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## ENHANCING STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT ATTITUDE TO YORUBA COMPOSITION WRITING THROUGH LITERATURE MATERIALS

Makinde, S.O. (Ph.D.)

Dept. of Curriculum Studies,  
Faculty of Education, Lagos State University, Ojo

&

Ezeokoli, F.O. (Ph.D.)

Dept. of Teacher Education,  
Faculty of Education, University of Ibadan.

### Abstract

This study sought to determine the relative effects of literature materials on students' achievement in and attitude to Yoruba composition writing. One hundred and twenty three students selected from four secondary schools in Yewa North Local Government Area of Ogun State were involved in the study. Five instruments were used for collection and data analysis was done using analysis of co-variance (ANCOVA), multiple classification analysis (MCA) and the Scheffe Post-Hoc Analysis. Result indicates that treatment was found to have contributed significantly to variations in students' achievement in Yoruba composition writing. However, treatment was found not to have contributed significantly to students' attitude to Yoruba composition writing. Also gender did not contribute significantly to students' achievement in and attitude to Yoruba composition writing.

### Background to the Study

Language ability is a crucial factor in the educational process. It determines the degree to which learners can benefit maximally from instruction because their success depends on their ability to understand what is being said not only by their fellow learners but by their teachers too. It is equally important for such learners to understand formal and informal materials written in the target language.

In the educational circles, the importance of writing skill is generally acknowledged. In spite of the status of English language as the Nigeria's official language, the role of the mother tongues as potent means for enhancing learning of other subjects is an issue that cannot be dispensed with. The realization of this fact as well as other functional roles of the indigenous languages in Nigeria especially in promoting national integration and cultural reproduction, led to the adoption of these three major languages Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba as Nigeria's major languages (NPE, 2004).

The following studies have equally revealed that teaching in the mother tongue facilitate more meaningful learning than instruction received in English (Fafunwa, McCauley and Sokoya, 1989;

Ade, 1990; Olanrewaju, 1991; Akinbote and Viatonu, 1996 and Salami, 1999). It is however, worrisome to know that secondary school products are not well grounded in their local languages. Many of them find it difficult to communicate meaningfully in both spoken and the written forms of their mother tongues.

It must be noted that composition writing in Yoruba is an important aspect of the senior secondary school certificate examination and considering the fact that it carried 40% of the overall score, success in it will determine the success of a given candidate in the subject. According to Heaton (1975) composition or essay writing is a task that involves the manipulation of words in grammatically correct sentences and linking those sentences to form a piece of continuous writing which succinctly communicate the thoughts and ideas of a writer on a certain topic. It is also defined by Ogbuchi (1997) in the following ways:

- a piece of continuous prose that develops a point of view in a given topic.
- a composition guided by the controlling idea
- a process of communicating an idea in continuous prose format
- a well-organised piece of prose on a given topic
- a grammatical and rhetorically accurate piece of writing that communicates its message effectively (p. 139).

The definition are communicating the same idea in different ways. In this study, composition writing refers to the writing efforts of learners on Yoruba composition topics based on their ideas, experience, imagination and creativity. Scholars like Onukaogu and Ohia (1997), Babalola (1991), Oden and Denga (1999), Ezeokoli (1999) and Makinde (2000) have argued in support of the use of literature materials to teach language more effectively.

According to these scholars, oral and written literature models provide materials for imitation. In addition, the natural relationship between literature and language leads credence to the incorporation of literature materials into the teaching of composition. This is born out of the fact that language and literature are two sides of the same coin. Literary

materials are rich in linguistic facilities that aid effective communication in both the oral and written forms. When students are exposed to these materials, and they study the sentence structures, styles of different writers, they acquire more vocabularies as well as organisation skills. A relevant study was that of Ajayi (1996) who found the newspaper useful as enrichment materials on teaching English composition writing.

Problems identified to be affecting students' achievement in composition writing include, population explosion (Dadzie, 1989); non-availability of instructional facilities (Kolawole, 1997), and attitude towards composition writing (Lawal, 1988; Kolawole, 1997 and Oden, 1999). Other factors include gender (Denga, 1988 and Oden, 1999) and verbal ability (Nevile, 1986; Ajayi, 1996 and Olaboopo, 1999). However, much of the available studies on composition writing were conducted on English language while there is none in Yoruba language. This therefore prompted these researchers to conduct this study on the use of literature materials as enrichment inputs on students' achievement in and attitude to Yoruba composition writing using gender as an intervening variable.

### Research Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis were formulated and tested at the 0.05 alpha level:

- There is no significant difference in the mean post-test achievement scores of students exposed to the enrichment materials and those in the control group.
- There is no significant difference in the mean post-test attitude scores of students exposed to the enrichment materials and the control group.
- There is no significant difference in the mean post-test achievement scores of male and female students exposed to the enrichment materials and those in the control group.
- There is no significant difference in the mean post-test attitude scores of male and female students exposed to the enrichment materials and those in the control group.

### Methodology

#### (a) Sample

The sample consisted 123 SS II students (71 males and 52 females) selected from four secondary schools (intact classes) in Yewa North Local Government Area of Ogun State.

#### (b) Instrumentation

Five instruments were used for data collection.

They are described below:

- Students' Attitude in Yoruba Composition Writing (SAYCOW):** This was designed to

elicit information on students' attitude to Yoruba composition writing. This is made up of 27 four point Likert scale items, which were generated with input from language and test construction experts. The reliability coefficient on the 27 items using Cronbach Alpha was established as .97.

- Achievement Test in Yoruba Composition Writing (ATYCOW):** The ATYCOW was

used to measure the students' achievement in composition writing before and after exposure to the oral and written literature materials. It consists of 5 composition topics selected from 10 topics after a test-retest procedure on a sample of 100 SS II students. The test-retest procedures (with one week interval) gave a Kr21 reliability co-efficient of .91. Meanwhile, a marking guide patterned after the West African Examination Council (WAEC) and the National Examination Council (NECO) was used in scoring of students' composition answer scripts.

- Teaching and Learning Guide (TALG):** This experimental instructional programme was prepared to guide the teachers in knowing what content to teach and how to teach it effectively.

- Audio Tape of Oral Literature Materials Yoruba (ATOLIMY):** The audio tape contains the oral literature materials which were presented to the experimental group 1 and 2.

- Written Literature Materials in Yoruba (WOLMAY):** The WOLMAY consists of extracts from poetry, prose and drama taken from Fagunwa (1985), Isola (1978), Makinde (1989), Oladipo (1973), Odujoro (1961), Owolabi (1997) and Thompson (1988).

### Procedure

The four teachers used for the experiment were experienced graduate teachers of Yoruba language who had not less than five years teaching experience. They were trained for two weeks (one week for discussion and one for practical) before the commencement of the experiment. The experiment begins with the administration of SAYCOW and ATYCOW as pre-test on all the students. This was followed by the treatment using TALG, ATOLIMY and WOLMAY on the three experimental groups. The four groups were three experimental groups: oral literature group, written literature group, oral and written literature group and one conventional (control) group. Discussion method was held constant in the four groups. After the four weeks of treatment, the SAYCOW and the ATYCOW were administered on the four groups as post-test.

### Data Analysis and Findings

The analysis was done using analysis of covariance (ANCOVA), multiple classification analysis (MCA) and Scheffe post-hoc analysis.

Table 1 below shows the analysis

**Hypothesis One**  
 HO<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant difference in the mean post-test achievement scores of students exposed to

**Table 1: Summary of ANCOVA on Post-Test Achievement Scores of Subjects According to Instruction and Gender**

Source of variation	Sum of squares	Df	Mean of square	F	Significance of f
Covariates (pretest)	795.963	1	795.963	75.762	.000*
Main effects	1569.379	6	261.563	24.896	.000*
Group	613.627	3	204.542	19.469	.000*
Gender	2.670	1	2.610	.254	.615ns
Explained	2,716.383	25	108.655	10.342	.000
Residual	1,019.097	97	10.506		
Total	3,735.480	122	30.619		

\*significant at P < 0.05

The summary of ANCOVA as shown in Table 1 reveals that treatment was found to have contributed significantly to variations in subjects' achievement scores in Yoruba composition writing (F at df 3,122

= 24,896; P < 0.05). the MCA of the ANCOVA is shown in Table 2 and it describes the achievement of subjects according to instruction and gender.

**Table 2: MCA of Post-Test Achievement Scores of Subjects According to Instruction and Gender**  
 Grand mean = 18.935

Variable + category	N	Unadjusted variation	Eta	Adjusted for independent - covariates deviation	Beta
<b>Instruction</b>					
1. Oral Lit. Group	27	-1.16		.36	
2. Written Lit. Group	31	1.39		1.19	
3. Oral and Written Lit. Group	37	4.44		2.25	
4. Control Group	28	-6.29		-4.65	
			7.2		.47
<b>Gender</b>					
1. Male	71	.16		.14	
2. Female	52	-.22		.19	
			.03		.03
Multiple R <sup>2</sup>					.640
Multiple R					.800

The MCA in Table 2 describes the achievement of subjects in Yoruba composition writing according to instruction and gender. The Oral and Written Literature Group has the highest mean score of 21.19 followed by Written Literature Group (20.13); Oral

Literature Group (19.30) and the Control Group with the least mean scores of 14.29.

In order to identify the pairs of group means with significant variations, Scheffe post-hoc analysis was carried out and the summary is shown in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: Scheffe post-hoc analysis of post-test achievement in Yoruba composition writing according to treatment group**

Mean	Groups	Groups 4	Groups 1	Groups 2	Groups 3
14.29	4		*	*	*
19.30	1	*			*
20.13	2	*			*
21.19	3	*	*	*	

\*Denotes pairs of groups significantly different at the .05 level.

In Table 2 above, the mean post-test achievement scores indicate that experiment group 1-3 differed significantly from the control group. Also, there was a significant difference between experimental groups 1 and 3 and lastly between experimental group 2 and 3. From the analysis in Tables 1, 2 and 3 there is a significant difference between the mean post-test achievement scores of subjects exposed to the

enrichment materials and those in the control group. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected.

**Hypothesis Two**

HO<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant difference in the mean post-test attitude scores of students exposed to the enrichment materials and those in the control group. The analysis is shown in Table 4 below.

**Table 4: Summary of ANCOVA on subjects' post-test attitude scores according to instruction and gender**

Source of variation	Sum of squares	Df	Mean of square	F	Significance of f
Covariates (pretest)	.119	1	.119	.002	.968
Main effects	420.736	6	70.123	.960	.456
Group	50.121	1	16.707	.227	.876ns
Gender	217.418	1	217.418	2.977	.088ns
Explained	22161.996	25	90.480	1.239	.227
Residual	7,084.346	97	73.034		
Total	9,346.341	122	76.609		

ns = not significant

The summary of the ANCOVA shown in the Table 4 above indicates that treatment was found not to be contributed significantly to the variation in subjects' attitude scores [F(3,122) = .222; p>0.05].

The MCA of the attitude scores as presented in Table 5 below shows the adjusted mean attitude scores of subjects according to instruction and gender.

**Table 5: MCA of attitude scores of subjects according to instruction and gender in Yoruba composition writing**  
 Grand mean = 70.073

Variable + category	N	Unadjusted variation	Eta	Adjusted for independent - covariates deviation	Beta
<b>Instruction</b>					
1. Oral Lit. Group	27	.07		.36	
2. Written Lit. Group	31	.71		.90	
3. Oral and Written Lit. Group	36	-1.55		.31	
4. Control Group	28	-.53		-4.65	
			.11		.80
<b>Gender</b>					
1. Male	71	1.09		-1.30	
2. Female	52	1.48		1.64	
			.12		.16
Multiple R <sup>2</sup>					.040
Multiple R					.221

The MCA in Table 5 shows the adjusted mean attitude scores of subjects according to instruction and gender. The grand mean was 70.07. The Written Literature Group had the highest mean score of 70.97 followed by Oral Literature Group (70.44); Control Group 60.72 and Oral and Written Literature Group (69.26) being the least mean score. From the analysis in Tables 4 and 5, there is no significant difference in the mean post-test attitude scores of subjects exposed

to the enrichment materials and those in the control groups in Yoruba composition writing the null hypothesis is therefore not rejected.

**Hypothesis Three**

HO<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant difference in the post-test achievement scores of male and female students exposed to the enrichment materials and those in the control group.

The ANCOVA in Table 1 reveals that gender of students was found not to have contributed significantly to variations in subjects' achievement scores in Yoruba composition writing [ $F(3,122) = .254; P < 0.05$ ]. The MCA in Table 2 shows that male has a slightly higher mean score of 19.08 than the female (18.75) however the difference is not significant. Based on this result, the null hypothesis is not rejected.

#### Hypothesis Four

**H<sub>04</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean post-test attitude scores of male and female students exposed to the enrichment materials and those in the control group.

The ANCOVA in Table 4 reveals that gender was not found to have contributed significantly to the variations in subjects' attitude scores in Yoruba composition writing [ $F(3,122) = 2.977; P > 0.05$ ]. The MCA in Table 5 also indicates that female students had a higher mean score of 71.71 than their male counterparts 68.86. From the analysis in Tables 4 and 5, it is evident that there is no significant difference in the mean post-test attitude score of male and female students exposed to the enrichment materials and those in the control group. The null hypothesis is therefore not rejected.

#### Discussion of Results

From the data analysis, it could be seen that treatment contributed significantly to variations in students' achievement scores in Yoruba composition writing as revealed in Tables 1, 2 and 3. The superiority of the experimental groups over the control group is also revealed in the analysis. The result is in consonance with Ajayi (1996) who found that students exposed to the newspaper enrichment materials performed significantly better than those in the control group. The result also corroborates Onukaogu and Ohia (1997) that literature enriches our aesthetic experience and makes positive effects on our language use and creativity. That those in the oral and written literature group had the highest mean post-test achievement scores is noteworthy. Literary materials afford reader the development of communicative competence (Makinde, 2000), exposure to a wide variety of enriched environment to write well (Olaboopo, 1999) and an enhanced ability to generate ideas, extend vocabularies and develop organisation skills in creative writing.

In spite of the variations in the mean post-test attitude scores of the students, the differences were not significant as revealed in Tables 4 and 5. The result agrees with those of Kolawole (1997) and Oden (1999) who found no significant relationship between students' attitude and their achievement in English composition writing. However, the result contrasts with those in Neville (1986), Ajayi (1996)

and Olaboopo (1999) who found attitude to be a determining factor in students' achievement in composition writing. The present situation of students' attitude towards Yoruba composition writing could be the result of students' general apathy for Nigerian languages.

The analysis also revealed that gender was found not to have any significant effect on students' achievement in and attitude to Yoruba composition writing as indicated in Tables 1, 2, 4 and 5. The situation contradicts Ezewu (1987), Oden and Denga (1999) and Olaboopo (1999) who observed that language is essentially a female subject. It however confirms the observations of Aluko (1999) and Adepoju (1996) that there is no gender advantage in achievement in language. This means that literature enrichment materials could be useful to both males and females to produce the desired achievement in composition writing.

#### Recommendations

Based on the findings in this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Teachers should endeavour to expose students to literature materials in order to enrich their linguistic facility for both oral and written communication.
2. Curriculum experts and publishers should integrate literary models into the composition writing programme in secondary schools.
3. Literature based materials from other subject areas like Social Studies, Integrated Science, newspaper and magazines should be incorporated into the language-teaching programme of secondary schools.
4. Literature in Yoruba and in other Nigerian languages should be made compulsory for all secondary school students.

#### Conclusion

It could be inferred from the findings in this study that the use of enrichment models could enhance students' achievement in and attitude to Yoruba composition writing. It is also revealed that irrespective of gender, literature enrichment materials could facilitate students' achievement in and attitude to Yoruba composition writing. In this regard, the need for the use of oral and written materials as enrichment inputs for improving students' achievement in composition writing has become more compelling.

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