
ELT in Literature: Using Poetry in Enhancing Students' Speaking Performance

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ARTICLE INFO

Received

28/12/22

Revised

13/01/23

Accepted

25/01/23

Keywords:

Integration,
teaching, poetry,
speaking, students.

ABSTRACT

ELT in literature is one form of teaching integration, which is considered an effective way to learner motivation, and a positive atmosphere in learning the language. This research presents the study of teaching integration by using poetry as a medium for enhancing students' speaking performance. This aims to analyze how the student's performance in English speaking by using a poem in literature. The qualitative descriptive method is employed to research samples from 15 groups of students in the Prose and Poetry coursework. Data collection techniques were taken by observing closely towards students' conversation activities by using poetry, which is further analyzed by using Hughes' speaking rubrics, such as fluency, details or understanding, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. The results obtained that the use of poetry as a medium for conversation activity impacts students' speaking performance, particularly vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency. In short, this finding is a very interesting way, which can be widely offered in ELT programs, such as basic English.

How to cite: Suhadi, A. (2023). ELT in Literature: Using Poetry in Enhancing Students' Speaking Performance. *English Teaching and Linguistics Journal*, 4(1), 24-30.

I. INTRODUCTION

In higher education, an ideal target for learning English, students can speak actively and fluently as an important skill that should be mastered comprehensively by English students. It is not for academic achievement only, but broadly as the component to support students' success in the future. As cited in Gimpao (2005), having good competency to communicate in English gives a large impact on a student's academic achievement and future as well. Unfortunately, this, based on some related cases, is still a serious problem, which is optimally not resolved yet. Several researchers have been studied; at the higher education level, many students have difficulties developing their skills in speaking English (Hariswan at. all, 2022), their mother tongue is not English (Sayuri, 2016), and incompetent in communicating orally (Zhang, 2009), teaching strategies, curriculum, and environment (Rababa, 2005), and enable for conducting independent learners (Nakatani, 2010). In the particular case, this study has observed 10 students of Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu when conducted 'Thesis Defense', in 2021, which aims to investigate students' performance in defending their ideas or thoughts through the 'questions-answers' as given by thesis examiners. The analysis obtained, only a few students can comprehensively perform their speaking actively while defending their thoughts. Others tend to use mixed language.

Fundamentally, the above cases are definitely caused by some related factors. Internal factors relate to language competence, such as lack of vocabulary (Songbatumis, 2017; Haryanto, et al, 2017), grammar –students are difficulty arranging words into sentences (Haryanto, et al, 2017), topical knowledge refers to information that enables students to use language with reference to the world they live (Jahbel, 2017), self-confidence aspect (Astuti, 2015; Mazouzi, 2013; Tuan & Mai, 2015; Jahbel, 2017; Husnawati, 2017). From External factors, Performance Conditions (Tuan & Mai (2015), the strategy of teaching and learning (Khan, 2011; Fatiloro, 2015), and the learning environment (Minghe & Yuan, 2013).

Regarding this, an interesting way to solve students' barriers to English speaking can be conducted through the teaching integration program between English Learning Teaching (ELT) and literature. Some researchers have studied that ELT in literature provides many benefits in learning English. Pushpa and Seyed Yousef (2014), “the poetry media in autonomous classrooms has significantly an effect towards students’ communication in increasing logical thinking and reasoning abilities. Kathryn Michalko (2012), the Spoken Word Poetry (SWP) of poetry media can positively be used to help students' self-confidence and identity. Christopher D Roebuck (2015), showed that poetry media has a positive impact on academic achievement, creativity, and changes in students' attitudes. Other researchers have developed the use of poetry media with a more specific focus; Saputri Dwi Lestari (2010) focuses on aspects of pronunciation ability. Her results showed significant results to improve students' English pronunciation. Anne Picpican Bell (2005), by conducting the "recitation" model” can develop the skill of fluency in speaking English.

This study offers a form of teaching integration in literature by narrowing down the use of poetry media for enhancing students' speaking performance. The samples of research are 30 students from the fourth semester of the English Education Study Program at Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu, academic years 2020/2021. Samples are required to practice the form of conversation by using poetry medium, which is further evaluated based on Hughes' speaking rubrics, such as vocabulary, details, grammar, pronunciation, and fluency. The underlying motive for choosing this area is because poetry has more potential (elements and components) than other genres, –can be preferred as a tool for discussion, and exchanging ideas, and thoughts. Practically, this program is considered a very interesting way, which is believed to be able to encourage students’ motivation, class participation, and learning atmosphere.

Theoretical Framework

Literary Teaching Integration

In teaching activities, there are many aspects of scientific disciplines that can be integrated, because its contents and principles are closely related to other disciplines. From this description, many experts have defined the integration of teaching with varied approaches. Howe & Covell (2007), and Poldberg (2013), the implementation of teaching integration can improve learning through increased content and involvement in classroom activities. (Marshall, 2014) explains "integration is a rich and complex approach to the teaching and learning process, this approach is not only for new initiatives in the field of education that prioritize conceptual and procedural skills, but also contributes to the transformation of education. Brown (2007), that teaching integration brings artistic or literary content into the teaching curriculum, such as music, visual arts, drama, poetry, and prose.

Specifically, Silverstein and Layne (2010:1), “literary integration” is a teaching approach in which students build and demonstrate understanding through literary or artistic forms. Students engage in creative processes that link components in literature with other fields for fulfilling the goals of both. Chodudjah argues that learning integration can make students more active in learning because students are invited to think creatively, observe, and role-plays to describe what they see and feel from literary works. Through literary media, there is an emphasis on the mutualization of literature/arts and academics, which does not only develop an understanding of academic subjects (Marshall, 2014). Furthermore, other experts; May and Robinson (2016), Marshall (2014: 104), Silverstein and Layn (2012), Clark (2006:19), Bresler (1995) all view the importance of teaching integration programs to develop understanding, increase participation and build self-confidence. According to May and Robinson, integration is divided into four styles: (1) subservient integration, in literature, is used as a medium to serve the basic academic curriculum, (2) effective integration, literature evokes personal expression, (3) social integration, literature as a way to improve participation in a community or school, and (4) cognitive integration, is a widely accepted integration in which both literary and core academic subjects are treated equally (14). This notion is reinforced by Bresler (1995), although there are slight differences, he identifies integration into four groups; subservient, balanced, affective, and social.

The practice of teaching integration, according to Clark (2006:19) comes in various forms, ranging from the most superficial to deeper exploration. Because it is a substantive approach to exploring and explaining the relationship between the areas of conceptual and structural levels. In-depth, this is described from Fogarty's thought (1991), the principle in teaching integration is divided into two parts: First, the effect of integration in context, several models signify that an integrated curriculum can reciprocally promote all subjects in terms of pedagogical practice and learning outcomes. Second, 'integration' is a new meaning that some elements in the system function as facilitators and guides.

Benefits of Integrated Poetry Teaching

Literary genres, especially poetry media, have more opportunities to develop speaking skills compared to other genres (Vinothees AP, 2018). Linguists realize the usefulness and value of literature can provide resources to improve language skills, namely as knowledge in the discourse of interpretation, functional and structural. The following factors support poetry in language teaching; (1) ideal means of developing language acquisition, (2) motivating students in speaking, (3) a tool for introducing cultural assumptions, (4) building confidence to interact, (5) developing strong communication skills.

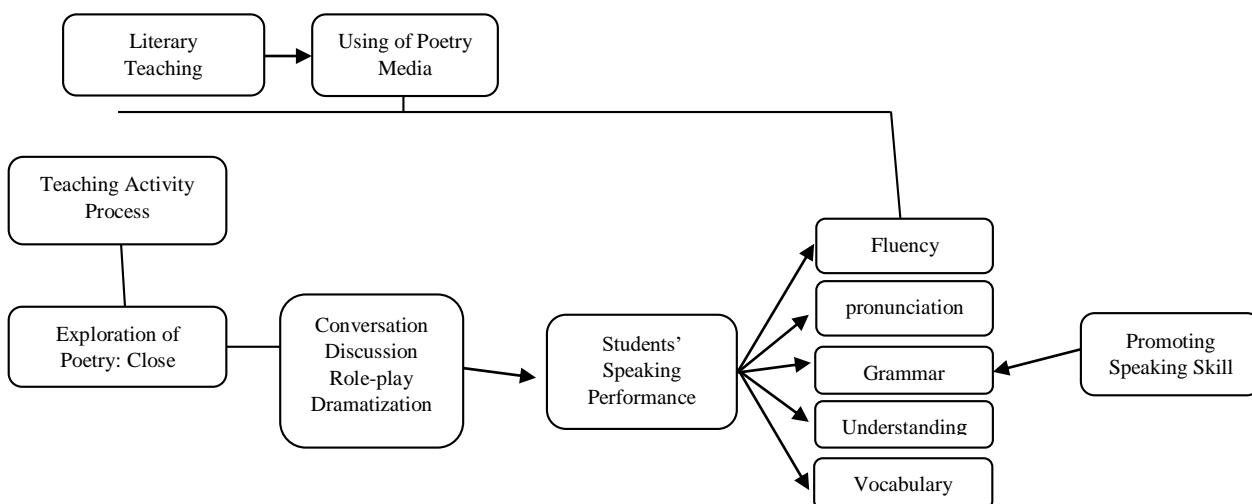
Poetry Teaching Integration Method

According to Deepa P (2018), there are three methods used in the integration of poetry teaching: (1) Cultural exploration, students learn about several cultures and ideologies by connecting their own cultural experiences with the content of poetry. (2) Language exploration and poetry material help students in using language and vocabulary. This approach allows systematic access to texts, for example, literal, and figurative language, and direct and indirect speech. (3) Exploration of personal growth, bridges culture, and language by focusing on the use of a particular language; text, and cultural context. Students are encouraged to express opinions, and feelings and make connections between their personal and cultural experiences expressed in texts. It also helps develop knowledge of ideas and language through different themes and topics when interpreting texts and constructing meaning based on their own experiences.

Instructional Forms in Teaching Poetry

Through poetry material, oral communication can be improved effectively. It is developed through aspects such as grammar rules, syntax, and vocabulary. Abilasha R (2018), several forms of instruction for teaching poetry in the classrooms: (a) Discussion; students are given complete freedom to express their ideas; agree or express objections in the discussion forum for conveying ideas from the content of poetry. (b) Conversation, students are given clues to words or keywords from poetry, and then build a spontaneous conversation. This activity builds the initiative to ask questions or express opinions. Students are positively encouraged to have the instinct to speak when spoken. (c) Role Play; this activity is like a drama, students take on different roles in typical situations. This activity is to provide practice by using a language in different situations. They were allowed to role-play with other students and asked them to speak naturally, which might be role-playing between two or more students. (d) Telling (Story Telling); storytelling instructions to practice improvisation, skits, or embellishments. From poetry, students are required to ask and explain the outline of a story in a creative style. The acquired language skills reproduce sentences from memory and improve memory power. (e) Debate; this activity is useful for improving language skills, promoting fluency, and getting rid of shyness. (f) Narration; this instruction tells the events in sequence can help improve students' speaking skills. Any incident or event can be taken from the poem, students are asked to tell about the theme. They should have complete freedom to tell any incident. This activity makes students free to speak without hesitation. (g) Spontaneous (Extempore); as an activity that can be demonstrated to test students' ability to speak English. This activity provides a large scope for students to improve their speaking competence. Such a technique helps students to gauge the depth of knowledge rather than their wits and eloquence. To build fluency in speaking, students are given the easiest topics at the beginning and encouraged to participate. This technique is to improve their fluency and vocabulary skills.

Diagram of Literary Teaching on Poem



II. METHODS

Research Design

This study used a descriptive qualitative underlying motive to analyze the use of poetry as teaching media for observing students' speaking performance in English by taking up 15 groups of students' conversations from the fourth students in Prose and Poetry course, the academic year 2020/2021. This study attempts to observe the forms of students' speaking performance by using poetry as media for conversation and narration activities. From these activities are observed four components of speaking namely fluency, pronunciation, grammar, details, and vocabulary.

Research Procedures

In this study, by using poetry as a medium of learning, students are required to perform two forms of speaking activities: conversation and narration, which are conducted collaboratively and individually. In the conversation, students collaboratively perform their speaking. The procedures of this study, research requires students to work together and individually in using the poem 'Phenomenal Woman' by Maya Angelou as the object/media for conducting English conversation and narration activities. In the conversation activity, students work with his/her partner to use the poem in their conversation practice. In the whilst, narration activity, students are required to retell the content of the poem based on their understanding. Both conversation and narration require the correct understanding in terms of speaking performance.

Data Collection Techniques

In this study, data collection techniques are conducted through several phases; (1) students are given the selected poem by Maya Angelou, it is *Phenomenal Woman*. They are given some minutes to understand the words, phrases, and meaning of the poem. (2) Students are asked to perform the conversation activity by using poem. (3) Researcher observed the students' conversation and narration by using Hughes's speaking rubric, as stated in the following.

Data Analysis Technique

Data of students' conversation and narration activities are analyzed based on Hughes speaking rubric, which focuses on four components, such as fluency, vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and details. These data also are supported by interview results; it is students' responses after they have used poetry media in the speaking activity.

Score	Fluency	Pronunciation	Vocabulary	Grammar	Details
5	Smooth and fluid speech; few to no hesitations; no attempt to search for words; volume is excellent.	Pronunciation is excellent; good effort at accent	Excellent control of language features; a wide range of well-chosen vocabulary	Accuracy & variety of grammatical structure	Excellent level of description; additional details beyond the required
4	Smooth and fluid speech; few hesitations; a slight search for words; inaudible word or two	Pronunciation is good; good effort at accent	Good language control: a good range of relatively well-chosen vocabulary	Some errors in grammatical structures are possibly caused by an attempt to include a variety	Good level of description; all required information included

3	Speech is relatively smooth; some hesitation and unevenness caused by rephrasing and searching for words; volume wavers	Pronunciation is good; some effort at accent, but is non-native	Adequate language control: vocabulary range is lacking	Frequent grammatical errors that do not obscure meaning; little variety in structure	Adequate description: some additional details should be provided
2	Speech is frequently hesitant with some sentences left uncompleted; volume very soft	Pronunciation is okay; no effort toward a native accent	Weak language control: basic vocabulary choice with some words lacking	Frequent grammatical errors even in a simple structure that at time obscure meaning	The description lacks some critical details that make it difficult for the listener to understand
1	Speech is slow, hesitant & strained except for short, memorized phrases; difficult to perceive continuity in speech; inaudible	Pronunciation is lacking and hard to understand; no effort towards a native accent	Weak language control: vocabulary that is used does not match the task	Frequent grammatical errors even in simple structures; meaning is obscured	Description is so lacking that the listener cannot understand

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results of an analysis of the use of poetry as a medium in enhancing students' English-speaking performance. There are two forms of speaking activities that have been practiced by students in the learning program of English Prose and Poetry coursework, such as conversation and narration. The results of students' speaking activities were further analyzed by Hughes' (2013) speaking rubrics. Vividly, both conversation and narrative performance are described in the following explanations.

Poetry for Conversation Performance

Collaboratively, in this activity, the targets for learning speaking encompasses students who are required to perform their speaking through conversation activity by using the poem above, 'Phenomenal Woman' by Maya Angelou. By conducting this, students' conversation performance is observed as some component of speaking performance as stated in the speaking rubrics. Therefore, before conducting their conversation collaboratively, students are given some minutes to make short preparation, are required to understand the whole content or meaning of the poem, use the target of language given (*bold words*) correctly, and conversation themes should not be out of poetry. Based on the results of analysis, the forms of students' speaking performance are described in the following table.

Table 1: Students' Conversation Performance

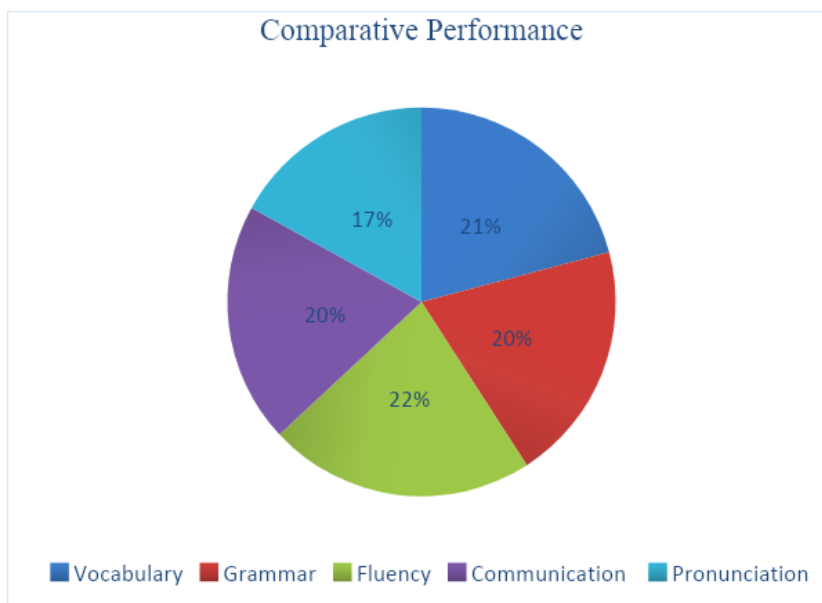
Groups of Conversation	Range Scores of Speaking Rubrics (1 – 5)					Scale of Score
	V	G	F	C	P	
Group 1	5	5	4	5	4	4.6
Group 2	5	4	5	4	4	4.4
Group 3	5	4	4	4	5	4.4

Group 5	5	4	5	4	3	4.2
Group 6	4	4	4	4	4	4.0
Group 7	5	4	5	4	5	4.6
Group 8	5	4	4	3	4	4.0
Group 9	5	3	4	4	4	4.0
Group 10	5	4	4	4	3	4.0
Group 11	4	4	4	3	4	3.8
Group 12	5	3	4	3	4	3.8
Group 13	3	4	4	3	4	3.6
Group 14	4	3	4	4	4	4.0
Group 15	4	3	4	4	3	3.6
	4.26	3.53	3.93	3.53	3.83	3.8

Notes: V: Vocabulary, G: Grammar, F: Fluency, C: Comprehend/details, P: Pronunciation

Table 1 above is an overview of students' English-speaking performance achievements from ELT in literature activities. The research sample consisted of 15 groups, which practice their conversation by using poetry as the medium. Data analysis obtained, there are variations in the achievement of collaborative conversation performance as assessed by Hughes' speaking rubrics; the component of vocabulary acquisition is at the highest level (4.26), it is followed by fluency (3.93), and pronunciation (3.83). The students' performance achievement of vocabulary can be described as their vocabulary performance almost close to the excellent level, where the conversation is carried out with *'good language control; a good range of relatively well-chosen vocabulary'*. In the fluency component, student conversation practice is very well done; *'smooth and fluid speech; few hesitations; a slight search for words; an inaudible word or two'*. In the aspect of pronunciation, students can use or pronounce the target words well with *'good pronunciation, good effort at accent'*. Other aspects like grammar and details obtained a 3.53 score. This illustrates that in students' conversation practice, there were *'some errors in grammatical structures possibly caused by an attempt to include a variety'*, and their whole details/understanding of poetry with a *'good level of description'; all required information included*, which indicates that it still needs additional descriptions that have not yet been explained from several aspects of the poem.

Generally, the ELT in literature shows students' English performance at a very good level. The pattern of integration in teaching literature by using poetry as media in learning English speaking activities provides mutual benefits in which students not only understand the important elements as contained in poetry but can also be integrated as a medium for learning English speaking, for instance, conversation activity. These activities can be seen from the comparison of students' speaking performance in the graph below.

Table 2. Comparative Performance

From this explanation, it is illustrated that the distribution of students' speaking performance is still quite balanced, nothing is too striking. This shows that the conversation practice provides a very good space for students in enhancing some components of English speaking through the media of poetry, such as vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, details, and fluency. The integration of teaching literature with English language skills is a mutual benefit that can have good potential in the development of English-speaking skills.

ELT in Literature

Based on the results of analysis, ELT in literature by using the medium of poetry provides mutual benefits for students, they do not only study literature but can also be used as a medium in learning to speak English. For example, in the results of this study, students collaborated in carrying out conversation activities, which gave a very good impact on the components of speaking English, especially vocabulary, fluency, and pronunciation. These findings are a very good learning pattern to be applied in learning English speaking. Several researchers have previously studied from different angles. Deepa and Ilankumaran (2018), reading poetry is an interesting area, which always awakens the senses and promotes literary things. It serves not only as a model of literature but also as a model for teaching language skills such as speaking. They emphasize that poetry is an effective way of language teaching, which provides a platform to improve the communication skills of students, such as vocabulary, sentence formation, syntax, fluency, and creative skills. Similarly, in Roberston (2009), poems can be used to introduce or practice new vocabulary, language structures, and rhyming devices, and shorter poems often give ELLs a chance to explore an idea while working with a more manageable amount of text than a short story. Reena Mittal, poetry was not considered appropriate for second language learning especially when we talk about grammar, communication skills, etc. But poetry serves not only as a model of literature but a model for teaching skills such as speaking and reading. Poetry can be an effective way of language teaching. The student can easily relate structures and themes with the help of poetry.

IV. SUGGESTION AND CONCLUSION

As has been discussed above, this study has pointed out that poetry provides a wide space to be used as a medium of learning speaking. This study proved that using poetry can help students enhance their vocabulary, fluency, and pronunciation as well, which indicated a very good category. Although, in other aspects, its impact is still not so visible, which is probably caused by outside factors from students' skills in speaking English. This research recommends the model of teaching integration in the literature toward the skill of English can be practiced as an alternative to teaching speaking in the classroom. This, in many levels of education, particularly higher education, is still seldom practiced by teachers, despite its results can be positive for teaching, speaking, or learning atmosphere.

In this study, researchers only concern themselves with the selected poem by focusing on the conversation activity. Therefore, further research can develop this aspect with wider poems and learning activities as a way for enhancing students' performance in English.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to say a big thanks to the head of the English Education Study Program, Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu, who has supported this research.

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