

**EFFECT OF THE USE OF PUNCTUATION MARKS ON THE ESSAY
PERFORMANCE OF SS2 STUDENTS IN SELECTED SCHOOLS IN KANO STATE**

BY

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**BEING A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE TESL SECTION, DEPARTMENT OF ARTS
AND SOCIAL SCIENCE, FACULTY OF EDUCATION, AHMADU BELLO
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ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (TESL)**

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DECLARATION

I declare that this study on “Effect Of The Use Of Punctuation Marks On The Assay Performance of Kano State SS2Students is my original research work. It has not been presented anywhere for the award of higher degree in any form. All sources and quotations have been acknowledged through references.

Signature

Date

CERTIFICATION

This research study Effect Of The Use Of Punctuation Marks On The Assay Performance of Kano State SS 2 Students by KABIRU SANI, has been read and approved as having met the requirements for the award of Master's Degree in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL).

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DEDICATION

This research study is dedicated to my beloved parents for their care, moral and financial support in my education and other aspects of life in general.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Allah (S.W.T) the creator and the owner of the earth and the universe and everything contained in them is the first to be thanked.

My profound appreciation and thanks go to my outstanding supervisor, Dr. (Mrs) RamlatuJibir-Daura who devoted her time despite her tight schedule and commitments for reading the work, pinpointing wrong and suggesting correction which culminated into makingthis research study a success. May Allah (S.W.T) continue to help her in all her undertakings, Amen.

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Abstract

Writing is a very important aspect of English language development. The importance of this skill makes it a determining factor in the academic and the social life of the students. The incessant complaints of teachers and other stakeholders of the inability of the students to express themselves in writing nowadays was the impetus that propelled this research work. This research was an attempt to explore the impacts of the effect of the use of punctuation marks on the written performance of SS2 students in Kano State. The schools selected were Rumfa college and Government Senior Secondary School Gwammaja. The population was one thousand (1000) while the sample was one hundred (100). The instruments were teacher constructed objective test and an un-punctuated passage to be punctuated. The variables tested were the fullstop, comma, colon and semi-colon. The choice of these variables was based on the belief that it was hardly if not impossible for one to write appropriately in English or understand the same without properly applying these punctuation marks. The subjects of this research study were randomly selected. The data for the research were mainly collected from the tests given to the students. T-test and ANOVAs were used to analyze the data collected in testing of the four hypotheses formulated. The hypotheses were formulated to investigate the effect of the said variables on the essay performance of the subjects. The finding indicated that there was significant effect of the variables on essay performance of the subjects, as T calculated was greater than T critical. Practice based approach be used, effective teaching strategies be applied to remedy the problems. NECO and WAEC be setting questions on punctuation marks and stakeholders be accessing new findings via university authorities.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Lack of proper use and application of punctuation marks would be equated to a new car without an effective brake system. That is, the knowledge of the other elements of the language, without the ability to skilfully use the punctuation marks will not enable an individual to write meaningfully and effectively in the language. Certain problems of ambiguity cannot be solved in English but only through the use of punctuation marks.

Linguists such as (Adekunle) have agreed it is hard, if not impossible, for one to write an essay appropriately in English or understand the same without properly applying these punctuation marks. It is unanimously agreed, by linguistics across the world that structure in English is complex because it is composed of many interrelated and interdependent ideas that need to be marked before they would be understood by readers. As such, the need is reinforced for the use and application of punctuation marks, in the process of writing and reading such structures.

Murthy(2007) believes that” punctuation plays an important role in developing writing skills” .Here, it is clear that the use of punctuation marks is necessary in writing an essay meaningfully and getting what is written understood. It could also be understood from the above that ,not even at the secondary school level, but at whatever level one must use punctuation marks in order to write meaningfully and in order to put the text through.

Manser (2006) asserts that “the purpose of punctuation mark is to make clear the meaning of the sentences and text”. This statement shows that to avoid writing meaninglessly, punctuation marks should be used; so that, the meaning of the text could be understood by the reader and subsequently got the text appreciated.

Pryse(1993)submits that “what might be a good writing is so often spoiled by lack or bad punctuation” Here, one can safely say that to avoid spoliation of any writing ,proper use of punctuation marks should be ensured. And, it could also be said that in order to avoid misinterpretation of what one writes one should make sure that, one’s writing is properly punctuated.

The researcher is inspired to take up the study on the effect of use of punctuation marks on the performance of SS2 students in some selected schools in Kano by the statistical data provided by unpublished thesis written by Usman (2012), that evaluated the impact of information technology on the spelling of students, which indicated that 52.8% did not use punctuation at all, while 48% over used it. The researcher is also inspired by the growing tendency in modern usage of omitting some punctuation in the process of writing e.g. when my father said to me i will go to Mecca with you this year I am very happy and never forget that day. (Usman, 2012:45).

- i. Pre-eminent or preeminent
- ii. Non-functional or nonfunctional
- iii. Non-polluant or non Polluant

The above are examples of how the old and Younggénérations of writers affectpunctuationwiththosewithdashwitten by oldgénération and thosewithout by new generationrespectively.

Kirlpatrick (2007) lamented the lack of punctuating writing by younger generation thus :

“Modern writers tend to punctuate much more lightly than their older counter parts and this goes hand in hand with the modern tendency to use less formal language and a plainer style (Kirkpatrick:2007:210)”

The researcher is equally inspired by the variation in the use of punctuation among writers, for some use it heavily while others use it lightly.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

It could be described that learners of English as a second language and the SS2 students of the senior secondary school in Kano state in particular, suffer from lack of knowledge of punctuation marks as tools for presenting their ideas in essay writing during classroom work, test, and their internal and external examinations. Moreover, students find the use of punctuation marks very difficult because of the need for the essay writing to contain interrelated and interdependent sentence structures, which are marked through the use of punctuation marks.

It is for this reason that the study aims at determining the level at which the non-use of punctuation marks affects the performance of students’ in their essay in English. As well as to investigate the students’ essay writing with a specific focus on their ability to manipulate some of the punctuation marks in putting the idea through.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

This study aims at determining the level at which the non-use of punctuation marks affects the performance of students in English language while, specifically, the study has the following objectives:

- i. To find out the effect of the use and non use of punctuation marks on the essay performance of SS2 students in selected schools in Kano.
- ii. To identify the effect of the use and non use of comma on the coherence of the essay performance of SS2 students in selected schools in Kano.
- iii. To assess the effect of the use and non use of full stop on the paragraphing of the essay performance of the SS2 students in selected schools in Kano.
- iv. To evaluate the effect of use and non use of colon and semi colon on the idea packaging of the essay performance of SS2 students in selected schools in Kano.
- v. To give some possible strategies of punctuation use with the hope of enhancing the performance of the students.

1.4 Research Questions

In relation to the research, the following questions are set:

- i. What is the effect of the use and non use of some selected punctuation marks on the essay performance of SS2 students in some selected schools in Kano?
- ii. What is the effect of use and non use of comma on cohesion of the essay performance of SS2 students in some selected schools in Kano?
- iii. What is the effect of the use and non-use of full stop on paragraphing of the essay performance of SS2 students in some selected schools in Kano?

- iv. What is the effect of the use and non-use of Colon or Semicolon on the idea packaging of essay performance of SS2 students in some selected schools in Kano?

1.5 Research Hypotheses

Going by the specific objectives, the following null hypotheses are tested in the research.

A case of misuse of punctuation mark.

- i. There is no significant effect of the use of some selected punctuation marks on the essay performance of SS2 students in some selected schools in Kano.
- ii. There is no significant effect of the use of Comma before and after treatment on the coherence of essay performance of SS2 students in some selected schools in Kano.
- iii. There is no significant difference between the use of fulstop before and after treatment on paragraphing in essay performance of SS2 students in some selected school in Kano.
- iv. There is no significant effect of the use of Colon or Semi-colon before and after treatment on idea packaging in essay performance of SS2 students in some selected schools in Kano.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The research aims at finding out the effect of the use of some selected punctuation marks on the performance of students in essay writing in general. And in particular, the research would benefit the following people.

The teacher who teaches English Essay Writing in Senior Secondary School, by showing the variation among the modern writers and their older counterparts and advising him or her to stick to the basics in view of the level he teaches.

The Students of SS2 who write essays in English by constantly showing them the importance or the effect of the use or non use of punctuation marks in making their essays understandable, and the implication of misusing the punctuation marks.

The curriculum planners who plan English curriculum as well as textbook writers by showing them the implication of the use of punctuation marks in English.

1.7 Basic Assumption

This research work has the following assumptions;

A case of misuse of punctuation: the use of punctuation marks helps in conveying and understanding of the meaning of the written texts in English.

1.8 Scope and Limitation

The fact that punctuation marks have something to do with both written and spoken aspects of English Language, the study is delimited to the written aspect of the language. Also, in relation to the population it is delimited to SS2 students in senior secondary schools in Kano State, thus ,it does not involve the other SS classes.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

Under this chapter the researcher; discussed an overview of punctuation marks such as The concepts and uses of punctuation marks .

.2.2 Concepts of punctuation marks in Essay Writing

Ataman (2002:76) states that “punctuation marks aid clarity and understanding of written communication. This is the art of indicating pauses and stopping points in writing. When we talk, we always pause to breathe or rest, and when we finish, we stop. This is what punctuation marks do in writing. If for example, a paragraph or sentence is written without these pauses or they are wrongly placed, reading it will be very difficult”. This means, for effective spoken or written communication, punctuation mark should be used accordingly. Misusing them by students will result to poor performance in written English.

Punctuation marks could be classified into two main types namely; terminal markers (fullstop, question mark, exclamation mark) which indicate end of sentence or utterance and the internal markers (comma, colon, semi-colon) denote the interruption of thought in a sentence.

Ataman (2002:76) itemized different types of punctuation marks which include: fullstop or period (.), the question or interrogative mark (?), the exclamation mark (!), the comma (,), the semi colon (;), the colon (:), the apostrophe (’), the interred comma (-), the dash, the bracket (()).

The full stop or period

A lady answered my question.

The question mark

Did you miss the test?

The exclamation mark.

Yes, you!

The Comma

The accident occurred yesterday, Monday, June 9, 2001.

The semi – colon.

I invited John, Yusif, Abdul and Isa to the concert; but Bola Chukwa and Asobie also followed us.

The Colon.

The lecturer asked her: “Are you with us?”

The apostrophe

'96, won't, her's.

The interred comma

'come, let us reason together', They said.

The dash

Mary – for all I know – never loved Okon.

The Bracket

Soccer (my favourite game) is the most popular game all over the world.

The full stop or period (.); the fullstop is used to mark the end of a declarative sentence, an imperative sentence or an indirect quotation as shown below:

- i) A lady answered my question (dec)
- ii) Answer my question lady (imperative)
- iii) I asked whether the lady could answer the question (as indirect question).

The above indicates that the misuse or non-use of a full stop would definitely affect the performance of students in essay writing. This is because if he does not use the full stop inappropriately, he would have his sentences running out of control until their meaning is lost.

The full stop is used for shortened forms of words (Gen. Ref. for “general” and reference”). It is also used in triflats to indicate the omission of words within a quoted sentences, and three periods plus a terminal period to indicate omission at the end of a quoted sentence e.g.

When I got home I ate the meal prepared by my daughter.

... I ate the meal ...

These three dots are called ellipsis or omission marks.

The other uses of the fulstop above show that the non-application or misuse of the period would affect the performance of students writing an essay, if they do not use them appropriately they would not be able to abbreviate or ellipse quoted sentences.

The researcher views Atman’s point (2007) on the use of full stop or period as incomplete because he failed to include other uses of full stop in relation to email and website addresses e.g.

- i. Sample, name@metro.ne

- ii. Info @sampleaddress.co.uk

And in website address, such as

www.sample-url.com (Kirkpatric, 2007:181)

In the same vein, the researcher also is dissatisfied with the use of fullstop postulated by Atman (2007) as he has not made mention of the use of fullstop,

- i. At the end of a group of words, which although not a sentence, is complete in itself, such as an address e.g.

Dockyard Road.

Apapa.

- ii. When money is written in figure: N13.45, E2.30 (Namme& Smith, (1981)

In addition, Ahmad, Jowitt, Abdu & Ahmad (1999:45) assert that “punctuation are the main signs other than letters that divide up written language into units of meaning”.

Based on the above statement, it would be understood that the use of punctuation marks affects the performance of an essay writer. This is because, if the writer does not divide up the language into units of meaning, he is likely to develop and present ideas in his essay that may not convey his message to the readers. And if this happens, his performance at writing the essay may be rated poor.

The comma (,) is the most commonly required and used symbol. However, it is also the less understood and so most misused punctuation.

The comma (,) is used

- i. to mark subordinate components of a sentence when such components are not logically necessary to complete the sentence e.g. He came here earlier, looking tired and haggard.
- ii. to enclose appositives in the form of noun or noun-phrases that explain a preceding noun or pronoun: e.g. Mohammad Bashir, the only male child in the family so far, is expected to read medicine.
- iii. to mark noun phrase in direct speech: e.g. Good friend, repeat that good news.
- iv. In dates to separate the name of month or day of month from the year: e.g.
The election of June 12, 1993 plunged Nigeria into crises.
The election of 12 June, 1993 plunged Nigeria into crises.
- v. to mark adjectives or adverbial modifiers e.g.
Musa is a pleasant person, quick witted, always entertaining his friends.
- vi. to separate dependent clause for the purpose of avoiding ambivalence or confusion in meaning:
Ambivalent: While I wrote, the women kept on reading
Better: While I wrote, the woman kept on reading.
- vii. to indicate parenthetical expressions that have no direct grammatical function except to improve general meaning in a sentence: e.g.
The students, on their own part, have not been involved in acts of hooliganism.

viii. for absolute phrases: e.g.

My lesson over, I left the class immediately.

Dinner having been served, we went a head to eat.

ix. for interjections not strong to require an exclamation mark: e.g.

Oh friend, why did you not tell me.

x. for complete enclosure when used in pairs: e.g.

My words, which were addressed to students in the class only, were hash.

(Ahmad et al, 1999)

Other uses of commas

A parenthetical expression must be completely set off from the rest of the sentence. If parenthetical expression occurs at the beginning of a sentence, it is followed by a comma, if the parenthetical expression is at the end of a sentence, it is preceded by a comma and if the parenthetical expression is at the middle of the sentence it is both preceded and followed by a comma. E.g.

i. No, I don't know where they keep their knives

ii. The winner of the contest was Judy, not Jili.

iii. Some seafood, especially swordfish and tilefish, may contain harmful amounts of mercury.

(Choy &Clark(2011).

Though, the explanation on the use of comma seems comprehensive, but still the researcher feels that, Ahmad, Jowitt, Abdu& Ahmad's (1999), study on the use of comma, is incomplete because they have failed to make an inclusion of other uses of comma such as:

- i. After the person addressed at the beginning of a letter
Dear John,
- ii. After the expression which is used immediately before the signature at the end of a letter:
Yours Sincerely,
Frances.
- iii. At the end of lines (apart from the last) in addresses:
St mark's high school,
P.O.B box, 2000,
Ibadan.
- iv. To close a word or words addressed directly to some persons: e.g.
Please, Sir, tell me the answer (Namme and Smith: 1981:166)

Jowitt&Nnamonu (1985) assert that “punctuation means the use of printed signs other than letters namely: full stops, colon, semi-colon, commas, inverted commas, apostrophes, question and exclamation marks, hyphens, dashes and brackets. They are essential for dividing up written language into units that convey meaning. The wrong use of them, or failure to use them, will easily lead to misunderstanding”.

Namme& Smith (1981:165) view “punctuation isa device used by a writer to help his readers understand the meaning of his words, by conveying in print or writing, the tones, inflexions and pauses of spoken words, punctuation marks are signposts that should help the readers to find his way over the printed or written page” e.g.

- i. When the thief shot, Ashlayjames called the police.
- ii. When the thief shot Ashlay, James called the police.

In view of the afore-mentioned statement and the examples cited above, it is understandable that the performance of students in essay writing would be affected by the use of punctuation marks. This is because, if we look at the two sentences quoted, we would find that they have the same wordings but different meanings as a result of the placement of the punctuation marks, for the first sentence shows that the thief shot only and subsequently Ashlay James called the police. While sentence two shows that the thief shot Ashlay and subsequently, James called the police.

So, based on these wordings but different meanings, we can see the effect of the use of punctuation marks on the performance of a writer in general and students in essay writing in particular. This is because, if the comma is misused or used wrongly the writer could not have helped his reader understand the meaning of either of the sentences.

According to Namme& Smith (1981) the semicolon (;) is used

- i) To separate items in a list when the items have several words and often need the use of commas within themselves as in;

“You should remember these things when you go camping; check that all your gear is in order; see that you are equipped for emergencies: if you are trekking over uninhabited country, take a good supply of food; take a first aid kit-you never know when it might be needed and as far as possible, plan your route”.

- ii) To indicate that the writer wants the reader to pause and consider for a slightly longer time than he would for a comma. e.g.

“It is often better to tackle the difficult question rather than the easy one; because the difficult question is likely to draw the best out of you”.

iii) To divide a sentence which consists of two balanced statements: e.g.

- I. A man who evades paying his taxes is a bad citizen; but one who pays without thinking why he is paying is equally bad.

The researcher feels dissatisfied with the postulation given on the use of semi-colon as incomplete having not included, the use of semi-colon as a separation device before certain adverbs e.g. however; nevertheless; hence; moreover etc.

A paragraph is a division in writing set off by an indentation of the first sentence as a sign for the reader of what constitutes a unit of thought (Brooks & Warren, 1949 cited in Kamal, 2001).

Paragraphing affects the performance of students in essay writing, because when writing an essay each idea is expected to be developed into a comprehensive paragraph, the idea would be understood as an entity before it merges to form the overall meaning of the essay. For this reason, if paragraphing is misused or used wrongly, the essay will be distorted, and the performance of writer negatively affected.

Patience, Cythia, Joy& Muhammad (1997) asserts that “punctuation involves the use of signs or marks to divide writing in sentences, clauses, phrases or into minimum unit of meaning in order to convey ideas or information clearly and accurately”. E.g.

- I. The ugly man, standing outside, who stammers is our teacher.

- II. In order to secure a seat, he arrived early at the stadium.
- III. We bought the book which he recommended, because it is well written.

(Ogunsanwo, Duruaku, Ezechukwao&Nwachukwa 1990)

- I. Still water must be transported to dry areas.

The effect of the use of punctuation could be seen in this sentence because without a comma after still the water could not be transported to the dry areas. This is because still water means water that does not move.

- II. Politicians sometimes make controversial remarks bureaucrats never

This sentence also shows the effect of punctuation because without a comma after bureaucrats the sentence is meaningless.

- III. Those who can pay and forgo consumption of other essential goods

This sentence also clearly shows the effect of punctuation. This is because without the placement of a comma after can the sentence is confusing.

- iv. Its motor is small and its a small motor

Lack of punctuation here shows meaninglessness of the two sentences This is because without an apostrophe after s in its to show possession the sentence is meaningless while without an apostrophe before s in its in second sentence the subject is not properly used.

The above description of punctuation and the sentences cited clearly show how the effect of the use of punctuation marks affects the performance of a writer, particularly an essay writer. This is because unless the sentences are punctuated, their meaning would not have been brought to the surface for the reader to understand. And being

the components of an essay, the misunderstanding of the meaning would eventually affect the understanding of the essay written by an essay writer.

The Question Mark (?)

The question mark is used after direct (but not after an indirect question) e.g.

The question mark is used:

i. After direct question

Who started the rumor? (direct question)

She asked who had started the rumor (Indirect question)

ii. after direct question within a direct question followed by one question mark inside the quotation mark. E.g.

Pilate asked, “What is Truth?”

iii. after a series of quotations having the same subject and verb may be treated as elliptical: that is, only the first item includes both subject and verb. E.g.

Did they clean the attic? The basement?The whole house?

iv. within parenthesis used to express the writer’s uncertainty about the correctness of the proceeding word, figure, or date:

Chaucer was born in 1340? And died in 1400.

(Hodges, Whitten & Horner 1990:167).

Murthy (2007:318) asserts “punctuation plays an important role in developing writing skills. It is very often proved that punctuation may alter the meaning of a sentence” e.g.

I. “The principal”, says the student, should be expelled from the college.

II. The principal says that the student should be expelled from the college.

The explanation that, the punctuation may alter the meaning of a sentence indicates how lack of punctuation marks could also alter the meaning of an essay. It also shows how the effect of the use of punctuation marks affects the performance of an essay writer, for, if he does not carefully and appropriately use the punctuation marks, he may end up writing an essay that does not convey any message, which would eventually affect his general performance.

To buttress this point, one should study the above two sentences and see how the use of punctuation marks changes the meaning of the two sentences even though, they have the same wording.

The first sentence shows that it is the student who suggested the principal should be expelled, while the second sentence indicates that it is the principal who suggested the student should be expelled.

The Capital Letter

Capital letters are used in the following cases:

at the beginning of a sentence e.g.

Prevention is better than cure.

Necessity is the mother of invention.

at the beginning of each line in poetry e.g.

My days among the dead are past

When I am dead, my dearest,

Sing no sad song for me;

Sunset and evening star,

And one clear call for me.

at the beginning of name of people, places, mountains, rivers e.g.

Azikiwe, Abuja, River Niger, The Himalayas etc.

formation and adjective indicating nationality.

Nigeria, Nigerian, America, American, Canada, Canadian.

at the beginning of names of days, months, festivals and historical eras. e.g.

Monday, New Yam Festival, the Middle Ages, November, the Independent Day etc.

at the beginning of names of books, plays and works of art. e.g.

The Qur'an, The Bible, the Dictionary, King Lear, The Tempest etc.

for titles of people and names of things when we refer to unique examples e.g.

The king of England, The President of Nigeria, The Emperor of China, The Golden Fleece.

for all adjectives derived from proper nouns, e.g.

Muslim, Christian, Himalayan, Nigerian, Herculean.

for all nouns and proper nouns standing for God.

The Lord. The pronoun 'I' and the interjection 'O'

(Murthy: 2007)

Pryse (1993:57) views "So much of what might otherwise be good writing is so often spoiled by lack of or bad punctuation" e.g.

When an adverb occurs between two verbs with which it should be meaningfully associated, in the absence of correct punctuation, the following type of ambiguous statements will result e.g.

Those who returned safely travelled to their village.

Here we do not know what was done safely the returning or the travelling to the village, which is largely due to the effect of non use of correct punctuation mark. But, if the correct punctuation marks are used, the meaning of the sentence and what was done safely could be established, thus we have.

- i. Those who returned, safely travelled to their village.
- ii. Those who returned safely, travelled to their village.

The effect of punctuation could be seen in the following pair of sentences that is, if comma is placed after returned then it indicates that it is travelling that is done safely While if the comma is placed after safely. it indicates that, it is the returning that is done safely.

Another example is, .

- i. People who shout, loudly complain of headaches.
- ii. People who shout loudly, complain of headaches.

In the second pair of sentences ,the effect of punctuation could also be seen for, if the comma is put after shout then it is the complaint of a headache that is made loudly. However if a comma is placed after loudly then it is the shouting that is done loudly.

This is also the same as the first example, that it would only be understood what was done loudly through the effect of the use of punctuation mark

Based on the description of what punctuation is capable of doing and the ambiguity of the sentences when written without any punctuation, one can safely conclude that the effect of the use of punctuation mark, could seriously affect the performance of an essay writer. This is because if in writing sentences, one could come up with such a level of ambiguity, due to lack of punctuation marks what more of when writing a whole essay.

The Colon (:)

A colon is used

- i. when the first part of a sentence is complete in sense, though followed by another remark arising from it and depending on it for sense, but not in construction e.g.

Try to be honest at all times: nothing is so important in business life.

- ii. for introducing a saying, speech, example, question and so on, e.g.

We all know the famous quotation from Shakespear:

“All the world’s stage”.

(Pryse, 1993)

The researcher feels the use of colon as postulated by the writer is incomplete having not included other uses of the punctuation mark, such as using it for two independent ideas contained in an utterance, the second of which is an explanation or a restatement of the first and the use of colon in numerals such as 7:30, 22:11:72 and a ratio 7:3.

Adekunle (1987:129) says “these punctuation marks help us know the various ideas contained in an utterance so that we may not confuse one with any other in context. They make it easy for us to see the correct relationship – among the words and expressions which make up an utterance”.

The statement is suggestive and indicative that; the success or failure of the performance of an essay writer depends largely on the effect of the use of punctuation marks. This is because, it is the ideas contained in an essay and the correct relationship that makes up the totality of the essay. It is also the correlation of the ideas contained in the essay that conveys the message of the passage and makes it sensible and meaningful to the reader. E.g.

- I. A man usually makes a scene if he finds his wife looking at another man; if he doesn't, he usually has a reason of his own for keeping quite.
- II. It was a very good party and we had excellent food, soup, Jollof rice, salad and fried chicken.

Quotation Marks (“ ”)

This punctuation mark is used to set off the exact words of a speaker, specific concept or term, an expression for which the author does not want to take responsibility, and so identify slangs. E.g.

- i. Exact words used

The chairman of the board frowned and said, “cheat the workers? Count me out”.

- ii. Specific concept or term

The word “Stagflation” is the appropriate term for the present economic situation.

iii. Borrowed Expression

The Yorubas in Serra Leone are referred to as “ekus”

iv. Slangs

He was so ill after drinking three bottles of gogoro that he rarely “quenched”

(Adekunle: 1987)

Manser (2006:348) asserts “the purpose of punctuation is to make clear the meaning of sentences and texts. This is achieved by controlling the shape of sentences, through the use of periods, commas, semicolons, and so on, thereby breaking up texts into manageable pieces. Punctuation enables important phrases to be emphasized and connections to be made between clauses and sentences so that they combine to form an intelligible narrative”

e.g.

- i. The foreign ambassador who arrived today said the president is to be trusted.

Without any punctuation beyond the initial capital letter and the final period, this sentence appears to suggest that the foreign ambassador was one of the several ambassadors arriving on different days and that it is he or she who said the president was to be trusted. The same sentence has a different meaning however, when two commas are inserted. E.g.

- i. The foreign ambassador, who arrived today, said the president was to be trusted.

Here, it is clear only one foreign ambassador, who just arrived, is under discussion and as before, that he or she was the person who believed the president was to be trusted. Yet, another interpretation is possible when quotation marks are inserted.

e.g. “The foreign ambassador, who arrived today,” said the president “is to be trusted”.

Here, it is the president who speaks and declares that the foreign ambassador who just arrived is to be trusted.

Note that, with the exception of the punctuation marks all the three examples are identically worded.

So based on the description of what punctuation involves and the changes identified with the sentences wherever a different punctuation mark is used, we can safely say the use of punctuation marks on the performance of an essay writer cannot be over emphasized. This is because, if we look at how phrases, clauses and sentences combine to form an intelligible narrative and how through the effect of the use of punctuation marks the three sentences are made to have different meaning, we can definitely say the above without any fear of contradiction.

Apostrophe (‘)

An apostrophe (‘) denotes possession of something or a possessive relationship with another person (mother’s room, my brother’s house, the book’s cover, my friend’s sister).

In the case of names or singular nouns ending in s, x, or z, the apostrophe may or may not be followed by S. The general rule is that possessive nouns are formed by adding ‘s to a singular noun (the girl’s dog, the people’s choice). In the case of plural nouns that end in S the possessive noun is formed by adding a final apostrophe (a bees’ nest, the soldiers’ barracks; five years’ experience). Apostrophe is used in contraction (can’t, shouldn’t they’re, they’ve). Apostrophes are not generally employed to make singular nouns plural, but there are a very few circumstances in which they may fulfil this function (she cannot pronounce her r’s, this part of cards has no 5’s).

(Manser: 2006)

Pink&Thomes (1970:117) view “in order to assist, the reader to grasp readily the meaning of a written sentence, certain stops or marks of punctuation are inserted to indicate where pauses would naturally be made in reading the sentence”.

The statement quoted above indicates how the performance of an essay writer is affected by the use of punctuation marks. This is because, the aim and objective of any body writing an essay is to make the meaning of his sentences understood by his reader which would eventually culminate to the total understanding of the meaning of the passage.

The inverted commas (“ ”) are used to indicate direct speech

- i. “A strange house is this”, said I to Antonio.

- ii. “Mary” I said solemnly, “you must not laugh at me now”

They are also used to indicate quotation from or the titles, novels, plays, essays etc.

“Blakesmoor in H - Shire”

Dash

i. The Dash (--) is used to mark a parenthesis or an abrupt change of thought e.g.

- i. At last – to cut a long story short – we reach the harbor.
- ii. Proceeding to our next point – but I fear I bore you.
- iii. It is used before repeated word.
- iv. It is also inserted before the demonstrative pronoun these, those, such, when they are used at the beginning of the main statement to sum up a number of items previously mentioned.

(Source: Pink & Thomas 1970)

Alobo (2008) asserts “punctuation is an aspect of the mechanical skill of writing, any write up that is not properly punctuated is a write off”

Any write-up that is not properly punctuated is a write off. This posits the effect of punctuation marks on the essay performance of a writer. This is because, if an essay is not properly punctuated, no matter how well written, it is going to be a write off which would eventually fault the essay in particular and the performance of the writer in general and which would also affect the communication between the writer and the reader.

The round brackets ()

The round bracket is used to mark off a strong parenthesis when the writer feels that a stronger mark than a pair of commas is needed. E.g.

Caeser's ambition (so skilfully denied by Mark Anthony) was feared by Brutus.

The square brackets []

The square is used to indicate that the words enclosed within quoted matter are not part of the original material e.g.

The critical passage is: 'I do not deny that it [the treasure] played a part in my plans. (Alobo, 2008).

Quirt & Green Baum (1973) assert that "punctuation serves two main functions: separation of successive unit, included units and specification of language".

The above assertion shows how the effect of the use of punctuation marks can affect the performance of an essay writer. This is because unless separation of successive units, included units is affected the whole write-up in bound to be distorted, for nobody could make sense out of it. And unless specification of language function is established, there is likely going to be a misinterpretation of sentences, which will definitely affect the general performance of the essay writer e.g.

- i. John has gone already?
- ii. Isn't she beautiful!

Without considering the specification signs, the grammatical form would otherwise suggest that the first is a statement, and the second a question.

Odiaka (1974) posits that punctuation is the correct use of the capital letter, fullstop (.) Comma (,) question mark (?) quotation marks (“”) apostrophe (‘) hyphen (--) and the exclamation mark (!); they make what we read or write much clearer”.

The above postulation indicates the effect of the use of punctuation marks on the performance an essay writer. This is because, it is only when punctuation marks are employed that a writer writes and a reader reads much more clearly.

Though it shows how punctuation marks affect the performance of a writer, the researcher still feels that the postulation is incomplete and incomprehensive, having ignored other punctuation marks which are necessary for making writing much more clearer.

Punctuation is described as the ‘traffic’ of written words, as well as reading which a good writer must employ, and a good reader must obey. Faulty punctuation always slows up reading, and may lead to the misinterpretation of the meaning and consequently a breakdown in communication.

(Burton & Humphries: 1991)

The above assertion clearly shows the effect of the use of punctuation marks on the performance of SS2 students writing an essay. This is because, when an essay is written, it is written to establish an effective communication with a reader, who interprets the essay in line with the writer. But, when the reader misinterprets the meaning of the essay due to lack or bad punctuation, the communication breaks down which eventually affects the performance of the writer.

Kirkpatrick (2007) submits that punctuation is the use of certain established marks or symbols within a piece of written text. Punctuation prevents a piece of text from being just a string of words by breaking up the string of words into meaningful units and by making the text more fluent. Basically, punctuation marks can be seen as symbols which are used to separate and join units of language into cohesive text.

The last sentence of the above statement indicates the effect of the use of punctuation marks on the performance of an essay writer. This is because, it is only when units are separated or joined that a text is made cohesive. And it is only when the text or essay is cohesive, that the message gets to the receiver as correctly and accurately as intended by the writer.

Hyphen

A hyphen, written as a small stroke – is used to join two words together or indicate that a word has been broken at the end of a line because of lack of space. It is used in a variety of situations. A hyphen is used

- i. as the prefixed element in proper noun as: Pre-Christian, post-renaissance, anti-British pro-American etc.
- ii. before dates or numbers, as in: Pre-1914, pre-1066, post-1920, post-1745.
- iii. before abbreviations as pro-BBC, anti-Eu and anti-True.
- iv. Sometime for clarification and to avoid confusion. Some words are ambiguous without the presence of a hyphen e.g. re-cover as in re-cover a chair is spelled with a hyphen to differentiate it from recover, as in the accident victim is likely to recover. Similarly, it is used in re-form,

meaning to form again as in, they have decided to re-form the society which closed last year to differentiate the word from reform meaning to improve, to become better in behavior.

- v. Sometimes the hyphen is used in some compounds formed from phrasal verbs though as a matter of choice. E.g. take-over or takeover run-up or run-up.
- vi. for compound adjectives consisting of two elements, the second of which ends in ed can be formed using a hyphen such as heavy-hearted, fair-haired, fair-minded and long-legged.
- vii. in compound adjectives when they are used before nouns, such as gas-fired, central- heating, oil-based paints, solar-heated building and chocolate – wafted biscuits.

(Kirkpatrick: 2007)

with the prefix ex-in the sense of former as in ex-wife, ex-president.

when self-is prefixed to word such as self-styled self-starter, self-evident.

Some fixed components of two or three or more such as son-in-law, good-for-nothing, devil-may-care can be formed by using a hyphen.

The explanation offered on the uses of hyphen in English by the writer seemed to have exhausted all the occasions on which the mark is used.

Punctuation is a system capable of conveying force, intonation, urgency, tension, doubt, rhythm and passion, while never abandoning its duty to consistency and clarity of meaning” (King 2000)

(Adeyi& Mohammad 2012)

The above submission made by king clearly shows how the use of punctuation marks affects the performance of an essay writer. This is because when an essay is written, it is written to convey all that. King has said using consistency and clarity of meaning of what the writer intends to talk on.

Asterisk (*)

An asterisk is a punctuation mark that is used to draw attention to an additional note or a footnote.

The titles of books are underlined or italicized. it is also used to show wrong sentence construction

I will follow you (correct version, I will accompany you)

The slash, oblique or virgule

This is usually used to show alternatives, usually representing the words or and/or e.g.

His/her

Dear Sir/Madam

2009/2010 session

(Adeyi&Mohammad:(2010)

The researcher feels that the information provided above is incomplete having not included the use of asterisk for substituting letter e.g. I cannot open the s **** d tin

The researcher also feels the same in the case of oblique where only one of its uses is provided while other uses such as, using it in some abbreviation, e.g. c/o smith (meaning care of smith) and its use instead of the word per, as 60km/h (60kilometres per hour).

Oluikpe (1981) submits that “the main purpose of punctuation is to help you to present your ideas clearly and effectively. To achieve this, punctuation marks must be used only when they are necessary”.

The effect of the use of punctuation on the performance of an essay writer is seen here, when we look at the last sentence, which suggests that; punctuation should only be used when necessary. That is, only when the need arises for punctuation, for unnecessary punctuation may spoil communication which a writer wishes to establish.

Based on the above statement; we can see how punctuation can make or unmake written communication effective. Punctuation marks are essential for dividing up written language into units that convey meaning. The wrong use of them, or failure to use them, will easily lead to misunderstanding.

(Jowitt&Nnamonu: 1985)

The last sentence of the above statement clearly shows how the use of punctuation marks affects the performance of an essay writer. This is simply because, if punctuation marks are wrongly or are not used at all, it will easily lead to the misunderstanding of the passage, which would eventually lead to spoliation of the

whole passage. And this would also affect the performance of the writer, for his objective is to put across the message to his readers.

Ngwaba, cited in Oluikpe (1981:125) stresses that “punctuation consists of a series of marks inserted to mark off words one from another either to show their grammatical relationship or to give emphasis to them”.

This assertion made by the writers also shows the effect of the use of punctuation marks on the performance of a writer in general and an essay writer in particular. This is so, because unless the relationship of words and sentences in a write-up is established or unless emphasis is given to such relationships, there is no way that the string of such words or sentences will make meaning to the reader, talk more of understanding the whole passage.

Cullup (2005:56) submits “if we want to communicate chaos, then unpunctuated nonsense will do very well. But if we are concerned-as should be about communication effectively, then we need to know what punctuation marks are available to use and what conventions there are to use”.

The effect of the use of punctuation marks on the performance of a writer is seen here. For a writer to write and convey his message, get it understood and accepted, he needs to punctuate his writing or else he does nothing other than creating chaos, which would totally defeat the essence of essay writing.

Brooks & Warren (1949) cited in Kamal (2010) stress “a paragraph is a division in writing set off by an indentation of the first sentence as a sign for the reader of what constitutes a unit of thought”.

Here, the effect of the use of punctuation marks on the performance of an essay writer ,can be seen and this is because, by using an indentation of the first sentence to show to a reader what constitutes a unit of thought, we are more or less making it simple for the reader to understand what the essay is all about, which should be the overall objective of a writer.

The review indicates to the researcher that reading and making meaning of what is read is only possible through proper use of punctuation marks. It also shows that mechanical skills, if not used properly makes a good essay an understandable one. The review also clearly indicates that separation of successive units and specifications of language is necessary and could only be achieved by the use of punctuation marks. “The semi-colon alerts the reader that you want to make a connection between two independent clauses, and you want the connection to be more “intimate” than the period.” E.g.

Injustice is relatively easy to bear; what strings is injustice.

(2014:University of Arzona)

Content, expression and organization cannot be established in written English without the use of clauses. And clauses cannot be used to give content, expression and organization without being connected to one another and the connection is not possible without the use of some punctuation marks. So, this clearly shows the effect of punctuation on content, expression and organization of written English.

“In the following examples, the reader may get confused as to which group checks in with which A, B, C and D may be falsely perceived as a series.” E.g.

Confusing:

For this flight group, A checks in with B, C and D check in with E and F checks in with G.

Clear:

For this flight, group A checks in with B; C and D check in with E; and F checks in with G. (Inc:2002-2014)

Any organization, content or expression in written English that is characterized by confusion should be avoided. This confusion could only be avoided if certain punctuation marks are used as we have seen in the above quotation. That is, without placing a semi-colon correctly in between items confusion sets in, as in the case of the first sentence. And when confusion relates to sentence, it would eventually affect the expression, then the content and finally the organization.

“When students learn to write, they begin by learning about the four types of sentences and the role punctuation plays in determining and creating those different sentence types.” (Time 4 writing com: 2014)

Expression is only possible, if types of sentences are properly controlled and used, and if punctuation plays a significant role in shaping and creating those types of sentences. This is because, normally, expression is made through the use of sentence types, and the sentence types through the use of proper punctuation so that, the meanings are made clear and the message they convey easily transmitted. It is when

this is done that content and organization can be achieved in written English. So this clearly shows the effect of punctuation on effect content and organization,

“Punctuation is a series of marks which can be used to separate words and groups of words to make intended meaning clear and easy to follow. It can be used to emphasize certain words and phrases, and to distinguish between major and minor ideas. Skilful punctuation is the key to good sentences construction and therefore to clear expression.” (Lamb: 2008)

Organization of the written work in English could only be possible, if punctuation is used properly. This is because, if we look at part of what the above quotation says, we can see that written English cannot be organized if major ideas are not distinguished from minor ideas, through the use of punctuation, and if certain words and phrases are not emphasized for better understanding of the reader, the content and the organization would be seriously affected.

We could also see the role played by punctuation on expression, if we look at another part of the quotation, that is, the issue of separating words or group of words to make intended meaning clear and easy to follow.

“You can use semi-colon to string together many independent clauses, thus purposely creating short sentences which could stand independently with a period between them, but which are closely connected in sense. E.g., people do not only read because they seek information; they also read for pleasure.” (Robertson: 1992)

The above statement also shows the effect of punctuation on the content, organization and expression. This is because if, connection is not made between or among clauses,

it would be impossible for content, organization and expression to be established in written English. This is because it is normally these clauses that make up sentences and sentences make up paragraphs, and paragraphs make up what is written in the language. So this, shows the effect of punctuation on the content organization and expression of written English.

“The trick with comma is to use just the right number of them. If you use too many, your sentences become jerky. If you use them too springly, your sentences tend to produce confusion and incomprehension.” (Robertson: 1992)

The effect of the use of punctuation on content, expression and organization could also be seen in the above statement, that is, if one of the punctuation marks(The comma) is not used properly, confusion and incomprehension will set in, which would eventually effect the organization, the content and the expression of what was written in English.

Adedokun(2008)submits that ” we use punctuation in writing to put our words ,phrases, clauses or sentences in order and to express what we actually want to say.”

The role of punctuation on content, organization and expression could be observed, if we look at the above submission. This is because it is only when words, phrases, clauses and sentences are put in order that the content would be conveying the meaning intended, the organization smooth and the expression meaning making .And this could only be achieved when punctuation is used aright in ordering of the words ,phrases clauses and sentences.

“Spelling and punctuation perform the function of the notes and bolts in a piece of writing .Amis- spelt word or wrongly punctuated sentence can alter the meaning intended by the writer.”

(NTI/DLS:2000)

When meaning is altered expression is lost, when expression is lost, content is lost and when content is lost, organization is not feasible. So this clearly shows the effect of punctuation on content, organization and expression.

The researcher also learned from the review that to avoid making a piece of text from becoming a string of words, punctuation marks should be adequately used. The researcher also observes that punctuation marks are only used when necessary.

2.3 Previous Studies on Punctuation Marks and Essay Writing

In this section, some studies that have been carried out are going to be reviewed.

Kure (2008): carried out a research on “An investigation into the State of punctuation strategies among SS3 students in Jigawa State. The researcher used essay questions and oral interview with teachers and students randomly selected from the population sample. “In terms of population and sample size, the researcher used a government secondary school with a total number of two hundred and forty (240) and a sample size of one hundred and four (104).

The result of the research showed that there was more incorrect usage of punctuation marks than the correct usage of the same. The finding also revealed that majority of the students could not use punctuation marks for the fact that the teachers were not

qualified as a result of which they (the teachers). skipped teaching the students the art of punctuating their essays.

The findings also showed the interference of the mother tongue on the students' essays which majority affected the students' style of writing. Kure's research is similar to the current research for, the two studies are both in relation to punctuation marks. Kure used essay questions and oral interview, while the researcher of this work would use teacher's constructed test and essay as his instruments for data collection.

Critically, it would be said that the researcher had tried his best to find out what caused the students failure to use punctuation marks in their essays appropriately. The oral interview should not have been used as an instrument for data collection in the view of the fact that punctuation deals with written aspect while oral interview deals with spoken aspect of the language. However ,the researcher of this study would use a teacher constructed question and an essay..

Muhammad (2010) did a research on "punctuation marks and effective written communication". A case study of the Higher National diploma (HNDII) students of School of Technology, Kano.

The researcher used essays, dictation and questionnaire for data collection. The essay writing and dictation tasks were used to test the students' skills in the correct use of punctuation for effective communication. Muhammad's research is similar to this research because the two researches are on punctuation marks in relation to written aspect of English Language. Muhammad used essay, dictation scripts and

questionnaire for data collection. The researcher of this work would use teacher's constructed test and an essay. The researcher of this work would not use dictation for fear of some students having hearing impairment which would pave way for extraneous variable to set in

In terms of population and sample size, the researcher used all the 380 HNDII students, from the seven departments of the school of Technology, Kano State Polytechnic. While the researcher used the sample size of 30% of students of each department of the polytechnic.

The result of the researcher showed that the student's performance was rated 'good' due to minimal errors observed in the two separated writing tasks. The weaknesses observable in the respondents' written communication were not traceable to only overt punctuation errors identified. Again the finding showed that majority of the respondents were taught punctuation in their previous schools, and their good performance might have been influenced by this fact.

Critically, it would be observed that the researcher had used appropriate instrument for data collection. However, the use of dictation scripts should not have used in view of the fact that some of the respondents might have hearing impairment which might have affected their performance, having not heard properly what was dictated, talk more of punctuating it.

Abbas (2008) carried out a research on "the impact of mixed sentences on the quality of students' writing in Aminu Kano college of Islamic and legal studies. The sample

size was two hundred and one (Mogan&Kreycie 1971) which was selected randomly by choosing the students whose admission number ended with an odd number.

The researcher used an essay assignment which was given to the students on the topic of their choice.

Besides, it would be said that Abba's research is similar to this research because the two topics have something to do with writing. Abbas used essay writing on the topic of the students' choice to be written at home and the researcher of this work would use an essay to be written under the supervision of the researcher in relation to the use of punctuation marks.

The result of the researcher showed that one of the problems which distorted clarity, form and cohesion in the students essay was a problem of run-on sentences which was due to bad or non-use of punctuation marks. Below are some examples.

- It is universally recognized that the key person in an educational system.
- Despite its stark desert location surrounded by red-earth, cliffs attended by the light of Jerusalem in the distance dominated by which.
- This day the emir rode back to his palace on his horse where he will read the.

Critically, it is observed that the instrument used by the researcher for his data collection. Seemed ineffective because giving students an assignment to do at home on a chosen topic, extraneous variables may come in, such as being assisted by some people on how the assignment should be done which would eventually affect the performance of the students.

Below is the summary table for the review of related literature under the head punctuation marks and writing.

2.1A summary of Review of punctuation marks, concept and effects.

Authors Reviewed	Summary of Aspects reviewed	Areas Relevant to the Present Study
Ataman (2007).	Punctuation marks aid clarify and understanding of written communication.	Related to the study because there must be clarify and understanding of the written communication among the readers.
Ahmad Jowit Abdu& Ahmad (1999).	Punctuation is in the main, the use of signs other than letters to divide up written language into units of meaning.	Relevant to the study, for unless essay writing is divided into units the message intended to be conveyed many not be possible.
Namme& Smith (1981).	Punctuation is a device used by a writer to help his readers understand the meaning of his words, by conveying in print or writing, the tones, and pause of spoken words punctuation marks are sign posts that should help the readers to find his way over the printed or written page.	Related to this work because it is almost the aim of an essay to make it possible for the reader to understand the meaning of the essay.
Patience Cymthia. Joy & Muhammad. (1997)	Punctuation involves the use of signs or marks to divide writing in sentences clauses, phrases into minimum unit of meaning in order to convey ideas or information clearly and accurately.	Relevant to the study because, phrases, clauses and sentences must be linked to build up an essay.
Pryse (1993).	So much of what might otherwise be good writing is so	Relevant to the work, because the whole aim is to write a good essay

- often spoiled by lack of or bad punctuation. not a bad or spoiled one.
- Adekunle (1987). Punctuation marks help us know the various ideas contained in an utterance so that we may not confuse one with another in context. They make it easy for use to see the correct relationship among the words and expressions which make up an utterance. It is relevant to the study because of the various ideas that come together to form an essay, and the avoidance of confusing one idea with another.
- Manser (2006). The purpose of punctuation is to make clear the meaning of sentence and text. This is achieved by controlling the shape of sentences through the use of period, comma, semicolons, and so on, thereby breaking up texts into manageable pieces. Punctuation enables important phrases to be emphasized and connection to be made between clauses and sentences so that, they combine to form an intelligible narrative. This is related to the study because in essay writing some ideas are stressed against others to draw attention to the main ideas of the essay, and to differentiate what is main idea from what stands to be an expansion of the main idea, so that the reader may actual theme of the essay.
- Pink & Thomas (1970). In order to assist the reader to grasp readily the meaning of a written sentence, certain stops or marks of punctuation are inserted to indicate where It is relevant to the work because meaning of the essay should be made clear to the reader through the use of punctuation.

	pauses would naturally be made in reading the sentences.	
Alobo (2008).	Punctuation is an aspect of the mechanical skill of writing. Any write up that is not properly punctuated is a write off.	It is related to the study because to avoid writing off, one must punctuate to produce a write – up.
Quirk and Green Baum (1973).	Punctuation serves two main function; separation of successive unit, included units and specification of language.	Relevant to the study because there is need for separation of unit and specification of language in essay writing, to avoid misunderstanding of the essay.
Odiaka (1974).	Punctuation is the correct use of the capital letter, fullstop (.) comma (,) question mark (?) quotation marks (“) apostrophe (‘) hyphen (-) and the exclamation mark (!). These make what we read or write much clearer.	This is related to the work because clarity is one of the features of the content of a good essay writing so that meaning and sense could be made to reader of the essays.
Kirkpatrick (2007).	Punctuation is the use of certain established marks or symbol within a piece of written text. Punctuation prevents a piece of text from being just a string of words by breaking up the string of words into meaningful units and by making the text fluent.	This is relevant and related to this study, because there is always need for cohesion of content in essay writing, which is achieved through proper use of punctuation and which is achieved through breaking up string of words into meaningful units, which helps facilitate understanding of the essay.

Summary

The researcher has reviewed the concepts of punctuation marks treated in books by different authors. The researcher also reviewed some past related works by other researchers which is known as empirical study.

2.5 The Theoretical Framework

Kombo (2006:57) defines theoretical framework as “a collection of interrelated ideas based on the theories. It is a general set of assumption about the nature of phenomena. To understand theoretical frame works, an analysis of theories has to be made”.

So based on the above mentioned assertion, the researcher uses the following as theoretical frame work.

Quirk (1973:458) theorises that “punctuation serves two main functions, (a) successive (such as sentences by periods, or items in a list by commas) included units (as when parentheses mark off an interpolated phrase or clause) (b) separation of language function (as when an apostrophe indicates that air inflexion is generative”.

This assertion made by Quirk implies that for one to write and get what he has written to be understood by one’s target audience, one has to use punctuation marks to separate sentences, phrases, clauses and items in a list or by indentation of paragraphs.

Also one should specify the mentioned items in order to have what one has written understood by the target audience or else there would be distress, lack of interest, attention on the side of reader, which would eventually affect the essay. Having

assessed Quirk's theory in relation to the use of punctuation marks and having found the wide coverage the theory gives to punctuation marks, this study would use the model to explain our data in the study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher focused on the systematic procedure of the activities taken in the study. They included the following:

The research design and the population used for the study. The sample size and sample procedure chosen for the research. The method employed for data collection and the instrument used and data analysis.

They were discussed under the following sub-headings.

3.2 Research Design

The researcher of this work used the experimental research design. By experimental design subjects were randomly assigned to an experimental group which received the treatment and to a control group which did not receive treatment. The design was used for the present study because the topic dealt with the use of punctuation marks on written performance of the English learners.

3.3 Population for the Study.

The population of this research work was SS2 Senior Secondary Students of Kano State. There were four hundred and thirty five Senior Secondary Schools in Kano State in the fourteen local education offices, with a total population of SS2 students of Sixty three thousand four hundred and two (63,402). As at 2013 (source KSSSMB)

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure.

Out of the total number of one hundred and ninety two senior secondary schools in Kano State metropolitan zonal education offices in December 2011, two Senior Secondary Schools were selected for the research study. This was because it was an experimental study; the schools were grouped into two. These were experimental and control groups. One hundred students were sampled for both experimental and control groups in line with Krejcie & Morgan (1971).

The population of the two schools was sampled randomly. This was done by tossing folded papers by the testees which contained yes and no. The procedure used to determine the sample size of either of the two selected schools was percentage based on the number of the students of either of the schools.

Table 31 Distribution of Sample size.

Schools	Sample
Rumfa College Kano	50
Govt Senior Sec School Gwammaja	50

Procedure

The researcher gave a pre-test to both groups. Collected the scripts and marked. Then, the researcher taught the experimental group on the use of the four variables. Then the researcher gave a post test to both groups, collected the scripts and marked, so that a comparison of the results could be made.

Table 3.2 distribution of population and sample

S/N	Names of Schools	No of Students	No of Students' Sample
1	Rumfa College	550	50
2	Government Senior Secondary Gwammaja.	450	50
	Total number of population	1000	100

Instrument for Data Collection

An Objective test and an Essay Topic were designed and used by the researcher for the collection of data in this work. That was, students were given objective questions and a topic to write an essay on..

3.06 Pilot Test

A pilot test was conducted at Aminu Kano Commercial College, using five students, for the collection of data in this research work. The researcher used teacher's constructed test and topic to write an essay on. He distributed the question papers to the students and invigilated through the help of some teachers in the schools. After the test, a marking scheme was designed in which a stipulation was made, that each of the corrected use of punctuation marks was given one mark while wrongly used punctuation marks was not given any mark. This was done to ensure the validity of the instrument.

3.07 Validity and reliability of the instrument

Both the face and content validity of the instruments were determined by the experts' opinion which included the researcher's supervisor and colleagues. The criticisms and suggestions made improved the structure and standard of the instruments.

The reliability of the instrument for this research work was established by using the test and re-test method. Five students were randomly sampled. Teacher constructed objective test and an essay topic were administered on the subjects at the first instance and after an interval of two weeks, to avoid the problem the respondents remembering how they had responded in the first test, a different form of the teacher constructed test and the essay topic were administered on the subjects. Osuala(1983).

3.08 Procedure for Data Analysis

In order to have a proper analysis of the data in this research provided, one hundred marks were allotted for the four punctuation marks(fulstop, comma, colon and semi-colon), sixty marks for the objective test and forty marks for the essay.. In the analysis, the research questions were analyzed using mean while the research hypotheses were analyzed using T.test and Anova. So that the means of the two samples could be compared with a view to finding out the difference between the two sample' means.. Questions were analyzed item by item including the correct and wrong answers. This was by giving two marks for correct answer while no mark was given for wrong answer.

Data presentation and Analysis of findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of data collected from the field.

The data was presented in two forms.

(a) Research Question Testing.

(b) Hypothesis Testing.

All the hypotheses under discussion were tested under 0.05 level of significance.

DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS SCORES ALL THE VARIABLES

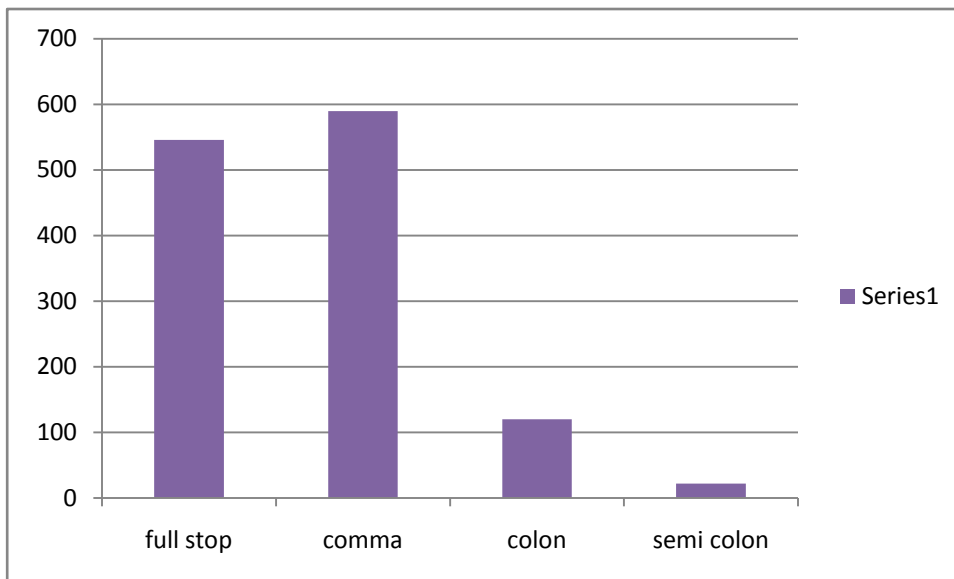
PRE-TEST			POST-TEST		
OVERALL PRE-TEST OBJECTIVE RESULT			OVERALL POST-TEST OBJECTIVE RESULT		
RUMFA COLLEGE	Overall scores	Mean		Overall scores	Mean
Fulstop	546	10.92	Fulstop	544	10.89
Comma	580	11.6	Comma	634	12.68
Colon	120	2.4	Colon	144	2.88
Semi-colon	22	0.44	Semi-colon	85	1.7
GSSS GWAMMAJA	Overall scores	Mean		Overall scores	Mean
Fulstop	520	10.4	Fulstop	704	14.08
Comma	346	6.92	Comma	865	17.3
Colon	58	1.16	Colon	194	3.88
Semi-colon	80	1.6	Semi-colon	186	3.72

PRE-TEST			POST-TEST		
OVERALL PRE-TEST ESSAY RESULT			OVERALL POST-TEST ESSAY RESULT		
RUMFA COLLEG VARIABLES	Overall scores	Mean	RUMFA COLLEGE VARIABLES	Overall scores	Mean
Fulstop	118	2.36	Fulstop	206	4.12
Comma	298	5.96	Comma	328	6.56
Colon	0	0	Colon	2	0.04
Semi-colon	0	0	Semi-colon	2	0.04
GSS GWAMMAJA Variables	Overall score	Mean	GSS GWAMMAJA VARIABLES	Overall scores	Mean
Fulstop	132	2.64	Fulstop	510	10.2
Comma	138	2.76	Comma	628	12.56
Colon	0	0	Colon	154	3.08
Semi-colon	0	0	Semi-colon	154	3.08

RUMFA COLLEGE PRETEST OBJECTIVE RESULT (CONTROL GROUP)

The graphs below show the overall objective results in the pre-test and post-test of both control and experimental groups respectively with the results reading as follows: pre-test:Fulstop1066marks,Comma926 marks, Colon 178, and Semi-colon102 marks while the post-test reads thus: Fulstop 1248 marks, Comma 1499 marks, Colon 338marks, and Semi-colon271 marks.

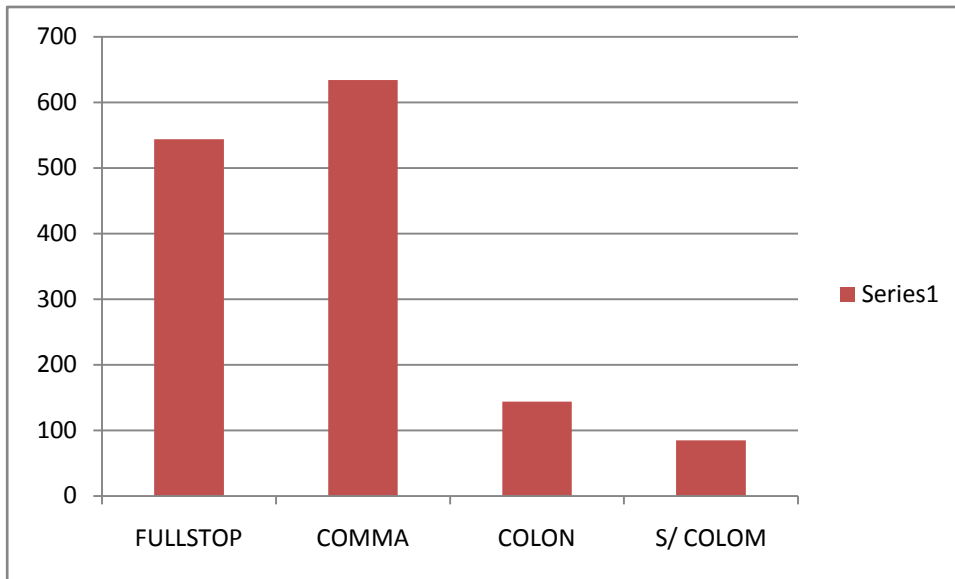
Table 4.1 Pre Test result of objective Test



The above graph represents Rumfa college Pre Test Objective Result with a total of 546 for full stop, 580 for comma, 120 for colon and 22 for semi colon.

RUMFA COLLAGE POST TEST OBJECTIVE RESULT(CONTROLLED GROUP)

Table 4.2 Post Test Result of objective Test

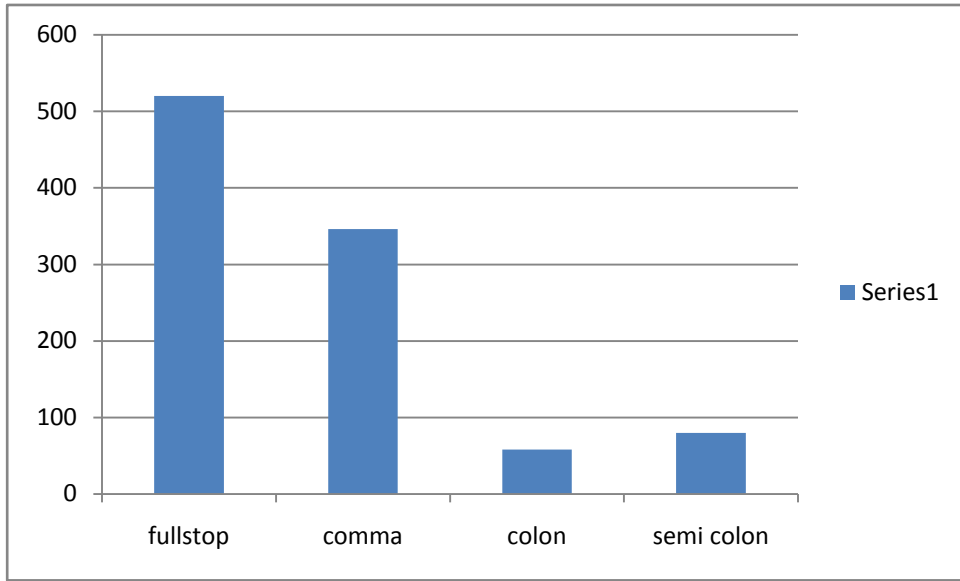


The above graph represents Post Test Objective result of Rumfa College (controlled group) with a total score of full stop 544, comma 634, colon 144 and semi colon 85.

GOVERNMENT SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL GWAMMAJA PRE-TEST

RESULT IN OBJECTIVE (Experimental group)

Table 4.3 Pre- Test result of Objective Test



Above is a graph of GSS Gwammaja Objective Pre-test result with a total Score of Fullstop;520, Comma;346, Colon;58, SemiColon;80.

(Experimental group).

GOVERNMENT SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL GWAMMAJA POST

TEST RESULT IN OBJECTIVE TEST

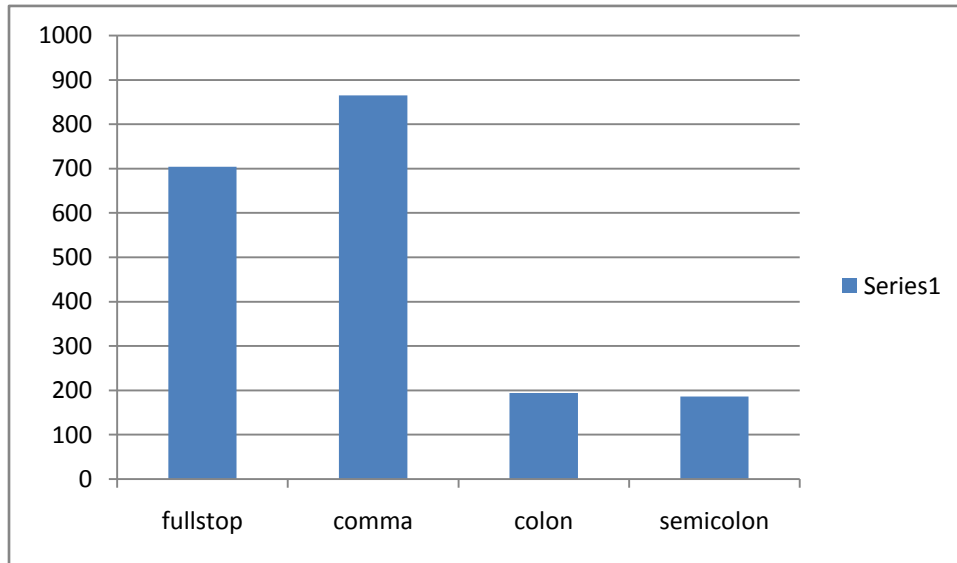


Table
4.4
Post
Test
Result
in
Object
ive
Test

The above is a graph of GSS Gwammajapost test Objective results with a total scores of Fullstop;704,Comma;865,Colon;194,SemiColon;186. This is also an Experimental group.

4.4 Research Question Testing

Research Question 1

Research Question 1: What is the effect of the use and non-use of selected punctuation marks on the essay performance of SS2 students in some selected schools in Kano.

Variables	An overall objective and Essay tests results of four variables (Fulstop, Comma, Colon and Semi-colon) before and after treatment.	Percentage
Pre-test	Before treatment	
Fulstop	Highest 2, average 29, lowest 69	Highest 2%, average 29%, lowest 69%
Comma	Highest 18, average 27, lowest 55	Highest 18%, average 27%, lowest 55%
Colon	Highest 8, average 24, lowest 68	Highest 8%, average 24%, lowest 68%
Semi-colon	Highest 7, average 9, lowest 84	Highest 7%, average 9%, lowest 84%
Post-test	After treatment	
Fulstop	Highest 47, average 35, lowest 18	Highest 47%, average 35%, lowest 18%
Comma	Highest 70, average 18, lowest 12	Highest 70%, average 18%, lowest 12%
Colon	Highest 51, average 19, lowest 30	Highest 51%, average 19%, lowest 30%
Semi-colon	Highest 45, average 15, lowest 40	Highest 45%, average 15%, lowest 40%

Table 4.8 presented the effect of the use and non use of selected punctuation marks before and after treatment in objective and essay tests and the performance of SS2 students in Kano. A total of one hundred (100) students formed the sample of the candidates before treatment. Thirty one (31) 31% passed while sixty nine (69) 69% failed in the use of full stop, forty five (45) 45% passed while fifty five (55) 55% failed in the use of comma, thirty two (32) 32% passed while sixty-eight (68) 68% failed in the use of colon and sixteen (16) 16% passed while eighty-four (84) 84% failed in the use of semi-colon. The table also presented the effect of the use and non use of punctuation marks after treatment, with the scores of the four variables as follows: eighty-two (82) 82% passed while eighteen (18) 18% failed in the use of full stop, eighty-eight (88) 88% passed while twelve (12) 12% failed in the use of comma, seventy (70) 70% passed while thirty (30) 30% failed in the use of colon and sixty (60) 60% passed while forty (40) 40% failed in the use of semi-colon. Therefore, the number of students who passed both tests in the four variables after treatment was greater than the number of those who passed the tests in the use of the four variables before treatment which indicated that there was a strong effect of the use of punctuation on the performance of SS2 students in Kano.

HIGHER ACHIEVER.

BEFORE TREATMENT.

Below is the pre-test excerpt sample of a higher achiever showing lack of organization and good paragraphing as a result of not punctuating the excerpt correctly.

.....*since I was young I have been liking Biology because I want to be a doctor Also if you want to be a doctor, necessary and compulsory you most determination about readingSo if I became a doctor, by the grace of God i shall help poor persons. Also and I support pregnant women as well assomeone who have injury.*

While below is the excerpt sample of the same student after treatment showing smooth flow of ideas, idea packaging and good paragraphing as a result of punctuating the excerpt.

AFTER TREATMENT

.....*Since I was young, I have been liking Biology because I want to be a doctor. Also, if you want to be a doctor, it is necessary and compulsory to pass your exam in Biology. So, if I become a doctor, by the grace of God, I shall help poor persons. Also, I support pregnant women as well as someone who have injury*

Research Question 2: What is the effect of the use of comma before and after treatment on cohesion of the essay performance of SS 2 students in some selected schools in Kano.

Table 4.9: The effect of the use of comma before and after treatment:

Variable	Objective and Essay test in Percentage
Comma	the use of comma before and after treatment
Pre-test	Before treatment

Highest	18	18%
Average	27	27%
Lowest	55	55%
Total	100	
Post-test	After treatment	
Highest	70	70%
Average	18	18%
Lowest	12	12%
Total	100	

Table 4.9 presented the effect of the use of comma before and after treatment in objective and essay tests and the performance of SS2 students in Kano State .A total of one hundred (100) students formed the sample of the candidates before treatment. Eighteen(18) 18% got the highest mark, twenty-seven(27) 27% students got average mark while fifty-five(55) 55% students got the lowest marks. Again one hundred(100) students in the post test formed the sample of the candidates after treatment with seventy (70) 70% students having the highest score, eighteen (18) 18% an average score and twelve(12) 12% the lowest score. Therefore, the number of students who passed the tests after treatment was more than the number of those who passed before treatment which showed that there was a strong effect of the use of comma on the performance of SS2 students in Kano state.

AVERAGE ACHIEVER.

BEFORE TREATMENT

.....But what I realize in this subject is that every teacher or lecturer use my subject to express what he want to express may bean Chemistry teacher or Physics maths and other there is no way he can teach this students with out considering my best subject although my subject havemanywritersthis shows that my subject is the most considered subject in the world because no matter where you came from you must accept my subject is you mother tongue.

The above is the sample of an average achiever's excerpt before treatment with no any punctuation mark used except in some few places, which resulted in lack of free flow of ideas and idea packaging. While below is the sample of the same student's excerpt after treatment showing smooth flow of ideas and idea packaging and as a result of punctuating the excerpt correctly.

AFTER TREATMENT

.....But, what I realize in this subject is that, every teacher or lecturer use my subject to express what he wants to express. may be can an Chemistry teacher or Physics, maths and others. There is no way he can teach the students without considering my best subject. Although my subject have many writers. This shows that my subject is the most considered subject in the world because no matter where you come from, you must accept my subject is you mother tongue.

Below is the pre-test excerpt sample of a lower achiever showing lack of organization, free flow of ideas and good paragraphing as a result of not punctuating the excerpt correctly

Research Question3.What is the effect of the useof fulstop before and after treatment on the paragraphingof the essay performance of SS2 students in some selected schools in Kano.

Variable	Objective and Essay tests in the use of fulstop before and after treatment	Percentage
Fulstop		
Pre test	Before treatment	
Highest	2	2%
Average	29	29%
Lowest	69	69%
Total	100	
Post test	After treatment	
Highest	47	47%
Average	35	35%
Lowest	18	18%
Total	100	

Table 50 presented the effect of the use of fulstop before and after treatment on the paragraphing of essay in the objective and essay tests and the performance of SS2 students in Kano. A total of one hundred (100) students formed the sample of the candidates before treatment with two (2) 2% highest, twenty-nine (29) 29% average and sixty-nine(69) 69% the lowest. The Same number also formed the sample after treatment with forty-seven (47) 47% highest, thirty-five(35) 35% average and eighteen(18) 18% the lowest. Therefore, the number of students who passed the tests after treatment was greater than the number of students who passed in the two tests before treatment, which indicated that there was a strong effect of the use of fulstop on the essay performance SS2 students in Kano.

LOWER ACHIEVER.

BEFORE TREATMENT

.....*Then, Any country can use English language if you can't hearing english, you don't understand very well.*

Any chief in world is hearing english.

English is the most important of any subject because any subject, you learn an English language

. But no hausa and Islamic languages

. Even examination, you most get English language.

My Allah help us, to get English language in you examination And then, by the great of God, Any examination we will have nine credite

Below is the sample of the same student's excerpt after treatment ,though with a paragraphing problem showing smooth flow of ideas and idea packaging and as a result of punctuating the excerpt correctly

.AFTER TREATMENT.

.....Then, any country can use English language. If you can't hear English, you don't understand very well.

Any chief in world is hearing English.

english is the most important of any subject, because any subject you learn an English language.

.But, no Hausa and Islamic languages. Even in examination ,you most get English language.

My Allah help us to get English language in your examination. And then, by the great of God, Any examination we will have nine credit.

Research Question 4. What is the effect of the use of colon or semi-colon before and after treatment on idea packaging of essay performance of SS2 students in some selected schools in Kano.

Variable	Objective and Essay tests in the use of colon before and after treatment	Percentage
Colon		
Pre-test	Before treatment	
Highest	8	8%
Average	24	24%
Lowest	68	68%
Post-test	After treatment	
Highest	51	51%
Average	19	19%
Lowest	30	30%

Variable	Objective and Essay tests in the use of semi-colon before and after treatment	Percentage
Semi-colon		
Pre-test	Before treatment	
Highest	7	7%
Average	9	9%
Lowest	84	84%
Post-test	After treatment	
Highest	45	45%
Average	15	15%
Lowest	40	40%

Table 50.1 -presented the effect of the use of colon and semi-colon before and after treatment of both objective and essay tests. A total of one hundred (100) students each for either of the two variables formed the sample of the candidates before treatment, with the pre-tests scores in colon in both objective and essay as follows, eight(8) 8% highest, twenty-four(24) 24%average and sixty-eight(68) 68% lowest. And the scores of pre-test of the semi-colon in both objective and essay tests is also as follows, seven(7) 7%highest nine(9) 9%average and eighty-four(84) 84%lowest.

The table also presented the effects of the use of colon and semi-colon after treatment with the scores of post –tests of colon for both objective and essay tests as follows, fifty-one(51) 51%highest, nineteen(19) 19%average and thirty(30) 30%lowest and with the scores of post test of semicolon for both objective and essay tests reading thus, forty-five(45) 45%highest fifteen(15)15% average and forty(40) 40% lowest. Therefore, the number of students who passed both tests after treatment was more than the number of those who passed the tests before treatment which indicates that there is a strong effect of the use of both colon and semi-colon on the performance of SS2 students in Kano

4.5 Hypothesis Testing

Null hypothesis 1

There is no significant effect of the use of punctuation marks on the essay performance of SS2 students in some selected schools in Kano.

Table 4.5 Effect of the Use of Punctuation Marks on Essay Test

ANOVA

<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	3564.7	3	1188.233	370.8027	1.64E-80	2.650677
Within Groups	628.08	196	3.20449			
Total	4192.78	199				

The above table showed the analysis of the essay results of post test on the effect of the use of punctuation marks and the performance of the students. The effect was found with an F value of 370.82 and an f=critical value of 2.651 under the degree of freedom 0.05, which showed that the F value (370.82) was greater than the F critical value of (2.651). We therefore, rejected the null hypothesis and accepted the alternative hypothesis, which said there was significant effect of the use of punctuation marks on essay performance of the subject.

Null hypothesis II

There is no significant effect of the use of Comma before and after treatment on the coherence of the essay performance of SS2 students in Kano.

Table 4.6 Effect of the Use of Comma on the Coherence of Essay Performance after the treatment.

T-Test: Paired Two Sample for Means

	<i>Variable 1</i>	<i>Variable 2</i>
Mean	6.04	2.88
Variance	13.63102	9.49551
Observations	50	50
Pearson Correlation	0.161875	
Hypothesized Difference	Mean 0	
Df	49	
t Stat	5.067427	
P(T<=t) one-tail	3.07E-06	
t Critical one-tail	1.676551	
P(T<=t) two-tail	6.14E-06	
t Critical two-tail	2.009575	

The table presented the correlation matrix of the use of comma on the coherence of the essay performance before and after treatment and the performance of the students. The effect of the use of comma before and after treatment was found by using T-test to find out the difference of the use of comma before and after .We therefore took the essay results of comma from post test of the controlled group and the essay results of the post test of the experimental group and compared. The table above showed that the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted under the degree of freedom 0.05 with a T critical value of 2.01 and a p-value of 6.14.which meant there was significant difference in the used of comma before and after treatment.

Null hypothesis III

There is no significant difference between the use of fullstop before and after Treatment on paragraphing of the essay performance of SS2 students in some selected school in Kano.

Table 4.7 Effect of The Use of fulstop on Idea Packaging of The Essay Performance Before and after Treatment.

T-Test: Paired Two Sample for Means

	<i>Variable</i>	<i>Variable</i>
	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>
Mean	2.6	2.64
Variance	2.979592	3.500408
Observations	50	50
Pearson Correlation	0.080887	
Hypothesized	Mean	
Difference	0	
Df	49	
t Stat	-0.11588	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.45411	
t Critical one-tail	1.676551	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.908221	
t Critical two-tail	2.009575	

The table above presented the correlation matrix of the use of fulstop on paragraphing of the essay performance before and after treatment and the performance of the students. Effect was found by using T-test to find out the difference of the use of fulstop before and after treatment. We therefore took the essay results of the use of

full stop from post test of the control group and that of the post test of the experimental group and compared. The table above showed that the null hypothesis was accepted and the alternative hypothesis rejected, under the degree of freedom 0.05 with a T- critical value of 2.01 and a p-value of 0.45 which meant there was no significant difference in the used of full stop before and after treatment

Research hypothesis IV

Table 4.8. There is no significant effect of the use of Colon or Semi-colon before and after treatment on idea packaging of essay performance of SS2 students in some selected Schools in Kano.

ANOVA

<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	0.54	3	0.18	3.12766	0.026886	2.650677
Within Groups	11.28	196	0.057551			
Total	11.82	199				

Analysis of variance was used to find out the effect of the use of colon and semi colon before and after treatment, the essay results of both control and experimental groups of pre and post tests of colon and semi colon were used in the above table and found out there was a relationship between the pre and post test results of Colon and semi-colon. With a p- value of 0.026 , f- value of 3.127 and an f- critical value of 2.65 under the degree of freedom 0.05. we therefore, rejected the null hypothesis and accepted alternative hypothesis .

4.6 Summary of major findings

The summary of major finding of this work are as follows

The research question one tested showed that there was strong effect of the use of punctuation marks i.e. Fulstop, Comma, Colon and Semi-colon on the essay performance of SS2 students in some selected schools in Kano. This was shown in the results of the pre-test and post-test, with the post-test result being better than the pre-test result,

The research question two tested indicated that there was a strong effect of the use of punctuation marks on the essay performance of the SS2 students in some selected schools in Kano. However, the research discovered that many of the respondents could not use colon and semi colon appropriately. This was shown in the pre-test and post-test results which showed an insignificant difference between the two tests, which eventually resulted in their poor performance in that respects.

Also considering the marks scored in both the pre-test and post-test of these variables before and after treatment it could safely be stated that the students had a problem with the use of colon and semi-colon because they were not taught topics that could have served as foundation upon which the two variables are learnt. Topics such as clauses and their types, phrases and their types and how strong contrasts are used..

The research question three also showed that there was a strong effect of the use of fulstop on essay performance of the respondents, though, the respondents could answer some questions before treatment but almost all the questions set were answered after treatment which resulted in their good performance in that perspective.

Research question four also revealed that there was a strong effect of colon and semi-colon on the essay performance of SS2 students in some selected schools in Kano. This revelation was seen in the performance of the students in the two tests, with the post-test result being much better than the pre-test results in the two variables.

The null hypothesis one tested showed that there was significant effect of punctuation on the essay performance of the subjects.

The null hypothesis two tested indicated that there was significant difference in the use of comma before and after treatment on the cohesion of the essay performance of the subjects.

The null hypothesis three tested revealed that there was no significant difference in the use of fulstop before and after treatment on the idea paragraphing of the essay performance of the respondents.

The null hypothesis four tested pointed out that there was significant effect of the use of colon and semi-colon on the idea packaging of the essay performance of the subjects.

4.7 Discussion

The research was carried out to assess whether or not the use of some punctuation marks, e.g (fulstop, comma, colon and semi-colon) by the students of Rumfa College

and Government Senior Secondary School Gwammaja were determiners of the quality of the students' essay performance. A lot of literature had shown that the said variables contributed tremendously to the quality of the students' written performance. It was in the realization and appreciation of this fact that effects of these four variables on good essay writing was investigated. These variables were chosen because they reflect the cohesion, idea packaging and paragraphing of essay writing. To measure the effect of the variables, four hypotheses were formulated to investigate whether or not the variables helped the students to write better

This work had found that there was significant effect of the use of punctuation marks on the essay performance of SS2students in Kano. The research work was similar to that of Kure (2008) whose hypothesis one revealed that there was significant effect of punctuation on the essay performance of the subjects which was as a result of their not being taught effectively and the bad strategies used by the teachers in teaching the subjects .Olaofe(1987) asserts that teachers who have some insight into how the forms of English function and understand the grammatical structure of English ought to teach it better. This fact may be tenable when what they should teach before punctuation marks could be introduced. The analysis of the result of the non-use of punctuation marks before treatment ranged between 55%, 68% and 69% respectively.

This research found out that, the students did not know how to formulate paragraphs correctly. The reason behind was that, they did not know what a topic sentence was, upon which all other sentences revolve round in the process of paragraph formulation. It was also discovered that, the students did not know paragraph types .E.g Introductory, transitional and concluding paragraphs, which were characterized by the four selected variables .To test these, hypothesis one was formulated with a view to testing the effect of these four variables in the essay performance of the SS2 students in Kano. The result showed that, there was a significant effect of the variables on the essay performance of the students. This was because the F-value was 370.82 and the F-critical value was 2.651 under the degree of freedom 0.05,.As such, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted.

The research also discovered that, majority of the students did not know how to use comma correctly. in respect of phrases and clauses, which are usually marked off by the use of comma. It was also discovered that, the students could not use comma properly with conditional sentences because of their lack of knowledge of these conditional sentences and their components. Another problem discovered with the use of comma by the students was the issues of question tag, direct speech and contrasting expressions, which are all marked off with comma. Accordingly, the research hypothesis two was formulated with the aim of testing whether or not there, was significant effect of the use of comma before and after treatment on the coherence of the essay performance of SS2 students in Kano. On testing this hypothesis, it was indicated that there was significant effect of the said variable on the coherence of the essay performance of the students. This was because the T-critical

value was 2.01 and the P-critical value was 6.14 under the degree of freedom 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted.

The research made a discovery that, even though, majority of the students could use fulstop in so many instances, vast majority of the respondents did know the use of fulstop in respect of email and website addresses, which seemed to be a new development in the fulstop usages. To find the effect of the use of fulstop on the paragraphing of the essay hypothesis three was formulated with the aim of testing the effect of the use of fulstop before and after treatment on the paragraphing of the essay performance of the SS2 students in Kano. On testing this hypothesis, the outcome revealed that, there was insignificant effect of the variable on essay performance of the students, because the result of pre-test and pos-test were almost the same. This was because T-critical value was 2.01 and P-value was 0.45. As such, the null hypothesis was accepted and the alternative hypothesis rejected.

The research discovered that the students did not know how to use colon and semi-colon correctly. This was because it was found that the students were not taught topics that could have formed the foundation upon which the two variables are learnt. The extent to which these variables are appropriately used was expected to help in the idea packaging of the written performance of the students. To assess this, hypothesis four was formulated with the aim of testing whether or not there was a difference on the quality of the essay performance of the students before and after treatment with regard to the idea packaging. After testing the hypothesis, the result indicated that, there was significant effect of the use of colon and semi-colon on the idea packaging of the essay performance of the SS2 student in Kano. This was because the P-critical

value was 0.026, F-value 3.127 and F-critical 2.65, under the degree of freedom of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis stood rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted.

Similarly, considering the scores of the students in the use of punctuation marks (ie Fulstop, Comma Colon and Semi-colon) after treatment, it could be concluded that there was a strong effect of these four variables on the essay performance of the students

.Research question one showed that there was a strong effect of the use of the selected variable i.e. (comma, fulstop, colon and semi-colon) on the essay performance of the students, as the number of the students who passed the tests on the four variables after treatment was greater than the number of students who had failed the test.

.Research question two showed that there was a strong effect of the use comma on the essay performance of the students, as the number of the students who passed the tests after treatment was greater than the number of students who had failed the test. This was because 88% of the students passed the tests and only 12% failed the test.

Also research question three revealed that there was a strong effect of the use of Fulstop on the essay performance of the students after treatment because out of the total number of the students who sat for both objective and essay 83% passed the tests while only 17% failed in the test.

So also, research question four indicated that there was a strong effect of the use of colon and semi-colon on the essay performance of the subjects. This effect could be seen in the percentage of those who passed both the objectives and essay tests respectively which read as 70% passed and 30% failed.

Moreover, the findings of this research work were similar to that of Muhammad(2010) who found that the students had serious difficulties with the use of the medial punctuation marks in their essay which was manifested as errors of omission.

In addition, the results of the research questions showed that there was more difficulties in the use of comma, colon and semi-colon than there was in the use of fulstop among the SS2 students in Kano State.

CHAPTER FIVE

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.0 Introduction

Chapter five of this research summarizes and concludes the study. It tends to give a conclusion and some recommendations based on the findings of this study that has been conducted.

5.1 Summary of the work

This study tried to assess the effect of the use of punctuation marks on the essay performance of SS2 students of Senior Secondary Schools in Kano State. The population for the study was SS2 students of two senior secondary schools in Kano whose total population was one thousand from which a sample of one hundred (100) students was chosen. The study was delimited to the students of Kano metropolitan zonal education offices from which one hundred students were randomly sampled. Un-punctuated passage and teacher constructed objective tests were used as the instruments for data collection. Four research questions and four hypotheses were formed, tested and analyzed by the use of T-test and ANOVAs at 0.05 level of freedom. And the result was that there was significant difference in the use of comma, colon and semi-colon on the idea packaging, coherence and proper paragraphing before and after treatment. However, hypothesis three revealed that there was no significant difference in the use of full stop before and after treatment.

5.2 Conclusion

Based on the findings it is concluded that the use of fullstop, comma, colon and semi-colon on the written English performance of the SS2 students of the senior secondary schools in Kano state is problematic. However, it could be said that the use of colon and semi-colon is more problematic than the use of fullstop and comma.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion drawn from this research, the following recommendations were made:

Implication of the findings for curriculum planners

Curriculum planners should be liaising with university authority with a view to accessing research findings that would help improve curriculum planning at primary, junior and senior secondary school levels. English curriculum planners should make adequate provision for the teaching of punctuation marks across all levels of our educational systems. Follow-up inspection to see to the proper implementation of the curriculum be made regularly at all levels. English textbooks designed for use at these levels be made to reflect the curriculum by hundred percent

Implication of the findings for students.

This research work revealed that proper use of punctuation marks has great potential of improving the students' performance in essay writing. Coherence, idea packaging and paragraphing could be achieved by exposing the students to the use of these punctuation marks. Meaning making of the passage written could also be achieved if students are taught how to manipulate punctuation.

The students exposure to the importance of punctuation would help reduce the unnecessary mistakes made during external examination which usually results in mass failure in English and help improve the chances of their success in the exams.

Implication of the findings for teachers of English language.

Workshop, seminar and paper presentation on the new strategies of teaching punctuation marks be organized for English teachers regularly .Also, English teachers be made to write an aptitude test on punctuation marks by asking them to punctuate an un punctuated passage or by asking them to answer some oral questions on the use of punctuation marks before they are employed. The teachers be acquainted with new findings of how punctuation marks could be taught in particular and in English in general Teachers should see to it that enough exercises are given to students on punctuation marks, the exercises marked and necessary correction made.

Implication of the findings for textbook writers.

English textbook should not only treat punctuation marks but show how new strategies could be used to teach each punctuation mark. Adequate exercises on punctuation marks alone with their answers are provided. English textbook writers be accessing research findings that would help improve the contents of their works.

Implication of the findings for government and other stakeholders

The state government should recruit enough and qualified English teachers so that a lot of impact could be made in the field. The supervision of English teachers by the

senior secondary school management board be objectively regularly made. External bodies such as WAEC and NECCO be setting questions directly on punctuation marks both in objective and essay papers. as they do to other aspects of the language.

5.4 Recommendations of the Areas for Further Study

This study could not cover all the research areas in the use of punctuation marks in English language. Its delimitation to use of fulstop, comma, colon and semi-colon on the written English of SS2 students of some selected schools in Kano state metropolis Zonal Education Offices, the study recommends that similar researches should be carried out in the following areas:

- The other punctuation marks.
- The other punctuation marks in relation to SS3 students written English. of senior secondary schools.
- The use of all punctuation marks on written performance of SS2 and SS3 of senior secondary schools in Kano.
- The same research topic could be carried out on both private and public schools to derive the differences between the two in the state.
- The research on the use of punctuation marks on written performance of the students of senior secondary schools should be carried out in all the zonal offices across the state.

INTERACTIVE STRATEGIES FOR THE TEACHING OF PUNCTUATION MARKS.

PUNCTUATION MARKS RECOGNITION

A plastic cube could be used with each cube bearing one of the punctuation marks. Teacher shows the cube to the students and the students respond by saying the punctuation mark contained. After that, some students could be asked to come to the front of the class and show their bearing these punctuation marks and get the class responding by saying the punctuation mark each cube shown contained. This could continue until the recognition of the marks is perfected

PUNCTUATION MARK PRODUCTION

Students under the supervision of the teacher could be asked to produce the selected punctuation marks, by writing them on their paper cut cubes and demonstrate to the class .E.g. [.] [,] [:] and [:]

MATCHING SOUND WITH THE PUNCTUATION MARKS

Students could also be matching the selected punctuation marks with the sounds of the same produced by the teacher .E.g. A teacher can say comma and a student shows the symbol of the sound produced by the teacher.

SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION STRATEGIES.

A teacher can ask the students to construct sentences using the selected punctuation marks. Then, he collects the work and marks with a view to assessing whether or not they have done the right thing.

PUNCTUATING SIMPLE PASSAGE.

A teacher writes a small passage on the board which is not punctuated and asks the students to copy it in their exercise books and punctuate it with the appropriate selected marks.

A SIMPLE PASSAGE PUNCTUATION BASED ON QUESTION AND STATEMENT.

The students can be engaged in copying a passage in their exercise books, and punctuating based on question and answer/statement .E.g .A teacher points at the first blank space, which is not punctuated and asks the students to mention the punctuation mark required to fill in the blank space. This could continue until all the selected punctuation marks are used.

.PHONIC GAME

A phonic like game can be used as another way or strategy for teaching punctuation mark. E.g. Full stop, Comma, Colon, Semi-colon can be written on a card, student can pick a card , you then, write sentences without punctuation mark on flash card and give to some students to hold high in front of the class . Then, students are asked which punctuation mark should be used in the sentences, upon saying this, the student holding that punctuation mark will come out and show it.

WORKING IN PAIRS STRATEGIES

Each student writes passage omitting the selected punctuation marks from the text Then, student A gives student B .Student A reads the passage(with the punctuation marks) to student B. Student B inserts the punctuation marks required. This could continue until each has its work done.

PUNCTUATION GAME STRATEGIES

A teacher writes different structures on strips indicating selected punctuation marks missing. Then, he divides the class into small groups. One pupil from a group picks

up a strip reads out the structure or shows it .While someone else supplies the correct punctuation mark required.

SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION GAME.

Here, a teacher writes components of sentence and selected punctuation marks on flash cards. Then, students can be engaged in the game by inviting some of them to come to the front and pick the flash cards required of a sentence construction, without a punctuation mark. Then, the is asked of the punctuation mark required, the student holding the required punctuation mark comes out and be in between the students holding the sentence components where the punctuation mark is required.

The [manager] [asked for the following] [pin] [card] [clips] [and] [ruler.]
--

[The manager] [askedfor the following] [:] [pin] [,] [card] [,] [clips] [,][and] [ruler].
--

[W] [H] [O] =[W] [.] [H][.] [O][.]

[B][B] [C] = [B][.] [B] [.] [C] [.]
[Eno] [is] [polite] [gentle] [hardworking] [and] [respectful] [young girl].
Eno is a polite ,gentle, hardworking ,respectful ,young girl.

EXPLORING DEEP KNOWLEDGE USING HIGHER-ORDED THINKING

The teacher asks students to share what they know about the selected punctuation mark by asking probing questions such as:

Where can we find comma?

How do we know where to put a comma in a sentence?

How does this make the text easier to understand?

What if we did not use comma?.How would this affect the writing?

How are these marks different in purpose?

Do you think we find more full stops in writing than comma?

A student draws a comma on the board and the teacher demonstrates how the same can be used to show an apostrophe, a semi-colon..

Ask students to talk about punctuation decisions they have made as writers and they made them. Use this information to assess students' understanding of written conventions .Be wary of "teacher pleasing" answers; listen for evidence of thorough understanding of punctuation usage.

Begin to collect picture books (both fiction and nonfiction) that contain interesting punctuation in them. As you read aloud to students, notice punctuation and comment

on how it helped you to read and understand the text. Notice punctuation in the: real world:, such as in ads or menus, and comment on it to students. You will be bringing punctuation to the forefront of their thinking even before you begin serious study.

Confer with students asking them how they are using punctuation to shape their reading. Confer again asking how they are using punctuation to create meaning in their writing.

Allow students to talk about and “play” with punctuation .Establish partnerships where students can discuss “how they want their writing to sound” and get feedback on which punctuation will do that.

Make sure the chart is accurate and readable. Refer students to the chart when they have punctuation question.(Adapted from NTI 2000&2008).

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APPENDIX I

Objective Test For Students

Name of school _____

Name of student _____

Class _____

English Test On Punctuation marks.

Time: 35Minutes.

Instructions: Answer all the questions provided by inserting a comma in the followings.

- (1) Giraffe is a tall long necked long-legged animal.
- (2) He is a tall handsome smart and ambitious Youngman.
- (3) No it has stopped.
- (4) Unfortunately she injured her k skiing.
- (5) Ibrahim lent me his biro book and ruler.
- (6) Hello Mr. Carter.
- (7) MissZainab can I borrow a pencil please.
- (8) Fly Over Bridge Kano.
- (9) Dear Sir
- (10) Yours faithfully

APPENDIX II

Instructions: Answer all the questions provided by inserting a fulstop in the followings

- (1). He drew a horse
- (2). Please don't be late
- (3). J K Ibrahim
- (4). What time is it?
- (5). 1Sabon Gari 2 Kurmi market 3 Dawanau market
- (6). N1345K NE230
- (7). Dockyard Road Apapa
- (8). Yours Sincerely,
Ibrahim
- (9). Help! The boy is drowning
- (10). Get out of my office

APPENDIX III

Instructions: Answer all the questions provided by inserting a Colon or Semi-colon in the followings

- (1). The ratio was 2 1.
- (2). Kano WA Royal Pacific.
- (3). To err is human to forgive is divine.
- (4). I have no sense of direction I always get lost when I visit a new town.
- (5). Umar What have you got in the bag?.
- (6). The psychologist used quantitative analysis the economist used qualitative analysis.
- (7). She loved him he hated her.
- (8). A decision has been made we will buy chocolate before we make any other decision.
- (9). Dear Mr.Haruna
- (10). There is no cloud in the sky it is extremely hot.

APPENDIX IV

ANSWERS OF OBJECTIVE TEST

Award 2 marks for each correct answer and zero mark for incorrect answer i.e $2 \times 30 = 60$ marks

COMMA.

1. Tall, long necked,
2. Tall, handsome,
3. No,
4. Unfortunately,
5. Biro,
6. Hello,
7. Zainab,
8. Fly over bridge,
9. Dear Sir,
10. Yours faithfully,

FULSTOP

1. Horse.
2. Late
3. J.K. Ibrahim.
4. Is it?.

5. 1.Sabon Gari 2.Kurmi market 3.Dawanau market

6. N 13.45K , E 2.30.

7. Apapa.

8. Ibrahim.

9. Drowning.

10. Office.

COLON AND SEME-COLON.

1. 2:1

2. Kano WA: Royal Pacific

3. To err is human;

4. Sense of direction;

5. Umar

6 .Quantitative Analysis;

7. She loves him:

8. Adecision has been made;

9 Dear Mr Haruna:

10. There is no cloud in the sky;

SECTION 2: Essay writing

Write an essay of not more than 250 words on “The Subject I like must”

APPENDIX V

THE LESSONS TO BE TAUGHT TO THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

Weekly scheme of work.

1st week

- a. The use of full stop and
- b. The use of comma.

2nd week

- a. The use of colon and
- b. The use of semi-colon

3rd week

- a. The use of hyphen and
- b. Quotation mark

4th week

- a. The use of capitalization
- b. Apostrophe and

5th week

- a. The use of quotation mark
- b. The use of exclamation mark.

c. 6thWeek

- a. The use of dash.
- b. The use of the inverted comma.

Six weeks would be used for the treatment due to the number of the punctuation marks and in view of the students' standard.

Appendix VI

Class: SS II

Subject: English

Topic: The Hyphen

Objectives: The students should recognize hyphen - join two or more words to form compound words, divide a word when there is no room to complete it, at the end of a line, to add prefixes to a word and to form the nouns or adjectives from some verb + preposition.

STEP I: The researcher introduces the hyphen to the students: e.g.\

Step II: The researcher teaches the students how a hyphen can be used to divide a word when there is no room to complete it at the end of a line, by telling them that, the word can be divided at syllable break.

Hyphen for example can only be divided as a hyphen and not hyphen.

Step II: The students at this step are taught, how to use hyphen to form a compound word. E.g. Mother – in – law, twenty – one, thirty – eight.

Step III: The students are also taught, how to use hyphen to add prefixes to a word.

E.g.

Ex-official, Don African ex – president.

STEP IV: The researcher teaches the students how to use hyphen to form the noun or adjectives from some verbs + preposition. E..g

(a). We watched the plane take off . The take- off was successful.

(b). Some restaurants serve food you can take away and eat at home. This is called take- away food.

APPENDIX VII

Class: SS II

Subject: English

Topic: Exclamation Mark!

Objectives: At the end of the lesson, the students should be able to use exclamation mark to show exclamation.

Step I: The research teaches the students to recognize exclamation mark!

Step II: The researcher shows the student how to use exclamation mark in sentence construction that shows exclamation.

E.g. Help! Help!!, the boy shouted from the river.

APPENDIX VIII

Class: SS2

Subject; English.

Topic: The use of comma.

Objectives:

1. At the end of the lesson, the students should be able to use comma in separating items in a list.
2. They should also be able to use comma to enclose appositive.
3. They should also be able to mark off noun phrase in direct speech
4. They should use comma in date to separate the name of months.
5. They should be able to use comma to mark Adjectives or Adverbial modification.

Step I: All the students in the class would be taught, the uses of comma as stated in the objectives generally.

Step II: The students will be divided into meaningful groups with each group assigned to work on a particular use of comma.

Step III: The teacher asks each group to come out and tell the class what was discussed in their group.

Step IV: The teacher conducts a general discussion on what each of the groups presented to the rest of the class with a view to correcting erroneous presentation made.

Step IV: The teacher then reassigns the groups with different uses of comma to work on.

APPENDIX IX

Class: SS II

Subject: English

TOPIC: The semi- Colon.

OBJECTIVES: At the end of the lesson the students should be able to:

- a. Recognize the semi – colon.
- b. Use semi – colon to separate items in a list. When items have several words and often need a comma within themselves.
- c. Use the semi – colon to indicate a pause slightly longer than a comma.
- d. Use the semi – colon to divide a sentence which consists of two balanced statements.
- e. Use the semi – colon to set off retain adverb.

Step I: In this step the students would be taught to recognize the semi – colon drawing it on the board. E.g. ;

Step II: The students would be taught how to separate items in a list when items have several words and often need a comma within themselves.
E.g.

You should remember these things when you go camping; check all your gear in order; see that you are equipped for emergencies; if you are trekking over uninhabited country; take a good supply of food; take a first aid that you never know when it might be needed and as far as possible plan you route.

Step III: The students would also be taught how to set off certain adverbs while constructing sentences. E.g. however; nevertheless; hence;

Step IV: The use of the semi-colon to divide sentences of two balanced statements would be explained to the students. E.g.

A man who evades paying his taxes is a bad citizen; but one who pays without thinking why he is paying is equally bad.

Step V: Semi-colon slightly longer than a comma would be explained to the students by writing a sentence on the blackboard to show that at work.

E.g.

It is often better to tackle the difficult question rather than the easy one; because the difficult question is likely to draw the best out of you.

APPENDIX X

Class: SS II

Subject: English

Topic: The Dash (--)

Objective: At the end of the lesson the students should be able to use Dash to mark parentheses, an abrupt change of thought, before repeated words.

Step I: The researcher teaches the students how to use Dash to mark parentheses or an abrupt of thought. E.g.

- a. At last – to cut a long story short – we reached the harbor.
- b. Proceeding to our next point – but I fear I bore you.

Step II: The researcher also shows the students how to use Dash(-) for repeated words. E.g. ----- Hence the tendencies to correcting thieving, to lying, so general among children – tendencies.

APPENDIX XI

Class: SS II

Subject: English

Topic: The use of Colon:

Objectives: At the end of the lesson the students should be able to

- (a) Recognize a colon.
- (b) Use the colon to separate a sentence which is complete in sense.
- (c) Use a colon to introduce a saying.

STEP I: The students would be taught how to recognize a colon. E.g. (:)

STEP II: The use of colon to separate a sentence which is complete in sense would be taught to the students. E.g

Try to be honest at all time: nothing is so important in business life.

STEP III: The students would also be taught how a colon is used to introduce a saying. E.g.

We all know the famous of quotation from shake spear; “All the world’s stage”

APPENDIX XII

Class: SS II:

Subject: English

Topic: The Inverted Commas.

Objectives: At the end of the lesson the students should be able to use inverted commas to indicate direct speech and quotation from the text, words, plays, essays, etc.

Step I: The researcher shows to the students how inverted commas are used in enclosing direct speech. E.g.

“A strong house is this, said I to Antonia.

“Mary” I said solemnly, “you must not laugh at me now”.

Step II: The researcher also teaches the students how to enclose quotation from texts. E.g.

“Blakes moor in H – shire”.

Step V: The students would also be taught the use of quotation mark to enclose slangs. E.g.

He was so ill after drinking three bottles of Ogogoro that he rarely

“quenched”.

APPENDIX XIII

Class: SS II

Subject: English

Topic: The square brackets

Objectives: The students are expected to use square bracket to enclose words within quoted matter which are not part of the original.

Step I: The students be taught how the square bracket is used in enclosing a part or words which in not part of the original text. E.g

- a. The critical passage is: I do not deny that. I (the treasure) played a part in my plans.
- b. I do not say that. It (the book) worth buying.
- c. I have not seen the reason why that he (the man) in guilty of the offence.

APPENDIX XIV

Class: SS II

Subject: English

Topic: virgule

Objectives: At the end of the lesson the students are expected to make use of virgule to give an alternative or to divide lines of verse when they are not written on separate lines.

Step I: The researcher shows the virgule (/) to the students for recognition.

Step II: The researcher teacher the students how to the virgule to give alternative. E.g.

- a. Bring your wife/girl friend with you.
- b. Every student should bring his/her own pencil.

Step III: The researcher also teaches the students how to use virgule to divide lines of verse. e.g.

“Turning and turning in the widening gyne the falcon count hear the falcon/thing fall apart: the centre cannot hold/merely anarchy is loosed upon the world.

APPENDIX XV

Class: SS II

Subject: English

Topic: Apostrophe

Objectives: At the end of the lesson students should identify apostrophe among the punctuation marks. They should also be able to use the apostrophe with a singular noun, a plural noun that ends in an (s) and a plural noun that does not end in an (s)

Step I: The student be taught to recognize the mark by drawing it on the blackboard, e.g.

's in respect of a singular noun.

' in respect of a plural noun that ends in

's in respect of a plural noun that does not end in an (s)

Step II: The students would be shown and taught the uses of the above mentioned apostrophe

This is Umar's hat.

These are Government Girls' colleges.

These are men's dresses

APPENDIX XVI

Class:SS2

Subject: English

Topic: The use of full stop.

Objective: At the end of the lesson the students should be able to

- a. Recognize full stop.
- b. Use full stop to end a sentence.
- c. Use full stop in abbreviation.
- d. Use the full stop at the end of a direct question.
- e. Use the full stop for shortened forms.
- f. Use the full stop at the end of an address in letter writing.

Step I: The students would be taught the uses of full stop as stated in the objectives of the lessons.

Step I: The students would be taught the use of full stop in ending a sentence. e.g.

- Ibrahim is a teacher.
- Musa and Zainab are brother and sister.

Step II: The use of full stop to end an address would be taught at this step. e.g.

Aminu Kano Commercial College,

P.M.B. 3013,

Kano.

22nd , February, 2014.

Step III: At this step the students would be taught the use of full stop in abbreviation e.g.

B.B.C,N.N.P.C ,C.T.V.

Step IV: The students would also be taught the use of full stop to end a direct question. E.g.

- a. What is your name?
- b. How old are you?
- c. What is a full stop?

APPENDIX XVII

Class: SS II

Subject: English

Topic: Ellipsis

Objectives: The students should at the end of the lesson be able to recognize and use Ellipsis correctly.

Step I: The researcher helps the students recognize the ellipsis, e.g

Step II: The researcher also teaches the students how to use ellipsis to show a deliberately missed out word in quotation e.g.

“Turning and turning..... things fall apart.

APPENDIX XVIII

Class: SS II

Subject: English

Topic: The inverted commons

Objectives: At the end of the lesson, the students should be able to inverted commons to indicate direct speech and quotation from the filets, records, plays, essays e.t.c.

Step I: The researcher shows to the students how inverted commons are used in endorsing direct speech e.g.

“ A strong house is this” said I do Antonia.

“May” I said solemnly, “you must not laugh at me now”.

Step III: The researcher also teachers the students how to enclose quotation from tents. E.g.

Blacks moor in H-shine”

APPENDIX XIX

Class: SS II

Subject: English

Topic: The quotation mark

Objectives: At the end of the lesson the students should be able to

- a. I identify the quotation mark in pairs or in single. E.g. “ “
- b. Use the quotation mark with exact words, specific concept, term, borrowed expression and slang's

Step I: The mark would be drawn on the blackboard both in pairs or single for the students to recognize. E.g.” “ ‘ ‘

Step II: The students would be taught how to use the mark in quoting the exact words of the speaker. E.g.

The Chairman frowned and said, “ cheat the workers? Count we out”

Step III: They would also be taught how to use the quotation mark to enclose specific concept or term. e.g.

The word “stagflation” is the appropriate form for the present economic situation.

Step IV: The use of quotation mark for borrowed expression would also be taught to them. E.g.

The Yorubas in Serra Leone were inferred to as “ekus”

Step V: The students would also be taught the use of quotation mark to enclose slangs. E.g.

He was so ill after drinking three bottles of Gogoro that he rarely “quenched”.

All the lessons would be evaluated when the researcher goes to the field and gives a post test to the students.

APPENDIX XX

GOVERNMENT SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL GWAMMAJA

PRE-TEST ESSAY RESULT EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

Score S/N	12 Marks Fulstop	20 Marks Comma	4 Marks Colon	4 Marks Semi Colon
1	6	0	0	0
2	2	0	0	0
3	2	2	0	0
4	2	6	0	0
5	2	2	0	0
6	2	8	0	0
7	0	0	0	0
8	2	14	0	0
9	0	2	0	0
10	0	0	0	0
11	2	2	0	0
12	2	0	0	0
13	2	4	0	0
14	8	2	0	0
15	8	2	0	0
16	2	0	0	0
17	4	8	0	2
18	4	8	0	0
19	2	8	0	0
20	2	2	0	0
21	2	2	0	2
22	4	2	0	0
23	2	0	0	0
24	2	2	0	0
25	2	4	0	0
26	2	0	0	0
27	2	0	0	0
28	4	2	0	0
29	2	2	0	0
30	2	4	0	0
31	2	2	0	0
32	2	0	0	0
33	2	0	0	0
34	4	2	0	0
35	0	0	0	0
36	2	0	0	0

37	6	0	0	0
38	2	4	0	0
39	2	6	0	0
40	6	2	0	0
41	2	0	0	0
42	2	8	0	0
43	2	2	0	0
44	4	4	0	0
45	2	0	0	0
46	2	4	0	0
47	4	6	0	0
48	2	4	0	0
49	2	4	0	0
50	4	2	0	0

APPENDIX XXI

GOVERNMENT SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL GWAMMAJA

POST-TEST ESSAY RESULT (EXPERIMENTAL GROUP)

Score	20 Marks	20 Marks	10 Marks	10 Marks Semi Colon
S/N	Fulstop	Comma	Colon	
1	8	14	4	2
2	12	12	4	4
3	12	14	4	4
4	10	12	4	4
5	8	14	4	4
6	10	16	4	4
7	10	12	2	4
8	10	14	4	4
9	10	14	2	0
10	10	10	4	4
11	6	14	4	4
12	2	4	0	4
13	10	14	4	4
14	10	10	4	2
15	10	10	2	4
16	8	14	4	2
17	10	12	2	2
18	10	14	4	4
19	10	14	0	2
20	10	12	4	4
21	10	14	2	4
22	10	16	4	4
23	10	14	4	2
24	8	12	4	4
25	20	16	2	4
26	20	12	4	4
27	8	12	4	2
28	10	6	4	0
29	10	12	4	4
30	10	14	2	4
31	4	10	0	0
32	10	14	2	0
33	8	12	2	4
34	10	12	4	4
35	10	12	2	2

36	8	6	2	2
37	12	12	2	4
38	12	12	4	4
39	12	14	4	4
40	12	12	4	4
41	12	12	0	0
42	10	14	4	4
43	12	16	4	4
44	10	14	4	0
45	10	14	2	4
46	12	10	4	4
47	8	12	2	2
48	12	16	4	4
49	12	12	2	2
50	12	14	4	4

APPENDIX XXII

GOVERNMENT SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL GWAMMAJA

PRE-TEST OBJECTIVE RESULT (EXPERIMENTAL GROUP)

	20			
Score	Marks	20 Marks	10 Marks	10 Marks
S/N	Fulstop	Comma	Colon	Semi Colon
1	12	12	0	6
2	12	10	0	0
3	10	6	0	2
4	12	4	2	0
5	4	2	2	0
6	8	10	0	0
7	10	4	0	0
8	12	16	0	0
9	14	6	2	0
10	4	2	0	0
11	14	4	0	4
12	8	2	0	2
13	12	10	6	4
14	12	6	0	0
15	4	4	0	0
16	8	10	0	2
17	12	10	0	6
18	14	10	4	6
19	10	12	0	4
20	10	12	0	2
21	12	12	2	0
22	12	8	4	2
23	14	2	0	0
24	8	10	0	4
25	12	8	0	0
26	4	2	0	0
27	4	2	0	0
28	19	4	0	6
29	10	6	0	0
30	4	12	4	0
31	12	10	2	4
32	12	6	0	0
33	8	2	2	0
34	14	12	2	2
35	10	4	0	2

36	14	4	0	0
37	10	2	0	0
38	14	4	0	0
39	12	4	2	0
40	14	14	4	6
41	6	2	2	2
42	16	10	4	4
43	12	4	4	8
44	10	4	2	0
45	12	0	0	4
46	10	6	2	0
47	14	12	4	0
48	12	12	2	2
49	12	14	2	2
50	12	4	0	2

APPENDIX XXIII

GOVERNMENT SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL GWAMMAJA

POST-TEST OBJECTIVE RESULT (EXPERIMENTAL GROUP)

Score S/N	20 Marks Fulstop	20 Marks Comma	10 Marks Colon	10 Marks Semi Colon
1	12	18	4	4
2	16	18	8	4
3	12	14	4	4
4	18	18	4	2
5	16	16	4	4
6	14	20	4	6
7	14	28	6	4
8	14	20	4	0
1	14	18	4	2
10	14	18	2	4
11	16	16	4	4
12	12	16	2	4
13	18	18	8	4
14	121	12	6	4
15	14	18	4	4
16	14	16	6	4
17	14	18	4	6
18	18	20	4	4
19	14	20	4	4
20	14	18	4	4
21	16	20	4	4
22	12	17	4	4
23	16	12	4	2
24	18	18	0	6
25	14	20	0	2
26	12	18	6	4
27	8	18	2	4
28	14	20	6	0
29	16	18	4	4
30	14	20	4	6
31	12	16	4	6
32	14	20	4	4
33	14	12	0	2
34	14	16	4	4
35	14	20	2	2
36	14	16	4	2
37	12	12	2	4

38	16	18	4	4
39	16	20	4	4
40	14	20	4	6
41	8	14	4	4
42	16	20	4	4
43	16	20	6	4
44	16	20	6	4
45	16	18	4	6
46	16	18	10	4
47	14	16	22	4
48	14	20	2	4
49	16	18	2	4
50	18	20	4	4

APPENDIX XXIV

RUMFA COLLEGE PRE TEST ESSAY RESULTS

S/N	12	20	4	4
	FULSTOP	COMMA	COLON	SEMI-COLON
1	4	6	0	0
2	2	10	0	0
3	2	8	0	0
4	2	4	0	0
5	2	4	0	0
6	0	4	0	0
7	2	10	0	0
8	4	4	0	0
9	8	14	0	0
10	4	8	0	0
11	6	4	0	0
12	4	6	0	0
13	2	10	0	0
14	2	2	0	0
15	4	10	0	0
16	2	10	0	0
17	2	10	0	0
18	2	10	0	0
19	2	4	0	0

20	2	12	0	0
21	2	4	0	0
22	0	2	0	0
23	2	8	0	0
24	2	12	0	0
25	2	0	0	0
26	2	0	0	0
27	4	12	0	0
28	4	4	0	0
29	2	0	0	0
30	0	10	0	0
31	4	4	0	0
32	0	10	0	0
33	2	2	0	0
34	2	6	0	0
35	2	8	0	0
36	2	4	0	0
37	4	4	0	0
38	2	4	0	0
39	4	8	0	0
40	2	2	0	0
41	10	6	0	0
42	2	0	0	0

43	4	4	0	0
44	2	4	0	0
45	0	4	0	0
46	6	2	0	0
47	2	6	0	0
48	2	2	0	0
49	2	6	0	0
50	2	10	0	0

RUMFA COLLEGE POST-TEST ESSAY RESULTS

S/N	12	20	4	4
	Fulstop	Comma	Colon	SEMI COLON
1	4	6	0	0
2	6	16	0	0
3	2	4	0	0
4	4	14	0	0
5	4	8	0	0
6	4	4	0	0
7	2	10	0	0
8	4	6	0	0
9	10	10	0	0
10	4	14	0	0
11	4	0	0	0
12	2	8	0	0
13	2	10	0	0
14	2	6	0	0
15	2	14	0	0
16	4	10	0	0
17	4	12	0	0
18	4	8	0	0
19	2	0	0	0
20	2	14	0	0

21	4	6	0	0
22	6	12	0	0
23	6	6	0	0
24	4	10	0	0
25	6	4	0	0
26	4	6	0	0
27	4	12	0	0
28	8	4	0	0
29	4	2	0	0
30	6	6	0	0
31	4	4	0	0
32	6	12	0	0
33	2	12	0	0
34	4	2	2	0
35	4	4	0	0
36	6	6	0	0
37	2	6	0	0
38	4	8	0	0
39	4	2	0	0
40	4	2	0	0
41	2	2	0	0
42	6	2	0	0
43	4	0	0	0

44	4	10	0	0
45	6	2	0	0
46	4	2	0	0
47	4	2	0	0
48	4	0	0	2
49	4	2	0	0
50	4	6	0	0

RUMFA COLLEGE PRE-TEST OBJECTIVE RESULTS

S/N	20	20	10	10
	FULSTOP	COMMA	COLON	SEMI-COLON
1	12	10	0	0
2	12	10	0	0
3	14	16	2	0
4	12	16	4	0
5	10	18	4	0
6	12	12	6	0
7	12	14	0	0
8	14	14	2	2
9	14	14	0	0
10	6	8	2	0
11	12	16	4	0
12	12	10	6	2
13	14	14	0	0
14	12	8	0	0
15	12	12	0	0
16	12	18	0	0
17	8	8	4	2
18	12	16	4	4
19	10	12	0	0
20	14	16	4	0

21	10	12	0	0
22	8	12	0	0
23	12	6	0	0
24	12	14	6	4
25	12	12	4	0
26	10	8	4	0
27	10	12	0	0
28	12	14	0	0
29	4	8	2	0
30	10	12	4	0
31	14	8	6	6
32	10	14	4	0
33	10	12	0	0
34	10	12	0	0
35	14	8	0	0
36	12	12	2	0
37	6	0	0	0
38	16	18	6	0
39	10	16	6	0
40	10	10	0	0
41	12	14	4	2
42	8	8	2	0
43	12	10	2	0

44	8	0	2	0
45	2	4	0	0
46	12	12	4	0
47	12	14	6	0
48	10	8	4	0
49	10	8	4	0
50	12	10	4	0

RUMFA COLLEGE POST TEST OBJECTIVE RESULTS

S/N	20	20	10	10
	FULSTOP	COMMA	COLON	SEMI-COLON
1	12	12	4	2
2	12	10	0	0
3	14	14	2	0
4	14	18	2	6
5	12	18	6	0
6	4	6	4	4
7	12	16	0	0
8	14	20	2	2
9	14	16	0	2
10	10	14	2	0
11	12	18	2	0
12	16	16	8	4
13	14	12	0	4
14	14	12	4	0
15	10	12	4	6
16	12	12	2	4
17	8	10	4	0
18	14	12	2	2
19	6	10	4	0
20	14	16	6	4

21	10	8	4	4
22	10	14	2	0
23	10	12	0	0
24	16	12	2	6
25	14	12	2	0
26	12	12	2	0
27	12	18	6	0
28	8	16	0	0
29	8	6	0	0
30	12	16	6	2
31	14	16	6	4
32	12	14	4	0
33	14	14	6	2
34	14	14	4	2
35	14	16	6	2
36	10	20	2	2
37	6	18	2	0
38	14	16	2	6
39	12	12	0	0
40	10	6	0	0
41	12	18	6	4
42	6	8	2	0
43	8	8	4	0

44	12	20	6	0
45	12	6	0	0
46	8	6	0	0
47	12	10	6	4
48	6	8	2	0
49	12	16	4	2
50	8	10	6	2