



Effect of Genre-Based Approach on Secondary School Students' Achievement in English Narrative Writing in Toro LGA, Bauchi State

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Abstract

This study was designed to determine the effects of genre-based approach on secondary school students' achievement in narrative composition writing in Toro LGA, Bauchi State. The study adopted quasi-experimental research design consisting of two groups of SS 2 students, experimental and control. All conditions were similar in the two groups except that the students of the experimental group were exposed to the treatment of genre-based approach. Purposive sampling techniques of 79 SS2 students were used. Narrative test instruction was adopted from past WAEC narrative questions which were administered at the end of series of narrative composition writing lessons. Data collected were analyzed using t-test statistics observed at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypotheses of no significant difference were tested and rejected while the alternate hypotheses were accepted. The result revealed that experimental group performed significantly better than the control group. This means that genre-based approach has a significant effect when taught narrative composition writing. It is therefore recommended that genre-based approach should be adopted in order to improve SS2 students' achievement in narrative writing.

Keywords: Process-genre Approach, Achievement, Narrative Writing

Introduction

English language is one the most important languages in the world. It is the language that fills a huge communication gap by facilitating contact between people of diverse language background around the world. It is also a language of technology, official documents as well as official communication. It is the language of commerce and, in Nigeria; English language is the medium of instruction at all levels (Ndukwe, 2015). Like any other language, English language basic skills are: listening, speaking, reading and writing, therefore, writing is the most important skill in educational curriculum of the Nigerian secondary schools, considering that English language is the language of instruction in secondary schools, therefore, there is an urgent need to motivate students to master English writing composition so as to achieve academic excellence in the secondary school and even higher education of learning. Composition writing is a piece of writing which students compose in response to a given activities or guide. It is the form of communication in which the writer expresses his or her mind, views, ideas, and opinions as

well as thoughts to others. It is written in a prose form, and sentences which are short or long. Since composition is meant to communicate ideas, the writer should choose possible diction and style that will give meaning to achieve an identified goal (Onyinyechi, 2019).

Narrative composition as an account of an event, incident or activity. He further asserts that narrative is often about past events; hence the dominant tense is the past tense. In some cases, though, as he said, the narration can take a present tense. While, Anyebe, (2017) stated that this form of writing, which involved narrative techniques, could also be called 'what happened', how did it happen? Where did it happen? However, National Teachers Institute (2009) maintained that narrative "deals with telling a story or narrating events or incidents that took place in the past. It involves the narrative of experience, or participation in even or activity". Richard (2019) observed that narrative writing is a personal account, a story that the writer tells his or her reader. He further maintained that narrative writing it is an account of a series of facts or events, given



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in order and establishing connections between the steps. It can even be dramatic, in which case you can present each individual scene with actions and dialogue. The chronology could be in strict order, or you could include flashbacks.

Teaching narrative writing is very important because of these reasons: first, it reinforces the grammatical structure, idioms and vocabulary in learners as it's the raw material with which paragraphs are made. The second reason is, when students write they have a balance to be adventurous with the language and it increases the cognitive ability in students writing proficiency. Finally, the language students become involved with the language with their readers. However, most language learners realize the learning to write fluently and expressively are difficult. It is because writing needs simultaneous control of a number of variables.

A good narrative composition should possess these qualities include:

Proper organization: this can be done through the use of paragraphing. In English narrative composition writing the theme of discourse is broken down in to different paragraphs, each of which deals with one of the several sub-themes of the topic of discussion.

Mechanical accuracy: Mechanical accuracy in narrative composition writing is achieved through the proper use of English grammar, spelling and punctuation markers, questions, whether they are of question tag or open-ended question must carry a questions mark, while the period must appear at the end of a sentence to avoid run-on sentence. Exclamations must also end with an exclamation mark. In listing, every item of the list must be separated by a comma while the 'and' conjunction connect the last item on the list to the rest. The colon is used to show that there is an additional explanations following the preceding sentence, while the semi-colon is used to separate a sentence whose words are already separated by colons accurately, for example, indicates a break in transition. This can either be long enough to change the thought pattern or to clarify more of the idea earlier explained (Neple, 2017). And, others include proper content and sentence fluency.

Genre-based approach has emerged as both a set of pedagogies rooted in linguistic theory and a critical response to some of the tenets

of whole language instruction (Hicks, in Mehr 2017). It was evolved as a model of language in context known as Systematic Functional Linguistic (SFL). SFL was developed by Halliday (1978) which is a theory of language and a methodology for analyzing text and their context of use. The genre framework supports writing with generalized, systematic guiding principles about how to produce meaningful composition. Genre-based approach controls a set of communicative purposes within certain social situations and that each genre has its own structural quality according to those communicative purposes. Therefore, the communicative purposes and the structural features should be identified when genres are used in writing classes. The structural features that genres are made up include both standard of organization structure and linguistic features. Standards of organizational structure refer to how the text is sequenced and logically organized. Modelling as a first step to follow when teaching writing with genre-based approach. It has to do with the use of texts that focused explicitly on the structure and the language of the text, how choice of language worked to shape meaning of the particular text; the second is, joint construction (guided practice) this is when teacher and students are jointly in constructing a particular text. And the third which is independent construction this step makes students to write independently to enable them to accomplish their individual writing (Byram, 2004).

In the genre-based approach, however, the knowledge of language is intimately attached to a social purpose, and more focus is on the viewpoint of the reader than on that of the writer. Writing is mostly viewed as the students' reproduction of text based on the genre offered by the teacher. It is also believed that learning takes place through imitation and exploration of different kinds of models. Accordingly, learners should be exposed to many examples of the same genre to be able to develop their potentialities in writing.

Statement of the Problem

Writing has been the backbone of students' literacy skills therefore, the researcher, a language teacher, has observed that public secondary school students in Toro local



government performed very poor in narrative writing in both external and internal test and examination. This is supported by Bamidele (in Onyinyechi, 2019) asserted that students' scores in narrative writing is not satisfactory and poor writing skill has been identified as major cause. Statistics from West African Examination (WAEC) has shown a highly underachievement in students' narrative writing examination. According to the Chief examiner's report (2016) less than 20% of the candidates who took the WAEC examination got the credits pass in English language and the report shows that some of the challenges were bad narrative composition writing such as poor spelling, inappropriate use of vocabulary, misuse of punctuation marks and lack of unity and coherence in paragraph development. Also, same West African Examination Council' Chief Examiner's Reports of 2013,2014 and 2018 indicated that some of the major causes of students' failure in English language were paralleled to narrative composition writing as indicated that candidates wrote rather long essay that lose focus, poor punctuation, poor spelling and wrong use of tenses, poor organization and total lack of creativity were dominants in most of the students essays. While some candidates copied the comprehension questions as their narrative composition. This shows that one of the main problems that often leads to the massive failure in English language is attributed to the inability of the students to perform in narrative composition writing. This can be ascribed to the following factors: lack of background and language ability on the side of the students, lack of students' ability to express what they have in mind, lack of adequate practice by students, lack of motivation and on the part of the teachers, attitude of the teacher, inadequate instructional materials, poor methodology, among others. Similarly, Richard (2019) attributed students' failure in narrative composition writing to poor methodology. The researcher's teaching experience shows mass failure in narrative composition writing in frequent promotion examinations which arose the interest for this research, however, this assertion can be backed as Oyetunde and Muodumogu (in Yoila, 2017) observed that the school system is failing in its responsibility to make learners proficient in English language skills. The students' failure

is being attributed to poor knowledge of narrative composition writing, therefore, this research is going to find out the effectiveness of a particular method on narrative composition writing. Moreover, this research investigates the effect of genre-based approach on secondary school students' achievement in narrative composition writing in Toro LGA, Bauchi State.

Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to find out the Effects of Genre-based Approach on Senior Secondary School Students' Achievement in Composition writing in Toro LGA, Bauchi State. The study is guided by the following objectives which are to:

1. examine the SS2 students' level of achievement in paragraph organization before and after instruction using the genre-based approach.
2. determine the SS2 students' level of achievement in the use of punctuation marks before and after instruction using genre-based approach.

Research Questions

This study will be guided by the following research questions. These are:

1. To what extent does the experimental group differ in paragraph organization from the control group before and after instruction?
2. In what ways does the experimental group differ in the use of punctuation marks from the control group before and after instruction?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses will be tested at 0.05 level of significant to guide this study.

1. There is no significant difference in the post-test mean score of the experimental and control groups in paragraph organization before and after instruction.
2. There is no significant difference in the post-test mean score of the experimental and control groups in the use of punctuation marks before and after instruction.

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study will be quasi-experimental design. This is because it involves randomly assigning subjects into two groups, an experimental



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group and a control group. Both the experimental and control groups is pre-tested and post-tested after the treatment group (experimental group) have been exposed to genre-based approach in narrative types of composition writing. The post-test will enable the researcher to identify changes in the experimental group and control group. Any significant difference between the two groups will be the effects of genre-based approach. The population consist of 21 senior secondary schools in Toro Local Government Area of Bauchi state. The total number of SS2 students of the 21 secondary schools is 4452. The total sample of the study is 79 students. The sampled students consist of two intact classes. The schools chosen as sample are Government Comprehensive Day Secondary school Tilden Fulani which will be reflected as school A and Government Day Secondary School Narabi will also be reflected as school B. Also, school A was used as experimental group while school B, as control group. The total number of SS2 students in School A is 225 of which SS2 A contains 41 students, B 60, C 54 and D 70. However, SS2 A is chosen as sample for experimental group. While, the total number of SS2 students in school B is 105 of which SS2 A contains 33 students, B 38, C 34. However, SS2 B is chosen as a sample for control group. The sampled classes are mixed (male and female). Simple random techniques were used to select two schools from the sample frame provided by the Toro Zonal office. Lottery method was used to randomly sample the schools. This was applied when all the names of the secondary schools in Toro Local Government area was written on pieces of paper and thoroughly

mixed in a basket, then two pieces will be picked from the picture at random and opened to reveal the name of the schools, by doing this, all the secondary schools will be given equal right of being selected for the study. The researcher will use the Narrative Composition Achievement Test (NCAT) instrument to collect the data. The instrument for this study was developed by adopting the previous validated English WAEC narrative essay questions. Because the questions were standardized and validated by experts. It will be chosen from the previous past questions that will test the students in the following skills: paragraphing and punctuation. The researcher will select and adopt one narrative question from past WAEC questions. The instrument for the study was subjected to content and construct validity and scrutiny by two experts, one from English Education unit of the department of Arts Education and one from the Test and Measurement unit of the department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, University of Jos. The experts are expected to check the content and clarity of the test questions. Their comments as well as suggestion will be of immense support in writing the final copy of the instrument. For the reliability of the instrument, the instrument will be adopted from pass WAEC questions, therefore it has already been a standardized and reliable instrument.

Results

Research Question one:

To what extent does the experimental group differ in paragraph organization from the control group before and after instruction?

Table 1: Description of Statistics of students' achievement in paragraph development

Group	Test	N	\bar{x}	SD
Experimental	Pretest	40	2.8	1.21
	Posttest	41	5.51	2.04
Control	Pretest	38	2.15	0.865
	Posttest	36	3.75	1.380

Table 1 reveals that the pretest mean scores of the experimental group ($\bar{x} = 2.8$, $SD = 1.21$) on the use of paragraph development in composition writing is slightly higher than that of the control group ($\bar{x} = 2.15$, $SD = 0.865$) likewise posttest mean scores of the

experimental group ($\bar{x} = 5.51$, $SD = 2.04$) is significantly higher than that of the SS2 students in the control group ($\bar{x} = 3.75$, $SD = 1.380$). This indicates that SS2 students who were exposed to Genre-based approach have higher use of paragraph development in



narrative composition writing than those who were not.

To what extent does the experimental group differ in the use of punctuation marks from the control group before and after instruction?

Research Question two

Table 2: Description of statistics of students' achievement in punctuation marks

Group	Test	N	\bar{x}	SD
Experimental	Pretest	40	3.12	1.44
	Posttest	41	5.95	1.86
Control	Pretest	38	2.5	1.13
	Posttest	36	3.83	1.52

Table 2 reveals that the pretest mean scores of the experimental group ($\bar{x} = 3.12$, $SD=1.44$) on the use of punctuation marks in composition writing is slightly higher than that of the control group ($\bar{x} = 3.83$, $SD= 1.52$). Similarly, posttest means scores of the experimental group ($\bar{x}= 3.12$, $SD= 1.44$) is significantly higher than that of the SS2 students in the control group ($\bar{x}= 3.83$, $SD=$

1.52). This indicates that SS2 students who were exposed to genre-based approach have higher use of correct punctuation marks in narrative composition writing than those who were not.

Hypotheses one:

There is no significant difference in the post-test mean score of the experimental and control groups in paragraph organization before and after instruction.

Table 3: t-test analysis on paragraph development between experimental & control group

Group	N	\bar{x}	SD	Level of Sign	t-Cal	t-tab	Decision
Experimental	41	5.51	2.04	0.5	4.88	1.98	Rejected
Control	36	3.75	1.38				

Table 3 analysis reveals that the table value (1.98) is less than the calculated value (7.21). Therefore, it means that null hypotheses should be rejected and concludes that there is significant between the students in the experimental group ($\bar{x}= 5.51$, $SD= 2.04$) and that of control group ($\bar{x}= 3.75$, $SD= 1.38$) in paragraph development. This result shows

that Genre-based approach has significant effect on student's achievement in paragraph development.

Hypotheses two:

There is no significant difference in the posttest mean scores of the experimental and control group in the use of punctuation before and after instruction.

Table 4: t-test analysis on punctuation marks between the experimental and control group

Group	N	\bar{x}	SD	DF	Level of Sign	t-Cal	t-tab	Decision
Experimental	41	5.95	1.86	77	0.5	7.57	1.98	Rejected
Control	36	3.83	1.52					

Table four Analysis reveals that the table value (1.98) is less than calculates value (7.21). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and concludes that there is significant difference between the students in the experimental group ($\bar{x}= 3.83$, $SD= 1.52$) in punctuation marks. This result shows that Genre-based approach has significant effect on students' achievement in narrative composition writing.

Discussion

The finding on whether genre-based approach affects students' narrative in composition writing or not the result reveals that there is a significant difference in the mean scores of the experimental and the control groups. significant difference was also observed in the posttest mean score of the experimental group because of the intervention received by the control group.



The samples of narrative genre which were shared in the composition teaching class at the modelling stage described sufficiently the processes of forming the topic sentence as well as the supporting details which form the most important part in developing a paragraph. However, the collaboration of the students during join-construction and independent writing stage made learning more practical and exposed learners to styles of using linkers. However, the mean score of the posttest of the control (3.75) group is lower than the experimental group because of the absence of the aforementioned intervention as favored by the experimental group. In view of this, the result reveals that genre-based approach is very effective in teaching narrative composition writing. This is similar to the findings of Lee (2013) as he believed that through imitation and exploration of different kinds of models learners could be able to construct a good paragraph on their own.

Moreover, significant difference was observed in the achievement mean score of the posttest of the experimental (5.95) in punctuation. The experimental group is higher than the control group (3.83) because of the intervention applied during narrative composition writing lessons. This is attributed to students' exposure to lessons punctuation. Similarly, the experimental group was exposed to the function of each punctuation and how it is used in context as described in the modelling stage of the approach especially when sample genres were shared in the narrative experimental lessons, While, at the join-construction and independent writing stage the experimental group was involved in the practical exercise by exhibiting the usage of the punctuations, this makes it possible to show higher achievement than the control group which was not exposed to any intervention, therefore, this does not contradict the findings of Khatibi (2014) that the genre-based approach improved students' use of punctuation mark in composition writing.

Conclusion

Evidence from this research has shown that teaching narrative composition writing using the genre-based approach is better. This is justified by the improvement of the experimental group over the control group in

composition as a result of the treatment received in teaching instruction. While, the control group that was not exposed to treatment the result shows low performance. The findings also show an improvement in students' narrative composition especially in the following skills: paragraph development and punctuation mark which revealed higher achievement in the experimental group than control. This implies that using genre-based approach in teaching narrative composition writing is extremely better because students were involved in collaboratively practical process of genre-based approach where sample genres were shared among the learners and the teacher described vividly the features of the narrative genre at modelling stage while at join-construction and independent stage reflected the practical writing phase where the teacher guided the students on how and what to write in the course of teaching. The study indicated that students learn narrative composition writing rapidly by doing it through the guide of the teacher as evidence showed from the performance of the experimental group. However, it also shows that students developed inspiration of writing and correct use of punctuation marks through descriptive teaching, reading and ample use of teaching aids such as sample genres, pictures, dictionary and related text books. By implication, the conventional approach could not have had this opportunity which indicates that the genre-based approach has greater effect in students' narrative composition writing in senior secondary school.

Recommendations

The researcher has offered some recommendations as follows:

1. Teachers of English should be encouraged to integrate genre-based approach in teaching English narrative writing.
2. Composition narrative writing instruction should be learner-centred in such a way that learning materials should be applied to encourage active participation of the learners while the role of the teacher is to guide the composition writing students.
3. Curriculum planers are also advised to plan secondary school English language curriculum taking cognizance to include the genre-based approach.



4. Teachers of English should encourage students to read books extensively which will develop students' inspirations to be applied in narrative composition writing.
5. Parents should be encouraged to create an enabling reading environment for their children which will make them learn unconsciously the correct grammatical usage and adapt to think creatively in writing their feeling, emotion and opinion.
6. Narrative composition writing club should be established in all public schools with a clear intervention from government which will serve as motivating factor to capture the interest of the learners.

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