

## Testing Creative Writing in Pakistan: Tensions and Potential in Classroom Practice

Humaira Irfan Khan

School of Education, University of Glasgow  
85 BOWMAN STREET  
United Kingdom

### Abstract

*The paper entitled 'Testing Creative Writing in Pakistan: Tensions and Potential in Classroom Practice' aims at discovering the impact of creative writing tests on classroom practice in Pakistan. The data collected from the questionnaire and focus group interview with University of Education postgraduate students – who are also in-service school teachers – discovers that English teachers in Pakistan do not teach to develop the creative and communicative abilities of pupils studying the English language at Matriculation Level in Pakistan. The findings also explicitly indicate that these in-service teachers do not have information about approaches that are widely used for teaching writing in a western educational context, such as the 'genre approach' and the 'process approach'. The classroom assessment is influenced by the Board Examinations, while the students memorise the essays and stories from their textbooks and reproduce them.*

**Keywords:** creative writing, assessment of creative writing, approaches to teach writing, and Board Examinations

### 1. Introduction

This paper explores that in Pakistan, although creative writing is widely recognised in schools and English literature is taught, the students are not being provided with sufficient classroom practice in various genres of creative writing. It is observed that the assessment system in Pakistan has marred students' ability in creative writing. Therefore, the proposed research plans to discover the factors influencing classroom practice. It is evident that in Pakistani schools, the pedagogy, the curriculum and the assessment system do not provide freedom for self-expression which is a prerequisite for creativity. It is important to establish why creative writing is being neglected in schools, despite such a great literary heritage and the need to move with changing times. In Pakistan, there are many factors which are responsible for the decline of creativity in schools. According to Warwick and Reimers (1995), these consist of unmotivated faculty and students; a curriculum divorced from real problems faced in teaching and the heavy reliance on rote memorisation. Besides these factors, there are some other noteworthy constraints upon teachers' efforts to develop creative writing. They are, according to Siddiqui (2007, p. 161) 'large-size classes, lack of resources, untrained teachers, fixed syllabus, forty minutes duration for English and external examination bodies'.

### 2. Creative Writing

This project deals with the act of writing creatively. The research discovers that Pakistan has a rich literary heritage and people are creative in their daily lives, but are not able to express themselves creatively because writing in a second language is a difficult skill and has to be learnt strenuously. Learning to write effectively is a fundamental component of education and the ability to do so could be a great asset for students throughout their lives (Berdan, 2006). It is pertinent to know that 'writing is not an innate natural ability but is a cognitive ability' (Harris, 1993, p. 78) and has to be acquired through years of training or schooling. Despite the fact that English is taught as a second language and writing is a compulsory skill in Pakistan, during the whole period of education, students in schools face great difficulty with expressing themselves in simple English. Thus, the problem which the researcher identifies is that in Pakistan, the teaching of writing tends to maintain more focus on memorisation of ready made answers from help books, rather than on the development of communicative and creative abilities.

#### 2.1 Creative Writing in western educational context

It is important to know the meaning and purpose of creative writing in the western educational setting, to compare and contrast with the situation in a Pakistani classroom. Everett (2005) believes creative writing to be any writing of original composition. Marshall (1974, p. 10) states that 'creativity is the ability to create one's own symbols of experience; creative writing is the use of written language to conceptualize, explore and record experience in such a way as to create a unique symbolization of it'. There are various other views regarding creative writing. O'Rourke (2005) considers creative writing to be a craft and a profession.

It is also an expressive art and an intellectual activity, given that creative writing activities – such as problem solving tasks and so on – are not just pieces of writing, but lead to novel and valuable ideas and make meanings. Hooker (1997) values creative writing for the contribution it makes to educate the imagination of the students. In creative writing, ‘writers are engaged in their imaginative world having a dialogue with their writerly self’ (O’Rourke, 2005, p. 174). Everett (2005) says that somewhere in an educational scheme, there must be encouragement for the dreams and imaginings of youth. In schools, the learners are taught to express their feelings, experiences and knowledge in various types of writing. For example in English classrooms in Scotland, ‘pupils commonly express their thoughts, feelings and imaginative ideas by writing poetry, prose and drama in ways that demonstrated their creativity with language and ideas’ (HMIE, 2006, p. 8). The students in the classroom creatively express themselves using their imagination and figurative language, such as metaphor, similes and imagery.

Generally, it is observed that creative writing is undertaken by pupils in several situations: as a class activity directly under a teacher’s control; as a group activity; as a self-motivated individual activity; as a regular subject or a skill to be practised; or as the theme of a project (Marshall, 1974). Griva (2007) emphasises that teachers should stimulate the creative imagination of their students and to motivate them to share their ideas using language. Fay (2007) asserts that teachers observe that during the creative process of writing, students develop their literacy and critical thinking skills. As a consequence, creative writing has a special place in education because it equips children with the basic skills of language and gives them opportunity for free expression of feelings and experiences. Interestingly, learners’ works of creative writing speak out with voices that emerge with ‘an energy, vitality and authenticity which reflect their creative engagement’ (Grainger et al, 2005, p. 7). Arnold (1991) argues that creative writing can play a part in the development of integrated human beings who can respect the uniqueness of themselves and others.

## **2.2 Creative Writing in Pakistan**

Traditionally, in Pakistan, creative writing was known as literature including the variety of its genres. As a result, Pakistani students and teachers are still confused about the term ‘creative writing’ and so tensions arise in the classroom. Considering the changing trends in teaching and the advantages of creative writing, it is certainly the responsibility of English teachers to give importance to creative writing, to understand the complexity of writing development. Nadeem (2007, p. 2) believes that ‘Pakistani teachers should keep in view the needs and interests of students to enable them to be expressive in writing’. It is believed that creative writing can be pleasurable and self-developing if our expressive and communicative needs motivate us to write.

In Pakistan, creative writing is widely recognised in schools, but it is important to note that ‘creative writing has been reduced to a set of formulae taught through a series of exercises’ (Myhill, 2001, p. 19). At Matriculation level, there are various genres of creative writing such as letter writing, essay writing, story writing and dialogue writing which are introduced in textbooks and practised in the classroom. According to Warsi (2004, p. 1), problematic issues in the Pakistani system of education which fail to promote imaginative writing in various genres in the classroom ‘are the shortcomings in the curriculum, examination, inefficient teachers, methods and techniques’. It is true that these practices hinder the development of insight and interest among learners. In Pakistan, it is important for English teachers to use suitable approaches, keeping students’ needs in sight, to endorse creative writing.

## **3. Teaching Creative Writing in classroom**

The current research deals with the teaching of creative writing in the classroom in Pakistan, taking into consideration Pakistani teachers’ views about teaching. Teaching in the classroom, in Pakistan, is dependent on a number of factors such as curriculum and assessment. In addition, teachers are not autonomous; they cannot teach independently without permission from the authorities. Notably, the imposition of a prescriptive curriculum and tightly defined assessment system has challenged teachers’ professional autonomy and reduced their creativity (Burgess et al, 2002; Fisher, 2004). This fact is reiterated by Hanke (2002) so that if the curriculum and assessment system do not give opportunity to teachers to act independently, their professional and intuitive potential is definitely constrained. This situation mentioned above is applicable to teaching creative writing in a Pakistani classroom. There is a vast magnitude of literature available on the effective teaching of creative writing in the classroom. The various writers’ views about classroom practice help to point out weaknesses and tensions in Pakistani educational practice.

The role of English teachers is important, as Grainger et al. (2005, p. 178) assert that ‘creativity in students’ writing does not occur independently of the skills, talents, motivations, knowledge and understanding of teacher’, and that the creative teachers of writing are ‘autonomous, competent, reflective and critical and work towards a vision of children who can think and act for themselves’ (Moss, 2001, p. 36). Those teachers, who give the learners topics of their own choice, help the learners to become engrossed in their writings. Thus, ‘the meanings of words and ideas are felt more strongly and deeply and their voices ring with conviction’ (Laevers, 2000, p. 24). Interestingly, Wilson and Ball (1997) describe risk-taking as an important characteristic of creative writing teachers who have the disposition to remain open to new ideas and strategies which may benefit the learners. Grainger et al. (2005, p.183) believe that ‘research in the field of creativity indicates that creative teachers adopt a learner centred focus’. They make creative writing fun while stimulating their imagination and encouraging their criticality. Barnes (2007, p. 27) remarks that ‘it is clear teachers need to be geared towards individuals, their passions, capabilities and personalities’. It is seen that learners’ ‘creative abilities are developed if teachers’ own creative abilities are properly engaged’ (Grainger et al, 2005, p. 5). It is one of the central themes of the present study that those teachers who are themselves creative and write creatively, are better teachers. In Pakistan, it is urgently required that teacher education programmes should work in this direction.

### **3.1 Teaching Creative Writing in classroom in Pakistan**

In the classroom, as discussed above, students are instructed to learn – by heart, from textbooks – the above mentioned types of writing. Incredibly, when they write a story or an essay, it is the same for the whole class. They are not encouraged to write their own stories using genre and process approaches. They do not know that ‘creativity’ means to create something imaginatively. However, if creative writing is taught effectively, it can provide the learners, as Mustafa (2009, p. 1) believes, with ‘an opportunity for skill building, communication, expression and lays the foundation of their worldview’.

In Pakistan, the teaching of creative writing is restricted to the teaching of classical English literature, such as the poetry of Wordsworth, Keats, Coleridge, the dramas of Shakespeare, the novels of Charles Dickens and so on. However, in the classroom, teachers mostly do not teach literature, they teach about the literature. As Siddiqui (2007, p. 165) points out ‘most of the teachers of literature pay extra emphasis to biographical details of the authors and literary movements. So instead of teaching literature, they teach about literature’. As a consequence, writing in Pakistan is taught in such a way, as Boden (2001, p. 102) remarks, ‘it ends up killing the creativity’. It is strongly suggested that methods used for first language acquisition should be employed for second language acquisition. However, in most of the schools and colleges, the teachers still prefer to teach the writing skill through the product approach and not through the process genre approach and the basic objectives of learning writing are not considered (Siddiqui, 2003). Writing is still being taught through the Grammar Translation Method which does not consider the linguistic needs of learners. Warsi (2004, p. 3) argues, ‘the translation method is used to teach writing in Pakistan. It is ineffective in that communicative and creative skills are ignored and a great deal of stress is laid on rules and exceptions of English language’.

The needs of the students are that they should be taught that writing is a craft which may involve the writer in focusing, planning, organizing, reflecting and revising to produce a product that is suited to its form, purpose and audience (Browne, 1993). On the other hand, Pakistani students do not have awareness about the various steps involved in writing. They do not plan, draft, revise and re-edit their writing. They just read model essays and reproduce them instead of relying on sensory descriptions, observation and real life experiences. Their marked essays lack constructive feedback, so they continue to commit the same errors repeatedly.

### **4. English language assessment in Pakistan**

There are different qualities which can maximize the overall usefulness of an English language test. A good test should have construct validity, reliability, authenticity, interactiveness, impact and practicality to foster creativity and independent learning (Bachman and Palmer, 1996; Brown and Pickford, 2006). One major problem in the testing of creative writing in Pakistan is that it tends to lack many of these factors. In Pakistan, it is seen that assessment has a direct relationship with teaching in the classroom. As Siddiqui (2007, p. 187) asserts, ‘in Pakistan the impact of assessment is conspicuous. It is an assessment system that has emerged as an omnipotent force that is calling the shots in the educational scenario of Pakistan. Each new government claims to realize its significance but hardly takes any practical, meaningful, holistic, and sustainable steps towards streamlining the system’. Despite the fact that English language testing does not measure students’ creativity and critical thinking, and that this is realised, no significant efforts are being made to improve the situation.

The teachers' attention is focused on stereotypical questions set in the board examination; as a consequence, they do not practice creative writing sufficiently in the classroom. Siddiqui (2007, p. 164) rightly says that 'the students memorise ready made answers of short stories, essays, plays, poems etc because the assessment system encourages rote learning and the examination requires the students to reproduce what they have learnt by heart'. A critical evaluation of the Lahore Board Examination's Past Papers discloses that the topics are repeatedly taken from the textbooks (prescribed books) of Matriculation. To quote Siddiqui (2007, p. 103) 'in Pakistan, the textbooks are supposed to occupy a central position in the process of teaching and learning to the extent that the assessment system and classroom teaching seem to revolve around the textbooks'. One noteworthy fact is that for the past 10 years, the textbook of Paper B (English Grammar and Composition) has not been revised or updated. The textbooks have model essays and stories which students memorise for tests. For example, writing a story is a recurrent question. The type of question can remain unchanged year after year.

Year 2008: Write a story with a moral 'The boy who cried wolf'.

Year 2007: Write a story with a moral 'union is strength'.

Year 2006: Write a story with a moral 'a friend in need is a friend indeed'.

These stories are prescribed in the syllabus. The question of story writing is easy and the learners need not think critically and imaginatively. In the test, the students have to remember the logical sequence of the events or paragraphs as they are given in the textbook, otherwise they would lose their score, because the examiners would keep the model compositions in view. The students do not write the stories themselves. They are not taught to develop the plot, characterisation or dialogue. The research therefore asks, what is the purpose of such an examination? Does it measure originality of ideas, language and organisation? The students' creative writing does not possess these characteristics. As Siddiqui (2007, p. 189) believes, 'in Pakistan, the assessment system excludes creativity and critical thinking out of its legitimate boundaries'. It is stated in the National Education Policy (1992, p. 69) that 'we are caught in a vicious circle; the cycle begins at a badly constructed syllabi and ends at a rag bag system called examination'.

#### **4.1 Negative Washback of Board Examinations in Pakistan**

Hughes (1989, p. 1) defines washback 'as an effect of testing on teaching and learning'. According to Hughes (2003), a test could have either beneficial or harmful washback. A test has beneficial washback if it is based on the language needs of the learners, but if the test content and techniques are at variance with the objectives of the course, it is unreliable and likely to have harmful washback. Board examinations have negative washback in Pakistan. Siddiqui (2007, p. 189) argues 'the negative washback effect on teaching is of two kinds: explicit and implicit. In the Pakistani context, the explicit effect is shown in the apparent tactics the teacher uses to help students get good grades. The implicit washback effect is the teacher's own view of teaching which gets contaminated by the hanging sword of memory-gear tests'.

This paper has explored the teachers' concept of creativity in Pakistan. The literature attempts to provide an overview of the meaning and purpose of creativity, and creative writing in an academic setting. It is highlighted that in some countries like the United Kingdom, special emphasis is laid on creativity in schools at all levels. On the contrary, Pakistani schools, despite teaching English literature as a compulsory subject, fail to develop pupils' interest in creative writing. The article also analyses how do English teachers like to develop the students' creative writing in classroom? In this respect, the article also discusses approaches to teaching writing in the classroom. The problem in Pakistani schools is that teachers still prefer to teach writing through the Grammar Translation Method, which does not make pupils good writers. In addition, those teachers who have creativity and enjoy writing creatively, can stimulate pupils' imagination and enhance their creativity.

#### **5. Research Methodology**

The researcher after receiving ethical approval from the University of Glasgow, travelled to Pakistan in June, 2009, to collect data from University of Education, Lahore. To establish the baseline of this research, the research used a questionnaire for in-service schools teachers (students of the University of Education) – to estimate the teachers' perceptions about creative writing in Pakistan, teaching of creative writing in the classroom and assessment of creative writing by Lahore Board Examination. The sample size was n=70. A Focus Group Interview of six in-service female teachers was also recorded to explore in-depth attitudes of teachers towards teaching of creative writing. These female teachers expressed their personal opinions about creativity, creative writing, classroom strategies and the Board Examination. The details of the interview supplement the data analysis of the questionnaire. This paper analyses the findings of the questionnaire and the focus group interview.

## 6. Findings and Discussion

The data reveals that most of the female and the male English teachers' ages are between 25 to 30 years (87% female and 77% male). Some middle-aged male and female teachers are also attending a Masters in English at the University of Education. The reason for most of the teachers falling in the first category could be explained by the University of Education's policy that young teachers should be given preference by the admission committee, because they have to spend more time in service than the middle or the old teachers. The data also manifests that out of the total population of the participants, 53% female teachers and 47% male teachers had responded to research queries. The researcher initially planned to have responses of an equal ratio – i.e. 50% male and female teachers – but this was not possible, as more female teachers were admitted into the above mentioned course than male teachers. The data shows that almost all respondents are experienced teachers, but male teachers have more teaching experience than female teachers. Some male teachers (6%) have more than 15 years' teaching experience. Their opinions are certainly valuable for the current research project. It is observed that mostly young teachers enter into the programme because public sector universities prefer that students should not be above 26 years, and for aged teachers some seats are fixed, hence they also can have a chance to enhance their qualification.

### 6.1 Teachers' interest in creative writing

The results of the data represented in Table A.1 reveal that more female teachers have a tendency to express themselves creatively in writing than male teachers. It is shown in Table 4.6 that only 14% of male teachers mostly take an interest in creative writing, compared to 41% of female teachers who mostly like to write creatively. It is certainly important for teachers to work artistically to transform their own and their students' writings. Significantly, teachers should also write articles, stories and poems and seek to have them published in magazines or newspapers. The pupils' writing develops if they have a sympathetic audience to respond positively and constructively to, and if their writing is published or used for some genuine function.

### 6.2 Interest to teach creative writing

The research evidence in Table A.2 discovers that 55% of female teachers always like to teach creative writing, compared to 48% of male teachers; 33% of females and 30% of males mostly like to teach creative writing. In this way, it is seen that 88% of females and 78% of men are interested in teaching writing creatively. Generally, in a creative writing classroom, teaching and learning are integrated processes. While teaching creative writing, teachers also undergo development through exploring, engaging and reflecting upon ideas and issues. In Pakistan, teachers may enlarge their creative potential through joint imaginative activity and interaction. The participants are interested to teach creative writing, given remarks such as: *'I like to teach creative writing because it enhances their writing skills'* and *'I have an interest in teaching creative writing as it nourishes students' thinking ability'*. Such comments reinforce the data obtained from the questionnaire. The discussion shows that they are aware of the fact that those teachers who teach creative writing must be creative themselves since creative teachers of writing construct a positive disposition in pupils and develop their capacity to think and learn for themselves. Crucially, teachers in Pakistan must improve their own writing skill in order to be good teachers of creative writing.

### 6.3 Creative writing motivates students to learn English

The research data in Table A.3 shows that 70% of female teachers and 64% of male teachers believe that creative writing motivates students. The researcher investigates how effective teaching of creative writing can accelerate the learning process in a Pakistani classroom. These teachers are interested in teaching creative writing because it motivates learners and activates their creative faculties. It is quite encouraging to see that most of these Pakistani English teachers are fond of teaching writing creatively. According to teachers, pupils are motivated to learn the English language in creative writing classes. They believe *'students find creative writing interesting because it allows free expression to their feelings'*, *'students feel motivated because they believe they will create something new'* and *'in creative writing classes, students participate eagerly'*. However, they do not explain the techniques which motivate students. The research project is aimed at discovering whether these teachers are actually teaching creatively or not. Thus, the researcher finds that they are confused about strategies needed to rouse learners' interest in creative writing. The data analysis emphasises that Pakistani teachers should kindle the imagination of children using art and realia (real life objects). They must also inspire them to explore ideas and experiment with language. It is observed that such explorations enable teachers to be open and flexible to others' ideas, as well as be critically evaluative of learners' writings. Rarieya (2007, p. 65) suggests *'if classrooms in Pakistan have to produce active and inquiring learners, teachers who provide the leadership and guidance in such classrooms must have professional development that is creative, inquiry-oriented and collaborative'*.

If teachers work imaginatively, they can create a rich environment by making use of slides, diagrams and visuals to recognise, nurture and develop learners' creative potential. It is noticed that in Pakistan, classrooms are teacher-centred but in order to captivate learners' attention, the teacher should adopt a learner-centred focus and forget his authoritative role; in this way, the usual power relations in the class are altered and the students take initiative to create something new. Above all, creativity is not an individual performance. It is an outcome of our interaction with other people. It can be called a cultural process. It involves risk taking and experimentation. It also requires stimulus in the form of visuals or realia. The practice of writing in the classroom in Pakistan could be described as a process in which 'large numbers of children enter school as eager learners and writers, and leave it as reluctant writers' (Hood, 1995 cited in Smith and Elley, 1998, p. 63). It is an undeniable fact that students do not write through some spontaneous creative force, but instead learn to write what their culture and school construct for them.

#### **6.4 Classroom strategies used for teaching creative writing**

It is evident from the discussion that these teachers are familiar with techniques such as brainstorming and the discussion method, given comments such as: *'I generate discussion in the classroom related to a given topic for writing'* and *'I use brainstorming and discussion to teach writing'*. The teachers do not mention the various approaches which could be used to teach writing effectively, either in the questionnaire or the focus group discussion. The reality is that in Pakistan, writing is taught through traditional approaches – such as the Grammar Translation Method – that require copying and asking for words, thus encouraging pupils to become reliant on the teacher. The outcomes of traditional methods are that they inhibit pupils' willingness to write themselves, waste classroom time, and fail to provide students with a sense of the personal and communicative uses of writing.

#### **6.5 Lahore Board Examination tests**

Most of the participants' responses in Table A.4 ascertain that Lahore Board Examination's prominent flaw is its failure to measure students' creativity. It is worth mentioning that whoever crams things more efficiently, even without proper comprehension, can secure good marks in the examination. The teacher in the Pakistani education system is always under pressure to achieve a good result. The teacher who manages to gain a maximum number of As in his/her class is appreciated more than the one who promotes creativity in learners. Furthermore, the Lahore Board Examination lacks some qualities which should be in a good test such as construct validity, reliability, authenticity, interactiveness, impact and practicality.

#### **6.6 Textbooks and creative writing**

The deduced data shows (see Table A.5) that most of the English teachers perceive that the topics for creative writing are taken from textbooks. This fact can be further reinforced by comparison with the textbooks prescribed by the Punjab Textbook Board. Topics such as 'My Neighbours', 'My School' or 'A House on Fire' are specified in the textbooks for writing essays. The same topics are given in the examination. Pakistani students prepare these topics from guide books for the examination. In addition, the examiners cannot give unseen questions in case the students may fail. With all these elements considered, the Board Examination does not serve its purpose of assessing students' creativity. Both qualitative and quantitative data show that Pakistani teachers are not satisfied with the way topics are presented in textbooks and assigned to students for writing. The teachers state that *'students prepare essays from guide books'*; *'I give topics from textbooks because students cannot write on unfamiliar topics'* and *'I also give them topics from textbooks because they have to obtain good marks in Board Examination'*. It is important that topics should be interesting, in order to help promote pupils' self-expression.

#### **6.7 Feedback on writing**

According to teachers in the focus group discussion, particular responses stated that: *'I also point out mistakes of grammar, spelling and organisation of content'* and *'I also correct mistakes'*. It is explicit that teachers correct students' mistakes instead of responding to what they have written and encouraging them to develop this.

### **7. Conclusions and Recommendations**

The research findings reveal that the participants provide a variety of definitions of creativity such as, 'creative writing is an expression of inner feelings and emotions' and 'creative writing encourages discussion of social problems prevalent in society'. Furthermore, it can be justified to argue that their definitions of creativity are derived from English Literature, which they have studied. The responses of the focus group interview also reinforce closed and open questions' data. For instance, an interviewee affirms 'creativity is a spontaneous overflow of emotions'. It seems that their conception of creativity is artistic, which also involves free thinking.

Having said this, none uses words such as ‘experimentation’, ‘risk taking’, ‘problem solving’ or ‘intuition’ which are commonly used for creativity in a western educational context. The results of the gathered data indicate that most of the teachers choose topics from the textbooks and explain them, whereas a few teachers assert that they like to teach writing using discussion and brainstorming. The remaining teachers claim to teach creative writing using activities and audio visual aids. Nobody considers that ‘creativity flourishes where there is a systematic strategy to promote it’ (Robinson, 2001, p. 12). In addition, they do not suggest approaches to teaching such as the genre approach or the process approach for developing creative writing.

More importantly, no mention is given of the typical Pakistani classroom challenges and constraints, which hinder students’ writing development. The pupils do not themselves decide the topics; instead, the teacher presents a topic or a theme. The teacher is the only audience for whom the students write. The teacher implicitly or explicitly dictates the form. The students write in accordance with the school timetable and much of the writing is carried out in the form of exercises which the teacher decides upon. Finally, the teacher judges the pupils’ writings as the finished product. In Pakistan, English teachers must be encouraged to engage in activities that are essential for creativity, such as risk taking and viewing of their own learning.

The following recommendations can be given:

- It is essential to revise curricula at Matriculation level to develop creativity in learners. If the students are given creative tasks in their textbooks, their creative potential can be enriched. Furthermore, they will be enabled to refine their skills and develop their communicative competence.
- Significantly, the creative tasks in the textbooks must be accompanied with instructions about their performance in groups or pairs. In a classroom teaching environment, the group activities are vital because they provide opportunities for students to think critically and constructively, as they are active constructors of knowledge and not just recipients of information from the world.
- Pakistani teachers mostly believe in the delivery of lectures, emphasise closed questions and recall of memorised knowledge; in this respect, there is limited scope to demonstrate creativity in the classroom. The need is to motivate pupils to ask open-ended questions, to regard mistakes as part of learning and to emphasise pupils’ creative responses. It is, therefore, desirable to set aside traditional methods of teaching and to use the communicative approach for teaching creative writing.
- If teachers use the process writing approach to teach creative writing, they should encourage peer writing to make students reflect on all aspects of the writing process.
- Crucially, the *school timetable* should give importance to creative writing. English teachers can also arouse the learners’ interest in creative writing, so that their works will be published in a school magazine; it is potentially futile to continue writing unless there are intrinsic rewards in the process.

In short, it is important to achieve the implementation of various classroom strategies discussed above. Those teaching English in Pakistan must be imparted *appropriate pedagogical training* for teaching creative writing in the classroom and enhancing the learners’ creativity and critical thinking ability. There should be a clear focus on the needs of learners and effective learning strategies and approaches (HMIE, 2006, p. 5).

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**Appendix A**

Groups	Percentage				
	AL	M	U	ST	NV
Female	24	41	19	15	1
Male	1	14	10	8	1

**Table A.1**

Groups	Percentage				
	AL	M	U	ST	NV
Female	55	33	1	6	5
Male	48	30	3	16	3

**Table A.2**

Groups	Percentage				
	AL	M	U	ST	NV
Female	70	24	5	0	1
Male	64	30	3	3	0

**Table A.3**

Groups	Percentage				
	AL	M	U	ST	NV
Female	8	5	5	35	47
Male	3	18	6	36	40

**Table A.4**

Groups	Percentage				
	AL	M	U	ST	NV
Female	8	5	5	35	47
Male	3	18	6	36	40

**Table A.5**