much.</td>
<td>1 - 7 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>I like poetry personally.</td>
<td>16 3 4 3 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>I would never use poetry as a teaching activity.</td>
<td>1 4 5 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Poetry can be valuable supplementary teaching material.</td>
<td>12 9 5 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Because poetry is shorter, it can be given as a whole both in meaning and form in an average lesson.</td>
<td>10 5 11 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>I like poetry because students do almost all the talking.</td>
<td>8 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Poetry has the value of appealing to each individual reader in different ways.</td>
<td>15 7 5 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Poetry motivates the students to use English</td>
<td>4 8 15 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Poetry helps to lower the students' anxiety level.</td>
<td>1 8 14 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Poetry helps to present and practice language structures and vocabulary.</td>
<td>8 11 6 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Poetry generates discussion in the classroom and students give their opinions and feelings easily.</td>
<td>10 11 4 1 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>The selection of specific poems for a particular group of students is important.</td>
<td>23 4 - 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Students exchange opinions through poetry.</td>
<td>7 13 7 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Using drawings, sound, photographs, and music as a supplementary material makes poetry more enjoyable and beneficial.</td>
<td>19 7 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Poems which express strong emotions, attitudes, feelings, opinions, and ideas are usually more productive for generating discussions.</td>
<td>12 14 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Selecting poems which have universal topics, such as love, friendship, old age, and nature, can be understandable and enjoyable for students.</td>
<td>18 7 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Poetry provides different and interesting activities so that students enjoy and learn the language easily.</td>
<td>8 14 5 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Poetry is difficult to understand and boring for the students if they can't comprehend it fully.</td>
<td>8 8 7 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Students initiate their opinions easily through poetry</td>
<td>1 6 18 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


4.4.3 Native Teacher Responses

According to table 4.11, 13 native speakers who were administrated the questionnaire were all British. Twelve of them (92%) agreed that literature can be used as teaching material with only one disagreeing (Q-2). Nine (69%) indicated that they like poetry personally (Q-5), and 2 teachers indicated that they would never use poetry as a teaching activity (Q-6), but on the other hand all of them agreed that it can be valuable supplementary teaching material (Q-7). Nine teachers agreed that poetry generates discussion, but 2 did not agree with this statement and the other 2 had no opinion about it (Q-14). Except for one, all of them mentioned that selecting poems which have universal topics (Q-19) and which express feelings, ideas, and strong emotions (Q-18) can be more productive. As was shown in the table, native speakers (NSs) compared with the non-native speakers (NNSs) strongly agree on the use of literature as teaching material but neither NSs nor NNSs had a preference for using poetry over prose. They significantly disagree (69%) with the statement that "I would never use poetry as a teaching activity. But, on the other hand, both NNSs and NSs agreed on the opinion that poetry can be a valuable supplementary teaching material.
Table 4.11
Native EFL Teachers' Responses to the Questionnaire
N=13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. I use different kinds of materials in addition to the text books to teach English in the classroom.</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Literature can be used as teaching material</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I prefer using poetry rather than prose to teach English.</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I like using poetry because I don’t have to talk as much.</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I like poetry personally.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I would never use poetry as a teaching activity.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Poetry can be valuable supplementary teaching material.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Because poetry is shorter, it can be given as a whole both in meaning and form in an average lesson.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I like poetry because students do almost all the talking.</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Poetry has the value of appealing to each individual reader in different ways.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Poetry motivates the students to use English.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Poetry helps to lower the students' anxiety level.</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Poetry helps to present and practice language structures and vocabulary.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Poetry generates discussion in the classroom and students give their opinions and feelings easily.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. The selection of specific poems for a particular group of students is important.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Students exchange opinions through poetry.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Using drawings, sound, photographs, and music as a supplementary material makes poetry more enjoyable and beneficial.</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Poems which express strong emotions, attitudes, feelings, opinions, and ideas are usually more productive for generating discussions.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Selecting poems which have universal topics, such as love, friendship, old age, and nature, can be understandable and enjoyable for students.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Poetry provides different and interesting activities so that students enjoy and learn the language easily.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Poetry is difficult to understand and boring for the students if they can't comprehend it fully.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Students initiate their opinions easily through poetry</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Almost all of the NNSs preferred to use a variety of materials in the classroom (Q-1), 10 (66%) of them indicated that literature can be teaching material (Q-2), but only 2 (13%) of them preferred using poetry to prose (Q-3). Eight of them had no opinion about using it. On the other hand, 8 (53%) of the NNSs agreed that poetry can be a supplementary teaching material (Q-7) but two of them disagreed with that idea. Nine of them were not sure about the statement "poetry motives students to use English" (Q-11). They were also neutral (63%) on the statement that students initiate their opinions easily through poetry (Q-22). They significantly agreed (93%) that selection is important (Q-19), and that using drawings, photographs, and music makes teaching poetry more enjoyable for the students (Q-17). They disagreed with the statement that they would never use poetry as a teaching activity (Q-6).
Table 4.12
Non-native teachers' responses to the questionnaire
N=15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly</th>
<th>Strongly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. I use different kinds of materials in addition to the text books to teach English in the classroom.</td>
<td>6 8 - -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Literature can be used as teaching material</td>
<td>3 7 - 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I prefer using poetry rather than prose to teach English.</td>
<td>1 1 8 4 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I like using poetry because I don't have to talk as much.</td>
<td>1 - 3 6 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I like poetry personally.</td>
<td>8 2 1 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I would never use poetry as a teaching activity.</td>
<td>- 3 5 1 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Poetry can be valuable supplementary teaching material.</td>
<td>4 4 5 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Because poetry is shorter, it can be given as a whole both in meaning and form in an average lesson.</td>
<td>3 3 7 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I like poetry because students do almost all the talking.</td>
<td>- 4 6 4 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Poetry has the value of appealing to each individual reader in different ways.</td>
<td>8 4 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Poetry motivates the students to use English</td>
<td>- 6 9 -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Poetry helps to lower the students' anxiety level.</td>
<td>1 6 6 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Poetry helps to present and practice language structures and vocabulary.</td>
<td>3 9 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Poetry generates discussion in the classroom and students give their opinions and feelings easily.</td>
<td>6 6 2 - 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. The selection of specific poems for a particular group of students is important.</td>
<td>13 1 - 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Students exchange opinions through poetry.</td>
<td>5 9 - 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Using drawings, sound, photographs, and music as a supplementary material makes poetry more enjoyable and beneficial.</td>
<td>10 4 - 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Poems which express strong emotions, attitudes, feelings, opinions, and ideas are usually more productive for generating discussions.</td>
<td>4 9 1 - 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Selecting poems which have universal topics, such as love, friendship, old age, and nature, can be understandable and enjoyable for students.</td>
<td>8 4 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Poetry provides different and interesting activities so that students enjoy and learn the language easily.</td>
<td>4 8 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Poetry is difficult to understand and boring for the students if they can't comprehend it fully.</td>
<td>7 5 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Students initiate their opinions easily through poetry</td>
<td>- 3 10 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.4.5 Native Speaker Comments

Apart from the results of the questionnaire, a set of "unexpected data" was gathered from the NSs on the use of poetry in the classroom. Although there were no open-ended questions in the questionnaire, some of the native speaker teachers felt compelled to write comments and personal opinions on the use of poetry in addition to answering the questionnaire. None of the non-native teachers wrote any comments. The content of the comments were focused on their experience in using poetry in the classroom. Some of them, depending on their experiences, gave advise on using poetry.

A British teacher who has ten years of EFL experience and has a BA in English Literature and Post Graduate Certificate in English Language and EFL, wrote that as she personally did not like poetry she preferred not to use it in class. Another British teacher who has 6 years of experience and a BA in Modern Languages, wrote about an experience of hers in which she had used short stories and poetry and had varied responses. She explained that many students seemed reluctant to discuss their responses to or feelings about poetry. She also reported that since students were able to be more open about their opinion, they responded eagerly to subjects such as poverty, war, etc. She agreed with the statement "poetry helps
to present language structures and vocabulary" in the questionnaire but commented that sometimes poets use slang or unusual constructions, therefore teachers need to be careful. Another British teacher with ten years of teaching experience, indicated that he quite happily agreed with most of the statements in the questionnaire, and he said he believed that poetry, used carefully, can bring out a lot from the students. And finally, another British teacher who has a BA honors and MA in English literature mentioned that her answers were probably biased because she teaches ESP literature. She also mentioned that she used a lot of poetry and encourages students to write their own. She said on the other ESP programs the opportunity to use poetry may be very limited.

4.4.6 Comparison of the Native and Nonnative Teachers' Responses

The data showed that the NSs typically agreed on the use of literature as a teaching material (Q-2). They also significantly agreed that selection is important (Q-15, 17, 18, 19). The NNSs also agreed with these statements. But neither NSs nor NNSs had a preference for using poetry over prose (Q-3). On the other hand, both NNSs and NSs agreed on the opinion that poetry can be a valuable supplementary teaching
material. The important significant differences are about the motivation (Q-11), lowering the anxiety level (Q-12), the value of poetry in presenting language structures (Q-13), and exchanging ideas through poetry (Q-16). Forty-six percent of the NSs think that poetry motivates the students to use English whereas 60% of the NNSs disagree with the idea. Again, while 46% of the NNSs agree that poetry helps to lower the students’ anxiety level, only 15% of the NSs agree with the idea, and the rest have a neutral opinion. On the other hand, 80% of the NNSs agree that poetry helps to present and practice language structures and vocabulary, but, only 53% of the NSs agree with that. Finally, 93% of the NNSs agree that students exchange ideas through poetry but only 46% of the NSs agree with the idea.

4.5 Results

The data analysis showed that the use of poetry in class promotes a communicative classroom. Checklist results and student responses to the questionnaire are strong evidences that through poetry they practiced their speaking skill. They talked about the poems and, discussed their ideas with each other through poetry. Most of the students responded positively to the lesson. They felt comfortable talking about different
ideas. The students were so eager to express their opinions and discuss them that the teacher did not want to interrupt most of the time. The evidence is convincing that using poetry in the classroom as teaching material encouraged students to talk. Poetry motivated the students to talk in English and it helped them to think imaginatively. We can conclude from these data that poetry was quite effective in drawing and keeping students' attention and providing motivation and that students have many things to say and poetry led them to verbalize what they think. So the classroom was communicative in the sense that students talked rather than the teacher and that they had something that they wanted to say.

The students were also eager to write something about the poem. In fact writing came naturally as a follow up activity. They are asked to write their own poem about themselves just like the old lady did in the poem. There were really very good poems and the students seemed to be very happy while they were writing their own poem. Some of the poems were so interesting that their teacher posted them on the bulletin board. They also wrote letters to the old lady in the poem pretending to be the son or daughter of the old lady. Some letters were at least a page-long. The papers showed that they had been very
imaginative in writing those letters. Thus, the lesson provided not only speaking practice, but students had a chance to practice their writing ability as well. Finally, the peripheral materials showed that poetry helped the students practice their listening and reading skills. They first listened to the tape recording of the poems and this helped to practice the listening skill. Then they were given the copy of the poems, they did a silent reading and understood it so they practiced their reading comprehension.

The teachers also have positive opinions on using poetry in the classroom and generally agree that it may help to develop students’ speaking ability. They also agree that it can be useful if the right selection is made. On the other hand some of the teachers do not prefer to use poetry. They find it difficult to teach. But most of the responses were positive about using poetry as a supplementary teaching material.
CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 Review

As stated in chapter 1, the aim of this study is to determine whether poetry engendered a more communicative classroom in teaching English language to students in the university level than traditional classroom materials. The professional literature has been reviewed, and various views on the role of creative literature and poetry in particular in the EFL classrooms have been reported in Chapter 2. The data gathered from multiple sources have been exhibited in Chapter 3 and analyzed in Chapter 4.

This study was conducted at Bilkent University. The students in three upper intermediate classes at BUSEL were chosen as subjects for the study. A sample lesson using poetry was taught in two experimental groups and the verbal flow was observed in these classes by means of a checklist which determined how much and what kind of discussion poetry generated among the students. A post-questionnaire was given to these subjects after the class time was ended to get their reactions and ideas about the lesson. In the control group, a traditional approach to teaching was used. This class was observed through the same
checklist to see the discussion level in this class while they were following their usual lesson plan within a fifty-minute period of time. As a separate part of the study a questionnaire was administrated to EFL teachers to get their comments on the utility and value of using poetry in the EFL classroom.

5.1.2 Conclusions

The data analysis showed that poetry engendered a more communicative classroom. The classroom was communicative in the sense that students talked rather than the teacher and that they had something they wanted to say. It was found that poetry had been effective in drawing and keeping students' attention and providing motivation. They were eager to express their opinions and to discuss different ideas with each other. It was also observed that poetry brought variety to the class activities and the students were not bored but enjoyed the lesson and responded positively to the lesson.

Teachers' responses to poetry were also positive and their positive responses (especially when coupled with the positive student responses) are strong evidence that poetry can be effectively utilized as teaching material to create a more communicative classroom. Most of the teachers agreed with the
opinion that poetry generates discussion if chosen carefully. It was also noted that native speakers mostly agreed that poetry could be used effectively as a teaching aid, but that nonnative speakers felt the opposite.

It was also found that poetry can serve different activities which develop students' basic skills such as writing a new poem themselves, dramatizing the poem, illustrating the poem and then narrating it so that they can enjoy themselves while they were learning the language.

5.2 Assessment of the Study

Observations through the checklist and the students' and the teachers' mostly positive opinions on using poetry are strong evidence that poetry can effectively be utilized as teaching materials in the EFL classrooms. But, in order to assure more reliable results if the study were replicated, certain points should be taken into consideration in reviewing the design.

First of all, in order to develop more reliable data, time allotted for the study should be long enough to allow for an experimental group in which various different poems are taught with different kinds of activities during two or more weeks. A control group
in which a traditional approach to teaching is used should be observed as well during the same period of time. Then a statistical analysis should be run on the observational data in order to compare the utility of poetry to that of general prose. More than one experimental and control group should be observed.

Second, questionnaires should be distributed to a larger number of teachers so that results can be generalized in a more reliable way.

5.3 Pedagogical Implications

The data presented in Chapter 4 strongly support the conclusion that poetry can engender a more communicative classroom, if the poetry is chosen carefully and used intelligently with appropriate activities. It is clear that poetry can be used to develop students' abilities in all four language skills provided the lesson is well constructed. Therefore, this study also aims at making implications for curriculum designers so that poetry would have a more prominent place in EFL syllabuses.

Teachers play an important role by choosing poems for particular group of students. It is up to the teachers' ability to use poems with different kinds of activities considering the abilities and needs of the students. For example, in this study, the students
were asked to write their own poems as a writing activity, and they seemed to enjoy writing them. By implication, they might have also been asked to memorize the short poems that they wrote so that they would have a poem in mind and they would enjoy reciting it by heart. They were also asked to write letters or a descriptive writing referring to the poem. This is an advisable activity to make the students develop their writing abilities. Based on the results drawn from the study, silent reading of the poem is not advisable because the students do not read the poem when they are asked to read silently but they might have been asked to dramatize the poem so that they can learn how to read and enjoy a poem.

5.4 Future Research implications

The question which this study undertook the answer was whether poetry engendered a more communicative classroom in teaching English language to students in the university level. The data collected to answer that question generated other questions. For example, does poetry generate more discussion than prose? In this study, poetry classes was compared with a class where a traditional approach to teaching was used based on a nonfiction prose piece. In order to answer the question that came up from the study, a prose class
where a short story or drama is used as teaching material needs to be observed to compare the amount of discussion generated with a poetry class. As a possible future study, the flow of communication in the same class and same teacher needs to be analyzed under two conditions: 1) A prose lesson and 2) a poetry lesson. A statistical analysis needs to be done to find out the differences between scores so that more sound results can be obtained.

Another point that needs to be investigated is the observational categories. In this study, teaching poetry was explored from a slightly superficial conversational analysis viewpoint. The interaction could be explored more deeply and thoroughly. In the future studies it can be analyzed culturally. Does poetry reflect the culture of a country? Do students who read poetry learn and understand and recognize the culture of the language?
BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

CHECK LIST

R = Response  
T = Teacher  
AN = Answer  
S = Student  
CQ = Content Questions  
LQ = Language Questions  
IN/D = Initiate discussion  
IN/Op = Initiate opinion  
S/OPa = Sentence/Opinion-agree  
S/OPd = Sentence/Opinion-disagree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Turn</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>CQ</th>
<th>LQ</th>
<th>AN</th>
<th>S/OPa</th>
<th>S/OPd</th>
<th>IN/D</th>
<th>IN/Op</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T/S</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### APPENDIX B

#### STUDENT-QUESTIONNAIRE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I enjoyed the lesson.</td>
<td>() () () () () () ()</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I learnt about myself and the world.</td>
<td>() () () () () ()</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. My English improved because of this lesson.</td>
<td>() () () () () ()</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I felt more like talking in this class than I usually do.</td>
<td>() () () () () ()</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I felt comfortable and confident while talking about the poem.</td>
<td>() () () () () ()</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I used my English easily to express my feelings about the poem.</td>
<td>() () () () () ()</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I disliked this poem because:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) I didn’t understand the words.</td>
<td>() () () () () ()</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) The sentences were too complex.</td>
<td>() () () () () ()</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) The topic was boring.</td>
<td>() () () () () ()</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) I generally dislike poems.</td>
<td>() () () () () ()</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) Others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I liked this poem because:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) It was easy to understand.</td>
<td>() () () () () ()</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) It was short.</td>
<td>() () () () () ()</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) The topic was real and interesting.</td>
<td>() () () () () ()</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9. Give your most positive opinion about the lesson.

10. Give your most negative opinion about the lesson.
Appendix C

Teacher-Questionnaire

NAME (Optional):

NATIONALITY:

TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND:

Direction: Please put (x) according to the degree to which you agree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. I use different kinds of materials in addition to the text books to teach English in the classroom. ( )( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

2. Literature can be used as teaching material. ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

3. I prefer using poetry rather than prose to teach English. ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

4. I like using poetry because I don’t have to talk as much. ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )
<p>| 5. I like poetry personally.       | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 6. I would never use poetry as a teaching activity. | ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) |
| 7. Poetry can be valuable supplementary teaching material. | ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) |
| 8. Because poetry is shorter, it can be given as a whole both in meaning and form in an average lesson. | ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) |
| 9. I like poetry because students do almost all the talking. | ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) |
| 10. Poetry has the value of appealing to each individual reader in different ways. | ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) |
| 11. Poetry motivates the students to use English | ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) |
| 12. Poetry helps to lower the students’ anxiety level. | ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) |
| 13. Poetry helps to present and practice language structures and vocabulary. | ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) |
| 14. Poetry generates discussion in the classroom and students give their opinions and feelings easily. | ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) |
| 15. The selection of specific poems for a particular group of students is important. | ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16. Students exchange opinions through poetry. ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

17. Using drawings, sound, photographs, and music as a supplementary material makes poetry more enjoyable and beneficial. ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

18. Poems which express strong emotions, attitudes, feelings, opinions, and ideas are usually more productive for generating discussions. ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

19. Selecting poems which have universal topics, such as love, friendship, old age, and nature, can be understandable and enjoyable for students. ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

20. Poetry provides different and interesting activities so that students enjoy and learn the language easily. ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

21. Poetry is difficult to understand and boring for the students if they can't comprehend it fully. ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

22. Students initiate their opinions easily through poetry ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )
APPENDIX D

LESSON PLAN

Class Identification

Level: Upper Intermediate

Age Range:

Size:

Major at Bilkent:

Place: BUSEL

Time and Date:

Objectives: To practice students' speaking, listening, writing skills. To provide opportunities to communicate and exchange ideas through poetry.

Instructional Activities and Materials

Warm up: (10 minutes)

* Divide the class into groups of four.

* Give each group photographs of old people and ask them to talk about what the people seem to have in common and how they differ from each other, and ask them to make up a story about the old people in the photos.

Main Activity: (no certain time limit; until the discussion is over)

- You are going to listen to a poem by an old lady about herself. Now write down five words you expect to meet in the poem.
- Now, close your eyes and think of an old lady and keep her picture in mind while you listen to the poem.

* Read the poem aloud.

PHINEUS:

I'm an old lady
And I don't have long to live.
I am only strong enough to take
Not to give. No time left to give.
I want to drink, I want to eat,
I want my shoes taken off my feet.
I want to talk but not to walk
Because if I walk, I have to know
Where it is I want to go.
I want to sleep but not to dream
I want to play and win every game
To live with love but not to love
The world to move but me not move
I want I want for ever and ever
The world to work, the world to be clever.
Leave me be, but don't leave me alone.
That's what I want. I'm a big round stone
Sitting in the middle of a thunderstorm.
There you are: that's true.
That's me. Now: you.

(John Arden)

- I want you to express your feelings about the old lady in the poem to the people next to you. Then you'll tell it to the class.

* Give a copy of the poem to each student.

- Describe the old lady. What kind of a person is she?

Follow up Activity: (Optional; to continue the lesson if time allows)

* Write the following options on the blackboard and tell the students to do the one which appeals to them most (in pairs).

1. Draw a picture of the old lady and explain it to the
class.

2. Pretend to be the son or daughter of the old lady and write a letter to her on her birthday.

3. Accepting the old lady’s invitation (‘That’s me. Now: you.’), write a poem about yourself.

(The poem used in the second poetry class.)

WARNING

When I am an old woman I shall wear purple
With a red hat which doesn’t go, and doesn’t suit me,
And I shall spend my pension on a brandy and summer
gloves
And satin sandals, and say we’ve no money for butter.
I shall sit down on the pavement when I am tired
And gobble up samples in shops and press alarm bells
And run my stick along the public railings
And make up for the sobriety of my youth.
I shall go out in my slippers in the rain
And pick the flowers in other people’s garden
And learn to spit.

You can wear terrible shirts and grow more fat
And eat three pounds of sausages at a go
Or only bread and pickle for a week
And hoard pens and pencils and beermats and things in boxes.

But now we must have clothes that keep us dry
And pay our rent and not swear in the street
And set a good example for the children.
We will have friends to dinner and read the papers.

But maybe I ought to practise a little now?
So people who know me are not too shocked and surprised
When suddenly I am old and start to wear purple.

Jenny Joseph