

25	<p>PEDAGOGY OF POETRY WITH REFERENCE TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH'S POEM 'THE DAFFODILS' PROF. DR. CHANDRAKANT R. MANDLIK</p>	94-96
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PEDAGOGY OF POETRY WITH REFERENCE TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH'S POEM 'THE DAFFODILS'

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Abstract:

The teaching English Language and literature includes epic, poetry, drama, prose pieces and poetry. But teaching poetry is an enjoyable and rewarding experience. The teacher has lot of freedom for interpreting the poem independently. He has to use authentic references and not readymade notes. The correct pronunciation leaves right impact on the mind of the listeners. The teacher must spare time to ask short questions to get feedback.

The features like introduction of the poet, loud and slow reading of the poem, contextual meaning of the words, examples of other poems of the similar thought content, and interpretation of the poem in the light of stylistic approach are important.

Introduction:

I have been teaching English Language and literature since 1985 which includes epic, poetry, drama, prose pieces and poetry in the rural college Shri Shiv Chhatrapati College Junnar. Majority of the students of this college belong to the rural area called adivasi community. While teaching the various branches of literature to them my intention always is to lead them towards the path of understanding instead of going through examination and securing marks only. Teaching of poetry, what I feel is an enjoyable experience. People may have prejudice regarding teaching of poetry, that it is an easy task for many reasons. It is written in a limited number of pages. One may feel that it is easy to complete teaching of a single poem within 45 minutes by using translation method or paraphrasing it. But friends it damages beauty of the teaching of poetry.

Features of teaching poetry:

Because of many reasons I like poetry and teaching of poetry is my passion and urge forever.

Poems are written in rhyme-scheme and stanza pattern.

Poet uses different poetic devices.

Poet's use of diction.

Experience of the Poet becomes mine.

Free to interpret poem independently.

Teaching of poetry gives pleasure to the teacher when the students have books before them and try to become one with the poets ideas expressed in the poem. The teacher of English, I think can easily tempt the learners to be an active learner whenever he avoids teaching of English poetry by using translation method in his mother tongue. The teacher has to impress the student that the poem which he has been dealing with is his first experience (feeling himself as a poet) and not second by interpreting the poem independently and not using other's interpretation. He has to avoid readymade notes and peep into authentic references. It will enlighten experience of teaching and learning. The teacher also should not keep the long distance from the students so that the students can hear his sound clearly. For that he has to pronounce each word correctly. The correct pronunciation of the words will leave right impact of essence of the poem on the mind of the learner. Many times it happens that if the teacher is not well acquainted with utterances his sound creates loud laugh in the class. It is responsibility of the teacher to list contextual meaning of the words in English

otherwise the students stumble in understanding the poem. The solution I would like to advise is that he must be a teacher of appropriate speed before the slow learners. Asking short questions is also the best skill after completing illustration of each stanza which helps to get feedback. I would like to follow some steps while explaining Wordsworth's poem 'The Daffodils.'

Illustration with reference to Wordsworth's poem 'The Daffodils'

- 1 Introduce the poet William Wordsworth to the students in a simple language by telling them poet's biography, education and literary work. Do not forget to tell what kind of language the poet has used and the central idea of the poem in few words so what the students will perceive the theme of the poem easily.
- 2 Read out the whole poem loudly and slowly with intonation pattern, so that the emotional touch will be clearly understood by them.
- 3 Read each line of the poem and tell them meaning of the difficult words in English. Consequently the students can acquire sufficient enough vocabulary. It will also help them in writing paraphrase of the poem in their own language.
- 4 Explain each stanza of the poem in the class by giving them examples of the poems of other poets who have similarity of the thought content.
- 5 Indian students are unfamiliar with the flower daffodils. Therefore asks them names of flowers like 'rose' 'lily' so that they will be able to imagine an object that is daffodil. Find out important words related to the background, theme, and ideas the poet wants to express, e.g. cloud, vales, hills, beneath the trees, the breeze, stars, twinkle, milky way, a bay, tossing, waves, vacant, pensive mood, solitude, pleasure, dance with daffodils'. Such vocabulary will contribute to the students to know aspects of the nature and enable them to know Wordsworth as a nature poet.
- 6 It is also obligatory to interpret a poem in the light of stylistic approach in which main focus will be on language of content, Rhyme-scheme, metre and figures of speech. Language of poetry is different from the language of prose. Therefore, Wordsworth skilfully emphasizes simple language and avoids use of pompous language. According to him beauty of nature offers solace and enlightenment to the soul. By using simple and straightforward language in the poem 'The Daffodils' he shows intimate contact with the nature.
- 7 After explaining a poem ask the students to read a poem and write down some thematical points, which will help them to write appreciation of a poem on logical sequence.

In the first stanza comparison of Wordsworth's wandering with the wandering of cloud and comparison of the daffodils with the stars suggest poetic device i.e. simile. He again uses simile to compare numberless stars with the daffodils. Wordsworth uses alliteration in order to add musicality to the poem. He uses words like 'high' and 'hills' 'dances' and 'daffodils'. The teacher can give examples like 'kakune kakache kamache kagad kapatatun kadun katrine kara kara kaple'. If it is done the students will not find difficult to understand one of the important poetic devices, i.e. 'alliteration'. Poet's use of lexical deviation is remarkable. The words 'crowd' and 'host' are associated with human being. Violation of the linguistic norms enables the reader to understand social nature of the daffodils. It also foregrounds poet's loneliness and sociability of the daffodils. The sound of word 'fluttering' echoes the sound made by the daffodils, which suggests 'onomatopoeia'. One may find use of the poetic device like personification. He personifies daffodils in the poem 'The Daffodils'. Wordsworth uses the word 'crowd' to associate with human beings. The word host has two meanings: 'a large in number and entertainment. The daffodils are uncountable and they entertain the poet as a guest'.

In the second stanza Wordsworth says 'Ten thousand saw I as at a glance'. By using hyperbole the poet wants to tell the readers that the daffodils are a large in number.

In the third stanza of the poem, William Wordsworth repeats the word 'gazed' again and again in order to achieve the foregrounding effect. It reflects the reality that the poet observed the daffodils for a longer timer. Poet's use of cohesion declares his craftsmanship. The words like 'sprightly' 'glee', 'gay' 'jocund' 'bliss' and 'pleasure' are used to suggests Wordsworth's happy mood of mind and the cohesive effect.

Conclusion:

Teaching of poetry is unique and challenging experience which keeps human mind healthy and sound. According to Wordsworth the scene of the daffodils gives pleasure in the pensive mood. Therefore it is a source of joy. Teaching of this poem makes the teacher and the students aware of the stylistic elements of poetry such as language, stanzaic pattern, metre, and the figures of the speech. Wordsworth's unique and significant style of writing poetry helps to realize effect of the poem.

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