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Effects of Response Journal and Peer-Response Strategies on Senior Secondary School Students' Learning Outcomes in Prose Genre in Ife-East Local Government Area, Osun State Nigeria

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Abstract:

The study examined the effects of response journal, peer-response and conventional strategies on Senior Secondary School Students' achievement and attitude in prose genre in Ife-East Local Government Area (LGA), Osun State.

The study employed the pretest-posttest quasi-experimental control group research design. The population for the study comprised students in Senior Secondary School Two (SS II) in the Arts class in Ife-East Local Government Area (LGA), Osun State. The sample consisted of Literature-in-English students in their intact classes. Senior Secondary Two (SS II) students were selected. Three public schools were selected for the study in the LGA using simple random sampling technique. Two research instruments were used for data collection, namely Achievement Test in Prose (ATP) and Students' Attitude to Prose Questionnaire (SAPQ). There were pretest and posttest of all groups to ascertain their level of performance and the effects of the strategies on the students' learning outcomes in prose. Data collected were analysed using percentage, mean and Analysis of Co-Variance (ANCOVA).

The results revealed that there was a significant effect of response journal, peer-response and conventional strategies on SS11 students' achievement in prose in Ife-East LGA ($F= 14.49, p < 0.05$). The results also showed that there was a significant difference in attitude of students taught prose using response journal, peer response and conventional strategies in the selected senior secondary schools ($F= 12.47, p < 0.05$). The study concluded that the response journal and peer-response strategies had positive significant effects on students' achievement in prose in the senior secondary schools in Ife-East Local Government Area of Osun State.

Keywords: Peer response, Response journal, Achievement, Prose and Attitude.

Introduction

Literature is a creative work of arts which uses language and other artistic features to talk about life. It is an imaginative work of arts that mirrors life and, most times, focuses on the culture, beliefs, customs, religion and historical values particularly people and society. Literature therefore, is a reflection of man's life and creative representation of life. The materials for literature are drawn from the author's experience and observation of life. The author selects from his/her experience and shapes this to achieve some purposes which include criticism and entertainment. Although literature is related to life, it should be noted that literature is not an actual reproduction of life since the events and characters in literature are merely fictional except in non-fictional narratives. In literature, language shapes the perception of things. Language helps the understanding of literature, as it is the instrument used to compare, analyse and understand what is read (Oripeloye, 2017).

Being a form of artistic composition (spoken or written) which can be appreciated, literature is studied in schools at the primary school, secondary school and tertiary levels. At the junior secondary school level, it is not taught as a separate subject because it is subsumed under English Studies. Therefore, combination of both Literature and English is called English Studies. The English studies syllabus is such that larger percentage of English Language topics features prominently than Literature-in-English. The Poor teaching or neglect of literature or lack of it in Junior Secondary School accounts for the poor passes or failures at the Senior Secondary School Certificate examination over the years. However, at the senior secondary school level, it is taught as a separate subject in the humanities as stipulated in the National Policy on Education (NPE) (Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2014).

Lerer (2003) states that teaching Literature-in-English is not about walking into the classroom, read about some literary texts and waiting till inspiration hits. It is all about organising the critical analysis of how written texts represent imagined world and how imagined world represents the environment. Literature-in-English can bring man into close contact with the real world more than he can ever have been brought without a degree of personal experience, for which the span of life is insufficient.

Response journal and peer-response strategies have been discovered to be efficient teaching strategies for prose (Okolo, 1993). He found out that due to the complexity of language used in prose and the abstract nature of most concepts in literature, there is need for teachers to ensure students are given opportunity to critique, analyse and review the writings



of their peers, as constructive criticism is very important for the development of the skill of the student. Such opportunities are available in learner-centred strategies. These strategies are practicable in the classroom. It is instructive that the skill that the student eventually acquires is dependent on how these strategies have effects on students' achievement in prose, students' attitude to prose.

Prose as a genre of Literature, is an important aspect of literature. It is believed to be oldest of the literary genres. Literature itself is considered very crucial because it is the vehicle for societies to give sensitive expression to the innermost thoughts and feelings of individuals as well as the community (Inyang, 2009). There are three broad genres of Literature: prose, drama and poetry. Prose is also a genre of literature, Coker (2013) argues that the novel is a prose narrative form like the epic and the romance. The novel is a long narrative in prose form usually fictitious in the presentation of characters and events. The character and events represent actual life experiences that are presented in a complex plot structure. The novel, according to Coker (2013), contains stories, events and experiences that are new. As a genre of literature, the novel presents imaginative characters who are involved in everyday activities. The fact that a novel deals with imaginary activities does not take real places or locations and actual people away from the narration but it only looks at the people as archetypes as the writer uses them to show the complex nature of human relations and how people try to solve the problem of everyday life.

Prose involves creating a sense of imagination and illusion of reality which Literature is generally noted for. It is believed that prose is easier to read than poetry and drama. As such, it helps to develop a lifelong goal for reading as well as enhancing the cognitive and affective skill in Literature and reading. Prose is always written in plain and easily comprehended language and it is an ordinary non-metrical form of writing or spoken language. It is a long narrative with a wide range of characters, events and experiences. Prose also makes up of characters and it is written in a straight forward language. Prose is a kind of writing that is not poetic. Ibitoye (2005) notes that one major characteristic of prose is the use of action. Action in prose is of two types; rising and falling action. This is the stage in the growth and development of the plot, which proceeds, leading up to the climax. Falling action on the other hand is that stage of the prose which comes between the climax and the conclusion. A prose lacks an established regular rhythmic pattern associated with poetry. It makes use of continuous writing ideas that are sometimes connected. It may also consist of dialogue, chapters and paragraphs. Furthermore, prose consists of cast, setting and resolution. Examples of prose are Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, Elechi Amadi's *Joys of*

Motherhood. Prose is studied in schools so as to make the students recall the incidents in fiction that are feasible in life and that can refine their sensibility.

Response journal and peer-response strategies have been discovered to be efficient teaching strategies for prose (Okolo, 1993). He found out that due to the complexity of language used in prose and the abstract nature of most concepts in literature, there is need for teachers to ensure students are given opportunity to critique, analyse and review the writings of their peers, as constructive criticism is very important for the development of the skill of the student. Such opportunities are available in learner-centred strategies. These strategies are practicable in the classroom. It is instructive that the skill that the student eventually acquires is dependent on how these strategies have effects on students' achievement in prose, students' attitude to prose. Response journal strategy, according to Brownlie (2005) provides learners with an opportunity to record their personal thoughts, emotions, ideas, questions, reflections, connections, and new learning on what they hear, view, read, write, discuss and think. Response journal is on the other hand expressed as allowing students to remember to hold on to their thinking about what they are reading (Zimmermann, 1997). Response journals are easily implemented at all levels. Response journals can be used with any genre of literature (poetry, short stories, drama, media text, novel studies) and in different content areas that use expository text.

Response journals should be introduced as soon as possible using scaffolding such as sentence frames or prompts to start. The goal should be to have students enter the middle years feeling comfortable with recording their responses to reading with little or no scaffolding. Students must be part of the criteria setting process. This will enable students to set clear and realistic goals. Teachers may choose to examine journal entries as evidence of student writing at the draft stage. However, this does not mean that students cannot choose one of their responses to further enhance their writing and publish at a later date. Brownlie (2005) asserts that when using the response journal, teachers must ensure to assess for content not conventions. What we as educators want is that their writing enables students to personalize a story and gain insights about the character, to help them reflect, and to help them see the world in a different way (Brownlie, 2005). Our reflections are the making of deeper meaning and richer understandings. Our reflections are our dreams, our ideas, our questions, our initiatives, our visions our journeys of lifelong learning and teaching (Schwartz & Bone, 1995).

Writing responses to literature is an integral part of understanding the ideas in the literature. Through the use of response journals or entries, students can ask questions about



the literature, respond to characters' decision-making skills, make connections to their own lives, and make meaning for themselves. When it is prose, the response of students is determined largely by their ability to comprehend its' plain and complexities. Hence, when reading a novel, it is expected to have a journal in which the reader can make notes and references from the themes of the novel and also form an opinion in order to have a better understanding of the novel.

Peer-respond strategy is an instructional strategy in which groups of children under the guidance of the teacher work together through a given instructional assignment with a brilliant child, the peer teacher, providing assistance and instruction to others, the peer students. Peer-teaching is also theoretically based on the conceptions of the cognitive theorists like Vygotsky who proposed the zone of proximal development. The proposal points to the child's ability to profit from interaction with more competent peers (Igbo, 2004). The teacher who adopts the peer teaching strategy will identify the high, middle and low achievers amongst the students. The high achievers are used as the peer teachers and middle/low achievers are assigned in their small numbers to the peer teachers for instruction and assistance. The teacher prepares the lesson plan and reviews it for the peer teachers in sequential order. He also trains the peer teacher on how to inform, reward and relate to the students. Both the cooperative learning and peer teaching are child-centered instructional approaches, which are approaches recommended on the National Policy on Education for teaching literature in English (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014).

Peer-response (peer assessment) is a process through which students respond to and provide feedback on their peers' writing. They are not meant to take the place of teacher evaluation, but when incorporated into the writing process, they can be useful learning tools for both the writer and the student providing feedback. In other words, peer-response refers to the use of learners as sources of information for each other in such a way that learners assume role and responsibilities normally taken on by a formally trained teacher, tutor, or editor in commenting on and critiquing each other's drafts in both written and oral formats in the process of writing.

A substantial amount of research has been carried out on peer-response during the last three decades, showing its growing importance in schools worldwide. It is by far considered to have positive effects on students' learning and achievement in prose genre. Lundstrom & Baker (2009) asserted that the wanted and perceived benefits of using peer response is that students get a more developed sense of self-regulation, audience awareness as well as the possibility of using it as a tool to increase the students' awareness of their own learning.

However, in spite of the positive attitude towards the usage of peer-response, there are quite a few difficulties that need to be overcome if peer-response is to work in the classroom and achieve its aims (Tang 1999).

According to Rollinson (2005), one of the biggest concerns among students is that their peers are not proficient enough to provide feedback. Furthermore, friendship bias is a problem found in peer-response (Cheng & Warren, 2005; Harris & Brown, 2013; Tang & Tithecott, 1999). Peer response is considered important by school teachers, but the question is how much of it is used and if it is used, how many are used in the most efficient ways? The aspects to consider when using peer-response are many, and teachers might sometimes ask if it is really beneficial and worth the time. The benefits of giving feedback have been examined in a study conducted by Lundstrom and Baker (2009), where two groups of students were given two different tasks depending on which group they belonged to. One of the groups was assigned to give peer-response and the other one was assigned to receive peer-response. Both of the groups were given the same essay which was written by a student of their proficiency level. The group that received feedback was to revise the essay (with help of comments in the margins), and the group that gave feedback was to provide suggestions on how the essay could be improved (with the 3 comments in the margins removed). However, the students were never given the opportunity to give feedback on essays that their peers had written, nor did they receive feedback on their own writing. This was done so that the researchers could “control for differences in students writing”.

The results of the study showed that the students who got the opportunity to give peer-response improved their writing more between the pre- and post-test than the students who only got to use feedback to revise. The students who improved the most were beginners, and they improved in overall and global writing aspects, which include organization, development and cohesion. Hence it follows that giving peer-response was beneficial. Adedeji (2014) reports on benefits of peer-response detected in interviews with senior secondary students. Firstly, students claimed to learn while reading their peers' writing because they, sometimes, included ways of thinking and structuring that are new to the reader. Furthermore, if the texts contained errors, the students could also learn from that because they made the same errors themselves. Secondly, students reported that because of the similarities in their proficiency level and background, they could understand the writing of each other better than their tutor sometimes could. Thirdly, students felt more comfortable when discussing feedback with their peers than when they discussed it with their tutors, which led to deeper discussions and coverage of more areas with potential for improvement.



Similarly, Nwachukwu (2005) found that students from a secondary school in Enugu reported on the benefits of making suggestions for improvement while giving peer-response. They suggested that in order to be able to give good suggestions they needed to look up new words. These words were then later integrated in the students' vocabulary. In addition, the students claimed to have gained more awareness of their own writing and difficulties, and started to look for solutions for themselves in the same way as they looked for solutions for their peers when giving peer-response.

Abiodun (2005) conducted a study on his students over the course of three years in order to develop an effective practice for peer-response. At the end of the research period, when he had found a way of working that both he and the students were happy with, several benefits of peer-response were suggested. The students claimed that they learnt much about literature just by reading what their peers had written, as learnt during the course of the peer-response practice. Moreover, they believed that their peers had good suggestions for improving texts they had written. Motivation was also a factor, as the peer-response made it possible for more people than the teacher to read the writing of the students. This also contributed to making the students more aware of the audience when they were writing, possibly making the assignments feel more real and less of just a text for school.

Villamil and de Guerrero (1998) conducted a study regarding the impact of peer-response on writing. They found that receiving comments from their peers had a great effect on the students, who incorporated much of the feedback that they were given. Furthermore, Villamil and de Guerrero (1998) suggested that the peer-response used may have led to a degree of self-regulation. That is, the students were influenced to take more responsibility for their texts through the act of giving and receiving feedback from their peers, as well as they became more aware of their texts and what could be done to change them. Moreover, the students' awareness of their audience increased when they were writing, as they now had to write so that their peers would be able to understand them and not only their teacher. In similarity to this, Rollison (2005) suggested that writers need an audience, and the best audience is one that can give response immediately, so that the writer can change potentially confusing or difficult aspects of the text.

In her book on the use of peer-response groups, Løkensgard (2001) pointed out that students benefit from peer-response because of the zone of proximal development. By working together, students will learn from each other and teach each other new concepts and perspectives. This can happen when working with both written interaction and when reading other students' texts. This way, students can borrow parts from each other's texts, come up

with solutions of how to make peers' texts better and also improve their own writing. Lokensgard (2001) asserted that peer-response contributes to making students more aware of their own learning.

Another benefit that was pointed out is that students developed "a sense of ownership of text". They did not feel obligated to use all the comments they received, they rather discussed them with their peers and after that decided if they wanted to use them in their revisions. Furthermore, students claimed that it was helpful to work with peer-response because they had a chance to help each other. They recognized that they had different areas of knowledge and that they could fill the gap for other students as well that they could be helped to fill theirs. In addition, it was not only receiving comments from peers that helped in revising texts, it was also the act of giving feedback. By spotting weaknesses in their peers' writing, the students became more aware of their own writing; hence they could improve it even without much input from peers or their teacher.

Also, Bennett (2009) asserted that students reported to have gained self-confidence by working in the response groups; the consciousness of having an audience was reported by the students while one of them explained that when the teacher is the only person reading the text that he has produced, he does not have to try so hard to make the teacher understand. However, when he was aware that his peers were going to read what he had written, he wanted to make sure that they would understand what his intentions with the text were. It is evident that the importance of peer-response cannot be overemphasized in the teaching and learning process.

Teaching and learning Literature-in-English, particularly prose in Nigerian secondary schools and the overall effects of the strategies adopted by teachers on students' performance in the subject have attracted scholars' attention. Existing studies have examined the effect of discussion method of teaching prose, "take-your-book-and-read" approach, poor pedagogy, planning, presentation, non-genres-specific, using narration therapy to demystify the mystery that surrounds the comprehension of prose, and applying linguistic stylistic techniques in teaching and learning of prose (Ogunaike, 2002; Labo-Popoola, 2010; Fakeye, 2012). However, the place of response journal and peer-response strategies, particularly with respect to their effects on students' achievement in prose, and students' attitude to prose appear not to have received adequate scholarly attention. Therefore, there is need to fill this gap.



The purpose of the study is to investigate the effects of response journal and peer-response strategies on students' achievement in prose in senior secondary schools in Ife-East LGA, Osun State. The specific objectives of the study are to:

- (i) examine the effects of response journal, peer-response and conventional strategies on senior secondary school students' achievement in prose in Ife-East LGA, Osun State;
- (ii) assess the effects of response journal, peer-response and conventional strategies on the students' attitude to prose in the LGA.

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested:

- i. There is no significant effect of response journal, peer-response and conventional strategies on senior secondary school students' achievement in prose in Ife-East LGA, Osun State before and after the treatment.
- ii. There is no significant difference in the attitudes of students taught prose using response journal, peer response and conventional strategies in the selected senior secondary schools before and after being exposed to the treatment.

Methodology

The study employed the pretest posttest quasi-experimental control group design. The population for the study comprised students in Senior Secondary School Two (SS II) in the Arts class in Ife-East Local Government Area (LGA), Osun State. The sample consisted of Literature-in-English students in their intact classes. Senior Secondary Two (SS II) students were selected and three public schools were selected for the study in the LGA using simple random sampling technique. Literature-in-English students in their intact classes were used from each sampled school. There were two experimental groups and one control group. The groups were taught one African prose and one non-African prose which were randomly selected. Experimental Groups A and B were exposed to response journal and peer-response strategies respectively in appreciating the novel, while the control group was taught the novel using the teacher expository strategy.

Two research instruments were used for data collection namely: Achievement Test in Prose (ATP) and Students' Attitude to Prose Questionnaire (SAPQ) and were validated using expert judgement from the fields of Curriculum Development and Language Education in the

Department of Arts and Social Science Education, Obafemi Awolowo University. Field testing of the two research instruments was carried out on literature students outside the experiment who were also in their penultimate class. Reliability of the ATP was determined using test-retest while SAPQ was determined using Cronbach Alpha. The ATP after it was administered twice to the same respondents within two weeks interval was found to possess a reliability coefficient of 0.73 while the result of the Cronbach Alpha of the SAPQ was found to be 0.88 indicating that the items on the instruments are internally consistent. Data collected were analysed based on the hypotheses stated and analysis of Co-variance (ANCOVA) was used to analyse hypotheses one and two.

Results

Hypothesis One:

There is no significant effect of response journal, peer-response and conventional strategies on senior secondary school students' achievement in prose in Ife-East Local Government Area (LGA), Osun State. To test this hypothesis, the scores obtained from the Prose Achievement Tests of each student taught using response journal, peer-response and conventional strategies were subjected to tests of difference using Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) with their pre-test scores used as covariates.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Posttest Scores Obtained from the Prose Achievement Tests of each Student Taught using Response Journal, Peer-response and Conventional Strategies

Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Control group	8.36	2.96	33
Peer response group	10.70	2.34	30
Response journal group	12.42	3.71	31
Total	10.45	3.47	94

Table 1 reveals the posttest mean scores of the students exposed to the different strategies. The students taught with the conventional strategy had a mean score of 8.36 while the students taught using the peer-response had a mean score of 10.70 and students taught with response journal strategy had a mean score of 12.42. This reveals that the response

journal strategy accounts for the highest average score followed by peer-response strategy and those exposed to the conventional strategy had the lowest.

Table 2: ANCOVA showing Effect of Response Journal, Peer-Response and Conventional Strategies on Senior Secondary School Students' Achievement in Prose

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	272.05 ^a	3	90.68	9.66	.000
Intercept	1075.25	1	1075.25	114.50	.000
Pretest	6.30	1	6.30	.67	.415
Group	272.05	2	136.02	14.49	.000
Error	845.18	90	9.39		
Total	11376.00	94			
Corrected Total	1117.23	93			

a. R Squared = .244 (Adjusted R Squared = .218)

From Table 2, given that $F = 14.49$, $p < 0.05$, it can be observed that there is a significant effect of response journal, peer-response and conventional strategies on senior secondary school students' achievement in prose. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 3: Post-Hoc Test showing Pairwise Comparisons of Mean Difference of Effect of Response Journal, Peer-Response and Conventional Strategies on Senior Secondary School Students' Achievement in Prose

(I) group	(J) group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig. ^b	95% Confidence Interval for Difference ^b	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Control group	Peer response group	-2.478*	.792	.002	-4.052	-.904
	Response journal group	-4.145*	.774	.000	-5.683	-2.607
Peer response	Control group	2.478*	.792	.002	.904	4.052

group	Response journal group	-1.667*	.787	.037	-3.231	-.102
Response journal group	Control group	4.145*	.774	.000	2.607	5.683
	Peer response group	1.667*	.787	.037	.102	3.231

Based on estimated marginal means

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

b. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Least Significant Difference (equivalent to no adjustments).

Given that there was a significant effect of response journal, peer-response and conventional strategies on senior secondary school students' achievement in prose, the results of the pairwise comparison in Table 3 reveals that the significant effect of response journal, peer-response and conventional strategies on senior secondary school students' achievement in prose was accounted for by both response journal, peer-response and conventional strategies. However, the mean difference was significantly higher when the response journal group was compared with the control group (p -value < 0.05).

Hypothesis Two:

There is no significant difference in the attitudes of students taught prose using response journal, peer-response and conventional strategies in the selected junior secondary schools.

To test this hypothesis, the scores obtained from the Prose Achievement Tests of each student taught using response journal, peer-response and conventional strategies was subjected to tests of difference using Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) with their pre-test scores used as covariates.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of Attitudes of Students Taught Prose using Response Journal, Peer Response and Conventional Strategies in the Selected Senior Secondary Schools

Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Control group	43.15	6.746	33
Peer response group	32.67	9.22	30

Response journal group	32.55	9.87	31
Total	36.31	9.92	94

Table 4 reveals that the students taught with the conventional strategy have mean attitudinal scores of 43.15 while the students taught using the peer-response and response journal strategies have mean attitudinal scores of 32.67 and 32.55 respectively. This indicated that the conventional strategy account for the highest average attitudinal score followed by peer-response and response journal with the lowest score.

Table 5: ANCOVA showing Difference in Attitudes of Students Taught Prose using Response Journal, Peer Response and Conventional Strategies in the Selected Senior Secondary Schools

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	2394.78 ^a	3	798.26	10.63	.000
Intercept	5005.08	1	5005.08	66.66	.000
Attitude pretest	13.31	1	13.31	.18	.675
Group	2247.29	2	1123.65	14.97	.000
Error	6757.28	90	75.08		
Total	133073.00	94			
Corrected Total	9152.05	93			

a. R Squared = .262 (Adjusted R Squared = .237)

From Table 5, given that $F = 14.97$, $p < 0.05$, it can be observed that there is a significant difference in attitudes of students taught poetry using response journal, peer response and conventional strategies in the selected senior secondary schools. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 6: Post-Hoc Test showing Pairwise Comparisons of Mean Attitudinal Score of Students Taught Prose using Response Journal, Peer Response and Conventional Strategies

(I) group	(J) group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig. ^b	95% Confidence Interval for Difference ^b	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Control group	Peer response group	10.278*	2.240	.000	5.828	14.729
	Response journal group	10.521*	2.176	.000	6.198	14.844
Peer response group	Control group	-10.278*	2.240	.000	-14.729	-5.828
	Response journal group	.243	2.239	.914	-4.205	4.691
Response journal group	Control group	-10.521*	2.176	.000	-14.844	-6.198
	Peer response group	-.243	2.239	.914	-4.691	4.205

Based on estimated marginal means

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

b. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Least Significant Difference (equivalent to no adjustments).

Given that there was a significant difference in attitudes of students taught prose using response journal, peer response and conventional strategies in the selected senior secondary schools. However, the result of the pairwise comparison in Table 6 reveals that the significant difference in mean attitudinal score of students taught prose using response journal, peer response and conventional strategies was accounted for by the control group (conventional strategy) when compared with the response journal and peer-response strategies. However, there was no significant mean difference when the response journal group was compared with the peer response group ($p > 0.05$).

Hypothesis one tested the effect of response journal, peer-response and conventional strategies on students' achievement in prose. The result of the study revealed that the response journal strategy when used among students would have a more positive impact on the students' achievement in prose when compared to peer-response strategy or the conventional strategy. This finding is in line with Brownlie (2005) that journals provide



learners with an opportunity to record their personal thoughts, emotions, ideas, questions, reflections, connections, and new learning on what they hear, view, read, write, discuss and think. The result also corroborated the findings of Lundstrom and Baker (2009) which showed that students given the opportunity to use response journal improved their writing more between the pre- and post-test than the students who only got to use feedback to revise. This is also in line with the finding of Nwachukwu (2005) that students taught using peer-response were more conscious of their own writing and looked for solutions for themselves in the same way as they looked for solutions for their peers when given their peers' work.

Hypothesis two tested the attitude of students taught using response journal, peer-response and those taught using the conventional strategies and the result showed that students taught using the conventional strategy had the best attitude towards poetry than students taught with the response journal and the peer-response strategies. This result corroborated the earlier finding of Afolabi (2008) that conventional strategies had more positive effect on the learners' attitude towards poetry than discussion method. This is, however, contrary to the report of the Kenya Ministry of Education presented at the International Conference on Education in September 2001 that learner-centred strategy actively engaged students in the learning process for effective mastery of the subject matter and promotion of a positive attitude towards the subject.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that response journal and peer-response strategies can be used effectively in improving senior secondary school students' achievement and promoting in them a more positive attitude to the genre.

Recommendations

From the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Literature-in-English teachers should ensure the use of various strategies especially student-centred strategies such as response journal and peer-response strategies that would improve the students' achievement in literature in senior secondary schools.
2. Since attitude can influence success or failure in learning, teachers should make sure that prose class is lively, interactive, interesting and attractive to promote a positive attitude in learners towards learning.

3. Teachers should endeavour that teaching of prose at the senior secondary school level should engage teaching strategies like peer-response and response journal that will stimulate sufficient independent reading and response to prose that can help learners to retain the concept taught.
4. The government and schools should work towards having separate teachers for prose.

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