

ENHANCING CREATIVITY IN THE COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE CLASSROOM THROUGH POETRY AS A LITERARY GENRE

Aysun Yavuz

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to address the approaches and models of using literature as a language teaching tool and to suggest English teachers practical ideas about how to integrate the experience of writing poetry as a tool of teaching English especially to young learners and beginners. Poetry writing gives students an opportunity to transform their feelings into communicative force. As a literary genre poetry is not different from any other linguistic performance. It is the productive use of linguistic structures in order to achieve communication. In recent years language teaching methodology has been heavily influenced by the Communicative Approach. This paper also focuses on the possibilities of poetry writing in an interactive way through task-based learning activities in language classes. The aim of these activities is to maximise learners' understanding of poetry by first allowing them to try writing their own poetry in an interactive task-based language learning environment and secondly to provide teachers opportunities to use poetry as a language teaching device by adapting or adopting these activities. Issues related to classroom implications are given at the end of the study.

Key words: *Communicative Approach, Task-based Activities, Creative Writing, Poetry Writing*

İLETİŞİM ODAKLI DİL SINIFINDA EDEBİ BİR TÜR OLARAK ŞİİR YOLUYLA YARATICILIĞI GELİŞTİRME

Özet

Bu çalışmanın amacı edebiyatın İngilizce öğretim aracı olarak kullanılması konusunu ele alan yaklaşım ve modelleri tartışmak ve İngilizce öğretmenlerine şiir yazma deneyimini özellikle çocuklara ya da başlangıç seviyesinde olan öğrencilere İngilizce öğretiminde kullanılabilecek bir araç olarak kullanmak üzere pratik fikirler vermektir. Şiir yazma deneyimi öğrencilere duygularını iletişimsel bir güce çevirmek için fırsat verir. Edebi bir tür olarak şiir diğer dil kullanım türlerinden farklı değildir. İletişim kurmak için kullanılan bir dil kullanım şeklidir. Son yıllarda dil öğretimi yöntemleri İletişimsel Yaklaşımdan oldukça fazla etkilenmiştir. Bu çalışma şiir yazımının görev odaklı öğrenme aktivitelerinin yabancı dil sınıflarında aktif olarak kullanılmasını da konu alır. Bu aktivitelerin amacı öğrencilerin kendi şiirlerini yazarak şiirle ilgili anlayışını en üst düzeye getirmek ve öğretmenlerin dil öğretim aracı olarak şiir kullanımı olanaklarını bu aktiviteleri olduğu gibi ya da uyarlayarak artırmaktır. Çalışmanın sonunda sınıf uygulamalarıyla ilgili konular yer alır.

Anahtar sözcükler: İletişimsel Yaklaşım, Görev odaklı Aktiviteler, Yaratıcı Yazma, Şiir Yazma

1- Why Literature in Language Teaching?

Literature is not very different from any other linguistic performance targeting communication. It is only when we consider the second level, stylistic variety that the differences appear. Literature is a tool for learning the differences between language varieties such as a dialogue, a narrative, and a poetic style with the figurative speech. In more advanced levels, it could provide access to a local dialect, accent or specific vocabulary (Littlewood, 1986; Lazar, 1993).

A major problem of language teaching in the classroom is the creation of an authentic situation and context for language. A language classroom, especially one outside the community of native speakers, is isolated from the authentic context of events and natural language. In the case of literature, language creates its own context and agenda to compensate these disadvantages by depicting the natural events and situations (Öztürk and Çınar, 2007; Kudat, 2007). The world created in the work of literature is the foreign world, and the knowledge about this foreign world in communication. In this respect, literature is an effective access to the foreign culture in the widest sense. It is quite difficult to appreciate the created world of literature unless the everyday cultural background has already become familiar for the students so the world created by the literary work need to have interest and relevance for the students, and also that they need to have adequate knowledge and awareness of the cultural background to appreciate it (Littlewood, 1986; Carter and Long, 1991; Little, Devitt and Singleton, 1994; Öztürk and Akpınar Dellal, 2007).

2- The Changing Place of Literature in Language Classes

Until relatively recent times the teaching of literature was considered necessary for the truly educated person. More recently the emphasis on the study of languages was for specific technical, practical purposes and on the spoken more than on the written language. There was little about the teaching or use of literature in the foreign language class writings in the seventies or early eighties. There was very limited discussion about the relationship between language, literature and language teaching (Demirel, 1992). During the 1980s the situation has changed significantly by the emerging 'Communicative Approach' (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Literature is now undergoing an extensive reconsideration within the language teaching and related curricular reviews (Carter and Long, 1991; Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

The primary function of language is communication and communication is a must for not only transferring knowledge but also getting information. It is difficult to make a linguistic distinction between literature and other kinds of language. Thus, there is no reason for separating literature from the foreign language curriculum. Lazar (1993: 14-15) lists the reasons for using literature in the language classroom:

- ‘It is very motivating
- It is authentic material
- It has general educational value
- It is found in many syllabuses
- It helps students to understand another culture
- It is a stimulus for language acquisition
- It develops students’ interpretive abilities
- Students enjoy it and it is fun
- It is highly valued and has a high status
- It expands students’ language awareness
- It encourages students to talk about their opinions and feelings’

Therefore, literature as a means for expressing one’s self is concerned with all current issues in language education, especially ‘Communicative Approach’ to foreign language classes in relation to use of authentic materials, appreciation of different cultures, contextual and meaningful learning (Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Richards and Rodgers, 2001). Although language and literature seem to be distinct, they are not in their essence, since literature is also language. In this context it is possible to use language and literature to mutually reinforce each other in the language classes (Benton and Fox, 1985; Littlewood, 1986).

Regarding using literature in teaching language, Carter and Long (1991) identify three main models (*cultural, language and personal growth*) each representing different tendencies in methodology and in classroom practice. The Cultural Model enables students to understand and appreciate different cultures and ideologies within the natural context of tradition, thought, feeling and artistic form of the literature. The Language Model can be a tool for the teaching of specific language skills, vocabulary or structures. It would also stimulate creative and critical thinking, assist to raise an awareness of use of different modes of language, create an opportunity for team work, co-operation and experiential learning. The Personal Growth Model assists students to achieve an engagement with the reading of literary texts for an enjoyment and love for literature. Similarly, Lazar (1993) suggests three approaches in teaching literature (*language-based approach, literature as content and literature for personal enrichment*) each offering methodological assumptions, selection and organisation of teaching materials. Language-based approach, like the Language Model, draws the attention on grammatical, lexical or discoursal categories of the text. Literature as the content of

the course, similar to the Cultural Model, concentrates on the historical, social, political background to a text and characteristics of literary movements. The Personal Enrichment Approach shares common characteristics with the Personal Growth Model. In this approach, literature helps students to become more actively involved both intellectually and emotionally in learning the target language through focusing on personal experiences, feelings and opinions. Thus, engaging in literature would also make students more democratic, open-minded and open to change and improvement (see also Heathcote and Bolton, 1998; Fleming, 2003; Sarıçoban, 2004). Regarding these models and approaches, there needs to be a distinction made between studying literature and the use of literature as a resource such as, using literature in communicative learning tasks.

3- Changing the Nature and Focus of Writing in Communicative Classrooms

One of the most misleading assumptions is that communication means only oral communication (see Little, Devitt and Singleton, 1994). A predictable result of this assumption is that the emphasis has been taken away from writing and replaced on to speaking and listening. However, as Baturay and Akar (2007) state practising language skills in isolation does not support authentic communication. Therefore, skill integration would potentially stimulate more genuine and life-like communication. In order to facilitate communication and interaction in English classes, poetry writing can be used because it is universal, it aids language acquisition, and it also allows the use of a variety of linguistic devices in an authentic context (Lazar, 1993). The other function would be the shifting the heavy emphasis on extensive grammar and reading comprehension to writing poetry which could potentially give a more creative, less guided context and agenda to teaching English.

Regarding written discourse, students can be given some freedom to write what they want to write so writing could be an enjoyable experience and a communicative activity. Poetry writing requires the learner to invest something of him or herself in the activity which requires using the language in a less directed way than a drill or textbook exercise. Poetry writing task might require the learner to write something that could be used in or out of the classroom, such as a letter to a pen-friend, a recipe or a part of a diary (Swarbrick, 1994).

Creating the conditions necessary for creativity is vitally important in writing poetry. Teachers need to avoid some destructive influences in the classroom regarding poetry writing which can be teacher indifference, negative criticism, an unruly environment and unfamiliarity with the type of task. Instead, constructive influences such as teacher's appraisal, encouraging atmosphere, mutual respect for creative ideas, co-operation and a true stimulus which provides a need and a reason

to write can govern the classroom which might give the student an opportunity to transform his/her feelings into communication (see Carter and Long, 1991; Swarbrick, 1994).

Changing the emphasis from accuracy and textual analysis to fluency and purpose can also stimulate genuine communication. In the accuracy approach the assumption is students make mistakes because they are allowed to write what they want, therefore the importance of control in order to eliminate mistakes from written work needs to be stressed. Students are taught how to write and combine various sentence types through guided or semi guided activities and drills which allow little opportunities for self-expression. This approach was a product of the audio-lingual period, with its emphasis on correct structure and step by step learning (Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Richards and Rodgers, 2001). Textual analysis, in parallel with the accuracy approach, emphasises the importance of the paragraph as the basic unit of written expression and is therefore mainly concerned with teaching how to construct and organise paragraphs such as, forming paragraphs from scrambled sentences and developing paragraphs from topic sentences. (Hedge, 2000). This approach aims to get students to express themselves effectively in a context. In contrast, focus on fluency, encourages students to write as much as possible and as quickly as possible without the emphasis on mistakes and correct order. In this way students would feel that they are actually writing, not merely doing exercises. Although this approach is not the solution to the problems of language learning; it might potentially overcome the negative influence of inhibition. In real life, there is normally a reason for writing. Real purpose and reason are often neglected in teaching and practising writing. Teachers need to allow students to write purposefully with a reason such as writing in role-play situations, problem-solving activities, dramatisations, scenarios and writing poetry for expressing themselves on various topics such as, home and family, dreams and plans (Carter and Long, 1991; Miccoli, 2003; Ertürk and Üstündağ, 2007). This would motivate students to write as a form of communication.

4- Some Ideas for Stimulating Poetry Writing

Swarbrick (1994) examines some useful ideas for stimulating poetry writing in communicative language classrooms which can be adapted or adopted by the language teachers depending on the topic of the course, age, level, needs and expectations of the students. These are given below with the sample pieces of poetry:

Pattern Work: Lines need to answer the questions below. The questions or the sequence of the questions might be changed according the conditions given above.

This exercise can be used in teaching –wh questions as an information gap activity since asking and answering questions would provide a context for genuine exchange of communication (Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

‘A Marriage of Convenience’

Line 1 Who? : My friend Joan

Line 2 What? : Married an Italian

Line 3 Where? : In Rome

Line 4 When? : Last year

Line 5 Why? : She likes spaghetti

Perhaps that’s why! (p: 148)

Concrete poetry: Poem is written in the shape of the subject of the poem; if it is about a flower, then it will look like a picture of a flower on the page. This type of writing would be enjoyable particularly for young learners as they can experience drawing and painting as well.

Acrostic: This is where a word is written vertically on the page and a poem is created by using the letters for the first word of each line. This type of writing would be useful in teaching vocabulary and spelling to young learners.

SUN

Shining brightly

Under the sky

Nothing can escape (adapted from Swarbrick, 1994: 149)

Riddles: This is where the learner describes one thing in terms of another, leaving the reader or conversational partner to guess the title of the poem. This type of writing can stimulate guessing and problem solving skills of young learners.

I have two windows

I open them in day time

Close them during night (answer: eyes) (adapted from Swarbrick, 1994: 149)

Recipe Poems: The poem takes the form of a recipe but it describes something, maybe abstract or concrete. This activity gives a context and content for writing poetry as it serves to express feelings, ideas and experiences of students.

Butter, milk and sugar

Put onto the biscuit base

Spread the strawberry topping

Do not forget the cheese

Here is strawberry cheesecake! (adapted from Swarbrick, 1994: 149)

Literature, especially studying poetry offers an aesthetic and unique experience about language, form, observation and feeling. So, the following questions can be asked to students after the poetry writing session presented above for the complete cycle of the activity.

‘On Language: What words, phrases or lines stood out when you are writing, reading or listening to the poetry?

On Form: Can you say anything about the shape of the poem, how the words are laid out on the page?

On Observation: What is the writer really looking at, either outside or inside himself/herself?

On Feeling: What feelings are conveyed during the poem at different points? Do they change? Do you share them?’ (Benton and Fox, 1985: 24).

5- Activities for Stimulating Poetry

In these activities, it is intended to illustrate the possibilities of poetry writing to students in an enjoyable and non-stressful way. These activities are adapted from David Horner’s two poetry collections, ‘So There!’ (1993) and ‘Talking With Your Mouth Full’ (1995) which were very enthusiastic and helpful on the construction of this study.

5- 1. Aims of the activities:

- Desire to tackle possible questions in the mind of English teachers about use of literature and/or literary task-based activities.
- Attempt to give clues to prospective English teachers on the nature of literature and poetry as a specified literary genre.
- Shift the attention of future English teachers to use of poetry in task-based language learning activities in communicative language classes.

5- 2. Theme: Utilising personal memory banks on first day at school.

Step 1: *Evoking individual memories:* The teacher projects an overhead transparency onto the screen which he/she uncovers in stages. After each new

stimulus the learners have time to filter out from their memories the images which are being evoked. It is very important that nobody talks during this phase and that their attention is directed after each stimulus sentence.

OHP: first day at school

- Try and remember your first day at school
- Take your time and let the memories emerge. Explore them
- Remember the morning before you went to school
- Did you go alone?
- What did you wear?
- How did you feel?
- Do you remember the school building?
- Your classroom?
- Your classmates?
- Your first teacher?
- Other

Step 2: Note making: Teacher arranges learners in groups of four to six. Next the learners write down individually what they remember, e.g. key words, parts of sentences, images and associations.

Step 3: Sharing experiences: At this point pairs in the group share their experiences with each other. This phase is particularly useful because it helps learners to clarify their recollections. After this discussion the notes are expanded.

Step 4: Public sharing: Each member of the group offers two particular memories as working material to the group. They are written on the board or an overhead projector transparency.

Step 5: Listening/imagining: The recollections are read out loud; the group listens to the rhythm of the words and the sentences and the fragments of sentences and try to see what the words suggest.

Step 6: Poetry writing: Using the personal notes and what was written on the board as raw material each learner then write an individual text (prose, poetical prose or poetry) on the theme ‘first day at school’.

Step 7: Presentation: It should be made clear that nobody would be forced to publish his/her text. Those who wanted to publish their text handed it in. They are

shuffled, distributed and read out. Students could be asked to present on a more voluntary basis. Another possibility is to pin up the poems on the classroom wall. They can then be read and commented on at any time. It is important to note that the teacher is also a participant in the activity and should also contribute a poem if possible. The class has about thirty minutes to write the texts in their draft form. Here is an example written by the author while practising this activity in a micro-teaching session:

I was frightened
Holding my mum's hand
I passed a long corridor
Mum left
It was a big class
My teacher smiled
I sat down there
And
Cried.

5- 3. Theme: Antique Shop

Step 1: Introduction: The class is arranged in a circle and the words *Antique Shop* is introduced, and class reactions and associations are elicited.

Step 2: Guided fantasy: The learners are asked to imagine an antique shop:

- OHP
- Stimulus tasks/questions:
 - What can you see?
 - Explore the shop
 - What kind of objects can you identify?
 - What is on the walls?
 - Are there any boxes with small items in them?
 - What does the shop smell like?

A few minutes are allowed for learners to explore and regenerate their memories.

Step 3: Elicitation: Their responses are elicited in the form of a brain-storming activity and gathered on the board. During this phase the students are encouraged to make extended contributions by means of questions which stimulated them to probe their thoughts. Often what one student said is built upon by another so that fragmented details are displayed on the board.

Step 4: Processing the data: Teacher arrange learners in groups of two or three sub-groups of three students are formed and then asked to select up to six items from the board and together to brain-storm the life histories of the objects and to make notes. At this point they are asked to rearrange their notes in a poetic form, i.e. to try and shape a poem from the material they assembled. They are able to add or subtract words in order to develop their ideas. They are not bound by any rules that the poem should be rhymed or unrhymed, in a fixed or varying form. They are given the general guideline that poetry is suggestive rather than explanatory.

Step 5: Exhibition: The learners make large displays of their work and display the finished poems on the classroom wall. They are asked to identify as many poems which are different in form and content as possible.

Step 6: Preliminary feedback: Individual students are asked to read out any poem which they find interesting and enjoyable.

Step 7: Opinion Exchange: Feelings and viewpoints are explored by means of stimulus tasks/questions:

OHP:
What kind of mood did you create?
Identify the atmosphere in the poems on the wall.
Other.

The aim of this activity is to maximise learners' enjoyment of reading poetry by first allowing them the opportunity to try writing their own poetry. Here is an example written by the author while practising this activity in a micro-teaching session:

Whose are they?
I see a silver ring
With a square yellow gem
Suits me
Strange to wear
Somebody else's ring

8- Issues on Classroom Implications

The context and the content of the activities above can be changed as recognising and meeting the needs of the students are essentially important in terms of conducting communicative classrooms apart from writing with purpose in a communicative manner. Poetry writing is rather a complex way of communication so it requires special teaching. Poetry writing needs to be preceded and accompanied by wide exposure to appropriate models of written language. If the learners have only seen dialogues in their course books they cannot be expected to produce other forms of the written language such as poems and reports. Therefore, the learners also need to be aware of how the conversational partners communicate through the written language and how this differs from oral communication. They need to understand how the written language is used to fulfil communicative purpose by establishing contact with the reader to get message across. As Grabe and Stoller (2002) argue, reading is the process of combining textual information with the information the reader brings to a text. Therefore, an *interactive model* stressing both what is on the written page and what a reader brings to it can be adopted since it views reading as the interaction between reader and text requiring both processing and interpreting the text. Thus, shifting the focus on accuracy and language-based approach to fluency and personal enrichment approach would also provide space and freedom to students for true exchange of communication in writing and appreciating poetry (Carter and Long, 1991; Lazar, 1993).

Teachers need to identify writing tasks relevant to the learners' needs and to establish learning environment for practising and experiencing them, such as poetry writing. Writing is somehow isolated from the other three skills of speaking, listening and reading. It is often related to the end of the teaching unit and used mainly for homework. Teachers need to relate writing activities with other skills, so that the learners appreciate writing as a real activity. Writing tasks are generally imposed and that the learners may not have either the relevant ideas or format to experience writing. The use of techniques and procedures which are used for oral work, such as pair and group work need to be examined within the context of the writing tasks. Teachers need to focus not so much at what the learners have failed to achieve but rather at what they have actually succeeded in doing, except when writing is being tested or examined. Writing needs to be a more rewarding activity in terms of achievement (Carter and Long, 1991; Hedge, 2000; Harmer, 2001). In terms of implications for the classroom issues below must be addressed by the teacher:

1. Teacher knowledge and experience about writing poetry
2. Students' prior knowledge and experience of writing poetry
3. Time and effort which will be devoted to poetry or activity based on poetry

4. Students' needs and responses
5. Preparing students emotionally, mentally, linguistically and even physically to writing poetry
6. There is a difference between knowledge about literature and knowledge of literature.
7. Reading literature requires different approaches and raises some complex questions of curriculum and syllabus design.
8. Literary competence is complex to define, but it is connected with different levels of communicative and linguistic competence.
9. Communicative task-based approaches provide an authentic context for interpreting or creating a literary text. Such approaches enable students to access to literary texts.
10. Reading literature can be a source of pleasure, a stimulus to personal development and a tool for developing communicative competence (Benton and Fox, 1985).

References

- Baturay, M.H. and N. Akar. (2007). A new Perspective for the Integration of Skills to Reading. *Language Journal*, 136, 16-26.
- Benton, M. and G. Fox. (1985). *Teaching Literature: Nine to Fourteen*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Carter, R. and M. N. Long. (1991). *Teaching Literature*. Essex: Longman.
- Demirel, Ö. (1992). *ELT Methodology*. Ankara: Pegem A Publishers.
- Ertürk, H., T. Üstündağ. (2007). The Effects of Written-Visual Teaching Materials on Acquiring Speaking Skills in English Language Teaching upon Students' Achievement. *Language Journal*, 136, 27-40.
- Fleming, M. (2003). *Starting Drama Teaching*. London: David Fulton Publishers.
- Grabe, W. and L. F. Stoller. (2002). *Teaching and Researching Reading*. Harlow: Pearson Education.
- Harmer, J. (2001). *The Practice of English Language Teaching*. Essex: Pearson Education Limited.
- Heathcote, D. and G. Bolton. (1998). Teaching Culture through Drama. In M. Byram and M. Fleming (eds.) *Language Learning in Intercultural Perspective: Approaches through Drama and Ethnography*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Hedge, T. (2000). *Teaching and Learning in the Language Classroom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Horner, D. (1993). *So There!*. London: Apple Pie Publications.
- Horner, D. (1995). *Talking With Your Mouth Full*. London: Apple Pie Publications.
- Kudat, C. (2007). *Yabancı Dil Öğretiminde Yazınsal Metin Kullanımı*. In A. O. Öztürk (Ed.) *Yabancı Dil Eğitimi Bölümlerinde Edebiyat Öğretimi*. Ankara: Anı Yayıncılık.
- Larsen-Freeman, D. (2000). *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lazar, G. (1993). *Literature and Language Teaching: A guide for teachers and trainers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Little, D., S. Devitt and D. Singleton. (1994). *The communicative approach and authentic texts*. In A. Swarbrick (Ed.) *Teaching Modern Languages*. London: The Open University.
- Littlewood, W.T. (1986). *Literature in the School Foreign-Language Course*. In C. J. Brumfit and R. A. Carter (Eds.) *Literature and Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Miccoli, L. (2003). *English through drama for oral skills development*. *ELT Journal*. 57(2), 122-129.
- Öztürk, A.O. and N. Akpınar Dellal. (2007). *Yabancı Dil Eğitiminde 'Öz' ve 'Öteki' Konulu Kültürlerarası İçerikli Metinlerin Bireyde Demokratik Kültür Bilincinin Gelişimine Katkısı*. In A.O. Öztürk (Ed.) *Yabancı Dil Eğitimi Bölümlerinde Edebiyat Öğretimi*. Ankara: Anı Yayıncılık.
- Öztürk, A.O. and S. Çınar. (2007). *Yazın Öğretiminde Kuramsal Yaklaşımlar*. In A.O. Öztürk (Ed.) *Yabancı Dil Eğitimi Bölümlerinde Edebiyat Öğretimi*. Ankara: Anı Yayıncılık.
- Richards, J.C. and T. S. Rodgers. (2001). *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sarıçoban, A. (2004). *Using Drama in Teaching Turkish as a Foreign Language*. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 14, 13-32.
- Swarbrick, A. (1994). *A la recherche du stylo perdu*. In A. Swarbrick (Ed.) *Teaching Modern Languages*. London: The Open University.

Summary

In this paper the models and approaches namely, language-based approach, literature as content and literature for personal enrichment and cultural, language and personal growth models of using literature as language teaching tools are presented. The Cultural Model enables students to understand and appreciate different cultures and ideologies within the natural context of tradition, thought, feeling and artistic form of the literature. The Language Model can be a tool for the teaching of specific language skills, vocabulary or structures. It would also stimulate creative and critical thinking, assist to raise an awareness of use of different modes of language, create an opportunity for team work, co-operation and experiential learning. The Personal Growth Model assists students to achieve an engagement with the reading of literary texts for an enjoyment and love for literature. Similarly, Language-based approach, like the Language Model, draws the attention on grammatical, lexical or discursual categories of the text. Literature as the content of the course, similar to the Cultural Model, concentrates on the historical, social, political background to a text and characteristics of literary movements. The Personal Enrichment Approach shares common characteristics with the Personal Growth Model. In this approach, literature helps students to become more actively involved both intellectually and emotionally in learning the target language through focusing on personal experiences, feelings and opinions.

It is argued that as a literary genre poetry is not different from any other linguistic performance. It is the productive use of linguistic structures in order to achieve communication. In recent years language teaching methodology has been heavily influenced by the Communicative Approach so changing the emphasis from accuracy and textual analysis to fluency and purpose can also stimulate genuine communication through poetry. In order to facilitate communication and interaction in English classes, poetry writing can be used because it is universal, it aids language acquisition, and it also allows the use of a variety of linguistic devices in an authentic context. The other function would be the shifting the heavy emphasis on extensive grammar and reading comprehension to writing poetry which could potentially give a more creative, less guided context and agenda to teaching English. Therefore, creating the conditions necessary for creativity is vitally important in writing poetry. Teachers need to allow students to write purposefully with a reason such as writing in role-play situations, problem-solving activities, dramatisations, scenarios and writing poetry for expressing themselves on various topics such as, home and family, dreams and plans.

Bearing in mind these issues, the possibilities of poetry writing in an interactive way through task-based learning activities in language classes are suggested with the aim of maximising learners' understanding of poetry by first allowing them to try writing their own poetry in an interactive task-based language learning environment and secondly to provide teachers opportunities to use poetry as a language teaching device by adapting or adopting

these activities. These activities aim at tackling possible questions in the mind of English teachers about use of literature and/or literary task-based activities, attempting to give clues to prospective English teachers on the nature of literature and poetry as a specified literary genre and finally, shifting the attention of future English teachers to use of poetry in task-based language learning activities in communicative language classes. Issues related to classroom implications are given at the end of the study.