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**E-Learning/Blended Learning/ICT in Education**

**Abstract**

The aim of this study was to examine the effects of Google Classroom instruction on Senior Secondary Students’ performance in Prose Appreciation in Bwari Area Council, Abuja. Five research questions and five hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The population of the study was one thousand, one hundred and forty-five students who offer literature in English as a subject, from fifteen Government Senior Secondary Schools in Bwari Area Council. A sample of one hundred and fifty-seven literature in English students were drawn from two Senior Secondary Schools in Bwari Area Council. Simple random sampling without replacement was used to sample two schools. Simple balloting was used to assign the experimental and control groups. A pre-test, post-test quasi experimental design was adopted for the study. Data was collected using a 25 item multiple choice Prose Appreciation Performance Test (PAPT). The instrument was validated by experts in in Tests and Measurements to ensure the face and content validity. A test of reliability was done to ensure the reliability of the instrument. The reliability was determined using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The data collected was analysed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions, while t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that the performance of students taught prose appreciation using Google Classroom was higher than those taught without the use of Google Classroom. Therefore, it is recommended that the Google Classroom instruction be combined with conventional teaching methods to improve students’ performance in prose appreciation.

**Introduction**

The period of the COVID-19 pandemic has clearly shown that using old ways to solve new problems cannot yield the desired results. This is because, the COVID-19 pandemic brought drastic changes to the conventional teaching and learning process in Nigeria. The life threatening virus does not allow for physical gathering and crowded environments anywhere, including schools, in order to avoid the spread of the virus which is highly contagious. The pandemic nearly brought the educational system in Nigeria to a halt, and necessitated the exploration of other ways for teachers to deliver instruction to students. Teachers of all subjects of the curriculum had to key into the new normal of using digital devices for teaching. Teachers of literature in English should not be left behind hence, the researcher intends to apply the same method to teach students prose appreciation in order to establish the usefulness of digital learning in improving students’ academic performance in prose. Prose is one of the three genres of literature that deals with long narratives, which require students to read, summarise and analyse in their own words. It consists of theme; which is an author’s main idea in a narrative, plot, this shows the sequence of events in an organised way, and setting, which reveals the location, time, period or era in which an author sets the narrative.

The use of digital technology in teaching might offer teachers of literature in English a good chance to make their work less stressful. However, in most Government Senior Secondary Schools in Bwari Area Council, prose appreciation is taught conventionally. That is, the teacher summarises the story after reading, identifies the major theme and analyses it. This means that the teacher directs the class without consideration to students’ understanding and active participation. This teaching method promotes the traditional approach to teaching, where the teacher is the sole authority in the classroom, instructing and directing the students in a way that the students may have little opportunity to express their ideas in a prose appreciation class. This process might direct students to memorise and recite without comprehension hence, students could lose interest in the subject. Most prose teachers in Government Senior Secondary Schools in Bwari are constrained by time allotted in the school’s time table for teaching prose to a large class and there are no provisions for extra lessons in prose, making it difficult to give attention to individual learners’ needs in order to enhance their understanding.

The computer is one of the devices explored by teachers in the quest for solving the problems generated by the COVID-19 pandemic in delivering instruction to students, owing to the fact that the computer is equipped with so ,any applications such as; Google Classroom, Skype, Zoom among others that can be manipulated to solve problems and enhance teaching without physical contact. According to Kim (2017), the computer was born out of the need to solve serious “number crunching” problems, rather than entertainment and e-mail. Today, the computer has gone beyond solving serious mathematical problems to solving serious problems associated with teaching and learning, such as the inability to physically interact in the classroom. The Google Classroom is an application that can be accessed and utilised with the aid of the computer, it is a learning management system which aims at engaging students in learning both online and physically. Izwan, Mohd, and Sarah (2016) state that the Google Classroom facilitate the teachers to create and organise assignments quickly, provide feedback efficiently, and communicate with their class with ease. This statement suggests that the Google Classroom might be essential in facilitating the teaching and learning of prose appreciation.

Olushola (2020) asserts that the Google classroom is a free paperless application. Simply put, the Google Classroom is a cost effective platform where students and teachers could interact at no cost at all. Azar and Iqbal (2018) opine that the Google Classroom can be used as a blended learning tool to elevate classroom productivity. This means that the Google Classroom instruction could complement, rather than replace face to face teaching thereby, creating a common ground for mix-mode learning to increase class effectiveness and learning objectives. Similarly, McGunnis (2021) describes the Google classroom as “mission control” for the classroom. McGunnis’ description of the Google Classroom suggests that the Google Classroom has strong appeal to maximise students’ attention span and could be applied to any teaching and learning situation.

The Senior Secondary School students in Bwari Area Council have different learning strategies, and delivering instruction to them through the conventional method alone could pose difficulty in their comprehension skills, analytical skills, critical thinking skills, objective reasoning skills and decision making skills. As a result, they may have little knowledge of these skills that they cannot do without in prose appreciation. Therefore, to achieve success in students’ prose appreciation, this study intends to find out whether the integration of Google Classroom instruction with the traditional method of teaching could become pertinent as an effective medium of teaching that could cater for the students’ learning needs in the teaching and learning process.

**Statement of the Problem**

The wake of the COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria has increased the need for classroom effectiveness and productivity in order to engage students to become independent learners and also, to expose them to personalised learning. Therefore this study is set to investigate whether or not the integration of Google Classroom instruction in learning would help the students achieve better results in prose appreciation.

The researcher intends to find out whether the integration of Google Classroom instruction with teachers’ traditional method of lesson delivery in prose appreciation could help improve students’ performance in critical thinking skills, objective reasoning skills and decision making skills which are essential in prose appreciation. It has been observed that students perform poorly in tests, internal and external examinations on prose appreciation. This could be attributed to the traditional method of delivering prose appreciation instruction to students, which entails that the students should learn through memorisation and recitation, a process that does not help to develop critical thinking skills, objective reasoning skills and decision making skills.

Again, teachers have observed that students are not enthusiastic about learning prose appreciation. Could this be that the current method of teaching and learning prose appreciation has so far proved to be not interesting, simplified, pleasurable and personalised to help students develop interest in the subject? Could the use of Google Classroom instruction help to make lessons more attractive, personalised, make the lesson become clearer, and simplified to increase students’ enthusiasm and improve students’ performance in prose appreciation? The focus of this research is to incorporate Google Classroom instruction in teaching (blended learning), to determine its effects on students’ learning and performance in prose appreciation.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of using Google Classroom instruction on Senior Secondary School students’ performance in prose appreciation, in Bwari Area Council. The specific objectives are to:

1. establish the pre-test performance of the experimental group to be taught prose appreciation using Google Classroom and the control group to be taught without it,
2. determine the effects of Google Classroom instruction in identifying main ideas in prose appreciation,
3. determine the effects of Google Classroom instruction on students’ critical thinking skills in prose appreciation,
4. determine the effects of Google Classroom instruction on students’ objective reasoning skills in prose appreciation,
5. establish the post-test performance of the experimental group to be taught prose appreciation using Google Classroom and the control group to be taught without it.

**Research Questions**

The following questions were raised to guide the study.

1. What is the difference in the mean score performance between the experimental and control groups in the pre-test results?
2. To what extent is the difference in the mean score performance between the experimental and control groups in identifying main ideas in prose appreciation?
3. How much difference is the mean score performance between the experimental and control groups in critical thinking skills in prose appreciation?
4. What is the difference in the mean score performance between the experimental and control groups in objective reasoning skills in prose appreciation?
5. To what extent is the difference in the mean score performance between the experimental and control groups in the post-test results?

**Research Hypotheses**

**Ho1:** there is no significant difference between the pre-test mean score performance of the experimental and control groups in prose appreciation.

**Ho2:** there is no significant difference between the mean score performance of the experimental and control groups in identifying main ideas in prose appreciation.

**Ho3:** there is no significant difference between the mean score performance of the experimental and control groups in critical thinking skills in prose appreciation.

**Ho4:** there is no significant difference between the mean score performance of the experimental and control groups in objective reasoning skills in prose appreciation.

**Ho5:** there is no significant difference between the post-test mean score performance of the experimental and control groups in prose appreciation.

**Methodology**

Research Design

This study employed a pre-test, post-test quasi experimental design. This design was chosen to enable the researcher to test the hypotheses about the effects of Google Classroom instruction on Senior Secondary students’ performance on prose appreciation. Intact classes were used for the study. The independent variable that was used in this study is the Google Classroom instruction in prose, while the dependent variable is the performance of the Senior Secondary students. The experimental group was exposed to instruction in prose appreciation on the Google Classroom, while the control group was taught prose appreciation without the Google Classroom. The design enabled the researcher to conduct the pre-test, administer the intervention and also, conduct a post-test on the sample.

**Population of the Study**

The population of the study consists of one thousand, one hundred and forty-five students who offer literature in English as a subject, with prose as a genre, from the fifteen Government Senior Secondary schools in Bwari Area Council as at the time of this research. All the students in the population go through the same educational strategies. That is , the students are used to the traditional method of teaching prose appreciation which is teacher centred and controlled, and not exposed to digital learning which is student centred and open to inquiry.

**Sample Size and Sampling Techniques**

The sample size of one hundred and fifty-seven literature in English students were drawn from the population of one thousand, one hundred and forty-five, from two Senior Secondary Schools in Bwari Area Council. The one hundred and fifty-seven literature in English students drawn from the population consists of the total number of students in the experimental group (79) and the control group (78). The sample size consists of students in the intact classes of Senior Secondary School in Bwari Area Council. The schools were selected through multistage sampling without replacement. One out of the two schools was assigned to the experimental group, while the other was assigned to the control group. Assignment of the schools was done through simple balloting.

**Reliability of the Instrument**

The developed Prose Appreciation Performance Test (PAPT) was administered to thirty students who are part of the population of the study, but did not form part of the sample of the study. This was done to help the researcher know whether the questions in the instrument were clear. It was also to have a general knowledge of how the results of the test would be on the general population.

**Method of Data Analysis**

To answer the research questions and test the hypotheses raised in this study, mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions and independent sample t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The level of significance adopted formed the basis for accepting or rejecting each of the null hypotheses. Prior to the application of the treatment, a test of homogeneity was conducted to ascertain whether or not the two groups that were randomly selected for the study are homogeneous in terms of their mean performance.

**Findings**

The first finding of the study revealed that the performance of students in the pre-test, prior to the commencement of treatment in prose appreciation taught using Google Classroom instruction was slightly lower, with a negligible difference of less than 1, compared to students taught without the use of Google Classroom instruction. A further test indicated that there was statistically significant difference in the pre-test mean score performance of the experimental and control groups in prose appreciation. The performance of students in prose appreciation taught using Google Classroom instruction was not similar to the performance of students in prose appreciation taught without the use of Google Classroom instruction in the pre-test results prior to the commencement of treatment. The difference of both groups is 0.87 which is less than 1. This means that there was a difference in the mean score performance in both experimental and control groups, though, negligible, prior to the commencement of treatment.

The second finding of the study revealed that the performance of students in identification of main ideas in prose appreciation taught using Google Classroom instruction was higher than those taught without the use of Google Classroom instruction. A further test indicated that there was a statistically significant difference in the mean score performance of the experimental and control groups in prose appreciation in Bwari Area Council. This result agrees with that of Laili and Muflihah (2020) that Google Classroom instruction significantly affects students’ ability to identify main ideas in prose appreciation. This corroborated the findings of Rilwan and Umoru (2021) that Google Classroom instruction had positive effects on the academic performance of students.

The third finding of the study revealed that the performance of students in critical thinking skills in prose appreciation taught using the Google Classroom instruction was higher than those taught without the use of Google Classroom instruction. The third hypothesis revealed a significant difference in the mean score performance of the experimental and control groups in critical thinking in prose appreciation. This finding is in agreement with that of Oyarinde and Komolafe (2020) that Google Classroom as an online learning delivery platform that positively affected students’ academic performance.

The fourth finding of the study revealed that the performance of students in objective reasoning skills taught using Google Classroom instruction was higher than those taught without the Google Classroom instruction. The fourth hypothesis revealed a significant difference in the mean score performance of the experimental and control groups in objective reasoning skills in prose appreciation. This finding is in agreement with that of Jeong and Kyung (2021) that Google Classroom instruction improves students’ ability to reason. This finding also agrees with that of McCormick, Dimmit, and Sullivan (2013) that students who were taught objective reasoning skills using Google Classroom tend to be more highly engaged in prose appreciation, as well as maintain higher levels of academic proficiency.

The fifth finding of the study revealed that the performance of students in the overall performance in prose appreciation in the experimental group was higher than those in the control group in the post-test. The fifth hypothesis revealed a significant difference in the post-test mean score performance between the experimental and control groups. This finding is in agreement with that of Wayhu, Yudi and Utari (2013) that the writing ability of EFL students taught using blended learning with Google Classroom was better than that of the other group taught without the use of blended learning with Google Classroom.

**Conclusion**

This study investigated the effects of using Google classroom instruction on Senior Secondary School students ’performance on prose appreciation in Bwari Area Council. From the findings of the study, the following could be drawn; students learn prose appreciation better when taught with Google Classroom instruction. The strategy is good for teaching prose appreciation because it enhances the students’ performance in literature in English.

**Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. In order to enhance Senior Secondary School students’ performance in prose appreciation, literature in English teachers should use Google Classroom instruction in addition to the traditional method of teaching prose appreciation, since Google Classroom instruction pattern was found to be an effective teaching strategy for improving students’ performance in prose appreciation.
2. Government and Senior Secondary School administrators should organise training and re-training programmes through intensive seminars and workshops on effective ways of using Google Classroom instruction for in-service literature in English teachers.
3. Google Classroom instruction teaching equipment should be provided to enhance the teaching and learning of prose appreciation.

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