Effects of Reading-Writing and Think-Pair-Share Strategies on Secondary School Students' Performance in Essay Writing in Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated the effects of Reading-Writing (RW), Think-Pair-Share (TPS), and combination (RW & TPS) strategies on students' performance in essay writing in senior secondary schools in Ondo State. The study adopted a quasi-experimental pre-test post-test four-group design as well as a descriptive survey type design. The population for the study comprised all the 25 297 public Senior Secondary School (SSS) II students of the 2019/2020 Session in Ondo State. The sample for this study was 308 SSS II students that were selected from public senior secondary schools, using a multi-stage sampling procedure. The instrument used for this study is the Essay Writing Performance Test (EWPT) which was a standardised WAEC question. The reliability of the instrument was established through the test re-test method and a reliability coefficient of 0.70 was obtained. The data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. All hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance. The performance of students in both experimental and Control Groups in the pre-test was low and did not differ statistically this established the homogeneity of the four groups before the experiment. The result also revealed that it was only in the RW and the combination Groups that there was a significant difference in the pre-test and post-test scores

of the test subjects at a 0.05 level of significance. The result also established there was a significant difference in the effects of the strategies of teaching investigated on the performance of the students in essay writing.

Keywords: reading-writing, think-pair-share, performance, and essay writing

1. Background

In Nigeria, English language learning is given a prominent place because it is used primarily for teaching in schools. As a result, all Nigerian elementary, secondary, and tertiary educational institutions now require students to take English as a subject. Examination boards like the West African Examination Council (WAEC), National Examination Council (NECO), and Joint Admission Matriculation Board (JAMB) make the English Language a required subject in their examinations because they recognise the economic value of the language for their applicants. No matter the student's major, all Nigerian higher education institutions demand English as a course of study in year one since they place a great emphasis on the language. The prominence of English in Nigeria's educational system means that students who do not have strong reading and writing skills in the language will have a difficult time in their examinations. Writing appears to be the more crucial of the two skills, particularly for students, since it affects their capacity to explain to the examiners what they have learnt in school and read. Writing is vital for academic success since it is an important requirement a student must satisfy to be able to earn excellent grades (Rae, 2020).

Writing is one way that people may communicate with future generations. The ability to write allows people of various generations to communicate with one another. Writing is a critical language aptitude in which students of language must develop expertise. In both language learning and academics, the ability to write is critical. As individuals advance in life and become working adults, proficiency in writing becomes crucial. As a result, academics and educators have made concentrated attempts to investigate the nature of this skill as well as the most effective strategy for teaching it successfully and communicatively. Writing is a skill that students should be allowed to learn like any other skill throughout time (Brink, 2020). According to Suvin (2020), Writing is one of the most important skills, but also one of the most complex skills to master for educational success. Rae (2020) also affirmed that communication, whether in speaking or writing, is a crucial skill that every student must master to succeed in school as well as in life in general. This is because communication allows students to learn all the rules of the language they are learning and demonstrates to them how they can more effectively organise their thoughts using the language. It was further explained that students' grammar, spelling, and punctuation, gestures, among others can also be improved upon when they learn how to use writing as means of expressing their ideas and messages clearly.

Writing in English is particularly significant in Nigeria because it is the country's official language. Anyone who wants to apply for a white-collar job or enroll in a tertiary school must be able to read and write in English. Lack of proficiency in reading and writing may make it difficult to get a suitable job. According to Komolafe & Yara (2010) despite the importance of the English Language in Nigeria, many students found it difficult to write fluently. In 2018,

the WAEC Chief Examiner's report indicated that students' main struggle in Mathematics is translating story problems into mathematical statements, which has resulted in widespread failure in the subject. This is because the language for teaching Mathematics and other subjects in our secondary schools is the English Language. The necessity of ensuring students' writing skills cannot be overstated in today's increasingly demanding world of literacy. Writing properly is both a luxury and a requirement for students' literacy development. As a result, training students to write well should be prioritised to ensure a worthwhile educational system. This study sets out to investigate the effects of Reading-Writing (RW) and Think-Pair-Share and a combination of both (RW-TPS) strategies on senior secondary school students' performance in essay writing in Ondo State. The role of the English Language in Nigeria's socio-economic and political life is significant because it is the official language of government, law, business, and education. Students must pass the English Language at least at the credit level to continue their studies beyond the secondary school level. Aside from the native languages of Nigeria, all subjects are taught in English. The capacity to articulate their views coherently in English is predicted to improve when students learn to write essays in English. Every year, students' performance in English Language examinations in Ondo State seems to be declining. About 10 369 students out of 28 770 who took the WASSCE examination in 2018 did not obtain a credit pass in the English Language examination (Ondo State Ministry of Education, 2020). What can be done to improve students' performance in English Language examinations, especially in the writing of essays, is a concern for educators, researchers, and the government. Teachers of English in secondary schools are supposed to give essay writing extra attention by introducing pupils to various essay forms and giving them a variety of essay writing assignments. The majority of teachers in Nigeria employ the traditional approach, which comprises lecturing to the class on the subject, providing notes if possible, and assigning writing projects to the students and this method appears not to be adequate. Many teachers are unable to provide each student with the specific attention they need while writing, therefore students frequently do not receive the amount of feedback from their teachers that is necessary for them to progress as writers. Sometimes teachers fail to grade these assignments since the students' teacher ratio is typically overwhelming. Muskin, (2017) asserts that the type of test a teacher may administer to their students, as well as the quantity and value of any feedback, may be significantly impacted by the number of students in a classroom. The main consideration is whether there are other approaches or strategies for instructing students on how to write essays. Other ways of teaching essay writing have been proposed by experts. Think-Pair-Share, Reading-Writing, Process, Genre, Integrated, and Interactional techniques are just a few of the options. Do these strategies outperform the traditional approach of teaching essay writing that is currently in use in Nigeria?

English must be taught properly in schools so that our children may acquire the necessary skills, given the importance of the English Language in the Nigerian educational system and the fact that it is a language of communication and possibilities. Our students must master the English Language's essay-writing component if they are to develop this proficiency. In public examinations, essay writing accounts for fifty percent (50%) of the total marks for the English Language (WAEC marking scheme 2021). It is therefore critical to determine the

effective strategy for teaching essay writing and to promote it among the teachers of the English Language in secondary schools in Nigeria. The objective of this research is to see how alternative teaching strategies RW, TPS, and a combination of RW and TPS affect students' performance in essay writing in senior secondary schools in Ondo State.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Reading-Writing Strategy

The Reading-Writing strategy is a traditional method of learning a language. It is also referred to as a Model strategy (Akinwamide, 2013). It is primarily based on presenting model texts to the learner, meaning that teachers can introduce various types of essays to cover the syllabus (Thulasi, Ismail & Salam, 2015). The Reading-Writing strategy is primarily focused on knowledge about the language structure, and development of writing; and is primarily the result of the imitation of model texts provided by the teacher.

According to, McCrimmon (1994), as cited in Thulasi, Ismail, & Salam, (2015) the Reading-Writing strategy helps students to create an end product that may be similar to the model essay provided by the teachers. The primary goal is to provide students with linguistic knowledge rather than to improve their skills in writing. By concentrating on utilising the appropriate language, students finally transformed the model into a new text that is nearly as excellent as the one they copied. Students reproduce the phrases to familiarise themselves with the material (Mourtaga, 2004). The foundation of the Reading-Writing strategy is the idea that if students have access to a quality model essay to examine before beginning their compositions, they would be better equipped to produce first drafts that are anticipated to resemble the model. According to the Reading-Writing strategy, writing is largely the product of students copying teacher-provided sample texts and is primarily focused on the understanding of language structure and writing growth. According to relevant literature, the Reading-Writing strategy emphasises both the content of the text and the score obtained (Hasan & Akhand, 2010). The texts must be completed by the students using this technique with proper grammar. Additionally, teachers give criticism based on grammatical and lexical mistakes. The four stages of the reading-writing strategy are familiarisation, controlled writing, guided writing, and free writing. Students examine model texts in stage one, while in stage two, they supervise activities to put into reality the elements that were emphasised during the analysis of the model text. For instance, in teaching a formal letter, students' attention will be drawn to paragraphing and the language used in making formal requests (Thulasi, et.al. 2015). For stories, the student's attention is directed at the techniques used to create interesting stories, and the students practice the highlighted features of the text. For formal letters, students' attention is drawn to the language for making formal requests. In stage three, students prepare to imitate the model text by arranging a predetermined set of ideas to fit the model. In stage four, students have the opportunity to select from a variety of comparable writing tasks to showcase their ability to use the language by the application of the skills, structure, and vocabulary they have practiced to produce their own written product.

Teachers' response is critical in assisting students in identifying and correcting their mistakes when the RW strategy is used. Due to the limited time available and a large number of

students per classroom in most schools, the use of model essays is the only means of reaching the entire students. This strategy helps students to learn from their mistakes by paying attention to proper grammar and sentence structure as indicated in the teacher's marking. Tangpermpoon (2008) believes that the RW strategy promotes writing skills in terms of grammar and syntax and, is based on different types of activities in the RW. The strategy is efficient when teachers grade the essays promptly before the students forget what they have written (Musa, Lie & Azman, 2012). RW also allows students to practice writing for different purposes by exposing them to various text genres as models.

The impacts of combining RW, Discussion, and Lecture methods with linguistic packages and socio-economic background on the accomplishment of SSS pupils in Nigeria in essay writing were investigated by Oyinloye and Gbenedio (2010). The study's findings revealed that combining a linguistic package with reading-sriting was the most effective technique for improving students' essay writing performance, with a mean score of 15.44

In their interventional study, Hasan and Akand (2010) looked at the impact of product and process approaches to writing on students' performance. They tried out an integrated approach like the process-product hybrid to develop students writing competence. Their results showed that students' writing skills improved significantly. Also, almost all of the students stated that this approach could help them in refining their writing ability.

Obateru (2018) investigated the impacts of Multi-draft, Model, and Integrated teaching techniques on students' attitudes and academic performance in essay writing in Ekiti State's secondary schools. The study's findings revealed the existence of a significant difference in students' essay writing performance. The treatment also had a considerable impact on the pupils' attitudes. The three studies reviewed confirmed that if the Reading-writing strategy is combined with other strategies it could result in better learning outcomes for students. This study will combine the RW strategy with the TPS strategy.

RW strategy can help Ondo State senior secondary school students to see examples of what examiners expect them to do through the model that will be presented to them. It will familiarise them with the characteristics, structures, layout, and grammar of any type of essay that will be presented to the students. The students will gradually learn the writing style of the model essays that the teachers present to them. English teachers will provide immediate feedback to their students as they practice writing in class using this strategy.

2.2 Think-Pair-Share Strategy

TPS is a cooperative learning technique and it is appropriate for teachers and students who are just getting to know collaborative learning. It is intended to motivate students to take on and complete a problem that is initially above their capabilities. It is founded on the concept of mediated learning. TPS allows students to work independently as well as collaboratively with others. Learning will be more interesting, and students will be able to develop their knowledge more quickly if TPS is used (Sugiarto & Sumarsono, 2014). According to the researchers, writing can become more interesting if students can receive assistance not only from their teachers but also from a colleague with whom they can brainstorm. When a student

realises he is not alone, solving a problem in class may become easier, and they may be able to learn from one another.

The use of the TPS strategy can promote active learning in the classroom. It easily spreads the advantages of cooperative learning processes of small groups to the entire class; it requires students to think about the lesson content. Students prepare for this process through the use of high-level thinking skills and reflecting on how they will communicate their opinions to the class.

TPS strategy can be used as a formative assessment tool for students and teachers. Feedback provided by the teacher and the pairs, as well as feedback from their thinking process, prompt the students to assess their learning. In addition, the written or oral products generated at the end of the process could give insights to both the students and the teacher on the students' learning levels (Black & William, 1998). Individual participation is encouraged by the TPS strategy, which is applicable in all grade levels irrespective of class sizes. Students consider questions in three interesting parts:

Think: Students are allowed to individually think about the question and come up with their solutions. According to Nystrand (2006), thinking is a distinct function from writing, and thinking processes come before writing processes. As a result, instructors should encourage stronger thinking skills in the early stages of pre-writing to improve writing.

Pair: To discuss their ideas, learners are divided into pairs. This step allows students to express themselves while also considering the opinions of others.

Share: Pairs of students present their ideas to the entire class. Students are often under less pressure when they present their thoughts to a group with the support of a partner. Furthermore, as a result of this three-step process, students' ideas have become more refined (Teachervision, 2017).

Think-Pair-Share ensures that students are paying attention by encouraging active participation. When they listen to their peers as they present their essays to the class, they can ask questions, correct others, critique, and make their contributions to help others improve their essays. It allows students to learn by "modeling" or by observing others. Ormrod (2004) believes that students do better academically when cooperative learning methods are used to teach students of various skill levels rather than traditional methods. The development of higher-order thinking abilities is promoted by cooperative learning. This strategy has been proven to contribute to deeper and more meaningful learning (Ofodu & Raheem, 2011; Mohammed, 2016; and Haakachima & Lunjebe, 2019).

Mohammed (2016) assessed the impact of the TPS strategy on the writing skills development of eleventh graders in Rafah government schools. The skills that were targeted were the ability to write a topic sentence, supporting sentences, a concluding sentence, and punctuation marks. The study's findings revealed that there were statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental and the control group's mean scores in the post-writing achievement examination, with the experimental group performing better.

Ofodu and Raheem (2011) investigated the effects of the Reciprocal Teaching Method (RTM) and Think-Pair-Share Method (TPSM) on the performance levels of students. They discovered that the RTM of cooperative instruction was the best method for teaching reading. The TPSM came in second (Fcal = 3.29 significant at 0.05), while the Conventional Instruction Method (CIM) came in third. They also discovered that the TPSM and RTM had a substantial impact on the reading comprehension of children with high, moderate, and poor performance levels.

Haakachima and Lunjebe (2019) used a quasi-experimental control group with pre-test and post-test design to investigate the impact of the TPS model on learners' performance in Quadratic Functions. They found that learners with attention deficit hyperactivity who were taught mathematics using the TPS performed better in the post-test than those who were taught using the traditional method. All the studies examined show that the TPS strategy is superior to the conventional method and that it improves students' comprehension, reading, and speaking skills. Apart from the above, it is also discovered that TPS is also very effective in teaching mathematics.

TPS, according to the researcher, is a strategy that will benefit Ondo State students in a variety of ways. It makes learning writing in a second language more interesting, given the help they will receive from their peers, their class teacher, and the contributions of various individuals who will present their views in class. It will also assist students in developing critical thinking abilities. This ability is required at all levels of education. It will allow students to ruminate on any given question and will assist them in drawing from their prior knowledge of what they have learnt. When such students brainstorm with their peers, they may understand the topic better. The process of sharing may assist students in communicating in English and gaining confidence among their peers and the general public.

2.3 Conventional Method of Teaching

The conventional method is often referred to as the "chalk and talk" method which involves direct instruction by the teacher whose primary role is to pass knowledge to students and conduct testing and assessment. Conventional teaching or traditional teaching refers to a teaching method involving instructors and the students interacting in a face-to-face manner in the classroom. According to McCarthy and Anderson (2000) teachers starts a discussion in the classroom, and focus exclusively on knowing the content in textbooks and notes. Students are expected to memorize the information and regurgitate it in the examination as a display of proficiency. This is a display of a lack of inquiry and cannot solve problems like it is in other instructional strategies. Memorizing information by students according to Harris and Johnson (2001) may not provide them with valuable skills or a body of knowledge that will last for a long time. Students in the conventional class are usually passive they are usually very attentive while the teacher explains the concept. The conventional classroom is known to be teacher-centered. The teacher is the one that controls and directs the class. Conventional teaching is assumed to limit the opportunity for students to be creative thinkers. It is generally believed that teachers in conventional classes are not sensitive to the issue of individual differences. Mostly when questions are posed it is usually the very brilliant students that are

quick to respond while others look on. This method does not give enough room for collaborative work and brainstorming among peers. In Nigeria, the conventional method is used to teach writing. Many researchers (Oyinloye & Gbenedio, 2010; Muodumogu & Unwaha 2013) believe that the conventional method is not adequate given the outcome of their research. This study intends to investigate the effects of RW, TPS, and the combination of RW +TPS on students' performance in essay writing in senior secondary schools in Ondo State.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

This study hinges on behaviourist and socio-cultural theories. Behaviourism is a natural language learning theory that was developed in part as a reaction to orthodox grammar. Language acquisition, according to behaviourists, is a conditioning process in which an expected goal is reached by a succession of stimuli and responses; that is, with appropriate conditioning, anyone, regardless of their history, can be trained to perform in a specific way. The reading-Writing strategy tilts towards the behavioural theory because it uses the model essay as a stimulus to which the students respond. It is believed that when students are exposed to what the examiners require through a model essay, they can learn by practice and reinforcement to reproduce similar essays.

Socio-cultural theory on the other hand is credited to Lev Vygotsky. Pupils internalised complicated ideas, according to Vygotsky, but he claimed that knowledge internalisation might be improved if students were appropriately guided by good, analytical questions posed by the teacher (Nath, 2010). This theory believes that if children are assisted they will be able to achieve what ordinarily they cannot achieve on their own. The theory sees the teacher as the facilitator of learning and not as the only one that can impart knowledge. It believes that students can learn from their peers and the society that comprises the adults, elders, and family members among others who can contribute to learning. The concept of this theory can be found in the TPS strategy where the teacher is recognised as the facilitator of learning, where students are allowed to first think about the questions posed to them before attempting to answer, and where students are allowed to brainstorm and learn from their pairs as well as share their ideas.

3. Methodology

This study is a quasi-experimental pre-test post-test four-group design (one Control and three experimental Groups). It also employed a descriptive survey type design. The baseline of the knowledge of students that were used for this study was established by pre-test while post-test was used after the treatment to measure performance. The population for this study comprised the 25 297 public Senior Secondary School II (SSS II) students of the 2019/2020 session in Ondo State. The students in SSS II should have covered a significant proportion of the English Language West African Secondary School Certificate syllabus, including essay writing. The SSS are spread across the 18 Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Ondo State. The schools that fell into the sample are only mixed gender. The sample for this study comprised 308 Senior Secondary II Students that were selected from SSS in Ondo State using a multi-stage sampling technique. In Stage One, four LGAs were randomly selected from the

18 LGAs in Ondo State. In the second stage, one Senior Secondary School (SSS) was chosen in each LGA purposively, making four schools in all. In the third stage, an SSS II class was chosen from each secondary school. The RW strategy was used in one school/LGA, while TPS was used in another school/LGA, Combination RW+TPS was also used in another school/LGA and one school was chosen from another LGA for the conventional method. One instrument was used for this study. This is the Essay Writing Performance Test" (EWPT). EWPT consists of five different essay questions and students were requested to answer just one within 50 minutes. These questions were drawn from past questions of the West African Secondary School Certificate Examination (WASSCE). The Essay Writing Performance Test (EWPT) was a past WAEC question. It requires no validation because it is a standard question. The reliability of the EWPT was established through the test-re-test method. Forty-three students drawn from two schools that were not part of the study were used for the test-re-test method. Scores obtained from the tests were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics to obtain the correlation coefficient and the result was 0.70. This instrument according to these results is reliable. The experimental procedure of the study was in three stages: The pre-Treatment Stage was when the researcher Solicited permission from the authorities of schools. And that was when the research assistants (teachers) were trained by the researcher. At this stage, the pre-test was administered to students. The Treatment Stage was when the Teaching-Learning Guide (TLG) was deployed. Post Treatment Stage was the last stage when EWPT was re-administered as a post-test.

3.1 Data Analysis

Student's t-test (t-test), analysis of variance (ANOVA), Post hoc, and analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) are the statistical tools that are used in this study in the testing of hypothesis for comparison of means between the groups. It is assumed that the dependent variables of the study (students' performances in essay writing under the different strategies) are on a continuous scale and approximate normally distributed. The mean values of the students' performances in essay writing under the different strategies are the representative statistics for the students' performances.

The T-Test is used to test whether the mean difference between two groups is statistically significant. The null hypothesis stated that both means are statistically equal, whereas the alternative hypothesis stated that both means are not statistically equal i.e., they are statistically different from each other. There are three types of T-tests, namely one-sample t-test, independent samples t-test, and paired samples T-test. In this study, the paired-sample T-test was deployed.

The paired samples t-test is used to determine whether the change in means between two paired observations is statistically significant. That is, the performance of the same subjects is measured two-time points (pre and post-intervention observations of the same subjects) are used where paired variables should be continuous and normally distributed. The mean and Standard Deviation of the paired differences and sample size would be used to calculate the significance level.

ANOVA test is used to compare the means between three or more groups. Its significant

P-value indicates that there is at least one pair in which the mean difference is statistically significant. Once the ANOVA has indicated the presence of statistical significance, Post hoc tests (pairwise multiple comparisons) are used to determine the significant pair(s).

The ANCOVA is an extension of the ANOVA. The ANCOVA is used to determine if the independent variable still influences the dependent variable after the influence of the covariate(s) has been removed. In ANCOVA, one continuous dependent variable, one categorical independent variable, and at least one continuous covariate for removing its effect/adjustment are used.

4. Results

4.1 Differences in English Essay Writing Proficiency Levels before Deployment of Strategies

To explore the effects of the strategies on the performance of students in essay writing in Ondo State, the students' mean scores and standard deviations in the Essay Writing Performance Test (Pre and Post EWPT) were calculated by experimental groups; the results are presented in Table1.

Table 1. Mean and standard deviation of pre-test and post-test scores of students in experimental and Control Groups

Strategies	Test	N	Mean	S.D	Mean Diff.
Reading-Writing (RW)	Pre Test	80	9.59	5.48	1.52
	Post Test		11.11	4.58	
Think Pair Share (TPS)	Pre Test	92	8.16	4.62	0.26
	Post Test		8.42	4.98	
Combination (RW & TPS)	Pre Test	103	9.66	4.23	1.65
	Post Test		11.31	4.73	
Conventional	Pre Test	33	8.91	5.66	0.27
	Post Test		9.18	4.57	
Total		308			

A comparison of the mean pre-test scores across experimental groups (four schools used in the study) shows that the experimental group where RW & TPS were combined had the highest mean score of 9.66. This was followed by the RW group with 9.59, Conventional with 8.91, and lastly 8.16 for the TPS group. This seems to suggest that the students were

not at the same level of proficiency in essay writing or rather there was no homogeneity among the students used for the experiment before the commencement of the experiment. This is what hypothesis 1 sought to establish. It aims to establish if students in the Reading-Writing group, TPS, and combination have the same essay writing standard as students in the Control Group before they were taught essay writing using the experimental strategies. Analysis of covariance was deployed to test if there was a significant difference between the pre-test mean scores of the students' performance in the experimental and the control groups. Table 2 presents the result.

Table 2. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for the difference in pre-test mean score of students in experimental and control groups

Groups	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	133.247	3	44.416		
Within Groups	7167.776	304	23.578	1.884	.132
Total	7301.023	307			

$P > 0.05$

The result presented in Table 2 shows that the F-cal value of 1.884 is not significant because the P value $(0.132) > 0.05$. Hence, the null hypothesis is not rejected. This implies that there was no significant difference in the pre-test mean scores of students taught essay writing using the experimental strategies and conventional method in senior secondary schools in Ondo State. The students in the groups (Reading-Writing (RW) strategy, Think-Pair-Share (TPS), Combination (RW & TPS), and conventional method) were homogeneous in their essay writing proficiency at the commencement of the study.

4.2 Differences in English Essay Writing Proficiency Levels before and after the Deployment of Strategies

The difference between the English essay writing proficiency levels before and after the deployment of strategies in teaching the students is depicted by the difference in the means scores of the groups (Mean Diff.) in Table 1.

RW strategy has a mean difference in students' performance in essay writing between pre-test and post-test scores of 1.52. The mean difference for the TPS strategy was 0.26, for the Combination (RW & TPS) strategy it was 1.65 while it was 0.27 for the conventional method. The table shows that students' performance in essay writing improved across the board for all four strategies because the mean differences were all positive. Based on the mean score differences, it appears that students' performance in essay writing was influenced by the use of Reading-Writing (RW), Think-Pair-Share (TPS), Combination (RW & TPS), and conventional methods, with the Combination (RW & TPS) strategy being the most effective

method in teaching essay writing. However, to establish if the positive mean differences were different from zero, an Analysis of Variance was carried out for all the four groups combined, with the results shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for Pre-test and Post-test Mean Scores of Students under the Groups

Source	factor1	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
EWPT	Linear	140.078	1	140.078	10.510	.001*
EWPT * Expt	Linear	34.609	3	11.536	.866	.459
Error(factor1)	Linear	4038.427	303	13.328		

* P < 0.05

Table 3 shows that the pre-test and post-test mean scores of students in the four groups (RW, TPS, RW & TPS; and conventional method) differ significantly, with P= 0.001<0.05. There is a piece of strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant difference in pre-test and post-test scores of students taught essay writing using experimental strategies and the conventional method. The null hypothesis was rejected as a result of this finding. A Paired Sample T-test for the mean difference of each of the treatment groups was used to investigate the source of the differences observed. Tables 4 to 7 summarize the findings.

Table 4. Paired Sample T-Test for Pre- and Post-test Comparison of Mean EWPT Score (Control Group)

Control Group Pair	Paired Differences					t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pre EWPT Score - Post EWPT Score	-0.27	6.71	1.17	-2.65	2.11	-0.23	32	0.82*

* The mean difference is not significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 5. Paired Sample T-Test for Pre- and Post-test Comparison of Mean EWPT Score (Reading-Writing Group)

Reading Writing Group Pair	Paired Differences					T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pre EWPT Score - Post EWPT Score	-1.51	4.36	0.49	-2.48	-0.54	-3.1	79	0.00*

* The mean difference is significant at a 0.05 level.

Table 6. Paired Sample T-Test for Pre- and Post-test Comparison of Mean EWPT Score (RW Combined with TPS Group)

RW combined with TPS Group Pair	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pre EWPT Score - Post EWPT Score	-1.63	4.9	0.49	-2.59	-0.66	-3.35	101	0.00*

*The mean difference is significant at a 0.05 level.

Table 7. Paired Sample T-Test for Pre- and Post-test Comparison of Mean EWPT Score (Think-Pair-Share Group)

Think-Pair-Share Group Pair	Paired Differences					T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pre EWPT Score - Post EWPT Score	-0.8	5.45	0.57	-1.93	0.33	-1.41	91	0.16*

The mean difference is not significant at the 0.05 level.

Tables 4 to 7 show that there was a significant difference in the test subjects' pre-test and post-test scores only in the RW and Combination groups at a 0.05 level of significance. This means that even though the mean differences between pre-test and post-test scores of the TPS and Control Groups are positive (Table1), the positive differences were not statistically significantly different from zero at a 0.05 level of significance.

4.3 Differences in English Essay Writing Proficiency Levels of Students in the Four Groups after the Deployment of Strategies

The study sought to find out if there were significant differences between the post-test performance score of students in the experimental and Control Groups in essay writing. By comparing the post-test scores of the students across the four experimental groups, this study aims to compare the effects of the four different treatments (strategies) on the students' performance in essay writing. Because the initial students' essay writing ability, as measured by their pre-test scores, may influence their post-treatment performance (post-test scores), their pre-test scores must be considered in the comparison. Thus, rather than using ANOVA, ANCOVA was used to allow the pre-test scores to be included as a covariate in the analysis. As a result, ANCOVA was used to ascertain if there was a statistical difference between the students' post-treatment performances in the four groups. Following the ANCOVA, a post hoc test was used to compare the mean scores of the groups pairwise. Table 8 presents the results of the ANCOVA, while Table 9 presents the results of the post hoc test.

Table 8. Summary of ANCOVA of the post-test overall performance of students in essay writing to Strategies of instruction

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	1775.806[a]	4	443.951	23.996	.000	.241
Intercept	2645.962	1	2645.962	143.014	.000	.321
Pre EWPT	1230.309	1	1230.309	66.498	.000	.180
Experimental Groups	273.777	3	91.259	4.933	.002	.047
Error	5587.432	302	18.501			
Total	39377.000	307				
Corrected Total	7363.238	306				

a. R Squared = .241 (Adjusted R Squared = .231)

Table 8 shows that the effect of strategies on groups was calculated as F = 4.933, which was significant at the 0.05 level because the P value (0.002) was less than 0.05. As a result, the null hypothesis that "no significant difference exists between the performance of students in the experimental groups and the conventional group in SSS in Ondo State" is rejected. As a result, it is concluded that there was a significant difference in the effects of the teaching strategies investigated on the students' performance in essay writing.

Table 9. Post-Hoc Multiple Range Comparison Using Scheffe Methods Dependent Variable Overall Performance of Students' Post-test Scores

(I) Experiment	(J) Experiment	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Control	RW	-2.13	0.98	0.20	-4.89	0.62
	RW & TPS	-2.13	0.95	0.17	-4.79	0.53
	TPS	0.76	0.96	0.89	-1.94	3.46
RW	Control	2.13	0.98	0.20	-0.62	4.89
	RW & TPS	0.00	0.71	1.00	-1.98	1.99
	TPS	2.89*	0.72	0.00	0.85	4.92
RW & TPS	Control	2.13	0.95	0.17	-0.53	4.79

	RW	0.00	0.71	1.00	-1.99	1.98
	TPS	2.89[*]	0.68	0.00	0.98	4.80
	Control	-0.76	0.96	0.89	-3.46	1.94
TPS	RW	-2.89[*]	0.72	0.00	-4.92	-0.85
	RW & TPS	-2.89[*]	0.68	0.00	-4.80	-0.98

Based on observed means. The error term is Mean Square (Error) = 22.436.

The mean difference is not significant at the 0.05 level.

The post hoc analysis of the students' performance after being exposed to treatments is shown in Table 9. At the 0.05 level of significance, the pairwise comparison of the RW strategy group with the TPS strategy group was found to be significant (with a mean difference of 2.89). Also, at the 0.05 level of significance, the pairwise comparison of the TPS group with the Combination group was significant (with a mean difference of -2.89). The pairwise comparison of the RW group, the TPS group, and the Combination and Control Groups, on the other hand, revealed no significant differences. As a result, the hypothesis that "in SSS in Ondo State, there is no significant difference between the performances of students in the experimental groups and the conventional group" is hereby rejected.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The study's findings revealed that students' performance in essay writing improved for all four strategies, as indicated by the positive differences between EWPT Post and Pre for all four strategies. This could be due to the various teaching strategies employed by the teachers when instructing the students in the various groups. This is in line with Akinwamide (2013) who advocates that different strategies for teaching writing should be encouraged to see which strategy is appropriate in getting the students along and making the writing class exciting. The combination of RW and TPS having the highest mean score confirms Tangperpoon's (2008) position that when strategies are combined, teachers use the strength in each strategy to complement the deficiency of the other strategy. The combination of these strategies appears to have produced the best essay writing results in students at SSS in Ondo State. This finding is consistent with those of Oyinloye and Gbenedio (2010), who discovered that combining a linguistic package with Reading-Writing is the most effective way to improve students' essay writing performance. Also, the combination of RW with other strategies was used by Hassan and Akhand (2010) in investigating its influence on students' quality of the product and process approach to learning writing. Their report showed that the students' performance in writing skills improved when the blend of process and product approaches were used in teaching them essay writing.

The results of this study also revealed that students in both the experimental and control groups did poorly on the pre-test, with no significant differences before the experiment. This conclusion demonstrated the homogeneity of the four groups included in the study. To put it

another way, the knowledge baselines for the four groups that participated in the study are comparable. As a result, any substantial difference observed after the treatment would be attributed to the precise treatment used, rather than chance.

Although the EWPT pre and post-scores of students in essay writing showed that they improved their performance after being taught using the four strategies, the Combination RW & TPS strategy was the most effective strategy for teaching essay writing in Ondo State, Nigeria. This was followed by the Reading-Writing (RW) strategy and the worst was the Think-Pair-Share (TPS) strategy. These results showed that the RW and Combination strategies, respectively, were effective in teaching the students' essay writing. The advantage of RW as a strategy for teaching essay writing is that it allows students to see a variety of model essays that are all written to the same high standard as the examiner. The students only need to model their writing after the model essay several times in their practice sessions to acquire some proficiency in essay writing. This is in line with Thulasi, Ismail, and Salam (2015) who recognise that Reading-Writing is good for students who are not exposed to different genres of writing. It will help students to learn different structures, grammar, etc. in the target language. The research findings imply that strategies are not set in stone. The approach chosen will be determined by the teacher, the students, and the text's genre. Certain genres respond better to one method than the other. The Reading-Writing strategy is very good for letter writing where the features are very fixed. Strategies can be integrated depending on the topics given to students. TPS, on the other hand, is a learning strategy that encourages classroom contribution by inspiring students to actively participate in class. It discourages situations where the teacher will just throw a general question that will be answered by just one student. The TPS strategy increases the types of personal communications that students need to process, organise, and retain ideas internally.

The study's findings revealed that there was a significant difference in the effects of the teaching strategies investigated on students' essay writing performance in Ondo State. RW and Combination both had the highest mean score of 11.31, after the experiment. This finding implies that RW and Combination strategy are more effective in teaching essay writing in Ondo State than TPS and Control (Conventional Method). On the contrary, researchers like Ofodu and Raheem, (2011); Mohammed, (2016); & Haakachima & Lunjebe, (2019) have found the TPS strategy to be very effective in teaching writing, mathematics, communication skills, and reading comprehension among others. The explanation that could be given for TPS not being effective is that the strategy is relatively new and female students in mixed schools may not find it easy to speak freely among their male colleagues and vice versa during the sharing session of the TPS strategy. If the class is not properly managed by the teacher, the class can become noisy and the TPS strategy could be time-consuming. The lack of effectiveness of the Control Group confirmed the researcher's hypothesis that the traditional method of teaching essay writing is ineffective. Several researchers have confirmed this (Oyinloye & Gbenedio 2010; Obateru 2018; Muodumogul & Unwahaz, 2013). As a result, the purpose of this study was to look into alternative strategies for teaching essay writing.

6. Conclusion

This study concluded that the strategy used in teaching students can affect students' learning outcomes. Also, it was discovered that RW and Combination RW+TPS strategies were very effective in teaching essay writing in SSS in Ondo State. The improvement in students' learning outcomes in essay writing was attributed to the strategies (RW, Combination RW+TPS) used in teaching them in the classrooms, according to the findings of this study. This, therefore, implies that English language teachers should be trained regularly on different strategies that will enhance students' learning outcomes. Teachers, therefore, should not be fixed on the conventional method alone but try to combine methods when teaching their students writing.

Recommendation

The following recommendations are made considering the importance of essay writing in SSS examinations and the findings of this study:

1. English Language teachers should adopt the RW strategy in teaching essay writing in SSS since it was found to have a significant effect on students learning outcomes.

2. Since the Combination strategy (RW & TPS) was also found to have enhanced the learning outcomes of students when used to teach essay writing, teachers of the English Language should have periods in which the students will be exposed to the use of RW and TPS strategies in essay writing.

3. English Language teachers should be trained on how to use RW and TPS strategies at regular intervals so that they can supplement the traditional method of teaching essay writing in Nigerian schools.

4. There is a need for book publishers to produce books for the SSS syllabus for English Language essay writing, specifically for the RW strategy application.

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