The Quest for Improved Learning Outcomes in Literature-in-English among Senior Secondary School Students in Ibadan, Nigeria: Teachers' Instructional Organisation in Focus

Evelyn I. Aiyede, Ph.D

evelynaiyede@yahoo.com

Abstract

This study examined the relationship between teachers' instructional organisation and academic achievement of senior secondary school students in Literature-in-English in Ibadan, Nigeria using the survey design of the correlational type as the research design. The participants were 20 Literature-in-English teachers and 436 students in intact classes from 20 senior secondary schools in Ibadan. Instruments used were Achievement Test in Literature-in-English (r=0.78) and Teachers Instructional Organisation Scale (r=0.81). Two research questions were answered using descriptive statistics and Pearson Product Moment Correlation at 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that teachers' instructional organisation was poor ($\bar{x}$ = 2.62) against the threshold of 3.0; and that instructional organisation correlated positively with students' achievement in Literature-in-English. Consequent on these findings, it is recommended that teachers should attend professional development programmes such as seminars and workshops to improve their instruction organisation skill for improved learning outcomes of students.

Keywords: Instructional organisation, Lesson delivery, Teaching-learning process, Achievement in Literature-in-English, Senior secondary school students in Ibadan

Introduction

The various subjects in the school curriculum contribute in different ways to human and national development. So, the emphasis placed on certain subjects in preference to others may, to some extent, reflect their contributions to human and social developments. One of such subjects is Literature- in-English. The use of literature as a vital instrument for moral and intellectual development of the individual and society dates back to the ancient times when literature, in the forms of poetry, songs, drama or oral prose, served as an instrument of entertainment, relaxation and education. Literature also plays an important role as a subject in the curriculum of secondary schools where it is taught as Literature-in-English. Teaching Literature-in-English at secondary school level aims at promoting a systematic development of both the language skills and literary knowledge considered essential ingredient for effective use of English in oral and written communication and in learning other school subjects.

Literature has three major genres and they include; poetry, prose and drama. Poetry deals with the personal emotions of the poet or with what is happening in the poet's society. It is usually written in a specially arranged line which is known as verse. It involves an expression of powerful feelings of the poet. It is of various types, such as lyric, elegy, ode, sonnet, ballad etc (Ajimuda 2008; Kehinde, 2012). Drama can simply be described as play written to be acted. A drama text is best when it is acted on stage. Students need to participate effectively in such activities for academic improvement. It involves some casts or actors, use of costumes and various strategic actions (Fakeye and Adebile 2012). Prose is a short or long story written in chapters. It is a narrative of events which could be verbal or written. It is a form of literature that does not conform to any literary pattern and differs from other genres in its literary form (Njoku, 2006).

Literature in English is one of the subjects that could help in the actualisation of the following Nigerian philosophy of education: (a) To live in unity and harmony as one indivisible, indissoluble, democratic and sovereign nation founded on the principles of freedom and justice, and (b) To promote inter-African solidarity and world peace through understanding. (NPE, 2013; Section 1 paragraph 2). It is obvious that literature not only helps to know more about diversity of human cultures, it also helps to understand human nature itself. Its scope covers works of art from different parts of Nigeria, Africa, Europe and other parts of the world, building students to get acquainted with the lifestyle of people from a wide spectrum of societies. This, according to Obichukwu (2009) and Amokeodo (2012), is likely to bring about understanding and tolerance of people of different tribes, tongues and nationalities, leading to better world peace.

Literature helps in moulding and forming students' character morally and intellectually. Instruction in Literature-in-English in Nigerian classroom has remained a means of entertainment and a veritable tool for the preservation of societal values, norms, customs, beliefs and traditions. The teaching / learning of Literature-in-English in schools is capable of improving students' knowledge of the different skills of the English language. The subject also plays a vital role in the exposure of learners to different peoples, customs and cultural practices. Thus, instruction in literature is not abstract to learners because it showcases everyday experience of mankind and mirrors the society thereby preparing the learners to actively participate as functional members of the society. Literature-in-English facilitates linguistic and intellectual development because it serves as an instrument of education.

Idialu (2014) identifies the purpose of studying Literature-in-English in Nigerian secondary schools as comprehensive exposure to literary materials, cultures and people/characters through the study of prose, poetry and drama. Amuta (2014) states that instruction in Literature-in-English in the

secondary school system in Nigeria not only helps to know more about diversity of human cultures, it also helps to understand human nature itself. This is because the scope of the recommended texts studied in the subject often covers works of art from different parts of Nigeria, Africa, and other Non-African countries. Therefore, the study of Literature-in-English in Nigerian secondary schools offers advantages such as building social tolerance and exposure to different cultures, and values across the globe. Such exposures and contacts could benefit learners by helping them to build acquaintance with other people's lifestyle, culture, and human nature in general.

Despite the invaluable contributions of literature to the overall development of human beings, feelers from the Nigerian educational scene show that students' performance in Literature in English at public examinations is poor. Besides, the security of lives and property as well as peaceful coexistence of different ethnic groups that make up the Nigerian nation have come under severe threats as exemplified by boundary disputes, all forms of altercations and banditry being currently witnessed in Nigeria. All these are clear pointers to ineffective teaching of Literature-in-English in schools. The poor performance of students in Literature in English has been attributed to poor quality of teaching and learning of the subject at secondary schools which invariably have been held accountable for poor results turned in by the students at public examinations on yearly basis.

Confirming this, the WAEC Chief Examiner's report (2019) says that students who sat for the examination could not exhibit mastery of texts as expected of candidates preparing for an examination. Candidate over-relied on short notes perhaps due to laziness on their part rather than to study the actual texts. Several factors have been attributed to the lingering problem of poor performance in Literature-in-English in public examinations. For example, The *WAEC Chief Examiners' Report* (2019) explained that poor reading and comprehension of the recommended texts led to shallow answers and responses by the students to examination questions.

The poor learning outcomes always recorded in literature has also been explained as one of the causes of inability of the subject to contribute fully to the realisation of the objectives of the Nigeria Philosophy of education of inculcating national consciousness and unity in students (NPE, 2013). Consequently, as noted by Adebile (2015), the spate of ethno-religious crisis around the country and various threats to peace and security in Nigeria are instances of the failure of Literature-in-English to justify its inclusion in the secondary school curriculum.

Attempts to improve students' achievement in Literature-in-English have prompted scholars to experiment with several learner-centred instructional strategies (Ayanniyi, 2009; Ogunyinka, 2011; Gafar, 2012; Amuta, 2014; Icheku, 2017). Some other studies (Idialu, 2014; Adebile,2015) investigated students-related variables that could predict achievement in Literature-in-English. Though these studies contributed to the body of knowledge, of the so many pedagogical factors, it is only teacher's instructional strategies and student factors that earlier studies focused on without consideration for others.

To this end, there is the need to shift research focus from teaching strategies and student-related factors to other pedagogical factors. Pedagogical factors are those variables relating to classroom instruction. Ajagbe (2022) notes that pedagogy focuses on the entire planning of a teacher to deliver contents using a systematic way in teaching and learning. Fakeye (2013) views pedagogy as the relationship between teaching /learning and the needs and well-being of the learner. The facts that various instructional strategies have been researched in the teaching and learning of Literature-in-English without much success in bringing about improvement in achievement in the subject, triggers the interest in focusing on other pedagogical factors namely, subject mastery, instructional organisation, questioning behaviour and assessment practices. At this juncture, it should be noted that success of the students in any examination partly depends on qualified and dedicated teachers who are able to organise instruction in such a way that it meets the need of the different students in the classroom.

Instructional organisation has been described as effective plan and arrangement of the steps and processes of instruction logically and coherently. Teachers' instructional organisation entails the skilful planning and organisation of lessons by the teacher. Schunk and Zimmerman (1998) observe that learning takes place with ease and faster under teachers that are well organised. This has also been found to be an important variable in improving students' academic achievement and attitude of learners. The teachers as the implementer of the curriculum would have to determine how they can systematically teach every topic that is lined up in Literature-in- English syllabus. The starting point to this is for the teachers to ensure that the content of the lesson would have to reflect the uniqueness of the students in terms of age, class and ability. Also, the teacher would have to create a rich learning environment in the classroom, one that provides many opportunities for students to engage with content and peers, to study and grow in knowledge. This will also involve the systematic use of various instructional materials, teaching methods and strategies (Ogunyinka, 2011). Thus, when an instructor is prepared and organized, confidence level increases; anxiety decreases; and teaching/learning is enhanced.

The way a teacher organises instruction will directly affect students' views of themselves as successful learners. Teachers organise instructions based upon their beliefs about students' learning. Thus, teachers' understanding of the effects of instructional organisation becomes crucial to the success of learning (Ames and Ames, 2004). Elochukwu (2001) avers that

the process of teaching and learning involve the dissemination of ideas, skills, knowledge, values and attitude from the teachers to the students and it must be properly organised. Ogunyinka (2011) posits that a teacher must be able to organise instruction in such a way that it would meet the need of his or her students in a multi-dimensional state during the process of teaching and learning in the classroom.

Findings from studies on the relationship between instructional organisation and students' achievement have been conflicting. For example, Gunter, Estes, and Schwab (2013) report a positive relationship between teachers' instructional organisation and students' achievement in Mathematics. The scholars also report that quality learning takes place when the teacher takes students through a clearly sequenced instructional procedure. However, the findings of a study by Fakeye and Aiyede (2016) show that teachers' instructional organisation has a negative and very weak relationship with students' achievement in English Language. The foregoing has shown that there is no consensus in research findings on the link between teachers' instructional organisation and students learning outcomes. This calls for further studies on the extent to which teachers' instructional organisation would predict students' achievement in and attitude to Literature-in-English.

Statement of the Problem

Literature-in-English is one of the subjects offered at the senior secondary school level in Nigeria because of its numerous values that could help in building well-adjusted citizens. However, despite the importance of the subject, studies have shown that students' achievement in and attitude to it are not encouraging. Though scholars have experimented with different strategies of teaching and learning the subject, results from these studies have not translated to significant improvement in students' performance in the subject because other pedagogical variables such as subject mastery, instructional organisation, questioning behaviour and assessment practices were not considered. Studies have established a strong link between this teacher variables and general academic success. However, to the best of the knowledge of the researcher, this variable has not been examined for its influence on students' achievement in Literature-in-English in Ibadan, Nigeria. Therefore, this study investigated teacher instructional organisation as a correlate of students' achievement in Literature-in-English in selected senior secondary schools in Ibadan, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in this study:

1. What is the Literature-in-English teachers' rating in instructional organisation?
2. What is the relationship between teacher, instructional organisation and students' achievement in Literature-in-English?

Scope of the Study

The study covered SS II Literature-in-English students and their teachers from 20 senior secondary schools in five local government areas in Ibadan Metropolis, Oyo State. It investigated the relationship between teacher instructional organisation and students' achievement in Literature-in-English. The achievement test covered the prescribed texts which have been studied in the affected schools as stated in the WASSCE syllabus on Literature-in-English from 2021 – 2024.

Significance of the Study

Findings from this research are significant in many respects. The findings of this study have revealed that teachers' rating in instructional organisation was very poor. It also showed that the way teachers organised instruction correlated positively with students' achievement in Literature-in-English thereby identifying factors to be addressed in improving learning outcomes in the subject. This study has also revealed the important area of professional development for teachers of Literature-in-English.

Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive research design of correlational type as it investigated the extent to which the teacher instructional organisation correlated with students' achievement in Literature-in-English. The participants of this research were drawn from the public senior secondary schools in Ibadan. The simple random sampling was used to select five local government areas from the 11 Local Government Areas in Ibadan metropolis, Oyo State. The purposive random sampling was used to select four senior secondary schools from each of the five Local Government Areas, making a total of 20 schools that participated in the study. The selection of participating schools in this study was based on the following criteria:

I. The school must have at least a graduate teacher of Literature-in-English.
ii. The subject teacher must possess at least five years of experience of teaching Literature-in-English.
iii. Schools that have treated the prescribed Literature-in-English texts at the time the Literature-in-English Achievement test questions were drawn.
iv. Schools that were willing to participate in the study.

One intact class of SSII Literature-in-English students and one teacher teaching SSII Literature-in-English were selected from each school making a total of 20 teachers that participated in the study. In all, a total of 436 students participated in the study. The instruments used were Achievement Test in Literature-in-English (r=0.78) and Teacher Instructional

Organisation Scale (r=0.81). The teachers were informed about the purpose of the research and what it entailed. Also, briefing sessions was organised for teachers and students that participated in the study. This was followed by the training of four Postgraduate students in Language Education as research assistants who helped to observe teachers during lessons. The teachers were observed twice in each of the twenty schools on instructional organisation by the trained research assistants. The administration and collection of teachers' and students' instruments covered a period of about four weeks.

Results

Research Question one: What is the Literature-in-English teachers' rating in instructional organisation?

Table 1: Literature-in-English Teachers' Instructional Organisation

S/N	Statements	5	4	3	2	1	Mean	STD.D
1	The teacher reviews topics covered in previous lessons	18 5.4%	86 25.6%	115 34.5%	102 30.4%	15 4.5%	2.97	0.98
2	The teacher states major objectives	12 3.6%	23 6.8%	148 44.0%	151 44.9%	2 0.6%	2.68	0.76
3	The teacher give preliminary overview at the start of the lesson	41 12.2%	65 19.3%	100 29.8%	95 28.3%	35 10.4%	2.95	1.18
4	The teacher distinguishes topics and signals transition	27 8.0%	40 11.9%	43 12.8%	143 42.6%	83 24.7%	2.36	1.10
5	The teacher outlines points on blackboard	27 8.0%	179 53.3%	59 17.6%	24 7.1%	47 14.0%	3.34	0.71
6	He/she uses explaining links (because, since, therefore) and other organisation cues	64 19.0%	30 8.9%	165 49.1%	77 22.9%	- -	3.24	0.75
7	He/she indicates end of sections and start of new topics	- -	141 42.0%	98 29.2%	52 15.5%	45 13.4%	3.00	1.06
8	He/she avoids excessive digressions from major topics	- -	29 8.6%	120 35.7%	135 40.2%	52 15.5%	2.38	0.85
9	He/she emphasises major points in plan (e.g., pauses, raising the voice, repeating, speaking slowly)	- -	19 5.7%	86 25.6%	138 41.1%	93 27.7%	2.09	0.87
10	He/she periodically summarizes previous points	- -	36 10.7%	74 22.0%	131 39.0%	95 28.3%	2.15	0.96
11	The teacher relates the lesson to real life experience	10 3.0%	72 21.4%	104 31.0%	94 28.0%	56 16.7%	2.68	1.08
12	The teacher plans to end the lesson by summarising the lesson	10 3.0%	80 23.8%	101 30.1%	75 22.3%	70 20.8%	2.66	1.14
13	The teacher reviews main topics	- -	18 5.4%	99 29.5%	109 32.4%	110 32.7%	2.07	0.91
14	The teacher uses verbal and nonverbal cues to drive home his/her points	- -	12 3.6%	82 24.4%	93 27.7%	149 44.3%	1.87	.90
15	The teacher previews topics to be covered in future classes	- -	22 6.5%	72 21.4%	120 35.7%	122 36.3%	1.98	0.92

Weighted Mean = 2.62, Criterion Mean = 3.00

Result on Table 1 shows that the weighted mean of the rating of the teachers in instructional organisation is 2.62 as against the threshold of 3.00. This means that teachers' instructional organisation was poor.

Table 2: Correlation Matrix of Instructional Organisation and Achievement in Literature-in-English

Construct	Achievement in Literature -in-English	Teachers' Instructional Organisation
Achievement in Literature -in-English	1	
Teachers Instructional Organisation	0.60* .000	1
Mean	25.50	21.05
Std. Deviation	5.93	3.32

*Denotes relationship significant at 0.05 level.

Table 2 shows the results of Pearson Product moment correlation conducted to explore the relationship between teachers' instructional organisation and students achievement in Literature-in-English. There was a significant relationship between teachers' instructional organisation and students' achievement in Literature-in-English [r=0.60].

Discussion of the Findings

Literature-in-English Teachers' Instructional Organisation

Findings revealed that the sampled Literature-in-English teachers at senior secondary schools in Ibadan exhibited poor instructional organisation. This perhaps is traceable to the fact that majority of the teachers did not participate frequently in professional development activities such as capacity building and MDG training workshops which could help to improve their instructional organisation. This finding agrees with Mustapha (2012) who found in a study that teachers' instructional organisation in English Language was good. It, however, contradicts that of Edun (2020) who found that Social Studies teachers exhibited good instructional organisation. The finding is also at variance with Aina (2018) who reported that preservice teachers had good instructional organisation in oral English during teaching practice. The contradictions in the finding of this study and those of Edun (2020) and Aina(2018) reported above might be owing to differences in the participants and location of the earlier studies. Knowledge is dynamic and it grows daily.

Teachers' Instructional Organisation and Students' Achievement in Literature-in-English

The result of the study revealed that teachers' instructional organisation had a positive relationship with students' achievement in Literature-in-English. This finding is not surprising considering the fact that the way the teacher organises instruction affects students' views of themselves as successful learners. In addition, quality learning takes place when the teacher takes students through a clearly sequenced instructional procedure. This finding accords perfectly with those of Palmer (2011) and Gunter (2013) who found in separate studies that teachers' instructional organisation significantly correlated with students' achievement in Mathematics, Science and English language respectively. However, this finding contradicts the submissions of Glory and Akpan (2017), Green (2008) and Mustapha (2019) that teachers' instructional organisation was not significantly related to students' achievement in English language, Biology and Social studies respectively.

Conclusion

The study investigated teachers' instructional organisation as a correlate of achievement in Literature-in-English in Ibadan, Nigeria. Teachers' instructional organisation was found to be capable of influencing students' achievement in Literature-in-English. The study had thus provided a better understanding of an important pedagogical variable that could influence students' achievement in Literature-in-English.

Recommendation

The following recommendations are made in the light of the findings of the study:

1. Literature-in-English teachers should be exposed to regular training workshops, conferences, seminars and symposia to constantly update their skill of instructional organisation.
2. Teachers should also organise Literature-in-English instruction in such a way that students are adequately engaged with the prescribed texts in order to enhance their academic achievement.
3. School administrators should ensure constant monitoring of Literature-in-English instruction to ensure that teachers display high level of instructional organisation to facilitate good academic achievement.

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