

English Connotations as an obstacle hinders appreciating English poetry

By

Dr. Ishraga Ahmed Abdulrahman Mohamed Nour

Associate Professor – Applied Linguistics

Taibah University

And

Dr. Mazahir Abdelgani Elsiddig Mamoun

Associate Professor – Applied Linguistics

King Khalid University

القبول : ٢٩ / ٦ / ٢٠١٩

الاستلام : ١٦ / ٥ / ٢٠١٩

المستخلص :

الشعر عموماً يُسَجَّرُ جماليات اللغة في التعبير، والمعنى الإيحائي هو أحد عناصر اللغة البيانية التي تظهر هذه الجماليات. كما أن طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية في الجامعة يواجهون العديد من العوائق لفهم وتذوق الشعر الإنجليزي ومن ثم لا يستشعرون هذه الجماليات. تهدف الدراسة للتحري عن المعاني الإيحائية باعتبارها عائق من عوائق تذوق الشعر الإنجليزي. اتبعت الدراسة المنهج الوصفي التحليلي، كما استعانت بالاستبيان بوصفه أداة لجمع البيانات. وجه الاستبيان لعدد خمسين محاضراً بأقسام اللغة الإنجليزية كلية التربية حنتوب - جامعة الجزيرة السودان، كلية التربية الحصاصيصا - جامعة الجزيرة - السودان و كلية ود مدني الأهلية - السودان. تم تحليل البيانات باستخدام برنامج الحزم الإحصائية للدراسات الاجتماعية (SPSS). برهنت الدراسة عدم إدراك الطلاب لمفهوم المعنى الإيحائي وعدم قدرتهم على استنباط اللغة البيانية والرمزية في الشعر. كما أظهرت عدم قدرة الطلاب على تذوق الشعر الإنجليزي. ثم أوصت الدراسة بتشجيع طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية لدراسة المعنى الإيحائي وإدراك أهميته في توضيح الصور الخيالية في الشعر. كما أوصت الأساتذة المختصين بتدريس الشعر الإنجليزي باستخدام سبل مفيدة لرفع مستوى الطلاب في تذوق الشعر الإنجليزي.

Abstract:

Poetry in general exploits the aesthetics of the language. Connotation is a figure of speech which helps in revealing these aesthetics. EFL Learners at University encounter many obstacles to understand and appreciate English poetry. Thus, they cannot feel

this aesthetics. The study aims to investigate connotations as an obstacle hinders appreciating English poetry. The study follows the descriptive analytical method. A questionnaire was chosen as a tool of data collection. This questionnaire was directed to (50) lecturers of English language at Faculty of Education- Hantoub – University of Gezira - Sudan, Faculty of Education- Hasahesa – University of Gezira - Susan, and Ahlia college - Sudan. The data were analyzed through using computer program (SPSS). The obtained results revealed that EFL University students are not aware of the connotative use of language and they are not able to extract figurative language and symbolism from poems. Moreover, they cannot appreciate English poetry. The study recommended that learners of English at University should be encouraged to study connotation and be aware of its importance in clarifying the images of poems. It also advises teachers of poetry courses to use helpful techniques to increase learners appreciation of English poetry.

Terms of the Study

Ballad : a song or a poem that tells a story.

Chant: a religious song or prayer or a way of singing, using only a few notes that are repeated many times.

Elegy: a poem or a song that expresses sadness, especially for somebody who has died.

Epic: a long poem about the actions of great people or about a nation's history.

Metaphor: a word or phrase used to describe somebody or something else, in a way that is different from its normal use in order to show that the two things have the same qualities.

Sonnet: a poem that has (14) lines each containing (10) syllables and a fixed pattern of rhyme.

Simile: a word or a phrase that compares something to something else, using the words like, as, ... etc...

1.Introduction

Poetry has been regarded as something central to existence, something has a unique value to the fully realized life. It can open the eyes to new ways of looking at experiences, emotions, people, nature, and more. It takes people on voyages with poetic devices such as imagery, metaphor ,rhythm and rhyme . The poet shares feelings with readers and listeners; readers and listeners share these feelings with each other , and anyone can be part of this exchange. Appreciating these feelings needs knowledge of culture , situation and the style of the poet . Connotative use of expressions and words on expressing feelings greatly affects understanding and hence appreciating English poetry.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Appreciating English poetry depends on understanding the connotative words used in the poem. Thus, connotation plays a vital role in appreciating English poetry. It is noticed that connotation represents a problematic area for EFL learners at university in understanding and appreciating English poetry. Therefore, the researcher attempts to investigate this problem. The study aims to:

1. Investigate the effect of connotation on appreciating English poetry.
2. Prove that connotative words represent a main problem that hinders appreciating English poetry.

1.3 Questions of the Study

1. What is the effect of connotation on appreciating English poetry?
2. To what extent do connotative words cause a problem hindering EFL learners appreciation of English poetry?

1.4 Hypotheses of the Study

1. Connotation is essential to appreciating English poetry.
2. Connotative words are a problem that hinders appreciating English poetry.

3. Most EFL University students cannot appreciate English poetry.

This study is expected to be helpful and valuable for University Lecturers, translators, university syllabus designers and for appreciators of English poetry in general.

1.5 Methodology of the Study

The sample of the study consists of (50) professors of English language at Faculty of Education – Hantoub University of Gezira - Sudan, Faculty of Education – Hasahesa – University of Gezira - Sudan, and Ahlia college - Sudan. The descriptive analytical method will be adopted in this study. The data of this study will be analyzed through computer program (SPSS) .

2.Literature Review

2.1 Language of Poetry

Discussing the language of poetry is very important to clarify the real relation between connotation and poetry. Balla (2012) says that language of poetry differs from ordinary language in its deviations from the grammar of the ordinary language and primarily involves special syntactic and semantic categories. It is worth mentioning that the essential equipment for appreciating poetry is the awareness of words. These words include connotations. Moreover, Liang (1999) believes that a poet when writing a poem has to rely solely on words. That means the study of a poem must be primarily a study of words. Most important, is that poetry is especially good at exploiting the connotations of words.

2.2 Denotation and Connotation in English Language

There are two levels of meanings in a language: denotation and connotation. Many linguists attempt to identify the terms 'denotation' and 'connotation', agreeing on that denotation is the act of naming something with a word or the actual object. In other words, it is the idea to which the word refers, whereas various words are used to express the meaning of connotation.

Hornby (2005, 308) defines connotation as the additional meaning of a word. For example, the word '*professional*' connotes '*skills*' or '*excellence*'. Another definition is given out by Richards et al (2013), stating that connotation is the emotional meaning towards what the word refers to. They provide the word '*child*' as an example defining it as a young person; but there are other characteristics which adult people associate with 'child' such as : '*amusing, noisy, sweet, affectionate...etc*'. These associations can be used as connotations for the word 'child'

Longman Dictionary of English Language (2005, 328) states that both 'connotation' and 'denotation' mean 'meaning', and they are complementary rather than synonymous. In other words, denotation makes explicit statement of the primary meaning, while connotation conveys the associations that cling to the word as a result of experiences.

Palmer (2001) shows that other terms share the characteristics of denotation and connotation. These terms are 'sense' and 'reference' or 'intention' and 'extension'. Here, denotation has relation with reference and extension, and connotation is related to sense and intentional meaning of words.

Dworkin (2009) defines connotation as the particular colouring or shade of meaning that it takes on from the place it is used and from the words that surround it. Balla (2012) ensures that words are not certain things, but they can acquire associations which affect the way of understanding these things. Thus, "*lily*" is not a white flower, this is the denotative use, it connotes notions of purity.

There are also synonymous words for the term 'connotative meaning' such as 'affective meaning', 'emotive meaning', and 'attitudinal meaning'.

Other examples of connotations are: '*home*' which denotes the place where one lives, but connotes intimacy, coziness, and privacy. '*Tart*' denotes sweet dish made of pastry and fruit, but

connotes a loose woman. 'Chicken' as another example that denotes a kind of animal and connotes 'coward'. Through application to poetry:

T. S. Eliot in his poem "Marina" wrote:

Those who sit in the style of contentment, meaning Death
Those who suffer the ecstasy of animals, meaning Death.

Here the denotation of "Death" is the end of the person's life, but it connotes in the first line the self-deceived people while in the second line it connotes the lustful people.

Connotation may make reference to facts, or represent an object or state of affairs. It also expresses feelings and attitudes towards the matters referred to.

2.3 Connotation VS Culture

In fact, it is really not an easy matter to identify culture. In general, the word "culture" has been used to refer to the way of doing things. It is also could be defined as a set of ideas, customs, arts, and skills which distinguish a certain group in a certain time. Palmer (2001) defines culture as the knowledge that someone can acquire as a result of being a member of a particular society. The Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary (2005) gives this definition of culture: "*Way of life of a particular country or group, for example: Islamic or African culture*".

Concerning language and culture, it is agreed that a language is part of culture and culture is part of language. In other words; they are interdependent on each other, so no one can separate the two without losing the significance of the other. Literature as a part of language and a mirror of culture is affected by cultural differences. As a clarifying point Satti (2006, 85, c.f Mutawi, 1998) gives these examples of cultural differences. The number (13) in American culture connotes bad luck, 'raven' in English culture is a bird of bad omen which signifies death, while in Arabic culture 'crow' connotes bad omen. Moreover, in Arabic

culture 'green' connotes 'beauty, paradise...' and in English 'sunny' connotes 'brightness, cheerfulness, Warmth... etc... '.

The aspect of lexis which is more noticeable in literature particularly poetry is connotation. Dictionaries tell only little about the connotative potential of lexical items; that is because they depend largely on culture. Connotation in poetry is particularly subtle and lively, and it can be said that they are culture-bound.

3. Concept of Poetry

Actually identifying poetry is a difficult matter for many linguists as well as the poets themselves. For many poets, poetry is too elusive to be defined. Poetry for Wordsworth is "the spontaneous over-flow of powerful feelings". Coleridge defines poetry as the best words in the best order, Hopkins sees poetry as speech framed to be heard for its own sake and interest. For Mathew Arnold, poetry is the criticism of life, while for Auden poetry is the clear expression of mixed feelings. Other poets define it as memorable speech, or imaginative passions or even musical thought.

All previous definitions work to express the nature of poetry in abstract terms without arriving to a precise definition. Linguistically, poetry is defined as the rhythmical composition of words that express an attitude designed to arouse emotional response. Generally, poetry expresses various emotions which are expressed by the use of variety of techniques including similes and onomatopoeia. The emphasis is on the aesthetics of the language. In other words, poems make much use of imagery and word associations to quickly convey emotions.

Concerning the language of poetry, when the poet writes any poem he/she tries to find the word that suits his/her needs and expresses his/her feelings. This word may carry more than one meaning, that is to say, these related meanings can be called connotative meanings. Hence the poet chooses his/her words according to their particular shade of meaning. Thus when reading

or listening to poems there must be alertness to the precise meanings of the words. To sum up, by using connotative words, the poet is able to give the exact experience that he/she wants to communicate. In addition to that, he will also be able to bring out the expressive potentialities that the words possess.

3.1 Elements of Poetry

The elements of poetry are grouped under the terms 'form' and 'content' as 'thought, associations, imagery, emotion, sound, rhythm and verse form.

1. Thought:

For many writers , thought is a very essential part for the appreciation of poetry. The poet's actual words give distinction and vitality to the thought, therefore, they are of greatest importance.

2. Associations:

These refer to the implied meanings of words in poetry. They are important because these meanings and associations give precision and reality to the general idea.

3. Imagery:

Ballla (2012) defines imagery as a term used to signify all the objects and qualities of sense perception referred to in a poem or other work of literature, whether by literal description, by allusion, or in the analogies used in its similes and metaphors.

4. Emotion:

Emotion is the feelings expressed. It is one of the most important principles of aesthetics; the appreciation of a work of art requires feelings and emotion.

5. Sound:

Word-melody has its own value in most poetry. It should not attract readers and listeners attention so closely to itself and separate them from the accurate thought and lively image.

6. Rhythm:

Al-Faki ((2006, 98) c.f Warren and Brooks (1950)) states that rhythm means the pattern of stressed and unstressed sounds in a line of poetry. It is very essential in poetry.

7. Verse form:

The verse form according to Al-Faki (2006, 98) c.f Warren and Books (1950) is divided into either stanza or free verse. A stanza is a group of lines of verse within a poem. It has different names according to the number of lines. For example, two lines are a couplet three lines are a tercet, four lines are a quatrain....etc. Concerning free verse, it is written in broken-up lines like poetry, not continuously like prose. It is usually very rhythmical.

8. Rhyme and Meter:

As elements of poetry, Heidegger (2010) defines them as meter is a fixed arrangement of stressed and unstressed syllables in verse, while rhyme is the sameness of sounds at the ends of verse lines.

3.2 Types of Poetry

Many types of poetry can be distinguished; they are also called 'poetic forms':

1. Sonnet:

The sonnet is a fourteen lines poem which has a fixed form or pattern. Sonnet itself has three main types:

- a. The Italian sonnet; consists of octave (eight lines of verse) and sestet (six lines of verse).
- b. The Spenserian sonnet: three quatrains and a couplet.
- c. The Shakespearean sonnet: three quatrains and a couplet.

2. Ballad:

It is a song, transmitted orally to tell a story. Gray (1997, 14) defines literary ballad as "a narrative poem written by learned poets in deliberate imitation of the form of popular ballad". For example "*Rime of the Ancient Mariner*" by Coleridge. Events in ballads are the stuff of tabloid journalism, domestic crimes, unhappy marriages... etc..

3. Ode:

It is a kind of poem made up of stanzas, each stanza includes unfixed number of lines. It discusses one personal theme or idea. For example, "Ode to the West Wind", by Shelley.

4. Elegy:

A kind of poem written to mourn over the death of someone and mention the good points and traits of the loved one.

5. Epic:

It is a very long narrative poem, that discusses important events and adventures in the life of a nation. For example Milton's literary epic "Paradise Lost". Heidegger (2010) defines an epic as a verse about the deeds of heroes.

6. Parody:

Imitation of others poems in tone, characteristics, form and language to make people laugh.

7. Dirge:

A poem written and sung over the death of someone.

8. Lullaby:

A song sung to send babies to sleep.

9. Euology:

A song or poem intended to praise someone for good deeds.

10. Satire:

The opposite of euology, a poem intended to criticize someone.

11. Chant and Hymn:

Religious poem or song written to praise God.

12. National Anthem:

Poem or song sung by a nation to express loyalty in ceremonial occasions.

Another classification for poetry is provided by Al-Faki (2006, 103) c.f Farrelt (2000) classifying poetry into:

1. Dramatic poetry: kind of poem where a single character addressing a silent listener, explains his actions at an important

moment in his life. For example "*The Cock Tail Party*" and "*The Family Reunion*" by T. S. Eliot.

2. Narrative Poetry: The kind of poetry which tells a story. It includes epic and ballad. For example the "*Iliad*" and "*The Odyssey*" by Homer.
3. Lyric Poetry is any fairly short non narrative poem representing a single speaker who expresses a state of mind or a process of thought and feeling. It includes the elegy, hymn and ode. It is worth mentioning that lyrics are characterized by their simplicity of language, intensity of imagination, and sincerity of feeling.

4. Connotations and Figurative Language

According to the (<http://specialed.com/literary/figurative.htm>) a figure of speech is a use of a word that diverges from its normal meaning to a specialized meaning not based on the literal meaning of the word. Heidegger (2010) believes that the poet works with words, skillfully putting them together so as to draw a picture in the mind, the words that express this picture are called figures of speech.

It is knowledgeable that figurative language goes beyond the literal meaning of words to create a new image, or a fresh impression in the minds.

Figures of speech-such as simile, metaphor, and personification-provide emphasis, freshness of expression or clarity. However, clarity may suffer from their use, as any figure of speech introduces an ambiguity between literal and figurative interpretation. Figurative language can be also called language of rhetoric or locution.

Crystal (2004) distinguishes two kinds of figures; figures of thought, and figures of speech. Figures of thought or 'tropes' means the words are used in a way that affect the meaning, while in rhetorical figures the effect is not primarily in the meaning but in the order of the words. In other words, figures of thought still hold

even if the words used are changed, whereas figures of speech vanish if one changes the words. He classifies figures of speech into four classes:

1. Figures of diction: They consist of changes of letters or syllables within words.
2. Figures of construction; in which normal grammar is departed from construction.
3. Other figures: such as repetition in various forms.
4. Tropes: where words take on meanings which are different from their ordinary senses. That is to say, connotation.

It is obvious that the before-mentioned information shows that connotation is an inseparable part of figurative language in other words it is a support or a kind of figurative language. Crystal (2004) points up adding that there are more than thirty figures of speech summed up as follows:

4.1. Simile:

It is the act of direct comparison between different things, in dissimilar things an element of similarity is affected by means of a connective such as : "like, as, than, seems, or appears" for example:

1. *How sharper than a serpent's tooth is To have a thankless child*
Shakespeare (1569-1616)
2. *O' my love is like the melody That's sweetly play in tune. As fair thou art, my bonie lass So deep in love am I;* Robert Bum (1759-1796)

4.2. Metaphor:

Metaphor is the act of comparing two things but without using connectives. For example;

Eye, gazelle, delicate wanderer,

Drinker of horizon's fluid line.

And Winter's dregs made desolate

The weakening eye of day. Stephen Spender (1962)

In this example the poet wants the reader to understand that *"the weakening eye of day"* is the sun made clearly dull by the effect of the cold weather. There are three kinds of metaphor: implicit metaphor, mixed metaphor and dead metaphor.

a. Implicit metaphor; the tenor is not stated, but is implied by the verbal context.

For example: *"That reed was too frail to survive the storm of its sorrows"*

b. A mixed metaphor means to involve metaphor within metaphor. For example:

*O, How shall summer's honey breath hold out
Against the wreckful siege of battering days?*

c. A dead metaphor: is very common in usage, for example when saying: *"The heart of the matter"*.

4.3. Hyperbole:

This means exaggeration or making something seem either excessively large, or great or excessively small. For example;

*Thou art so true, that thoughts of the suffice.
To make dreams truths, and fables histories;*

John Donne

4.4. Personification:

A figure of speech in which a thing or animal or even nature is made like human beings. For example:

"The wind stood up and gave a shout..."

4.5. Metonymy:

The substitution of the name of something to another thing closely associated to it. The form 'synecdoche' is used as a kind of metonymy. In other words, in this figure a thing is called, not by its true name, but by something associated to it. For example:

"On the death of his brother he succeeded to the throne".

Here the expression *"succeeded to the throne"* means being a king.

4.6. Repetition:

As a figure of speech, it takes many forms, such as:

- a. Alliteration: the use of the same letter or sound at the beginning of words that are close together, for example:
'A bracelet of bright hair about the bone...'
- b. Anadiplosis: repetition at the start of a line of a poem of the last word of the preceding line, for example:
*'Having put love at last to show this face;
This face, by which he could command...'*
- c. Anaphora: repeating a word at the beginning of two or more lines, for example:
*'Let sea-discovers to new world...
Let maps to others, world on world..
Let us possess our world...."*
- d. Antanaclasis; repeating a word changing its sense, for example:
*"My ranges of heart can like, wish and a dove
But after one such love, can love no more,"*
- e. Epanalepsis: repeating at the end of a line the word that started it:
*'He thinks that else none can, nor will
That any loves but he...'*
- f. Epizeuxis: immediate repetition of word.:
'...all, all, some proprieties invest,..'
- g. Polyptoton: repeating the word in the same phrase after a short interval in a different case:
*'If they be two, they are two so,
As stiff twin compasses are two..'*

4.7. Chiasmus:

Order of words in the first of two parallel clauses inverted in the second:

*'The fairest woman, but thy ghost,
But corrupt worms, the worthiest men."*

4.8. Apostrophe:

A way of addressing someone who is dead, or speaking to abstract things.

For example:

*"Ah, penny, brown penny, brown penny,
I am looped in the loops of her hair"*.

4.9. Periphrasis:

Substitution of an explanatory phrase for a word.

For example:

*"Our voices carry, and though slumber-bound,
Some few half wake and half never their choice,
Give tongue, proclaim their hidden name, 'Hound voice'*

4.10. Paronomasia:

The use of words similar in sound but different in meaning:

' So, in forgetting, thou rememb'rest right,
And , unawares, , to me shalt write'.

4.11. Pasison:

A sequence of phrases, clauses or sentences of similar structure:

"Go and catch a falling star,
Get with child a man dark root,"

4.12. Onomatopoeia:

Sometimes called echoism, it is the words that seem to resemble their sounds. In other words; the similarity is due as much to the meaning, and to the feel of uttering the words as to their sounds. For instance: hiss, buzz, bang, dig, knock, splash and cuckoo.

Other figures of speech include polce, tapinosis, parambole, oxymoron, exclamation, epistrophe, epimorphosis, aposiopesis, antimetabole, paradox, rhetorical question, antithesis, epiphraisis...etc..

5. Connotation and Symbolism

In literature, a symbol is a thing that suggests more than its literal meaning. A symbol in other words, is seen as something

which represents something else by analogy or association, Gray (1997, 168) states that "some symbols are 'conventional' or 'public', thus *the Red, White, and Blue*, '*the Cross*', are terms that signify symbolic objects fixed to a particular tradition or culture".

In poetry, poets use 'private' or 'personal' symbols which develop themselves. They do so by exploiting pre-existing and widely shared associations. For example; the general tendency to associate the rising sun with birth and the setting sun with death or to associate climbing with effort or progress.

Various English romantic poets employed private symbols in their poetry. This employment of symbols has revealed the 'Symbolist Movement' in France since the first World War. The famous poets of this period were Arthur Symons, Ernest Dowson, Yeats, Eliot, Pound, Cummings, Hart Crane, ...etc..

5.1 Connotative Expressions in Two Selected Poems:

"The Frog Prince", "Not Waving But Drawing"

By: Stevie Smith (1902-1971)

It is worth mentioning that Stevie Smith's style is distinguished by her use of a simple, straightforward diction, or choice of words. This simplicity can be deceiving. However, she often uses words with multiple meanings to convey her messages. She also depends on a word's connotation to develop meanings:

5.1.1) Selected Lines from: "The Frog Prince":

To be happy
To work up contentment
To make much of being a frog
To fear disenchantment
Says, it will be *heavenly*
To be set free
Cries, *heavenly* the girl who disenchants
And the royal times, *heavenly*,
And I think it will be.

Come, then, royal girl and royal times,
 Come quickly.
 I can be happy until you come
 But I cannot be *heavenly*,
 Only disenchanted people
 Can be *heavenly*

Bryan (2000) when analyzing this poem states that this poem is told from the point of view of the frog, who begins by telling who he is, how he arrived at his present situation, and what will happen to him. In these chosen lines the word "*heavenly*" is mentioned several times. In lines (5) and (8) "*heavenly*" connotes "*happy*", in line (7) it connotes "*cool*" since "*heavenly*" is a slang used by frivolous to mean "*cool*". In line (13) it connotes "*glory*", that is to say, "*to be glorified person and go to heaven*".

In other words, the frog/poet finds contentment and pleasure even in his quiet, simple and restricted life as a frog. And so the thought of being disenchanted is understandably daunting, he tells himself that this fear of disenchantment may be part of the spell and so he ought to welcome being free from the spell. "*Heavenly*" was also slang used by the frivolous which could be roughly translated as "*cool*". The line "*Cries, heavenly, the girl*" by linking heavenly with girl and cries suggests the frivolous meaning perhaps even more than the biblical. The last verse is disconcerting in its suggestion that the frog/ poet cannot be heavenly until he disenchanted. Heavenly and happy are carefully separated, confusing the reader if s/he expect heaven to be enchanting and think it is heavenly to be happy.

Stevie made comments when reading her poems, and at different times she said: "*The frog prince had this feeling of hope in death*". She also said:

"The Frog Prince is a religious poem, because he got too contented with being a frog and was nervous of being changed back into his proper

shape and going to heaven. So he nearly missed his chance of great happiness, but, as you see, he grew strong in time".

5.2.2) "Not Waving but Drowning" by Stevie Smith.

Nobody heard him, the dead man,
But still he lay moaning:
I was much further out than you thought
And not waving but drowning
Poor chap he always loved Larking
And now he's dead
It must have been too cold for him his heart gave way,
They said.
Oh, no no no, it was too cold always
(still the dead one lay moaning)
I was much too far out all my life
And not waving but drowning

The expression "*dead man*" in the first line connote the misunderstood person. In the third line the phrase "*further out*" does not mean in distant but in ideas. The title "*Not Waving but Drowning*" connotes depression and isolation.

This poem Stevie Smith explores the idea of isolation by being misunderstood by the people around. The poet deepens the reader's appreciation of the theme by employing imagery, contrast and an ambiguous tone. The poet employs many techniques such as the use of persona as in: "*I was much further..*", "*I was much too far...*" and the first person narrative making the poem seem very personal which deepens the reader's appreciation of the theme of isolation. Repetition is also used to reinforce the meaning of certain phrases making them stand out helping to appreciate them, for example: "*And not waving but drowning*" it is mentioned both at first and last stanzas. Isolation through the misunderstanding of other people is also explored in the second verse. It becomes apparent that people did not realize how the dead man felt, putting

his death down to a practical joke gone wrong "*he always loved Larking*". The word "*Larking*" has connotation of frivolity and light heartedness and yet it is clear to the reader that the man did into feel that way and was crying for help.

6.conclusion

In the light of the method adopted the researcher has found out the following:

- 1- EFL learners at University cannot appreciate English poetry (93.7%).
- 2- EFL university students are not aware of the connotative use of language (93.4%).
- 3- EFL students at University are aware of symbolism and figurative language, but they are not able to extract them and express their usage in the poem (76%).
- 4- Culture-bound words confuse EFL students in understanding English poetry (93.4%).
- 5- Engaging EFL students at university in activities based on literary theories is a helpful technique to facilitate appreciation of English poetry (80%).

6.1 Recommendations

In the light of the above mentioned findings, the researcher recommends the following:

- 1- Lecturers at university especially those who teach poetry courses should use helpful techniques to increase learners understanding of English poetry and hence raise the standard of appreciation.
- 2- Exposing learners to a wide range of examples and exercises of figurative language and symbolic use of words will help them to express their usage easily.
- 3- EFL learners at university should be encouraged to study connotations and get aware of its importance in clarifying the images of poems and then increase their abilities to know how to work out the connotative meanings of words in the context.

REFERENCES

- Al-Faki, I. M (2006), *'An Introduction to Literature'*, Open University of Sudan, Khartoum.
- Balla, B. (2012) *'Symbolism, Synesthesia, and Semiotics : Multidisciplinary Approach'* USA. Edward Arnold Publishers.
- Crystal, D.(2004), *'The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language'* Cambridge University press.
- Dwoekin. C. and Perlofe . M (2009) *'The sound of Poetry'*. The University of Chicago Press. Chicago.
- Gay. M. (1997). *'A Dictionary of Literary Terms'*. (2nd edition) Longman. Longman University Press.
- Heidegger . M. (2010), *'Poetry, Language, and Thought'*. Library of Congress. USA
- Hornby. A. S (2005), *'Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary'*. Oxford University Press.
- Johnson. K (2006), *'Poetry for the People'*, English Teaching Forum.
- Liong. K (1999), *'Caged in our Signs: A book about Semiotics'*. Ablex publishing corporation. New Jersey.
- Little. M. D (2000) , *'The Language of Literature'*. Boston, A Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Longman Dictionary of contemporary English Language, (2012), Longman Group Limited.
- Mansour. W. (1999), *'Appreciating Poetry'*, English Teaching Forum.
- Murray, Y. and Winterowd R. (1985) *'English Writing and Skills'*. USA Conrado Publishers.
- Palmer. F. (2001). *'Semantics'*, second edition, Cambridge University Press.
- Richards et al (2013), *'Longman Dictionary of Contemporary Language'*, Longman University Press.

Rogers, P. (1996), *'The Poetry Sausage Machine Creative Writing as a Teaching Strategy'*. English Teaching Forum.

Websites

<http://www.petry.org.Uk/connotation-Literary.term.htm>

<http://speciald.about.com/od/literaryla/figurative.htm>.

html:file//owner/thefrog.prince.by.Stevie.Smith.poetry/Archive.mh

t

Dr. Ishraga Nour & Dr. Mazahir Mamoun
