



ABSTRACT

This study examined the impact of using evaluative reading comprehension approach (ERCA) to enhance sentence and paragraph writing performances of Almajiri learners of English language in north west, Nigeria. The population of the study comprised 35,652 Almajiri pupils studying in modern Almajiri schools in north west zone, Nigeria. The target population were all the primary five (5) Almajiri pupils in the north west, Nigeria, while the sample size was made up of 97 Almajiri pupils that were selected from Mal. Kwaire Qur'anic School, Dakingari, Kebbi state and Tsangaya Integrated Model Boarding Primary School, Tambuwal, Sokoto

IMPACT OF USING EVALUATIVE READING COMPREHENSION APPROACH (ERCA) TO ENHANCE SENTENCE AND PARAGRAPH WRITING PERFORMANCES OF PRIMARY 5 ALMAJIRI LEARNERS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN NORTH WEST ZONE, NIGERIA

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Introduction

The Almajiri education system, originally called the 'Tsangaya' was first established under the Kanem-Borno empire, one of the oldest ruling empires in the world extending from the frontiers of Northern Nigeria across the Chadian region up to the borders of Libya. It was a replica of Islamic learning centers in many Muslim countries such as the madrassa in Pakistan, Malaysia, Egypt, Indonesia and so on. The system was funded by the state treasury (Bait-ul Mal) and the Zakat fund and was under the control of the emirs of the traditional government system. Since Islam encouraged charity to a wayfarer and to a student of learning, the community as well readily supported this Almajiri most of whom came from faraway places to enroll in the Tsangaya schools. In return the Almajiri offered services such as laundry, cobbling, gardening, weaving, sewing and so on as charity to the community that contributed to their wellbeing; hence, they gave back to society as the society gave to them (Okonkwo and Alhaji, 2014). The classical structure of the Tsangaya is that they were located on the outskirts of town near farmlands that are devoid of any activity during the dry season – thus providing a



state. Two intact classes were selected from the sampled schools. In order to answer and test the research questions and hypotheses, a pre-test achievement test was administered to both the experimental and control groups followed by eight (8) weeks exposure to treatment, then finally the post-test. The instruments used were sentences extracted from the two (2) comprehension passages and these sentences were arranged to form a composition question for testing paragraph writing. Descriptive and Inferential statistics were used to compare the results of the pre-test and post-test. The result showed that there is a significant difference in the sentence and paragraph writing performance of Almajiri pupils that were exposed to Evaluative Reading Comprehension Approach (ERCA) and those that were treated with the conventional teaching activities. In the light of the findings, the researcher recommended among others the training and retraining of English language teachers in Almajiri schools on the use of reading comprehension approach to enhance sentence and paragraph writing performances of Almajiri pupils. More so, textbook writers/publishers and curriculum planners should create an avenue for writing lesson to be integrated into evaluative reading comprehension lesson (ERCA), this will go along way in making the lesson more meaningful, purposeful, rewarding and exciting.

Keywords: Evaluative Reading Comprehension Approach (ERCA), Sentence, Paragraph, Writing Performances, English Language.

conducive atmosphere for learning (Odumosu, Odekunle, Bolarinwa, Taiwo, Ajala, Aluko, Alonge & Aliyu 2013).

The Kanem-Borno empire remained the major power in the region up until late 19th century. The outstanding man of the 19th century in West Africa was Shehu Usman Dan Fodio, a Fulani, who was born in the Gobir territory, present day Northern Nigeria, about 1750. He was brought up with his brother as a strict Muslim who was well educated in classical Islamic science, philosophy and theology, and after studying for some years in Agades, he felt the call to dedicate his life to teaching the faith. He became a prominent mallam in Alkalawa. However, Shehu was critical of the monarchy in Gobir and condemned many of its traditional practices which he called 'unislamic'. His rising popularity alarmed Yunfa, the Emir of Gobir, who feared that the principle of Islam would leave no room for the comfort and privileges enjoyed under the status quo, thus he planned to eliminate Shehu.

In response to Yunfa's planned action, Shehu declared jihad on the 'infidel rulers' in Gobir based on their impiety, corruption and lack of concern for the 'disinherited peasants' (Awofeso & Richie 2013). His charisma and influence amongst other mallams enabled him to secure the tacit support of both the peasants and devout bourgeoisie. From these beginnings arose the eventful years of the jihad, from 21 February, 1804, the date of the hijrah (flight) of Shehu to Degel, to the slaughter of Yunfa and his gobirawa at Alkalawa in 1808; and the subjugation of the more distant Hausa states by about 1810 (Ademoyega 1962). Thus, Shehu Usman Dan Fodio and other mallams pioneered the establishment of the Sokoto Empire, which until 1904, ruled the northern parts of most of modern-day West Africa, from Cameroon in the east to Burkina Faso in the West. The



political administration of the empire was within the framework of Sharia (Islamic Law) (Ademoyega, 1962).

In the modern time, effort is being made to integrate the Almajiri system of education into the mainstream of western education. Hence, several far-reaching fundamental restructuring has taken place and is still taking place in the practices of the modern Almajiri system of Education in order to meet up with the objectives of the Universal Basic Education and National Policy on Education. For example, English language which is central to western education in Nigeria is integral to the curriculum of the current Almajiri system of education. Therefore, the need to adopt effective teaching approach in order to enhance the English language skills, precisely writing skill of this category of pupils has become urgent more than ever. This is because the Almajiris unlike their counterparts who have relatively been exposed to English language before their primary education require special treatment and attention. In order to achieve this aim, the Evaluative Reading Comprehension Approach (ERCA) is a round peg in a round hole in this direction. Reading will inspire learners, in that it develops independent thinking. Those who read abundantly, will have the ability to judge ideas and opinions in the texts. Writing requires organizing these ideas and opinions into a text. Abundant reading will also give learners an idea to compare their own work with well-written texts. What is more, reading will enhance cultural knowledge of learners, and thus, reading will play a stimulating role to change writing from an annoying activity into an enjoyable learning experience. Learners will gather ideas and knowledge through reading that will support their writing performance (Demirel, 2016).

More so, Oz (2011) states that writing skills have direct relationship with reading skills. Its aim is to ensure that learners in foreign language teaching actively use the information they have gained in the classroom with writing activities and express their thoughts in a foreign language in writing (Guzel & Barin, 2013). These goals can only be achieved through various writing activities.

In the classroom environment where foreign language teaching is carried out, reading and writing skills in that language can only be developed as long as the practices and exercises that attract the interest and attention of the learners are carried out. In this context, reading skills can be improved by reading practice, and writing skills can be improved by integrating reading and writing practices. These practices include some activities that should be done before during and after the main activity.

Developing Writing Skill through Reading

Demonstrating writing proficiency relies on language efficiency in that language. Without language proficiency students cannot achieve in foreign language learning. Reading is a useful learning tool that can close this gap. Written texts are useful language input sources. Reading, as being one of the four basic skills, is an activity that requires understanding. Reading is the activity of seeing perceiving, comprehending and making sense of all words sentences or writing with all



its elements (Durmus, 2013). In other words, Reading according to (Demirel 2016) is the activity of deriving meaning from written symbols through the collaboration of cognitive behaviors and psychomotor skills. This activity is carried out with the coordination of mind and eye and the meaning of written expressions.

Reading is one of the most important sources of information (Fletcher & Portalupi, 2011). One of the important objectives of reading is to enable the foreign learner to understand and interpret the written text in the target language correctly (Guzel & Barin, 2013). Meaningful structures are made up of consecutive sentences, words and visuals. All kinds of information feelings and thoughts are placed in this structure in a logical order (Gargiulo, 2017). According to Elhabiri (2012), the definition of the text is made in different ways according to daily and scientific language. It is a written whole consisting of multiple sentences as it is understood from the word “text” in everyday language. Within the framework of linguistics, not only written words but also oral words are called text.

It is obvious that oral skills development which is one of the requirements of the communicative approach, is important for the learners, as well as the ability to express oneself in writing and to translate thoughts into writing in the target language (Mart 2018). Berninger and Winn (2016) argue that writing involves the process of transcribing structured information in the brain into symbols”. It is though that writing has an important role in providing cognitive development. In this context writing activity is a process that involves obtaining and expressing information. Writing, which is one of the most powerful communication expressions of the learner, is also a key for the success of the learner. In order to achieve this aim, the teacher, who uses the story as a teaching material must activate the learners’ previous knowledge during the reading process, arrange the students’ thoughts and help them prepare a draft, teach the learner the process of writing by reviewing and evaluating the drafts and ensure the continuity of this chain of action. If these skills are required, the habit of writing in the target language can also be established in the learner.

In foreign language teaching, writing skill, which is seen as the last stage of language skills and thought to be the most difficult skill, requires the use of foreign language in writing correctly and in accordance with the rules (Demirel, 2016). This skill can only be improved by practice. It is thought that reading, which is thought to be combined with writing in practice, will improve the writing skill by providing development of thinking. As Oz (2011) states, “writing skills are directly related to reading skills.” It is aimed that learners in foreign language teaching actively use the information they have gained in the classroom with writing activities and express their thoughts in a foreign language in writing (Guzel & Barin, 2013). These goals can be achieved through various writing activities.

In the classroom environment where foreign language teaching is carried out, reading and writing skills in that language can only develop as long as the practices and exercises that attract the



attention of the students are performed. In this context reading skills can be improved by reading practice, and writing skills can be improved by writing practice. These practices include some activities that should be done before during and after the main activity. Story as being one of the literary genres written in the target language for the development of reading skills is also very appropriate to use the story and similar resources can be used because it is short and more appropriate for classroom environment.

When students read, it will make them to acquire language input. Reading will help learners to learn from what others have written (Hudson 2017). Well-written reading materials will set a model to see structure and vocabulary use (Hudson 2017), and learners will transfer the text structures they have learnt into their own writing. Reading will enable learners to internalize how vocabulary and structures function in the text. “Students are also exposed to language patterns that help them to see the many and complex ways that sentences and paragraphs can be put together” (Vandrick, 2013:265). Apparently, a good command of grammatical structures will help students build on writing skills.

Both reading and writing activities are involved in written text. Kennedy & Bolitho (2015:85) explain the role of text for reading and writing activities as:

The actual content of the written text may be the same but the differences that reading is concerned with the recognition of aspects of that structure, whereas writing has do with the production of the text. In this respect reading may be regarded as a necessary precondition for any writing task, since the writer must be aware of the structure of a particular type of writing before he can produce it.

The relationship between reading and writing has been well recognized, in that “good reading, like effective writing, involves generative process that creates meaning by building relations between the text and what we now believe, and experience” (Wittrock, 2013). Writing has been considered a generative activity (Hudson, 2017). Writing requires using words accurately in a text. These words must create a meaning. And a good writing occurs when these words and what students now are lined together. Grammar patterns set the foundations of good writing. Simply put writing is demonstrating what students know in a meaningful text.

Reading requires comprehension, through generating meaning of a text. Both skills involve generating relations among words sentences, and paragraphs (Hudson, 2017). Comprehending will lead to composing which is constructing meaning developing and expressing ideas (Squire, 2013). Comprehension of reading materials will help students master the language patterns. Consequently, students can develop their ideas in a text.

Reading will inspire learners, in that it develops independent thinking. Those who read abundantly, will have the ability to judge ideas and opinions in the texts. Writing requires organizing these ideas



and opinions into a text. Abundant reading will also give students an idea to compare their own work with well-written texts. What is more, reading will enhance cultural knowledge of students, and thus, reading will play a stimulating role to change writing from an annoying activity into an enjoyable learning experience. Students will gather ideas and knowledge through reading that will support their writing performance.

Statement of the Problem

This study examines the Impact of Evaluative Reading Comprehension Approach (ERCA) on the sentence and paragraph writing performances of the Almajiri Learners of English Language in North – West Zone Nigeria. There are increasing evidences for the need to create a teaching technique that will meet the special English language needs of the Almajiri pupils, this is because this category of pupils unlike their counterparts who had privilege to attend nursery school before their primary school education have very weak background of the usage of English language. The performance of the Almajiri pupils in word spelling and sentence construction for the purpose of meaningful transfer of information into written form is significantly very poor. This was made known in the researcher’s encounter with one of their teachers who lamented pathetically about the condition of these pupils in the target language(English language). More so, as observed by Adekunle (2015) that absence of well-defined objective, ineffective teaching methodologies/techniques, the dearth of trained language teachers, lack of adequate teaching technique and materials are the causes of pupils’ poor performance in reading and writing lessons, and the Almajiri pupils are not exempted from this problem.

More so, considering the importance of English language in our national life in Nigeria, there is the need to creatively fashion out effective teaching techniques that will impact meaningfully on the teaching and learning of the target language most especially to pupils who have extremely weak background like the Almajiris. It is in realization of the above facts that this study investigates the impact of Pragmatic Language Teaching Techniques (PLTT) on reading comprehension and writing performance of Almajiri learners of English language in North-West Zone Nigeria.

Evaluative Reading Comprehension

An evaluative question asks the reader to decide whether he or she agrees with the author’s ideas or point of view in light of his or her own knowledge, values and experience. These questions can be answered outside the passage. In other word, a reader reads beyond the text. According to Kanno (2018), the following questions are associated with evaluative comprehension:

- What is your opinion of -----?
- How would you feel if -----?
- How effective are -----?
- What would you have done in that situation?



- What is the author not telling you in this text?
- What kind of person wrote this text?
- How did this text make you feel?
- Judge the value of ----- why do you think this?
- What is the text trying to make you believe?
- Has the author shown any prejudice or made any assumption about?

Features of Evaluative Reading Comprehension Approach (ERCA)

1. Learner centred: here the focus is on the pupils rather than the teacher. This means the students are urged to be actively involved in their own process of learning. They are allowed to come up with their own ideas, questions, definitions and make-ups.
2. Collaborative in nature: here emphasis is placed on learning through social interaction. This is done by making students to work in groups to solve problems, investigate and explore topics/situations in order to arrive at conclusions. By so doing they discover or construct knowledge by themselves.
3. Teacher guided: in pragmatic classrooms, collaborative learning is a process of peer interaction that is mediated and structured by the teacher. Discussion can be prompted by the presentation of specific concepts, problems or scenarios, and is guided by means of effectively directed questions, the introduction and clarification of concepts and information, and references to previously learned material.

Implications on Pupils' Learning

The implications of evaluative reading comprehension approach (ERCA) on pupil's learning are that:

1. They no longer sit down to be informed or loaded by the teacher but discover lesson contents by themselves as they respond to the teacher's prompting in the form of questions, assignments, project works and such like.
2. Students now learn to work in groups as organized by the teacher for effective collaboration or cooperative learning.
3. They become co-custodian of knowledge as they share and build on their previous experiences to create new knowledge.
4. They take responsibility to learn by actively participating and collaborating in the process.
5. Student should learn to consider the opinion of others by appreciating and investigating new ideas and lessons learnt from their colleagues.
6. They should value every experience, learn from them and be ready to share with their groups in order to improve their cognitive ability continuously.



Importance of Evaluative Reading Comprehension Approach (ERCA) on Writing Performance of Pupils:

Evaluative Reading Comprehension Approach (ERCA) lends credence to teaching/learning process in the following ways:

1. Encourages active participation of pupils.
2. Encourages active participation and interaction among learners, the teacher and other components of the teaching learning process.
3. Encourages the development of writing skills in such a way that will make the pupils to generate enough ideas for writing.
4. Encourages learners to develop and use their own initiatives.
5. Discourages rote learning and passivity on the part of learners.
6. Stimulates interest and aids retentions.
7. Develops critical thinking and problem-solving capacity.
8. Promotes individual and cooperative learning in the classroom.
9. Promotes team spirit among learners as they work in group.
10. Triggers curiosity on the part of learners through the use of activity-based teaching methods employed by the teacher.
11. Promotes high self-esteem on the part of learners based on their trust in self-approach to learning. The teacher guides the pupils to trust, believe in themselves and demonstrate that they can accomplish given task.
12. Facilitates active construction of knowledge where learners are encouraged to explore and interact with the resources available.
13. Concretizes learning and knowledge in the sense that pupils are more likely to retain the facts that they discover and construct by themselves than those they are told or given by the teacher.
14. Helps in developing episodic memory. This refers to the ability to reminisce or recall past event based on particular episodes or encounter that facilitate retention and recall which are necessary for effective learning (Kanno, 2018).

Teaching Activities During the Study, Using Evaluative Reading Comprehension Approach to Enhance Sentence and Paragraph Writing Performances:

A passage titled 'MY FUTURE PLAN' was selected from Macmillan Brilliant Primary English Book 3. English language was code mixed/switched during the lesson, and the objectives of the study are stated below:

At the end of the lesson pupils should be able to:

1. Discuss their future plans.



2. Respond to questions about themselves and putting same in sentence-writing. E.g.:
Question: What is your name? Response: 'My name is Yusuf'.
3. Merge the responses to form a paragraph in a composition writing.
4. Discuss misconceptions or answers on the anticipation guide.
5. Explain reasons why questions were answered the way they were.

According to Hudson (2017), the following steps were followed in using Evaluative Reading Comprehension Approach (ERCA) to enhance sentence and paragraph writing performances of Almajiri pupils during the research:

Lesson Presentation: Teacher presents the lesson in the following steps:

- i. He asks pupils to introduce themselves.
- ii. He divides the pupils into groups and makes the copy of the reading passage available to each member of the group, he appoints a head for each group and also peers pupils with special learning needs with stronger readers.
- iii. The teacher distributes the anticipation guide prepared by him and guides pupils to read the statements. He also reminds them that they have opinions and that having an opinion does not mean it is truth or false.
- iv. Then he guides them to use their opinions and answer true or false to statements in the "pre-reading" column.
- v. He engages pupils in a conversation to share their answers and the opinions that support them, then reiterates that everyone is entitled to an opinion.
- vi. He guides pupils to respond to the following questions about themselves in writing at the "post-reading" column based on facts from the story and also reminds them that their opinions are not to interfere with the facts in the reading:

A. What is your name?	'My name is Yusuf Aliyu'.
B. How old are you?	'I am thirteen years old'.
C. What is your complexion?	'I am dark in complexion'.
D. What is your position in the family?	'I am the last child in the family of four'.
E. What are your best subjects?	'My best subjects are English lang. and Basic science'.
F. What is your favorite game?	'My favorite game is football'.
G. What is your father's occupation?	'My father's occupation is farming'.
H. What is your mother's occupation?	My mother's occupation is tailoring'.
I. What will you like to become in future?	'I will like to become a medical doctor in future'.
J. What is your state of origin?	'I am an indigene of Kebbi state'.
- vii. Teacher guides the pupils to arrange the responses/sentences above to form a paragraph of a composition on 'MY SELF'.



“My name is Yusuf Aliyu, I am thirteen years old. I am the last child in the family of four children. I am dark in complexion. My best subjects are English language and Basic science. My favorite game is football. My father’s occupation is farming. My mother’s occupation is tailoring. I will like to become a medical doctor in future. I am an indigene of Kebbi state”.

- vii. Teacher guides the pupils to read the one-paragraph composition on the topic: My Self several times.
- viii. He asks pupils to return to the text and guides them to highlight where they found answers to the questions (evidence). He discusses answers and guides pupils to share locations of the answers in the text.

Methodology

The researcher made use of quasi experimental pre-test post-test design. There were experimental and control groups. The experimental group was treated using Evaluative Reading Comprehension Approach (ERCA), while the control group was only exposed to the Conventional Method (CM) of teaching.

The population of this study comprised all the 35,652 pupils studying in modern Almajiri schools in North-West zone, Nigeria. The North-Western states are made up of Kano. Kebbi. Kaduna. Katsina. Jigawa. Sokoto and Zamfara. According to UBEC (2019), there are 35,652 pupils studying in modern Almajiri schools in North -West, Nigeria, this figure was also confirmed by media survey (2021). The target population of this study were 97 primary 5 Almajiri pupils in Mal. Kwaire Qur’anic School, Dakingari, Kebbi State and Tsangaya Model Integrated Boarding Primary School Tambuwal, Sokoto State. The primary five (5) Almajiri pupils are considered appropriate for the study because they are considered to be learners who have acquired a few grasps of the English words due to the fact that they have been in the primary school continuously for the period of five (5) years. More so, learners at this level are considered to be matured enough to co-operate with the researchers. In order to investigate the Impact of Evaluative Reading Comprehension Approach (ERCA) on sentence and paragraph writing performances of Almajiri pupils, the research instruments for this study were divided into two, each of the section was made up of 15 questions, with the total questions of 30, and each of the questions carried 2 marks.

Discussion and Analysis

Descriptive statistics was used in this study. The data from the study was analyzed using frequency count, mean, standard deviation and t-test statistical method. This method is considered appropriate because the study is to show the difference between post-test achievement of the experimental and control groups; and the difference between performance and scores in using



Evaluative Reading Comprehension Approach to enhance the sentence and paragraph writing performances of the Almajiri pupils.

Research Question One:

What is the impact of Evaluative Reading Comprehension Approach (ERCA) on Sentence Writing Performance of Almajiri pupils?

Table 1 Pre-Test Performance Scores of the Experimental Group in Sentence Writing

Level	Score	No. of Students	%
Zero	0	50	96.15
Low	1 – 9	2	3.85
Middle	10 – 15	0	0
High	16 – 20	0	0
Total	20%	52	100

Table 1 shows that the pre-test performance of the experimental group was terribly poor. They were unable to respond to questions in simple sentences as 96% of them failed to score a single mark, while the only respondent that made the best effort scored 1%.

Table 2 Pre-Test Performance Scores of the Control Group in Sentence Writing

Level	Score	No. of Students	%
Zero	0	40	88.88
Low	1 – 9	4	8.89
Middle	10 – 15	1	2.2
High	16 – 20	0	0
Total	20%	45	100

The performance in sentence writing was exceptionally poor. About 90% of the pupils scored zero, while only one of them scored between 10-15 marks. About 90% of the pupils scored zero while only 1% of them scored between 1-15marks.

Research Question Two:

What is the Impact of Evaluative Reading Comprehension Approach (ERCA) on Paragraph Writing Performance of Almajiri pupils?

Table 3 Pre-Test Performance Scores of the Experimental Group in Paragraph Writing

Level	Score	No. of Students	%
Zero	0	51	98.07
Low	1 – 9	1	1.92
Middle	10 – 15	0	3.85
High	16 – 20	0	0
Total	20%	52	100



Table 3 shows the pre-test performance of the pupils at the paragraph writing was very poor. While 98% of the pupils scored zero mark, non was also able to score a single mark in the high range, while one was in the low range.

Table 4 Pre-Test Performance Scores of the Control Group in Paragraph Writing

Level	Score	No. of Students	%
Zero	0	40	88.88
Low	1 – 9	5	11.1
Middle	10 – 15	0	0
High	16 – 20	0	0
Total	20%	45	100

Table 4 shows that the pupils' performance in paragraph writing was exceptionally poor. Most of the pupils scored zero with 5 of them scoring between 1 – 9marks.

The Post Test Performances of the Experimental and Control Groups

Null Hypothesis One:

There is no significant difference between the sentence writing performance of pupils engaged in ERCA and those engaged in conventional sentence writing activities. This null hypothesis was tested using an inferential statistics of independent samples t-test. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 4.27.

Table 5 Independent Samples T-Test on Sentence Writing Performance of Experimental and Control Groups

Group	N	\bar{X}	SD	T	Df	p	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
							Lower	Upper
Experimental	52	4.51	3.421	5.735	80	.000	2.355	4.728
Control	45	1.31	2.511					
Total	97							

Table 5 presents the results of the sentence writing performance of students engaged in ERCA and those engaged in conventional writing activities. The mean sentence writing for the experimental group ($M = 4.51$, $SD = 3.421$) was higher than that of the control group ($M = 1.31$, $SD = 2.511$). The mean difference between the experimental and control group was 3.613 in favour of the experimental group. The 95% confidence interval of the difference was 2.355 to 4.728. The results for $t(80) = 5.735$, $p = .000$ shows a significant difference between the two means. This shows that the experimental group performed better than the control group in sentence writing activities. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated no significant difference was rejected. Thus, there was



a significant difference between the sentence writing performance results of pupils engaged in ERCA and those engaged in conventional sentence writing.

Null Hypothesis Two:

There is no significant difference between the paragraph writing performance of pupils engaged in ERCA and those engaged in conventional writing activities. This null hypothesis was tested using an inferential statistics of independent samples t-test. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 4.28.

Table 6 Independent Samples T-Test on Paragraph Writing Performance of Experimental and Control Groups

Group	N	\bar{X}	SD	T	Df	P	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
							Lower	Upper
Experimental	52	4.45	3.321	5.626	80	.000	2.378	4.618
Control	45	1.23	2.542					
Total	97							

Table 6 presents the results of the paragraph writing performance of pupils engaged in ERCA and those engaged in conventional writing activities. The mean paragraph writing for the experimental group ($M = 4.45$, $SD = 3.321$) was higher than that of the control group ($M = 1.23$, $SD = 2.542$). The mean difference between the experimental and control group was 3.613 in favour of the experimental group. The 95% confidence interval of the difference was 2.378 to 4.618. The results for $t(80) = 5.735$, $p = .000$ shows a significant difference between the two means. This shows that the experimental group performed better than the control group in sentence writing activities. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated no significant difference was rejected. Thus, there was a significant difference between the sentence writing performance results of pupils engaged in ERCA and those engaged in conventional sentence writing.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this research clearly indicate that there was a significant difference in the sentence and paragraph writing performances of Almajiri pupils that were exposed to ERCA and their counterparts that were engaged with the conventional teaching activities. The findings established that evaluative reading comprehension approach has remarkable impact on sentence and paragraph writing performances of the pupils. This reaffirms the views of Readance, Bean and Baldwin (2018), Cowelty (2014), Donna (2016) and Tetty and Au (2015) that Evaluative Reading Comprehension Approach (ERCA) essentially challenges pupils' preconception or misconception about a topic or concept, help them set a purpose for reading and access prior knowledge about a particular topic, and aid them in reading strategically.



The results of the study also confirm Duffelmeyer (2014) and Kujawa & Haske (2015) that Evaluative Reading Comprehension Approach are designed to increase content knowledge and reading comprehension concurrently while activating prior knowledge.

The use of ERCA had major impact on the outcome of the study. Before reading, Evaluative Reading Comprehension Approach helped activating prior knowledge, setting a purpose for reading, predicting, positioning, asking questions on what they know, making connections were diligently treated. Anticipation guide prepares the pupils for text by asking them to answer a series of essential questions or statements related to the content material to help foster discussion and comprehension before reading. Anticipation Guide consists of statements related to the text the pupils were made to read. Some of the statements were true, some were false, some provoked deep discussion, controversy and disagreement. The outcome of using pragmatic language teaching technique to enhance the reading comprehension performance of the pupils was successful because it developed their critical thinking ability and also promoted cross-cultural understanding among them.

Conclusion

The outcome of this study has established that there is a significant difference between the performance of Almajiri pupils that were exposed to Evaluative Reading Comprehension Approach in teaching sentence and paragraph writing and those that were treated with the conventional method of teaching. The sentence and paragraph writing performances of the pupils placed under the treatment of ERCA improved drastically compared to their counterparts that were only confined to the traditional method of teaching. The conclusion of this study is that using Evaluative Reading Comprehension Approach (ERCA) to enhance sentence and paragraph writing of Almajiri pupils impact positively on their academic achievement.

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