

Investigating EFL Learners' Ability to Analyse Poetic Language: A Pedagogical Corpus Stylistic Approach

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Abstract—Pedagogical stylistics refers to the application of the tools of stylistics in the teaching of the English language as a foreign or a second language. Teaching and learning poetry is challenging. Thus, pedagogical corpus stylistics (Henceforth, PCS) approach has been introduced to Iraqi undergraduate foreign language learners (EFL) to guide them to analyze poetic language. The study aims to make students interact with authentic examples of poetic language and answer questions about it. The main objective of the study is to examine whether PCS tools enable the learners to provide linguistic evidence from the poetic texts they are exposed to. This in turn ensures objective poetic analyses. Moreover, it aims to enable EFL Iraqi students to discover salient norms related to the Standard English language. The study reveals that the pedagogical corpus stylistic approach helps the students to discover language patterns using corpus tools with the help of the teacher's guidance at the beginning but this eventually leads to independent learning and discoveries about poetic language.

Index Terms—pedagogical corpus stylistic, poetic language, teaching EFL

I. INTRODUCTION

Reading English poetry is an enjoyable experience for both teachers and learners of the English language. However, poetry is not a straightforward genre to teach or learn. Verdonk (2013) believes that poetic texts are complex in nature. Similarly, Jeffries (2008) noted that poems have their own texts worlds; thus, it is tricky and difficult for readers to comprehend. Thus, there have been several methodological attempts have been made to tackle and solve this issue (Jaafar, 2021).

It can be a painstaking endeavor to teach poetry. For many reasons, poetry is rich material for EFL learners. It provides them with a vivid cultural background about the language that foreign learners do not know or have limited knowledge about. Moreover, poetry contains figurative devices that tend to defeat the readers' interpretive expectancy. Intertextuality is another factor that can hinder straightforward understanding of poetry, for instance, the use of allusions. Approaching literary texts by EFL Iraqi students can be a challenging task. Furthermore, reaching the correct, objective interpretation based on linguistic evidence is far more challenging. Pedagogical corpus stylistics which is proposed by (McIntyre & Walker, 2019) to teach L1 learners. However, in this study, this approach is adjusted to suit EFL Iraqi learners. What matters is to base the students' interpretation on linguistic patterns from the poetic texts.

Pedagogical stylistics as a methodology, in general, refers to the application of the tools of stylistics in teaching. More specifically, in the teaching of the English language as a foreign or a second language. McIntyre (2011, 2012) illustrates that pedagogical stylistics differs from the pedagogy of stylistics. On the one hand, pedagogical stylistics offers specific tools and techniques to teachers and learners of the English language. While, the pedagogy of stylistics is concerned with the methods of teaching stylistics itself as a field of linguistics (see, for instance, Short, 2006; Alderson & McIntyre, 2006; Plummer & Busse, 2006). Pedagogical corpus stylistics needs to be advocated in this study to foster language learning with stylistic tools that help learners to a better understanding of poetic texts. To put it differently, it is argued that PCS as an approach brings the attention of learners to language patterns that can be missed through regular teaching. For example, the use of authentic data in selected corpora gives the learners a chance to examine language in real use. The concordance lines for instance help them to see words in context and link the learning experience to their own knowledge.

However, the main focus of this study is on pedagogical stylistics and more specifically, on corpus pedagogical stylistics. Different theoretical approaches have addressed the integration of stylistics within classroom teaching of poetry. These approaches encourage the use of technology in teaching and learning. Most of them recently addressed the integration of corpora with stylistic tools (McIntyre & Walker, 2019). Nonetheless, based on the literature review, it appears that the pedagogical corpus stylistic approach has not been applied to the Iraqi higher Educational context. The

researchers argue that teaching poetry within the Iraqi educational context lacks linking content to form. In fact, teaching poetic language in regular classes focuses on thematic, moral aspects of poems. Thus, the study here aims to fill this gap and link form to meaning. It is important to shed light on phonological aspects and semantics as well as grammar while teaching poetry. Linking words to other contexts is crucial as well.

Among other important areas in pedagogical stylistics that require further research basically include three main possible studies; first, students' engagements with the text is still needed to be considered. To focus on engaging students with the target text instead of asking them to look for meaning, they can be engaged with the text they are exposed to. In other words, to link their own experiences and to be completely immersed within the text. The aim is to enable them to answer questions like: "how does this text impact you and why is that?" replacing questions like "what is the author's intention"? Or what is the meaning of the text?" (Zyngier, 2020, p. 449). Thus, this study aims to examine the significant outcome of combining pedagogical corpus stylistics approach and data-driven learning in the teaching of poetry among EFL students at the University of Baghdad to reach this goal. In fact, there are no studies concerning pedagogical corpus stylistics conducted within the Iraqi educational context. Thus, this study would help in filling this gap.

Moreover, the connection between foregrounding and pedagogical stylistics has to be enhanced in the reception area. To put it differently, intending to understand EFL students' responses, researchers can benefit from the tools of psychology and social sciences where there can be a part of some studies that can bring the attention to cultural nuances that can show various responses toward a particular literary text (Zyngier, 2020). For example, Iraqi students as foreign learners or readers, in general, have a different cultural background from those whose English are their first language. Thus, it is expected that the learners have various interpretations of the same target text.

In the same vein, corpus stylistics proved to be fruitful in classroom teaching. It can bring attention to patterns of language that can be missed by manual analysis. However, still more studies are needed that can be valuable in the interpretation process. Regardless of the technique, whether driven-corpus or corpus-based one (Zyngier, 2020; Zyngier et al., 2008; McIntyre, 2012).

Another important research gap is the development of pedagogical stylistics which can benefit from the turn of physical classes to virtual ones, especially after the technological platforms have been introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Empirical studies need to be conducted to testify the impact of integrated virtual classes with physical ones and their effectiveness on pedagogical stylistics. It is true that:

"What has been said of stylistics also applies to its pedagogical branch. It now goes "far beyond the rhetoric, poetics, formalism, structuralism, and functionalism of the past to embrace corpus, critical, cognitive, pedagogical, pragmatic, gender, multimodal and, most recently, neuroscientific approaches. These are all awaiting new endeavors" (Burke, 2014, p. 2).

Based on the above-mentioned research gaps and suggestions for further studies, this current study adapts corpus tools with pedagogical stylistics. The researchers can utilize online platforms for instance Google Classroom in addition to regular classes to achieve the goal of the study. Mainly, it is to guide students toward independence in finding patterns for language as linguistic evidence. Thus, the next research objective of this study is to determine how corpus pedagogical stylistics as a tool reveals patterns in language that enable teachers and EFL students to interpret texts.

II. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

English Education in Iraqi Universities Context

Teaching English literature at the university level in Iraq needs to be revived and adjusted according to the current technological developments. Usually, the focus on teaching the literary subject is deprived of connecting a form to meaning (see, for instance, Jaafar & Hassoon, 2018). Literary texts in general are taught by teachers who are specialized in English literature who are not trained to focus on linguistic elements. Most of those teachers consider linguistics as an alien. Their explanation is mainly restricted to narrating events and the thematic moral meanings of the literary texts. Little attention is paid to stylistic features other than figures of speech. Stylistics is not a matter of listing similes and metaphors. It goes beyond to include and integrate theories from other fields such as cognitive linguistics, corpus linguistics, functional linguistics, and critical discourse analysis. Stylistics is electives in nature. To put it differently, it keeps itself informed with all the developments in other fields (Jeffries & McIntyre, 2010). Based on what is mentioned above, there is a need to investigate the effectiveness of PCS approach to teach English language through literary texts in particular poetry to EFL Iraqi undergraduate students. Thus, pedagogical corpus stylistics can offer new tools to achieve the aims of the study.

The Iraqi Higher Educational system recognizes English as a Foreign Language (EFL)(Ministry of Higher Education). The target of the study is undergraduates Iraqi EFL students at the University of Baghdad. It is necessary to mention that, stylistics is not included in the syllabus. Poetry is being taught from a different perspective (themes, symbols...etc.). Corpus studies are not taught at the undergraduate level nor at the postgraduate level at the University of Baghdad, especially in a practical way.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Fogal (2015) presents a survey of thirteen studies to identify the main themes of these studies that deal with stylistics as a tool to improve second language learning. Fogal's study highlights the main gaps in these articles and concluded further empirical work needs to be done.

According to O'Halloran (2014), there are many approaches to teach or to know about a single poem. These approaches can be given as a guide to students to learn and analyse a poetic text. He proposed a performance stylistics approach that involves readers or students to find an answer to this question instead, the reader asks a very different question:

"How can I connect up a poem with different things outside of it in order to help dramatize it in a singular way?" (O'Halloran, 2014, p.146). This mainly means a reader has to connect the poem with outside matters. In other words, to perform an interpretative performance of a poem by means of web-based engagement. O'Halloran (2014) performance stylistics approach requires three elements. The first uses a web-search element and the second one is the traditional stylistic analysis. The last element is an optional corpus analysis which usually can be performed after the web search and before the stylistic analysis.

Part of the myriad approaches to poetry O'Halloran's study (2019) comes up with postdigital stylistics which is a new methodology in teaching. This approach suggests getting benefits from mobile devices to make films to embody literary interpretation and encourage learners to reflect their ideas through filming poems. However, there are no studies directed to apply teaching literature to Iraqi EFL learners through the use of stylistic techniques as well as corpus and pedagogical tools. The current study endeavors to investigate the effect of integrating three basic tools. Using corpora in learning is an effective means to achieve the goal of the study. Therefore, there is an attempt to extend what have been proposed earlier from research gaps and to encourage students to utilize selected corpus tools under the guidance of the teacher who acts as a facilitator in the process before starting the actual analysis.

IV. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Given these observations raised above, the present study, to be specific, addresses the following objectives:

- 1- To determine the extent to which the pedagogical Corpus stylistic approach can improve EFL Iraqi undergraduate students' interpretive poetic skills.
- 2- To show what are the effects of using the pedagogical Corpus stylistic approach to overcome difficulties in analyzing and understanding poetry.
- 3- To investigate the effectiveness of the PCS approach in teaching English through poetic language.

A. *Significance of the Study*

The current study is of crucial importance. Its significance lies in developing an approach to teaching English through poetry. It makes use of technology in reaching its aims. The study can help university Iraqi EFL students to increase their ability to analyse poetic language using corpus as well as pedagogical stylistic techniques. The availability of corpus tools and data is much connected to the development of technology which becomes part of life. Thus, employing these free facilities is crucial to achieve noticeable changes in both teaching and learning (see, Jaafar, 2019, 2021).

Moreover, students can develop autonomous learning skills through the introduction of DDL methodology. Searching for patterns through a corpus is not useful in finding textual patterns that help in interpretation but also, the search enables learners toward discovery learning. In addition to what is mentioned above, the study is valuable in terms of developing the curriculum of the Department of English to include stylistics and corpus studies at undergraduate levels.

There are no studies conducted in the Iraqi educational context that propose and conduct a pedagogical corpus stylistics approach to teach poetic language. Thus, it is believed that the current study is of immense practical significance to pave the way for future studies and applications in teaching not only poetry but also other literary genres. To sum up, the outcome of this study encourages more attempts to deal with corpora and technology within classroom teaching.

B. *Pedagogical Stylistics versus the Pedagogy of Stylistics*

Pedagogical stylistics differs from the pedagogy of stylistics. The former refers to the practices of applying stylistics toolkits in teaching. In other words, the tools of stylistics are used in teaching for example English language for foreign learners. On the one hand, pedagogical stylistics offers specific tools and techniques to teachers and learners of the English language. Using toolkit of stylistics in teaching English literature or even non-literary language is not a recent practice. Due to the importance of using authentic data in teaching the English language, many studies have been conducted in this vein. Many scholars have participated in developing pedagogical stylistics, some of the pioneers in this field include Widdowson (1975) Urszula Clark, and Sonia Zyngier who form (Ped-sig) group at the PALA conference in 1996 which is the first group that specialized in pedagogical stylistics (Zyngier, 2021). On the other hand, the pedagogy of stylistics is concerned with the methods of teaching stylistics itself as a field of linguistics (McIntyre 2011, 2012; McIntyre & Walker, 2019).

As mentioned earlier, pedagogical stylistics differs from the pedagogy of stylistics. To illustrate the difference,

McIntyre (2012) conducted a study on how to teach corpus stylistics to students. This can be an example of the pedagogy of stylistics. His study shows how stylistics can borrow from corpus linguistics techniques to support analysis with textual pieces of evidence to obtain objectivity. McIntyre (2012) illustrates “what we want to do in the stylistic analysis is to validate (or invalidate) the more subjective views of mainstream literary critics. And we can use corpus evidence to help us do this”(p.118). He further produces a corpus stylistic analysis of Hemingway’s novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls* to testify whether what have mentioned by critics that Hemingway’s writing style is simple and it is characterized by a ‘paratactic syntax’ feature in the novelist’s style. His approach is to compare the electronic version of the text against a reference corpus from the BNC, this is achieved using Wmatrix corpus tool. A list of the key parts of speech in the novels that show under and over-represented word classes. The first results were in contrast to the critics’ viewpoint. The coordinating and the subordinating conjunctions are over-represented in the novel. McIntyre (2012) concluded that:

“Corpus stylistics familiarizes students with key methodological concepts, such as research questions, hypotheses, data, methods, and tools of analysis. Once students have a firm grasp of these concepts, it can be much easier for them to apply what they have learnt to qualitative stylistic analysis (and, of course, to other subjects and disciplines). Corpus stylistics has the potential to improve students’ abilities in stylistic analysis generally..... In this sense, we see a circular and mutually beneficial relationship between the pedagogy of stylistics specifically and pedagogical stylistics generally.” (p.123).

V. CORPORA IN THE CLASSROOM

Using corpora in teaching and learning can be of immense significance. Iraqi Learners need to enhance their poetic analytical skills and competence so their searches become more focused, their interpretation of findings to be more explicit, their comprehension of corpus usage to be deeper, and their language awareness to be sharper. Bernardini (2004, p.23) demonstrates that “learners are asked to abandon deeply rooted norms of classroom behaviour, but soon becomes liberating for both teachers (who can stop pretending to be sources of absolute and limitless knowledge) and learners (who start to see themselves as active participants in the teaching-learning process”. Nevertheless, using corpora and corpus tools requires training for both teachers and learners. Not only this but also it needs planning as emphasized by McIntyre & Walker (2019).

A. Corpus Tools for Analysis

An essential part of this current study is to guide Iraqi EFL participants toward discovery learning. In order to bring their attention to patterns of language in a particular text/s, they need to be introduced to computer tools to achieve this aim. The learners need to examine and investigate how words in context have certain textual uses and significance. Extracting wordlist and retrieving concordances can be of immense importance in terms of getting meaning and answering particular research questions. Furthermore, the use of corpus tools, computer software can bring attention to irregular occurrences of words and reveal foregrounded patterns. Cobb and Boulton (2015) point out that individual texts can benefit from corpus tools, which can assist determine whether a text is acceptable and which components to emphasize. A teacher may upload a text into free software and have the lexis color-coded according to the frequency of each word in the BNC or COCA corpus. Such data can aid in making judgments about which items to teach in a particular text, such as disregarding or glossing over less frequently occurring items while relying on the highly apparent repeated appearances of others to educate in context (Cobb, 2007).

B. What Is Corpus, and Why It Is Used

According to Jones and Waller (2015), “A corpus is simply an electronically stored, searchable collection of texts. These texts may be written or spoken and may vary in length but generally, they are longer than a single speaking turn or single written sentence” (p.5). Meanwhile, McIntyre and Walker (2019) argue that “a corpus is a collection of texts but one which has been put together according to strict criteria”(p.3). So, any collection of texts is a corpus; previously, many kinds of research have been conducted using a similar amount of data, but at that time, the name “corpus” has not been applied yet. The word “corpus” is driven from the Latin word meaning “body” since corpus is a body of texts (McEnery & Wilson, 2001).

Corpora vary in their sizes, types, and aims of construction. There is no strict limit of its size; what is the maximum and the minimum number of words a corpus should contain, but clearly, it should be large enough to achieve the aims of the study (Jones & Waller, 2015, p.6).

Lastly, using computer tools within the linguistics analysis helps to identify some linguistic features of a text that cannot be noticed by the manual human analysis (Ho, 2011, p.7).

VI. METHODOLOGY

A. The Integration of Frameworks

Pedagogical Corpus stylistics is an approach for assisting students in improving their ability to read and analyse poetry texts in English. For the purpose of this research, Iraqi students are taught to be aware of PCS tools which allow

them to unveil meaning and textual interpretation of the selected poetic texts. Pedagogical corpus stylistics requires the integration of three essential tools (see figure 1). Firstly, the use of corpora in teaching and learning is as data-driven learning (DDL) as a pedagogical tool. This way of learning helps the Iraqi female students to deal with real examples of language which can be searched by corpus tools or web interfaces. It is assumed in this study that the Iraqi students can examine concordance lines which can aid them in gaining meaning (McIntyre & Walker, 2019; Johns, 1991, 1994). Approaches based on stylistic analysis only are of immense significance in helping students to locate linguistic evidence (see, for example, Jaafar, 2014). Secondly, the stylistic tools are part of the approach that includes deviation, foregrounding and figures of speech. Finally, it is important to integrate corpus tools as well to foster the process of interpretation (Jaafar, 2019, 2021).

Applying corpus methods has its importance in text analysis. For example, by applying corpus methods O'Halloran (2014) tries to find evidence to testify literary criticism or judgments which might be accused of being subjective. In his study, he attempts to verify Roger Fowler's critique "dynamic and disturbing" to Fleur Adcock's poem, "Street Song," O'Halloran (2014) shows how the application of both schema theory and corpus analysis can be helpful in giving ideas about Fowler's literary evaluation.

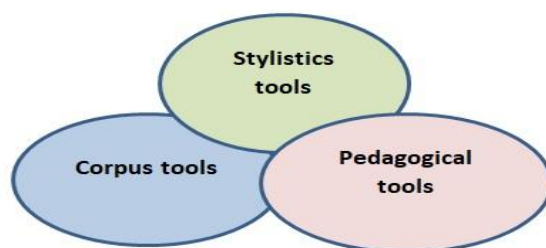


Figure 1. The Integration of PCS Various Tools

B. Rationale of Data Selection

Poetic language tends to be attractive. It is rich with figurative devices which make it distinct from other genres of literature. Here in this study, selected poems from Liverpool poetry are reflecting this fact. Another reason for choosing poetry, poems are shorter texts in comparison to novels and dramas. This facilitates the application of this research in terms of time consumption. Achieving goals with less time. Furthermore, poetry is tricky to learn and interpret because of the deliberate use of figures of speech and foregrounding by the poets. This is also because it reflects cultural aspects of the target language. Targeting culture is part of the process of learning. For practical reasons, poetry is being taught for four years during college study at the Department of English, University of Baghdad. For this reason, poetry as a subject can be employed in a way to improve the language and in particular, enable learners to focus on linguistic patterns which lead to meaning. Poetic texts are sources of meaning.

C. Data Collection Procedure

1-Questionnaire

The items in the questionnaire can be closed-ended, open-ended, or a combination of the two types. Closed-ended shows more efficiency in the collection and analysis (Tashakkori et al., 2009). Thus, this type of questionnaire is adapted for the study. The questionnaire responses help in exploring the Iraqi learners' perspectives about the difficulties in reading poetic English language. It also gives an idea about the usefulness of the workshop of the study.

Finally, a response essay of 300 words should be written electronically about an analysis of one of the selected poems. The response essay is essential in this study because it reflects at the early stage the weakness of the learner in interpreting the selected poem. Moreover, how much benefit is gained at the end of the workshop program. All these are collected (the questionnaire and the response essay) in a digital way to save time.

To ensure the validity of the questionnaire, it is shown to several teachers at the Department of English specializing in both literature and linguistics for further notes, suggestions, and constructive ideas.

2-Focus Group Interviews (FGIs)

With a view to give the participants an opportunity to express their feelings towards the approach of the study as well as their general difficulties in analyzing poetry objectively, it is important to interview them. Discussing learning issues helps to tackle the obstacles within the study. The participants during the interview will be divided into four focus groups. Five students for each group to ensure encouragement of participation and this group is small in terms of maintaining concentration on each individual. Furthermore, group interviews can help to establish a positive educational environment that encourages hesitant learners to engage and develop their ideas. All participants can

interact in a stimulating environment as a researcher notices and compares their thoughts in a group setting. (Almufayrij, 2016).

In this regard, an online setting will be chosen to manage the interview phase of the study. Many applications nowadays are available to perform this task efficiently. This facilitates time management and speeds up the process of the interview. Cohen et al. (2007, p.242) affirm “the Internet may also enable researchers to contact hard-to-reach groups and individuals”

Some possible questions during the interview might include:

- 1- Were you able to find the general idea/theme of the poem with the help of PCS tools? And how?
- 2- How do pedagogical corpus stylistic tools help you in finding the patterns of language?

VII. THE PROCEDURE OF THE RESEARCH

A. *Medium of Instruction*

Students join a one-month online session for instruction through Google Meet an online video communication service provided by Google one of the facilities in Google classroom. The reason for choosing an online platform is related to the time limit during the lecture. There is not enough time to join classroom workshops which normally required allotting specific time and place. Furthermore, through an online workshop, learners have the ability to access the internet, which is not available at the College where they study. Moreover, students prefer online lectures for they have experience in joining lectures during the pandemic. Thus, the online lectures of the workshop reflect the use of technology in teaching and practice.

B. *Participants and Setting*

The participants who are involved in the workshop are fourth-year undergraduate female students. 60 students will be targeted to be the participants. The study is to be conducted in the Department of English, College of Education for Women, University of Baghdad. These students are foreign language learners and their level of language proficiency is upper-intermediate (there are variations and individual merits). Their age at this level of study is between (21-and 23).

The learners are introduced to basic concepts related to corpus tools and text analysis with examples from literary and non-literary texts. During the time of the workshop, they need to answer a questionnaire with questions that can examine their ability to analyse and reach linguistic interpretation. The experiment is set for 60 minutes and in each session, students are introduced to activities.

The choice of the learners is based on several factors:

- 1- Those who are willing to learn extra information which is not listed in their syllables. That means their joining is voluntary.
- 2- The learners should have internet access.
- 3- They are chosen for their collaborative merits and commitments to complete the task.

C. *The Experiment*

The experiment of this study consisted of 60-minutes online lessons for 6 weeks (in which students from the experimental and control groups experienced a total of 360 minutes of instruction. For the experimental group, the PCS approach was introduced which is adapted from McIntyre and Walker (2019) with further adjustments to suit the Iraqi students' educational context. While in the control group the participants receive the traditional teaching process concerning poetry.

The experiment is a means to make learners independent in providing linguistic evidence while analyzing a piece of poetry. They need to learn how to justify their interpretation and this can be from the text itself. Their analyses should be evidence-based ones. Thus, during the workshop, the learners are guided on how to employ the tools of PCS to discover meaning and support their poetic analyses. They need to learn how to be objective and avoid being subjective. They are introduced to poetic examples of how poets form meanings through sound, structure, and wording of ideas.

The stages of the experiment include:

In weeks **1& 2** the subjects that are covered; firstly, an introduction to stylistic basic tools.

The tools include (foregrounding, deviation, and figures of speech). For example, the poem “Goodbat, Nightman” by Roger McGough is part of the collection *The Mersey Sound* (Henri et al., 1967) it is introduced to the learners.

God bless all policemen
and fighters of crime,
May thieves go to jail
for a very long time.
They've had a hard day
helping clean up the town,
Now they hang from the mantelpiece
upside down.
A glass of warm blood

and then straight up the stairs.
 Batman and Robin
 are saying their prayers.
 * * *
 They've locked all the doors
 and they've put out the bat,
 Put on their batjamas
 (They like doing that)
 They've filled their batwater-bottles
 made their batbeds,
 With two springy battresses
 for sleepy batheads.
 They're closing red eyes
 and they're counting black sheep.
 Batman and Robin
 Are falling asleep.

The learners are asked to find new, unfamiliar words; they rightfully identify (goodbat, nightman, batjamas, batwater, batbeds, battresses, batheads). This coinage can be recognized as Neologism, a term that refers to the formation of new words, and the learners are introduced to this term in linguistics, but never have the chance to identify such words before in a practical way.

Not only this but also tasks & discovery learning are encouraged. The first stage focuses on the sounds of the words. To make learners aware of the deliberate use of alliteration, assonance, and consonance by the poets for aesthetic purposes to create rhythm and to make readers enjoy the experience of reading the poems. Thus, the term phonological deviation is introduced and exemplified. The teacher encourages the learners to be active and try to locate such examples of sound deviation in the poem "Love Is". The learners need to seek patterns of sound that are prominent and catchy.

In weeks 3 & 4, Corpus stylistic tools are presented to the students through the virtual class such as online corpora and corpus tools. They are informed how to use BYE- BNC and the learners are guided toward independent learning tasks. These include searching for collocations, word relations, and collocation networks. They are directed toward the use of online corpora to examine concordance lines about a particular node. For example, the participants are asked to find the collocates of the node 'Night' from the poem 'Goodbat Nightman'.



Figure 2 Starting the Process of Finding Collocations

They have the chance to unravel difficulties in the poem. As figure 4 shows the learners check collocates following the word 'night'. The asterisk represents any part of speech.

ON CLICK:

HELP	①	★		FREQ	ALL	%	MI	
1	①	★	BEFORE	715	84032	0.85	4.08	
2	①	★	AFTER	533	111902	0.48	3.25	
3	①	★	AGO	166	19057	0.87	4.12	
4	①	★	AIR	163	18109	0.90	4.17	
5	①	★	SKY	153	4653	3.29	6.03	
6	①	★	SHIFT	82	3949	2.08	5.37	
7	①	★	GOBLIN	78	417	18.71	8.54	
8	①	★	GOBLINS	75	369	20.33	8.66	
9	①	★	CLUB	68	16075	0.42	3.08	
10	①	★	DUTY	64	7806	0.82	4.03	

Figure 3 The Most Frequent Collocates After the Selected Node Night

The learners notice by one click the most frequent collocates after the selected node. They can also check the context and read the concordance lines. This practical engagement makes them deal with the language and encourages them to discover new patterns and support their independent learning. It is clear from the figure that the word before is the most frequent node that follows ‘night’ scoring 715 times in the BNC. In addition to that, the learners can

=CONTEXT		HELP
1	FXU S_interview_oral_history	#starting a week without your Er I've slept a night before , somewhere at the weekend, when the day comes, but you
2	FXX S_interview_oral_history	#'s dead. And she'd had an abortion the night before and she'd died that day on the Monday. She'd had
3	FY6 S_interview_oral_history	#Mhm. (SP:PS25K) just the same as it was the night before , you know. But round here you could go to sleep,
4	GYW S_interview_oral_history	#you would draw the tools, at the, the night before you went to the job, you would take them there to the
5	HET S_interview_oral_history	#And anyway, they sailed cos I was aboard the night before they sailed as a (unclear). This was about nineteen seventeen. You
6	HEV S_interview_oral_history	#th-- the widest part of the Channel. (pause) And night before they'd sunk a hospital ship. U-Boats. (pause) We came across
7	J8F S_interview_oral_history	#near home working then, and as I say the night before he went he was, he was gon na work on the Monday
8	K64 S_interview_oral_history	#and the night we slept in the garden and the night before we went we, Mrs (----) was taken ill and I was giving
9	G59 S_meeting	#. I remember sitting helping to write the cards the night before and we were writing them off a typewritten sheet. (SP:G59PSUNK) (unclear)
10	G59 S_meeting	#'s right. (SP:G59PSUNK) (unclear) (SP:PS27U) the stuff down the night before with the (SP:PS27W) Yes. (SP:PS27U) numbers on it? (S

Figure 4 The Concordance Lines of ‘night’ & ‘before’

specify the number of tokens in both the right and the left context. At least five occurrences of the target not are encouraged to be examined. In the final stage in weeks **5 & 6**, the participants are given examples of keywords, KWIC keywords in context. During the process of introducing the tools of the methodology to the participant, it is essential to use guided questions prepared by the teacher that helps to improve their learning performance (Nelson-Addy, 2020). Later in this stage, the learners’ set for a post-test, and the interpretive essays are collected. They are asked to write an analysis to about one of the selected poems for the study.

D. Pre-test

Sixty pre-test scores after asking the students to analyse and interpret “Goodbat Nightman” were collected. This test aims to verify to what extent the participants can analyse the poetic text in a systematic objective way and how much linguistic evidence is provided. The results reveal that the learners have poor interpretive skills and they have difficulty in providing language patterns that support their explanations. Through an intensive qualitative examination of the participants’ answers, it is clear that they need to be introduced to PCS so they can pay heed to language patterns.

E. Post-test

The pretest and the qualitative step help to locate the learners’ issues in analyzing the poem. Thus, the experiment is subsequently conducted for six weeks with the main aim of introducing PCS tools to the participants so they can improve their ability in interpreting poetry by systematically focusing on the text as a source of meaning. During the virtual lectures, the students are guided on how to use the online corpora through their mobile devices and practice and give them a chance toward discovery learning. The students are asked to analyse the same poem and support their analysis. The results of the post-test showed there is a noticeable improvement in their interpretation. Their analysis is evidence-based. 90% of the learners developed awareness of providing textual evidence to ensure objectivity.

VIII. RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS

To answer the first research question “To determine the extent to which the pedagogical Corpus stylistic approach can improve Iraqi undergraduate students’ EFL interpretive poetic skills?”

Following the experiment, the pretest and post-test scores of both groups were compared using a paired samples t-test and sorted by overall score and sub-scores. The significant p-values ($p < 0.05$). This suggested that the PCS was effective in enhancing the experimental group's overall analytical interpretative competence, particularly in identifying language patterns that supported their claims. This study supports the findings of McIntyre and Walker (2019), who claimed that the PCS influenced students' EFL poetry interpretation positively. Concerning the second objective of the study pedagogical corpus stylistic approach, a questionnaire is given after the post-test supported by a focus group interview. Voluntarily, the participants show a great interest in giving their feedback and fill the electronic questionnaire which contains questions based on a Linkert scale of four questions.

The items of the questionnaire include:

- 1- Poetic language is challenging to understand and analyse
- 2- Poetry improves English language skills
- 3- The cultural aspect of the language can be learned from poetic texts.
- 4- Pedagogical Corpus Stylistic approach helps in overcoming difficulty in analyzing poetic text.
- 5- Stylistic and corpus tools are easy to apply and follow
- 6- There is a great difference in the analysis before and after the experiment.

- 7- I feel more confident after the experiment in analyzing poetry.
- 8- Finding linguistic evidence is important to support my analysis
- 9- The poetic text is the only source of meaning
- 10- Personal experience can help in analyzing poetry

Generally, the participants agree on all the items. However, different attitudes appeared toward items number 9 and 10.

The final research objective is “To investigate the effectiveness of the PCS approach in teaching English through poetic language”. It is clear from the questionnaire and the focused group discussion that the learners positively reacted to the approach in both learning English through poetry in general and in learning how to do objective analyses in particular.

IX. CONCLUSION

The pedagogical Corpus Stylistic approach helps Iraqi students to discover interesting facts about the English poetic language. Through searching and the using of corpora in learning, they depend on themselves and can find suitable interpretations based on textual evidence. In sum, pedagogical corpus stylistics helps students to discover language patterns using corpus tools with the help of the teacher’s guidance at the beginning but this eventually leads to independent discoveries about poetic language. In sum, developing course materials for EFL learners is a challenging matter in terms of filling the gap in the literature in a way adding new activities and presenting interesting, catching drills for learners to improve the process of learning the target language. Authors of course material might need to consider cognitive activities that can engage learners to develop their skills to improve learning skills.

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