

Teachers' Content Mastery, Pedagogical Knowledge and Styles of Teaching: A triad for Enhanced Learning Achievement and Effective Teaching Delivery

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Abstract

Keywords:

teachers' content mastery; pedagogical knowledge; teaching styles; teaching delivery; learning achievement; Literature-in-English

Teachers' proficiency in content, pedagogy, and their approach to lesson delivery is an essential requirement for quality learning outcomes. This paper aims to examine whether teachers' content knowledge, pedagogical skills, and teaching styles influence students' attitudes towards and performance in Literature-in-English. The study employed a descriptive research design with both quantitative and qualitative methods. The sample consisted of 127 Literature-in-English teachers and 632 students in the Arts stream from government-owned secondary schools in Ekiti State, Nigeria. Seven research instruments were used for data collection. Data analysis was conducted using inferential statistics. The findings indicate that all three independent variables are crucial for effective teaching, with teachers' content knowledge being the most significant factor affecting students' performance in Literature-in-English, followed by pedagogical knowledge and then teaching style. Conversely, teachers' pedagogical knowledge was statistically proven to have the greatest impact on students' attitudes towards Literature-in-English, followed by content knowledge and teaching style. The findings and conclusions of this study provide valuable insights for stakeholders in education on how to formulate action plans for improved teaching and learning outcomes.

1. Introduction

Literature-in-English serves as an encyclopedia of a nation's civilisation and culture. It reflects cultural customs, religion, history, economy, political systems, spiritual pursuits, ideologies, and the psycho-social structure of a nation. Literature-in-English is an artistic and creative form through which human beings can imaginatively depict peoples' lives, experiences, phenomena, and personalities within literary works. These imaginative works of art depict different historical epochs, events, and situations that reflect the ways of life and traditions of various races and cultures through language. Literature-in-English provides an outlet for people to express their thoughts, imaginations, emotions, experiences, and culture using elaborate language. Its aims include education, entertainment, and the development of intellect, morals, and language.

Literature-in-English is a school subject which has three genres, drama, prose and poetry. Literature-in-English is included in school curricula for the development of learners' potentials in an all-encompassing style; linguistic, motivational and methodological reasons (Duff & Maley, 1990). These reasons could be observed in learners' achievement such as students' attitude and performance. Learning achievement is an indication that shows the extent to

which learners have achieved the set goals. It is a pointer to the outcomes of the learning process which is evident in students' cognitive, affective and psychomotor abilities. Learning achievement is not about learners obtaining good grades alone, but also learner's ability to successfully internalize information, skills, and concepts learnt. It also reflects in the learner's character, personality, thought process, social skills, self-confidence, practical abilities, motivation, and interest to learn and pursuing higher achievements (Mudzakkir & Darmawan, 2024). Attitude could be explained as learners' feelings about ideas or phenomena, which could be positive or negative. The attitude of the learner towards learning is important; it is pivotal to learners' academic achievement in school subjects.

Despite the various benefits of Literature-in-English, Literature teachers and students exhibit an unwholesome attitude towards the subject, while students' performance in both the internal and external examinations is unsatisfactory (Planning, Research and Statistics Department, Ministry of Education and Technology, Ado-Ekiti, 2017). For instance, of the three genres of Literature-in-English, teachers still feel unease with the task of teaching poetry. Students, especially, consider poetry to be the most difficult



genre due to language complexities, interpretation and grammar. These have made students abhor poetry (Carla, 2011; Daniel, 2013; Hashim & Nawawi, 1994). Another factor that contributes to students' abhorrence is the adoption of ineffective and teacher-centred approach in Literature classrooms (Labo-Popoola, 2010; Saffeen & Areen, 2013). Studies conducted by Amosun and Kolawole (2015), Auerbach and Andrews (2018) and Ayalew et al. (2022) focused on teachers' instructional practices. These studies attest that teacher-associated variables are significant factors which influence students' learning achievement.

Teaching is a complex social activity that involves interaction with students, teaching resources, and content. Teachers' ability to positively influence learners' outcomes largely depends on their experiential, professional, and academic qualifications, as their level of expertise and competence cannot be overstated (Olaleye, 2013). At any given moment, teachers, as agents of change, are tasked with guiding the progress of scientific and humanistic development. They are responsible for imparting knowledge and encouraging students to engage with emerging discoveries worldwide. Consequently, teachers' contributions are vital for the continuous growth of knowledge within the teaching community, lifelong learning, and self-improvement.

Knowledge of content, pedagogical content knowledge, knowledge of the curriculum, knowledge of pedagogy, knowledge of contexts in education, knowledge of learners and their characteristics, and knowledge of educational ends, purposes, and values are teacher knowledge needed for effective teaching delivery and improved learning achievement (Shulman, 1987). Of all these teacher knowledge, several studies have discussed the importance of content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge to students' learning outcomes (Adediwura & Bada, 2007; Badawi, 2009; Liu, 2013; Adegbola, 2018; Omonije & Obadiora, 2018). Teachers who are versatile in subject matter and pedagogical skills have the knowledge of the subject and understand why it is so. They create a participatory and supportive learning environment; have an insight into learners' learning deficiencies and help to address students' misconceptions and inadequacies. Teachers' competence in classroom activities depicts teachers' personal and professional development (Atrido, 2021). However, Atrido (2021) decries that some teachers exhibit dearth of subject competence, while some teachers still do not have appropriate knowledge of the

various methods of teaching in Literature-in-English (Adelabu & Nder, 2013).

The researcher of the present paper observed that teachers can possess adequate mastery of content and be dexterous at pedagogy, yet be deficient in the manner in which they transmit information to students. The peculiarities of each teacher create distinctions in the way they present content, manage the classroom, employ teaching techniques, interact with students, and assess stated behavioural objectives. The specific pattern of a complex mix of needs, behaviours, beliefs, abilities, personality, attitudes, and approaches to teaching that are demonstrated by teachers—observable through how they conduct the teaching and learning process—is called teaching style (Farooq et al., 2022). Teaching style is an important factor in Literature-in-English classrooms as it can serve either as a motivating or a demotivating factor. Many students have a flair for a particular subject because of how the teacher handles it. Some students attend classes because of the teaching styles adopted by their teachers, while others stay away from classes because they are demotivated by the atmosphere created by the teachers' teaching style. A teacher's approach to classroom instructions plays a significant role in students' performance in and attitude towards a subject (Tanner & Dan, 2004). This study aims to examine the significance of teachers' content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and teaching styles as vital essentials for effective classroom teaching and improved students' attitude towards and performance in Literature-in-English.

2. Theoretical foundation

2.1. Content knowledge

Teachers' content knowledge is a body of knowledge about a discipline which encompasses understanding of principles, ideas, facts, theories, the vocabulary through which they teach, and how they are structured and organized (UNESCO-International Institute for Educational Planning, 2022). Content knowledge refers to teachers' possession of the comprehensive knowledge of a subject and the extent to which teachers marshal, amplify and explore topics, whether or not the topics will be taught in the classroom (Alimuddin et al., 2020). Laghari et al. (2023) expatiate that teachers' content knowledge is the expertise possessed by teachers on subjects' foundational concepts, theories, compositions, resources, forensic techniques, interrelationship with other subjects, and the practical applicability of concepts from several disciplines to real life.

Teachers' mastery of content is not limited to mastery of teachers' areas of specialization alone, but also adequate knowledge of students' presumptions, misconceptions, and re-teaching of misconceptions to form useful cognitive delineations.

Teachers' subject knowledge affects their ability to break down content to help learners understand the outlined objectives. It influences how teachers set questions and give assignments to students. Teachers' knowledge of subject matter need not be confined to the curriculum they teach. When teachers possess adequate knowledge beyond the stated curriculum, the probability of explaining the content comprehensibly for learners is high (Jadama, 2014). Tamir (1988) noted that substantive structure and syntactic structure are requisite for content mastery. Substantive structure refers to theories, models, concepts, and facts, while the syntactic structure focuses on the ways, means, and processes by which these accepted truths have been established. To ensure content competence, teachers are saddled with the responsibility of possessing in-depth knowledge of topics and establishing how these topics are interrelated with other varieties of topics that their students come across in other school subjects (Noddings, 1998). Teachers' knowledge of content in Literature-in-English helps teachers deliver error-free content, give sequential explanations, analogies and presentations, arouse creative thought-provoking questions, simplify complicated preconceptions, and correct misconceptions.

2.2. Pedagogical knowledge

Pedagogical knowledge refers to what teachers know about the rudiments of teaching-learning matters, such as theories of learning, approaches to teaching, techniques of evaluation, and classroom managerial issues. It is any theory relating to the process of teaching and learning possessed by teachers which influences what they teach in the classroom (Lenhart, 2010). It is the teacher's ability to fashion out techniques of effective teaching and appropriate materials needed for the promotion of improved learning outcomes. Pedagogical knowledge refers to the use of communication, lesson presentation and managerial skills needed for effective delivery in the classroom (Hakizumuremyi & Maniraho, 2022).

Pedagogical knowledge is the broad knowledge about the art of teaching which teachers acquire in the course of their teacher training or on the job after a period of time. Teachers' pedagogical knowledge is on the premise that teaching goes beyond the act of transmitting concepts, skills and information from

teacher to students, but rather, an intricate phenomenon that demands several and diverse on-the-spot decisions and feedback to students' continuous learning needs (Rajabi et al. 2015). Teachers' pedagogical knowledge has two possible sources. The first source refers to the means by which teachers develop their occupational knowledge. At this level, sources of teachers' pedagogical knowledge are from formal teacher education (both pre- and in-service), the experience they had when they were students, or on-the-job experience. The second source is the foreknowledge that teachers employ to form their professional knowledge. Such knowledge is garnered from kinds of knowledge, misconceptions, and beliefs that teachers (or pre-service teachers) bring to the teaching arena.

2.3. Teachers' teaching styles

The term teaching styles refer to the teacher's prevalent classroom behaviour which is not associated to a teaching method, or a technique alone, but also a value system held by a teacher, even if the course content taught changes (Ashworthy, 1998). It is the underlying plans of action that delineates the behaviours exhibited by teachers for the purpose of actualizing the stated learning objectives. Teaching style is the teacher's consistency at displaying certain behaviours, traits or quality overtime in the classroom in the course of relying knowledge, skills or information. The exhibition of these manners could be an offshoot of teachers' inclination, exposure, nature, custom, or even habit. Teaching style reveals teachers' philosophies, beliefs and the roles they prefer to take in the course of delivering information in the classroom (Saswandi, 2014).

Teaching styles adopted by teachers influence the type of assessment, management skills, methods of instruction, interactions, and emotional atmosphere in the classroom (Miller, 2006). Teaching styles are formed by accumulated notions about teaching, developed over the years through teachers' personal experiences, learning backgrounds, and educational and cultural influences. Teachers' teaching styles are evident in the organisation of classroom delivery, modes of discussion, lesson planning, presentation and evaluation of learning content, and the implementation of learning activities (Wong, 2015).

The researcher suggests that Literature-in-English teachers' preferred teaching styles may be influenced by how they were taught as students, their abilities, exposure, and beliefs about effective teaching. Some teachers believe it is their duty to dominate and steer

the lesson, leaving no space for student interference, while other teachers think that students are stakeholders in the teaching-learning process; therefore, their participation in class activities is essential. Early identification of teachers' teaching styles can significantly improve students' experiences. Understanding their own teaching styles may help teachers better realise how to implement their enthusiasm and vision for teaching, and how they can adapt, modify, or support their styles to improve interactions with students while maintaining all aspects of teaching. After identifying their teaching styles, teachers can explore ways to modify their approaches to meet students' needs and aspirations, address potential shortcomings, and develop plans to rectify any issues (Alhussain, 2012).

Researchers have come up with multiple teaching styles. Pratt et al. (2001) enumerate teaching styles as apprenticeship, transmission, nurturing, developmental, and social reform. Sun and Wang (2007) delineate teaching styles as: a) indifferent style, b) laissez-faire style, c) democratic style, d) authoritarian style. Mohanna et al. (2007) adumbrate teaching styles as no-nonsense teachers, the straight facts, big conference teachers, the official formal curriculum teachers, the one-off teachers, the sensitive student-centred teachers, and all-round flexible and adaptable teachers. Grasha and Riechmann (1996) classified teaching styles as formal authority, the expert, the delegator, the facilitator, and the personal role model.

The personal model style encourages students to imitate their approach, despite potential challenges in meeting the teacher's standards and expectations. Students are engaged in the learning process, fostering open engagement, communication, and competence. This style stimulates interest and critical thinking, encourage students to take an active role, and promote their efforts. The expert teaching style places teachers at the center of class activities, teaching, and explaining. This style professes teachers as "custodians of knowledge." Students taught by expert teachers have superficial knowledge and lack of deeper understanding. Teachers do not prioritize student participation, but focus on theoretical understanding rather than practical application. A teacher with formal authority style provides feedback based on formal standards, sets learning targets, and expectations, while focusing on clear expectations. However, this style can lead to restrictive regulation of students' standards and concerns. (Grasha &

Riechmann, 1996; Nway & Nwe, 2018; Amasha & Assadi, 2024; Chiazor & Agwazie, 2024).

Teachers with facilitator style guide students, individually and as a group, towards set goals, encouraging them to communicate their thoughts and ask questions. The teacher plans, creates a positive climate, and fosters bonding among group members. The teacher provides input, guards against weak and vulnerable students, and helps passive learners to be heard. This method offers personal flexibility, focusing on students' ambitions and needs, but requires good teaching skills and time. Teachers with a delegator style help students become independent learners by working on projects independently or as part of an autonomous team. Teachers engage students through regular interactions, using both expert and delegator teaching styles. The goal is to enhance students' autonomy, with the teacher designing and implementing activities and acting as a consultant or resource person (Grasha & Riechmann, 1996; Nway & Nwe, 2018; Amasha & Assadi, 2024; Chiazor & Agwazie, 2024).

2.4. Studies on teachers' content mastery, pedagogical knowledge and teaching styles

Over the years, studies have been conducted on teacher content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and teaching styles vis-à-vis students' learning outcomes. The outcomes of these studies have yielded mixed results. For instance, Boz (2002) investigated subject matter and pedagogical content knowledge of prospective teachers. The study differentiates between "knowing that" and "knowing why" in the classroom. "Knowing that" is declarative knowledge of procedures, rules, and concepts associated with specific topics in subjects in the school curriculum. It is the knowledge of a basic repertoire of subjects which focuses on symbolization, manipulation and their interpretations at different occasions. "Knowing why" is the underlying meaning and understanding of why things are the way they are; it includes understanding of why rules may or may not work in certain ways, and anticipation of the aftermath of using these rules (Even & Tirosh, 1995). Nonetheless, Findings from the study show that respondents understand that a literal symbol in Mathematics changes its sign when it is moved to the other side. However, it seems they forgot or did not know the reason why this rule works that way. The gap between their "knowing that" and "knowing why" seems to affect their explanations on mathematical symbols (Boz, 2002).

Chen, et al. (2020) examined whether the subject matter knowledge of high school life science teachers' and knowledge of students' misconceptions would have impact on students' learning. The study confirmed that teachers' ability to only comprehend science concepts they teach is not sufficient rather, they also need to have a broad knowledge of various conceptions students might have about the topics they have for the day when coming into their lessons. Peiman et al. (2015) show that when teachers have the knowledge of the subject matter, knowledge of assessment and knowledge of instructional techniques, such teachers are adjudged to be skilled and effective.

The study of Laghari et al. (2023) reveals that the majority of the respondents had satisfactory knowledge of foundational concepts and theories of subjects. Nonetheless, most of them are adjudged as developing teachers not only because of their subject area expertise, but because they could not connect the discipline they teach with other courses and demonstrate how they could apply their knowledge to happenings in real-life situations. Teachers' content knowledge plays a crucial role in achieving stated behavioural objectives. Its significance on students' learning achievement cannot be played down. In spite of the importance of teachers' content knowledge, Bold et al. (2017), cited in UNESCO-International Institute for Educational Planning (2022) observed that teachers in several countries in the world do not have appropriate mastery of content knowledge necessary for their teaching.

Okon (2022) examined which of the teaching methods, teachers' content knowledge and teachers' encouragement would influence Grade 10 students' mathematics results. Findings show teachers' knowledge of mathematics content is a significant element capable of producing better results. However, the results showed that the majority of the teachers do not have sufficient skills and knowledge in some topics in Mathematics. Peerzada and Jabeen (2014) investigated how teachers' subject matter knowledge and their behaviours impacted students' performance. Findings reveal that student performance is contingent on teacher subject matter knowledge. The researchers noted that teachers without content expertise could probably teach concepts erroneously and may have more difficulty presenting the subject matter. This may further deepen learners' malicious knowledge of concepts, just as their teachers.

Mosabala (2018) conducted a study on knowledge structures for teaching a science topic, the Doppler

Effect. It was shown in the study that, in spite of the long teaching experience of the case study teachers, they cannot be classified as expert teachers because of the deficiencies in their transformed knowledge structures, the display of a lack of links among concepts and a lack of coherent knowledge about concepts. Wijayanti et al. (2021) analysed teachers' content knowledge and students' performance on fraction topics. The analysis revealed that both students and teachers tow a line of cognitive structure on fractions. Rather than teaching for understanding, teachers taught the concept of fractions for procedural performance. The pattern of teaching has successfully exposed learners to memorization of misconceptions about fractions.

Guerriero (2014) research affirms the need for teachers' dexterity in pedagogy and shows that relationship exists among teachers' pedagogical knowledge, professional competence and learning opportunities. Contrarily, the findings of Odumosu et al. (2018) play down the significance of pedagogical knowledge. The study reveals that students were not affected by teachers' pedagogical knowledge in Algebra in Mathematics. Suharyadi (2022) reveals that both senior and junior EFL teachers, equally, do not possess significant pedagogical knowledge because the senior teachers do not possess the appropriate knowledge of several aspects of pedagogical knowledge, while the junior ones are seriously weak in the teaching profession and lack the knowledge of English language teaching theory. König (2024) revealed that during teaching practicum in Austria and Germany, preservice teachers acquired pedagogical knowledge but discontinued with it at the point of transmission into the teaching profession

Farooq et al. (2022) investigated the impact of teaching styles on students' achievement scores at a university. The study indicated that teaching styles and learners' academic achievement are related. Many of the respondents are classified as facilitators, followed by the expert, delegator, formal authority, and lastly, demonstrator. Ullah et al. (2024) analysed the significant impact teaching styles have on students' academic performance at Peshawar University. The findings show that facilitator and delegator are active because of student-centred teaching styles displayed by the teachers, which have a significant improvement on students' academic performance, but authoritative styles have a comparatively lower impact.

Research findings indicate a positive and significant impact of teaching styles and learning

motivation on students' learning achievement at SDN Kutisari I/268 Surabaya (Mudzakkir & Darmawan, 2024). Teachers who have healthy interactions with students are perceived to develop interests in academic matters, get involved in classroom tasks, muster confidence, and achieve academic prowess. The student's ability to pull through rigorous learning tasks is contingent on the classroom structure set up by the teacher (Inayat & Ali, 2020).

Research gaps have been observed in the reviewed papers. Findings from the reviewed studies above have contradictory perspectives about the impact of teachers' content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and teaching styles. Some findings revealed that these teacher-related factors contribute significantly to learners' learning outcomes, while some revealed otherwise. The reviewed papers focus on mathematics, life sciences, science, and motivation. In addition, none of the papers reviewed has investigated the influence of the combination of the trio: teachers' content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and teaching style on students' performance and attitude in Literature-in-English. Furthermore, most of the papers reviewed neither investigated students' attitudes nor were they localized. To bridge these gaps, the present paper purposely seeks to confirm or negate earlier findings of the reviewed papers on the independent and dependent variables. It intends to domesticate the influence of the combination of the triad of content knowledge of teachers, pedagogical knowledge and styles of teaching on students' attitudes to and performance in Literature-in-English. Research findings from this paper will add to the available literature on teachers' content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and teaching style. Two research hypotheses were formulated to achieve the purpose of the study:

1. None of these variables (teachers' pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge and teaching styles) will significantly contribute to students' academic performance in Literature-in-English?
2. None of these variables (teachers' pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge and teaching styles) will significantly contribute to students' attitude in Literature-in-English?

3. Research methodology

3.1. Methodology

The study employed a descriptive research design of a survey type. The research design was considered appropriate because the characteristics of the

population were observed and described without manipulating variables. Research ethics were strictly adhered to throughout the study. Respondents were duly informed of the purpose of the study, their consent was sought, and participation was made voluntary. The identities of the respondents were guaranteed and kept confidential.

3.2. Sample and sampling technique

A multistage sampling procedure was adopted for the study. The procedure was adopted because the representative sample was selected in a sequence of stages from a population using smaller groups at each stage. At the first stage, four local governments were selected through a simple random sampling technique. Thereafter, using a simple random sampling technique, from each local government area, 4 schools were selected. At the third stage, through the purposive sampling technique, in total, 48 schools were selected. Purposive sampling technique was employed because certain criteria were set for school selection: the school must have registered students for Literature-in-English in external examinations for not less than 10 years, the school management must indicate interest in the research, and there must be teachers of Literature-in-English in the schools. At the last stage, in each school, intact classes of students who were taught Literature-in-English were considered. Participants in the study were 632 Literature-in-English students and 127 Literature-in-English teachers in Senior Secondary School II in Ekiti State, Nigeria.

3.3. Instruments

Seven instruments were employed for data gathering: students' questionnaire on teachers' pedagogical knowledge and teachers' teaching style; questionnaire on students' attitude to Literature-in-English; performance test conducted on students in Literature-in-English; questionnaire on teachers' pedagogical knowledge and teaching style in Literature-in-English; classroom observation scales for teachers' pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge and teaching styles in Literature-in-English. Students' questionnaire on teachers' pedagogical knowledge and teachers' teaching style sought students' opinions about their teachers' behaviour, time and classroom managerial skills, methods of teaching and assessment, knowledge of learning theories, and teacher-student relationship and interactions. A questionnaire on students' attitude to Literature-in-English focused on students' disposition to the genres of Literature, their passion for the subject

and their likes and dislikes about the subject, etc. Students' performance test in Literature-in-English tallied with the Literature-in-English Syllabus. Test items that consisted of objective and essay questions were drawn from the recommended literature textbooks and texts.

Teachers' questionnaire on teachers' pedagogical knowledge and teaching style in Literature-in-English centred on Literature-in-English teachers' opinions about their behaviour, time and classroom managerial skills, methods of teaching and assessment, knowledge of learning theories, and teacher-student interactions. The live classroom observations for content knowledge, teaching styles and pedagogical knowledge were carried out by research assistants who were also the foremost Literature-in-English teachers in the selected schools, but were not teaching the selected classes of students. Each observation scale was divided into two parts- A and B. Part A focused on respondents' personal information, such as the name of the school, class, subject, duration of period, and date of observation. For Part B of teachers' pedagogical knowledge, research assistants observed the presentation of respondents' lessons to check for their understanding of teaching approaches, learning theories, classroom assessment techniques, and classroom management for 40 minutes at each lesson. The degree of scoring was Very often (4), Often (3), Sometimes (2), Hardly Ever (1), and Never (0).

Part B of teachers' content knowledge consisted of observation protocol schedules for knowledge of literary appreciation skills (literary techniques); literary works (characterization, themes, plot); language learning and development (analytical, inferential skills and diction); and moral and values (application of literary works to life situations and experiences). The degree of scoring was Appropriately Mastered and Adequately Executed- excellent (4); Appropriately Mastered but Needs Adjustment - good (3); Fairly Mastered but More mastery and adjustment are recommended - fair (2); Poorly Mastered and appropriately executed- (poor (1); No Mastery- fail (0). Teachers' teaching styles propounded by Grasha and Riechmann (1996): the expert, formal authority, role model, facilitator and delegator types were used in the study. The scoring of Very Often (4), Often (3), Sometimes (2), Hardly Ever (1), and Never (0) was used for 40 minutes at each lesson.

3.4. Validity and reliability of the instruments

Before the pilot study, research experts in the fields of Literary Studies, Measurement and Evaluation,

Language Education, and teachers teaching Literature-in-English scrutinized the instruments. Thereafter, they ascertained the content and face validity of the performance test and questionnaire. The instruments related to students were administered to 150 Literature-in-English students who were not part of the selected sample. A test-retest of the instruments was carried out during the pilot study. Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation was employed to ascertain the reliability coefficients. Students' questionnaire on teachers' pedagogical knowledge and teachers' teaching style (0.79); questionnaire on students' attitude to Literature-in-English (0.81); performance test of students in Literature-in-English (0.80); and questionnaire on teachers' pedagogical knowledge and teaching style in Literature-in-English (0.83) were obtained. To get the reliability of the observation scales, inter-rater reliability through Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was employed. The reliability of 0.82, 0.81 and 0.77 were obtained for classroom observation scale measuring teachers' pedagogical knowledge, teachers' content knowledge and teachers' teaching styles in Literature-in-English (0.77) respectively.

4. Results

Inferential statistics, multiple regression analysis, at the 0.05 level of significance, was used for data analysis.

H01: None of these variables (teachers' pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge, and teaching styles) will significantly contribute most to students' academic performance in Literature-in-English

Table 1

Multiple regression of joint contribution of content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and teaching styles on students' performance in Literature-in-English

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	p
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	37.291	3.774		9.880	.000
Teachers' Pedagogical Knowledge	.161	.092	.157	1.756	.016
Teachers' Teaching Style	-.051	.061	-.080	-.837	.043
Teachers' Content Knowledge	.251	.074	.327	3.375	.001

R=.372; R²=.139; Adjusted R²= .118; F_{3, 123} = 6.598, p=.000

p<0.05

Table 1 shows a positive relationship between the independent variables (teachers' content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and teaching styles) and the

dependent variable (students' performance in Literature-in-English) ($R=0.372$). The regression model shows that teachers' content knowledge significantly contributes to students' performance, followed by pedagogical knowledge. Although teaching style is statistically significant, it has a smaller and negative impact on students' performance. Nevertheless, the result reveals that the independent variables jointly accounted for 13.9% ($R^2 \times 100$) of any variance observed in students' performance. The result shows further that $F_{3, 123} = 6.598$, $p=.000$. Hence, the null hypothesis is not accepted, which means that content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and teaching styles jointly contributed to students' performance in Literature-in-English.

H02: None of these variables (teachers' pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge and teaching styles) will significantly contribute to students' attitude in Literature-in-English?

Table 2

Multiple regression of joint contribution of content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and teaching styles on students' attitude to in Literature-in-English

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	p
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	23.514	5.030		4.674	.000
Teachers' Pedagogical Knowledge	.413	.099	.402	4.164	.000
Teachers' Teaching Style	.086	.122	.062	.702	.484
Teachers' Content Knowledge	-.099	.082	-.116	-1.214	.227
R=.383; $R^2=.147$; Adjusted $R^2=.126$; $F_{3, 123} = 7.058$, $p=.000$					

p<0.05

Table 2 reveals a positive relationship between the independent variables (content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and teaching styles) and the dependent variable (students' attitude to Literature-in-English) ($R=0.383$). The result also depicts that independent variables jointly accounted for 14.7% ($R^2 \times 100$) of the variance observed in students' attitudes to Literature-in-English. However, the result statistically shows that $F_{3, 123} = 7.058$, $p=.000$. Hence, the null hypothesis is not accepted, which means that teachers' pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge, and teaching styles jointly contributed to students' attitude to Literature-in-English.

5. Discussions

It is revealed from the study that teachers' content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and teaching styles jointly contributed to students' attitude to and

performance in Literature-in-English. They jointly accounted for 13.9% of any variance observed in students' academic performance. Although in descending order, the highest contributing factor to changes in students' performance in Literature-in-English was teachers' content knowledge ($\beta=0.327$), followed by teachers' pedagogical knowledge ($\beta=0.157$) and teachers' teaching style ($\beta=0.080$). The remaining unexplained 86.1% of the variation could be caused by other variables not discussed in this study.

Teachers' content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and teaching styles jointly accounted for 14.7% of any variance observed in the attitudes of students to Literature-in-English. At separately levels, only teachers' pedagogical knowledge with a beta value of 0.402 among the other contributing factors to changes in students' attitude towards learning of Literature-in-English was statistically shown to be better than content knowledge and teaching styles. The remaining unexplained 85.3% of the variation could be due to other variables not discussed in this study. Findings in Auseon (1995) confirmed that both pedagogical knowledge and subject matter knowledge affect the process of instruction because pedagogical knowledge is required in what and how teachers choose to teach. Atrido (2021) emphasized that, though, teachers' subject matter knowledge and pedagogical knowledge are two sides of a coin yet, a significant correlation exists between teacher's knowledge of the subject matter and what they teach. This implies that teachers' understanding of the content they teach is a sine qua non for effective classroom instruction. Teachers with shallow content and pedagogical knowledge will be at a loss when they are to teach concepts effectively and convincingly. Therefore, unarguably, teachers' knowledge of the subject matter and pedagogy of a discipline influences students' performance (Salami & Spangenberg, 2024).

Hill et al. (2005) reveal that teachers' knowledge of Mathematics is significantly related to students' achievement in Mathematics. A study conducted by Jadama (2014) on the influence of teachers' subject matter knowledge reveals that subject matter knowledge of a teacher significantly impacts on teaching and learning process in schools. This finding is at variance with the study of Odumosu et al. (2018), who reported that there was no significant interaction effect of content and pedagogical knowledge on students' achievement in algebra. Also, findings in the study of Mudzakkir and Darmawan (2024) support the findings of the present study that the teaching style

employed by teachers is an indispensable factor that determines the success or otherwise of the student's learning process.

6. Conclusions

The study confirmed the intricate interplay of teacher knowledge and attributes in influencing learning outcomes. It therefore behooves teachers to adopt essentialities that can enhance students' continuous improvement of knowledge and effective teaching delivery. The findings in the paper establish that teachers' competence of subject matter, pedagogical knowledge and teaching styles are cornerstones for effective classroom delivery and enhanced learners' performance in Literature-in-English. This, therefore, implies that Literature-in-English teachers ought to possess mastery of their discipline and be dexterous in pedagogical skills for optimal students' learning outcomes. A teacher's teaching style dictates the way a teacher creates a classroom atmosphere and presents materials, which is expressed through their character, behaviour and mannerisms.

6.1. Limitations and further research

Lack of prior investigation on the combination of the trio, teachers' subject matter, pedagogical knowledge and teaching styles on students' learning outcomes, affected the availability of prior studies to help elaborate the research problems being investigated and review past literature. The study adopted a descriptive research which is a mere description of the phenomenon revolving teacher-related variables in four local governments in Ekiti State. Thus, there is a limitation to the generalizability of the findings. To tackle the paucity of studies on the combination of teachers' subject matter, pedagogical knowledge and teaching styles and learner-related issues, further research could be carried out on this topic. In addition, future studies could adopt experimental or other research methods. A Larger sample and scope could be investigated for generalization. Further studies, especially qualitative research, can be conducted to explore why teaching styles may have a negative effect, and which of the teaching styles have a negative effect on the teaching and learning of Literature-in-English.

6.2. Recommendations

The following recommendations are advanced in line with the findings and conclusion of the study:

1. Teachers' content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and teaching styles are good determinants of students' learning outcomes in

Literature-in-English. Hence, teachers should strive daily to master them.

2. Teachers should know their teaching styles, and constantly employ teaching styles that can endear and sustain students' interest.
3. Government and stakeholders of education should organize workshops, seminars and training for teachers where actionable strategies can be identified to enhance teaching delivery and learning achievement.

Conflict of interest: It is declared in this study that conflict of interest does not exist.

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