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Curriculum–Practice Tensions in Poetry Integration: Instructor Perceptions and Practices in Libyan University EFL Classrooms

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Abstract

Poetry has long been considered a valuable resource in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction because of its potential linguistic and affective benefits. However, limited empirical research has examined how poetry is implemented within institutionally required university curricula, particularly in under-researched contexts such as Libya. This study investigates Libyan university instructors' perceptions and practices regarding integrating poetry into required literature courses. Data were collected using a descriptive quantitative survey of 70 instructors (N = 70) representing several public Libyan universities. The findings reveal mixed perceptions of poetry's pedagogical effectiveness and uneven patterns of classroom implementation, despite its formal curricular inclusion. While more than half the instructors reported using poetry in their teaching, the frequency of integration varied substantially. Instructors also identified several challenges, including limited teaching resources, perceived irrelevance, and insufficient pedagogical preparation for teaching the subject. Simultaneously, many participants recognized benefits such as emotional engagement, vocabulary enrichment, knowledge expansion, and the promotion of critical thinking. These findings highlight a curriculum–practice gap in Libyan higher education, suggesting that institutional requirements alone do not ensure consistent classroom implementation. This study contributes empirical evidence regarding poetry pedagogy in Libya and offers insights into how structural conditions and instructor perceptions influence its integration into university language teaching.

Keywords: *poetry, literature integration, EFL, higher education, language teaching*

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الملخص

تُعَدّ القصيدة منذ زمن طويل موردًا قيّمًا في تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية بوصفها لغةً أجنبية لما تنطوي عليه من فوائد لغوية وانفعالية محتملة، ومع ذلك، ما تزال الأبحاث التجريبية التي تتناول كيفية توظيف الشعر داخل المقررات الجامعية الإلزامية محدودة، ولا سيما في السياقات التي لم تحظَ بالاهتمام البحثي الكافي مثل ليبيا. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى استقصاء تصوّرات وممارسات أعضاء هيئة التدريس في الجامعات الليبية بشأن دمج الشعر في مقرّرات الأدب الإلزامية، وقد جُمِعت البيانات باستخدام استبانة وصفية كمية شملت 70 أستاذًا (N = 70) يمثّلون عددًا من الجامعات الليبية الحكومية. تكشف النتائج عن تصوّرات متباينة حول الفاعلية التربوية للشعر وأنماط غير متسقة في تطبيقه داخل الصفوف، على الرغم من تضمينه رسميًا في المنهج المقرر. فعلى الرغم من أن أكثر من نصف المشاركين أشاروا إلى استخدامهم للشعر في التدريس، فإن وتيرة هذا الدمج تباينت بدرجة ملحوظة. كما حدّد أعضاء هيئة التدريس عدة تحديات، من بينها محدودية الموارد التعليمية، والشعور بعدم ملاءمة الشعر لاهتمامات الطلبة، وضعف التأهيل البيداغوجي المتخصص في تدريسه. في الوقت نفسه، أدرك كثير من المشاركين جملة من المزايا، مثل تعزيز التفاعل الوجداني، وإثراء الحصيلة اللغوية، وتوسيع آفاق المعرفة، وتنمية التفكير الناقد لدى الطلبة، وتبرز هذه النتائج وجود فجوة بين المنهج المعلن والممارسة الفعلية في التعليم العالي الليبي، بما يشير إلى أن المتطلبات المؤسسية وحدها لا تكفي لضمان تطبيق متّسق داخل قاعات الدرس. تسهم هذه الدراسة في تقديم دليل تجريبي حول بيداغوجيا تدريس الشعر في ليبيا، كما توفّر رؤى حول الكيفية التي تؤثّر بها البُنى المؤسسية وتصورات المدرّسين في دمج الشعر ضمن تعليم اللغة في الجامعة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: *الشعر، دمج الأدب، اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، التعليم العالي، تعليم اللغات*

1. Introduction

The use of literary texts in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education has attracted scholarly attention for several years. Beyond its aesthetic value, literature is now widely acknowledged as a core pedagogical resource in EFL/ESL classrooms. It serves as a bridge for supporting language development, cultural awareness, and learners' engagement with meaning *(Hişmanoğlu, 2005; Khatib et al., 2011; Lazar, 1993; McKay, 1982)*. Within this broader discussion, poetry occupies a distinctive place because of its condensed language, rhythmic patterning, figurative density, and openness to interpretation.

Recent research suggests that poetry can contribute meaningfully to language learning when introduced through appropriate scaffolding and purposeful classroom activities. Studies have reported that poetry can support vocabulary growth, reading engagement, grammatical awareness, pronunciation development, and learner *motivation (Kellem, 2009; Khatib et al., 2011; Nishihara, 2022; Paran, 2008)*. Earlier pedagogical work has emphasized that poetry can create opportunities for creative response, interpretive discussion, and oral participation, particularly when teachers move beyond purely formal analysis and adopt more interactive classroom practices *(Lazar, 1993; McKay, 1982).*

Despite these potential benefits, poetry is not consistently integrated into EFL teaching practice. In many educational contexts, teachers report difficulties related to limited instructional time, pressure to complete the syllabus, inadequate teaching resources, and concerns about students' language proficiency *(Milad, 2023; Nishihara, 2022)*. Research in

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language education generally suggests that educators acknowledge the pedagogical advantages of integrating literary texts. Nevertheless, the practical application of such texts in classroom environments remains constrained by various contextual and pedagogical limitations *(Khatib et al., 2011; Suwastini & Rahmayanti, 2024)*. This implies that the formal inclusion of poetry in university curricula does not guarantee consistent classroom implementation.

This issue is particularly relevant to the Libyan higher education context, where poetry is included in required literature courses, yet little empirical evidence is available on how instructors perceive and apply this curricular requirement in classroom practice. One way to better understand this issue is through research on teachers' cognition and curriculum enactment. Studies on teacher cognition suggest that classroom practices are shaped not only by formal training and institutional expectations but also by teachers' beliefs, professional experiences, and judgements about what is feasible in specific teaching contexts *(Borg, 2003, 2015; Kubanyiova & Feryok, 2015).* Similarly, curriculum enactment research argues that educational policies and syllabus requirements are rarely implemented mechanically; instead, teachers interpret and adapt them within their own institutional environments *(Remillard, 2005; Spillane et al., 2002)*. From this perspective, the integration of poetry into language classrooms can be viewed as a situated pedagogical decision influenced by both structural conditions and instructors' professional choices.

The Libyan higher education context offers a particularly relevant setting for examining this issue in several ways. In many Libyan universities, literature courses are compulsory in English departments, and poetry is an important component of these courses. In principle, this institutional arrangement, together with the fact that many instructors are academically trained in literature, would appear to support the regular inclusion of poetry in classroom teaching in the country. However, the available local research suggests that the reality may be more complex. Studies on literature teaching in Libya point to practical challenges such as limited instructional resources, variation in students' English proficiency, and a continued reliance on traditional, explanatory teaching approaches (*Al Sabiri & Kaymakamoğlu, 2019; Milad, 2023).*

Although international scholarship has examined poetry in EFL classrooms from linguistic, affective, and pedagogical perspectives, empirical work focusing specifically on how poetry is enacted within Libyan university classrooms remains limited. Existing Libyan studies provide useful insights into literature teaching in general, but they rarely examine poetry as a distinct pedagogical practice or systematically investigate instructors' perceptions, reported practices, and perceived constraints in relation to literature courses. Consequently, there is still limited empirical evidence on how institutional expectations interact with classroom realities in Libyan EFL higher education.

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Accordingly, this study investigates Libyan university EFL instructors' perceptions and practices regarding the integration of poetry into required literature courses. Specifically, it seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- examine instructors' attitudes toward poetry as a pedagogical tool in EFL higher education;
- measure reported frequency and forms of poetry integration;
- identify perceived barriers that may limit classroom use; and
- explore conditions that may support more sustainable implementation.

1.1 Contributions

This study contributes to the literature in several ways. First, it provides empirical evidence from the under-researched Libyan higher education context in which poetry is formally included in the curriculum. Second, it examines whether real classroom practices match curricular expectations. Third, it identifies the contextual and pedagogical factors that appear to influence instructors' implementation decisions. Finally, it offers recommendations that may support the more effective integration of poetry in Libyan university EFL settings. This study adopted a descriptive survey design and did not aim to establish causal relationships with student learning outcomes.

2 Related Work

2.1 Poetry as a Linguistic Resource in EFL

The use of literature in language teaching has always been associated with authentic exposure to vocabulary, discourse structures, and culturally embedded meanings (*Hişmanoğlu, 2005; Khatib et al., 2011; Lazar, 1993*). Within this tradition, poetry is often viewed as particularly valuable because its linguistic density and artistic style encourage learners to pay closer attention to the language form. Several studies suggest that poetry can support lexical perception, vocabulary retention, and awareness of syntactic and semantic relationships when accompanied by guided classroom tasks (*Kellem, 2009; Khatib et al., 2011*). In addition, poetry has frequently been used to support pronunciation and oral fluency through activities such as recitation, reading aloud, and performance-based learning (*e.g., Lazar, 1993; McKay, 1982; Suwastini & Rahmayanti, 2024*). These practices can help learners develop sensitivity to the rhythm, tone, and sound patterns of English.

Simultaneously, the linguistic benefits of poetry should not be assumed to occur automatically. Their realization depends on several factors, including the correctness of text selection, learners' language ability, the nature of teacher mediation, and the extent to which poetry is connected to

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explicit language learning goals. Classroom-based research suggests that poetry tends to be more effective when embedded within interactive learning environments rather than being treated solely as an object of formal literary analysis (*Paran, 2008*). This indicates that pedagogy plays a vital role in determining whether poetry is a meaningful language-learning resource.

2.2 Affective and Cognitive Dimensions of Poetry Teaching

Beyond its linguistic value, poetry has often been associated with affective engagement and the development of higher order thinking. Because poems frequently inspire personal interpretation, ambiguity, and emotional responses, they can encourage discussion, reflection, and creative engagement with meaning. Studies on literature in EFL classrooms suggest that literary texts can support classroom dialogue, interpretive interaction, and learner engagement when taught through appropriate pedagogical strategies (*Taye, 2025*). Consequently, poetry may enhance not only language development but also learner contribution and critical thinking.

However, the motivational and cognitive value of poetry strongly depends on how it is taught. Research on poetry teaching with English second language learners shows that students may experience poetry as challenging, particularly because of figurative language, low motivation, and teacher-centered approaches (*Nishihara, 2022*). In contrast, approaches that include discussion, performance, creative response, and guided interpretation may promote more active learner engagement. This suggests that the educational value of poetry lies not only in the genre itself, but also in the pedagogical conditions under which it is introduced.

2.3 Institutional and Contextual Constraints in EFL Classrooms

A recurring theme in the literature on integration is the gap between pedagogical potential and classroom feasibility. In many educational settings, teachers operate under structural conditions that limit the regular use of literary texts. Frequently cited constraints include heavy curricula, limited instructional time, lack of teaching materials, and concerns that students may struggle with the complexity of literary language *(Milad, 2023*). Such challenges are particularly relevant in EFL contexts, where student proficiency levels may vary widely and instructional priorities are often shaped by examination requirements or syllabus coverage. Research on literature teaching supports this observation. Although literature is often acknowledged as valuable in principle, teachers may still use it sparingly if they believe it does not align well with student needs, time constraints, or institutional expectations (*Khatib et al., 2011; Suwastini & Rahmayanti, 2024*). Therefore, the issue is not simply whether poetry has educational value, but whether classroom conditions allow teachers to use it in a practical and sustainable way.

2.3 Teacher Perceptions and Curriculum Enactment

Teachers' beliefs and professional judgement play an important role in shaping how curricular content is translated into classroom practice. Research on teacher cognition shows that

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classroom decisions are influenced not only by formal training and institutional guidelines but also by teachers' beliefs about learning, their professional experience, and their understanding of what is feasible in particular contexts *(Borg, 2003, 2015; Kubanyiova & Feryok, 2015).* Consequently, instructors working within the same curriculum may implement its components differently.

Curriculum enactment research offers a related perspective by emphasizing that teachers do not simply deliver curriculum content to students. Instead, they interpret and adapt curricular expectations within their institutional environments *(Remillard, 2005; Spillane et al., 2002).* This perspective is especially relevant in literature teaching, where official course descriptions may appear clear, but classroom practice often reflects local constraints and teaching traditions.

These issues are particularly relevant in the Libyan context. Existing studies suggest that literature teaching in Libyan higher education is influenced by factors such as limited instructional resources, variation in students' English proficiency, and reliance on traditional explanatory teaching methods *(Al Sabiri & Kaymakamoğlu, 2019; Milad, 2023).* However, empirical evidence specifically examining how instructors perceive and implement poetry in required university literature courses remains limited. This study addresses this gap by examining instructors' perceptions, reported classroom practices, and perceived constraints related to poetry integration in Libyan university EFL settings. By combining insights from literature pedagogy, teacher cognition, and curriculum enactment research, this study seeks to better understand why the formal inclusion of poetry in the curriculum does not always translate into consistent classroom practice.

2.5 Research Gap and Research Questions

Although previous research has demonstrated that poetry can contribute to language development, learner engagement, and interpretive thinking, much of this literature has focused either on the general value of literature in language education or on specific classroom interventions aimed at improving student outcomes. Comparatively less attention has been given to how poetry is implemented within institutionally required university curricula, particularly in under-researched higher education contexts such as Libya. This issue is important for two reasons. First, the Libyan case presents a distinctive institutional structure: poetry is formally included in required literature courses, and many instructors responsible for teaching these courses have literature-related academic training. Under such conditions, one might expect poetry to be consistently integrated into classroom teaching. However, research on teacher cognition and curriculum enactment suggests that formal curricular requirements do not guarantee pedagogical uptake. In practice, classroom implementation may still be shaped by instructors' beliefs, available resources, students' readiness, and local teaching cultures. To date, relatively little empirical research has examined the relationship between curricular requirements and actual classroom practices regarding poetry teaching in Libyan university

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classrooms. In addition, survey-based evidence documenting how instructors perceive poetry as a pedagogical tool, how frequently they report using it, and what benefits and challenges they associate with its use is limited. Consequently, understanding how poetry functions within the everyday reality of Libyan EFL higher education remains incomplete. To address this gap, this study investigates the following research questions:

- RQ1: What are Libyan university instructors' perceptions of poetry as a pedagogical tool in EFL higher education?
- RQ2: To what extent do instructors report integrating poetry into literature courses?
- RQ3: What challenges do instructors encounter when teaching poetry in Libyan university contexts?
- RQ4: What benefits do instructors perceive from integrating poetry into language instruction?

3 Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a descriptive survey design to investigate university instructors' perceptions and reported practices regarding the integration of poetry into required literature courses in Libyan English departments. A survey approach was selected because it enables the collection of structured information from a relatively large number of participants and allows for the identification of patterns in attitudes, classroom practices, and perceived challenges. The purpose of this study was descriptive rather than experimental. Accordingly, this study does not attempt to establish causal relationships between variables. Instead, it aims to provide an empirical overview of how poetry is perceived and implemented in Libyan higher education.

3.2 Participants and Sampling

The study involved 70 instructors teaching in the English departments of several Libyan universities. The participants represented a range of demographic and professional backgrounds, including male and female instructors with varying levels of teaching experience. Participants were recruited using a convenience sampling method. Invitations to participate in the survey were distributed electronically through academic networks and professional contacts in English departments. Participation was voluntary, and the instructors who received the invitation could choose whether or not to complete the questionnaire. This approach was considered appropriate given the exploratory nature of the study and practical accessibility of the participants.

3.3 Instrument

Data collection relied on a structured, researcher-designed questionnaire tailored to investigate instructors' perceptions, classroom practices, and contextual factors influencing poetry

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integration. The questionnaire items were developed based on the study objectives and informed by recurring themes in the literature on poetry integration and literature teaching in EFL contexts, including poetry's perceived linguistic value, affective and motivational benefits, classroom practices, teaching challenges, and the need for pedagogical support *(Suwastini & Rahmayanti, 2024; Kellem, 2009; Milad, 2023; Nishihara, 2022; Khatib et al., 2011).*

- Demographic information (gender, age, teaching experience, and area of expertise).
- Perception items measured on Likert-type scales examined attitudes toward poetry, including its effectiveness, creativity, cultural relevance, motivational value, and suitability across proficiency levels.
- Practice-related items assessing whether instructors integrate poetry in their courses and how frequently it is used.
- Multiple-response items investigating instructional activities, perceived challenges, and observed benefits associated with poetry teaching.

Professional development items examining instructors' perceived need for additional training and teaching resources. The questionnaire included both closed-ended and multiple-selection items in order to capture quantitative information about instructors' teaching practices and perceptions.

3.4 Instrument Validity

To strengthen content validity, the questionnaire items were developed in line with the study's research questions and informed by recurring themes identified in the literature on poetry integration and literature teaching in EFL contexts. The instrument was studied by two experts in English language teaching and literature pedagogy to assess the clarity, relevance, and appropriateness of its items. Based on their feedback, minor wording adjustments were made prior to data collection. Since the questionnaire was researcher-developed and included different types of items, including Likert-scale, closed-ended, and multiple-response questions, reliability was addressed through careful item construction, expert review, and consistency between the questionnaire sections and study objectives.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

The questionnaire was distributed electronically to instructors at several public Libyan universities using an online survey platform. Before completing the questionnaire, the participants were informed about the purpose of the study and assured that their responses would remain anonymous. Participation was voluntary. The survey remained open for three weeks, and reminder messages were sent during this period to encourage the participation.

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3.6 Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Frequencies and percentages were calculated to summarize the instructors' perceptions, reported classroom practices, and the challenges and benefits they identified. Responses to multiple selection items were analyzed by calculating the frequency with which each option was selected. Because this study is exploratory in nature, the analysis focuses on identifying general patterns and trends rather than testing inferential hypotheses.

4 Results

This section presents the descriptive findings of the survey conducted with 70 instructors from English departments in several Libyan universities. The analysis focused on four main aspects: instructors' background characteristics, their perceptions of poetry as a teaching tool, the extent to which poetry is integrated into classroom practice, and the challenges and benefits associated with its use in teaching.

4.1 Participant Characteristics

The sample consisted of 70 instructors. Among them, 39 participants (55.7%) were female and 31 participants (44.3%) were male. Participants also represented different academic specializations within English studies. Twenty-nine instructors (41.4%) identified their primary area as literature, 21 instructors (30.0%) as language studies, and 20 instructors (28.6%) reported expertise in both literature and language.

4.2 Perceptions of Poetry as a Teaching Tool

The participants were asked to evaluate the effectiveness of poetry as a pedagogical resource in EFL instruction. As shown in Figure 1, this distribution suggests that the instructors held mixed views regarding the usefulness of poetry in language teaching. Fourteen instructors (20.0%) considered poetry to be highly effective, while another 14 (20.0%) viewed it as moderately effective. Eleven participants (15.7%) expressed neutral opinions. In contrast, 18 instructors (25.7%) reported that poetry was somewhat ineffective as a teaching tool, and 13 instructors (18.6%) described it as ineffective. Overall, the distribution of responses indicates diverse perspectives among instructors regarding the pedagogical value of poetry.

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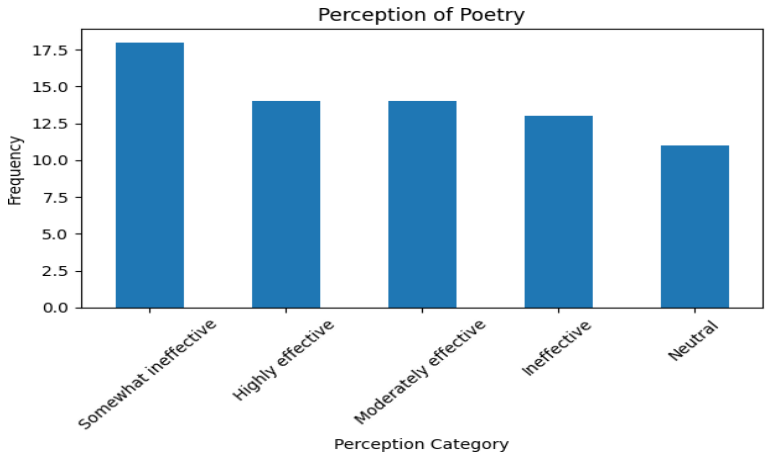

Figure 1: Instructors' perceptions of poetry as a pedagogical tool (N = 70).

4.3 Integration of Poetry in Classroom Practice

The participants were also asked whether they incorporated poetry into their teaching. As shown in Figure 2, 37 instructors (52.9%) reported that they integrate poetry into their classroom practices, whereas 33 instructors (47.1%) indicated that they do not use poetry in their courses.

This distribution suggests that although poetry is included in the curriculum of literature courses, its classroom implementation is not uniform across instructors.

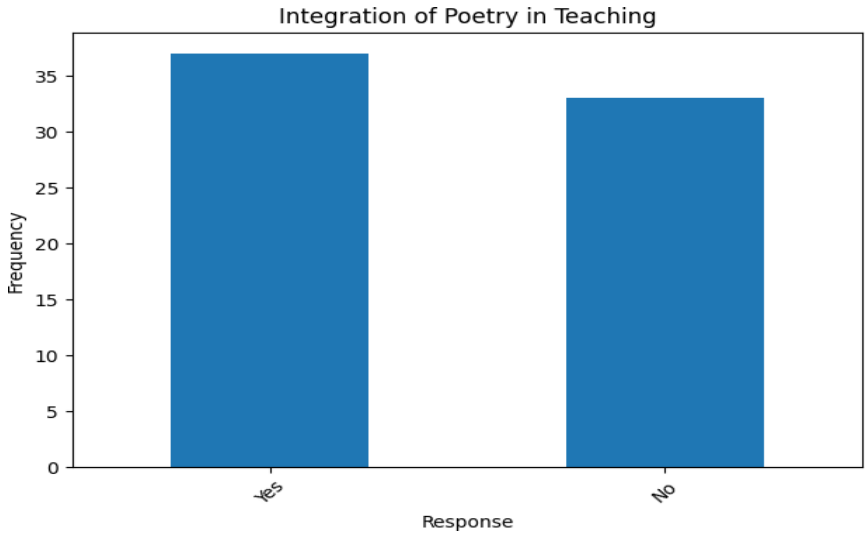

Figure 2: Reported integration of poetry in required literature courses.

4.4 Frequency of Poetry Integration

Instructors who reported using poetry were asked how frequently they incorporated it into their teaching. As presented in Figure 3, 26 instructors (37.1%) stated that they regularly

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integrated poetry into their lessons. Twenty-three instructors (32.9%) reported occasional use, while 21 (30.0%) indicated that they rarely used poetry in their classes. These responses show that even among instructors who acknowledge using poetry, the level of integration varies considerably across different contexts.

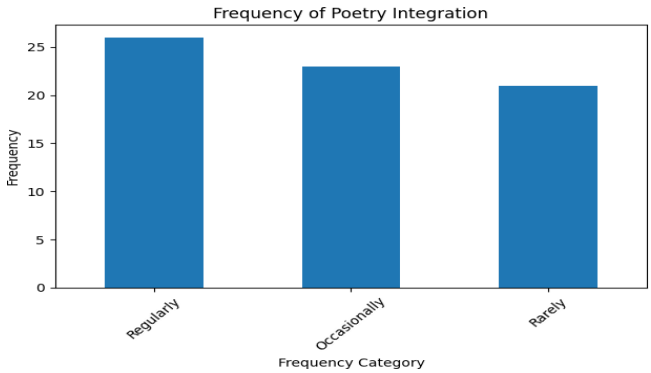

Figure 3: Frequency of poetry integration among instructors.

4.5 Challenges in Teaching Poetry

Participants were asked to identify the main challenges associated with the integration of poetry into their teaching. The responses are presented in Table 1. The most frequently reported challenge was a lack of instructional resources, selected by 45 instructors (64.3%). A similar number of participants (n = 45, 64.3%) indicated that poetry is sometimes perceived as irrelevant in language-focused curricula. In addition, 42 instructors (60.0%) reported that they may feel underprepared to teach poetry effectively. Other commonly mentioned challenges included difficulties students may encounter when interpreting poetic language (40 instructors, 57.1%) and limited instructional time within the course schedule (40 instructors, 57.1%).

Table 1: Reported challenges in integrating poetry (N = 70)

No	Challenge	N	Percentage
1	Lack of resources	45	64.3%
2	Perceived irrelevance	45	64.3%
3	Underprepared instructors	42	60.0%
4	Difficult for students to understand	40	57.1%
5	Time constraints	40	57.1%

4.6 Perceived Benefits of Poetry Integration

Despite the challenges identified above, the instructors also reported several pedagogical benefits associated with poetry integration. As presented in Table 2, emotional engagement was

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the most frequently cited benefit, selected by 53 instructors (75.7%). Other commonly reported benefits included vocabulary development (44 instructors, 62.9%), increased cultural awareness (41 instructors, 58.6%), and the promotion of critical thinking (40 instructors, 57.1%). These responses indicate that many instructors recognize the potential of poetry to contribute not only to language development but also to broader cognitive and cultural learning outcomes.

Table 2: Perceived benefits of poetry integration (N = 70)

Benefit		**N**	**Percentage**
1	Emotional engagement	53	75.7%
2	Enhances vocabulary	44	62.9%
3	Cultural awareness	41	58.6%
4	Develops critical thinking	40	57.1%

5 Discussion

This study examined Libyan university instructors' perceptions and practices regarding the integration of poetry into required literature courses. Overall, the findings point to a complex instructional situation characterized by mixed perceptions, uneven classroom implementation, and the simultaneous recognition of both benefits and challenges.

First, the instructors' perceptions of poetry were notably divided. While some participants viewed poetry as highly or moderately effective, a comparable proportion regarded it as somewhat or completely ineffective. Rather than indicating a clear consensus, this distribution suggests some degree of ambivalence. This finding is consistent with previous literature on EFL literature integration, which highlights the pedagogical value of literary texts and the practical challenges that may limit their classroom use *(Suwastini & Rahmayanti, 2024; Milad, 2023; Khatib et al., 2011)*. The results suggest that poetry's pedagogical legitimacy remains contested, even within literature-oriented academic environments.

Second, despite poetry's formal inclusion in Libyan English department curricula, nearly half of the instructors reported that they did not integrate poetry into their teaching practices. Among those who use it, the reported frequency varies considerably. This pattern highlights a clear curriculum–practice mismatch, as institutional requirements do not necessarily translate into consistent classroom implementation. Research on teacher cognition and curriculum enactment has long suggested that curricular expectations are interpreted through teachers' professional beliefs and the practical realities of their teaching environments *(Borg, 2015)*. The present findings appear to reflect a similar dynamic in the context of Libyan higher education.

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Third, the challenges reported by instructors provide further insights into the factors shaping classroom practices. Lack of resources and perceived irrelevance were the most frequently mentioned barriers, followed by feelings of insufficient pedagogical preparation, student comprehension difficulties, and limited instructional time. These concerns mirror findings from other under-resourced EFL settings, where literature integration is constrained by institutional and practical conditions *(Milad, 2023).* Interestingly, the prominence of "underprepared instructors" is particularly noteworthy given that many participants described themselves as literature specialists. This suggests that academic expertise in literature does not necessarily translate into pedagogical confidence in teaching poetry in language-focused classrooms.

At the same time, instructors identified several benefits associated with poetry integration. Emotional engagement emerged as the most frequently reported advantage, followed by vocabulary development, cultural awareness, and promotion of critical thinking. These findings correspond with previous research highlighting the affective and cognitive potential of poetry in language-learning environments *(Khatib et al., 2011).* The coexistence of strongly perceived benefits and substantial reported challenges highlights the important tension between pedagogical value and practical feasibility.

Taken together, the findings suggest that poetry integration in Libyan higher education is shaped less by curricular absence or lack of disciplinary expertise than by contextual and structural conditions. Even in systems where poetry is formally included in the curriculum and instructors are academically trained in literature, classroom practices are influenced by factors such as resource availability, time constraints, and perceptions of student readiness. These conditions contribute to a curriculum–practice gap that requires greater institutional attention.

When interpreted in relation to the research questions, the results indicate that positive perceptions of poetry's pedagogical benefits (RQ4) do not automatically lead to consistent classroom integration (RQ2). Instead, structural and contextual constraints (RQ3) appear to influence implementation decisions, even when instructors acknowledge poetry's educational value (RQ1). This pattern supports theoretical perspectives suggesting that curriculum enactment is mediated rather than mechanically determined. In the Libyan context, poetry integration appears to depend largely on perceived classroom practicality rather than solely on institutional mandates or disciplinary training. The study therefore contributes to understanding literature integration not simply as a matter of curricular inclusion, but as a situated pedagogical process shaped by the contextual realities. Strengthening poetry integration in Libyan universities may require targeted pedagogical training, access to adaptable teaching materials, and closer alignment between curricular expectations and classroom conditions.

While the findings offer useful insights into poetry integration in Libyan higher education, several limitations should be acknowledged. The study relied on self-reported survey data and did not include classroom observations. Furthermore, the use of convenience sampling may

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constrain the generalizability of the results beyond the instructors who participated in the study. The descriptive design also limits the possibility of causal interpretations. Future research could complement survey data with qualitative classroom studies and broader sampling strategies to provide a more detailed understanding of poetry-teaching practices.

6 Conclusion

This study examined the integration of poetry into required literature courses in Libyan university English departments. The findings indicate that although poetry is formally included in the curriculum and many instructors have academic training in literature, classroom implementation remains uneven. Instructors have varied perceptions of poetry, and their reported integration practices lack consistency. Additionally, several structural and pedagogical challenges seem to influence their instructional decisions. Simultaneously, instructors recognize the clear linguistic, cognitive, and affective benefits associated with poetry teaching. The coexistence of perceived value and reported constraints reflects a broader curriculum–practice tension within Libyan higher education. Addressing this tension may require institutional support, context-sensitive pedagogical training, and greater access to adaptable instructional materials. By providing empirical evidence from the under-researched Libyan higher education context, this study extends the current research on literature integration beyond theoretical advocacy toward a closer examination of curriculum enactment realities. The findings suggest that institutional mandates and disciplinary expertise alone are insufficient to ensure consistent pedagogical practice. Therefore, sustainable poetry integration in Libyan EFL higher education may depend on strengthening the alignment between curricular expectations and the practical conditions of classroom teaching.

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