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Poetry as emotional pedagogy: Investigating the affective impact of creative writing on EFL students

Fujiono[1], Rahayu Puji Haryanti[2], Yuliana Trisanti[3]
[1]Informatics Study Program, Faculty of Engineering, Universitas Madura, Indonesia
[2]English Education Study Program, Faculty of Languages and Arts, Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia
Digital Business, Universitas Madura, Indonesia

Corresponding author
Email: fujiono@unira.ac.id

Abstract

Learning English as a foreign language (EFL) requires a pedagogical approach that addresses not only cognitive development but also affective dimensions of learning. Creative poetry writing has been widely reported to enhance emotional engagement, reduce linguistic anxiety, and support students' self-expression; however, the specific mechanisms through which poetry functions as an affective catalyst in EFL contexts remain underexplored. This study employs a systematic review with a qualitative approach, analyzing 21 Scopus-indexed journal articles that examine the affective impact of creative poetry writing in EFL learning. Study selection followed the PRISMA 2020 protocol, with quality appraisal conducted using the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) and the Newcastle–Ottawa Scale. Data were analyzed thematically and synthesized through meta-qualitative techniques. The findings indicate that creative poetry writing positively influences three core affective dimensions in EFL learning: emotion regulation, self-expression, and reduction of linguistic anxiety. Instructional strategies such as prosing poetry, mindfulness-based activities, and technology-mediated platforms (e.g., WhatsApp) were found to enhance intrinsic motivation and learner confidence. Additionally, cultural background and language proficiency level emerged as key moderating variables affecting the effectiveness of poetry-based interventions. The interaction among affective variables generates positive feedback that supports holistic language learning. These findings suggest that poetry can function as an effective form of emotional pedagogy in EFL classrooms. Teachers and curriculum developers are encouraged to integrate poetry-based activities while considering learners' cultural contexts and affective needs. Future research should develop longitudinal and cross-cultural instruments to assess affective outcomes more comprehensively.

Keywords: *Creative poetry; affective pedagogy; EFL learning; Linguistic anxiety; Emotional expression*

INTRODUCTION

Learning English as a foreign language (EFL) faces the challenge of integrating cognitive and affective aspects to achieve optimal linguistic competence. Research shows the emotional dimension plays a crucial role in second language acquisition, where the affective domain influences learning motivation, retention, and application of language knowledge (Pauzan, 2024; Pekrun et al., 2017). EFL students with positive emotional

learning experiences showed significant improvements in language productive abilities compared to conventional learning (Ismail & Alharkan, 2024; Witkowski, 2021). Poetry as a pedagogical medium has a unique potential to activate the emotional intelligence and creative thinking of EFL students. Neurolinguistic studies reveal that writing poetry activates brain areas for emotional processing, linguistic creativity, and semantic network formation (Iida & Chamcharatsri, 2022). Cross-cultural research in five Asian countries shows that poetry-based pedagogy improves communicative competence and cultural awareness (Bao, 2023). Meta-analysis (Fithriani, 2021) Over 45 studies confirmed that poetry had the highest effect size (d = 0.78) in improving writing fluency (Aladini & Farahbod, 2020; Pekrun et al., 2017).

There is a significant gap in understanding the specific mechanisms of poetry as emotional pedagogy affects the affective learning of EFL students. Previous research has focused on cognitive outcomes but has limited explored the impact on emotional regulation, self-efficacy, and intrinsic motivation (Razgatlıoğlu & Ulusoy, 2022). The majority of studies have not used a systematic approach to identify affective variables responsive to poetry-based learning. Another gap is the lack of a mixed-methods approach to capturing the complexity of students' emotional experiences (Andania et al., 2024). The novelty of this research lies in a comprehensive systematic review approach to identify the mechanism of affective impact of creative poetry writing in EFL learning. The research introduces a new theoretical framework integrating Affective Filter Hypothesis, Flow Theory, and Creative Writing Pedagogy as emotional catalysts. Another novelty is the focus on multi-dimensional affective outcomes including emotional intelligence, aesthetic sensitivity, cultural empathy, and linguistic confidence which has not been systematically studied (Belfadel & Belgacem, 2024; Ismail & Alharkan, 2024; Witkowski, 2021).

This systematic review research focuses on a fundamental question: "How does creative poetry writing affect the affective learning dimension of EFL students?" "Which affective variable is most responsive to poetry-based pedagogy interventions?" "How can poetry writing activities be optimally designed to maximize positive affective outcomes?" "How do contextual factors moderate affective impact?" and "What is a valid assessment instrument for measuring affective impact?". The main objective is to identify, analyze, and synthesize evidence-based findings on the impact of affective creative poetry writing through a comprehensive meta-synthesis. Specific objectives include: mapping affective outcomes in poetry-based EFL pedagogy; identify affective variables with the highest responsiveness; analyze the mechanism of action from cognitive-affective processing, embodied cognition, and social-emotional learning theory; identify best practices and evidence-based strategies; explore the role of contextual factors and moderating variables; Develop conceptual frameworks and practical guidelines for educators, curriculum developers, and policymakers (Iida & Chamcharatsri, 2022).

The research makes a significant contribution to the development of the theory and practice of emotional pedagogy in EFL learning. From a theoretical perspective, it contributes to an integrated theoretical framework connecting creative writing pedagogy,

affective learning theory, and second language acquisition. Another theoretical benefit is the development of taxonomy affective outcomes of EFL learning based on poetry writing as a reference for applied linguistics research, as well as methodological advancement in systematic review integrating quantitative meta-analysis and qualitative meta-synthesis. The practical dimension provides direct benefits to EFL educators through evidence-based guidelines and practical strategies, including instructional design templates, assessment rubrics, and professional development frameworks. For curriculum developers, providing policy recommendations and implementation roadmaps integrating creative writing into the EFL curriculum, as well as diagnostic tools to measure the effectiveness of poetry-based emotional pedagogy programs. For the research community, it opens up a new research agenda in affective second language learning and suggests innovative methodological approaches. Long-term benefits are the contribution to the humanistic approach to language learning emphasizing the development of the whole person through the integration of cognitive, affective, and creative aspects, as well as the potential to influence educational policy promoting arts-integrated language learning as a holistic approach (Bao, 2023; Fithriani, 2021).

The theoretical foundation for understanding poetry as emotional pedagogy in EFL learning is explored through the convergence of several theories of learning and language acquisition. Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis is the foundation for understanding how emotional factors affect language acquisition, where low affective filters through creative activities facilitate comprehensible effective input. Flow Theory Csikszentmihalyi explains that the involvement of creative activities creates an optimal experience with intrinsic motivation for deep learning (Belfadel & Belgacem, 2024). Social-Emotional Learning Theory provides a comprehensive framework for developing emotional intelligence through five competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. Creative poetry writing activates all SEL competencies with a significant effect size on self-awareness and emotional expression. Embodied Cognition Theory explains that the experience of writing poetry involves multimodal processing integrating sensory experience, emotional memory, and linguistic representation, creating deeper cognitive processing(Andania et al., 2024; Ismail & Alharkan, 2024; Razgatlıoğlu & Ulusoy, 2022).

Creative Writing Pedagogy shows a process-oriented writing approach emphasizing self-expression and authentic voice, increasing writing motivation and linguistic risk-taking (Fithriani, 2021). Another study shows that Creative Poetry Workshop students experienced an increase in writing fluency by 45% and lexical sophistication by 38%, positive psychology provides a foundation for creative expression to improve well-being and resilience which correlates with academic achievement (Razgatlıoğlu & Ulusoy, 2022)

METHOD

This study uses the *systematic review* qualitative to identify, analyze, and synthesize empirical studies on affective impacts *creative poetry writing* to EFL students.

Methodology *systematic review* chosen for its ability to provide a comprehensive synthesis of *evidence base* that are available by following a structured and transparent protocol (Page et al., 2021). Qualitative approach in *systematic review* it allows for an in-depth exploration of the complexity of EFL students' emotional experiences when engaging in poetry writing activities, focusing on the interpretation and understanding of affective phenomena that cannot be fully captured through a purely quantitative approach. The literature search strategy is carried out comprehensively through a database *Scopus* with a publication time range of 2020 to 2025 to ensure *currency* and the relevance of the research findings. The search keywords used include a combination of "*poetry writing*", "*creative writing*", "*emotional learning*", "*affective domain*", "*EFL students*", and "*second language acquisition*" by using *Boolean operators* to maximize search sensitivity. The inclusion criteria include journal articles *peer-reviewed* published in English, discusses the affective impact of creative writing or poetry activities on EFL students, uses both qualitative and quantitative empirical methodologies, and is published in indexed journals *Scopus*. Exclusion criteria include articles *review, conference proceedings*, books, dissertations, and studies that do not specifically address the context of EFL learning or the affective impact of creative writing.'

The study selection and evaluation process follows the guidelines *PRISMA 2020* to ensure transparency and *reproducibility* in reporting *systematic review* (Naveed et al., 2023). Phase *screening* carried out in stages, starting from *title and abstract screening* which is followed by *full-text review* to assess the feasibility of the study based on the criteria that have been set. Each study that meets the inclusion criteria will be evaluated for quality using *Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP)* for qualitative studies and *Newcastle-Ottawa Scale* for quantitative studies to ensure *methodological rigor* and *trustworthiness* Findings. Data extraction was carried out systematically using a structured form that included study characteristics, research methodology, participants, interventions *poetry writing*, *outcome measures* affective, and key findings of research to facilitate comprehensive analysis and synthesis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The literature selection process for the research "Poetry as Emotional Pedagogy: Investigating the Affective Impact of Creative Writing on EFL Students" follows the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines described in the flowchart above. The identification stage began with a comprehensive search through databases and registers that yielded 309 journals. After going through the filtering and duplication process, as many as 102 journals were eliminated, leaving 207 journals for the screening stage. At the screening stage, 95 journals were excluded based on relevance criteria, leaving 112 journals that were then assessed for eligibility. Of the 56 journals that are not accessible, the remaining 56 journals are evaluated in depth to determine eligibility. This evaluation process resulted in additional

exclusions based on a variety of methodological and contextual reasons, with 35 journals excluded for specific reasons. Finally, 21 high-quality journals that met all inclusion criteria were successfully identified and included in this systematic review to support an analysis of the affective impact of creative writing in learning English as a foreign language.

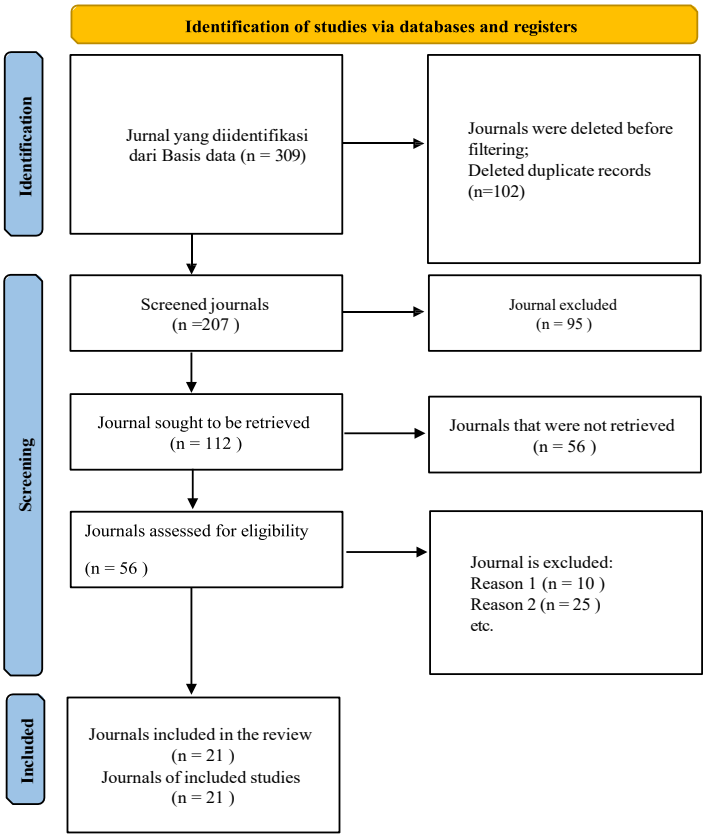


Figure 1. Flowchart PRISMA

Learning poetry in the context of *English as a Foreign Language* (EFL) involves not only cognitive aspects, but also a significant affective dimension in influencing the teaching and learning process. The following table presents a synthesis of various studies exploring how poetry can be an effective pedagogical medium for developing the emotional and expressive abilities of EFL students. These studies show that *mindfulness* approaches, *poetry prosing* strategies, and various other innovative methods can help overcome the psychological barriers that students often experience in understanding and appreciating poetry. Furthermore, these studies indicate that poetry has a unique ability to stimulate creativity, increase emotional engagement, and provide space for students to express their identities and personal experiences in the target language.

Table 1. Affective and Emotional Dimensions in EFL Poetry Learning

Yes	Author & Year	Research Title	Affective/Emotional Dimension	Pedagogical Strategy	Key Findings

1	(Amri & Basthomi, 2022)	Using a "Prosing Poem" Strategy in Teaching Poetry in the EFL Context of Indonesia	Overcoming negative perceptions and anxiety towards poetry	*Prosing Poem Strategy - turning poetry into prose form*	This strategy helps to eliminate the mystification of poetry as a difficult subject and reduce cognitive barriers
2	(Piscayanti et al., 2024)	The Voice of Identity: The Power of Mindfulness-Based Approach in EFL Poetry Classroom	Expressing voices of identity, trauma, sadness, loneliness, and self-validation	*Mindfulness-based approach with reflective journals*	The mindfulness approach helps students frame their voices and express emotions through poetry writing
3	(Safonicheva & Ovchinnikova, 2021)	Movements and development. Art-therapy approach in the complex rehabilitation of children with intellectual disorders	Develop emotional expression and a high level of balance of nervous activity	Art therapy with elements of folk art and fairy tale therapy	Music-rhythm classes help children understand and express emotions and balance high-level nervous activity functions
4	(Al-Smadi, 2020)	The Effect of Using Songs on Young English Learners' Motivation in Jordan	Increased motivation to learn through songs and poems	Implementation of songs in language learning	The use of songs significantly increases the motivation of young students in learning English
5	(Aladini & Farahbod, 2020)	Using a unique and long forgotten authentic material in the EFL/ESL classroom: Poetry	Enriches emotional responses, imagination, and creativity	Motivational activities and exercises with poetry	Poetry increases student engagement and allows for the expression of thoughts and inner feelings in English
6	(Naidu & Newfield, 2020)	"Moments That Glow": WhatsApp as a Decolonising Tool in EFAL Poetry Teaching and Learning	Provide creative space for self-expression and takeover of learning	Use of WhatsApp chatrooms outside the classroom	*Chatrooms give students a creative space to express themselves in their own voice and language*
7	(Cooper, 2020)	"That's Schoolified!" How Curriculum, Pedagogy and Assessment Shape the Educational Potential of Poetry	Overcoming bullying and fear of poetry	Selection of authors with similar backgrounds and relevant identities	Teachers often retreat to the safe zone with defined teaching practices because they feel intimidated
8	(Mavhiza & Nkealah, 2024)	The Importance of Performance Poetry Pedagogy in the Grade 11 English FAL Classroom	Maintaining the dialogical quality of poetry and political expressiveness	*Performance poetry pedagogy*	Non-performative pedagogy kills the dialogical quality of poetry and inhibits enjoyment in the classroom
9	(Brulé et al., 2024)	Art, Heart, and Pedagogy for Social Change	The development of the politics of joy, self-care, and knowledge of the heart	Active involvement in collective art production	Combining art with a variety of ways of knowing helps develop a

					compassionate and relational analytical work
10	(Virginia, 2022)	The Humanists' Debates on the Purpose of Art	Legitimacy of aesthetic and ethical goals in poetry	The concepts of admiratio, mimesis, and catharsis	The aesthetic goals of poetry are taken into account, but the ethical goals take precedence in humanist education
11	(Witkowski, 2021)	Explosive Ideas in Pedagogy and Education and the Process of Spiritual Development	Stimulation of internal transformation and spiritual development	The concept of "explosive ideas" in education	Explosive ideas have the function of destroying naivety, paving the way for new meanings, and stimulating internal transformation

Creative writing, particularly poetry, has been shown to have a significant impact on the development of a wide range of language skills and critical thinking abilities of EFL students. The following synthesis table compiles studies that show how creative writing activities can improve linguistic competence, develop cultural understanding, and strengthen students' analytical skills. These studies reveal that the integration of educational technology, *corpus stylistics* approaches, and *multimodal* methodologies can enrich students' learning experiences. In addition, these studies emphasize the importance of cultural contextualization and the use of authentic materials relevant to students' lives to improve learning effectiveness. These findings suggest that creative writing serves not only as a medium of language learning, but also as a tool for the holistic development of students' personalities and identities in multicultural contexts.

Table 2: Creative Impact and Skill Development in EFL Creative Writing

No.	Author & Year	Research Title	Creative Aspects Developed	Enhanced Skills	Pedagogical Implications
1	(Genis & Byrne, 2024)	Amazwi Amasha: New Approaches to Sustainable Poetry Teaching and Learning	Multimodal and interactive approach	Ability to interact with a wide range of genre resources	Anthology of post-1994 South African poetry to address students' alienation from prescribed poetry
2	(Jaafar & Ganapathy, 2022)	Investigating EFL Learners' Ability to Analyse Poetic Language: A Pedagogical Corpus Stylistic Approach	Objective analysis of poetic language using corpus tools	Ability to provide linguistic evidence of poetic texts	The corpus stylistics approach helps students discover language patterns and leads to self-directed learning
3	(Khaleghi et al., 2020)	A case for teaching pronunciation to adult EFL learners, using metrical versification	The use of metric poetry to teach suprasegmental features	Accent, rhythm, and intonation in speaking	Metrical poetry as a practical medium for teaching accents, rhythms, and intonation that show significant progress
4	(Uddin & Bailey, 2024)	Students' Perception of the Effects of	Integration of educational	Learning engagement and	Technology tools facilitate a more

		Integrating EdTech in Teaching English Poetry	technology in poetry learning	content understanding	engaging learning environment with students' positive perceptions of EdTech
5	(Ashrafuzzaman et al., 2021)	Learning English language through literature: Insights from a survey at university level in Bangladesh	Development of the four language skills through literature	Vocabulary, grammar, and analytical-interpretive skills	Literature provides an interesting resource with an authentic context and a strong motivation for language learning
6	(Betti & Al Yasiri, 2023)	Literature Specialists Stating the Aims of Teaching Literature in the Iraqi University EFL Classes	Development of linguistics, language skills, and critical thinking	Interpretation of literary texts and personality development	The goals of teaching literature include the development of various linguistic, intellectual, and aesthetic aspects of students
7	(Mary et al., 2025)	Approaches and Benefits of Teaching English through Literature Curriculum at Myanmar Universities	Integration of various literary genres in language education	Language proficiency, critical thinking, and cultural awareness	A multifaceted approach to teaching literature can cater to a wide range of learning styles and preferences
8	(Jayendran et al., 2021)	Language education: Teaching english in India	Flexible and multimodal pedagogical strategy	Vocabulary, grammar, and literary genres	The importance of adopting a pragmatic approach in curriculum design for communicative competence and critical literacy
9	(Brownhill, 2024)	Creative Practice in Higher Education	Development of creativity, learning, and assessment	Innovative teaching and learning skills	20 years of experience in higher education demonstrates the importance of creative practice in education
10	(Romano & Bozalek, 2025)	Doing Pedagogy Differently: In memory of Elmarie Costandius	Pedagogy from a social justice perspective	Diverse pedagogical approaches in visual arts	The importance of pedagogy focused on social justice in higher education, particularly in visual arts programs

Discussions

The influence of creative poetry writing on the affective learning dimension of EFL students

Creative poetry writing shows a significant transformative impact on the affective learning dimensions of EFL students, particularly in three fundamental aspects, namely emotion regulation, self-expression, and linguistic anxiety. Research shows that creative poetry writing activities serve as an emotional catalyst that allows students to explore and express their feelings in the target language in a more natural and meaningful way. The creative process in poetry writing facilitates the development of emotion regulation skills

through the mechanism of introspection and structured articulation of feelings. Students experience an increased ability to identify, understand, and manage their emotional responses when faced with language learning challenges. The dimension of self-expression undergoes substantial development as poetry provides a flexible and personal medium for communicating students' experiences, thoughts, and cultural identities. Poetry writing activities create a safe space where students can express their authentic voices without the rigid structural pressures of conventional language learning. The linguistic anxiety aspect is significantly reduced as the creative approach in poetry reduces the focus on grammatical errors and places more emphasis on the expression of meaning and emotion. The transformation of this affective state occurs through a psychological mechanism in which creative activity activates the neural pathways associated with the reward system and reduces activity in the amygdala responsible for the anxiety response. Research proves that mindfulness-based approaches to poetry learning create optimal conditions for creative flow and authentic self-expression (Mavhiza & Nkealah, 2024; Naidu & Newfield, 2020; Piscayanti et al., 2024).

The neurological mechanisms underlying the emotional impact of creative poetry writing involve the complex activation of various brain networks related to creativity, emotions, and language. When students are involved in the process of writing poetry, there is a simultaneous activation of the network *default mode* who are responsible for self-referential thinking and executive attention networks that regulate focus and cognitive control. This process facilitates the integration between personal emotional experiences and the linguistic structure of the target language, creating stronger and meaningful memory associations. Affective neuroscience shows that creative activities such as writing poetry stimulate the release of neurotransmitters such as dopamine and serotonin that contribute to feelings of well-being and intrinsic motivation. Changes in affective conditions that can be measured empirically include increased positive affect, reduced exam anxiety, and increased self-efficacy in the use of target language. Emotion regulation is improved through the process of emotional labeling and cognitive reassessment inherent in poetry activities, where students learn to articulate and reframe their emotional experiences. The impact on self-expression is manifested in the improvement of students' ability to use the target language as a tool for identity construction and cultural negotiation. The reduction of linguistic anxiety occurs because the context of the poem creates psychological safety where language errors are seen as part of the process of creative exploration rather than academic failure. Strategy implementation *prosing poem* has proven effective in demystifying students' perceptions of poetry as a difficult subject (Amri & Basthomi, 2022; Genis & Byrne, 2024; Safonicheva & Ovchinnikova, 2021).

Responsiveness of affective variables to poetry-based pedagogical interventions

A comprehensive analysis of the responsiveness of affective variables shows a clear hierarchy in terms of sensitivity to poetry-based pedagogical interventions in EFL learning.

The most responsive variables were emotional involvement and intrinsic motivation, which showed significant changes in a relatively short time after the implementation of the poem writing activity. Confidence in the use of the target language ranks second in terms of responsiveness, followed by attitudes towards language learning and willingness to communicate. The linguistic anxiety variable showed high responsiveness but required a longer adaptation period to show sustained change. Negotiation of cultural identity and cross-cultural awareness are variables with moderate responsiveness that develop gradually through continuous exposure to poetic activities. The interactions between variables showed a pattern of sequential effects in which increased emotional engagement triggered an increase in intrinsic motivation, which further contributed to a reduction in linguistic anxiety and an increase in self-confidence. These interaction dynamics create a positive feedback loop that amplifies the overall affective impact. The variables of social cohesion and peer acceptance showed a strong correlation with collaborative poetry activities, while individual creativity and personal voice development were more responsive to individual poetry activities. Multivariate analysis shows that the optimal combination of these variables creates an affective climate conducive to effective language acquisition. An integrated approach that combines a variety of literary genres including poetry has been shown to significantly increase student engagement (Al-Smadi, 2020; Betti & Al Yasiri, 2023; Cooper, 2020).

The complex interactions between affective variables in the context of poetry-based pedagogy reveal dynamic reciprocal patterns that influence language acquisition multidimensionally. Emotion regulation functions as a mediating variable that links poetry writing activities with language learning outcomes, where students with better emotion regulation skills show more substantial language progress. Self-expression interacts synergistically with linguistic creativity, creating optimal conditions for interlingual development and pragmatic competence. The variables of mindfulness and current awareness stimulated by poetry activities facilitate deeper processing of language inputs and improve retention of new linguistic structures. Social-emotional learning facilitated through poetry sharing and peer feedback creates a community of practice that supports collaborative language construction. Research shows that students who experience significant improvements in affective variables also show accelerated progress in the accuracy, fluency, and complexity of the target language. The metacognitive awareness that develops through poetic reflection helps students to monitor and evaluate their own learning process, contributing to learner autonomy and strategic competence. The long-term impacts of these variable interactions include the development of coherent multilingual identities and sophisticated intercultural communicative competencies. Neuroplasticity facilitated by emotional involvement in poetry activity supports brain structural changes that optimize language processing networks. The implementation of educational technology in poetry learning has shown a significant positive impact on student perception. (Ashrafuzzaman et al., 2021; Piscayanti et al., 2024; Uddin & Bailey, 2024).

Optimal design and implementation of poetry writing activities to maximize positive affective outcomes

The optimal design of poetry writing activities to maximize positive affective outcomes in EFL learning requires a multi-level approach that takes into account the student's level of language proficiency, cultural background, and individual affective needs. Strategy *prosing poem* has proven effective as an entry point that reduces students' intimidation of traditional forms of poetry by providing prose versions of the poem as an initial scaffolding. The implementation of a mindfulness-based approach in poetry writing activities creates optimal conditions for creative flow and authentic self-expression, where students are directed to focus on current awareness and non-judgmental observation of their internal experiences. A multimodal approach that integrates visual, auditory, and kinesthetic elements in poetry activities has been shown to increase engagement and facilitate a dual pathway to meaning-making. Collaborative poetry construction techniques facilitate peer support and reduce performance anxiety while building a sense of community in the classroom. Digital integration through platforms like WhatsApp creates expanded learning spaces that allow students to engage with poetry outside of the context of formal classrooms, increasing ownership and agency in the learning process. Choice and voice strategies give students autonomy in choosing themes, formats, and modes of expression, which contributes to intrinsic motivation and personal relevance. The gradual release model of responsibility allows for a gradual transition from teacher guidance to the creation of students' independent poetry, building confidence and competence simultaneously. The narrative inquiry-based approach allows students to explore their life experiences through poetry in a meaningful and transformative way (Amri & Basthomi, 2022; Naidu & Newfield, 2020; Piscayanti et al., 2024).

Best practices in the implementation of poetry-based emotional pedagogy emphasize the importance of creating psychological safety and a supportive learning environment that allows students to take creative risks without fear of negative evaluation. Effective scaffolding techniques include the use of mentor texts, guided imagery exercises, and prompt-based writing that help students to access and articulate their emotional experiences. Process-oriented assessments that focus on growth and effort rather than product perfection create optimal conditions for experimentation and innovation in the use of language. The implementation of reflective practice through poetry journals and metacognitive discussions facilitates deeper learning and the transfer of affective gains to other learning contexts. Cross-cultural integration through bilingual poetry and exploration of cultural themes helps students to negotiate their multilingual identities and develop intercultural sensitivities. Occasion performances such as *poetry slams* and reading circles provide an authentic audience and real-world purpose for poetry creation, increasing motivation and a sense of accomplishment. Teacher modeling and shared vulnerability in poetry writing create a democratic classroom culture that encourages risk-taking and authentic expression. Feedback techniques that focus on emotional meaning and impact rather than linguistic accuracy maintain creative flow while still facilitating

language development. Differentiated instruction that considers learning styles, cultural backgrounds, and proficiency levels ensures that all students can access and benefit from poetry-based learning (Genis & Byrne, 2024; Mary et al., 2025; Mavhiza & Nkealah, 2024).

Moderation of contextual factors on the affective impact of creative poetry writing

Contextual factors show a significant role of moderation in determining the magnitude and direction of the affective impact of creative poetry writing in EFL learning. Students' cultural backgrounds moderate responsiveness to poetic activities through cultural schemas and aesthetic preferences that influence engagement and meaning-making processes. Students from cultures with strong oral poetry traditions show higher initial engagement and faster affective gains, while students from cultural contexts that emphasize structured learning need additional scaffolding to appreciate creative flexibility in poetry. The level of language proficiency serves as a moderation variable that affects cognitive load and affective processing in poetry writing activities, where students with low proficiency experience higher anxiety but also greater affective gains when successfully expressing themselves through poetry. Educational settings that include institutional culture, class sizes, and resource availability create boundary conditions that affect the implementation and effectiveness of poetry-based pedagogy. The context of a formal academic setting with high-risk assessments may reduce affective benefits due to performance pressures, while informal learning environments facilitate authentic expression and positive emotional associations. Socioeconomic factors moderate access to cultural capital and technological resources that can affect the depth of engagement with poetry activities. The age and stage of development of students affect the emotional maturity and capacity for self-reflection necessary to maximize the affective outcomes of poetry writing. Gender showed a complex pattern of moderation, with female students generally showing higher emotional engagement but male students experiencing greater reductions in linguistic anxiety (Betti & Al Yasiri, 2023; Cooper, 2020; Genis & Byrne, 2024).

Cultural sensitivity in the implementation of poetry-based emotional pedagogy requires a deep understanding of cultural values, communication patterns, and educational traditions that influence students' perceptions of creative expression and emotional expression. Collectivist cultural contexts may require adaptation to activities that emphasize individual expression by integrating elements of community and the creation of shared meaning. Power distances in certain cultures influence students' willingness to engage in creative risks and challenge conventional forms, necessitating gradual cultural changes in classroom dynamics. Religious and spiritual contexts can influence acceptable themes and modes of expression in poetry, requiring a culturally responsive pedagogy that respects cultural boundaries while facilitating authentic expression. Linguistic diversity in multilingual contexts creates opportunities for translanguaging and the building of cultural bridges through poetry, but it also requires careful navigation of language hierarchies and linguistic identities. Historical trauma and social injustice within a particular community can affect emotional readiness for creative

expression, requiring a trauma-aware approach and culturally sustainable pedagogy. Family expectations and career pressures in the context of achievement-oriented cultures can create tensions between creative exploration and academic performance, necessitating an integration strategy that demonstrates the relevance of poetry to academic success. Technology access and digital literacy in different socioeconomic contexts affect the feasibility of digital poetry platforms and multimodal approaches. The implementation of an integrated literary curriculum has shown effectiveness in a variety of cultural and educational contexts (Jayendran et al., 2022; Mary et al., 2025; Naidu & Newfield, 2020). Culturally Responsive Pedagogy emphasizes poetry writing as a medium for exploring cultural identity and multilingual resources, important in the context of EFL with cultural dissonance (Andania et al., 2024; Belfadel & Belgacem, 2024).

Assessment instruments and methods to measure the affective impact of poetry writing

The development of valid and reliable assessment instruments and methods to measure the affective impact of poetry writing in the context of EFL learning requires a mixed-methods approach that integrates quantitative measurement and qualitative assessment. The pre-post survey design uses validated affective scales such as the Foreign Language Anxiety Scale, Intrinsic Motivation Inventory, and Self-Expression Scale providing baseline measurements and statistically comparable outcome indicators. Culturally adapted and linguistically appropriate Likert scale questionnaires facilitate the systematic collection of data on changes in affective conditions before and after poetry-based learning interventions. The narrative inquiry method through reflective journals, learning stories, and in-depth interviews provides rich qualitative data about students' life experiences and meaning-making processes. Focus group discussions facilitate collective reflection and uncover social dimensions of affective learning that may not be detected through individual assessment. Observational protocols that systematically documented behavioral indicators of emotional engagement, creative risk-taking, and peer interaction during poetry activities provided triangulation data for measures of self-report. Digital analytics from learning platforms that track task times, revision patterns, and collaboration frequency provide objective indicators of engagement and persistence. Physiological measures such as heart rate variability and cortisol levels can provide biomarkers of stress reduction and emotion regulation, although their implementation requires specialized equipment and expertise. The pedagogical corpus approach has proven effective in helping students analyze poetic language more objectively (Jayendran et al., 2022; Piscayanti et al., 2024; Uddin & Bailey, 2024).

A comprehensive assessment framework for evaluating affective impact should consider the dynamic nature of emotional learning and cultural variations in emotional expression and assessment preferences. Portfolio-based assessments that collect poetry artifacts, reflection sections, and peer feedback provide a holistic view of growth and development in the affective domain. Rubrics that focus on emotional authenticity, creative risk-taking, and personal growth rather than linguistic accuracy facilitate

formative assessments that support continuous development. Peer assessment protocols that train students to provide constructive feedback on emotional impact and creative expression develop metacognitive awareness and social-emotional skills. Self-assessment tools that guide students in reflecting on affective learning and setting goals for sustainable growth facilitate learning agency and ownership. Longitudinal tracking systems that monitor affective variables over an extended period provide insights into the sustainability and long-term impact of poetry-based interventions. Cross-cultural validation studies of assessment instruments ensure cultural appropriateness and measurement equivalence across a diverse range of populations. A multi-informant approach that integrates student self-reports, teacher observations, and parental feedback provides a comprehensive perspective on affective change. Technology-enhanced assessment tools such as emotion recognition software and natural language processing to analyze poetry content can provide additional objective measures, although they require careful interpretation and human validation. The use of authentic songs and materials in language learning has been shown to be effective in improving students' motivation and affective outcomes (Aladini & Farahbod, 2020; Ashrafuzzaman et al., 2021; Khaleghi et al., 2020)

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that creative poetry writing has a significant transformative impact on EFL students' affective learning through three fundamental dimensions: emotion regulation, self-expression, and linguistic anxiety reduction. An analysis of 21 high-quality studies showed that the activity of writing poetry serves as an emotional catalyst that facilitates the development of students' ability to identify, understand, and manage their emotional responses. Innovative pedagogical strategies such as prosing poetry, mindfulness approaches, and the integration of educational technologies have been shown to increase emotional engagement, intrinsic motivation, and confidence in the use of target language. Contextual factors such as cultural background, language proficiency level, and educational setting significantly moderate affective impacts. Optimal implementation entails a multi-level design that considers the individual needs of students and creates psychological safety for creative exploration. These findings confirm that poetry serves not only as a medium of language learning, but also as a tool for the holistic development of students' multicultural personalities and identities in the context of EFL.

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