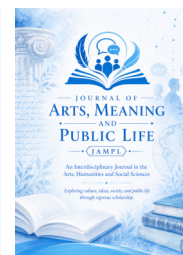


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Trans-lingual scaffolding and creative writing among slow learners in multilingual Nigerian classrooms

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effect of trans-lingual scaffolding on creative writing among slow learners in multilingual Nigerian classrooms. Guided by three research questions and corresponding hypotheses, it examined learners' creative writing achievement, writing quality, and attitudes toward multilingual writing practices. A quasi-experimental mixed-methods design was adopted with 600 slow learners from selected schools in Lagos, Port Harcourt, and Kano. Data were collected through the Creative Writing Achievement Test, questionnaires, classroom observations, interviews, focus group discussions, and learners' writing samples. Quantitative data were analyzed using means, standard deviations, t-tests, correlation analysis, and ANCOVA, while qualitative data were thematically analyzed. Findings showed that learners exposed to trans-lingual scaffolding significantly outperformed those taught through English-only instruction. They recorded higher posttest achievement scores, greater mean gains, and improved writing quality in thematic depth, originality, vocabulary use, and structural organization. Learners' attitudes toward multilingual writing practices also had a strong positive relationship with creative writing achievement. The study concluded that trans-lingual scaffolding is an effective strategy for improving creative writing among slow learners in multilingual settings.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Language remains one of the most powerful instruments for cognitive development, identity formation, and creative expression within educational spaces Olorunfemi and Bayaro (2025). In multilingual societies such as Nigeria, classroom communication naturally occurs through dynamic interactions among English, indigenous languages, and Nigerian Pidgin. Despite this linguis-

tic reality, formal classroom instruction continues to privilege English as the sole legitimate medium of academic engagement, particularly in writing instruction. This monolingual orientation has increasingly generated concern among scholars who argue that rigid English-only pedagogies silence multilingual learners and restrict their expressive capacities Bonacina-Pugh et al. (2021). Creative writing, by its nature, demands imagination, cultural connection, emotional engagement, and linguistic freedom. However, many slow learners in Nigerian classrooms experience writing as a stressful and exclusionary activity rather than an avenue for creativity. In many cases, these learners possess rich oral com-

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municative abilities in their indigenous languages or Nigerian Pidgin but struggle to transfer such ideas into formal English writing. Recent developments in translanguaging scholarship have challenged the traditional assumption that languages function as isolated systems within the minds of multilingual learners, arguing instead that multilingual individuals draw from a unified linguistic repertoire in meaning-making processes [García and Wei \(2014\)](#). The concept of trans-lingual scaffolding offers a potentially transformative approach to this challenge. Unlike random code-switching, trans-lingual scaffolding systematically allows learners to move between languages during brainstorming, discussion, drafting, and revision processes while gradually developing proficiency in academic English.

1.1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The persistent use of rigid English-only instructional approaches in Nigerian classrooms continues to disadvantage many slow learners in creative writing activities. Although these learners often demonstrate oral competence and imaginative abilities in their indigenous languages, they struggle to express such creativity effectively in formal English writing environments. The pressure to conform exclusively to English linguistic norms frequently creates anxiety, cognitive overload, low participation, and weak writer confidence. Furthermore, traditional writing instruction tends to prioritize grammatical accuracy over learner voice, originality, and meaning-making processes. Thus, multilingual learners are denied access to valuable linguistic resources that could support idea generation and textual development. Despite increasing global recognition of translanguaging as an inclusive pedagogical strategy, there remains limited empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of trans-lingual scaffolding for enhancing creative writing among slow learners in multilingual Nigerian classrooms. This study therefore investigates whether trans-lingual scaffolding can improve creative writing performance, learner participation, and writer agency among slow learners.

1.1.1. Objectives of the study

The study seeks to:

1. examine the effect of trans-lingual scaffolding on the creative writing achievement of slow learners in multilingual Nigerian classrooms;
2. investigate the influence of trans-lingual scaffolding on learners' thematic depth, originality, and structural quality in creative writing; and
3. determine learners' attitudes toward the use of multiple languages during the creative writing process.

1.1.2. Significance of the study

This study is significant because it contributes to emerging scholarship on multilingual literacy, inclusive pedagogy, and creative writing instruction in African educational contexts. The findings may provide empirical support for integrating indigenous languages and Nigerian Pidgin into formal writing instruction for slow learners. The study may also assist curriculum developers, classroom teachers, language educators, and policymakers in designing more inclusive literacy instruction that recognizes multilingualism as an educational resource rather than a classroom problem. Furthermore, the study contributes theoretically

to translanguaging scholarship by extending its application to creative writing and writer agency among slow learners in post-colonial multilingual classrooms. It also advances ongoing conversations on linguistic justice, epistemic inclusion, and culturally responsive teaching within Nigerian education.

1.2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions guide the study:

1. What effect does trans-lingual scaffolding have on the creative writing achievement of slow learners in multilingual Nigerian classrooms?
2. How does trans-lingual scaffolding influence thematic depth, originality, and structural quality in learners' creative writing?
3. What are learners' attitudes toward the use of multiple languages during the creative writing process?

1.3. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses are formulated and tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

- H01:** There is no significant difference in the creative writing achievement of slow learners exposed to trans-lingual scaffolding and those taught using conventional English-only methods.
- H02:** Trans-lingual scaffolding has no significant influence on learners' thematic depth, originality, and structural quality in creative writing.
- H03:** There is no significant relationship between learners' attitudes toward multilingual writing practices and their creative writing performance.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The review is organized under conceptual review, theoretical framework, empirical studies, and identified gaps in the literature.

2.1. THE CONCEPT OF TRANSLANGUAGING

The concept of translanguaging has emerged as one of the most influential perspectives in contemporary multilingual education. Originally developed by Williams in the Welsh bilingual education context and later expanded by [García and Wei \(2014\)](#), translanguaging refers to the flexible use of multiple linguistic resources by multilingual individuals to construct meaning, communicate ideas, and facilitate learning. Unlike traditional bilingual models that separate languages into rigid compartments, translanguaging views language practices as interconnected and dynamic. [García and Wei \(2014\)](#) explain that multilingual learners do not think in isolated languages; rather, they draw from a unified linguistic repertoire during communication and learning processes. This perspective challenges monolingual assumptions that regard the use of indigenous languages in English classrooms as interference or deficiency. [Bonacina-Pugh et al. \(2021\)](#) argue that translanguaging has transformed educational discourse by repositioning multilingualism as an intellectual resource rather than an instructional impediment. According to the authors, translanguaging encourages learners to use familiar linguistic systems in negotiating

meaning, improving comprehension, and enhancing participation in academic tasks.

Within African educational contexts, translanguaging has become increasingly relevant because many classrooms operate naturally through multilingual interaction. Learners frequently combine English with indigenous languages and Nigerian Pidgin during peer interaction, storytelling, and informal classroom participation. However, these linguistic realities are often ignored in formal literacy instruction where English-only policies dominate. Karki *et al.* (2026) maintain that translanguaging promotes linguistic inclusion and epistemic justice by validating learners' identities and cultural knowledge systems. The study further explains that multilingual learners develop stronger engagement when allowed to integrate home languages into academic expression. This argument is particularly important in Nigerian classrooms, where learners often possess richer expressive abilities in indigenous languages than in formal English. Similarly, Kiramba and Oloo (2019) observed that multilingual learners possess untapped communicative resources that remain underused in conventional classroom instruction. Their study emphasizes that allowing learners to draw upon indigenous linguistic resources improves participation and meaning-making processes, particularly among learners struggling with second-language proficiency. The growing body of translanguaging scholarship therefore suggests that multilingual practices can support literacy development, learner confidence, and classroom inclusion. Nevertheless, the application of translanguaging specifically to creative writing among slow learners in Nigeria remains insufficiently explored.

2.2. TRANS-LINGUAL SCAFFOLDING VERSUS CODE-SWITCHING

Although translanguaging and code-switching are sometimes used interchangeably, important distinctions exist between the two concepts. Code-switching generally refers to the alternation between two or more languages during communication. Traditional views often interpret code-switching as a compensatory strategy used when learners experience linguistic limitations. Trans-lingual scaffolding, however, extends beyond spontaneous language alternation. It involves the deliberate pedagogical use of learners' multiple linguistic resources to facilitate cognitive development, comprehension, and academic expression. In trans-lingual scaffolding, teachers intentionally guide learners through stages of meaning construction using familiar languages before transitioning toward formal academic language. According to García and Wei (2014), trans-lingual scaffolding allows learners to move fluidly between languages during brainstorming, drafting, discussion, revision, and collaborative learning. Such movement supports cognitive flexibility and reduces the mental burden associated with exclusive second-language processing.

Yang *et al.* (2026) explain that multilingual learners often demonstrate stronger writer agency when allowed to negotiate ideas through diverse linguistic and semiotic resources. Restrictive monolingual policies, by contrast, frequently suppress learner creativity and weaken confidence in writing tasks. In the Nigerian context, trans-lingual scaffolding may involve the use of Yoruba, Hausa, Igbo, Efik, Tiv, or Nigerian Pidgin during oral storytelling, idea generation, peer discussion, vocabulary clarification, and narrative planning before learners produce formal English texts. This

process enables learners to access prior knowledge and cultural experiences more effectively. The distinction between trans-lingual scaffolding and ordinary code-switching is therefore significant because the former represents a structured pedagogical approach rather than incidental language alternation.

2.3. CREATIVE WRITING IN MULTILINGUAL CLASSROOMS

Creative writing refers to imaginative written expression that emphasizes originality, emotional depth, narrative development, and personal voice. It includes genres such as short stories, poems, descriptive essays, dramatic dialogues, and autobiographical narratives. Creative writing occupies an important position in literacy education because it promotes imagination, emotional intelligence, critical thinking, and communication skills. However, creative writing instruction in many multilingual classrooms remains heavily constrained by rigid grammatical expectations and examination-oriented practices. Hall (2017) argues that effective writing instruction should prioritize meaning-making and learner voice rather than excessive mechanical correction. Unfortunately, many multilingual learners experience creative writing as an anxiety-inducing activity because they are evaluated primarily through grammatical accuracy rather than expressive quality. Yang *et al.* (2026) further observed that writer agency develops when learners can mobilize linguistic, cultural, and semiotic resources during composition processes.

Learners who are restricted to unfamiliar linguistic forms often experience diminished confidence and reduced expressive freedom. In multilingual Nigerian classrooms, learners frequently possess rich oral storytelling traditions rooted in indigenous cultures. Oral narratives, proverbs, idiomatic expressions, folktales, and communal storytelling practices represent valuable creative resources. However, English-only instruction often disconnects learners from these cultural foundations during writing instruction Olorunfemi and Bayaro (2025). Karki *et al.* (2026) note that multilingual learners produce richer and more authentic writing when classroom practices permit multimodal and multilingual expression. This finding suggests that creative writing development may improve when learners can initially formulate ideas through familiar linguistic structures before refining them into academic English. Creative writing in multilingual classrooms therefore requires pedagogical approaches capable of balancing linguistic accuracy with expressive freedom and cultural relevance.

2.4. SLOW LEARNERS AND LANGUAGE LEARNING CHALLENGES

The term "slow learners" generally refers to learners who progress academically at a slower pace than their peers despite possessing average or near-average intellectual abilities. Such learners often require additional instructional support, extended processing time, and alternative pedagogical strategies. In language education, slow learners frequently encounter difficulties related to vocabulary acquisition, sentence construction, grammatical organization, reading comprehension, and written expression. However, scholars increasingly caution against interpreting language-related difficulties as indicators of low intelligence. Kiramba and Oloo (2019) argue that multilingual learners are often misjudged academically because educational systems fail to recognize the complexity of multilingual cognition. Learners who

struggle with English expression may still demonstrate strong reasoning abilities and creative potential in indigenous languages. Within Nigerian classrooms, many slow learners experience linguistic exclusion because instructional approaches prioritize English proficiency without acknowledging learners' multilingual realities. As a result, learners simultaneously struggle with language processing, idea generation, and academic performance expectations. According to Vygotsky's sociocultural perspective, learners develop more effectively when instructional support aligns with their existing linguistic and cognitive resources. Scaffolding strategies therefore become essential for helping slow learners transition gradually from familiar oral expression toward formal written communication.

2.5. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study is anchored in three theories based on their relevance to the study: Translanguaging Theory, Sociocultural Theory and Scaffolding, and Cummins' Linguistic Interdependence Theory.

2.5.1. Translanguaging theory

This study is anchored primarily on Translanguaging Theory developed by [García and Wei \(2014\)](#). The theory challenges traditional monolingual assumptions by proposing that multilingual individuals possess integrated linguistic systems rather than separate language compartments. According to the theory, multilingual learners draw flexibly from diverse linguistic resources to construct meaning, negotiate understanding, and participate in social interaction. Translanguaging therefore recognizes language practices as fluid, dynamic, and interconnected. [Bonacina-Pugh et al. \(2021\)](#) explain that translanguaging enhances classroom participation because learners can access prior knowledge through familiar languages while gradually developing proficiency in the target language. The theory further promotes linguistic inclusion and educational equity by validating learners' identities and home languages. The relevance of Translanguaging Theory to this study lies in its emphasis on multilingual meaning-making during literacy activities. Slow learners participating in creative writing tasks may benefit significantly from opportunities to brainstorm, narrate, and draft ideas using multiple linguistic resources.

2.5.2. Sociocultural theory and scaffolding

Vygotsky argues that learning occurs through social interaction and guided participation. Scaffolding refers to temporary instructional support provided by teachers or peers to help learners accomplish tasks they may not complete independently. Through scaffolding, learners gradually internalize knowledge and develop greater independence. In multilingual classrooms, language itself becomes a cultural and cognitive tool for scaffolding learning. Learners can use indigenous languages to negotiate understanding, clarify concepts, and organize ideas before transitioning into formal English writing. The sociocultural perspective therefore supports trans-lingual scaffolding as a collaborative and learner-centered instructional strategy capable of improving creative writing among slow learners.

2.5.3. Cummins' linguistic interdependence theory

Cummins' Linguistic Interdependence Theory further explains the relationship between first-language competence and second-

language development. According to [Cummins \(2008\)](#), skills acquired in one language can transfer positively to another language. This theory opposes the misconception that indigenous languages hinder English acquisition. Instead, it argues that strong first-language development supports literacy growth in additional languages. The implication for this study is that allowing learners to use indigenous languages during creative writing activities may strengthen rather than weaken English writing proficiency.

2.6. EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Several studies have examined translanguaging and multilingual pedagogy across different educational contexts. [Kiramba and Oloo \(2019\)](#) investigated multilingual classroom interaction in Kenya and found that learners demonstrated improved participation and comprehension when allowed to use multiple linguistic resources. The study concluded that multilingual pedagogies create more inclusive learning environments. [Ojong \(2022\)](#) examined translanguaging pedagogy in Cameroon and reported that learners developed greater confidence and engagement in English language learning when indigenous languages were incorporated into classroom interaction. [Madaki \(2024\)](#), in a Nigerian-focused study on multilingual minority students, found that translanguaging spaces enabled learners to negotiate meaning more effectively and participate actively in academic discussions. The study stressed the importance of recognizing learners' linguistic identities in educational settings. [Karki et al. \(2026\)](#) explored translanguaging and multimodal composition among multilingual learners and concluded that multilingual writing practices promote epistemic inclusion, creativity, and learner agency.

In the same vein, [Nawaz \(2026\)](#) investigated multilingual repertoires in ESL writing classrooms and found that learners who used multilingual resources produced more elaborate and expressive written texts than those restricted to monolingual instruction. [Yang et al. \(2026\)](#) examined multilingual academic writing and discovered that learners' ability to mobilize linguistic and cultural resources significantly influenced writer agency, confidence, and textual originality. Despite these contributions, most existing studies focus broadly on language learning, classroom participation, or academic writing. Very few studies specifically examine creative writing among slow learners in multilingual Nigerian classrooms. Furthermore, limited research investigates how translanguaging influences thematic depth, originality, and writer agency in Nigerian educational contexts.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section discusses the research design, population of the study, sample and sampling techniques, instruments for data collection, validity and reliability of the instruments, procedure for data collection, method of data analysis, and ethical considerations that guided the study.

3.1. RESEARCH DESIGN

The study adopted a quasi-experimental mixed-methods research design involving both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The quantitative component enabled the researcher to determine whether trans-lingual scaffolding significantly improved creative writing performance among slow learners, while the qualitative component provided deeper insight into learners' classroom ex-

periences, writing confidence, participation, and multilingual meaning-making processes. Specifically, the study employed a pretest–posttest non-equivalent control group design. Two groups participated in the study. Learners in the experimental group were exposed to trans-lingual scaffolding strategies during creative writing instruction, whereas learners in the control group received conventional English-only instruction. The choice of the quasi-experimental design was informed by the nature of school settings, where complete randomization of learners was impracticable. Existing classroom structures had already been established by the schools, and disrupting such arrangements could have interfered with academic activities. Creswell and Creswell (2023) observed that quasi-experimental designs are particularly suitable for educational research conducted within natural classroom environments where intact groups must be maintained. The mixed-methods approach was considered appropriate because creative writing development could not be fully explained through numerical scores alone. Learners' participation, confidence, writer agency, and interaction with multilingual resources required interpretive analysis in addition to statistical measurement. The integration of both approaches therefore strengthened the credibility and depth of the study.

3.2. POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The population of the study comprised one thousand (1,000) upper primary and junior secondary school learners drawn from multilingual public schools located in Lagos, Port Harcourt, and Kano. These locations were selected because they represent linguistically diverse urban centers in Nigeria where learners interact regularly through English, indigenous languages, and Nigerian Pidgin. The population specifically consisted of learners identified as slow learners or low-proficiency writers in English language classrooms. The choice of these cities was informed by their multicultural and multilingual characteristics, which provided a suitable context for investigating trans-lingual scaffolding and creative writing among multilingual learners.

3.3. SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

A sample size of six hundred (600) learners was selected from the total population of one thousand (1,000) learners for the study. The sample was selected using a multistage sampling procedure involving purposive sampling, stratified sampling, and simple random sampling techniques. At the first stage, purposive sampling was used to select multilingual public schools from Lagos, Port Harcourt, and Kano. The purposive technique was considered appropriate because the researcher specifically required schools characterized by linguistic diversity and multilingual interaction among learners. At the second stage, stratified sampling was employed to categorize learners according to location, class level, and identified writing proficiency. This ensured adequate representation of learners from the three selected cities and minimized sampling bias. Thereafter, simple random sampling was used to select the actual participants from the identified strata. This gave all eligible learners equal opportunity to be selected for the study and enhanced fairness in participant selection.

The selected sample of six hundred (600) learners was thereafter divided into three hundred (300) learners in the experimental group and three hundred (300) learners in the control group. Ta-

ble 1 shows the states and samples.

The sample size was considered appropriate because it provided sufficient data for statistical analysis while ensuring broad representation of multilingual learners across the selected locations.

3.4. INSTRUMENTS FOR DATA COLLECTION

Several instruments were used for data collection in order to capture the different dimensions of creative writing development and multilingual classroom interaction. The major quantitative instrument used for the study was the Creative Writing Achievement Test (CWAT). The test consisted of narrative and descriptive essay prompts designed to assess learners' creative writing abilities before and after the intervention. Learners' essays were assessed using rating criteria focusing on thematic depth, originality, organization, coherence, vocabulary use, creativity, and grammatical expression. The Creative Writing Achievement Test was considered appropriate because the study specifically sought to measure changes in learners' writing performance. The use of essay writing tasks provided direct evidence of learners' ability to organize ideas creatively and express thoughts meaningfully. A Classroom Observation Checklist was also used during the intervention process. The checklist enabled the researcher to observe learner participation, collaborative interaction, multilingual negotiation practices, teachers' scaffolding behaviors, and learners' confidence during classroom activities. Observation was necessary because many aspects of multilingual interaction and learner engagement could not be fully captured through tests alone.

In addition, a Learners' Attitude Questionnaire was administered to gather information regarding learners' perceptions of multilingual writing practices. The questionnaire contained Likert-scale items examining learners' confidence, writing anxiety, classroom participation, and attitudes toward the use of indigenous languages during creative writing activities. Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were also conducted with selected learners and teachers after the intervention process. These qualitative instruments enabled participants to explain their experiences, perceptions, and classroom challenges in greater detail. The interviews further provided insight into issues relating to learner voice, writer agency, and the emotional dimensions of multilingual writing instruction.

3.5. VALIDITY OF INSTRUMENTS

The instruments used for the study were subjected to face and content validation by experts in Language Education, Applied Linguistics, Curriculum Studies, and Educational Measurement and Evaluation. The validators examined the instruments for clarity, relevance, comprehensiveness, language appropriateness, and alignment with the objectives of the study. Their comments and suggestions guided necessary corrections and modifications before the final administration of the instruments.

3.6. RELIABILITY OF INSTRUMENTS

In order to ensure reliability, a pilot study was conducted using learners outside the main study sample but possessing characteristics similar to those of the participants selected for the study. The reliability of the questionnaire was determined using Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient. A reliability coefficient of 0.70 and

Table 1. States and samples.

State	No. of Schools	Experimental Sample	Control Sample
Lagos	5	100	100
Port Harcourt	5	100	100
Kano	5	100	100
Total	15	300	300

Source: Fieldwork, 2026.

above was considered acceptable for the study. Furthermore, inter-rater reliability procedures were employed during essay scoring. Multiple assessors independently scored selected essays using the same scoring rubric, after which their scores were compared to ensure consistency and fairness in evaluation. The reliability procedures adopted for the study enhanced the consistency and dependability of the research instruments.

3.7. PROCEDURE FOR DATA COLLECTION

Data collection was conducted in three major phases: the pre-intervention phase, the intervention phase, and the post-intervention phase. During the pre-intervention phase, approval was obtained from school authorities before the commencement of the study. Participants were informed about the purpose of the research, and pretest creative writing tasks were administered to both experimental and control groups in order to establish baseline writing performance. Information regarding learners' linguistic backgrounds was also collected during this stage. Teachers participating in the experimental group subsequently received orientation on trans-lingual scaffolding strategies and multilingual classroom practices. The intervention phase lasted between six and eight weeks. Learners in the experimental group were exposed to trans-lingual scaffolding strategies during creative writing instruction. During brainstorming activities, learners generated ideas using indigenous languages or Nigerian Pidgin before gradually translating such ideas into English.

Oral storytelling activities, collaborative writing tasks, peer interaction, vocabulary bridging, and scaffolded drafting formed part of the instructional process. Learners discussed story ideas with peers in familiar languages before developing formal written compositions in English. Teachers guided learners in refining their drafts gradually while focusing initially on meaning and creativity before addressing grammatical accuracy. The instructional process reduced writing anxiety and enabled learners to participate more confidently during classroom writing activities. Learners in the control group, however, received conventional English-only writing instruction characterized by teacher-centered explanation, grammar-focused correction, and individual writing exercises. Indigenous languages and multilingual interaction were largely excluded from the writing process in the control classrooms. At the end of the intervention process, posttest creative writing tasks were administered to both groups. Questionnaires, interviews, classroom observations, and focus group discussions were also conducted during the post-intervention stage.

3.8. METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed in analyzing the data collected for the study. Quantitative data obtained from the Creative Writing Achievement Test and learners' ques-

tionnaires were analyzed using mean and standard deviation in order to describe learners' performance and attitude patterns. Inferential statistical tools such as paired-sample t-test and Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) were further used to determine significant differences between the experimental and control groups. The use of ANCOVA was considered appropriate because it controlled for possible differences in learners' pretest scores, thereby ensuring more accurate interpretation of treatment effects. All hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance.

Qualitative data obtained from interviews, classroom observations, focus group discussions, and learners' writing samples were analyzed thematically. The thematic analysis focused on issues relating to learner voice, multilingual negotiation practices, classroom participation, writer agency, confidence development, and creative expression. Narrative excerpts from learners' essays and interview responses were also used to illustrate emerging themes identified during analysis. The integration of quantitative and qualitative analysis provided a richer and more comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of trans-lingual scaffolding in multilingual writing classrooms.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Data collected through the Creative Writing Achievement Test (CWAT), learners' questionnaires, classroom observations, interviews, focus group discussions, and learners' writing samples were analyzed and interpreted in line with the research questions and hypotheses formulated for the study.

4.1. RESEARCH QUESTION ONE AND HYPOTHESIS ONE

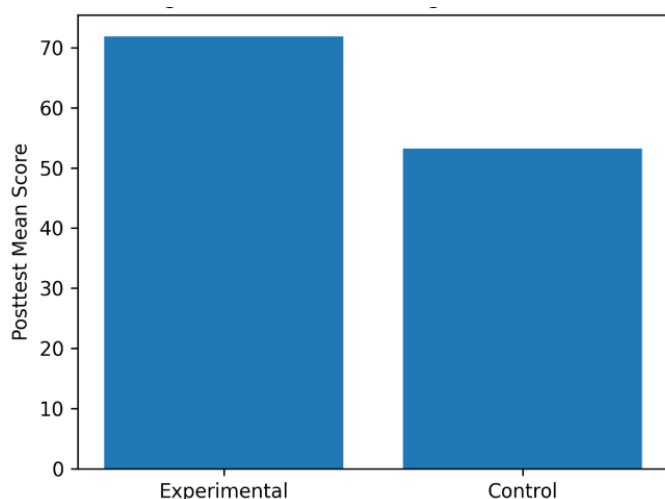
Research question one sought to determine the effect of trans-lingual scaffolding on the creative writing achievement of slow learners in multilingual Nigerian classrooms, while hypothesis one stated that there was no significant difference in the creative writing achievement of learners exposed to trans-lingual scaffolding and those taught using conventional English-only methods. Table 2 presents the mean, standard deviation, and ANCOVA analysis of learners' creative writing achievement.

The result presented in Table 2 revealed that learners exposed to trans-lingual scaffolding obtained a higher posttest mean score of 71.84 compared to 53.22 obtained by learners taught using conventional English-only instruction. The experimental group also recorded a higher mean gain score of 29.68, while the control group recorded a mean gain score of 11.48. The finding indicated that learners who participated in multilingual instructional activities demonstrated greater improvement in creative writing achievement than learners taught through conventional English-only methods. Furthermore, the ANCOVA result revealed a significance value of .001, which was lower than the 0.05 level of significance. Consequently, the null hypothesis, which states that

Table 2. Mean, standard deviation, and ANCOVA analysis of learners' creative writing achievement.

Group	N	Pretest M	Posttest M	Mean Gain	ANCOVA ($F = 24.637, df = 1, 597, p < .001$)	Sig.
Experimental	300	42.16	71.84	29.68	24.637	.001
Control	300	41.74	53.22	11.48	—	—

Source: Fieldwork, 2026.

**Figure 1. Creative writing achievement.**

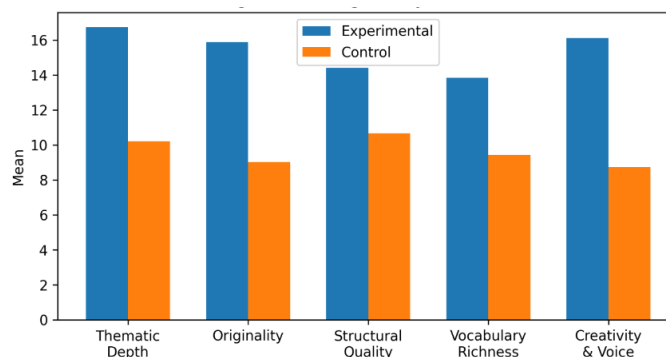
there is no significant difference in the creative writing achievement of learners exposed to trans-lingual scaffolding and those taught using conventional English-only methods, was rejected. This implied that there was a statistically significant difference in the creative writing achievement of learners exposed to trans-lingual scaffolding and those taught using conventional methods. Figure 1 illustrates the result.

Figure 1 shows the performance of the experimental and control groups. The finding suggested that allowing learners to brainstorm, negotiate meaning, and organize ideas through indigenous languages and Nigerian Pidgin reduced writing anxiety and enhanced creative expression in English.

4.2. RESEARCH QUESTION TWO AND HYPOTHESIS TWO

Research question two examined how trans-lingual scaffolding influenced thematic depth, originality, and structural quality in learners' creative writing, while hypothesis two stated that trans-lingual scaffolding had no significant influence on learners' thematic depth, originality, and structural quality in creative writing. Table 3 presents the mean scores and t-test analysis of writing quality indicators.

The findings presented in Table 3 revealed that learners exposed to trans-lingual scaffolding performed better across all indicators of writing quality than learners taught using conventional English-only instruction. The experimental group recorded higher mean scores in thematic depth, originality, structural quality, vocabulary richness, and creativity. This finding suggested that multilingual instructional support enabled learners to develop richer ideas, organize narratives more effectively, and express themselves more confidently during writing activities. The t-test analysis further revealed statistically significant differences across all writing

**Figure 2. Writing quality indicators performance between the experimental and control groups.**

quality indicators since all significance values were lower than the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. The finding implied that trans-lingual scaffolding significantly improved the quality of learners' creative writing. Figure 2 shows the performance of the experimental and control groups on the writing quality indicators.

The improvement observed among learners in the experimental group may have resulted from their ability to draw from indigenous oral traditions, cultural experiences, and familiar linguistic expressions during idea generation and draft development.

4.3. RESEARCH QUESTION THREE AND HYPOTHESIS THREE

Research question three investigated learners' attitudes toward the use of multiple languages during the creative writing process, while hypothesis three stated that there was no significant relationship between learners' attitudes toward multilingual writing practices and their creative writing achievement. Table 4 presents the mean scores and correlation analysis of learners' attitudes toward trans-lingual scaffolding.

The findings revealed that learners demonstrated positive attitudes toward trans-lingual scaffolding and multilingual writing practices. All questionnaire items recorded mean scores above the decision mean of 2.50, indicating general agreement among learners. The learners reported that multilingual instructional practices improved their confidence, reduced writing anxiety, enhanced classroom participation, and enabled them to express ideas more effectively during writing activities. Furthermore, the correlation analysis revealed a strong positive relationship between learners' attitudes toward multilingual writing practices and their creative writing achievement ($r = .78$). Since the significance value (.001) was lower than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. Figure 3 illustrates the results.

The finding implied that positive learner attitudes toward multilingual instructional practices contributed significantly to improved writing performance and classroom engagement.

Table 3. Mean scores and t-test analysis of writing quality indicators.

Writing Indicator	Experimental Group Mean	Control Group Mean	t-value	Sig.
Thematic depth	16.74	10.21	7.36	.001
Originality	15.88	9.03	7.92	.001
Structural quality	14.42	10.66	5.81	.001
Vocabulary richness	13.84	9.42	5.24	.002
Creativity and voice	16.11	8.74	8.16	.001

Source: Fieldwork, 2026.

Table 4. Mean Scores and Correlation Analysis of Learners' Attitudes toward Trans-Lingual Scaffolding

Questionnaire Item	Mean Score
I felt more confident when allowed to use my indigenous language during brainstorming.	3.71
Using multiple languages helped me express my ideas better.	3.82
I enjoyed creative writing more during multilingual activities.	3.68
Translanguaging reduced my fear of making mistakes.	3.57
I participated more actively during multilingual writing lessons.	3.76
Correlation Analysis	
Variables	r-value / Sig.
Learners' attitude and writing achievement	.78 / .001

Source: Fieldwork, 2026.

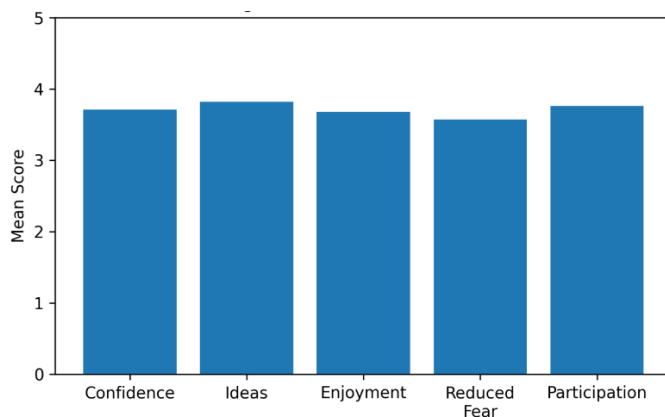


Figure 3. Learners' attitudes toward trans-lingual scaffolding.

4.4. QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Qualitative data obtained from interviews, classroom observations, focus group discussions, and learners' writing samples further provided deeper insight into the effectiveness of trans-lingual scaffolding in multilingual writing classrooms. The thematic analysis revealed several important themes.

4.4.1. Increased classroom participation

Classroom observations revealed that learners in the experimental group participated more actively during creative writing activities than learners in the control group. Many learners who rarely contributed during English-only instruction became more actively involved when allowed to discuss ideas using indigenous languages and Nigerian Pidgin. One learner from Lagos remarked: "When I explained my ideas first in Yoruba, writing in English became easier for me." Another learner from Kano stated: "I was no longer afraid because I could discuss my story with my classmates before writing." The findings suggested that multilingual instructional support reduced classroom anxiety and encouraged collaborative participation among slow learners.

4.4.2. Improvement in writer confidence and agency

Interview responses further revealed that learners developed stronger confidence and ownership of their writing during the intervention process. Many learners explained that multilingual brainstorming enabled them to communicate personal experiences and cultural stories more effectively. One participant from Port Harcourt stated: "Before now, I usually copied ideas from others because I did not know how to begin writing. But now I could think in my language first." Another learner from Lagos observed: "I enjoyed writing because I could explain stories from my community properly." The findings indicated that trans-lingual scaffolding strengthened learners' writer agency and expressive confidence.

4.4.3. Increased cultural and linguistic creativity

Analysis of learners' essays revealed increased use of culturally relevant examples, indigenous idioms, descriptive narration, and emotionally engaging storytelling among learners exposed to trans-lingual scaffolding. Some learners initially drafted ideas using Nigerian Pidgin or indigenous expressions before refining them into English narratives. This process appeared to support originality and thematic richness in writing. The findings demonstrated that multilingual instructional practices enabled learners to connect classroom writing with familiar cultural experiences and oral traditions.

4.5. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of the study revealed that trans-lingual scaffolding significantly improved creative writing achievement among slow learners in multilingual Nigerian classrooms. Learners exposed to multilingual instructional support demonstrated higher achievement scores, stronger thematic development, greater originality, improved narrative organization, and increased writer confidence compared to learners taught using conventional English-only instruction. The findings supported [García and Wei \(2014\)](#) Translanguaging Theory, which argues that multilingual learners possess integrated linguistic repertoires rather than isolated language systems. The flexibility to move between languages during brain-

storming and draft development appeared to strengthen learners' cognitive processing and meaning-making abilities.

The findings also aligned with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which emphasizes the role of scaffolded interaction and collaborative learning in cognitive development. Through multilingual classroom interaction, learners negotiated ideas more effectively and gradually developed confidence in formal English writing. Furthermore, the findings corroborated Kiramba and Oloo (2019), who argued that multilingual learners possess untapped communicative resources frequently ignored in conventional classrooms. Similarly, the findings agreed with Karki *et al.* (2026), Nawaz (2026), and Yang *et al.* (2026), who reported that multilingual writing practices improve learner participation, creativity, expressive freedom, and writer agency. The study additionally demonstrated that rigid English-only instructional approaches may suppress learner voice and creativity among slow learners. By contrast, trans-lingual scaffolding created a more inclusive classroom environment where learners could use familiar linguistic resources in constructing meaning. The findings therefore suggested that multilingual pedagogical approaches provide more equitable and culturally responsive pathways for literacy development in Nigerian classrooms.

5. CONCLUSION

This study examined the effect of trans-lingual scaffolding on creative writing among slow learners in multilingual Nigerian classrooms. The purpose of the study was to determine whether allowing learners to use multiple languages, including indigenous languages and Nigerian Pidgin, during brainstorming and writing activities would improve their creative writing achievement compared to the conventional English-only method. Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that trans-lingual scaffolding is an effective instructional strategy for improving creative writing among slow learners in multilingual Nigerian classrooms. The study established that learners who were exposed to multilingual instructional support demonstrated significantly higher creative writing achievement than those taught using conventional English-only methods. Their improvement was evident in both quantitative and qualitative measures, including higher posttest scores, greater mean gains, and enhanced writing quality.

The findings also revealed that trans-lingual scaffolding significantly improved learners' writing quality in terms of thematic depth, originality, vocabulary use, structural organization, and creativity. Learners were able to develop richer ideas and express themselves more confidently when allowed to draw from their full linguistic repertoire. Furthermore, the study showed that learners developed more positive attitudes toward creative writing when multilingual support was introduced. They reported reduced anxiety, increased confidence, and higher classroom participation. A strong positive relationship was also found between learners' attitudes and their writing achievement, indicating that emotional and motivational factors played an important role in learning outcomes.

5.1. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Schools should adopt trans-lingual scaffolding strategies in

teaching creative writing and other language-based subjects.

2. Teachers should encourage learners to use indigenous languages and Nigerian Pidgin during brainstorming and idea-development stages.
3. Regular professional development programs should be organized to train teachers on multilingual instructional strategies.
4. Curriculum planners should incorporate translanguaging principles into English Language syllabuses.
5. Schools should provide culturally relevant instructional materials that support learners' linguistic backgrounds.

5.2. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was limited in several ways. It was conducted only in selected schools within three Nigerian cities, which may limit the generalization of the findings to other local regions. The study also focused solely on creative writing among slow learners, excluding other aspects of language such as reading, listening, and speaking. Additionally, differences in teacher experience and classroom conditions may have influenced learners' performance to some extent.

5.3. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical principles were strictly observed throughout the study. Approval was obtained from relevant school authorities before data collection commenced. Participants were adequately informed about the purpose of the study, and participation remained voluntary throughout the research process. Confidentiality of participants' information was maintained, and learners were assured that the study was conducted strictly for academic purposes. Participants were also informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any stage without penalty. These ethical measures ensured the protection of participants' dignity, welfare, and academic interests throughout the study.

DATA AVAILABILITY

The datasets generated and analyzed during the current study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTEREST

The authors declare that there are no financial interests, commercial affiliations, or other potential conflicts of interest that could have influenced the objectivity of this research or the writing of this paper.

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