

**МЕДИЦИНА, ПЕДАГОГИКА И ТЕХНОЛОГИЯ:
ТЕОРИЯ И ПРАКТИКА**

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THE ROLE OF POETRY IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

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ABSTRACT

This article is to highlight the role of poetry in language acquisition (LA), emphasizing its unique contributions to linguistic, cognitive, and cultural development. While traditional language learning focuses on structured methodologies, poetry offers learners an immersive, creative approach to mastering a new language. It enhances linguistic skills through its complex syntax, rich vocabulary, and rhythmic pronunciation. Cognitively, poetry promotes critical thinking, improves memory retention, and fosters creative expression. Culturally, poetry serves as a bridge to understanding the target language's deeper societal and emotional contexts. Despite some challenges, such as its abstract nature, poetry remains a valuable tool for language acquisition when integrated effectively into the classroom.

Keywords: cultural competence through poetry, vocabulary expansion, communicative skills, expressive abilities.

Language acquisition has traditionally relied on structured, formal approaches, such as grammar exercises, vocabulary drills, and immersive communication practices. However, integrating creative expressions like poetry into language learning can offer unique benefits that complement these methods. Poetry, with its rhythm, imagery, and emotional depth, provides opportunities for learners to engage with language in ways that transcend rote memorization. In this article, the role of poetry in language acquisition (LA) will be analyzed, examining how it enhances linguistic, cognitive, and cultural competencies in learners.

+ Linguistic Benefits of Poetry in LA

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Poetry presents a unique linguistic structure that can challenge and enrich language learners. Its condensed nature requires learners to focus closely on word choice, sentence construction, and grammar. Through the analysis and creation of poetry, learners engage with language at a deeper syntactic level, making it an effective tool for teaching vocabulary and grammar.

Syntax and Grammar: The unconventional sentence structures and word order found in poetry encourage learners to think about the flexibility of language. As poetry often deviates from typical grammar rules, learners are prompted to re-evaluate their understanding of syntax, promoting greater grammatical awareness and adaptability.

Vocabulary Expansion: Poetry's use of vivid, figurative language offers learners exposure to a rich array of vocabulary, including less commonly used words and expressions. By analyzing metaphors, similes, and other literary devices, students can learn to interpret complex meanings and expand their lexical repertoire.

Pronunciation and Rhythm: The rhythmic and phonetic qualities of poetry, including meter, rhyme, and alliteration, provide natural exercises in pronunciation. Learners can benefit from reading poetry aloud, which helps develop their articulation, intonation, and overall phonetic awareness in the target language.

✚ ***Cognitive Benefits of Poetry in SLA***

Poetry is not merely a linguistic exercise but also a cognitive one. The interpretative nature of poetry encourages higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills, both of which are essential in mastering a second language.

Critical Thinking. Interpreting poetic texts requires learners to think critically, as meaning in poetry is often implied rather than explicit. Learners must draw on contextual clues, metaphorical language, and personal reflection to grasp the poet's intentions. This process sharpens cognitive abilities, such as inference and deduction, which are transferable to other areas of language learning.

Memory and Retention. The musicality and emotional resonance of poetry can make it easier for learners to memorize new vocabulary and sentence structures. The combination of rhyme, repetition, and imagery found in poetry serves as mnemonic devices that aid long-term retention of language elements.

Creativity and Expression. Engaging with poetry stimulates creativity, allowing learners to express themselves in ways that may not be possible through more formal language exercises. The freedom to experiment with language in poetic form fosters

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an environment where learners can take risks, make mistakes, and refine their language use without fear of rigid correction.

✚ Cultural Competence through Poetry

Poetry is deeply rooted in cultural contexts, making it a valuable tool for developing cultural competence in language learners. Through poetry, learners can gain insight into the history, values, and emotions of the people who speak the target language, which enhances their understanding of cultural varieties.

Cultural Immersion. Poetry often reflects the cultural and historical backgrounds of the people who produce it. By studying the poetry of a target language, learners can immerse themselves in the cultural narratives, traditions, and values embedded in the text. This cultural immersion fosters empathy and a deeper understanding of the societal context in which the language is spoken.

Intercultural Dialogue. Engaging with poetry from different cultures encourages learners to reflect on their own cultural experiences while comparing them to those depicted in the poetry. This comparison can promote intercultural dialogue, encouraging learners to develop a more global perspective and greater respect for cultural diversity.

Emotional Connection. Poetry often deals with universal themes, love, loss, joy, and identity that transcend cultural boundaries. By relating to these themes, learners can form emotional connections to the language and its speakers, thereby increasing their motivation to learn. This emotional engagement can also make language learning a more fulfilling and personally relevant experience.

✚ Practical Applications of Poetry in LA

While the theoretical benefits of poetry in language acquisition are clear, its practical application in the classroom is equally important. Teachers can utilize various strategies to incorporate poetry into language lessons effectively.

Poetry Reading and Analysis. Instructing students to read and analyze poetry allows them to engage with complex sentence structures, vocabulary, and cultural references. By discussing the meanings of poems, students practice both their interpretive and communicative skills.

Poetry Writing. Encouraging learners to write their own poems in the target language can enhance their creative language use. Writing poems enables students to experiment with new vocabulary and sentence structures in a less restrictive context, while also developing their expressive abilities.

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Collaborative Poetry Projects. Group poetry projects can be an excellent way to foster collaboration and peer learning. Working together on a shared poem allows students to negotiate meaning, offer feedback, and learn from each other's language use, thereby reinforcing their communicative skills.

While poetry offers numerous advantages, there are challenges to its integration in language classrooms. Poetry can be intimidating for some learners due to its abstract nature, and its dense language may be difficult for beginners to understand. Teachers need to carefully select poems that match the proficiency level of their students, gradually increasing the complexity as learners become more comfortable with poetic forms. Additionally, the interpretive nature of poetry may not align with traditional language assessment methods. Educators will need to develop alternative forms of assessment, such as creative projects or oral presentations, that allow students to demonstrate their understanding of poetic language in ways that standardized tests may not capture.

In conclusion, the role of poetry in second language acquisition is multifaceted, offering linguistic, cognitive, and cultural benefits that complement traditional language learning techniques. By engaging with poetry, learners are exposed to rich linguistic structures, encouraged to think critically, and provided with opportunities to connect emotionally and culturally with the target language. While there are challenges in incorporating poetry into the classroom, the rewards far outweigh the difficulties. When used thoughtfully, poetry can be a powerful tool in helping learners not only acquire a new language but also develop a deeper appreciation for the culture and creativity behind it.

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