

Research Paper

Effective Teaching of English Poetry at Rural Jr. Colleges

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ABSTRACT

Poetry is an integral and inseparable part of English language-teaching from Pre-primary level to the University level. Actually it is a formidable challenge for the teachers to maintain charm and interest amongst the highly packed classes where it becomes difficult to concentrate on an individual student or to a small group. Teaching English and that to poetry in rural area is no child's play. Here the paper makes an attempt to highlight all the aspects of teaching poetry at the rural places where the position of English language is not only miserable but also horrible.

It also suggests some innovative techniques to maintain charm and interest of rural Jr. College (+2) students.

Introduction –

“Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings; it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquility”.

William Wordsworth.

It is said that poetry conveys the poet's imagination, mood and feelings through words as well as music. These are to be conveyed to the learners while teaching a poem; that is where the teaching of a poem is different from the teaching of prose. Some may argue that a poem is actually caught and that it cannot be taught. Ideally it is true but, in practice, to a large extent it can be taught; it has to be. The focus of a prose lesson is more on teaching language but the aim of a poetry lesson is what is usually called 'appreciation' or to be more precise, enjoyment. The teaching of poetry must be lively, stimulating, and challenging participatory activity.

Poetry fastens upon an object and turns it into a shape of beauty, or it sees eternal beauty in ordinary and common things. It raises this material world to a higher state. A true poet is a genius, who speaks in a new language to hearten and inspire his fellows, and to expound to them the age in which they live.

Advantages of Teaching Poetry-

Poetry has tremendous appeal for the listeners especially children and it is the best way of exciting their love of the language.

*It helps in the all-round development of pupils particularly the emotional, imaginative, intellectual, aesthetic and intuitive sides.

*Poetry educates our emotions and increases our powers of imagination.

*Poetry is more memorable than prose because of its arrangement of rhyme and rhythm.

*The rhythm of poetry helps the learner to acquire natural speech rhythms.

*Poetry imports pleasure and happiness to the students.

*Poetry introduces variety in English course and is a good antidote against boredom.

Teaching Poetry through Modern Modes of Communication –

The investigator ventured to employ modern modes of communications viz. C.D. player, tape-recorder, video tape and television to teach the poem of std.XII English course book entitled “Siddhartha and the Swan”. A film on Lord Gautam Buddha was shown highlighting and laying emphasis on the childhood events of Siddhartha. The poem was well recited with proper stress, intonation and correct pronunciation and was made available through cassettes to the XII std. students.

Objectives of the study –

To find out the achievement level of XII standard students to appreciate the beauty, rhyme and style of the poem.

Hypotheses - The research paper aims at –

1. There is a significant gain in the XII standards students scores with the communicative approach.

2. Students immensely appreciate the beauty, rhyme and style of the poem.

Methodology –

In the present study, the experimental research method was followed and a single group pre-test and post-test and post-test design was adopted.

Sample –

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A sample of 50 pupils studying in std. XII was selected by random sampling techniques from the rural Jr. Colleges of Akola District.

Sl.No.	Name of Jr.College	Boys	Girls	Total
1.	Rupnath Arts College, Dahihanda	7	3	10
2.	Sakharam Maharaj Jr.College Keliveli	6	4	10
3.	Tukaram Maharaj Jr.College Kinkhed	4	6	10
4.	Parshuram Naik Jr.College Borgaon Manju	7	3	10
5.	Govindrao Adik Jr. College Parad	5	5	10
		29	21	50

Technique –

In order to make the students learn, understand and appreciate the beauty of the poem “Siddhartha and the swan” a film on Lord Gautam Buddha was shown with much focus on the childhood events. The cassettes having the poem recited with proper stress, intonation, rhyme and correct pronunciation were supplied to the English teachers who made the students listen to it minutely.

Procedure –

A pre-test was conducted to estimate the student's ability and knowledge to appreciate the poem.

Later in order to ascertain the effectiveness of modern modes of communication the investigator employed the various communicative aids for a period of fifteen days in and outside the classroom.

A post test was administered to the students to evaluate their achievement in appreciating poetry and the scores were computed and the average percentage was calculated to find out if there was any significant difference between the pre and post treatment tests.

Pre-Test

Sl.No.	Marks	No.of students	Percentage
1.	0-5	19	38%
2.	5-10	21	42%
3.	10-15	7	14%
4.	15-20	3	06%
5.	20-25	0	00%
		50	100%

Post-Test

Sl.No.	Marks	No.of students	Percentage
1.	0-5	02	04%
2.	5-10	04	08%
3.	10-15	11	22%
4.	15-20	12	24%
5.	20-25	21	42%
		50	100%

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Findings –

1. There was a significant gain in the scores due to the treatment. This is due to the use of modern modes of communication.
2. The students were able to appreciate and enjoy the beauty of the poem.
3. They were able to understand the poem easily and were able to achieve high scores.
4. Rural Jr. College students were truly benefited from the modern communicative approach of teaching.

Implication –

The modern modes of communication like CD player, tape recorder, video tapes, television etc. helped the students to understand, appreciate the poem and the finer grammatical problems raised in gnomic poetry.

Conclusion

Musical and metrical form of language is poetry. Poetry is a thing of beauty of form, beauty of thought and beauty of emotions. It is intimately limited with life. Poetry is sounder than sight. It appeals principally to the ear than eye. It is not so much read but sung. It is not so much seen but heard. It is not so much to be thought of, but to be enjoyed. According to Alexander Hadow – “Read each poem twice, give the children time to form their own impressions, invite them to criticize and help them in doing so. Let the poetry period be as far as possible a period of joy, a period of pondering over things they love already. Thus we can develop a taste for poetry and train their ear to the variety of beautiful sounds. Remember that we must aim at turning out readers of poetry and not students of poetry.

The modern modes of communication are surely a blessing in disguise when it comes to teaching and learning of poetry. It helps in achieving great results and that to at the rural places where the students have fear and hatredness for the foreign language.

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