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EFFECTS OF THINK-PAIR-SHARE ON SSII STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT IN COMPOSITION WRITING IN JOS SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, PLATEAU STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract
This study investigated the effects of think-pair-share strategy on senior secondary students' achievement in composition writing in Jos South Local Government Area, Plateau State, Nigeria. Two research questions and two corresponding null hypotheses guided the study. Quasi-experimental pre-test, post-test research design of non-equivalent groups was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of all the senior secondary II students in Jos South Local Government Area of Plateau State, Nigeria, numbering 1,705 in 20 public secondary schools in the 2024/2025 academic session. The sample of the study was made up of 81 SSII students, which was purposively selected from two public schools in Jos South Local Government Area of Plateau State and were assigned to two instructional groups, namely: experimental and control groups. Data were collected using a test tagged Composition Writing Achievement Test (CWAT). Data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions and ANCOVA to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The results showed that the experimental group significantly outperformed their peers in idea generation and sentence construction. It was, therefore, concluded that the think-pair-share strategy is an effective instructional approach for enhancing students' achievement in composition writing. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that English teachers should model and implement think-pair-share learning strategies to enhance students' writing skills, and that curriculum designers and English textbook writers should incorporate think-pair-share into secondary school writing programs.

Keywords: *composition writing, idea generation, sentence construction, think-pair-share strategy.*

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Introduction

In the teaching of English Language, students are expected to master four basic language skills, which are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Out of the four, writing is the last in the order of difficulty. However, it is not the last position in terms of importance, as students are expected to learn it throughout their studying period and even after. Nordquist (2019) defines writing as the act of composing a text; a system of graphic symbols that can be used to convey meaning. According to Anyebe (2019), writing is an act of putting down impression or statements which grows into a composition when done in a sustained form or manner. This means that composition writing involves combining words and phrases to narrate a particular event or convey a certain message.

Composition writing is the creation of written discourse, the putting together of sentences to form a text. Writing requires the collective effort of orthographic, graphomotor and other linguistic skills with the inclusion of semantics, syntax, spelling, and writing conventions (Najim, 2019). Thus, Akoko (2024) explains that the task of writing does not only depend on possessing the required knowledge of what to write but also metacognition, so that the writing undergoes the process of organising, revising and editing to ensure its effectiveness. Depending on the purpose of writing, the target audience and the context, the composition may take the form of narration, description, argument, exposition, instruction, letter, minutes of meeting, memoranda, biography, and autobiography among others.

Among others, an effective composition requires skills such as idea generation and sentence construction. Idea generation refers to the arrangement and ordering of sentences to form paragraphs and the unification of the paragraphs to make a whole, comprehensible composition. On the other hand, sentence construction refers to the way a sentence is arranged grammatically. In writing, sentences are constructed in sequence with meaning flowing from one sentence to another, conveying views and relationships (Gowon & Yashim, 2023).

The importance of writing in the life of a student cannot be overemphasized. According to Kangaroo Kids International School (2024), writing significantly improves students' communication skills. It channels their knowledge and thoughts, enabling them to express ideas clearly and effectively to others. This means that effective writing skills are essential for success in speeches and debates, as they allow students to coherently organise and present their arguments. Besides, observation shows that ability in composition writing improves research writing skills as it usually involves collecting information and facts to support opinions. This way, it helps students to find reliable sources, analyse their information, and differentiate facts from viewpoints.

Composition writing enhances critical thinking. This is because a writer constantly makes decisions about plot, character development, and narrative structure which are mentally engaging (Adetula, 2024). In the same vein, Asue and Udu (2019) posit that if writing is done as a process, the stages of writing are expected to contribute to strengthening students' thinking skills because they are engaged in processes such as connecting, analyzing and evaluating ideas; a fact that leads to higher performance in academic tasks such as assignment, test and examination. Besides, writing is the most demanding skill in the labour market today; for due to the advancement of information and communication technology (ICT), writers are in high demand by digital marketing companies and advertising organizations to make digital media content (Sharna, 2019).

Given the enormous benefits derived from writing, it is expected that students should be proficient in the language skill. However, experience and research findings (Anyebe, 2019; Akoko, 2024) show that many secondary school students cannot write effectively. Students' writing often suffers from incomplete sentences, disorganized ideas, and numerous errors in content and mechanics. As Akoko notes, several

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factors account for this challenge including: ineffective, teacher-centred teaching methodology, students' poor attitude to writing due to its difficult nature, and advent of social media where students write in short forms.

According to Akoko (2024), students' struggle in writing stems primarily from inadequate instructional methodology, which fails to provide students with comprehensive writing skills training. In line with this claim is Danjuma and Ahmad's assertion (2019) that the teaching method adopted by the teacher determines to a great extent the realisation of the laudable instructional objectives. While writing involves challenging tasks like topic selection, idea organization, drafting, revision, and publication – which do not apply to other language skills – the use of ineffective teacher-centred teaching methods like the lecture method bears significant responsibility. To turn the tide, a learner-based, participatory instructional strategy like think-pair-share is crucial.

Think-pair-share (TPS) is a structured collaborative strategy that includes the three steps listed in its name which are thinking, pairing, and sharing. In this strategy, students are given a task or problem to work on and think about a possible solution or a pathway to finding the solution before working with a partner to solve the problem. Finally, they are asked to share their solutions. The sharing portion can be within a small group or the whole class (Leon, 2024). This means that the Think-Pair-Share strategy works to get the entire class involved in the teaching-learning process. Unlike the teacher-centred teaching methods, it encourages learners to think independently before engaging in small group discussions. After chatting with a partner, students are then encouraged to share their thoughts with the whole class.

As observed by Hegwood (2024), there are numerous benefits of think-pair-share strategy. Firstly, it promotes collaborative learning and holds students accountable for their participation, ensuring that every voice is heard. Secondly, it offers students additional time to think, benefiting students who process information at a slower pace than their classmates and English Language Learners (ELLs). Thirdly, think-pair-share can be easily planned or used spontaneously, making it a flexible tool that can be applied across subjects and at any point in a lesson. In addition, it encourages students to develop critical thinking skills and active listening and points students to view their peers as valuable sources of knowledge. This way, it further promotes deeper comprehension, enhanced communication skills by getting students actively involved in meaningful debates, and improvement of collaborative learning environments.

Empirical studies have been conducted across different geographical locations and subject areas to determine the effects of TPS on students' academic achievement. In the international scene, Kombat, Asigri, Amanyi, Atepor, Adugbire, Akwensi and Apara (2023) conducted a study on the effect of think-pair-share on high school learners' academic attainment in fractions in Kasena-Nankana Municipal of Ghana. The study found that learners who received fractions instructions using the think-pair-share model outperformed their colleagues who were taught fractions without think-pair-share. In the same vein, Karura, Kimosop and Orora (2021) examined the effect of think-pair-share strategy on student achievement and motivation in CRE in Nakuru County, Kenya. The findings of the study revealed that TPS enhances achievement in CRE.

In Nigeria, Oguntade and Akinwamide (2022) investigated the effects of Reading-Writing (RW) and Think-Pair-Share (TPS) strategies on students' performance in composition writing in senior secondary schools in Ondo State, Nigeria, and established that there was a significant difference in the effects of the strategies on the achievement of the students in composition writing in favour of TPS. Also, Ogunleye, Onifade, Obadipe and Hamidu (2021) investigated the effect of think pair share and group investigation cooperative strategies on students' academic performance in Biology in Ekiti State. The findings revealed that these learning strategies (GI and TPS) had significant

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effects on students' performance in biology.

Despite the proven effectiveness of collaborative strategies, limited studies in Plateau State have examined the impact of TPS on composition writing. This study, therefore, investigated the effects of think-pair-share on SSII students' achievement in composition writing in Jos South Local Government Area, Plateau State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1 . What is the difference between the pretest and posttest mean achievement scores of students taught idea generation using the TPS strategy and those taught with the conventional method?
2 . What is the difference between the pretest and posttest mean achievement scores of students taught sentence construction using TPS and those taught conventionally?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference between the pretest and posttest mean achievement scores of students taught idea generation using the TPS strategy and those taught with the conventional method.
2. There is no significant difference between the pretest and posttest mean achievement scores of students taught sentence construction using TPS and those taught conventionally.

Methodology

The study adopted Quasi-experimental pre-test, post-test research design of non-equivalent groups. Quasi-experimental design is the type of research design that seeks to establish a cause-and-effect relationship between an independent variable and a dependent variable and is a useful tool where true experiment cannot be conducted for ethical or practical reasons (Akoko, 2024). Quasi-experimental design was considered appropriate for this study because there would be no randomization as intact classes shall be used to avoid the disruption of planned academic programs in the selected schools. The design has two groups, namely: experimental and control groups.

The population of the study consisted of all the senior secondary II students in Jos South Local Government Area of Plateau State, Nigeria, numbering 1,705 in 20 public secondary schools. The choice of public schools was due to their homogeneity in terms of teachers' qualifications and available material resources.

The sample of the study was made up of 81 SSII students which was purposively selected from two public schools in Jos South Local Government Area of Plateau State. The two schools were assigned to two instructional groups, namely: experimental and control groups. School A was the experimental group, while School B was the control group. Simple random sampling technique was utilised to select two schools from the 20 public schools in the population frame, since all the schools have similar characteristics and were homogenous. Thus, one intact SSII class in School A served as the experimental group, while one intact SSII class in School B served as the control group. However, the sample for the study was drawn using purposive sampling technique.

The instrument that was used for data collection in this study was a test tagged "Composition Writing Achievement Test" (CWAT). It was made up of a single argumentative composition question that was adapted from WAEC's 2018 English Paper II with modification. It was precisely the Question 3 in Section "A", which reads: "The literary and debating society of your school is organizing a debate on the topic: *Pen Robbery is Worse than Armed Robbery*. Write your argument **for** or **against** the motion." The pre-test and post-test format of the CWAT was the same and shall carry 100 marks (idea generation, 50 marks; sentence construction, 50). Students were required to write 350-word essay in 45 minutes.

To ascertain the appropriateness and usefulness of the CWAT, the instrument was

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submitted to one expert in the English unit of the Department of Arts Education and one expert in Research, Measurement and Evaluation Unit in the Department of Education Foundation, both of University of Jos, to ascertain its validity. On the other hand, the test of stability (test-retest) method was used to establish the reliability of the CWAT at 0.83 coefficient.

The researcher enlisted the assistance of two research assistants, both of whom were holders of a Bachelor's Degrees in English Education in English. These assistants underwent comprehensive training spanning three days prior to assisting with the administration of the pre-test, implementation of the think-pair-share strategy, and post-test. Each training session lasted for two hours, totalling six hours over the three-day period. Training sessions were conducted at School A, outside regular school hours. The research assistant assigned to School B did not receive specialized training, as he was tasked with teaching the control group using conventional methods. The pre-test and post-test questions remained the same. Lessons adhered to the schools' schedules of two periods per week for English Language instruction.

In contrast, the control group's research assistant received no specific training, as he was tasked with teaching using conventional methods (lecture method following the product approach to writing). However, he was supervised and encouraged throughout the instruction carried out based on the topic outlined in the provided scheme of work. This approach was meant to ensure that both groups receive consistent instruction, with the experimental group benefiting from the think-pair-share strategy and the control group following traditional teaching methods in which the teacher is the repository of knowledge and the most important person in the class.

The pre-test was administered to the students during the initial week of the study, with the research assistants providing assistance in the process. After the administration, the scripts were collected from the students, and the marking process was undertaken with the aid of the research assistants. To facilitate a comprehensive comparison and assessment of the treatment's effectiveness, the scripts were securely stored until the post-test was administered. This was hoped to allow for a meticulous evaluation of the students' writing abilities, enabling the researcher to determine whether the treatment had yielded any significant improvements in the post-test results.

The period of six weeks was earmarked for the study, but four weeks for treatment using the think-pair-share strategy. During the four weeks' treatment period, the experimental group received instruction on utilizing think-pair-share strategy for composition writing, whereas the control group received persuasive composition writing using the conventional teaching methods. Research assistants strictly adhered to the designed lesson plan. The treatment focused on applying think-pair-share strategy in the writing process. Experimental group participants met twice weekly for four weeks, totalling eight sessions. Each session lasted 1 hour 20 minutes (double period), accumulating to 10 hours 40 minutes. Although the control group met for the same period of time, members of the group did not receive training in think-pair-share strategy; instead, the teacher (research assistant) employed conventional methods for teaching composition writing. This distinction was to allow the researcher to identify the effects of the instructional strategy (think-pair-share) on composition writing skills.

Similar to the pre-test, the post-test was also the Composition Writing Achievement Test (CWAT), and was administered to both the experimental and control groups at the expiration of the fourth week of treatment. The post-test question was the same with the question in the pre-test. The test duration was 1 hour 20 minutes, divided into two 40-minute segments. This assessment evaluated students' proficiency in key composition writing skills, namely: idea generation and sentence construction.

To ensure objective and consistent scoring, a detailed marking scheme was prepared by the researcher and utilized for evaluating the

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achievement of the subjects. The instrument comprised a single question, specifically designed to assess composition writing skills. This question was allocated a maximum score of 100 marks; 50 marks each for idea generation and sentence construction. Descriptive statistics, comprising mean and standard deviation, was used to answer the research questions, while Analysis of Co-Variance (ANCOVA) was employed to test the null hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance.

Results

This section deals with the analysis of the data collected at the course of the study using tables, following the research questions and hypotheses

Research question one: What is the difference between the pretest and posttest mean achievement scores of students taught idea generation using the TPS strategy and those taught with the conventional method?

Table 1: Result of the Pretest and Posttest Idea Generation Scores of Students **in the Experimental and Control Groups**

Group	N	Pretest Mean	SD (Pre)	Posttest Mean	SD (Post)	Mean Gain
Experimental	36	8.03	1.13	18.11	2.36	10.08
Control	45	7.98	1.31	16.58	2.98	8.60
Mean Difference		0.05		1.53		1.48

The data presented in Table 1 above compares the performance of the Experimental and Control groups on the Idea Generation variable before and after the intervention. At the pretest stage, the Experimental group recorded a mean score of 8.03 with a standard deviation of 1.13, while the Control group had a slightly lower mean score of 7.98 and a standard deviation of 1.31. The small mean difference of 0.05 suggests that both groups were almost equal in their idea generation abilities before the intervention. Following the intervention, the Experimental group's posttest mean score increased substantially to 18.11 (SD = 2.36), whereas the Control group's posttest mean rose to 16.58 (SD = 2.98). This resulted in a mean difference of 1.53 in favor of the Experimental group, indicating a higher level of performance in idea generation after the treatment. When comparing the gain scores (the difference between posttest and pretest scores), the Experimental group demonstrated a mean gain of 10.08, while the Control group recorded a mean gain of 8.60. The difference in mean gain between the two groups is 1.48, which implies that the Experimental group benefited more from the intervention.

Research question two: What is the difference between the pretest and posttest mean achievement scores of students taught sentence construction using TPS and those taught conventionally?

Table 2: Result of the Pretest and Posttest Sentence Construction Scores of Students in the Experimental and Control Groups

Group	N	Pretest Mean	SD (Pre)	Posttest Mean	SD (Post)	Mean Gain
Experimental	36	7.58	1.38	17.67	2.53	10.09
Control	45	7.18	1.03	15.84	2.61	8.66
Mean Difference		0.40		1.83		1.43

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Table 2 presents the pretest and posttest performance of the Experimental and Control groups on the Sentence Construction variable. Initially, the Experimental group had a mean score of 7.58 (SD = 1.38), while the Control group scored slightly lower at 7.18 (SD = 1.03), resulting in a pretest mean difference of 0.40. This indicates a slight advantage for the Experimental group at the beginning of the study. After the intervention, the Experimental group's mean score increased significantly to 17.67 (SD = 2.53), while the Control group's mean also improved to 15.84 (SD = 2.61). The posttest mean difference of 1.83 shows a stronger performance by the Experimental group. In terms of learning gains, the Experimental group improved by 10.09 points, while the Control group gained 8.66 points. The gain score difference of 1.43 further suggests that the Experimental group benefited during the experiment.

Hypothesis one: There is no significant difference between the pretest and posttest mean achievement scores of students taught idea generation using the TPS strategy and those taught with the conventional method.

Table 3: Tests of Between-Subjects Effects for Mean Achievement Scores Between the Experimental and Control Groups at Idea Generation

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	256.373[a]	2	128.187	26.509	.000
Intercept	83.925	1	83.925	17.355	.000
Pre_Test_Idea	209.351	1	209.351	43.293	.000
Group	43.040	1	43.040	8.901	.004
Error	377.182	78	4.836		
Total	24762.000	81			
Corrected Total	633.556	80			

The analysis in Table 3 above shows a significant effect of the group on idea generation achievement, with an F-value of 8.901 and a p-value of 0.004. This means a statistically significant difference in the posttest scores between the experimental and control groups in favour of the experimental group; hence the null hypothesis was rejected. In other words, the experimental group performed significantly better in terms of idea generation compared than the control group. This result implies that the intervention (the experimental condition) had a noticeable impact on how students generated ideas in the experimental group over the control group.

Hypothesis two: There is no significant difference between the pretest and posttest mean achievement scores of students taught sentence construction using TPS and those taught conventionally.

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Table 4: Tests of Between-Subjects Effects for Mean Achievement Scores Between the Experimental and Control Groups at Sentence ConstructionResult in Table 4 shows that the group effect for sentence

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	343.620[a]	2	171.810	54.322	.000
Intercept	55.091	1	55.091	17.418	.000
Pre_Test_Sentence	277.210	1	277.210	87.646	.000
Group	27.428	1	27.428	8.672	.004
Error	246.701	78	3.163		
Total	23057.000	81			
Corrected Total	590.321	80			

construction was significant (F = 8.672, p = 0.004). The difference in posttest achievement scores between the experimental and control groups is statistically significant in favour of the experimental group. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. This result indicates that the intervention affected the treatment group's ability to construct sentences more effectively. It implies that the learning methods in the experimental group positively influenced their sentence construction abilities.

Discussion

The discussion of findings in this study is based on the analysis and interpretation of the two research questions raised and two null hypotheses formulated. The discussion cut across the variables of the study which are: idea generation, and sentence construction.

The finding showed that the students who were exposed to composition writing using think-pair-share strategy achieved significantly higher in idea generation than their peers who were not. Think-pair-share is effective in enhancing idea generation because it allows students to share and build upon each other's thoughts and ideas in a collaborative environment. This aligns with the finding of Kombat et al (2023) which indicated that learners who received fractions instruction in Kasena-Nankana Municipal of Ghana using the think-pair-share model outperformed their colleagues who were taught fractions without think-pair-share. The finding also supports Ogunleye et al (2021) who found that TPS had significant effects on students' performance in Biology in Ekiti State, Nigeria. It implies that collaborative learning strategies like the TPS can be a valuable tool in teaching argumentative writing. By incorporating think-pair-share into writing instruction, educators can help students develop their critical thinking skills and generate more ideas.

Result also showed that think-pair-share had a stronger positive effect on students' achievement in sentence construction than the absence of the strategy in composition writing lesson. The positive impact of think-pair-share is because it provides students with opportunities to practise articulating their thoughts and ideas in complete sentences through peer discussion. This is line with Karura et al (2021) who reported the effectiveness of think-pair-share strategy on student achievement and motivation in CRE in Nakuru County, Kenya. It also aligns with Akinwamide's (2022) finding that TPS was effective in enhancing students' achievement in

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composition writing in senior secondary schools in Ondo State. This implies that collaborative learning can help students develop their writing skills at the sentence level. Therefore, by using think-pair-share, educators can create a supportive learning environment where students can practice and refine their sentence construction skills.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the think-pair-share strategy is an effective instructional approach for enhancing students' composition writing skills. Also, think-pair-share emerges as an important collaborative strategy that enhances development in key areas of composition writing, particularly idea generation and sentence. Therefore, if teachers of English in secondary schools adopt the strategy in the composition writing lesson, students' achievement will improve significantly.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, it is hereby recommended that:

1. Students should engage in collaborative learning approaches like think-pair-share to improve their writing abilities.
2. English teachers should implement think-pair-share learning strategies to enhance students' writing skills.
3. Teacher education programs should include research-proven strategies like think-pair-share to equip prospective teachers for the task of writing instruction.
4. Government, through the Ministries of Education, should organize retraining seminars and workshops for English teachers on collaborative strategies like think-pair-share.
5. Curriculum designers and English textbook writers should incorporate think-pair-share into secondary school writing programs.

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