A Demonstration Sample for Poetry Education: Poem under the Light of 'Poetics of the Open Work'

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to provide a demonstration sample for the high school stage under the light of "Poetics of the Open Work" that is considered as a step towards comprehending the qualified poem. In this study, has been built in single group pretest-posttest design. Independent variables are applied to a randomly selected group to perform the pretest - posttest design There are measures applied both before the test (pre-test) and after the test (post test). The executed demonstration has proven, providing education under the light of Poetics of the Open Work has significant possibilities regarding both the consideration of poem - proper to its nature- as an art work and improving interpretation skills of students. During demonstration, active participation of students is observed through expressing their personal opinions. The most important difference between 'Secret Love' -based on direct narration as an example of first period of Necatigil poems- and 'Water Lilies' -as the example of his later period which is considered as the poet's mastery period- is the interpretation level.
Keywords: Poetry Education, poetic, open work

INTRODUCTION

Poetry is an extant art, generally protecting the basic characteristics though displaying some changes from primary samples, Changes during the history have led to the emergence of variations; thus, these variations complicated to define the poetry. However, a common definitive framework has been established as the figure of speech covering the features like a different language than the 'standard' language, producing an idiocratical reality; with harmony, imaginative qualities, multiple meanings, substantiality of connotations and so on. (Aksan, 1995; Easthope, 1983; Mukarovsky, 1970; Preminger, 1993). These characteristics are observed to be come forward during the modernization process in which the distinctions between artistic, scientific and philosophical discourses were clarified.

The overall objective of education is the holistic development of human. Scientific, philosophical and artistic ways of thinking are important elements of this development. Morin (2003: 35) who has discussed the knowledge in terms of human beings and human education emphasizes: "The development of technical-empirical-rational learning has never

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annihilated the poetic, magical, mythical or symbolic knowledge of human beings" From the perspective of human nature, this emphasis was made on an extremely important point. Therefore, an appropriate approach to this reality shall be the proper arrangement of the poetic knowledge or imaginative thinking, according to its nature, in education system. This means some distinctive properties of poetic language shall be taken into consideration. One of the basic characteristics of poetry as an art is that it has a different content intensity than the colloquial speech; because, the language of poetry positions at a different point. Differential definition of *'standard language'* and *'poetic language'* by Mukarovsky (1970: 40-56) provides guidance in this respect: "communication" is at the forefront regarding the standard language while "poetic function of the language" takes this place regarding the poetic language. In other words, poetic speech itself is important with its features as harmony, imaginative intensity, power of connotation and being open to interpretation. An approach to the interpretation of the poem may also be mentioned in this context: Riffaterre (1978: 6) who stated two levels of meaning as "mimetic means" and "hermeneutics means" regarding the interpretation of the poem emphasised: "literary reading occurs at hermeneutical level" .Poem as an open work, has "hermeneutics meaning" that offers various interpretation possibilities to the reader not "mimetic meaning" that concludes with comments exactly overlapping with the text.

When education environment examined in terms of expectations regarding poetry, it is observed that the above mentioned changing of information processes and the basic features of poetry have not been considered. For example, in Turkish language and literature education poetry is used as a vehicle for the transfer of certain course subjects in accordance with syllabus instead of being considered as art. Despite the national education program addresses poetry as art, it's a fact that poetry is used as an educational tool in primary and secondary schools (Afacan, 2013). Thus, it becomes difficult to comprehend the qualified examples of modern poetry for high school students. One of the main reasons of this is the approach of poetry serving as a means of transferring content related to a particular course during earlier education levels. Step to be taken towards considering poetry as art in the previous education levels shall be the subject of another study. In this study, demonstration sample under the light of "Poetics of the Open Work" as a step towards comprehending qualified poem for the high school stage is discussed.

"Open Work" concept with its conceptual integrity is an approach developed by Eco (2001). A poem is an "*open work*" by its very nature in terms of image, metaphor, symbol and mythological elements forming the structure of meaning. Poetica of the Open Work is functional in terms of presenting its propositions in a systematic way regarding mainly basic points such as "the reception of art work and artistic communication". Eco (2001: 27), describes his "*open work*" approach as follows: Each interpretation *explains* the work of art but does not *consume* it; every interpretation contributes to its genuineness, but each interpretation is only a complement of all the other possible interpretations". This study is based on the idea of demonstration under the light of mentioned approach offering significant opportunities for students regarding the comprehension of meaning universe of modern poetry.

Objective

The aim of this study is to provide a demonstration sample for the high school stage under the light of "Poetics of the Open Work" that is considered as a step towards comprehending the qualified poem.

Importance

A poem is an "Open Work" by its very nature in terms of image, metaphor, symbol and mythological elements forming the structure of meaning. Poetica of the Open Work is functional in terms of presenting its propositions in a systematic way regarding mainly basic points such as "the reception of art work and artistic communication".

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mentioned approach offering significant opportunities for students regarding the comprehension of meaning universe of modern poetry.

METHOD

In this study, has been built in single group pretest-posttest design. Independent variables are applied to a randomly selected group to perform the pretest - posttest design There are measures applied both before the test (pre-test) and after the test (post test) (Karasar, 2013).

Before the "Open Work" method demonstration 5 open-ended "poetry comprehension questions" were asked to an independent group of 22 11th grade students at Ankara Kocatepe Mimar Kemal High School.

Questions are regarding two chosen poems by Behcet Necatigil, *'Secret Love'* from his first period based on expression/narration by "standard language" and *'Water Lily'* from his second period covering open works based on deep connotations. These questions are prepared primarily considering the "polysemic" structure of poetry; and "Barrett Taxonomy" stages for being systematic.

Same 5 open-ended "poetry comprehension" questions were delivered to be answered to the same group at the end of 4 weeks of demonstration. The data obtained by open-ended practice is analysed and interpreted through "content analysis" under the conclusion of this study.

Demonstration Process

It is practiced as follows, with the main lines:

Ist Week (Course): *'Poetry and Definition'*: Poetry definitions of students are discussed. Poetry as an art, regarding semantics and its historical place, is discussed through examination of some poems with various poem definitions of some poets and philosophers such as Plato, Hamadani, P. B. Shelley C. Baudelaire, T. S. Eliot A. Haşim, Y. Kemal P. Reverdy, R. Jakobson, G. Thomson, A. Oktay H.Yavuz.

IInd Week: **a**. Mythological origin of art is briefly examined; with examples from painting and music, "the nature and the reception of art work" is discussed. Accompanied by some caricatures, critical assessments are stated regarding 'current poetry reception'.

b. The texts, *'Privately'* by Ahmet Kutsi Tecer, '*Saint-Antoine's pigeons/ 1. Eleni's hands'* by İlhan Berk are distributed; these are interpreted for the purposes of the study.

IIIrd Week: Focused on the characteristics of modern poetry with examples of poets such as Ahmed Haşim, Yahya Kemal, Nazim Hikmet, Necip Fazil Kısakürek, Oktay Rifat, İlhan Berk, Cemal Süreya, Gülten Akın and Hilmi Yavuz.

IVthWeek: *'Days flying by'*, *'Once Upon A Time'*, *'The Death of Patroklos and Horses'* by Oktay Rifat; *'Very beautiful thing'*, *'Explanations on Moon-v'* by M.C.Anday are discussed and compared to examine in terms of 'content intensity' of the poets' different stages to realise the improvement in the poetry line.

RESULTS

1. You want to talk on the theme of which of the two texts? Why?

Opinion	n	pre-test		post-test	
	22	f	%	f	%
Secret Love		12	54.55	4	18.18
Water Lily		10	45.45	18	81.82

The comments stand out according to the answers to the 'why' part of the pre-test (**I**) and post-test (**II**) questions:
'Secret Love':
(**I**) 'clear', 'familiar', 'simple theme', 'empathize with'…
(**II**) 'Open and sincere expression,' 'feelings in the foreground'…

'Water Lily':

(**I**) 'content intensity ',' depth ',' hidden meanings', 'broad sub-text', the effect of the images ...

(**II**) 'images, symbols and meanings open to different interpretations', ''personal to reader ',' more intimate ', 'content intensity ',' contained depth ',' forefront in terms of structure and meaning', 'different connotations' ...

2. If you could title the text, what would the title of each text be?

(This question is to measure the 'level of openness to interpretation' besides it corresponds to 're-organize' stage of Barrett's.) In the answers, 72.27% of recommendations regarding 'Secret Love' were similar to the original title while 40.91% of title recommendations were similar to the original title of 'Water Lilies'. This indicates that the 2nd poem has higher levels of openness to interpretations.

3. Regarding everyday experiences, environment and connotations which one of the texts is more significant for you? Why?

Opinion	n	pre-test		post-test	
	22	f	%	f	%
Secret Love		17	77.27	14	63.64
Water Lily		5	22.73	6	27.27
Swing		-		2	9.09

The comments stand out according to the answers to the 'why' part of the pre-test (I) and post-test (II) questions:

'Secret Love':

(**I**) Simple described environment ',' ordinary and realistic ',' as life, '' described more open ', ' clear traces the daily life', 'often experienced situation',' simple and compelling ','easy to visualise story and environment'...

(**II**) 'Situations more common in everyday life' , 'clear meaning', 'a cross-section of life ',' clear and concise '

'Water Lily':

(**I**), 'we can find ourselves a lot more in the text ',' implications',' different connotations' ...

(**II**) 'mystery in the poem is impressive ',' multipl-connotations ',' very different meaning', '' open to interpretation ',' feeling and intuition '...

4. Which text stands out for arousing interest and life experiences regarding yourself or others, or in terms of visualisation? Why?

Opinion	n	pre-test		post-test	
	22	f	%	f	%
Secret Love		14	63.64	9	40.91
Water Lily		8	36.36	12	54.55
Swing		-	-	1	4.54

The comments stand out according to the answers to the 'why' part of the pre-test (I) and post-test (II) questions:

'Secret Love':

(**I**) because it describes an event ',' ordinary to happen to the people ', 'common things seen around ',' theme about life, '' lives are more straightforward and plain', ' easy to visualise because experienced things are mentioned', '' the daily life language is used', 'because it is between 3 different characters' ...

(II) 'sections on the lives of everyone', 'easy to visualise', 'a direct and simple expression', 'can be visualised easily because it is true'

'Water Lily':

(**I**) 'because there are things that can be added by every reader', 'visualising is more exciting', 'meaningful', 'everyone can find his/her selves in it', 'easy to visualise because descriptive intensity is high'

(**II**) 'evoke the life and memories ', 'open-ended experiences',' proper images and descriptions for the poem', '' profound ',' evoke confidential and private life in readers' mind', '' aesthetically visualised',' arouse different feelings ', 'more successful in transferring the feeling'

5. In terms of meaning structure, language and expression characteristics, which text is more successful in your opinion? Why?

Opinion	n	pre-test		post-test	
	22	f	%	f	%
Secret Love		7	31.82	3	4.54
Water Lily		11	50.00	21	95.46
Swing		4	18.18	-	-

The comments stand out according to the answers to the 'why' part of the pre-test (I) and post-test (II) questions:

'Secret Love':

(**I**) used language more fluently ', ' unambiguous', 'clear', 'narrative simplicity'...

(**II**) 'Plain language', 'clear'

'Water Lily':

(**I**) 'meaning structure is intense', 'metaphor intensity', 'has space for readers' consideration', ' hidden meanings ', 'beautiful similes',' images and symbols are used', 'successful because it is not simple ', ' varying meanings that may change according to every reader',' impressive and intense ',' encouraging to think ',' words carefully selected '...

(**II**) 'Meaning intensity', 'ingenious similes', 'deep expression', 'every line is thought ', 'open to interpretation', 'evoke different connotations', 'words are used considering the connotations', 'successful in personification and using similes' 'established good context between the objects related to self''

General View

Opinion	n	pre-test		post-test	
	22	f	%	f	%
Secret Love		12	54.55	3	13.6
Water Lily		8	36.36	14	63.64
Swing		2	9.09	5	22.72

CONCLUSION

The executed demonstration has proven, providing education under the light of Poetics of the Open Work has significant possibilities regarding both the consideration of poem -proper to its nature- as an art work and improving interpretation skills of students. During demonstration, active participation of students is observed through expressing their personal opinions. The most important difference between 'Secret Love' -based on direct narration as an example of first period of Necatigil poems- and 'Water Lilies' -as the example of his later period which is considered as the poet's mastery period- is the interpretation level. Regarding the interpretation level; for the first poem "mimetic meaning" level -as called by Riffaterre (1978: 6)- stands out while 'hermeneutics meaning' level stands

out for the second poem. Poem as an open work, has "hermeneutics meaning" that offers various interpretation possibilities to the reader not "mimetic meaning" that concludes with comments exactly overlapping with the text.

This fact is obvious within the framework of this study regarding mentioned two poems by Necatigil. Therefore, open work approach, considering the poem as a work of art, is more effective than the approach that reduces poem into standard language under "comprehensibility" allegations. Open work approach has important facilities in terms of educational practicality and improvement of the sui generis interpretation ability of students. This approach is important for considering imaginative thinking as one of the main features of human. This is extremely important for the holistic education of the individual. Poetry education under the light of 'Poetics of Open Work' is effective in increasing the students' levels of 'accession to 'poetic meaning' and 'comprehending qualified poetry'.

SUGGESTIONS

Art of poetry, as the product of 'dreaming conscious' of man, shall be presented proper to its nature in educational environments, not as a means to transfer the contents of some courses. Appropriate approach to the nature of poetry is to consider it as an art. 'Poetics of the Open Work' shall provide valuable tools and capabilities in this regard for the educational process while protecting this feature of poetry. In this regard, poetry should have a special place in literature education; examples developing the imagination and ability to interpret should be chosen for students; methods and practices emphasising the importance of poetry as art and implicating its relation with other arts should be preferred

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