



Teachers' Perceptions in the Potential for ICT Integration through Smart Phones for Teaching and Learning of English Composition Writing in Secondary School in Gweru, Zimbabwe

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Abstract: *This study explored teachers' perception in the potential use of smart phones for ICT integration in the teaching and learning of English composition writing. A qualitative case study design was chosen. The population was made up of all teachers of English composition at secondary school level in Gweru, Zimbabwe from which a sample of 5 such teachers were purposively selected. The teachers were interviewed using a semi-structured in-depth interview for data collection. Findings indicated that while teachers agreed that smart phone have potential as integration tools for English composition writing, there was fear of disruptions during lessons due to their lack of knowledge as to how to control them in the classroom. Teachers also acknowledged their lack of efficacy in the use of smart phone as a teaching tool. Teachers further indicated a lack of support for ICT integration for Arts subjects, which include English composition writing by the school administration. The study recommended that English teachers be trained in ICT integration through the smart phone for improved learner performance. It further recommended that secondary school administrators should support ICT integration across the curriculum.*

Keywords: *Smart-phone, Integration, ICT, Disruptive, Performance*

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1. Introduction

The call to integrate ICTs in the secondary school has been long and loud (Musarurwa, 2011; Barnwell, 2016; Isaacs, 2007). Education globally for the 21st century is about ICT integration to ensure relevance as ICTs have become the new global language across every aspect of human life (Schwab, 2016). Well before the advent of COVID-19, the United States of America (USA) had begun raising its education to technological integration by introducing a program called ConnectED (Thomas & O'Bannon, 2013). Accordingly, the focus leaned more on the technology integrated teaching in English Language as compared to

other areas of study (Barnwell, 2016; Alzaza & Yaakub, 2011; Salehi & Salehi, 2012).

Research in the United Kingdom (UK) has shown that smart phones could be easily incorporated in the classroom. They have easy internet access, a host of education-friendly applications especially for the English composition classroom that could be used instantly without set-up (British Council, 2013; Barnwell, 2016). Teachers found English language teaching easier to experiment ICTs with especially in the use of mobiles in the classroom at secondary school level (Barnwell, 2016; Joyce-Gibbons - Deogratias, 2017).

In South African schools, it was found out that the use of smart phones was encouraged in recording lessons for later revision, tutoring through a networking company called MXit and accessing e-libraries (UNICEF, 2015). According to the UNICEF (2015), studies in South Africa showed that 90% of teachers affirmed that digital technology through the smart phone creates a whole new world for both the teacher and the learner and the classroom is the only place that smart phones can be rationalized and help enable the learner to fit in with technological life of the 21st century (Dahya, Dryden-Peterson, Douhaibi, & Arvisais (2019; Doyle et al., 2021; UNICEF, 2015). Generation Z learners cannot be reached easily with the traditional board and chalk classroom model. ICT integration for the secondary school classroom is a must for improved learner performance (Safa, 2018).

In Zimbabwe, a pass in English language is a pre-requisite to continue academically or for professional training. One cannot be deemed to have a full Ordinary Level (O levels) certificate without it. Yet, English language at O level is one of the most failed subjects (ZIMSEC, 2017). The examination comes in two papers, one and two. The composition component of the paper is the most challenging and failed (ZIMSEC, 2017). The use of smart phones in the teaching and learning of composition may help in improving grades for the students.

This qualitative case study was carried out to find out the perception of secondary school teachers of English composition writing in relation to whether smart phones have the potential to positively impact learner performance. The study generated data to inform stakeholders on the place and role that smart phones can play in the teaching and learning of English composition writing in Gweru, Zimbabwe.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Smart phone technology and composition writing

Teachers in the United Kingdom acknowledge that as technology is transforming lives daily in the way people shop, socialize, do business and play through the smart phone, school have to take note and change the way students have to learn (British Council, 2013; Dzinoreva & Mavhunga, 2022). These changes are challenging the traditional way composition writing has always been taught in schools and the formality of the classroom. However, this transformation through smart phone technology offers students and teachers the opportunity to come up with new designs in teaching and learning that meet modern theories of learning where the teacher is a

facilitator and not the source of knowledge (Graham, 2017; British Council, 2013; Thomas & O'Bannon, 2013).

Research in the USA has shown that teachers in schools today need to integrate technology even in the form of smart phones into instruction that is learner centered, (An & Reigeluth, 2011; Higgins, 2013; Freed, 2016). It is more difficult to teach composition writing without centering it on students than any other concept (Freed, 2016). The reason being that today's learners are growing up in a digital world where smart phones are an extension of their bodies and they have specifications that provide reality than the traditional dry charts and chalkboard diagrams (Higgins, 2013; Majoni & Majoni, 2015). Teachers are therefore expected to provide requisite skills to their students to access and benefit from that world, (Common Sense Media, 2016).

In Japan, research has discovered that amended student learning and improved teaching methods result from ICT even on the smart phones (Kale & Goh, 2014; Sangrà, & González-Sanmamed, 2016). According to a report on Japanese multimedia in education, the indication was that increased student exposure to smart phone technology through integration with the curriculum, positively impacted student achievement across subjects (UNICEF, 2017). Therefore, blanket bans on the smart phones in schools may have a negative impact as surreal classroom environments hurt composition learning more than it does other areas of learning.

In Bangladesh, smart phones and other mobile gadgets brought a relief in the improvement of the teaching and learning of English as a second language (Begum, 2011). They bring novelty and fun into learning which by traditional perception, is a serious and demanding undertaking, and has brought innovation and success in performance. In many developing countries, English language is critical in that it has become the language of the world and a window into the developed world (Joyce-Gibbons, 2017). Digital mobiles thus, offer these students an immersion into contact with first language speakers of English. They get the rare chance to listen to first language speakers in context for better acquisition and performance in writing (Barnwell, 2016).

2.2 Trends in Africa on smart phone use in schools

In Kenya, the government saw education as a key player in its thrust towards becoming a middle-income economy. A case study by Kerkhoff and Makubaya (2022) found out that while government distributed tablets for teaching and learning, in situations of shortage teachers became innovative by bringing in smart phones for teaching and

learning. UNICEF (2015) reported a wide use of smart phones for teaching and learning of various learning areas which include English composition writing in most low-income schools in Kenya.

In Tanzania, teachers' attitudes were shown to be intolerant, studies showed that phones were banned from the schools and classrooms although students had them, even rural students were shown to own smart phones. According to Kafyulilo (2017), the potential of smart phones in Tanzanian schools was not fully realized by both teachers and the authorities. The study perceived that the younger and more junior teachers were the majority of those teachers who were positive about having the smart phone in the curriculum while the majority of the older and more experienced teachers were more resistant to the idea (Gibbons et al, 2017; Batanero et al., 2021).

In South Africa some schools encouraged the use of smart phones while others in the majority did not (Song & Kong, 2017). According to the ICEF Monitor (2017), studies in South Africa were showing that 90% of teachers had a negative attitude towards smart phones in the classroom based on the belief that smart phones created short span distracted students as opposed to the results of an American survey where 44% of schools had embraced the Bring Your Own Device policy (BYOD) in ICT which included smart phones in the classroom.

South Africa had more use of the smart phones in the classroom in higher education than in secondary schools, however, they still found their way into the same classrooms smuggled by students who put them to other uses which were not educational (Graham, 2017). This is a waste as they would go a long way in making language learning more attainable especially the composition writing area. The research in South Africa showed that the internet was inundated with software to use in the classroom, however, in some instances, instead of encouraging positivity in attitude in teachers, they have done otherwise due to the difficulties teachers sometimes met when they attempted to use them for classroom purposes (Mavhunga, 2016; Song & Kong).

However, the same research found out that compared to older teachers, younger teachers felt more confident and had a much more positive attitude towards ICT in the classroom. According to Kafyulilo (2014), exposure and access to technology increases efficacy and tends to make teachers more positive towards its use in the classroom. Therefore, African classrooms needed a shift towards use of smart phones in its classrooms as literature indicates a will to do by most developing countries but stalled by economic challenges in equipping schools with requisite gadgets for integration (UNICEF, 2015).

In Zimbabwean there is a severe ban on smart phones in most public schoolrooms. When the former education minister in the country, Honorable Lazarus Dokora (2015) hinted on the integration of the curriculum to technology using the smart phone, there was a cry and hue from both teachers, parents and other stakeholders (Ndlovu, 2015). Teacher attitude was indicated as negative, perceiving phones as disruptive and hostile to good grades (Dokora, 2015). This meant that the level of adoption of smart phones as classroom technology was low and in some instances non-existent. However, smart phones were presented as having the ability to help Zimbabwe in the integration of technology with pedagogy which is the narrative of its new curriculum (Ministry of primary and secondary education, 2016).

Contemporary studies are showing that the most crucial aspect in the implementation of smart phones in schools is the teacher factor (Hart & Laher, 2015; Femi & Danlami, 2015 2015; Sibanda, Mapenduka & Furusa, 2016; Nzima, 2016). Studies on teacher attitude in relation to any form of ICT in the classroom is influenced by usefulness of the gadget, teachers ask if integration with the smart phone will improve performance (Hart & Laher, 2015; Barnwell, 2016; Majoni & Majoni, 2015; Graham, 2017). Other causes cited by research findings were issues of smart phone anxiety, training and ease of use which play a profound role in generating enthusiasm for use by teachers in their individual classrooms (Hart & Laher, 2015). Education is based on respect of the teacher by the students, if this is compromised then no meaningful learning goes on in the classroom and grades fall (Batanero et al., 2021).

2.3 Assumptions of Smart Phones in the Classroom

Research has it that the most important assumption in the process of smart phone implementation in teaching and learning is a satisfactory personnel base (Majoni & Majoni 2015; Salehi & Salehi, 2012; Sung et al, 2016). It is imposed as priority in the computerization of the English language curriculum especially composition writing for the classroom that the staffs be positive, be active and be effectively involved in the whole process (Chun, 2016). It is also assumed that the benefits of integration outweigh the cost and disadvantages associated with smart phones especially in their use in the classroom.

The USA as a country on ITC implementation prioritize also the training and staff development of the teaching fraternity, however, many a time ICT training comes to teachers in the form of computer literacy instead of skills development in terms of integrating ICT to curriculum (Thomas & O'Bannon, 2013; Mustafa et al., 2014). Familiarity with the smart phone has also raised the

assumption that teachers will find it easy to use it in the classroom as an integration tool especially in teaching and learning of English composition writing.

In South Africa, the assumptions on lifting the ban from most of its schools was that the education system needed to be compliant with global trends to give students an equal playing field for jobs on the international job market (UNICEF, 2015). Schools also assumed that allowing students phones besides their usefulness in the teaching and learning process would also help make schools a safe place for students when danger can be easily and speedily reported (Baek, Zhang & Yun, 2017).

What teachers are said to be aware of is the elements of disruption inherent in a phone and are alert to them, issues such as texting during lessons and opening unwanted sights at the wrong time and the worst being a phone ringing during class (Prasad, Lalitha & Srikar, 2014). However, English language teachers maintain that for language teaching, learning continues to occur even in what are called disruptive moments or unwanted sights, these can easily become creative moments in composition writing lessons (Kafyulilo, 2014). It was also shown that there is less skepticism on smart phone use in the classroom among younger teachers as compared to the older generation of teachers, therefore, there is hope for integration as long as this group of teachers is there in schools.

In Zimbabwe, Literature showed that there was some skepticism from some teachers and other stakeholders in education in relation to smart phones and other hand-held computers (ICEF Monitor, 2017; Dokora, 2015). Given the economic situations faced by developing countries in Africa, meeting reasonable computer student ratios especially as classes are already overcrowded in some instances, is next to impossible. Adoption of smart phones in the classroom is urgently needed to bridge knowledge gaps for developing countries and make education relevant for the learners.

Research, on the other hand, has constantly indicated that a lack of a clear framework on smart phone implementation in relation to classroom practice, as the major drawback in adoption of innovation by teachers at classroom levels (UNESCO, 2015; Sangrà, & González-Sanmamed, 2016). For Zimbabwe, there has been limited research on what teachers think towards using smart phones for the classroom, given the serious shortage of ICT tools in secondary schools countrywide (Bere & Rambe, 2019; UNICEF, 2015), let alone studies in the teaching and learning of English composition writing. This study therefore, aimed at finding out the teachers' perspectives on using smart phones in the classroom for teaching and learning English composition in secondary schools through a case study.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Paradigm

The aim of this study was to explore teachers' perceptions in the potential of ICT integration through smart phones for the teaching and learning of English composition writing in secondary schools in Gweru, Zimbabwe. The interpretative paradigm was chosen as appropriate for the underpinning of this study (Glesne, 2015). The paradigm assumes that reality is constructed socially (Maree, 2014). The paradigm allowed researchers to do data collection with secondary school teachers in their social setting concerning what they think and perceive about smart phones for their respective English composition writing classrooms. Multiple realities were evident as participants were interviewed (Glense, 2015).

3.2 Research Design

The research design allowed the researchers to specify participants' selection, choose data collection and data analysis techniques (Creswell, 2014). The study used a qualitative case study design as it follows parameters for studying human beings in their social settings. The design became ideal for this research as the researchers wanted to find out about a particular phenomenon, that is, the perception of secondary school teachers in Gweru, Zimbabwe towards the teaching and learning of English composition writing mediated by the integration of smart phones as ICT tools in their respective classrooms (Glense, 2015). This was suitable as it allowed for an in-depth rich picture of the experiences and perceptions of the teachers of English composition writing for analytical assessment of data (van Wyk & Wadhid, 2022).

According to McMillan & Schumacher (2001), it is the people's perceptions that direct their actions, feelings and thoughts because they consider them real. case studies help achieve a thorough exploration of what teachers see as real in the case of the potential that smart phones have in teaching and learning in relation to improved performance by secondary school learners. The methodology sought to understand phenomena according to how the respondents attributed meaning to their actions and behaviors (Mariee, 2014). In this study 5 secondary school teachers of English composition writing were studied in-depth for their perceptions on smart phones use for teaching English composition writing in one secondary school in Gweru, Zimbabwe (Yin, 2014). In this case study, data was drawn from in-depth interviews aided by semi-structured questions to give room for thorough exploration of participants thought and feelings concerning the phenomena of smart phones in their English composition classes.

3.3 Population and Sampling Techniques

The target population for this study was all the English language teachers in one secondary school in Gweru District, Zimbabwe. Purposive sampling was used to select subjects for the study (Creswell, 2014). The sample was made up of all the five teachers who comprised the English language department and taught English language from form one to form four in the school. The participants were chosen for the reason that they were rich information sources for the research question (Brynad, Hanekom & Brynard, 2014). They all taught forms one to four English Language in the school and all were experienced teachers of more than 5 years teaching English composition at secondary school level. The researchers gave these participants pseudo names, Mary, Jane, Ruth and Tino for the purposes of this study for anonymity.

3.4 Data collection

In this study data was collected using face to face interviews on a one-on-one basis. These were semi-structured interviews administered on the 5 teachers for qualitative data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

3.5 Research Instruments

Self-developed semi-structured questions for the interviews were used. A grand tour question, *‘What technology tools are at your disposal at your school in the teaching of English composition writing for your class?’* was asked each participant as an opening question for the interview (Creswell, 2014).

3.6 Data Analysis

The data collected from interviews was analyzed logically to find sense from it through thematic analysis (Creswell, 2014). There was systematic identifying, organizing and giving insights into patterns of meaning or themes across the data set and forming an interpretation thereof (Yin, 2014). The researchers preferred this method because it is mostly manual and demand an immersion into the discussions and recordings minutely picking recurrences one by one to increase trustworthiness of the findings. It has increased elements of accessibility and flexibility (Creswell, 2014). The researchers followed a linear analysis through six steps as given by Yin (2014), namely familiarization with the data, coding, creating themes, reviewing the themes against interview data itself and then constructing an analytic narrative to report to readers a coherent narrative.

3.7 Trustworthiness

In this study, to ensure trustworthiness, the researchers used prolonged time in the field and member checking (Creswell, 2014). In prolonged time in the field, the researchers immersed themselves in the study site long enough to build trust and rapport with the research participants. This long interaction with the participants helped in the collection of accurate information which gave strength and soundness to the study (Glense, 2015). Researchers also employed member checking which involved consulting with the participants in regard to the findings. This further authenticated results accuracy as participants validated that that the themes and categories reflected their responses.

4. Results and Discussion

The study had one research question: Do teachers perceive any potential for using smart phones in the teaching and learning of English composition writing?

First, the researchers needed to establish whether the school had technology tools to help participants integrate without having to look to smart phones in the first place. The face-to-face interviews with the subjects provided information to answer the question. The grand tour question in the interview opened the discussion towards answering the research question.

What technology tools are at your disposal at your school in the teaching of English composition writing for your class?

Researchers were informed by the responses of the participants that the school had several technological tools but the teachers in the English department rarely used them for teaching English composition writing because of the numbers of computers in relation to that of students per class, they were not enough. After establishing that the school indeed had inadequate ICT tools that teachers of English composition could use for their classes, the researchers went on with the rest of the questions. Data analysis established the following themes: technology tools in the school, place of smart phones in the school, place of smart phones in the classroom, smart phones and the teaching of English composition and views on teacher-pupil-smart phone relationships. We will now look at these themes one by one:

4.1 Technology tools in schools

Mary acknowledged that as a department they did not have technological tools in the form of smart boards, projectors or computers for use in their teaching and learning activities. The school had computers in the library which were accessible to students, but they were few. The actual number was twenty and the total enrolment of students in

the school was 876. There were also 30 computers in the computer lab, but those ones were for those doing computer studies as a course.

Jane added a new dimension to the discussion, that the Arts departments did not own technological tools in the school:

Besides having computers, Mathematics, Science and Business departments have projectors which we can borrow and use if there is need or if the owners are not using them. The school also has an interactive board under the Business department which is also accessible to me on request. On this one, students can use memory sticks, they can Google and they can also scan documents. Its use is difficult to be accessed by all students in my department and it's the only one in the school.

The rest of the subjects echoed the same answers. However, Peter said,

I use my smart phone to download information for my lessons and to discuss with some colleagues on composition writing teaching through social media, we have a whatsApp group for some English language teachers in the district.

Findings were that technological tools were there in the school but in short supply given the enrolment of 876 students in relation to 20 computers that were for all who used the library. Thus, the student computer ratio was 1:44. That supported teacher reluctance to integrate as research had it that student computer ratio is an important factor in the integration of ICT and curriculum (Mustafa et al, 2014; Baek, Zhang & Yun, 2017).

The ideal situation is a 1:1 ratio which most schools in Africa may fail to attain (UNESCO, 2015). In line with (Sibanda, Mapenduka & Furusa, 2016), teachers cannot fully integrate technology in their content for classroom activity if the hardware was not enough for the students per class. Another element that emerged from the discussion was that the Sciences, Math, Business and Geography departments had technological tools and the English department had none.

A follow-up question to further probe how teachers were integrating technology in the classroom was: *“How do you integrate technology with your content for your composition writing class?”*

Jane: I am not very good with computers; I don't use them in my class. I use technology to find information for my lessons when I am planning but don't involve my students in it. I once used the interactive board, but I discovered that I needed a lot of time to prepare so, I have since stopped.

Mary: I sometimes use PowerPoint to illustrate language usage and sometimes to show pictures in color. This is when need arises.

TEACHER Sue: *We have a whatsApp group for English teachers in the district so that's how I use technology to get latest information on teaching English at different levels. I also use my laptop to research on topics that I would be teaching that time. In the classroom, I don't use such technology.*

Ruth: *Occasionally I assign my students to find information on internet. Our internet sometimes is not reliable, so I just teach without technology.*

Tino: *I have been putting to practice what I found on the net on lessons using the computer for my classes on lessons for composition writing and on vocabulary. It's this term that I have actually been teaching these things directly on the computer, but it takes time to prepare.*

Findings from the discussions revealed that participants minimally integrated technology in the teaching and learning of English composition writing, because it took them a lot of time to prepare and availability of enough computers was a limiting factor (Musarurwa, 2011). Only Tino showed some disposition towards using technology on a more regular basis than the rest of the participants.

Further discussions to answer the research question brought out the following themes:

4.2 Place of smart phones in the school

Teaching and learning in the 21st century imply integration with technology. Schools are supposed to have laptops or computers for integration (Majoni & Majoni, 2015). However, many schools in Zimbabwe were unable to provide sufficient machines for all the learners in schools, thus, the researchers' quest to find out if smart phones could be used in place of computers for integration in the learning and teaching of English composition. In response to the question about what the subjects thought about the ban on smart phones from schools, three of the subjects asked viewed the ban on smart phones as justified as students were generally believed not to use their phones for educational purposes but for social chats.

Sue: explained that the ban was valid to a greater extent especially in relation to disciplinary issues in the school. Students tended to visit undesirable sites and may spend more time on social media than on schoolwork, which reduce time-on-task and output in terms of performance in examinations.

Sue said:

While it is true that children spend most of their time in school and should be taught to become good adults from

school, the issue of phones is a thorny area and needs control otherwise they can be of more harm than good if allowed in schools just like that.

Subjects agreed that the policy that banned smart phones from schools was well thought out and smart phones would be more of a distraction than a benefit to learning environments like schools. Jane explained that it was every teacher's aversion to have students in his/her class who had smart phones smuggled or otherwise because naturally students would like to communicate with their friends even from that classroom. Phones were thought to be more enticing than a lesson on composition writing and lessons were not always what students would prefer versus the applications on a phone. This finding showed that teachers were in support of the existing ban of smart phones in schools because they were not aware of any way to make them productive in their composition lessons (Burnette, 2016).

Ruth:

Those kids are way ahead of us teachers in terms of using those phones they will cheat on us especially in exams and we will never get to know that we have been cheated. That's the problem, so it is better we stick to what we can control and make them pass in the process.

It is an undeniable fact that the education sector stands to benefit much from ICT integration. English composition writing was one area that research has shown that it can be radically enhanced and yield positive results in performance by students (Batanero, et. al., 2021; Higgins, 2013) However, educationists in Zimbabwe seem to be in a dilemma in terms of accessing computers for schools and also making use of the smart phones that students already have in their pockets.

4.3 Place of smart phones in the classroom

The subjects of the interviews gave varied answers to the question, 'what do you think are the implications to your English composition class if students were allowed to bring smart phones to class?' Mary observed that it was undeniable that smart phones would be beneficial to the teaching and learning of composition writing. She argued that it would provide the gadget for integration that the school was failing to provide.

Asked to balance her response with the earlier argument that phones were disruptive, she said:

You know, it's a double-edged sword. Smart phones have applications that do well in teaching and learning of composition writing that a vigilant and committed teacher can make use of to

the benefit of the students. On the other hand, if poorly managed no learning would take place.

Mary stressed that:

The idea is not to allow students free access to their smart phones all the time. We cannot let a device like a smart phone with such useful applications just go without tapping its advantages in our composition classes.

As Jane responded to the same question, the reaction revealed that she agreed with Mary that smart phones would enhance learning in her composition writing class if it was not for the disruptions:

The smart phone will be helpful in composition writing especially in vocabulary, grammar and model compositions. I believe that smart phones support learning, even though I wouldn't know how to control my students so that they only stick to educational areas.

Sue did not want the smart phone for her composition class as she thought that they would not help with her students' creativity in composition writing. She argued that students would spend more time on social media and not concentrate on the tasks for school work.

Ruth was an examiner with ZIMSEC and she explained how in 2016 final examinations most rural students were disadvantaged by failure to understand meanings of particular games cited in the examination like the matador and his activities:

Smart phones would help students see videos of such games, expose students to reality in other parts of the world as education has become global... the smart phone would help in leveling the ground for all students in terms of creativity and English composition writing especially by using virtual trips.

When Tino responded to the question, the response showed that though he agreed that smart phones had valuable applications for learning, he felt students could do without them and still score highly as the demands of the syllabus in English composition writing could be satisfied without the burden of fighting distractions inherent in smart phone presence in a classroom:

With my very big class, I wouldn't want to have smart phones in it... control will be something else and very difficult, how would you make sure that all are on the same sites and doing things for the lesson... I'm afraid I can spend the greater part of the lesson reprimanding pupils instead of doing serious learning. Serious students can still score very highly without using their phones.

Tino further explained why smart phones would be handy if he knew how to control them:

Fifty is a big number when we look at resources to make integration possible for such a class. To begin with, there is no such number of computers in my school to cater for such a big class. And let's say there are, how will I supervise such a class and at the same time utilize my 35 minutes for productive learning considering that my students must sit for final examinations at O level?

This finding concurred with other research which concluded that 21st century students spend most of their time on technology but their learning in schools was designed for the late 19th century especially in English language learning (Barnwell, 2016; Graham, 2017). John Dewey once said that if teachers teach today the same way they taught yesterday, they rob today's children of tomorrow (Barnwell, 2016). The teacher was indicating sticking to traditional methods for digital natives.

Sue suggested that if students are allowed smart phones in composition writing classes, the schools should employ a computer technician whose job would be to monitor sites and the general use of phones by students. Sue based her argument on the powerful effects of audio visual learning and teaching aids of which smart phones were part, that these made composition writing more easily acquired as a skill and unlocked imagination which was a major ingredient in the learning area.

4.4 Smart phones and the teaching of English composition

In response to question 3 which said, *'Do you think students should be allowed to bring their smart phones to class for integration in English composition lessons?'*

Mary, Jane and Tino agreed that they would welcome a situation where they could have their students bringing smart phones to composition lessons especially for CALA activities. Teachers were of the opinion that with the advent of CALA, students should be allowed to do their own research on their smart phones instead of being spoon fed by the teachers due to lack of adequate ICT tools. Jane further explained that:

The school cannot at the moment afford a 1:1 student computer ratio therefore should allow them to bring their own phones to cover that gap especially now that they need to research for their CALA activities. At the moment they do the CALA at home which slows progress and I never know if they do the work themselves or pay someone to do it for them.

Mary, Jane, Ruth and Tino argued that smart phones helped them with reality teaching, opening students' minds to

things they have only heard of and being able to 'show' them what they looked like. Mary gave an example of descriptive compositions where students were required to describe for example desertification. Through their smart phones she said students could visit sites that show the process as a video and go on to describe prevention and restoration processes. That would help not only with the process but with the correct vocabulary to use. This agreed with literature that smart phones provide much needed reality to buttress creativity in composition writing (Chun, 2016; Dokora, 2015).

According to Tino:

Students may be asked to write about a fire, they may know descriptive words used in such a write-up but watching a video of a fire with firemen trying to put it out, the sounds, the noise and the behavior of spectators, of those trapped and the rescue or perish of some, would better position them to write better composition than when everything had to come from imagination.

Mary was of the opinion that smart phones would go a long way in making teaching of English composition writing livelier, if they can be controlled; and interesting for learners especially as they come with applications like videos and cameras.

Charts are outdated, especially self-made ones, we want to use live pictures but equipment is limited maybe allowing students to bring in their own phones and tablets would solve the tools issue, a way has to be there somehow to control them in the classroom.

Outcomes in this area showed that participants were aware of what applications the smart phones had and how they could be utilized in a composition writing class. As the Minister of education said, smart phones properly handled bring profitable integration to learning, especially in the teaching of composition writing to secondary school students (Dokora, 2015; Bere & Rambe, 2019).

Findings agreed with literature that technology in the form of smart phones when properly adopted for the classroom help students attain 21st century goals and objectives of education some of which were creativity, innovation, collaboration and problem solving (Doyle et al. 2021; Barnwell, 2016). Smart phones ubiquity in today's societies should be the teacher's motivator to incorporate them in teaching and learning as ignoring them may bring more harm than good in performance.

Tino had a contrary view to smart phones in the English composition class. He argued that at that moment teachers had no concrete measures in place in the school to control the use of smart phones if students were allowed to bring them to class. He felt he would not be able to control use

in his lesson and rob students of learning time. He thought if schools could not afford laptops and computers, student should continue to learn their composition writing the traditional way.

The numbers are too big. Imagine I have to meet 5 classes per day each with 50 students, it's quite difficult for me considering my limited knowledge on using smart phones for lessons. I am actually afraid they would be doing something else besides what I want them to do. So, I would rather teach more seriously in the classroom the usual way to cover the syllabus.

The composition writing teachers who participated in this study agreed that smart phones had the requisite specs that make the teaching and learning of composition writing successful and that the output was promising in terms of results in examinations. However, the statements by Sue collaborate with literature that teacher efficacy was an important determinant in the adoption of smart phones as integration tools in the English composition classroom (Safa, 2018; Batanero et al., 2021). To move away from the traditional class where the teacher is in control to a new system that is inherent in technology adoption where there is more collaboration and students take greater control was not easy for most teachers.

Tino agreed to the potential in smart phones but went on to observe that:

Smart phones in class for composition lessons sound good but reality is that as teachers we have no measures in place to control them. Personally, I want them in my class for what they can do but I'm afraid they may cause a lot of distraction and I end up having wasted learning time.

These findings agreed with research that failure to control smart phone use in the classroom affect time-on-task and impact negatively on output reflected by poor exit examinations results. Some teachers elsewhere have however successfully implemented use of smart phones for their classrooms and students have benefitted from such innovation (Beus, 2016). It was very important to note that adoption of smart phones should be accompanied by a comprehensive method of control of the gadgets otherwise the intended goals may not be realized.

Recent findings were that smart phones were more and more affordable for the average person even for students in the secondary schools in Sub-Saharan Africa (Musarurwa, 2011; UNICEF, 2015). Findings indicated increase in internet access and with the advent of a variety of social media platforms, many students and adults found smart phones more versatile for use in communication, commerce and banking. Introducing them for the

classroom would not require any effort as it would be just another extension use for them.

4.5 Views on teacher-pupil-smart phone relationships

Mary, when responding to the question, 'Are there any other issues that you would like to say about smart phones in the classroom in relation to teaching English composition?' Stated that the issue of self confidence in the use of smart phones in the classroom with students was a hindrance as she felt inadequate because students knew more about phones than she did. The respondent stated:

Students spend most of their time on the phone and they know more about it than we teachers do. This affects our confidence and we tend to feel intimidated by this lack of knowledge. As a teacher I want to feel in control of whatever takes place in my classroom for me to really teach and make students learn.

It showed that teacher efficacy was required for successful implementation of smart phones in the teaching of English composition. However, the findings tally with literature that lack of knowledge in the proper implementation of mobiles in the classroom does not make them less useful for integration in teaching and learning (Barnwell, 2017; Burnette, 2016).

Jane cited that literacy no longer meant the ability to read and write only but in the 21st century meant also ICT literacy. She explained that in the teaching of English composition writing, it was a great opportunity to teach students positive use of technology through their smart phones. She said:

When students know they can write better compositions and score very high if they use their phones on certain given sites, they would willingly do it and may even continue at home, which they don't do with dry traditional work... how as school can we give students a complete and wholesome education that excludes the smart phones which has become so much fixed to our students' hands and lives? We really need a solution urgently.

Proper use of smart phones should be perceived as a life skill and as such the onus lay with schools to see to it that students acquire this life skill as it has become part of life today (Dzinoreva & Mavhunga, 2022). Sue raised the issue that smart phones widen the technology divide between urban and rural schools. She said that internet in Zimbabwe was generally found in urban areas and peri-urban areas. However, she pointed out that it would not be fair to arrest innovation for the sake of the rural students;

Let's allow those who have access and can afford to go on ahead, one day the rural students will also follow. There is need for urban schools to use what they have instead of crying for schools to provide computers in the classroom for lessons.

Here the respondent contradicted her earlier aversion to smart phones in the classroom when she clearly stated that she would rather not have the smart phone in her composition writing class. Findings are that the respondent knew the benefits of the smart phone to her class but would rather not take the risk.

The finding concurs with recent research in Zimbabwe which revealed a serious shortage of computers in schools with some schools realizing a student: computer ratio of 1: 60! (UNESCO, 2015; Dzinoreva & Mavhunga, 2022). Which in effect support TEACHER 3's opinion that, bringing smart phones to the English composition class would enable a continuous and consistent integration of ICT without having to wait until such a time when schools can afford computers for each learner.

Ruth's response had to do with a suggestion that composition writing teachers should come up with a way to regulate the use of the phones in the classroom.

There is too much temptation where the smart phone is concerned. It would be expecting too much from the students to think that they would adhere to the rules whatever they are. Children will always be children so it is better not to have the phone in the classroom at all because pass rate will be worse than what it is.

Ruth was showing some consistence in his responses in terms of the place of smart phones in the classroom. There was evidence of the fear that the smart phone might not be able to improve performance but rather would make the situation worse (Chitiyo & Harmony, 2009).

Tino was skeptical of the extent of the usefulness of smart phones as learning tools in the English composition class. He agreed that the applications were there and the potential was very great but continued to cite control challenges and that more harm than good would result.

Administration should also help somehow to make it possible for us in the classroom but you find that there is more support for the science and math teachers in the school than for Arts subjects. The few equipment in the school are found in those departments. So, in the end we in English would tend to resort to our traditional ways of teaching as long as our pass rate is high in the subject no one queries us on our methods.

Research concurs that support for teachers from the Administration increases integration efforts by the teachers (Ngwu, 2014; An, & Reigeluth, 2011). Findings here show that Administration in schools viewed the Arts department as not in need of technological tools like sciences and Math Departments. That was found to be the reason why teachers were not cognizance of the link between the failure rates of their students in English composition writing to teaching methods that do not incorporate technology.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Public secondary schools in Zimbabwe have challenges in availing ICT tools enough for both learners and teachers to enable ICT integrated learning for English composition writing classes. In general, the teachers agreed that there is a lot of potential in using the smart phones to integrate teaching and learning in English composition lessons. Traditional modes of teaching are proving inadequate as failure rate remains very high for English Language at O level especially as the CALA component need integration to be successfully executed.

Teachers agreed that there was need to integrate to expose learners to reality for creative and descriptive writing in composition. However, teachers were faced with the problem of control of the smart phone once it came into the classroom. In the end teachers supported the blanket ban of the smart phone from the school as they foresaw more disruptions than learning taking place in their English composition writing lessons which would continue to lower learner performance in exit examinations. Another factor which was raised was that of teacher efficacy. Teachers agreed that learners have more knowledge about the smart phone and they were afraid they would cheat both during lessons and in the examinations. School administration was presented as biased towards the sciences and mathematics areas for ICT provision and relegating the Arts departments as not really needing them.

The study recommends that Ministry of primary and secondary education in Zimbabwe take on board learner smart phones for use as ICT tools in the teaching and learning of English composition writing and in-service teachers on their profitable use in the classroom. This is very important seeing that there is no solution in sight at the present moment of availing enough ICT tools for secondary schools in Zimbabwe and allow for integration in English composition writing classroom activities.

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