Effects of Stylistics and Moral-Philosophical Approaches on Students' Achievement in and Attitude to Poetic Literature-in-English in Some Secondary Schools in Kogi State

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Abstract

This study examined the effects of stylistics and moral philosophical approaches on students' achievement and attitude to poetic Literature in English in some secondary schools in Kabba/Bunu, Kogi State. It also investigated the moderating effects of gender on the dependent variables. The study adopted pretest-posttest control group quasi-experimental design with a 3x2 factorial matrix. The participants in the study were 232 senior secondary II students from six public schools purposively selected from Kabba/Bunu Local Government. Two intact classes were assigned to each of the treatment and control groups. Two main instruments used in the study were students' achievement test in poetry (r=0.89) and students' attitude to poetry questionnaire (r=0.89). Six hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Data were analysed using Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) and Scheffe post hoc analysis. The result showed that treatment has significant main effect on students' achievement in poetry ($F_{(2,\ 219)}$ *=130.20; P<0.05;* η^2 *=0.54). Students in the moral philosophical approach (*$\overline{X}$ *= 46.44) performed better than students in the stylistics approach (*$\overline{X}$ *=44.53) who in turn did better than those in the control group (*$\overline{X}$ *= 21.78). There is no significant main effect of gender on students' achievement and attitude to poetry. The interaction effect of treatment and gender on students' achievement and attitude were not significant. It is concluded that moral philosophical and stylistics Approaches facilitated students' achievement in poetry better than the information-based Approach.*

Introduction

Language plays an important role in human existence. It makes communication possible and functions as a key medium in the education process. Language has numerous purposes as it is used for social integration, mass mobilization, and literary creation especially in the three genres of literature – prose, poetry and drama. This explains the inseparable relationship between language and literature. Though it is contentious what the role of literature should be in the language classroom, there is a consensus that language and literature reinforce each other. Proficiency in English language leads to effective comprehension of literature and vice versa.

Apart from the linguistic value associated with the study of literature, students are encouraged to study it because of other values derived from literary studies especially literary competence. Literature as studied in Nigerian secondary schools comprises three genres: prose, poetry and drama. This study is concerned with the teaching and learning of poetry in the secondary school. Poetry is a piece of literary work, spoken or written, which concisely expresses and communicates thoughts, ideas, experiences, feelings and emotions beautifully by employing

figurative devices such as imagery, rhythm, sound. It is usually written in verse with lyrical effects.

Poetry is an important aspect of literature as it is believed to be the oldest of the literary genres. It is held to be closely connected with speech in origin. Literature itself is considered very crucial because it is the vehicle through which the society gives sensitive expressions to the innermost thoughts and feelings of individuals as well as the community. Literature is the expression of the facts of life, or the interpretation of life, or of the beauty of life, in language of such enduring charm that men treasure it and will not let it die (Ogunba, 1978).

Robey (1983) pointed out that poetry conveys a considerable proportion of its feelings through the regular arrangement and sound of words. Poetry actually has much to offer to those who are exposed to it. Poetry, if chosen carefully and exploited creatively, may help the students in the affective, communicative, cognitive and educational aspects of their development. Poetry is embedded with some values which could be used to develop some very important skills:

1. The repetition and pattern of poetry makes it an excellent resource for the development of early reading skills.
2. The evaluation of word choice and figurative techniques used by poets is a skill that can be transferred when commenting on authorial intent in any text-type.
3. Some of the traditional poems tell of history in engaging and compelling ways.
4. Poetry can be used to convey moods, feelings and attitudes that children can identify and express in their own poems.
5. Poetry encourages experimentation and creativity.
6. Poetry develops the imagination and trains the emotion, increases knowledge and develops character.(http://www.lancsngfl.ac.uk/nationalstrategy/literacy/download/ file/LLTpoetrybooklet.pdf).

Commenting further on the values of poetry, Wagner and Odom (2006) opine that poetry is for life and learning. They express as follows:

a) Poetry for life: through listening to poetry, poetry performance, and poetry writing, children can express their emotions, look at the world in a new way, and share their wishes and dreams
b) Poetry for learning:
   i. Listening to poetry can support phonemic awareness.
   ii. Poems can help children explore onsets and rhymes.
   iii. The rhythm, rhyme, repetition, and predictability found in many poems make them accessible to early readers
   iv. Choral reading of familiar poems can enhance reading fluency.
   v. Poetry is an excellent vehicle for emergent writing, especially for children with limited vocabulary
   vi. Poetry helps students think about voice and word choice in their writing. In addition, the study of literature can provide students with fresh and creative stance with which to approach their studies in particular and their lives in general.

Of the three denominations of imaginative literature, poetry, prose and drama: poetry has always seemed the most difficult and appeals less to a majority of readers. The distaste for poetry could be due to its language (Robey, 1983). Nnolim (1990) noted that the language of poetry is nuance, not explicit, connotative rather than denotative, allusive rather than direct, figurative rather than literal, symbolic rather than plain. And these are not normally expected from the language of novel or any prose narrative.

The comments of WAEC Chief Examiners' report May/ June, 2011 on

Literature-in-English showed that students generally did not perform well in the three genres especially in poetry where the performance was worst. They blamed the poor performance on candidates' lack of seriousness, poor knowledge of Literature texts, Literature being handled by incompetent teachers and their ineffective approaches to teaching Literature. The poor performance could be linked to poor teaching approaches as the approaches currently adopted in schools tend to minimize students' participation and thus fail to capitalize fully on the educational and motivational benefits to be gained from experiential learning and from the integration of the students' reaction to the teaching and learning situations. Because the language of poetry challenges the intellect more than that of prose, prose is more popular with teachers and students (Nnolim 1990). When only English poems appeared on examination syllabus, teachers depended heavily on study notes. Even then they regarded modernist poetry and its style with suspicion.

Benton 1978 refers to the condition suffered by poetry in general English language teaching as "neglect where it needs attention and concern where it is left alone". As a matter of fact, poetry is "ordinary" and 'familiar" not only in the daily conversation but also as a way to entertain the individual. Babies like the physical act of producing a sound repeatedly and children are normally attracted to jokes and outrageous puns. Even adults enjoy football chants, skipping rhymes, television jingles and many songs which possess the features of rhyme and rhythm (Hayhoe and Parker, 1988).

Literature features prominently in the school curriculum and the high failure rate in it at the Senior School Certificate Level is of great concern to students, teachers and school authorities. This is because, the low performance in this subject which is a reflection of underachievement in all the genres has hindered the dreams of students of getting admission into many lucrative courses such as Law, Mass Communication, Language Arts, Communication Arts, Theatre Arts and a host of others in tertiary institutions. As stipulated in JAMB Brochure (2010), at least a credit pass is a requirement before any candidate is eligible for admission to any of the aforementioned courses.

Besides, as useful as poetry is, it is not much liked by many teachers and students, as it is seen to be a complex aspect of Literature that has lots of challenges. Teachers generally have negative attitude towards poetry. It will be inaccurate to give the impression that only the problem of modern innovations in versification and that of poetic language stand between teachers and poetry. In fact, the charge of obscurity which teachers often make against poetry is not of language alone. According to Furbank and Arnold (1990), there are different categories of obscurity. Yet, another obstacle that stands between teachers and poetry is the seemingly unending controversies that characterize the study of Literature in general and poetry in particular. Scholars argue not only about forms but content as well.

In order to improve the teaching and learning of poetry and reduce the failure rate of students, researchers have made some positive contributions such as introducing different teaching approaches to reduce the rate at which students and teachers have lost interest in poetry aspect of Literature. It is necessary to look into the approaches that can be used to teach poetry so as to make it interesting and enjoyable.

An approach can be seen in various ways by different scholars. Moody (1983) explains that the importance of an approach is to provide a frame work, or

sequence of operations to be used when individual comes to actualities. Whitehead (1968) states that one factor that goes a long way in determining students' lifelong learning of reading is how the teacher approaches the teaching of Literature. There are various approaches that can be employed in the teaching of Literature, poetry inclusive. They are: the information based approach, language based approach, personal response approach, paraphrastic approach, moral-philosophical approach, stylistics approach, linguistics-stylistics approach, integrated approach, humanistic approach, communicative approach and skills based approach.

The information based approach is also known as the traditional approach to teaching literature, Carter (1988) considers this approach as a way of teaching knowledge about literature and poetry whereby it is seen to offer a source of information to the students. This teaching approach tends to be teacher centred as Lazar (1993) points out: that the focus on content would require students to examine the history and characterization of literary movement ranging from the cultural, social, political and historical background to a text, thus, demanding a large input from the teacher.

The teacher's task within this approach is to elicit information from students about the text, explain the content of the text to the class, and ask questions to check student's knowledge based on what they have read and to provide students with background information. Unlike in other approaches, the students acquire English by focusing on the course rather than the language itself. One aim of this approach is to teach students to read literature using the appropriate literary strategies. The students also read set texts and literary criticism to help them benefit in the discussion of the texts.

Besides information based approach, language based approach is another one applied to the teaching of poetry. Language based approach is closely related to language model presented by Carter and long (1991) where literary texts are seen as means to helping students' improve language proficiency. This is done by providing them exposure to the target language and connecting them to specific vocabulary and other aspects of language. Maley and Duff (1990) insist that the primary aim of this approach is "quite simply to use literary texts as resource for stimulating language activities". With the use of language based approach, the focus shifted to the learner, the reading process and creating language awareness in the learners (Too Wei Keong2007). In line with this approach, a language based framework for reading literary text is proposed by McRae (1991) and McRae and Vethamani (1999) which moves from lexis (vocabulary), syntax (sentences) to coherence (discourse). It also focuses on phonology (sound), graphology (visual effect of the text), semantics (meaning), dialect (variation of Standard English), register (tone), period (archaisms), and functions (message in the text).

This approach encourages the techniques which are learner centred, activity based and gives particular attention to the way language is manipulated. In addition, Maley and Duff (1990) insist that the primary aim of this approach is quite simple to use poetry texts as a resource for stimulating language activities; they point out that this approach sees literary texts as resources that cater for language practice through series of language activities rather than studying literature and poetry for the purpose of acquiring facts and information; there is little engagement of learners with the text other than for purely linguistics practice, poetry is used in a rather purposeless and mechanistic way in order to provide for a series of

language activities orchestrated by the teacher.

Personal response approach is also an approach aimed at eliciting personal response and foster students' personal development. Hirvela (1996) argues that this approach focuses on learners' response to the author's text. The learners would respond to what they think are the author's intention and the meaning that could be derived from the text. Vethamani (2003) further argues that although learners are encouraged to explore various textual meanings, their interpretation must be in tandem with the text. Rosli (1995) claims that this approach motivates and encourages students to read by making a connection between the themes of the text studied and their personal life experiences.

This approach is an excellent stimulus for group work that can help students 'to become actively involved both intellectually and emotionally' (Lazar 1993) by associating the theme and topics portrayed in the literary text with the students' personal experience. Paraphrastic approach is an approach that deals with the surface meaning of the text (Hwang and Embi 2007). Rosli (1995) asserts that it allows teachers to use simpler word and sentence structures compared to the more complicated ones in the text and sometimes the teacher can translate it into other languages. He argued further that this approach is suitable for beginners of the target language as it acts as a stepping stone in formulating original assumptions of the author's work. Some students may be weak in English, their understanding and comprehension of a particular literary text may be impeded due to low language proficiency.

Moral-philosophical approach incorporates moral values across curriculum. The focus of this approach is to discover moral values while reading a particular literary text (Hwang and Embi, 2007). It seeks to find the worthiness of moral and philosophical considerations behind one's reading (Rosli 1995).This approach enables teachers to lead learners in discussing the existence of moral values discernible in a text. According to Ricoeur (1995), teachers who guide learners read and interpret literary works under moral-philosophical approach may help learners to reach self-understanding and self-realization. Apart from this, the task of interpretation of literary text may further assist learners to explore how the texts project and manifest the world they inhabit (Shin 1996).

Another useful approach in the teaching of poetry is Stylistics approach. According to Leech and Short (1981), stylistics approach 'uses the apparatus of linguistic description' for example special stylistics choices and pattern as well as metalinguistic items to analyse how meaning in a text are communicated. Widdowson (1975) suggests that learners need to be alerted to deviations from Standard English and that this is best achieved through the comparison of literary discourse with instances of conventional writing. This approach guides students towards a close understanding and appreciation of the literary text itself using the combination of linguistics analysis and literary critics (Lazar, 1993). This means students are taught to see how linguistic form in a literary text functions in conveying message to the reader.

Lazar (1993) claims that there are two objectives of this approach. Firstly, it enables students to make meaningful interpretations of the text. This objective allows students to look beyond the surface meaning of the text. Secondly, it helps to expand students' knowledge and awareness of the language.

Another factor that could influence students' performance in poetry is gender. Studies indicate that girls have a

more positive attitude to Literature than boys and that girls had better literary skills, read more frequently and had a more positive attitude to reading and school than boys (Cole and Hall, 2008). This gender difference has been found to span a wide range of school age group and also widens with increasing age. In addition, there is evidence that for both boys and girls, attitude to reading text becomes more negative as children get older. (Mckinna 1995) but even with this, girls' attitude has been found to be more stable across time. Girls read more than boys and have better reading ability. Some other studies on gender and students' achievement in Literature also confirmed the fact that girls tend to have a higher reading and Literature achievement than boys (Rothman and McMillian 2003).

However, there have been some research works that revealed that males performed better than females in reading and Literature. Yusif (2012)conclusion in his work titled "Gender differences in reading performance in relation to content familiarity and gender neutral text" shows that males outperformed females in Literature. However, Jegede (1995) in a study of 160 Nigerian secondary school students to determine the influence of achievement motivation and gender on performance in English language learning explained that students are capable of mastering English language, gender not withstanding if they are properly motivated. It could be deduced that the influence of gender on achievement in Literature and Language based task are not conclusive. There is therefore the need to carry out further investigations on the influence of gender on students' performance in poetry, hence gender is used as a moderator variable in the study.

Several studies have been carried out on the teaching of Literature and poetry. Zhen (2012) discloses the problems of literature teaching and explores the feasible strategies in order that it can help teachers evaluate the quality in their teaching and learners' efficiency in their learning. Pilar (2007) writes on how literature could be used in language classes to develop students' knowledge of English. Vasuthavan and Kunaratnam (2009) investigates issues on students' reluctance in reading poetry. A six-week students centred teaching and learning programme using suitable text was carried out with a class of 39 form four students selected for the study and it was evident throughout the study that the perceptions of reluctance learners when confronting the learning of poetry, stemmed from students' inability to make meaning out of a poem. The result yielded encouraging reactions from the students. Students' active, enthusiastic participation in the programme confirmed that appropriate pedagogy, text selection and teacher's personality played a significant role in their perception of poetry.

Timucin (2010) explains the relevance of stylistics approach to the analysis of poems in teaching English as foreign language contexts. After having explained in what ways stylistics analysis helps the reader come to terms with the process of coding the meaning embedded in the text by focusing on the linguistics features, the two poems are compared and contrasted via a stylistics approach and concluded that stylistics approach will help students decode the embedded meanings in a poem.

Fernandes and Alsaeed (2014) present various trends in English literature that could be employed by both teachers and the students which make learning enjoyable. Khaled and Ghada (2014) investigated the approaches used by English teachers in teaching the literature component in English. The result revealed that the teachers tend to use more than one approaches and that not all approaches are used at the same degree or level

depending on many factors such as the type of literary text, the difficulty of the text, the number of the students in the class and the linguistics ability of the students. Furthermore, the results revealed that the information based approach was the most favoured in the literature class while the stylistics approach scored the lowest level of use.
ChemweiandSomba (2010) discover in their research that Cooperative learning has been proclaimed as an effective instructional approach in promoting language development in learners. Form three students in six secondary schools in Baringo district participated in the study. Six teachers of same sex taught the poetry content in the classes using either of the two approaches, namely cooperative learning and the conventional method. The study revealed that apart from its positive influence on the students' classroom interaction patterns, those in the cooperative learning groups learned poetry interpretation skills better than their counterparts in the conventional classrooms.

Statement of the problem

Poetry is a genre of Literature that is admired for its brevity of expression, communication of ideas, emotions and feelings in an extraordinary way. Like other genres of Literature, it contributes immensely to the development of the cognitive, affective and psychomotor faculties of those exposed to it. It remains however an aspect of literature that is not very much liked by teachers and students due to bias and difficulties of language, interpretation and comprehension associated with it. Over the years' students' performance in Literature has generally declined with poetry recording the worst performance among the other genres. The poor performance of students has been associated with the difficult nature of poetry, poor teaching approaches and methods, poor attitude of students and teachers to poetry and lack of qualified teachers. Studies on poetry have focused on problems of literature teaching, strategies of teaching poetry, students' reluctance in reading poetry, students' perception of poetry, gender and attitude to poetry. There is the neglect of studies on effective approaches to the teaching of poetry. It is against this background that this study determined the effects of stylistics and moral-philosophical approaches on students' achievement and attitude to poetic-literature-in-English. It also examined the moderating effect of gender on the dependent variables.

Hypotheses

These hypotheses were tested in the study at 0.05 level of significance.

Ho_1: There is no significant main effect of treatment on students':

a) achievement in poetic Literature-in-English.
b) attitude to poetic Literature-in-English.

Ho_2: There is no significant main effect of gender on students':

a) achievement in poetic Literature-in-English.
b) attitude to poetic Literature-in-English.

Ho_3: There is no significant interaction effect of treatment and gender on students:

a) achievement in poetic Literature-in-English.
b) attitude to poetic Literature-in-English.

Methodology

A pretest - posttest control group quasi – experimental design was employed in the study with a 3x2 factorial matrix. There are three categories of variables used in the study namely independent variable,

moderator variable and dependent variables.

The Independent Variable: is the instructional approach manipulated at three levels which are the Stylistics approach**,** Moral-philosophical approach and Information-based approach. The moderator variable which is gender is varied at two levels i) male ii) female**.** The dependent variables are students' achievement in poetry and students' attitude to poetry.

Six secondary schools were purposely selected from Kabba/Bunu Local Government Area of Kogi State. From each school, one intact class was randomly selected. Thereafter, two intact classes were randomly assigned to each of the treatment and control groups. A total number of 232 SSII Literature-in-English students participated in the study. The criteria for the selection of schools were as follows:

1. The school must have qualified teachers of Literature-in-English (B.Ed. English/ B.A. English and PGDE)
2. The school must have presented students for Senior Secondary School Examination (SSCE) for at least 5 years.
3. The school must be co-educational and public
4. The school must have selected the same poems for study for the SSCE
5. The school must be willing to take part in the study
6. The school must be far from each other to avoid contamination.

Seven instruments (two responses and five stimulus) were used in the study for the purpose of data collection. These are: (a) Response Instruments which comprise students' achievement test in poetry (S.A.T.P) and students' attitude to poetry questionnaire (S.A.P.Q), (b) Stimulus Instruments which consist of Teacher's instructional guide on stylistics approach, Teacher's instructional guide on moral-philosophical approach, Teacher's instructional guide on information-based approach, Lesson note and Research assistance's performance rating scale

Students' Achievement Test in Poetry (S.A.T.P)

This instrument was constructed by the researchers and it comprises 21 short answer and 8 essay type questions. The questions were based on four poems studied during the research. There were two sections A and B. Selection A solicited short answer questions while selection B solicited essay questions. Students were required to answer all the short answer questions and to answer one essay question from each poem. The researchers presented the test to the experts in the Department of Teacher Education to assess its face and content validity, after which some corrections and modifications were made. The test was trial tested on 49 SS II students equivalent to those used in the study. Using test retest method, the data collected were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and a reliability coefficient of 0.89 was obtained.

Students' Attitude to Poetry Questionnaire (SAPQ)

The attitude questionnaire was constructed by the researcher to measure students' attitude to poetry. It was divided into two sections A and B. Section A dealt with the demographic information about the students such as age, gender, class and school while section B elicited information about students' attitude to poetry. The instrument contained 28 items of the modified Likert type with four scales of: strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree. The scoring of the instrument was as follows: Strongly Agree 4, Agree 3, Strongly Disagree 2, Disagree 1, for positively stated items

and negatively stated items the reverse was the case, Strongly Agree 1, Agree 2, Disagree 3, and Strongly Disagree 4. The initial draft of the instrument was given to three lecturers in the Department of Teacher Education, University of Ibadan to assess for face and content validity after which necessary corrections were made. The instrument was trial tested on 50 students equivalent to the students used in the study but did not partake in the study. The data collected were analysed using Cronbach's alpha. The reliability coefficient of 0.74 was obtained. The initial number of items was reduced from 28 to 20.

Treatment procedure

The research was carried out in four phases namely:

a) Identification of schools: The researcher identified the school to carry out the study, collected letter of introduction from the researcher's school to the selected schools and sought the permission of the school authorities to use their schools.
b) Training of research assistants: The regular teachers who were teaching Literature in the selected schools were trained as research assistants for a week and thereafter, the pretest of achievement and attitude were administered to the students.
c) Treatment: after the administration of pretest, treatment was introduced during which experimental group I was exposed to stylistics instruction, experimental group II was exposed to moral-philosophical instruction to the teaching of poetry and the control group was taught in the conventional way. The poems were treated in accordance to the steps given in the instructional guide and the lesson note. This phase lasted for eight weeks.
d) The posttest: at the end of the treatment, posttest of achievement and attitude were administered to the students which lasted for a week.

The participants were exposed to treatment in the following order.

Experimental Group 1
Stylistics Approach.

The experimental group 1 was made up of SSII students from two schools randomly selected to the Stylistics Approach. They were exposed to the approach using the following steps:

Step I:(pre-reading activities) Teacher activates students' prior knowledge as they discuss the title of the poem. Students brainstorm on what they think the poem will centre on using the title.

Step II:(reading activities) Expressive reading of the poem by the teacher for clarification of difficult words and to facilitate comprehension of the poem. This makes the students have a feel of the language, rhythm, intonation, sounds used in the poem.

Step III: Students discuss the ideas, themes and language use in the poem, as they engage in semantic mapping of words, highlighting key words, finding out literal and connotative meaning of words, underlining the symbols, biblical allusion and other literary devices in the poem.

Step IV: Students engage in silent reading of the poem to pay attention to the structure and sequence of ideas in the poem, style, figures of speech and other poetic devices.

Step V: Further discussion of the poem led by the teacher in identifying the style and use of language.

Evaluation: Teacher asks questions to ascertain students' understanding, and correct their mistakes.

Conclusion: Further oral reading of the poem by the students.

Experimental Group II
Moral-philosophical Approach

The experimental group II was made up of SSII students from two schools randomly assigned to the Moral-Philosophical Approach. They were exposed to the approach using the following steps:

Step I: The teacher activates students' prior knowledge as they discuss the title of the poem. Students brainstorm on what they think the poem will centre on using the title.

Step II: Students engage in choral reading of the poem after the teacher to enable them share experience of the poem. Students read the poem silently noting key words and other devices.

Step III: Students engage in silent reading to build up understanding of issues presented in the poem.

Step IV: The teacher engages students in some activities like general discussion where they discuss the moral and philosophical issues in the poem.

Step V: The teacher engages the students in group discussion of the poem

Step VI: Students bring their ideas together on the values portrayed in the poem and the philosophy of life which the poem projects.

Evaluation: The teacher evaluates the lesson by giving short answer type of questions on the poem in order to assess the student's level of knowledge.

Conclusion: The teacher summarises the poem and gives the students assignment based on the poem studied.

Control Group
Information-based Approach

This group consists of SSII students from two schools randomly assigned to the Information-based Approach. They were exposed to the approach using the following steps:

Step I: The teacher asks students to read the poem silently and note difficult words and expressions.

Step II: The teacher reads the poem aloud to the students

Step III: The teacher explains the poem to the students by providing some background information related to the poem.

Step IV: The teacher analyses the poem by identifying the themes, tracing the logical development of ideas, explaining use of language and other poetic devices.

Step V: The teacher gives notes to the students.

Evaluation: The teacher asks questions to ascertain what students' have learnt, and corrects their mistakes.

Conclusion: The teacher summarises the lesson and gives them assignments on the poem studied.

Data Analysis

The data collected were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics used include computation of means and standard deviation. Inferential statistics used includes analysis of Co-variance (ANCOVA) to test the hypotheses and to determine the main and interaction effects of the variables under study. Where significant main effects were detected, the Scheffe Pairwise comparison was used as post-hoc measures. All hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance.

Results and Discussion

The results are presented according to the order of hypothesis formulated for the study.

Presentation of Results

Ho: 1a: There is no significant main effect of treatment on students' achievement in poetic Literature-in-English.

Table 4.1: Summary of ANCOVA of Posttest Achievement Scores of students in poetic Literature-in-English by Treatment and Gender

Source	Type III sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected model	63728.075	6	10621.346	97.242	.000	.727
Intercept	25968.010	1	25968.010	237.746	.000	.521
Pretest	21996.406	1	21996.406	201.385	.000	.479
Treatment	28441.953	2	14220.976	130.198	.000	.543
Gender	196.433	1	196.433	1.798	.181	.008
Treatment* Gender	168.909	2	84.455	.773	.463	.007
Error	23920.460	219	109.226			
Total	384953.000	226				
Corrected Total	87648.535	225				

Significant at p<0.05

Table 4.1 shows that there is significant main effect of treatment on students' achievement in poetic Literature-in-English ($F_{(2, 219)}$ =130.20; P<0.05; η^2 =0.54). The hypothesis was therefore rejected. The treatment has effect of about 54% of the total variance in performance (Partial eta squared = 0.54). Table 4.2 shows the magnitude of performance across the groups.

Table 4.2 Estimated Marginal Means for post-test achievement scores by Treatment.

Treatment	N	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Stylistics Approach	76	44.53	1.229	42.109	46.955
Moral Philosophical Approach	60	46.44	1.389	43.703	49.178
Control Group	90	21.78	1.132	19.551	24.015

Table 4.2 shows that students in the Moral Philosophical approach group had the highest achievement score ($\overline{X}$ = 46.44), followed by Stylistic approach group ($\overline{X}$ =44.53) and the Control group ($\overline{X}$ = 21.78).

Table 4.3Pairwise Comparison of Scheffe Post hoc Analysis Showing Sources of Significance

Treatment	X Mean	Moral Philosophical Approach	Stylistics Approach	Control Group
Moral Philosophical Approach	46.44			*
Stylistics Approach	44.53			*

Control Group	21.78	*	*	

Pairs of groups significantly different p<0.05.

Table 4.3 reveals that Moral-Philosophical approach group is significantly different from the Control group. Also, Stylistics approach group is significantly different from the Control group, but the two experimental groupsare not significantly different therefore, the source of difference is the treatment.

Ho: 1b: There is no significant main effect of treatment on students' attitude to poetic Literature-in-English.

Table 4.5 Summary of ANCOVA of Posttest Scores of Students' Attitude to Poetic Literature-in-English by Treatment and Gender

Source	Type III sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	339.815	6	56.636	1.148	.336	.030
Intercept	25468.579	1	25468.579	516.259	.000	.702
Pre_ attitude	24.607	1	24.607	.499	.481	.002
Treatment	46.989	2	23.495	.476	.622	.004
Gender	91.339	1	91.339	1.851	.175	.008
Treatment*Gender	100.486	2	50.243	1.018	.363	.009
Error	10803.919	219	49.333			
Total	704508.000	226				
Corrected Total	11143.735	225				

Table 4.5 reveals that there is no significant main effect of treatment on students' attitude to poetic Literature-in-English ($F_{(2, 219)} = .476$; $p > 0.05$; $\eta^2=0.00$). Therefore, hypothesis 1b was confirmed. Table 4.6 shows the estimated marginal means for posttest attitude scores by treatment.

Table 4.6 Estimated Marginal Means for Posttest Attitude Scores by Treatment

Treatment	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Control Group Approach	55.655	.761	54.156	57.154
Moral Philosophical Approach	55.585	.936	53.731	57.419
Stylistics Approach	54.585	.854	52.902	56.268

Table 4.6 shows that students in the Control group had the highest score ($\overline{X}$ = 55.66), followed by Moral-Philosophical group ($\overline{X}$ =55.59) and the Stylistics group ($\overline{X}$ = 54.59).

Ho: 2a: There is no significant main effect of gender on students' achievement in poetic literature in English.

Table 4.1 shows that there is no significant main effect of gender on students' achievement in poetic literature in English ($F_{(1, 219)} = 1.80$; $p > 0.05$; η^2 0.01). Therefore, the hypothesis was confirmed.

Ho: 2b: There is no significant main effect of gender on students' attitude to poetic literature in English.

Table 4.5 shows that there is no significant main effect of gender on attitude to poetic literature in English ($F_{(1, 219)} = 1.85$; $p > 0.05$; $\eta^2 = 0.01$). The hypothesis was therefore confirmed.

Ho: 3a: There is no significant interaction effect of treatment and gender on students' achievement in poetic literature in English.

Table 4.1 shows that there is no significant interaction effect of treatment and gender on students' achievement in poetic literature in English ($F_{(2, 219)} = 1.02$; $p > 0.05$; η^2 0.01). The hypothesis was therefore confirmed.

Ho: 3b: There is no significant interaction effect of treatment and gender on students' attitude to poetic literature in English.

Table 4.5 indicates that there is no significant interaction effect of treatment and gender on students' attitude to poetic literature in English ($F_{(2, 219)} = 1.02$; $p > 0.05$; η^2 0.01). The hypothesis was therefore confirmed.

Discussion of Findings

Students in the Moral-Philosophical approach performed better than their counterparts in the Stylistics approach and Control group. Also the students in the Stylistics approach performed better than their counterparts in the Control group. The result obtained in Moral-Philosophical approach group is consistent with Vethamani and Abdul Rahman (2007) who carried out a research on the approaches employed by teachers in teaching poetry in Malaysia, using form two and three students who were divided into groups. The overall findings of the study signify that most of the teachers prefer moral-philosophical approach in teaching poetry to other approaches and their students performed better using moral-philosophical approach.

Similarly, Suk Han and Omar (2007) carried out a study on approaches adopted in the teaching of poetry for upper secondary school students in Malaysia using 45 teachers teaching poetry and 60 students of the upper secondary school in Tawau town. He explored students' preference to approaches employed in their literature classes using qualitative and quantitative techniques in analysing data gathered through questionnaires, observations and interviews. The analysis of the data revealed significant differences in the nature of the students' responses to the teaching approaches they received in their various groups. The findings showed that application of moral philosophical approach significantly increased the level of students' involvement and it was the most preferred approach.

In the present study, the better performance of students in the moral-philosophical approach could be traced to the various motivating class activities like brain storming, choral reading, general discussions, reflective session, general search for values and group discussions which helped students to develop insight into Literature themes, comprehend underlying meanings conveyed in the poem, and engaging literary analysis and appreciation as well as criticism. Through this approach, students could explain the uses and functions of language in the poem,

interpret and explain the poem. The activities employed in moral-philosophical approach contributed to the changes in the students. In the same vein, the use of brainstorming contributed to the students' achievement in poetry. They were able to tackle problems through innovations and self-initiated approach. They gained from the idea of their counterparts which helped them to collaborate and build relationships. Al-khatib (2012) explained that the major purpose of brainstorming as a teaching strategy is to foster and enhance communication skill, to promote thinking and decision making skill as well as foster different viewpoints and opinions. Students are expected to learn about the subject by actively sharing information, experiences and opinions. It helps the teachers to conclude ideas that are broader than students' thinking solutions and makes the teacher more democratic and respectful of views regardless of the different points of view.

Furthermore, the students in the Stylistics approach performed better than their counterparts in the Control group. Stylistics approach was found to be effective too because it aided learning and assisted students in constructing and interpreting meaning from the selected poems (Timucin, 2010 and Hwang and Embi, 2007). The positive change in students' achievement in Stylistic approach could be traced to the various activities involved in the approach. Activities like brainstorming, semantic mapping of words, highlighting key words, finding out literal and connotative meaning of words, underlining the symbols, biblical allusion and other literary devices in the poem, highlighting complete sentences in a poem with alternating colours, identifying linguistics features, categorizing words from a poem into logical groups, circling personal pronoun, underlining the main verbs, possessive adjectives, and singular versus plural forms of words. Stylistics approach also includes group discussions about the major ideas and linguistic features in a poem.

The drawing of semantic maps increased the students' knowledge of vocabulary. They were able to give meaning to the difficult words used in the poem. With the use of semantic maps, students got adequate knowledge of vocabulary to derive meaning from what they read. Consequently, this made reading of the poem easier and understandable for them. They were able and willing to read a large amount of text without fear of encountering difficult expressions. The positive change in student's vocabulary knowledge is consistent with the findings of Yagoub, Zahedi and Mortaza Adbi (2012), who in their work on the effects of semantic mapping strategy on ESL learners' vocabulary found that semantic mapping is also a useful strategy that can be introduced to learners at any level of proficiency. It involves drawing a diagram of the relationship between words according to their use in a particular text. Semantic mapping has the effects of bringing relationships in a text to consciousness for the purpose of deepening the understanding of a text. It is best introduced as a collaborative effort between the teacher and the class (Stahl and Vancil 1986, cited in Nations and Newton 1997).

Conclusion

The use of instructional approaches (moral philosophical and stylistics) that ensure active engagement of students are more facilitative of students' learning in poetic literature in English than the Information-based approach which is the conventional approach. It is therefore recommended that teachers of Literature in English should use the Moral Philosophical and Stylistics approaches in teaching poetry at the

senior secondary school level. Besides, government should provide learning materials that will enhance effective teaching and learning like projectors, computers video clips of the prescribed texts in schools. Also, school libraries should be stocked with literature books so that students who do not have can borrow.

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