

## THE EFFECT OF PROPORTIONATE AMOUNT OF TIME ON STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE TEACHING ENGLISH POEMS AT HIGHER SECONDARY LEVEL IN PAKISTAN

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### ABSTRACT

*The researcher tried to find out the effect of proportionate amount of time on the performance of students while teaching English poems at higher secondary level in Pakistan. The study compared the effects of two given methods on the ability of the students to appreciate the theme, music and imagery of the poem. In this experimental study, Government Boys Higher Secondary School No.4 Dera Ismail Khan Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was selected as a sample through purposive sampling. Selection of sections was randomly done using the new draw method technique. Similarly one group was randomly selected as the experimental and the other as control. Each group was consisted of thirty students. The same teacher taught to experimental as well as control group. The researcher motivated directed and guided him to use traditional method for teaching English to control group and adopt interactive strategies for experimental group. The relevant pre-test was administered and the students of both groups were equivalent at the time of starting the experiment. The instruments consisted of two achievement tests (pre-test and post-test) in the subject of English 11<sup>th</sup> class and 10 poems which are included in the textbook of English Course Book of Intermediate Class of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Duration of teaching was about forty days with the period of 40 minutes and both the groups were instructed essentially the same thing except for the method of instruction. The teacher of experimental group started English poem with the help of interactive communication strategies whereas the control group was started English poems with the help of traditional method. Time given to the students was directly proportional to their academic achievement and the development of different aspects of poems was also directly proportional to the time consumed by the students. The study recommends that the concept of interactive communication strategies may be implemented at the higher secondary schools for teaching English poems in order to understand its theme, imageries and its musical effects.*

**Keywords:** Traditional method, Interactive strategies, Appreciation of poems, Proportionate amount of time.

### INTRODUCTION

Education as well as teaching are both dynamic processes and its objective is to get maximum learning experiences. Every subject needs to be taught with proper planning and accurate teaching methodology. English is largely spoken and understood in the world. In our country Pakistan it has a great significance as all the books of higher education including science, medicine, arts, humanities and social sciences are written in English. Our religion Islam highly values knowledge and lays great stress on the acquisition of knowledge. The Holy Quran says, "Are those equal who know and those who don't know".

Unfortunately in our country most of the people do not use English language in their daily life. One reason being the social environment, as it does not provide for an active use of the language. English is taught as a second language and there is no English speaking environment available to teachers as well as students. The students of public sectors schools face a lot of problems as they are just provided English speaking environment in schools and that is too much stereotyped. On the other hand new (National Education Policy, 2009) strongly recommends both for teachers and students to improve communication skills in English.

One can't deny the importance of English language. According to Minkova (2001) "Today English has become the lingua franca of the world. It has replaced French in the diplomacy, Germany in the field of science and technology, and Latin in the field of literature and art. One out of five persons speaks English on the planet earth. It has become an official or co-official language of 45 countries of the world. History also tells us that the progress of nations and civilizations without sacrificing the basic values of one's own culture (PP.3, 28-31)."

According to Ahmed cited by Behlol (2009) "English is the storehouse of knowledge. A large number standard journals and books are published in this language. For the exchange of the information in the field of industry and commerce English can serve more effectively than any other language. Knowledge of this language is essential for technicians, engineers, doctors and teachers. It contained the standard terminology of Science and Technology." The language is an expression of human activity and as human activity keeps on changing, the language also changes with it. The needs of time are responsible for the change in languages. The world has taken the shape of "Global Village". The influence of U.K and U.S.A has given the English language an international status.

Nicholas (1982) declares it as the language of United Nations and International Court of Justice. Richards (1991) says that it is the medium of International commerce, trade and communication. The countries where English is not the first language are feeling the intense value of English. They view that English is essential for their survival in the modern era of science and technology. As the most of the books of medicine, science, trade, and commerce are written in English language.

Despite many serious efforts of the educational planners, it is generally felt that the standard of English, in general and specifically at higher secondary level, is declining day by day. There are various reasons, one is that our teachers at secondary and higher secondary level are not aware of the effective teaching methodologies.

English was taught from Class 6 in Urdu medium schools but now realizing its importance and need, Govt. has made English compulsory from class 1. Since its independence, our country Pakistan faces the medium of teaching as a serious issue. Everyone recognizes the importance of teaching English but some hurdles are on the way. Competent English teachers need to be produced for public sector schools in order to remove this gap in private and public sector. Besides, teaching methods need to be updated for achieving maximum performance on the part of the students. Teaching methodology plays a very decisive role in overall teaching learning process. Teachers may improve their pedagogical and andragogical skills for bringing effectiveness in overall learning environment.

According to Khan (2012 p.3) National Education Policy 2009 focuses on improving the quality of public sectors teachers in the area of teaching methods. Provincial Plan of Action on Education for All (2003) emphasized that teachers are not properly trained to achieve the objectives of their teaching, as there is no plan of action for teachers. Nine to twelve months

training for pre-service secondary school teachers in Pakistan is a very short period for teachers' build up, as compared to other countries of the world, where they provide 2 to 5 years teacher training. Rizvi (2004) also expressed that the formal training of high school teachers for B.Ed & M.Ed is one year each but actual classroom hours are estimated to cover about six months. This training is also based upon the abstract nature rather than the practical aspect of pedagogy.

Safdar (2010, p.272), states that "The educational process is built around the transfer of knowledge from the head of the teacher (with help from textbook etc.) to the heads of the young learners. It ignores the innate ability of learners to construct their own understandings. It leads to memories/knowledge where ideas are not linked together; where most of what is learnt is quickly forgotten simply because there are few links between ideas to enable the learner to recall after a period of time."

The students at secondary and higher secondary level partially possess reading and writing skills. The inadequacy of competence germinates further problems at the later stages, which become very difficult to overcome. There are many factors involved in the deterioration in the standard of English language. Teaching methodology is not up to date. From the very beginning, English is taught by traditional methods. A teacher reads a passage or a lesson and then translates it into Urdu. Some teachers adopt the method of interactive strategies/activities in their classrooms. Researches on teaching demonstrate vigorous changes during the past decades. Siddique (1991) said that poems are chosen for the enjoyment of the students to break the monotony of their regular classes. The students want something different, something stimulating and interesting. Unlike the other literary genres; novels, drama or short stories, poems are brief and do not take much time. Students, in order to enjoy poetry, must be able to comprehend it. They can only comprehend it if their needs are kept in mind. Therefore, texts chosen for the early stages must be fairly simple. It should be appropriate to the age, interests and goals of the students. Certain texts will be appealing to younger children, others to teen-agers and more complex texts to mature students at the graduate or university level.

According to Gardiner (1987) cited by Ishtiaq (2005) every language has two aspects spoken and written, prose and poetry. Prose is simple, straightforward and unpractical whereas poetry is metrical and musical. Prose states, dry facts in dry and prose manner while poetry deals with the aesthetic satisfaction of human beings. It can gather up in few words, finest and sensitive feelings. Students like to read poems since they perceive such texts as better models for the production of their own language. Their plain, straightforward language could be reproduced by students and thus prevent them from tackling many of the linguistic, sociological and cultural barriers set up by older texts. The aims of teaching poems at higher secondary level are to help the students to become capable of deriving pleasure from English poetry, to make the students aware of the principles which will facilitate their enjoyment of poetry and to enable the students to develop their critical faculties so that they can distinguish between good and bad poetry.

Poetry should be taught to the students in such a manner that the students may be able to know about the theme of the poem, to appreciate the music of the poem and to be clear about the imageries used in the poem.

The aim and objective of teaching poetry should be to include extensive reading and reading related activities in the syllabus at the earliest possible moment. Thus with an awareness of the potential for education enrichment which poems offer on a variety of levels, teachers can help students in gaining pleasure, profit, and wisdom from their reading.

Teaching of poems needs special techniques because the poetry is a form of art, which uses words instead of colors and other material. But poets do not simply communicate simple thoughts; they want to communicate their complex experiences.

In our country, most of the teachers use traditional method for teaching English poems at higher secondary level; some also adopt the interactive communication strategies.

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Present research work is conducted to find out the effect of time on students' performance during teaching of English poems through traditional method and interactive communicative strategies and its effectiveness at higher secondary level.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE PROBLEM**

To get that in which method, customary method or interactive communication strategies, students take maximum time and how the time factor affects the students' performance.

### **Significance**

This research is of great meaning in order to make the teaching methodology of English more effective with special reference to teaching of poems at higher secondary level in Pakistan. The following factors point out this significance:

1. Teachers adopt normally traditional method in teaching English in classrooms at higher secondary level in Pakistan. All the time the teacher has to speak in the classroom, the students are merely silent listeners. Enough time is spent on making the direct translation of the poems in which the students do not gain any poetic idea, which the poet wants to convey through using different poetic devices. The poet gives his own individual touch through those imageries and without understanding those imageries; the students cannot pick the genuine idea and the pleasure. No practice is carried out for understanding the appreciation, theme, music and imagery of the poem which are its soul. So the study may prove helpful in bringing positive changes in the classroom.
2. The curriculum planners and policy makers may be informed of the results of the study and to plan accordingly.

### **Hypotheses**

- I. The time given to the students has no considerable effect on the students' performance that was taught via interactive activities.
- II. The factor of time has no prominent effect on the intellectual success of the students who were involved in teaching learning process dominated by the teacher.

### **Limitations**

- I. There were not existing reliable and valid tests and attitude scales for this research. So the researcher prepared pre-test, post-test and attitude scales with the assistance of supervisor and experts. Then these were made valid and reliable.
- II. Intervening variables like student's age, intelligent quotient and socio-economic status were not considered.

### **Delimitations**

- I. The experiment was delimited to Dera Ismail Khan District. The Government boy's higher secondary schools were considered as the population. Government Higher

Secondary School No 4 was considered through purposive sampling. It was further delimited to the male students of intermediate class.

- II. The poems are included in the 11<sup>th</sup> class of English Course Book of Intermediate class so only 11<sup>th</sup> class male students of the selected school were included in the study.
- III. Ten poems from the textbook of the English Intermediate Class for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province were included in the study.

## HOW TO TEACH POETRY EFFECTIVELY

The basic objective of teaching poetry is to get pleasure in learning and appreciating poems. The teacher should concentrate on those aspects of poetry, which evoke the response of pleasure rather than the more formal or academic ones. In order to appreciate the poem in its true sense, the students must know the poetic devices and the theme of the poem. The theme is the idea, perception, or impression that the poem conveys. The students would be able to enjoy poetry in a befitting manner if they are taught with the musical quality and other essential aspects of poetry i.e. diction, tone, symbolism and other poetic devices.

### Diction

The poetry is a form of art which uses words instead of colours and other material. But poets do not simply communicate thoughts; they want to communicate complex experiences. The students should understand the various techniques of using the words so they might be able to reconstruct an event. Words have denotative and connotative meanings.

### Tone

A Poet keeps a certain tone in his poem. One can see his tone paying attention to the rhythm, rhyme and symbolism. If the poet is sad, the rhythm may be slow; if happy, it may be fast. Some words are gentle in sound, others are mellifluous, some are sharp and some are flat. The words used in "The Daffodils" are gentle, mellifluous and smooth. The rhyme, rhythm, alliteration, assonance and onomatopoeia have all contributed to creating this positive effect.

I wandered lonely as a cloud  
That floats on high over vales and hills.  
When all at once I saw a crowd  
A host of golden daffodils  
Besides the lake, beneath the trees  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

(The Daffodils) by William Wordsworth. 1800, Course Book of 9<sup>th</sup> class)

### Symbolism

Poets take the assistance of symbols to convey their complex idea in more way. Persuasive generally, symbols represent conceptions or ideas through things which can be seen or feel through the senses. Yeat's poetry (1920) is replete with symbols. He has been called "the chief representative" of the symbolist movement in English literature. Symbols are not only denotative but also connotative and evocative. For example, the word (rose) not only denotes a flower but it also evokes images of beauty and love. The symbols make the language rich and expressive (Cazamian's History of English Literature, 1970). Spring is usually meant to symbolize birth and re-birth. Summer as a symbol in English poetry means bloom or youth. Autumn is a symbol of old age and winter is taken as a symbol of death.

## The Devices Used For Musical Quality of the Poem

- a. Consonance
- b. Assonance
- c. Alliteration

### a. **Consonance**

It is occurred when the final consonantal groupings are the same. For instance, in end/blind and will/hall, the final consonant in the first case are n and d and they occur in both the words. In will and hall the l is common.

### b. **Assonance**

It happens when poets use the words which have vowel sounds in common. For instance, in same/late the common vowel sound is seen as ai in phonic transcription, this creates a certain musical effect in poetry and the listeners enjoy and are used as a poetic device.

### c. **Alliteration**

It is the repetition of internal consonant sounds in neighboring words. It usually occurs at beginning of words. This is a literary device and poets use it to create a soothing effect in their poems. (Has flung the stone that puts the stars to flight, Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam). The alliteration of Stone and Stars is visible in the line. In Coleridge's poem Kubla Khan, the best example of alliteration is "Five miles meandering with a mazy motion."

## The Use of Figurative Language in Poetry

The poets take the help of figurative language in order to convey his idea in a more befitting manner. The word (dog) literally means an animal. The dogs are considered servile, low and faithful. Thus human societies have seen certain qualities in the animal and have come to look down upon it or like it. These human values have given a connotative meaning of the word. The literal language is language used precisely or denotatively. The figurative language, on the one hand, is language used in the connotative sense. The figurative language, therefore, uses comparisons and contrasts to help the reader to understand what is meant.

## DESIGN OF THE STUDY

This was experimental in nature and "the pre-test – post-test Equivalent group design" was applied (adopted from Watanable Hare, and Lomax, 1984 and Iqbal 1986). This design may be represented as (Best, and Kohn, 1986, p.127) cited by Bibi.A.(2002).

$$RO_1 \times O_2 \quad X \text{ gain} = O_2 - O_1$$

$$RO_3 \times CO_4 \quad C \text{ gain} = O_4 - O_3$$

Where

R = Random assignment of subjects to groups.

X = Exposure of a group to an experimental

(Treatment) variable.

C = Exposure of a group to the control condition.

O<sub>1</sub>, O<sub>3</sub> = Pre-test.

O<sub>2</sub>, O<sub>4</sub> = Post-test



Pre-test was conducted in order to know whether both the groups are equal for starting the study. Post-test was comprised of the contents of ten poems taught during the study. This design is popular and various researchers used this design in their research studies. Farooq (1997) favours it that this is the most suitable in minimizing the threat to experimental validity. Ishtiaq (2005) in his Ph.D study while finding the effectiveness between Grammar Translation Method and Direct Method for Teaching English at Secondary level. Similarly the same method was used in the doctoral research works of Gillani (2005), Tabassum (2004), Bibi.A (2002), Mahmood (2004), Iqbal (2006) & Ali (2008) and “ a test of the significance of the difference between means (x test for the large sample) may be used to test the significance of the difference between means. The equivalence of the experimental and control group was provided by chance assignment of subjects to control and experimental treatment.”

### SCHEDULE OF TIME

The time schedule was observed for calculating the proportionate amount of time taken by the teacher himself while teaching, secondly time utilized by Teacher and students during teaching learning process and the time utilized while students interacting among themselves

The proportionate amount of time was calculated by finding the percentage of the time taken by the teacher himself alone, teacher plus students and students in each group. On the basis of data obtained, findings, conclusions and recommendations were made.

**Table Time utilization in Experimental and Control Group**

Group	Days	Total time (hours)	Time utilized by teacher		Teacher and students take the time		Time taken by students	
			Hours	%	Hours	%	Hours	%
Experimental Group	40	1600 min 26.666 hrs	366 min 6.1 hrs	22.875	549 min 9.15 hrs	34.312	685 min 11.416 hrs	42.812
Control group	40	1600 min 26.666 hrs	798 min 13.3 hrs	49.876	489 min 8.15 hrs	30.563	313 min 5.216 hrs	19.562

### DISCUSSION

Table- shows the distribution of time, teacher takes 22.875% in EG and 49.876 % in CG, teacher plus students take 34.312 % in EG and 30.563 % in CG whereas students utilize 42.812 % in EG and 19.562 in CG respectively. This show that (42.812-19.562) 23.25 % students of experimental group remain active taking more time while students of control group comparatively take less portion of time. On the other hand teacher takes 27.001 % (49.876-22.875) more time in CG as compared to experimental group. In respect of time while the teacher and students interact with each other, 3.749 % (34.312-30.563), teacher and students utilize more time. Utilization of Time in Experimental and Control Group

Distribution of time in three categories:

- Teacher utilizes time during teaching
- Time which is utilized during teacher-student interaction
- Time utilized during interaction of students

Total classes: 40

Each class duration: 40 minutes

Total time of working hours. 1600 minutes or 26.666 hours

### Time Distribution of Experimental Group

Teacher takes time	=	6.1 hours (366 minutes)
Percentage	=	22.875%
Teacher +students	=	9.15 hours (549 minutes)
Percentage	=	34.313%
Time taken by the students	=	11.416 hours (685 minutes)
Percentage	=	42.811%

### Time Distribution of Control Group

Portion of time taken by teacher:	13.3 hours (798)
Percentage	49.876%
Portion of time taken by teacher	8.15 hours (489 minutes)
Plus students:	
Percentage	30.563%
Portion of time spent by students:	5.216 hours (313minutes)
Percentage	19.562%

### Comparative Analysis of Time Proportion In Experimental And Control

Teacher takes time (Experimental 6.1hours, Control 13.3 hours)

Teacher takes 7.2 hours(27%) more time in control group as compared to experimental group, on the other hand teacher plus students take (9.15 EG,8.15 CG) one hour(3.75%) more time in experimental as compared to control group and students' proportion of time (11.416 EG,5.216CG) ,here the students of experimental group spend 6.2 hours (32.250%) more time as compared to control group.

The more time consumed by the students, the more they learn, understand and appreciate the poems in its true sense. Students take opportunity to take enough time to share one another's views, exchange their learning and collaborate through interactive strategies. So the study proves the improvement in learning, understanding and appreciating the various aspects of poems are directly linked to the utilization of students' time.

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