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SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' PERCEPTION TOWARDS THE STUDY OF POETRY IN AGBANI EDUCATION ZONE, ENUGU STATE

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ABSTRACT

Poetry is one of the media used to study English Language. Good knowledge of poetry is a serious credit to eloquent speakers and prolific writers and those who had exploited the opportunity in poetry had reaped its fruit bountifully. However, in most occasions, students perform poorly on this subject area. This results to a situation where many of the students shy away from the area. To this effect, this research tried to examine the Senior Secondary School Students' Perception towards the Study of Poetry in Agbani Education Zone, Enugu State. In order to achieve this, the research adopted survey research design. The research area was Agbani Education Zone in Enugu State. The population of the study was 12,401 students which comprised of Senior School Students in 33 Schools in Agbani Education Zone. As a guide for solving the problem that stimulated this research, two research questions were formulated. The instrument used for collection of data was a structured questionnaire. Mean, was used for the analysis. The result revealed that students perform poorly in poetry because of negative perception they have developed on the subject. To this effect, students do not like attending poetry classes and do not make effort to improve on the study of poetry. Similarly, the study recommends that students should develop interest in poetry by cultivating positive perception on the subject. Also, teachers should approach teaching poetry from the angle of dramatization, singing and demonstration in order to change the negative perception students have towards poetry.

Keywords: Perception, Study and Poetry

Introduction

Poetry is one of the genres of literature studied in schools. It is an aspect of literary works that entices and gives pleasure to those who know how to relish and appreciate it. According to Kennedy (2012), the literal-minded might say, "Just let your eye light on it", but there is more to poetry than meets the eye. Many a reader who has no trouble understanding and enjoying prose finds poetry difficult. This is to be expected. At first glance, a poem usually will make some sense and give some pleasure, but it may not yield everything at once. It is not what you read like daily newspaper. A poem differs from most prose in that it is to be read slowly, carefully, and attentively. Poetry appeals to the mind and arouses feelings. Poetry may state facts, but more importantly, it makes imaginative statements that we may value even if its facts are incorrect (Kennedy, 2012).

As a result of the nature of poetry which differs from other aspects of literary genres, poets are permitted to use words the way they like in order to achieve their aims. It is this permission, otherwise known as poetic license that contributes to the difficult nature of poetry. While contributing on the nature of poetry, Packard in Burack **(**2015) notes:

> *We could begin by saying that poetry itself is language which is used in a specific way to convey a specific effect. And the ways that*

language can be used are expressed through all of the various poetics devices. In "The ABC of Reading" Ezra Pound summarized these and divided them into three categories – Phonopoeia (sight), Melopoeia (sound), and Logopoeia (Voice).

In further analysis of the above assertion, Packard notes that in sight, image is the heart and soul of poetry. This implies that human beings picture images in their minds and can easily attest that they get the picture of something indicating that imagistic understanding is the most basic and primal of all communications. In poetry as noted by Packard, sound has to do with rhythm which is notated as metrics, but may also be seen in such poetic devices as rhyme, assonance and alliteration. Voice as put forward by Packard is the sum total of cognitive content of the words in a poem. Voice can as well be seen as the signature of the poet on his poem that is his own unmistakable way of saying something. It is all these attributes that make poetry very interesting for those who can understand the language and difficult very incomprehensible to poor and illiterate minds on the use of language.

At Senior Secondary school level where literature is introduced fully and with poetry as its component, students are at ease in reading prose and drama. Since this difficulty has been obvious, it could be inferred that students may encounter many language learning challenges in studying literature in English, especially poetry. This can be attributed to lack of positive perceptions among the students towards the subject.

Poetry is a subject written in an elevated language which when approached from the surface perception appears very difficult to understand. Being in imagery and figurative language, it appears very hard to understand. To this effect there is a great variety of definitions of poetry as there are many poets and scholars of literature.

As a result of the nature of poetry, many students develop phobia towards the subject. Haraldson (2011) states that as a teacher he has spent several weeks practicing at different schools and observed that when the classes are to work with literature, focus is to a great extent placed on reading either extracts or only a few longer works of prose. Haraldson (2011) opines that it is not unusual for teachers to be met with negative responses when they announce that their classes are to work on poetry. He goes further to say that the students perceive poetry to be "difficult, irrelevant, boring and out of date".

At senior secondary school level as well as syllabus for Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSCE), students are expected to read about twelve (12) poems which include African and Non-Africa poetry in their literature examination. This is in addition to drama and prose. English Language as a second language entails that one should understand the literature component very well to be proficient in the language both in speech and writing.

Senior Secondary School (SSS) in Nigeria

Senior secondary school in Nigeria consists of the SS1, SS2 and SS3 which is equivalent to the 10^{th}, 11^{th} and 12^{th} Grade. The Senior Secondary School Examination (SSCE) is taken at the end of the SS3. Reforms implemented in 2014 have led to a restructuring of the National Curriculum. In the curriculum students are currently required to study four compulsory "cross–cutting" core subjects, in four available areas of concentration.

According to World Educational News Review (2017) compulsory subjects are: English

Language, Mathematics, Civic Education and one trade/entrepreneurship subject. The available subjects are: Humanities, Science, and Technology and Business studies. The new curriculum has a stronger focus on vocational training than previous curricula and is intended to increase employability of high graduate in the light of high youth unemployment in Nigeria. At the end of the SS3, around May/June, students sit for the Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE). They are examined in a minimum of Seven and a maximum of nine Subject, including mathematics, English Language, civic Education and one trade subject which are mandatory. Successful candidates are awarded the senior secondary certificate (SSCE), which lists all subjects successful taken.

Understanding of poetry requires adequate proficiency in the English Language. Lack of this proficiency discourages students from exploring more reading materials especially when the texts provided are beyond their language competency (Nortiana 2018). Most students who possess limited language proficiency may encounter difficulties in comprehending the prescribed poems, resulting in negativeperceotion towards learning of poetry. It is to this effect this researcher tends to conduct the study on senior secondary school students perception towards the study of poetry in Enugu Educational Zone, Enugu State.

Statement of the Problem

The inclusion of poetry in the Nigerian English language curriculum for Senior Secondary School provided the platform for the growth of literature in Nigeria schools thus preparing students for higher-level literary understanding and as well enable them to proceed to higher levels of literary appreciation. When students do not understand the language of poetry, there is visibly lack of interest among them which affects comprehension. In this instance, students are more likely to practice the notion of learning poetry for the sake of passing examination or they are compel to do it because of course they are likely going to study in future rather than appreciating the poetry itself and reaping the abundant benefit in the subject. Most secondary school students learn poetry grudgingly because it is part of the curriculum.

At this level of senior secondary one (SS1) where literature is introduced as a subject of its own, students come to realized that poetry is part of it and appears very difficult when compared with the other genres. At this point some of the students seem not to be interested with poetry, besides students believe that since literature is not compulsory subject, there is no need for one tasking him or herself in order to understand it. This negative perception will give effect to the student's attitude towards poetry. It is in this regard this work seeks to ascertain Senior Secondary School students' perception of the study of poetry in English in Agbani Educational Zone, Enugu State.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of the students' perceptions of and attitudes towards the study of Poetry in Enugu Educational Zone. Specifically, the study sought to determine.

1. Ascertain students' perceptions of poetry in secondary schools.
2. To investigate the extent students' perception of poetry affects their performance

Research Questions

The following research questions were designed to provide a guide for this study.

1. What is the perception of student towards the study of poetry in SSCE?

2. To what extent does students' perception of poetry affect their performance in SSCE?

Review of the Related Literature
Conceptual Framework
Poetry

Since the main concern of this work is the Senior Students' perception towards the study of poetry, it is important for us to look at the meaning of poetry, features of poetry, the language of poetry and some poetic device. It is all these ingredients that make poetry what it is. Some many poets and language scholars have attempted to give different definitions of poetry. However many scholars are of the views that no single definition can capture the essence of poetry. Definition of poetry can be likened to the expressions of the seven blind men who went and touched elephant. Every one of the blind men came with his own observation of how elephant looks like. Poets from various stand points of poetry came up with different definitions and description of poetry. This creates a lot of problems in the minds of readers and students. This is because when a student is confronted with unfamiliar poem, he or she might begin with trying to identify these features which are contained in a definition or description by a particular poet or language scholar, when eventually he fails to identify any or all the elements in a definition, frustration may likely occur. Better approach in a classroom situation has always been to confront the students with a piece of prose and a poem and allow them to react or express their observations. They would then be challenged to discover the differences between poetry and prose. Their responses have always been inspiring and the approach, overwhelming and pragmatic. Be that as it may, it is essential; we look at some of the definitions by some poets and scholars. Otagburuagu *et al* (2018) are of the opinion that poetry has a sense of history in it, encapsulating the past, capturing the present realities and etching on our minds the fears of the future. This captures the description of poetry and what it does in the mind of the readers. Also, Oluikpe et al (2015) in Umaru (2018) states that any occasion or situation in which powerful feelings or great emotions are involved is a moment for great poetry. This implies that any occasion that arouses emotion creates opportunity for poetry to be written. This emotion can be borne out of anger, suffering, happiness, celebrations etc. Ndubuisi (2014) quotes William Wordsworth as saying, "Poetry is a spontaneous over flow of powerful emotion". Oluikpe et al (2015) share the same view as William Word worth.

Similarly, Iloelunachi (2013) states that poetry is highly imaginative and it usually evokes human emotion and thinking by its use of vivid and concrete expression. From the above, all the authors who have described or defined poetry are of the opinions that poetry has to do with emotions. According to Wallace and Boisseau (2017), poetry expands from pure entertainment through the expression of emotion about the various universally shared aspects of life – Sickness, marriage, love, death, to ritual incantations made to bring about changes in life or in relationship between the living and the dead or between man and the supernatural. Poetry is used to express every aspect of human Endeavour both favorable and unfavorable situations, bad and good situations. According to Ndubuisi (2014) the Language of poetry is condensed and concentrated. He goes further to say that there is economy in the use of words brought about by the use of figures of speech. Poetry is language and poets use language to appeal to our emotions and sensibilities. Language of poetry can appeal to our sense of smell, taste, touch, sight as well as hearing**.**

While making input on the language of poetry, Kennedy (2012) identifies that language conveys the tone in poetry. According to him, "Sometime

in reading a poem, although we neither can see a face not hear a voice, we can infer the poet's attitude from other evidence". This is made possible through the use of language. This language of poetry is arranged in particular format otherwise known as stanzas and verse.

Stanza refers to a division of a poem based on thought process. Stanzas are described based on the number of lines they contain. There are many types of stanza arrangements. They are a couplet which is a two line stanza; a triplet (a three line stanza); a quatrain (a four line stanza); a quintet (a five line stanza) a sestet (a six line stanza) and octave which is an eight line stanza. These lines of poem can be measured in terms of the number of stressed and unstressed syllables otherwise known as verses. In this case we have free verse and blank verse. Blank verse refers to poetry that contains no rhyme. On the other hand, free verse refers to lines that measured in terms of the number of stressed and unstressed a poem written in free verse syllables often has a rhyme that suggests the rise and fall of the tone as in ordinary speech. There are many kinds of poetry and many poets have demonstrated these kinds of poetry in their various works. The popular ones include the following:

Ballad: According to Anders et al (2014) a ballad is a song or song like poem that tells a story. Most ballads have a regular pattern of rhythm and rhyme, and they use simple language with a great deal of repetition. Ballad generally, has refrains. Refrains repeated at regular interval. They usually tell sensational stories of tragedy, adventure, betrayal, revenge and jealousy. Folk ballads are composed by anonymous singers and are passed down orally from generation to generation before they are written down (often in several different versions) "Agbo Dancer" by J.P. Clark is folk Ballad. Similarly, "These Dreams Are…" by Aniakor in Otagburuagu and Okoro (2012) is also a folk ballad. There are also literary ballads. These are composed and written down by known poets, usually in the style of folk ballads. La belle Dame Sans Merci" is a famous literary ballad.

Elegy: This a poem that mourns the death of a person or laments something lost. Elegies may lament the passing of life and beauty or they may be meditations on the nature of death. An elegy is usually formal in language and structure, and solemn or even melancholy in tone. Much of English poetry appears to be elegiac from the Anglo, Saxon lyrics "The Wanderer" and "The Seafarer" to the great elegy of the Victorian era, Tennyson's "In Memoriam" another example of elegy. Another example of elegy by a Nigeria Poet is "the Casualties" by J.P. Clark.

Epic: This is a long narrative poem that celebrates the activities of heroes and heroines in their various societies. Most epics include elements of myth, legend, folklore and history. The tone of an epic is serious and language grand. Most epic heroes undertake quest to achieve something of tremendous value to themselves or their society. "Paradise lost" by John Milton is an example of Epic.

Lyric: This is a type of poetry that focuses on expressing emotions or thoughts, rather than on telling a story. Most lyrics are short, and they usually imply rather than directly state a single emotion. The term lyric comes from the Greek. In ancient Greece, lyric poems were recited to the accompaniment of stringed instrument called the lyre. Today poets still try to make their lyrics melodious, but they rely only on the musical effects they can create with words (such as rhyme, rhythm, alliteration, assonance and onomatopoeia). Example of lyric include; "Autumn" by John Keats and Mathew Arnolds "Dover Beach".

Ode: This is a complex generally long lyric poem on a serious subject. In English Poetry, there are basically two types of Odes. One is highly formal and dignified in style and is generally written for ceremonial or public occasions. This type of Ode derives from the choral odes of the classical

Greek poet Pindar. John Dryden's "Son for St. Cecilia's Day" is an English version of the Pindaric ode. The other type of ode derives from those written by the Latin poet Horace, and it is much more personal and reflective. In English Poetry, Is exemplified by the intimate, meditative odes of Such Romantic poets as Wordsworth, Keats and Shelley (Anderson et al 2014).

Sonnet: This is a fourteen line stanza form of poetry consisting of iambic pentameter lines (Ndubuisi, 2014). It has one of the several rhyme schemes. There are two major types of sonnets. The oldest sonnet form is the Italian sonnet, also called the Petrarachan sonnet named after the fourteen – century Italian poet Francesco Petrarch who popularized the form. The petrarachan sonnet is divided into two parts, an eight line octave with rhyme scheme abbaabba and a six-line sestet with the rhyme scheme cdecde or cdcdcd. The Octave usually presents a problem, poses a question, or expresses an idea, which the sestet then resolves, answers or drives home. John Donne's Sonnets and John Keat's sonnets are written in the Italian form.

The other major sonnet form, which was widely used by Shakespeare, is called the Shakespearean sonnet or the English sonnet. It has three four-line units, or quatrains, followed by a concluding two-line unit or couplet. The organization of thought in the Shakespearean sonnet usually corresponds to this structure. The three quatrains often express related ideas or examples, while the couplet sums up the poet's conclusion or message. The most common rhyme scheme for the Shakespearean sonnet is abab cdcd efef gg.

The third type of sonnet is the Spenserian sonnet which was developed by Edmund Spenser. Like the Shakespearean sonnet it is divided into three quatrains and couplet, but it uses a rhyme scheme that links the quatrain abab bcbc cdcd ee. A group of sonnets, on a related them is called a sonnet sequence or a sonnet cycle.

Perception of poetry by students

According to online Merriam Webster Dictionary (2021), perception is an awareness of the elements of environment through physical sensation. In his own contribution Norkhalia (2019), describes perception as how individuals withstand a situation or stimuli and formulate their senses to produce meaningful experiences based on their prior knowledge or experience. Narrowing it down, perception means how students respond to issues in order to produce meaningful outcome based on their earlier knowledge on the issues.

The receptiveness of students could be very selective or limited depending on their belief, motivation, personality as well as attitude. In this study, perception refers to teachers' and students' interpretation of poetry and how they perceive poetry. Perception according to Side and Azlina (2013) is an internal matter difficult to understand, they further state that perception plays an important role to achieve the target in many things. In their submission, when a person fails in life, many people may say that he probably has a bad perception. In order to buttress their argument, they say, "In School" the teachers often state that the failure rate in subjects relates to the negative perception such as laziness or nonchalant attitudes among students.

From the submission above one can easily adduce that students performance in certain subjects depends on their perception towards the subject. Positive perception towards the subject will encourage a person to learn the subject much better.

In their own contribution Adediwura and Tayo (2015) opine that students perception need to be fostered throughout the process of teaching and learning in order to have a good achievement. It is essential to note that the ability of students to their knowledge is a measure of the effectiveness

of teaching and learning processes. A positive perception can motivate students critical thinking, being active in the classroom, working together in groups, improve interaction and communication skills. Teaching style adopted by a teacher in the process of teaching and learning pottery has a significant impact on student's interest and understanding of a subject. This can as well make the student develop a positive perception on the subject.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study was based on Albert Bandura's Social learning theory of 1977 which asserts that all learning is acquired as a result of direct experiences with the object, subject, thing, issue or an idea. According Bandura, people interact with the environment which shapes the attitude and perception of individual and vice versa. It stresses on the immediate social context where an individual observes and interprets the perception other people which in town would determine their own perception. Individuals select models and will only adopt the perceptions of the models they deem similar to themselves and whom they esteem or have favourable regard.

In this instance, the learner determines the perception to expose oneself to or adopt and the ones to reject without necessarily engaging in other attitudes i.e. through observation. Individual's attitudes and perception determine also the extent to which one will persist in any task which results in either success or a failure of the tasks to be accomplished. Perceptions are therefore learnt experiences through observing, modeling and imitating the subjects in our environment or the perception of others.

According to Bandura as cited in Schunk and Zimmerman (2013) some perceptional changes may be mediated through modification of the model itself, through the role modeling, use of reinforcement and rewards and sometime through persuasion. In order for an individual to attempt a modeled perception, he must value the observed and perceive it as successful.

By implication Bandura is of the view that if the learners of poetry adopt positive perception towards poetry definitely they are likely going to do very well in the subject but where otherwise, the reverse is the case and the students may likely fall short of expectation.

Empirical Studies

The need for review of related empirical studies lies on the essence of the researcher to ascertain the extent other researchers have gone in fostering knowledge in the area under study. Bearing this in mind, the researcher consulted the works of the following people and their outcome on the topic under review.

Nkorhalila (2019) conducted a research on perceptions and attitudes towards poetry among ESL Secondary School Teachers and Student in Rengit, Johor Malaysia. According to the researcher, the data for the study were retrieved, from two schools in Rengit, Johor; SMK Tun Jardon and SMK Permata Jaya, all in Malaysia. 400 students and four (4) teachers were participants of the study. At the end, the researcher found out that both ESL teachers and students can develop positive or negative attitude depending on the forces of the environment of the learners and teachers.

In the same vein, Bahri (2020) conducted a study on student's perceptions on the use of poetry in English learning. According to Bahri, participants of the research were students of English Language Education Department (ELED) of Muhammadiyah University in Yogykarta. The researcher collected data through interview and used descriptive qualitative analysis to present the data. At the end, the

researcher discovered that challenges of using poetry in English Learning were difficulties in selecting suitable words, difficulties in understanding and using literary phrases in literary appreciation class. The researcher recommended that to increase student's perception about poetry, it should be used as one of the materials in English Language class. The empirical reviews conducted are related to this research and established that attitude and perception can play a serious role in determining the success and failure of students.

Summary of Reviewed Literature

The literature review was carried out under three subheadings which include, conceptual framework, theoretical framework and empirical framework. In the same manner, under the theoretical framework, the reviewer relied on Albert Bandura's learning theory of 1977 which stipulates that all learning is acquired as a result of direct experience with the object, subject, thing, issue or an idea. Bandura believes very strongly that individuals' environment shapes their perception towards an issue. This culminates into positive environment begets positives perceptions vice versa.

Similarly, researches conducted by different researchers on topics that are related to this study were reviewed. Most researches on perceptions have pointed to the fact that they play a crucial role in learning poetry hence determine the students' success in the subject. Research also supported the fact that a positive perception towards the subject is an important educational outcome that should be constantly nurtured regardless of the achievement level of the learners who should be guided in order to bring out their best ability. Literature confirms that it should start from ascertaining the roots cause of perception using that information to bring out the expected change which in most cases has remained elusive or not practicable in the school contexts. This study sought to establish more awareness and understanding on the common perception among the students which affects the learning of poetry and suggest more recommendation for improvement in performance through perception change. This is the gap this study seeks to close between this one and the previous studies reviewed.

Research Method

The research design adopted for this study was the survey design. The area of study was Agbani Educational Zone. Agbani Educational Zone is one of the Six (6) Educational Zones in Enugu State. The population for this study consisted 12,401 Senior Students in Agbani Zone. The Population figures were obtained from the Research and Statistics Department of the Post Primary School Management Board (PPSMB), Enugu, 2020. The Senior Students in Agbani Zone were used as population because at one level or the other, they must have been taught poetry. The sample size of this study comprised 388 students drawn from 33 schools in Agbani Education Zone. The instrument used for this study was the structured questionnaire constructed by the researcher. The questionnaire items were constructed based on the two research questions that guided the study. The validation method adopted for the instrument was the Face validity. The face validity ensured that there was cohesion and that the questionnaire tested what it was meant to test. To this effect, this was done by the researcher submitting the structured instrument to two experts. In order to ensure effective distribution of the instrument, the researcher recruited five research assistants. The research assistants administered the questionnaire to the five schools by hand while the researcher was in charge of one school. This was done to minimize high mortality rate of the instrument. Total number of 388 questionnaires was distributed and 380 were correctly filled and

returned. The Data collected were analyzed using mean.

Presentation of Results

This section handles the data presentation and analysis. In doing that data which represent the responses were presented and analyzed using statistical techniques, Out of 388 questionnaires distributed 380 were correctly filled and returned with the help of my research assistants. The results of these analyses were useful in providing answers to research questions and hypotheses formulated to serve as guide to the research work.

Research Question One: What is the perception of students on the study of poetry in Agbani Education Zone?

Table 1: the mean rating scores of responses on what is the perception of Students on the study of Poetry in Agbani Education

S/NO	Questionnaire Items	SA 4	A 3	D 2	SD 1	N	ΣFX	$\bar{X}$	Decision Rule
1	I perceive poetry as a difficult subject	225	105	30	20	380	1295	3.4	SA
2.	Interpretation of poetry is hard	226	105	28	21	380	1296	3.4	SA
3.	I have positive perception on the study of Poetry	20	30	105	225	380	605	1.6	SD
4.	I have developed negative perception because the language is hard	225	105	30	20	380	1295	3.4	SA
5.	I don't like poetry	205	110	35	30	380	1250	3.3	SA
	Grand mean							**3.0**	**SA**

Source: Field Survey 2022

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Research Question Two: To what extent does students' perception affect their performance in poetry in Agbani Education Zone?

Table 2: The mean rating scores of the response on the extent students' perception affects their performance in poetry in Agbani Education Zone

S/NO	Questionnaire Items	VHE 4	HE 3	LE 2	VLE 1	N	ΣFX	$\bar{X}$	Decision Rule
1	I score low in poetry due to my negative perception on	205	105	28	42	380	1247	3.3	HE
2.	I score high in poetry to due to my positive perception on poetry	42	28	105	205	380	562	1.5	LE
3.	I can't solve simple assignment on poetry due to my negative perception on the subject	205	105	28	42	380	1247	33	HE
4.	I solve simple assignment on poetry due to my positive perception on the subject	42	28	105	205	380	562	1.5	LE
5.	I am not sure of good grade in SSCE in poetry	205	105	28	42	380	1247	3.3	HE
	Grand mean							**2.6**	**HE**

Source: Field Survey 2022.

The above data on table seven shows a grand mean of 2.6. This implies that the students agreed that their perception on poetry affects their performance on the subject.

Summary of Findings

From the analysis above, here are the major summaries of findings:

1. Students agreed that their perceptions affect the study of poetry.
2. In the same manner, the students established that their negative perception on poetry to a very large extent affects their performance on poetry.

Discussion of Findings

The research question one examined the Perception of the Students on the study of Poetry in Agbani Education Zone. The result revealed that students perceive poetry as a difficult subject as well students perceive that interpretation of poetry is hard and as a result they have developed negative perception on the subject and do not like it. To support this, Fakeye (2012) is of the opinion

that students' perception of language of poetry as being difficult affects their study of the subject. Fakeye goes further to say that poems written in Middle English are too difficult to understand because of the language of the poems.

In the same vein, research question two was designed to ascertain the Extent Students' Perception of Poetry affects their performance in the subject area poetry. The result revealed that negative perception by students on poetry leads to scoring of low grade, inability to solve simple assignment in poetry and not being sure of good grade in poetry. In the same manner, this view is supported by Gurnam (2013) who opines that perception contributes to performance. He goes further to assert that positive perception brings about serious interest which in turn leads to positive performance. In this regard poor performance achieved in poetry is as a result of negative perception already adopted in the study of the subject.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to ascertain the Senior Secondary School Students' Perception towards the Study of Poetry in Agbani Education Zone of Enugu State. Students' negative perception of poetry affects the study of the subject. This result to a situation where the students perform poorly in poetry with its attendant consequence of the students shying away from the study of poetry. It is important that the students cultivate favourable perception towards the subject so that they can reap the benefit of it both in spoken and written English.

Recommendations

From the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations were made by the researcher.

1. Students should change their negative perception towards poetry by developing interest on the subject; such interest will create room for proper understanding of the language which appears to be difficult.
2. In order to overcome those factors that affect the perception of the students towards poetry, like not staying in the class, not paying attention to poetry etc., students should endeavour to stay in class, pay attention as well as make personal effort to improve on the subject area. This will make the students develop talent and ability on the subject poetry.

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