
EFFECT OF TEACHER FEEDBACK STRATEGY ON SECONDARY SCHOOL TWO STUDENTS' WRITING ACHIEVEMENT IN LAFIA METROPOLIS, NASARAWA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract: This study investigated the effect of teacher feedback strategy on Senior Secondary School Two (SS II) students' achievement in writing in Lafia Metropolis, Nasarawa State, Nigeria. It was guided by two research questions, while two null hypotheses were formulated and tested. Quasi-experimental, pretest, post-test non-equivalent control group design was adopted for this study. The population of the study consisted of 587 SS II from thirteen public secondary schools during the 2024/2025 academic session. The sample for this study was made up of 38 SS II students selected from two intact classes from two secondary schools using purposive and simple random sampling techniques. Data for the study were collected using Writing Achievement Test (WAT) with reliability coefficient of 0.93. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation. Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used for testing the hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level. The findings showed that there are significant differences between the mean content achievement scores ($F(1, 35) = 12.051$; $P = 0.001 < 0.05$) and organisation achievement scores ($F(1, 35) = 23.26$; $P = 0.000 < 0.05$) of students taught composition using teacher feedback strategy and those taught with conventional strategy. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that English Language teachers should endeavour to adopt teacher feedback strategy while teaching writing.

Keywords: Teacher feedback strategy, Achievement, Quasi-experimental Design, English Language Teaching

Introduction

Writing is an essential way by which human beings communicate their feelings, ideas, emotions, opinions, knowledge and point of view. It is also a thinking process; a discovery process involving ideas, discovering how to organize them and discovering what to put across to the reader (Ahmad, Saeed & Salam, 2018). Writing is crucial to students' success in life. With effective writing skills, students convey their feelings, emotions, thoughts, points of view and perceptions. It is, therefore, necessary for children to be taught to write effectively to arouse the interest of readers and meet their learning needs.

Effective writing responds to interests and needs of readers (Nordquist, 2024). Other qualities of effective writing include appropriate content and organisation (WAEC Chief Examiners' Report, 2020). Content refers to the statement of ideas that are relevant to the question. Also, the points must be fully developed. The candidate must give necessary explanations and illustrations to buttress his/her points to earn a credit. Organization is the ordering of sentences to form paragraphs and the unity of the paragraphs to make a whole composition are considered here. The qualities to look for are a suitable opening, adequate development, good paragraphing, balance, coherence and a suitable conclusion.

Statement of the Problem

Observation has shown that writing has been a frustrating task for students. The WAEC Examiner's Report (2020) observes that students' achievement in writing has been poor due to their inability to use expression. The frustration being faced by students in writing tasks could be caused by ineffective teaching strategies. The researcher observes that conventional strategies of teaching writing have been in vogue in secondary schools in Nasarawa Local Government Area of Nasarawa State, Nigeria. In these strategies, English Language teachers illustrate a few examples with little or no active engagement of learners in the composition writing process. Such strategies include discussion strategy, lecture strategy and demonstration strategy. These strategies have been criticized because they do not give children ample opportunity to practise writing skills effectively (Kimanzi, 2018). Composition writing skills cannot be acquired in such learning arrangement unless the teacher engages students in a process approach to composition writing.

Learning to write in English involves a great amount of mental capacity. This often creates problems for students, especially non-native speakers (Ismail, Maulan & Hasan, 2018). Students' writing needs to undergo a series of drafting stages which teachers correct and comment on, and students need to revise these corrections and respond to them accordingly. One of the ways of enabling students to write effectively is the provision of feedback on their writing. Feedback is a mechanism in writing by which comments are made in students' writing to guide them. The term feedback refers to information about how we are doing in our efforts to reach a goal (Alitto, 2020). It includes written and oral information given by teachers or students as response to writers' strengths and weaknesses in writing. There are different feedback strategies that are often adopted. These include: criterion-based and reader-based, peer feedback, teacher feedback and motivational feedback (Paterson, 2019). This study focused on teacher feedback strategy.

Teacher feedback strategy involves information a teacher provides to students on the strengths and weaknesses that have been identified in their writing (Kimanzi, 2018). Instead of telling students that they got 15 out of 20 in an essay or correcting spelling, punctuation and grammar, English teachers could put a letter in the margin for each error in that line using a 'G' for an error in grammar, an 'S' for a spelling mistake, a 'P' for punctuation. Kimanzi (2018) also points out that students need some feedback about how they are progressing in learning in form of marks or grades.

Effective feedback could result in high performance in writing (Ahmad, Saeed & Salam, 2018). It could also provide opportunities to close the gap between current and desired performance; and provide information to teachers that can help shape the teaching of writing composition. Muodumogu (2017) also observes that

feedback based on well derived writing criteria enhances students' self-evaluation of their writing skills. This could help them to become proficient writers.

Objectives of the Study

1. Find out the difference between content achievement of students taught composition using teacher feedback strategy and those taught with conventional strategy;
2. Ascertain the difference between organization achievement of students taught composition using teacher feedback strategy and those taught with conventional strategy;

Research Questions

1. What is the difference between the mean content achievement scores of students taught composition using teacher feedback strategy and those taught with conventional strategy?
2. What is the difference between the mean organization achievement scores of students taught composition using teacher feedback strategy and those taught with conventional strategy?

Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference between the mean content achievement scores of students taught composition using teacher feedback strategy and those taught with conventional strategy.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean organization achievement scores of students taught composition using teacher feedback strategy and those taught with conventional strategy.

Literature Review

Writing is a way of extending memory and process that involves series of actions aimed principally at communicating to the potential readers (audience) the ideas, feelings, opinions, knowledge and beliefs of the writers. According to Ahmad, Saeed and Salam (2018), writing involves putting down impressions, statements or declarations. Moreover, when writing is done in a sustained manner, it grows into a composition. It again indicates that writing has to do with the writer's intended information to be sent across to a specific audience (Nwogu, 2018). The primary goal of developing writing skills is to help students acquire writing skills which Murray (2014) lists as rehearsal, drafting, revising and editing. All these involve collection of enough information, creating more points in connection to the topic and targeting the audience using appropriate words in organising the writing. It also involves writing on a wide range of topics and variety of writings such as narrative, descriptive, expository and argumentative essays.

There is a special concern about the poor writing proficiency levels of learners, particularly at Senior Secondary School level where learners are expected to show strong academic literacy skills (Kimanzi, 2018). Writing is a process which is central to learners' learning across the curriculum and it enables learners not only to access knowledge from different sources, but also to display the acquired knowledge in different domains. Learners' poor writing skills are a great concern given that English (L2) is the main medium of instruction at all levels of education in Nigeria. The researchers observe that writing skills are not being taught effectively in Nasarawa Town in Nasarawa State. A major problem bedeviling the teaching of composition writing is inadequate qualified teachers of English Language. This is quite unfortunate as such teachers cannot teach composition writing effectively. Hence, there is the need to adopt appropriate strategies that could introduce students in the rudiments of composition writing. Thus, this study focused on feedback strategy.

The term feedback has different meanings depending on how it is viewed. Feedback is information and is a means of communication whereby the performer, whether it is an individual or a group, receives information that guides their future actions, in order to achieve a desired outcome (Banerjee, 2014). The author adds that feedback can be qualitative or quantitative, positive or negative, descriptive or non-descriptive and given during formative and summative assessments. Basically, feedback is information about how we are doing in our efforts to reach a goal. Saidu, Atinuke and Kuta (2019) define feedback as anything that might strengthen the students' capacity to self-regulate their own performances. Kimanzi (2018) state that feedback means information provided by an agent (such as teacher, peer, teacher & parent) regarding aspects of one's performance or understanding. Feedback can be informal (for example, in day-to-day encounters between teachers and students or trainees, between peers or between colleagues) or formal (for example, as part of written or clinical assessment).

Teacher feedback involves information a teacher provides to students on the strengths and weaknesses that have been identified in their writing (Saidu, Atinuke & Kuta, 2019). Teacher feedback can take many different forms. It can be designed to give students on-the-spot responses to the work they are immersed in at the time (Hounsell, 2018). Teacher feedback can be written responses in a learning log or on the work sheet or notebook. Teachers can provide feedback through conferences with specific goals. Conferences focus on suggestions and comments along with individualised goal setting on a formal level (Paterson, 2019).

Feedback is very vital in the teaching/learning process. It helps learners to maximize their potential at different stages of training, raise their awareness of strength and areas for improvement, and identify actions to be taken to improve performance. Black (2024) reported that achievement was higher for students who received peer feedback and teacher feedback. Feedback could support students' writing performance as writers (Peterson, 2020). Praise and high grades may instill greater confidence in some students' abilities as writers. Verbal or written feedback can be a powerful teaching tool if it is given while students are in the process of writing drafts. There is empirical evidence that teacher feedback enhances students' academic achievement in writing. Bonsu (2021) found that students have a positive perception towards written feedback, the communicative function of the teachers' feedback was both expressive and metalinguistic, and there was a positive effect of the written feedback from teachers on students' writing performance. Saidu, Atinuke and Kuta (2019) reported that students provided with feedback had a high mean score than their counterparts without feedback in achievement test. Leng (2020) found that written feedback gave learners new ideas and made them understand what the lecturer wanted in an essay that reflects their ideas clearly. Panadero (2019) also reported that feeding forward (information about improvement) was found to be a unique feedback type that was perceived by students as being most helpful to learning compared to other feedback. However, Demirel and Enginarlar (2016) reported a significant difference between the two groups (control group and peer-teacher feedback) as the control group significantly made more revisions in the content of their essays compared to the experimental group.

Research Method

Quasi-experimental, pretest, post-test non-equivalent control group design was adopted for this study. This design was chosen because randomisation was impossible especially in a school situation where school schedules cannot be interrupted. It becomes necessary to use groups as they are already organized into classes.

Thus, intact classes were used. According to Emaikwu (2016), in a school situation, classroom register and schedules cannot be disrupted or done away with in order to accommodate a research work. The area of this study was Lafia Metropolis, Nasarawa State, Nigeria. The population consisted of 587 SS II students from thirteen public secondary schools during the 2024/2025 academic session. The sample for this study comprised 38 SS II students in two intact classes from two secondary schools. Purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used for selecting the participating schools. The schools whose students were used granted permission, as custodians of the students, to carry out the experimental and control groups class processes since teaching and teacher feedback are classroom-based scenarios.

Writing Achievement Test (WAT) was used for data collection. It consists of five items that were adapted from West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) past questions. It covers narrative, descriptive, expository and argumentative compositions. Each respondent was required to answer one question. The same questions on writing used for the pre-test will be administered to all the groups as post-test. However, the questions were reshuffled and rephrased. Each item in WAT was scored out of 50. The researcher prepared Marking Guide for marking the WAT. It was constructed using West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) format. Content was marked out of 10, while organisation was marked out of 10.

The researchers also developed Lesson Plans for Teaching Composition Writing (LPTCW). Five lesson plans were used to teach writing to the experimental group using teacher feedback strategy. On the other hand, five lesson plans were used to teach writing to the control group using the conventional strategy. The topics on which the lesson plans are based included: descriptive composition, narrative composition, expository composition, argumentative composition and speech. All these lessons were based on SSII curriculum for English Language. The instrument for collecting data for this research and lesson plans were validated by three experts, two in English Language Education and one in Test and Measurement.

To ensure the reliability of the instrument, a trial testing of the instruments was carried out in one SSII class from one secondary school in the area of study. One day was used for the trial test. The reliability coefficient of the WAT was calculated using Spearman Rank Order Correlation. It yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.93. Two English Language teachers in SSII in the selected schools, were selected and trained to aid the researchers in collecting data for the study. Pre-test was administered to the participants in the study to ascertain their achievement in writing before the intervention programme. Afterwards, treatment was given. Post-test was administered to the students after the intervention programme. The study lasted for seven weeks. Training of research assistants and administration of pre-test were done in week 1.

Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) statistic. ANCOVA was used because the study involved intact classes where initial differences of the students were taken care of by ANCOVA. Iortimah and Aligba (2017) assert that ANCOVA makes multi-group comparison possible.

Results

The data collected for this research were analysed and interpreted in line with the research questions and hypotheses as follows:

Research question 1: What is the difference between the mean content achievement scores of students taught composition using teacher feedback strategy and those taught with conventional strategy?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Content Achievement Scores of Students Taught Using Teacher Feedback and Conventional Strategies

Strategy	Pre-Test			Post-Test		Mean Gain
	N	\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}
Teacher Feedback	23	2.03	0.93	3.70	0.82	1.67
Conventional	15	1.27	0.96	2.80	0.68	1.53
Mean Difference		0.76		0.90		0.14

Table 1 shows that at pre-test, students in the experimental group had mean and standard deviation of 2.03 and 0.93 respectively, while those in the conventional group had the mean of 1.27 and standard deviation of 0.96. Students exposed to teacher feedback had mean content achievement of 3.70 with standard deviation of 0.82, while those taught with conventional strategy had mean content achievement of 2.80 with standard deviation of 0.68. The difference in the post-test content achievement of the two groups is 0.90 in favour of those exposed to teacher feedback. The students taught using teacher feedback strategy had the mean gain of 1.67, while their counterparts taught with conventional strategy had the mean gain of 1.53. The difference in the mean gains of the two groups is 0.14 in favour of those taught using teacher feedback strategy.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the mean content achievement scores of students taught composition using teacher feedback strategy and those taught with conventional strategy.

Table 2: ANCOVA of Mean Content Achievement in Writing of Students Taught Using Teacher Feedback and Conventional Strategies

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Squared	Eta
Corrected Model	7.546 ^a	2	3.773	6.286	.005	.264	
Intercept	101.796	1	101.796	169.607	.000	.829	
Pretest	.263	1	.263	.438	.512	.012	
Strategy	7.233	1	7.233	12.051	.001	.256	
Error	21.007	35	.600				
Total	453.000	38					
Corrected Total	28.553	37					

Table 2 shows that $F(1,35) = 12.051$; $P = 0.001 < 0.05$. Since the probability value of 0.000 is less than the stated alpha value of 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is significant difference between the mean content achievement scores of students taught composition using teacher feedback strategy and those taught using conventional strategy. The partial Eta Squared value of 0.256 for strategy signifies that only 25.6 % of the difference in the students' content achievement scores can be attributed to strategy. This indicates a low statistical effect size.

Research Question 2: What is the difference between the mean organization achievement scores of students taught composition using teacher feedback strategy and those taught with conventional strategy?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Organization Achievement Scores of Students Taught Using Teacher Feedback and Conventional Strategies

Strategy	Pre-Test			Post-Test		Mean Gain
	N	\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}
Teacher Feedback	23	1.74	0.81	3.26	.75	1.52
Conventional	15	1.07	0.88	2.13	0.52	1.06
Mean Difference		0.67		1.13		0.46

Table 3 reveals that students in the experimental group had mean organization achievement of 1.74 with standard deviation of 0.81. On the other hand, those in the conventional group had the mean organization achievement and standard deviation of 1.07 and at 0.88 respectively at pre-test. At post-test, students taught with teacher feedback strategy had mean organization achievement score of 3.26 with standard deviation of 0.75, while those taught with conventional strategy had mean organization achievement score of 2.13 with standard deviation of 0.52. The difference in the post-test mean organization achievement scores of the two groups is 1.13 in favour of those exposed to teacher feedback strategy. The students taught with teacher feedback strategy had the mean gain of 1.52. On the contrary, their counterparts taught with conventional strategy had the mean gain of 1.06. The difference in the mean gains of the two groups is 0.46 in favour of those taught using teacher feedback strategy.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between the mean organization achievement scores of students taught composition using teacher feedback strategy and those taught with conventional strategy.

Table 4: ANCOVA of Mean Organization Achievement in Writing of Students Taught Using Teacher Feedback and Conventional Strategies

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Squared	Eta
Corrected Model	11.639 ^a	2	5.820	12.674	.000	.420	
Intercept	73.723	1	73.723	160.554	.000	.821	
Pre	.097	1	.097	.211	.649	.006	

Instruction	10.681	1	10.681	23.260	.000	.399
Error	16.071	35	.459			
Total	329.000	38				
Corrected Total	27.711	37				

Table 4 reveals that $F(1, 35) = 23.26$; $P = 0.000 < 0.05$. Since the probability value of 0.000 is less than the stated alpha value of 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is significant difference between the mean organization achievement scores of students taught composition using teacher feedback strategy and those taught with conventional strategy. The partial Eta Squared value of 0.399 for strategy signifies that only 39.9% of the difference in the students' organization achievement scores can be attributed to strategy. This indicates a low statistical effect size.

Discussion of Findings

The result showed that teacher feedback has significant effect on the content of students' essays. The content achievement score of students taught composition using teacher feedback strategy is higher than the score of those taught using conventional strategy. This finding confirms an earlier finding by Leng (2020) that written feedback gave learners new ideas and made them understand what the lecturer wanted in an essay that reflects their ideas clearly. It also lends credence to Saidu, Atinuke and Kuta (2019) who found in a study that respondents provided with feedback had a high mean score than their counterparts without feedback in achievement test. The finding also corroborates Panadero (2019) who reported that feeding forward (information about improvement) was found to be a unique feedback type that was perceived by students as being most helpful to learning compared to other feedback. This implies that students rely upon explicit feedback about the requirements of the task rather than feedback that encourage deeper thought processes or the generation of self-feedback through the monitoring of their own work. The finding of this study refutes Demirel and Enginarlar (2016) who reported a significant difference between the two groups (control group and peer-teacher feedback) as the control group significantly made more revisions in the content of their essays compared to the experimental group.

Finding also indicated a significant difference between the mean organization achievement scores of students taught composition using teacher feedback strategy and those taught with conventional strategy in favour of the experimental group. The finding of this study aligns with Kimanzi (2018) who reported that teacher feedback enhanced students' composition writing skills. This result, however, refutes Demirel and Enginarlar (2016) who found no significant differences in the organization in essays between the group taught with peer feedback and their counterparts taught using the conventional strategy. As teacher provides tips on how students organise ideas, students can revise their composition. This could enable them to revise the order of points in a manner that could be more coherent and logical.

Conclusion and Recommendations

It was found in this study that teacher feedback strategy is capable of enhancing students' achievement in writing in content and organization in composition writing. The differences were imminent after the treatment between the experimental and control groups. Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that;

1. There should be training programme for teachers on significance of feedback in the learning process.

2. There should be a feedback rubrics model instituted in schools to provide guideline for classroom jurisprudence.
3. Teacher feedback rubrics model should be integrated into national curriculum guidelines for schools.

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