I. Why has English Poetry been often left to one side in ESL/EFL classroom?

The range of English reading materials currently available to the students of ESL/EFL has been extended and varied. They are ranged from magazine essays, newspaper articles, journal writings, advertisements, brochures, technical instruction manuals, (business)letters or memorandums, biographies, reviews, health or science reports, travel writings, essays, stories, fictions, (text)books, news scripts, and so on. However, “poetry” has not been considered “as ‘proper’ material for foreign language learning” (Maley & Duff 6). There are various factors which have led English poetry “all too often left to one side” in ESL/EFL classroom (Maley & Moulding 134). First, it is due to “the utilitarian bias of the communicative approach” which has turned a side attention from any language material which seems not to have an immediate “practical purpose” (Maley & Duff 6), for example, to obtain reading skills or “practical language” which can be instantly used for acts of communication. Indeed, English poetry is still characterized as deviating from or distorting the norms of standard English language, “having no practical function at all” (Selden 9-10; qtd. in Lazar 2). Hence, learning/teaching English poems is regarded by most ESL/EFL students/teachers as too specialized, too difficult, too ‘unpractical,’ an act which has little to do with a build-up of ‘communicative’ literacy (reading, writing, speaking, and listening). Secondly, since selecting English poetry to teach in ESL/EFL has been made on the basis of its literary and historical value rather than its ELT value, teachers’ lack of experiences and ideas about how to turn English poems into an effective ESL/EFL material (rather than a literary text for a critical analysis or a literary interpretation) accounts for such least weight given to English poetry in the ESL/EFL field. Thirdly, many learners have had unpleasant experiences with poetry, whether English or Korean/Japanese, in both L1 and L2 classrooms. It is because over the years learners have accumulated unpleasant and even awful memories of being forced to dissect a poem to analyze what it really means in terms of form, structure, and theme exactly as “They” does in the following poem:

Introduction to Poetry

--Billy Collins--

I ask them to take a poem
and hold it up to the light
like a color slide.

or press an ear against its hive.

I say drop a mouse into a poem
and watch him probe his way out,

or walk inside the poem’s room
and feel the walls for a light switch.

I want them to waterski
across the surface of a poem
Assignment 1: Read Collins’ poem “Introduction to Poetry” and discuss about what you feel about your English poetry class

As Milosz writes in his poem *Ars Poetica*?, “The purpose of poetry is to remind us / how difficult it is to remain just one person, / for our house is open, there are no keys in the doors, / and invisible guests come in and out at will” (ll. 29-32: qtd. In Gibbons 3-4). Like “them” in the following poem, learners should have been given the freedom to discover, to explore, to break down boundaries, to create their own worlds, to pull forth their deepest thoughts and feelings, and finally to express and exchange them in words or on paper in the supportive poetry classroom where entire class participates and where each learner feels safe allowing his/her own ideas, feelings, reactions, and poems to be communicated (Savren 17):†

**On Reading Poems to a Senior Class at South High**  
--D.C. Berry--

Before  
I opened my mouth  
I noticed them sitting there  
as orderly as frozen fish  
in a package.

Slowly water began to fill the room  
though I did not notice it  
till it reached  
my ears  
and then I heard the sounds  
of fish in an aquarium  
and I knew that though I had tried to drown them  
with my words  
that they had only opened up  
like gills for them  
and let me in.

Together we swam around the room  
like thirty tails whacking words  
till the bell rang  
puncturing  
a hole in the door  
where we all leaked out  
They went to another class  
I suppose and I home  
Where Queen Elizabeth

† This part is indebted to *This Poem Knows You* (California Poets in the School Statewide Anthology 1984).
my cat met me
and licked my fins
till they were hands again. (cited from Teaching Poetry in High School, p. 11)

Assignment 2: How do you feel about the metaphoric image of students as frozen fish in a poetry class? Have you had the similar feeling or worse than it? How would like to describe your poetry class in a metaphor?

Finally, the combined thrust of the structuralism, the functionalism, and the cognitive psychology has dominated ESL/EFL methodologies and approaches, and such thrust has overemphasized what Carter calls “the transactional uses of language (i.e. the transacting of information, goods and services)” (1997: 160). Its overemphasis on the form-focused literacy, task-oriented communicative exercises, vocabulary-grammar-translation lessons “at the expense of interactive uses . . . and creative uses [of language]”(Carter 160) has resulted in promoting English language materials which are loaded with psychologically meaningless information and facts that are hardly relevant to students’ lives (values, emotions, tastes, attitude, self-esteem, spirit, wish, interests, concerns, etc.). Traditional tests (including TOEFL, TOEIC, and college entrance exams) based on these materials have been highly inadequate for encouraging discourse-oriented, socio-cultural, affective, and humanistic aspects of language learning/teaching, which English literature including English poetry can afford efficiently.

II. English Poetry and Humanistic Approach in ESL/EFL

Indeed, among the recent developments of significance for ELT are affective sides of language learning/teaching from the humanistic approaches. As proved by humanistic learning models and theories compiled in Arnold’s edition(1999), they have facilitated both self-directed and collaborative language learning process, stretching their paradigm far beyond mere and strict language teaching into “life goals”:

In a language classroom which focuses on meaningful interaction, there is certainly room for dealing with affect. . . . In this context, Steвick (1998:166) speaks of bringing to language teaching a concern for ‘deeper aims,’ for ‘pursuing new “life goals,”’ not just for reaching certain “language goals”’. . . . We need to be concerned with both their[learners’] cognitive and affective natures and needs. (Arnold & Brown 3)

Concerned with both cognitive and affective sides of language learning/teaching, this emerging paradigm, in turn, ushers in a primary shift in the current ESL/EFL theory and assessment: the shift from transactional uses of language towards interactional uses of language, from transmission of knowledge towards an experiential, from learner-centered approach, from form-based learning to meaning-oriented acquisition, from artificial language activities towards actual, creative, subjective, and contextual speech acts, from extrinsic motivation towards intrinsic motivation, from product-oriented learning towards process-oriented learning, from objective functionalism towards discourse-oriented culture, from isolated learning towards collaborative learning, from achievement testing towards authentic assessment, from teacher-as-controller towards teacher-as-facilitator, from non-literary texts loaded with information or facts towards what Day calls ‘language learner’s literature,’ and finally, from controlled teaching towards heuristic learning and acquisition. Teaching/learning English through English poetry can be an excellent add to this shift. The relevance of English poetry as a component of the humanistic ELT is well argued, and ways to incorporate English poems into ESL/EFL lessons are well suggested by many theorists and practitioners in the field of TESOL.

The aim of this lecture is to help you make English poetry accessible to your students of ESL/EFL, so that their various experiences through activities for English poetry can be a useful part of t

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heir overall English language learning. Many scholars have provided compelling arguments for using
English poetry as both input and output in the English language process (Maley & Moulding, Male
y & Duff, Lazar, Collie & Slater, etc.). They have also offered a wide variety of practical, innovativ
e, and motivating classroom activities concerning English poetry: (see Maley & Moulding 137-39; L
azar Ch.6; Somers Chs. 6-7)

1. Researching on any cultural, literary, biographical, and historical information which can help
   student better make sense of the poem (non-literary texts + poetry)
2. Deducing meanings from the context
3. Completing a paraphrase of a poem cloze-style
4. Choosing the best paraphrase among a few
5. Predicting what’s coming next after reading only one verse at a time
6. Improving on a given paraphrase (replacing, adding, or omitting words, images, etc.)
7. Ordering jumbled stanzas or lines in the correct sequence
8. Paraphrasing a poem into various prose versions or vice versa
9. Rewriting a part of a poem in one’s own words and ideas to offer different messages
10. Filling an omitted word, phrase, or line in relation to its context
   (a list of words, phrases, or lines can be provided)
11. Replacing images and figurative languages with other ones
12. Transforming a poem into ‘everyday’ style (dialogue, diary, speech, etc.)
13. Rewriting or improving the concluding lines with one’s own ideas
14. Parodying an original poem as a model into a new poem
   (noun-phrase poetry, one-word line poetry, etc.)
15. Re-writing a poem to show its reverse face
16. Answering questions which arise from ‘problem lines’ in a poem
   (discussing any unfamiliar vocabularies, syntactic features, rhetorical devices, etc., correcting
   them, if possible, and comparing their effects on the overall meaning of the poem)
17. Decoding complicated lines (ambiguous meanings) in terms of everyday language
   (Provided a few brief interpretations to select through group-work the most appropriate one)
18. Identifying the title of a poem among many
19. Arranging a poem jumbled into a prose style into another poem (while providing punctuati
   on) and comparing it with its original one
20. Discussing similarities/differences between poems of the same subject or thesis
21. Writing a group-poem or an individual poem and exchanging it for a comment
22. Finding a poem in everyday life (‘found poetry’)
23. Discussing the attitude, mood, tone, gist, or narrator of a poem
24. Discussing the theme of a poem and writing out personal experiences related to the theme
25. Doing a creative role-play based on the theme, story, and subject of the poem
26. Altering a poem’s point of view (i.e., from the 1st person point of view to the 3rd ppv)
27. Matching words to definitions, pictures, posters, or music (songs, classic, etc.)
28. Analyzing the stylistic device of repetition of key phrases and discussing how it contributes
   to the overall effect of the poem
29. Identifying, if any, any aural or musical qualities in the poem (rhyming, alliteration, meter)
30. Making a chant out of a poem or tuning a poem into a well-known song
31. Reading aloud poems (choral reading) and making a song, using a poem (group-work)
   (line reading, two-part reading, multiple-part reading, antiphonal reading, etc.)
32. Citing a poem from memorization
33. Listening-to-a recorded poem-activities (clozing, comprehension check-ups, etc.)
34. Translating an English poem into Korean/Japanese or a Korean/Japanese poem into English
   (individual or group work: compare and contrast various versions of a translated poem and
   select the most satisfactory one)
35. Explaining the story in the poem
36. Discussing the poet’s (the narrator’s) underlying cultural assumptions
37. Writing response-journals and exchanging them with classmates
38. Participating in on-line poetry discussion groups or on-line poetry competition
39. Responding to poetry by performing (readers theater, improvisation, mime, dancing, etc.)
40. Doing poetry slams with the aid of props, costumes, prerecorded music or musical instruments, and creative dramatics
41. Holding a poetry competition and an in-class poetry forum

These activities have been developed, tried, and tested by experienced teachers of English in their classrooms around the world (Basset & Grundy, McRae & Boardman, McRae & Pantaleoni, Maley & Moulding, Lazar, Maley & Duff, Collie & Slater, Eur, and Gower, if naming a few). Many practitioners have found them encouraging students not only to approach English language learning in a spirit of discovery of meaning but also to express their selves (emotions and thoughts) freely. As humanist approaches prove (see Hansen, Arnold), this experience of exercising freely their imaginative and cognitive ability, while working with texts creatively, subjectively, and collaboratively, is very invaluable to enable them to improve their overall language & discourse competence. Hence, if English poetry as a language material is integrated with other forms of English language, it can better offer “a rich resource for input to language learning” (Maley & Duff 7).

III. The Benefits of Using English Poetry in English Language Acquisition: Theory

The benefits of including English poetry in teaching English language can be classified in terms of aesthetic, linguistic, pedagogical, and heuristic advantages:

1. The themes: English poetry deals with are related to common areas of all human experiences, although the way they are treated differs to various extents in terms of culture. Carefully-selected English poems offer various themes which are relevant to the interests and concerns of learners as they provide them with “meaningful and memorable contexts for processing and interpreting new language” (Lazar 17). Hence, well suited for content-based approaches, English poetry can act as a powerful stimulus to the student’s own reflective thinking and emotions, which will elicit more expressions of opinions, reactions, and feelings for “more mature and fruitful group discussion” (Maley & Moulding 135). Thus, English poetry can be used as the basis for generating at once the student’s involvement and his/her subjective, creative, and meaningful responses. An understanding and explicating of the ways in which the themes are dealt with in English language can also help improve not only language awareness but also cultural awareness. (* see Hansen 222-24)

2. Subject: Most of current English language-teaching materials run the risk of trivializing content for the sake of highlighting the language. Being made to be “exposed to the surfeit of rapes, abortions, drugs and bombs,” learners are likely to lose interest in the act of reading itself (Maley & Duff 8), hence missing a chance for “the flow of reading” in which they can acquire a great deal of new vocabularies and sentence structures. Still worse, even important experiences such as love, death, life are frequently dealt with in terms of matter-of-facts (journalistic) manners, and therefore, they fail to provide learners with excellent opportunities not just to reflect their life but also to express their personal opinions, reactions and feelings. However, English poems touch upon non-trivial areas of human experience and heighten the student’s awareness of even the apparently trivial. Hence, they elicit a strong subjective investment in poem-centered activities, which, combined with group interactions, is a powerful motivational factor in language learning. (* see Hansen, pp. 217-22)

3. English poems expose par excellence learners to “fresh and unexpected” (hence, so-called ‘poetic’ or ‘creative’) “uses of language” in relation to vocabulary, syntax, semantics, morphology, structure, etc. (Lazar 15), which are beyond their fixed dimension only to embody multiple layers of meaning. In order to understand their specific effect (that of various ‘forms’) on the making of meaning, learners need to be actively and creatively involved in not only considering the ways in which this effect is achieved by departing from a norm of English but also explicating the ways in which
hich this specific style contributes to a build-up of a particular communicative effect in a particular context. By asking learners “to explore such sophisticated uses of language,” we are “encouraging them to think about the norms of language” (Lazar 18). An in-depth awareness of such creative facility with language can be a valuable ground for both understanding pragmatic functions of language uses and promoting creative play with English language in writing and speaking. The process of doing with language subjectively, creatively, and collaborative plays an important role in not only defusing learners’ fear but also expanding and developing their confidence in using it in an actual situation:

The meanings conveyed in poems are usually expressed very economically. In order to retrieve these meanings and talk about them, it is necessary to expand and extend the words on the page. From a small language input one can generate a large and varied output. (Maley & Duff 12)

Such pragmatic and creative uses of English language already prevail in everyday language: advertisements, political speeches (or cartoons), comedies, talk shows, jokes, and even in everyday conversation. Furthermore, we also help learners develop their “abilities to infer meaning and to make interpretations” (Lazar 19) on the linguistic and contextual basis by developing their “sensitivity to the web of associations which link words to each other,” to “the weight and quality of words,” and finally to “the limitations of their use in everyday speech as compared with poetic language” (Maley & Duff 12). Since any language act (even plain language) positions language users in a creative interaction with texts, an interpretation including the drawing of inference on what is produced by language is required on the part of language users. In Cater’s language, the experience of decoding poetic uses of language is “transferable to most language learning contexts in which meaning, because they are not always immediately transparent, have to be experienced, negotiated, or ‘read’ in the sense of interpreted between the lines” (155). This capacity gained from such experience “can then be transferred to other situations” as follows, where a creative and contextual interpretation needs to be made on the basis of “implicit or unstated evidence” (Lazar 19): fictions, editorials, defenses in court, playful speech, jokes, white lies, pretending statements, playing devil’s advocate, political slogans, riddles, metaphors, idioms, allusions, signs, suggestions, connotation, proverbs, contracts, etc. Finally, these capacities obtained from activities through English poetry can serve as a springboard for expanding learners’ communicative competence because English language is not always governed by rules; rather, it stretches beyond ordinary language uses “to achieve different communicative purposes” (Lazar 100). While reading and processing English poetry, learners learn how to “make use of certain interpretative strategies” which are contextual, creative, and subjective (Lazar 101) and use them functionally in an actual speech event. In Bassnett & Grundy’s language, when we teach English, we are not merely teaching language features, but we are teaching learners about what that language can function in a particular discourse and how they can understand and retrieve that function in an actual speech act (7).

4. In relation to #3, making such sophisticated language uses of English poetry the basis for generating group discussions and activities is one of the most important benefits of including English poetry in teaching English language. Various collaborative (a whole-group or small-group) activities have been developed not only to increase learners’ awareness of certain linguistic features but also to stimulate their sense to different uses of English registers. While 1) identifying the ways in which a sentence is newly organized, a new punctuation is created, and new registers are made, 2) pinpointing in what way and why they are unusual, 3) contrasting and comparing them with more commonly accepted uses, and finally 4) commenting on how these creative uses of language contribute to the overall or particular meaning of the poem, learners come to be familiar with the norms or rules from which these creative uses of English language deviate in order to achieve a particular pragmatic communicative effect. In addition, as being participants rather than passive observers, learners have a better chance, in the language of Maley & Duff, to play with new sentences, to create new sentences, to pull them in various ways, to use old words in new ways, to test their elasticity, to explore their limits through a poetry writing workshop in the supportive classroom context (9):

Learners can not only observe and share the experience of what others have dared to do with t
he language . . . , but through interactive writing tasks they can also reach out for the limits of the possible themselves. In one sense, the writing of poetry is an ideal task for language learners because of its tolerance of ‘error’ (see Widdowson, 1982; qtd. in Maley & Duff 9).

5. Along with such benefit as explained in #4, facilitating and maintaining a harmonic and safe class environment is another significant advantage that exploiting the creative uses of English language as encouraging group discussions can afford. As usual, even apparently simple English poems are rich in suggestive, colorful, and associative words and expressions which “speak subtly different messages to different people”: “Poems . . . offer both a public and a personal face” (Maley & Duff 9-10). Hence, nobody can claim himself/herself as a sole owner of the meanings embedded in the poem. Each learner’s perception and interpretation of the meanings has his/her own validity, and each personal meaning found in the poem is shared, exchanged, negotiated, reinforced, valued, or loosed in the process of interacting freely, safely, funnily with others’ findings. In this way, discussion is stimulated, and the teacher serves as a moderator. A safe learning community is created in which critical remarks and words of ridicule are greatly lowered “so that free communication can take place” among learners (Arnold & Brown 10). Thus, lessening or avoiding whatever might threaten learners’ ‘language ego’ (ibid.; 10), the fun discussion activities (small-group or a whole-group) through English poetry establish what Dufeu calls “a climate of acceptance,” which will not only create, in turn, “an environment of mutual support and care” (qtd. in Arnold & Brown 12) but also “encourage all members (teacher included) to accept the challenges for their own learning” (Dornyei & Malderez 169). The activities also serve to set up “the tension necessary for mutual exchange of ideas” (Maley & Duff 10), the interacting and negotiating of meanings in the classroom, which are the most valuable for an effective and authentic communication. Thus, “reducing . . . anxiety, increasing motivation, facilitating the development of positive attitudes toward learning and language learning, promoting self-esteem, as well as supporting different learning styles” (Crandall 227), the English poetry classroom shares essential characteristics of cooperative and humanistic learning:

. . . cooperative learning requires social interaction and negotiation of meaning among heterogeneous group members engaged in tasks in which all group members have both something to contribute to and learn from the other members. (Crandall 226)

. . . the second language class is a natural setting for being able to communicate in highly appealing ways. This is, while conversing in the target language students can share their hopes and dreams and their ambitions; their experiences, memories, desires; their interests, values and insights; their feelings, strength and much more. . . . It is truly getting to know others that we are truly able to like them. In such ways, self-esteem flourishes and grows. (qtd. in Moskowitz 178)

6. As well known, few language materials can give a better sense of the rhythms and melodies of a language than poetry. While stylistic features of the poem attracts readers’ eyes, its sound appeals to their ears, and a marked rhyme or an emphatic rhythm tends to stick to their minds (Maley & Duff 10-11). If we assume that language learning needs to be processed through the co-ordinated system of what Krashen calls “conscious learning and unconscious acquisition,” exposing learners to the sound patterns of English poetry can be assigned to promote their unconscious acquisition of English by helping them to unconsciously absorb, memorize, retrieve language features (vocabulary, grammar, sentence patterns, expressions, etc.) they read in English poetry. Moreover, when considered from the fact that all speeches have their own sound patterns with variations in speed of delivery, loudness, pitch, tone, softness, or stress (Lazar 118), learners’ exposure to the rich patterns of sound in poetry can be regarded as a best contribution to communicative competence. In fact, an awareness of sound patterns of a speech act can work as an excellent “guide to the structure of information in the spoken message” (Maley & Duff 11): “Some of the essential features of fluent speech—such as clarity of diction, phrasing, stress rhythm, control and variation of pace—flow naturally from the reading of poetry aloud” (Maley & Duff 12). Maley and Duff also adds that stress and rhythm—core elements of the everyday spoken English—are more likely to be retained through exposure to poetry” which can also help develop a sensitivity to them (11). Given the fact that current communicative practices are too contrived and meaning-deprived to be natural an
d interesting (so no personal investment in the practices), reading aloud English poetry naturally in choral or individual form while considering its mood, attitude, tone, pace, theme can be an excellent experience of developing spoken English competence and confidence in it: “the fact that group performance masks imperfections adds to self-confidence” (Maley & Duff 12). Indeed, if learners are taught to fully enjoy and appreciate the rich patterns of sound in English poetry, they will become better aware of “how its [a poem’s] stylistic features contribute to its meaning” while performing “movements, gestures, facial expressions and the changing qualities of voice” (Lazar 118). No doubt, developing intuitions as to the effect of stylistic features on the meaning is an important part of ESL/EFL.

7. If L2 learning through English poetry is very beneficial to ESL, learning how to read English poetry is very essential for maximizing such benefit. In regards to this, learning to write English poetry can be also an effective vehicle for developing English literacy in various reasons. Many people feel the need to quote or write poetry and use often (English) it as a way to express their feelings in birthday cards, wedding cards, anniversary cards, love letters, etc. As proved by the literacy program called “California Poets in the Schools 1984,” English poetry workshop can be applied to ESL/EFL context as a great way of helping learners develop English literacy by encouraging “all words . . . all phrases, twists of syntax, sounds and syllables” (Harer 19). Learners have chances of putting words and sentences in peculiar or natural ways while playing with language and trusting in their own voices, images, and ideas without being afraid of being laughed at: “Nothing they say is wrong, but that some things are more acceptable than other” (Palmer 23). Thus, composing an English poetry, in group or individually, has to do with focusing on “creating an educated person vs. a trained one” (Kennedy, et al. 1), and in other words, what Perron calls “an organic education” in the ESL/EFL field: “Not just poets/teachers/students, we become humans talking to one another, curious, vulnerable, silly, contributing equally those personal visions through which we understand the world” (Gable 59). Making a story line, providing words and sentences, creating images from their experiences, imagining the proper progress of ideas, learners use the created English poem as a medium through which they can express themselves subjectively, creatively, contextually, and collaboratively. Finishing, revising, printing, publishing, reading loud to their peers, learners become an active user of English language rather than its passive consumer or imitator, expanding their communicative experiences in the English language. Stimulating their creativity through English poetry workshop also fits for “pursuing new ‘life goals’” not just for reaching certain “language goals” (Arnold & Brown 3). Being a poet/a participant/a creator, a learner tends to be more active and responsible for his/her English learning.

To add another mysterious dimension and to give my students an idea of “audience” I explain to the class that we will copy the poems on lightweight paper, trim the edges, wrap them in plastic, tie them to two large helium balloons and let them go. I tell them that we don’t know where these poems will land and we don’t know who will read them. It might be years before they are found. In fact, they may never be found by a human. Perhaps the poems will land in a tree and a crow will find them and weave them into her nest. In this exercise I want my students to think about the unknown reader and also the idea that his/her poem is soaring or floating for an unknown length of time. I let them draw their own conclusions. . . . (cited from Mark Rodriguez, “For Every Poem You Write,” Forgotten Languages Eds. Kennedy, Sarah, Peter Harris & Bernard Gershenson. California Poets in the Schools: Statewide Anthology

There are students who will always write for you because they’re not afraid of their voices touching paper. These lucky ones have learned to trust themselves with their materials. They are like natural carpenters who, when given an ax, can march off into the forest and build something. The only problem with these students is that sometimes they try to build too perfectly, and the structures they create with words are like little fortresses that keep them locked on the outside. Very beautiful and closed. I challenge the "class poet" by suggesting that they build underground, dig deeper and go for the hidden perception, the unknown. Or I ask them to close their eyes and feel their way through the forest. This gentle "derangement of the senses" can be accomplished through free writing, guided meditation, music, chant-poems etc. (cited from Katharine Haper, "No
8. English stretches, shortens, blends, and often drops sounds. These subtle features are required to acquire for fluency but very hard for a student of ESL/EFL to comprehend until he/she is properly trained to perceive the language in natural conversation. ESL/EFL learners should be aware of the difference between the written word and its spoken form. Class activities such as pronunciation and listening exercises through poem songs are particularly useful in developing listening comprehension skills. Young and teenage students like to listen to pop songs and enjoy, at their own pace and individually, repeating them until they learn them by heart. Once they are familiar with the material, they tend to progress from a mere imitation to using it when engaged in a dialogue with others. This enables them to move from the formal structure of language to an informal improvisation, using what they learn by heart unconsciously (including rhythm, stress, length, etc.). Presenting English poetry into chants is another way of developing spoken language skills. (cited from Carolyn Graham)

Given that the affective side of language learning contributes in a significant way to enriching learners’ language learning, what I am offering now as a range/sample of suggestions and ideas about how to use English poetry as an effective language material provides a way of integrating a humanistic approach into both language learning process and language classroom, the approach which is characterized by holistic, heuristic, cooperative and interactional activities in their relation to such factors as self-esteem, autonomy, and motivation. In the language of Maley & Duff, “It is my hope that the readers will look upon them as the starting-point rather than the finishing-point of a useful and exciting exploration of language. I should be glad to hear from anyone who would like to suggest ideas that have not included in this lecture, or variations on the ideas suggested here” (Maley & Duff 16).

IV. Ideas and Activities: A Few Examples Among Hundreds of Activities

- **Assignment 3**: Read the following poem and then, discuss about what the poem tells about the relation between form and meaning and how you feel about the poem’s idea:

  **Glass**

  Words of a poem should be glass  
  But glass so simple-subtle its shape  
  Is nothing but the shape of what it holds.

  A glass spun for itself is empty,  
  Brittle, at best Venetian trinket.  
  Embossed glass hides the poem or its absence.

  Words should be looked through, should be windows.  
  The best words were invisible.  
  The poem is the thing the poet thinks.

  If the impossible were not  
  And if the glass, only the glass,  
  Could be removed, the poem would remain (Robert Francis, 1949)

1) **Form**: Read through the following section on “Closed Form & Open Form” and don’t stay there for a long time. Our class is not studying about poetry but experiencing it. So this time, a mere understanding of the difference between open form and closed form is enough. That’s it! Don’t w
aste you time and energy on putting the section into your memory.

**Closed Form & Open Form**

Writing in closed form, a poet finds some sort of pattern such as that of a sonnet with its rime scheme and its fourteen lines of iambic pentameter. Poems in closed form look regular and symmetrical stanzas, striving for a kind of perfection—seeking to lodge words so securely in place that no word can be budged without a worsening. "Limitation makes for power" "The strength of the genie comes of his being confined in a bottle" (Richard Wolber): Compelled by some strict pattern to arrange and rearrange words, delete, and exchange them, poets must focus on them the keenest attention. Often they stand a chance of discovering words more meaningful than the ones they started out with. And at times, in obedience to a rime scheme, the poet says something quite unexpected. (Most poetry of the past is in closed form, exhibiting at least a pattern of rime or meter)

Poems in open form seek no final click. Rather, they view the writing of a poem as a process instead of a quest for an absolute. Free to use white space for emphasis, able to shorten or lengthen lines as the sense seems to require, the poet lets the poem discover its shape as it goes along, moving as water flows downhill, adjusting to its terrain, engulfing obstacles. (Poems after 1960s)

**I. Closed Form:** Blank Verse, Stanza (heroic or closed couplet, tercet, terza rima, quatrain), Syllabic verse, Acrostic, Sonnet (Italian, Shakespearean—octave & sestet)

1) blank verse: the best-known one-line pattern for a poem in English with unrimed iambic pentameter (Shakespeare's plays; Milton's Paradise Lost, Tennyson's "Ulysses," etc.)

**This Living Hand, Now Warm and Capable** 1819?

This living hand, now warm and capable
Of earnest grasping, would, if it were cold
And in the icy silence of the tomb,
So haunt thy days and chill thy dreaming nights
That thou wouldst wish thine own heart dry of blood
So in my veins red life might stream again,
And thou be conscience-calmed—see here it is—
I hold it toward you. (John Keats 1795-1821)

2) Stanza: Couplet, Tercet, Terza rima, Quatrain

i) Couplet: any pair of rime lines that contain a complete thought.
- heroic or closed couplet: two rime lines of iambic pentameter, the first ending in a light pause, the second more heavily end-stopped:
- The poet may place a pair of words, phrases, clauses, or sentences side by side in agreement or similarity, forming a parallel, or in contrast and opposition, forming an antithesis.

Next at our altar stood a luckless pair,
Brought by strong passions and a warrant there:
By long rent cloak, hung loosely, strove the bride,
From every eye, what all perceived, to hide;
........................................ (George Crabbe)

ii) tercet: a group of three lines (usually rime)
- terza rima: made of tercets linked together by the rime scheme a b a, b c b, c d c, d e d, e
iii) quatrain: a group of four lines (usually rimed)

- syllabic verse: the poet establishes a pattern of a certain number of syllables to a line as a way of escaping the tyranny of the iamb and of discovering less conventional rhythms.
- acrostic: poem in which the initial letter of each line, read downward, spells out a word or words—that named (and insulted) a well-known anthologist.

**The Wood-Weasel** 1944

emerges daintly, the skunk--
don't laugh--in sylvan black and white chipmunk regalia. The inky thing adaptively whited with glistening goat-fur, is wood-warden. In his ermined well-cuttlefish-inked wool, he is determination's totem. Out-lawed? His sweet face and powerful feet go about in chieftain't coat of Chilkat cloth. He is his own protection from the moth, noble little warrior. That otter-skin on it, the living pole-cat, smothers anything that stings. Well,--this same weasel's playful and his weasel associates are too. Only Wood-weasels shall associate with me. (Marianne Moor )

* Watson, Hildegarde: The editor of The Dial

3) Sonnet (sonnetto: "little song"); Originally an Italian form, the sonnet owes much of its prestige to Petrarch (1304-1374), who wrote in it of his love for the unattainable Laura. Fourteen lines with a mbic pentameter

i) Italian or Petrarchan sonnet: the rime scheme in its first eight lines (octave) is a b b a, a b b a the rime scheme in the last six lines (sestet) is c d c d c d, c d e c d e, c d c c d c

* In the octave, the poet states a problem, and then, in the sestet, offers a resolution.

ii) English or Shakespearean sonnet: the rimes cohere in four clusters (three quatrains + on couplet) a b a b, c d c d, e f e f, g g

- The English sonnet has three places where the procession of thought is likely turn in another direction. Within its frame, a poet may pursue one idea throughout the three quatrains and then in the couplet end with a surprise.

4) Epigram: a short poem ending in a witty or ingenious turn of thought, to which the rest of the composition intended to lead up. brevity + a final dash of wit.

*I am his Highness' dog at Kew; Pray tell me, sir, whose dog are you? (Alexander Pope 1688-1744; 1738)

**This Englishwoman** (1937)

This Englishwoman is so refined She has no bosom and no behind.* (Stevie Smith 1902-1971) *behind = buttock
A Poet Defended (1984)

You claim his poems are garbage. Balderdash! *

Garbage includes some meat. His poems are trash. (Paul Ramsey 1924 -)

* Rewrite any of the preceding epigrams, taking them out of rime (if they are in rime) and adding a few more words to them. See if your revision have nearly the same effect as the originals.

5) Limerick: five anapestic lines usually rining a a b b a:

There was an old man of Khartoum
Who kept a tame sheep in his room,
"To remind me," he said,
"Of someone who's dead,
But I never can recollect whom." (W. R. Inge 1860-1954)

II. Open Form

Writing in open form, a poet seeks to discover a fresh and individual arrangement for words in every poem. Such a poem has neither a rime scheme nor a basis meter informing the whole of it. Doing without those powerful elements, the poet who writes in open form relies on other means to engage and to sustain the reader's attention. "Writing free verse is like playing tennis with the net down," says Robert Frost. "Being an art form, verse cannot be free in the sense of having no limitati ons or guiding principles" (William C. Williams): Organic poetry, raw poetry, open form poetry.

Assignment 4: The following poem would like this if given conventional punctuation and set in a solid block like prose. Discuss about what would be lost if the poem turns into such prose as follows. Exchange your ideas with others:

Buffalo Bill is defunct (=dead), who used to ride a watersmooth-silver stallion and break one, two, three, four, five pigeons just like that. Jesus, he was a handsome man. And what I want to know is: "How do you like your blue-eyed boy, Mister Death?" (cited from X. J. Kennedy 679)

Buffalo Bill 's (1923)

Buffalo Bill 's defunct
who used to
ride a watersmooth-silver stallion
and break one two three four five pigeons just like that
Jesus
he was a handsome man
and what I want to know is
how do you like your blue-eyed boy
Mister Death (E. E. Cummings)

2) Paraphrasing (Individual or Group Work): When we read a poem, we bring personal associati ons to it, making our own interpretations on it. Doing a paraphrase of a poem will help us understa nd how different/similar we are in our perception of the meanings of the poem (social aspects of lan guage learning). Although the paraphrase can’t tell all that the poem contains, it will help us how la nguage choices are made in relation to meaning (pragmatic competence) and how a particular style has a particular effect on the meaning in a particular context of the poem (discourse competence).
While paraphrasing, students work on vocabularies, syntax (grammar), patterns, tone, meanings, etc, which can help them improve language skills (for an intermediate students of ESL/EFL)

Ex 1]

**Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening**

Whose woods these are I think I know.  
His house is in the village, though;  
He will not see me stopping here  
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer  
To stop without a farmhouse near  
Between the woods and frozen lake  
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake  
To ask if there is some mistake.  
The only other sound's the sweep  
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark, and deep,  
But I have promises to keep,  
And miles to go before I sleep,  
And miles to go before I sleep. (Robert Frost 1923)

A man is on his way somewhere at nightfall. As he rides along the country road in the snow, he stops his horse to watch the woods. He knows who is the owner of the woods and where he lives. (He even seems to know who he would be in terms of personality and philosophy. The actual, legal owner of the woods is now in the village, not knowing the beauty of the woods filled up with snow.) The horse thinks it strange to stop in the snow and wonders why the man stops there in the coldest away from a farmhouse. (The horse does not (can't) see the mysterious beauty of the woods. What it desires is merely biological as opposed to philosophical). The horse gives its bells a shake. The horse seems to say, “hey, what's wrong with you?” There has been a deep silence, the silence broken only by the the sweep of light wind and downy flake. When the silence is completely broken by the bell sounds, the man awakens as if from a dream. Then, he reminds himself of his earthly duties and says he has a long was to go before he can sleep. Finally, he reminds once again himself of the unavoidable “fact” that he has a long way to go before he dies.  
[various versions are possible]

**Assignment 5: Paraphrase the following poem and exchange yours with others: See the differences/similarities. (for Advanced students)**

**The Lake Isle of Innisfree**

I will rise and go now, and go to Innisfree,  
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made:  
Nine bean-rows will I have there, a hive for the honey-bee,  
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,  
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;  
There midnight’s all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,  
And evening full of the linnet’s wings.

I will rise and go now, for always night and day  
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;  
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements gray,  
I hear it in the deep heart’s core. (W. B. Yeats, 1892)
3) **Translation (Individual or Group Work):** This exercise is concerned with the process of interlingual and intercultural transfer. In fact, everyone translates in various situations, personal or public. We all adjust our linguistic register in accordance with the situations in which we find ourselves. We use language with our close friends that we do not use in formal situations. We make these sorts of adjustments every moment and every day without realizing. It is when we come to interlingual translation that we start to think about the processes of transfer from one linguistic system into another, and in learning another language it is very important to be aware of those processes. We not only need to be able to translate, but we need to know how to do it. Translation is both dynamic and inevitable. There are no “right” or “wrong” ways in translation. So I want to get you away from the notion of translation that sees “faithfulness” as good and anything less than that as bad. For there is no such thing as a perfect translation. Translation is a way of discovering and even creating meanings. Languages and cultures are different, and by accepting that idea of difference we can move creatively and subjectively between languages and cultures without trying to force one linguistic system into the strait-jacket of another. It is real fun!

- **Assignment 6: Follow the direction**

1. Select whatever poems you enjoy reading. (short poems are preferred)

2. Discuss about the content of the poems under reading in terms of subject, theme, tone, etc.

3. Write it in a prose form as literally as possible. Do not make any stylistic adjustments, simply translate the text as close to word for word as possible.

4. Turn the prose form into an acceptable poem.

5. Share the finished version of each text with your peer group members.

4) **English Poetry Workshop including Prodzying:** Making a story line, providing words and sentences, creating images from their experiences, imagining the proper progress of ideas, learners use the created English poem as a medium through which they can express themselves subjectively, creatively, contextually, and collaboratively. Finishing, revising, printing, publishing, reading loud to their peers, learners become an active user of English language rather than its passive consumer or imitator, expanding their communicative experiences in the English language. Stimulating their creativity through English poetry workshop also fits for “pursuing new “life goals,” not just for reaching certain “language goals” (Arnold & Brown 3). Being a poet/participant/creator, a learner tends to be more active and responsible for his/her English learning. When learners create their own poem, they come to be more sensitive to English and learn how to love English poetry.

**Poetry Workshop**

I. Ten-minute Group Work (Include at least one metaphoric line or metaphor):

1) Write a line of poetry that seems to be an opening line (try out an opening line).

2) Be prepared to explain why your line is a first line rather than a line that might function equally well in a different context,

3) to describe the poem you envision following your line in terms of ideas.
4) Then be prepared to give your line away. Following these steps,

5) read the line to your peers and discuss its possibilities--get suggestions about what sort of poem they see burgeoning from that opening line, and why: these suggestions constitute their bids.

6) Then the author of the line agrees to give it--no strings attached and forever--to the peer whose suggestion, enthusiasm, or oddball approach most please her/him.

7) The peer write down the suggested line.

8) repeat 4), 5), 6), and 7) until you complete a poem.

9) Be prepared to read it aloud to the class.

9) **Hand it in after the class through email:** doseon@mail.korea.ac.kr

II. Write a ten-line poem. The poem must include a proverb, adage, or metaphor, of familiar phrase (examples: she is a brick house, between the devil and the deep blue sea, one foot in the grave, a stitch in time saves nine, don't count your chickens before they hatch, some day my prince will come, the whole nine yards, a needle in a haystack) that you have changed in some way, as well as five of the following words: You have 20 minutes.

**cliff, needle, voice, whir**

**blackberry, cloud, mother, lick**

*Parody:* the original poem doesn’t have to be a difficult one for parodying

[parody poem]

**Flowing of the Well**

--to Maggie Anderson--

The well is the deep teal fancy
of the September sky and it dreams a heir
to God. Its water is its own
mirror, reflecting everything but itself
and irresistible continuum.
The deepest phenomenon of emanation in dream,
the water embraces what comes before it, and
swirls, awake as a worm in a cocoon and feeding
whatever has roots as a nipple for an infant,
stony, and verdant basins hung vertically,
in darkness within light with the waving face,
as if saying love to the wind. (by Do-Seon Eur)

[original poem]


The corn is the enormous yellow dirigible
of the August fields and it dreams fair
weather. Its husk is its own green life
raft, sliding past clouds and irrelevant
gravity. The largest phenomenon of food
in dream, corn hugs the air, dives and
pirouettes, slick as melted butter, silk
tassels flattened back, wind in the ears.

5) Poetry songs and Chanting: Many familiar poems began life as songs. Shakespeare studded his
plays with songs, and many of his contemporaries wrote verse to fit existing tunes. Some poets com-
posed both words and music. Some poets who were not composers printed their work in madrigal b-
oks for others to set to music. In the seventeenth century, however, poetry and song seem to have
fallen away from each other.

Most poems are more memorable than most ordinary speech, and when music is combined with poe-
try the result can be more memorable still.

1. Let's not drink. Let's just sit here and look at each other. Or put a kiss inside my goblet
   and I won't want anything to drink.
2. Drink to me only with your eyes, and I'll pledge my love to you with my eyes;
   Or leave a kiss within the goblet, that's all I'll want to drink.
3. Drink to me only with thine eyes,
   And I will pledge with mine;
   Or leave a kiss but in the cup,
   And I'll not ask for wine. (Ben Jonson 1573?-1637?: "To Celia")

   DRINK to me ON-ly WITH thine EYES,
   And I will PLEDGE with MINE,
   OR LEAVE a KISS but IN the CUP,
   And I'LL not ASK for WINE.

Unlike many poems we read on the printed page, songs tend to be written in language simple enou-
gh to understand on first reading. This immediate clarity is essential to rap. In most rap-songs, the si-
nenger talks or recites at top speed, dazzling us with long, rhythmic, four-stress lines that end in rimes.
Rap began on city streets in the game of "signifying," in which two poets aim rimed insults at eac-
h other. (Rounc DMC, Grandmaster Flash, L.L. Cool J, Fat Boys)

Not all popular songs are so plainspoken: Bob Dylan, Sting, Bono, Elvis Costello, Michelle Shocked,
and others have written complicated lyrics full of strange, dreamlike imagery and poetic contents.

Ex) Song and Poetry: Singing and Saying

The Rose

Some say love it is a river that drowns the tender reed.
Some say love it is a razor that leaves your soul to bleed.
Some say love it is a hunger an endless aching need.
I say love it is a flower and you its only seed.
It's the heart afraid of breaking that never learns to dance.
It's the dream afraid of waking that never takes the chance.
It's the one who won't be taken who cannot seem to give
And the soul afraid of dying that never learns to live.
When the night has been too lonely and the road has been too long,
Then to think that love is only for the lucky and the strong.
Just remember in the winter far beneath the bitter snow lies the seed
That with the sun's love in the spring becomes the rose.  (Bette Midler)
As Tears Go by

It is the evening of the day.
I sit and watch the children play.
Smiling faces I can see,
But not for me.

I sit and watch as tears go by.
My riches can't buy everything.
I want to hear the children sing.
All I hear is the sound of rain
falling on the ground.

I sit and watch as tears go by.
It is the evening of the day.

I sit and watch the children play.
Doing things I used to do they think are new.

I sit and watch as tears go by.  (Rolling Stones)

Richard Cory, With Apologies to E. A. Robinson

They say that Richard Cory owns
One half of this old town,
With elliptical connections
To spread his wealth around.
Born into Society,
A banker's only child,
He had everything a man could want:
Power, grace and style.

But I, I work in his factory
And I curse the life I'm living
And I curse my poverty
And I wish that I could be
Oh I wish that I could be
Oh I wish that I could be
Richard Cory.

The papers print his picture
Almost everywhere he goes;
Richard Cory at the opera,
Richard Cory at a show
And the rumor of his party
And the orgies on his yacht--
Oh he surely must be happy
With everything he's got.  (Refrain)

He freely gave to charity,
He had the common touch,
And they were grateful for his patronage
And they thanked him very much,
So my mind was filled with wonder
When the evening headlines read:
  "Richard Cory went home last night
And put a bullet through his head.” (Refrain)
(Paul Simon; Simon & Garfunkel on Sounds of Silence 1966)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Love me Tender, Love me True</th>
<th>Hello</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elvis Presley</td>
<td>Lionel Richie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love me tender, love me sweet.</td>
<td>I've been alone with you inside my head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never let me go.</td>
<td>And in my dreams I've kissed your lips</td>
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<tr>
<td>You have made my life complete.</td>
<td>A thousand times.</td>
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<tr>
<td>And I love you.</td>
<td>I sometimes see you pass outside my door.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Love me tender, love me true.</td>
<td>Hello, is it me you're looking for?</td>
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<tr>
<td>All my dreams fulfil.</td>
<td>I can see it in your eyes.</td>
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<td>For, my daring, I love you.</td>
<td>I can see it in your smile.</td>
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<td>And I alwayas will.</td>
<td>You're all I've ever wanted,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>And my arms are open wide</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good-Bye</th>
<th>Without You</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>--Jessica--</td>
<td>-- Mariah Carey --</td>
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<tr>
<td>I can see the pain living in your eyes</td>
<td>No, I can't forget this evening</td>
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<tr>
<td>And I know how hard you try.</td>
<td>Or your face as you were leaving.</td>
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<td>You deserve to have so much more.</td>
<td>But I guess that's just the way the story goes.</td>
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<td>I can feel your hurt and I sympathize</td>
<td>You always smile, but in your eyes</td>
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<tr>
<td>And I'll never criticize</td>
<td>Your sorrow shows.</td>
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<tr>
<td>All you ever meant to my life.</td>
<td>Yes, it shows.</td>
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<td>I don't want to let you down.</td>
<td>No, I can't forget tomorrow</td>
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<td>I don't want to lead you on.</td>
<td>When I think of all my sorrow.</td>
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<td>I don't want to hold you</td>
<td>When I had you there, but then I let you go,</td>
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<tr>
<td>back from where you might belong.</td>
<td>And now it's only fair that I should let you know</td>
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<td>You would never ask me why</td>
<td>What you should know.</td>
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<td>My heart is so disguised.</td>
<td>I can't live if living is without you.</td>
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<tr>
<td>But I just can't live a lie any more.</td>
<td>I can't live.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would rather hurt myself</td>
<td>I can't give anymore.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Than to ever make you cry.</td>
<td>I can't live if living is without you.</td>
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<tr>
<td>But there's nothing left to</td>
<td>I can't give.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Say but good-bye.</td>
<td>I can't give anymore.</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tears in Heaven</th>
<th>You Light up my Life</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-- Eric Clapton --</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you know my name if I saw you in heaven?</td>
<td>So many nights I'd sit by my window.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you be the same if I saw you in heaven?</td>
<td>Waiting for someone to sing me his song.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I must be strong, and (I'll) carry on</td>
<td>So many dreams I kept deep inside me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cause I know I don't belong here in heaven.</td>
<td>Along in the dark,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you hold my hand if I saw you in heaven?</td>
<td>But now you've come along,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Would you help me stand if I saw you in heaven?</td>
<td>And you light up my life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'll find my way through night and day</td>
<td>You give me hope to carry on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cause I know I just can't stay here in heaven.</td>
<td>You light up my days and fill my nights wit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Time can bring you down, Time can bend your knees. Rollings at sea, a drift on the waters,
Time can break the heart. Could it be finally I'm turning for home,
Have your begging, please. Begging, please. Finally, a chance to say,
Beyond the door there's peace I'm sure. “Hey, I love you” never again to be all alone.
And I know there'll be no more tears in heaven. It can't be wrong when it feels so right,

Visit also our homepage: www://shinbiro.com/~eepoetry

Assignment 7: Write a short study of a lyric by a recent popular song-writer. Show why you believe the song-writer's work deserves the name of poetry. Or write or Find out a story with poetic devices and turn it into a rap. (cited from X. J. Kennedy, Literature: 604-619)

6) Contrasting: This exercise is to help students think about the meaning of each word in the poem providing an opposite word. There are various responses. For example, the opposites of man in a poem can be woman, boy, animal, and god, depending on the context in which it happens. It is a good idea to display the various results on the board and discuss about them. Work individually or in pairs on the following poems and circle words you can provide opposites for and write the opposites on the text. Compare and contrast your results with other groups’ and then discuss about what differences you find through this exercise:

Theodore Roethke (1908-1963)                             Howard Nemerov (b. 1920)

My Papa's Waltz                                     The Snow Globe

The whiskey on your breath                          A long time ago, when I was a child,
Could make a small boy dizzy;                        They left my light on while I went to sleep,
But I hung on like death:                            As though they would have wanted me beguiled
Such waltzing was not easy.                          By brightness if at all; dark was too deep.

We romped until the pans                            And they left me one toy, a village white
Slid from the kitchen shelf;                         With the fresh snow and silently in glass
My mother's countenance                             Frozen forever. But if you shook it,
Could not unfrown itself.                           The snow would rise up in the rounded space

The hand that held my wrist                        And from the limits of the universe
Was battered on one knuckle;                        Snow itself down again. O world of white,
At every step you missed                            First home of dream! Now that I have my dead,
My right ear scraped a buckle.                      I want so cold an emblem to rehearse

You beat time on my head                            How many of them have gone from the world's light,
With a palm caked hard by dirt,                     As I have gone, too, from my snowy bed. (1955)
Then waltzed me off to bed                           
Still clinging to your shirt. (1948)

D. H. Lawrence (1885-1930)—this poem for the most advanced students

Piano

Softly, in the dusk, a woman is singing to me;
Taking me back down the vista of years, till I see
A child sitting under the piano, in the boom of the tingling strings
And pressing the small poised feet of a mother who smiles as she sings.

In spite of myself, the insidious mastery of song
Betrayed me back, till the heart of me weeps to belong
To the old Sunday evenings at home, with winter outside
And hymns in the cozy parlor, the tinkling piano our guide.

So now it is vain for the singer to burst into clamour
With the great black piano appaionato. The glamour
Of childish days is upon me, my manhood is cast
Down in the flood of remembrance, I weep like a child for the past. (1918)

7) Making Meaning: A Closing Game: This exercise aims to lead learners towards making their own interpretations, making use of certain contextual readings. While making decisions about what would go in the blanks (or the blank lines), they come to experiment with the different effects which different decisions will bring about. In so doing, they have a better chance to use language functionally, contextually, subjectively, and even creatively, which are important elements in fluent speech. Compare your version with the original one and see the cultural differences/similarities. (The following poems are from Ten-Second Rainshowers)

An April Day
Here I am in April
When the trees and grass
Are both green. I’m sitting
Here in the shade with dirt.

The Wind
The wind I can’t see
but I feel and hear
and it must be a spirit
for when it passes
I see trees

Lazy Days
With my fishing I sink my problems.
With my hook I catch my joys.
This is the _____ that
You search tirelessly for.
No clock is here to count you time,
No person to disturb you,
Just a fishing pole and a riverbank,

Today
Today the sun shines
down hard, making it warm
but chilly, with the cool
breeze that comes from
nowhere; at this time of
the year, spring and winter

Four-Leaf Clover
I can remember
When I need you,
Four leaf clover,
When my heart was in love.
I was counting on you
To give me some luck

Leave Me Alone
The girls leave me alone
because
I go in the forest
and give crumbs to the birds,
then I try to open my lips
but they are frozen shut.

(Matt White; Grade 7)

(Matt Miller; Grade 10)

(Nello Caramat; Grade 5)
For him to notice me. (Stephanie Byrne; Grade 3)
You never came through
So ____________
___________.
(Susan Quijano; Grade 9)

My Comfort
For the thousandth time
I look in the mirror
And I see someone with beauty
Lots of people say I'm not
But who cares what
They think
I know I'm beautiful
And as long as I wake up
Every day and see it
I'll be happy with myself
And each time I turn
A different age, I'll wake up
With _____________.
(Falon Lipeford; Grade 6)

Loving
I have a crush on a girl.
But everybody says I am
A __________. So I am not going
To ask her out. Because she
Might ___________.
Oh, I get a chill even thinking
About her. Maybe if I send her
Some __________, she will know
How much I care. Or if
I send her some __________
To show her how much I
Think she is pretty.
(Gerry Morales; Grade 5)

I Saw Myself
I think I am in love
For I am drawing violets.
I feel this joy within my soul.
And yesterday I saw myself in the river
And for the first time
I ___________.
(Karen Navarez; Grade 4)

Chasing the Light
If I were a moth
I'd fly to the light
___________.
It is the only light
I know that
will never singe
my delicate wings. (Liz Flynn; Grade 1)

8) Figurative Language (I): Simile & Metaphor: In an actual conversation or writing, you someti-
mes feel like to speak nonsense as a humor or to say less than or beyond what you mean, “or the op-
posite of what you mean, or something other than what you mean.” Figurative language cannot be
taken literally only. As Robert Frost writes, “Poetry provides the one permissible way of saying one
thing and meaning another” (qtd. in & indebted to Perrine 58). In addition, learners often find it diff-
icult and uncomfortable to understand multiple ambiguities as witnessed in editorials, essays, fictions,
political speeches, jokes, and even in everyday conversation. Working on metaphorical language an-
d its figurative meanings in English poetry can help them reduce such difficulty a lot.

The Guitarist Tunes up
With what attentive courtesy he bent
Over his instrument;
Not as a lordly conqueror who could
Command both wire and wood,
But as a man with a loved woman might,
Inquiring with delight
What slight essential things she had to say
Before they started, he and she, to play.

(Frances Cornford 1886-1960)

Assignment 8: Read the following poem and discuss about what message about “life” the author tries to imply by means of the figurative term “hound”

The Hound

Life the hound
Equivocal
Comes at a bound
Either to rend me
Or to befriend me.
I cannot tell
The hound’s intent
Till he has sprung
At my bare hand
With teeth or tongue.
Meanwhile I stand
And wait the event.  (Robert Francis 1901-)

[what word would go in the blanks?]

I am silver and exact. I have no preconceptions.
Whatever I see I swallow immediately
Just as it is, unmisted by love or dislike.
I am not cruel, only truthful--
The eye of a little god, four cornered.
Most of time I meditate on the opposite wall.
It is pink, with speckles. I have looked at it so long
I think it is a part of my heart. But it flickers.
Faces and darkness separate us over and over.

Now I am ______. A woman bends over me,
Searching my reaches for what she really is.
Then she turns to those liars, the candles or the moon.
I see her back, and reflect it faithfully.
She rewards me with tears and an agitation of hands.
I am important to her. She comes and goes.
Each morning it is her face that replaces the darkness.
In me she has drowned a young girl, and in me an old woman
Rise toward her day after day, like a terrible fish.  (Sylvia Plath 1932-1963)

Assignment 9: Exercise: Clozing in Figurative Language (I): Simile & Metaphor

Who Am I? Oh, My Love Is like a Red, Red Rose
I am like a gate                              Oh, my love is like a red, red rose
without a name.                              That's newly _________ in June;
I am like stars making something.                My love is like the ___________
I wish                          That's sweetly played in tune.
I could be like other children,               So fair art thou, my bonny lass,
but I am just a dud.                          So deep in love am I;
I want to be                       And I will love thee still, my dear,
like _________ that have names.             Till a' the seas ____________.
(Jacob Mayes; Grade 4)

My violin's soft music
makes me feel relaxed.
It's like travelling in my dad's truck
from busy Virginia to flat, warm Kansas.
(Tondra Seibring; Grade 8)

The Pathway
I see a long path
in the dark woods.
If I go on it
all the leaves
on the trees
will _________ me.
(John Lipfert; Grade 4)

Rainshowers
Rainshowers
last forever, seconds
at a time, and
almost like _________
which is long
at heart.
(Mike Davis; Grade 8)

Girls are like _________; they
swim into minds with
open feathers.
(James Deloatch; Grade 7)

Exercise: Rewrite the following figurative Language into Plain language

1. Think of the storm roaming the sky uneasily
   like a dog looking for a place to sleep in,
   listen to it growling. --Elizabeth Bishop-- "Little Exercise"

2. . . . the hounds of spring are on winter's trace . . .
   --Algernon C. Swinburne-- "Atlanta in Calydon"
3. To see a world in a grain of sand
   And a heaven in a wild flower, . . . --William Blake-- "To See a World in a Grain of Sand"

4. Her presence was a roomful of flowers,
   Her absence is an empty bed. --Li Bo--

5. . . . When I kissed her paper cheek
   I thought of the snake,/ of his quick motion. --Ruth Whitman-- "Castoff Skin"

6. "Hope" is the thing with feathers -
   That perches in the soul -
   And sings the tune without the words -
   And never stops - at all - --Emily Dickinson--

7. You fit into me
   like a hook into an eye
   a fish hook
   an open eye --Margaret Atwood-- "You Fit into Me"

8. One morning our teacher read
   a long story.
   When it was over, our teacher
   looked like a book. --Georgina Bruer, Grade 3--

9. When my mom died
   I was like the winter --James Powell, Grade 8--

---

**Assignment 10: A Group Work**: Choose two short poems including a children's poem rich in figurative language. Rewrite the poems, taking for your model Howard Moss's deliberately bepiddling version of William Shakespeare's sonnet, "Shall I Compare thee to a summer's day?" Eliminate every figure of speech. Turn the poem into language as flat and unsuggestive as possible. Just ignore any rime or rhythm in the originals. You may have several versions in process. Then, in a paragraph, indicate lines in your revised version that seem worsened. In conclusion, sum up what your barbaric rewrite tells you about the nature of poetry. Hand in your assignment via email: doseon@mail.korea.ac.kr

**Assignment 11: Exercise: Clozing in Figurative Language (I): Personification**

**A Bad Day**

I overslept and missed my train,
slipped on the sidewalk
in the pouring rain,
sprained my ankle,
broke my glasses,
lost my keys,
got stuck in the elevator,
it wouldn't go,
kicked it twice and stubbed my toe,
bought a pen that didn't write,
took it back and had a fight,
got home angry,
locked the door,

**More Bad Luck**

The bread was stale,
like _______________.
It was four days old.
The milk was sour
like _______________.
The butter was rancid
like _______________.
The steak was tough
like _______________.
The service was dreadful
like _______________.
The waiter was rough
like _______________.
crawled into bed,  
couldn't take any more.  
(qtd. in Jazz Chants; 21)

My bill was huge  
like __________________________.  
His tip was small  
like __________________________.  
I'm sorry I went to that place at all.  
(adapted from Jazz Chants; 21)

Well, He Eats Like a Pig

Well, he eats like a pig,  
he can't get enough.  
He works like  
his real tough.  
He smoke like ________,  
four packs a day.  
He sleeps like__________,  
what more can I say?  
He drinks like ________,  
scotch on the rocks.  
When he gets real mad,  
he hardly talks.  
He cries like ____________  
when he's feeling sad.  
He's the dearest friend  
I've ever had.  
(qtd. in Jazz Chants; 77)

The ________ comes  
On little cat feet.  
It sits looking  
Over harbor and city  
On silent haunches  
And then moves on.  
(Carl Sandburg)

I love walking through ________, feeling  
it touches my unawaken skin. I feel it as my  
self because it hides something in and behind  
it. I like the way in which it melts like  
icescream on my palm.

(prose) I come back to a small fishing, where I grew up. I'm covering the whole village with my grey coat silently, and looking at a girl who I loved with all my heart. She is shedding tears. But nobody can notice it because of my grey coat. I am embracing her, and I hope it will last forever. Suddenly, beaming sunlights scatter grey coat.

a dog; a chimney; a log; a fish; a baby:  
Fog

- Assignment 12: Exercise: Clozing through Personification (II)

Title?: ____________

__________ talks like  
a broken heart a  
cold and lonely storm, the night's  
starry sky  
a yellow bot moistened air  
a way to say  
a cozy cottage on a peak  
or to remember  
a rosy red flower bed in a garden  
of air  
or  
a watching a volcano  
erupt  
(Emerald Light; 3rd Grade)

Title?: ____________

__________ look like the life  
of the invisible  
__________ smell like the person  
who own them.  
They sound like silence.  
They taste like air.  
__________ feel like you're  
being watched and followed.  
(Danita Coss; 4th Grade)
Coyote at the Reservation

Coyote walks lonely
in Kaibeto, Arizona
on the hot sand,
it is hot as _________.
Now it is midnight.
Coyote walks to a hogan
and taps on the wood.
“Come in,” said the Navajo lady.
Coyote did not come in.
The Navajo lady felt terrified.

__________

Coyote felt something
In his heart.
Coyote suddenly disappeared
into the night air
like a ghost.
(Stephanie Howard’ 5th Grade)

My Friend is My ________

My friend is stupid so they say but I know Ch in my name sounds like a choo-choo train
He’s smart I’ve been in my mind . . . rushing to the next pick-up
My friend is as simple as the Pharoah’s tomb Then the R comes growling r-r-r-r-r-
My friend is as complicated as treading a needle like a mad machine going crazy.
My friend is cynical, rude, angered, deadly The IS comes quickly with an i-s-s-s-s-s
He’s the kindest person I know . . . for a wonderful kiss.
My friend is my _________.
(Christopher Finley; 5th Grade)

9) Images: According to Arnold, images are “strongly connected to the emotional side of life, and thus can help to achieve learner engagement and greater assimilation of the language” (260). Since English words we are learning are presented with “many associations and images – visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, pleasant, unpleasant . . .” when used properly in relation to meaning, images can have a positive effect on language acquisition (Arnold 264). Given that “experience come to us largely through the senses” (Perrine 46), communication frequently tends to rely on sense impressions, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, tactile, organic, etc. For example, expressions about touch such as hardness, softness, wetness, heat or cold, hunger, thirst, fatigue, tension, sound, smell are recurrently found in everyday conversation. Understanding images can also help learners understand the flow of ideas, which is culturally specific.

In a Station of the Metro

The apparition of these faces in the crowd;
__________on a wet, black bough.
(Ezra Pound 1885-1972; 1916)
**Exercise:** Striking my bare foot against the comb in the bedroom, now cold and motionless but associated with the living wife (perhaps worn in her hair), I feel a shock as if I had touched her corpse: Write these statements into a short poem with 3 lines.

---

**The Winter Evening Settles down**

The winter evening settles down
With smell of steaks in passageways.
Six O'clock.
The burnt-out ends of _______ days.
And now a _______ shower wraps
The scraps
Of _____ leaves about your feet
And newspapers from vacant lots;
The showers beat
On broken blinds and chimney-pots,
And at the corner of the street
A _______ cab-horse steams and stamps.
And the lighting of the lamps.
(921)
(T. S. Eliot 1888-1965; 1917)

---

**The Great Figure**

Among the rain
and lights
I saw the figure 5
in gold
on a red
firetruck
moving tense
unheeded
to gong clangs
siren howls
and wheels rumbling
through the _______ city.
(W. C. Williams 1883-1963; 1

---

**Waiting for the__________**

Breeze sent a wrinkling darkness
Across the bay. I knelt
Beneath un upturned boat,
And, moment by moment, felt
The sand at my feet grow colder,
The damp air chill and spread.
Then the first raindrops sounded
On the hull above my head.
(Timothy Steele; 1986)

---

**Mid-August at Sourdough Mountain Lookout**

Down valley a smoke haze
Three days heat, after five days rain
Pitch glows on the fir-cones
Across rocks and meadows
Swarms of new flies.
I cannot remember things I once read
A few friends, but they are in cities.
Drinking cold snow-water from a tin cup
Looking down for miles
Through high still air. (Gary Snyder; 1959)

---

**A Sensual, For Ezra Pound**

A girl is feeding / grapes to three leopards.
The leopards are black. / The grapes are also blac
Blue Black.
And the girl is__________.
Like ripening grapes,
her__________, her small ________,
lean lightly into the air.
(Emanuel di Pasquale; 1989)

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**10) Composing Your own Poem:**

i) "Focusing on the First Line": Lanston Hughes’s "Children": This can be done individually, in p
airs, or in a small group. With large class it is best to work in small group of 4-5 students. Each group tries to fill the blanks with its own ideas and words and compares its versions with other’s during a general round-up. Suggestions are written up for a whole-class discussion. (This section is indebted to Gillian Lazar 109-110)

Children always ..............................
Children never ..............................
Old people always ...........................
Old people never ............................

[ex: an original poem in which each line begins with the same words]
Fear is total darkness
Fear is like a fuse going out
Fear is like a doll.
Fear is a bolt of lightning
Fear is a star that you can't see
Fear is frightening  (Marion Mackles, 6th grade; qtd. in Koch 53)

[Complete the poem using the words in the box below]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heads</th>
<th>ones</th>
<th>morning</th>
<th>is</th>
<th>only</th>
<th>old</th>
<th>ears</th>
<th>sleep</th>
<th>are</th>
<th>eyes</th>
</tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Children
Children ............................... at night
Children never wake up
When .......... comes.
.......... the old ones wake up.
Old Trouble ................. always awake.

Children can't see over their ................. .
Children can't hear beyond their ................. .
Children can't know outside of their ................. .

The old ones see.
The ................. ones hear.
The old ................. know.
The old ones .................. old.  (part of Laura Riding, "Gorgotten Children")

ii) "Thin Poem Writing": Create your own poem with short lines. It is fun!

This Is Just to Say
On the other
I have eaten
Window in
the plums
School lies
that were in
The playground
the icebox
And how I long
and which
To be on the
you were probably
Other side
saving
Of the
for breakfast
Window
(Tommy Kennedy, 6th grade; Koch 124)

Forgive me
they were delicious
so sweet
and so cold  (William Carlos Williams)

iii) "Noun Phrase Poem": Create your own poem with one word lines and enjoy it is fun!

Love
The Bird
To a Bird
iv) Found Poetry: This exercise helps students either shape a piece of free verse from everyday language or find out a poetry-like short passage from any magazine, newspaper, advertisement, essay, etc.

From West Monroe, L.A.  
Matilda Crabtree, 14, was Snoopy
Shot and killed by her father when she jumped from a closet and yelled “Boo” to scare her parents.
Last words: “I love you, Daddy.”
(excerpted from a newspaper)

Snoopy  
Snoopy
grew up more in the company of humans than dogs, which probably accounts for the fact that he’s much more human than canine. (cited from an Ad.)

Timing is Essential
Everybody tells us you can go anywhere.
But nobody tells us the tide’s coming.
There is no arguing over that.
Too late, all is water around us.
And we can go no where.
“Let’s not forget – time”
(from A Timex watch Ad.)

11) Split Poem Activity and Jazz Chanting: Split a poem into two parts, one with odd numbered lines and the other with even numbered lines and jumble them into two columns. Then ask students to listen to the recorded poem twice and arrange the lines in correct order. Use shorter and easier poems for the beginners and intermediates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column A</th>
<th>Column B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Give pearls away and rubies in vain;  
3. And I am two-and-twenty,  
5. When I was one-and-twenty y free.”  
7. ‘Tis paid with sighs a plenty ss rue.”  
9. When I was one-and-twenty, gain,  
11. ”Give crowns and pounds and guineas ‘tis true.  
13. But I was one-and-twenty, me.  
15. “The heart out of the bosom | 2. Was never given i  
4. I heard a wise man say,  
6. But keep your fanc  
8. And sold for endle  
10. I heard him say a |
12) Comprehension Check-Ups: An Example from a SAT English Test: Read the poem answer the questions (individually or in groups) based on the poem and exchange yours with others and then discuss about the differences:

**Fable**
-- Stephen Crane --

In heaven
Some little blades of grass
Stood before God.
“What did you do?”
Then all save one of the little blades
Began eagerly to relate
The merits of their lives.
This one stayed a small way behind,
Ashamed.
Presently, God said,
“And what did you do?”
The little blade answered, “O my Lord,
Memory is bitter to me,
For if I did good deeds
I know not of them.”
Then God, in all his splendor,
Arose from his throne,
“As best little blade of grass” he said.

1. It can be inferred that the speaker(s) in line 4 is/are
   (a) an angel
   (b) St. Peter
   (c) The blade of grass
   (d) God
   (e) The one little blade of grass

2. God’s attitude toward the little blade of grass may best be described as
   (a) condescending
   (b) neutral
   (c) admiring
   (d) disdainful
   (e) morally superior

3. What is the effect of lines 16-17 in relation to the rest of the poem?
   (a) They reveal God’s egotism
   (b) They heighten anticipation of the last line
   (c) They shift the narrative voice
   (d) They echo the last lines of the first stanza
   (e) They reveal the poet’s true feeling

4. God’s attitude toward the blades of grass as a group is
   (a) shameful
   (b) neutral
   (c) disgusted
   (d) disapproving
   (e) melancholy
5. The main idea of the poem is that
(a) it is better to do nothing than too much
(b) it is better to forget if you have done something wrong
(c) it is better to be modest than to be boastful
(d) it is better to keep your problems to yourself
(e) if you need to tell your bad deeds to someone, you are not worthy of respect

6. The word “presently” (line 10) means which of the following in the context of the poem?
   I. At this time
   II. In a little while
   III. At once

   (a) I only
   (b) II only
   (c) I and III only
   (d) II and III only
   (e) I, II, and III

7. It can be inferred that the small blade was “ashamed” (line 9) because
   (a) it was smaller than the others
   (b) it was disgusted with the other blades of grass
   (c) it didn’t feel worthy of God’s attention
   (d) it was bitter and lonely
   (e) it thought its acts greater than the others’ acts

Appendix 1: How to Select Proper English Poems for ESL/EFL learners: (I am still working on it)

1) poems that are worthy of attention and that could give good experiences;
2) some element in them that children would be excited by and connect with their own feelings
3) avoid poems of unfamiliar words and difficult syntax, allusions to unfamiliar things; students learned
   new words and new conceptions in order to play a new game, or get enable them to understand science
   fiction in comics or on TV, so why not for poetry which they liked just as much? (I doubt)
4) avoid poems whose meaning will remain obscure to children
5) a poem’s length
6) poems that use the words children really use when they speak
7) poems whose subjects are secrets, noises, colors, names of rivers, wishes, dreams, girls, love, troubles,
   lies, funny things, a strange and beautiful place, full of wonderful sounds, human/animal conversation
8) joke poems
9) story-telling & reading-aloud poems
10) poetry which gives fresh vision to common things and experiences; it can appeal to the intellect as
    well as to the emotions, as it extends and enriches meaning in everyday life.
11) poems that keep in mind the typical interests and concerns of childhood: relationships with friends
    and family, the outdoors, daily routines, play, animals, and ordinary everyday things such as safety
    pins or socks;
12) poems that show a fresh view of something with which a child is likely to be familiar and which
    appeal to the mind through the senses.
13) poems that relate to the emotions and experiences of the younger ages.
14) subjects that delight girls may bore boys and vice versa; words that set one child to laughing wi
leave others in silence; level of achievement, socioeconomic factors play a big part in the sort of
response a poem may meet; poems that all generations enjoy will not be necessarily meaningful t o the
next.

Appendix 2: Using on-line children’s poetry web-sites in ESL/EFL Classroom: (I am still worki ng on it. I will put it on on-line use through the homepage. Please visit the homepage later [http://w ww.shinbiro.com/~eepoetry])

Appendix 3: Works Cited:
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*authors unreferenced in “Works Cited” are from Arnold’s edition*