

**EVALUATION OF KENYA INSTITUTE OF
CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT APPROVED ENGLISH
TEXTBOOKS FOR TEACHING READING
COMPREHENSION IN KENYAN SECONDARY
SCHOOLS**

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF
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FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS
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DECLARATION

This study is my original work and has not been presented for the award of a degree in any other university or for any other award.


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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my parents Mr. & Mrs. John Muitherero. Thank you for your endeavour to see me through school when all the odds were stacked against it. May god bless you for your indescribable love.

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OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

- Textbook:** The main resource material used to teach reading and as a reference for both teachers and learners. Textbooks are vetted and approved by KICD.
- Reading:** The process of extracting meaning from interaction and involvement with a text.
- Strategy:** A plan of action or technique intended to accomplish a specific goal.
- Text:** printed materials in textbooks for teaching reading.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DCL:	Desired Competence Levels
DRA:	During-Reading Activities
EFL:	English as a Foreign Language
EGRA:	Early Grade Reading Assessment
ELT:	English Language Teaching
ESL:	English as a Second language
FPE:	Free Primary Education
FRF:	Fry Readability Formula
FRG:	Fry Readability Graph
FRI:	Fry Readability Index
FSE:	Free Secondary Education
KCSE:	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
KICD:	Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development
KLB:	Kenya Literature Bureau
MCL:	Minimum Competence Levels
MOE:	Ministry of Education
NRP:	National Reading Panel
NSW:	New South Wales
PRRA:	Pre-Reading Activities
PSRA:	Post-Reading Activities
RCS:	Reading Comprehension Skill
RA:	Reading Activities
RI:	Readability Index
ROK:	Republic of Kenya
SA:	South Africa
SAGA:	Semi-Autonomous Government Agency
SL:	Second Language

ABSTRACT

This study evaluated textbooks approved by KICD for teaching reading in Kenyan secondary schools with particular focus to the form one class. The motivation for the study is the poor performance in English in national exams more so in areas that require application of the Reading comprehension Skill (RCS). Besides, reading is a basic literacy skill which is crucial in the acquisition of communicative competence of English as SL. However, there is a challenge in the acquisition of this competence (Uwezo Report 2015). The study had three objectives: to establish the readability index of the texts, to determine the text types for presenting reading materials and finally, to find out the comprehension strategies provided in the texts. Though there are many aspects that contribute to competence in reading, this study focused on text variables. The study used the Schema Theory of reading. Data was collected and analyzed using the Content Analysis Approach (CAA). The Fry Readability Formula (FRF) and an evaluative criteria was developed based on the objectives of the syllabus. The two were used as data collection instruments. Data was presented using the Fry Readability Graph (FRG) and tables. It was analysed using (FRG) and discussions. The study established that the readability indices were inappropriate for form one. This means that most of the form ones would find the textbooks too easy. Furthermore, all the materials were found to be authentic implying that learners are exposed to language as used in natural settings. In addition, most of the textbooks had all the text types albeit with a bias towards local and non-fiction categories. The implication is that exposure to culturally diversified and literary texts is little. Moreover, pre-reading and post-reading activities were extensively used. However, none of the textbooks had provided during-reading activities. This scenario presupposes that learners are not able to engage and interrogate the materials as they read since there are no activities to assist them do so. This study recommends that local and non-fictional texts be reduced in favour of culturally diversified and fictional texts respectively. During-reading activities should also be included.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers the background to the study, statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions and research assumptions. In addition, the chapter presents the justification, significance and scope and limitation of the study. The research is evaluated KICD approved textbooks for teaching the reading comprehension skill in form one.

1.1 Background to the Study

Currently, the importance of English both internationally and nationally, is undisputed. Eggleston (1980) observes that of the 4000-5000 living languages, English is the most widely used. Eggleston (1980) adds that English continues to spread fast as its importance continues to grow. For instance, it is a major vehicle of debate at the United Nations, as well as being the official language of international aviation. As a country, Kenya has recognized the international importance of English. Indeed, Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) syllabus (2002) states that English is the pre-eminent language of international communication; those who master it reap numerous academic, social and professional benefits. Hence, it is necessary that Kenyans learn and acquire proficiency in English.

Consequently, to enhance its acquisition by the Kenyan populace, English has been entrenched in the syllabus and hence taught in school. In fact, the language policy requires that pupils be taught in the language of the catchment area up to standard three, after which English takes over as the medium of instruction all the way up to

tertiary level. Nevertheless, it is taught as a subject from standard one. This was recommended by the Gachathi Report (ROK 1976). This is necessary since in Kenya English enjoys a second language status. It plays both national and social roles. For instance, most documents of national importance are written in English and thereafter translated to other languages; examples being the constitution and acts of parliament. Moreover, it is the official language in Kenya.

The English language has four skills: writing, reading, listening and speaking. The current study focused on the reading skill. Each language skill has several sub-skills. For example, skimming, intensive reading, loud reading, speed reading and comprehension are sub-skills of the reading skill. Furthermore, the syllabus (KIE 2002) stipulates the reading skills that should be taught at each grade. The comprehension skill is to be taught in form one. This study delved into the teaching of the reading comprehension skill. A skill is the ability to carry out a task. The comprehension skill equips learners with the ability to read a text and extract meaning from it. This does not happen naturally. Students have to be taught how to do it. They should also be given opportunities to use the skill until they perfect in it. The comprehension skill is very crucial in the success of one's secondary school education. The foundation for secondary school reading is laid in form one (KIE 2002). Therefore, it is important to establish whether the variables used to lay this foundation fit in with the theories of reading as well as the syllabus. These variables are many for example, learner or pedagogical. This study focused on textbook variables.

The KIE syllabus (2002) underscores the fact that the main objective of teaching English is to acquire communicative competence. How then do we gain this

communicative competence in English as envisioned in the syllabus? Reading is the most appropriate option available. Nuttal (1982) says that the best way to learn a second language is the immersion programme. The alternative is to read extensively in it. McGregor (1971) adds that second language students of English must read themselves into it or move into an English speaking environment. Eggleston (1980) lends credence to the argument by saying that, by exposing students to written communication, they develop such 'feel' and insight into the working of a language that we can even hope to surpass the native speaker, especially, in reading and writing skills. He further asserts that, extensive reading is the easiest way of bringing second language learners into sustained contact with English; if what they read is of interest to them, then the language of what they have read rings in their heads. Gloenwergen (2008) adds that reading widely creates a world bank of vocabulary in the learners' minds. This gives them new ideas as well as different forms of sentence structures that they can use in both their verbal and written communication. McGregor (1971) observes that books provide a conducive atmosphere for learning to take place; little reading stifles language learning. Reading therefore, holds the key to the development of effective communicative competence in English for second language learners.

Apart from the acquisition of communicative competence, reading plays many other roles. For instance, reading is very crucial in the Kenyan education system: students have to read in English for all the other subjects save for other languages. Gloenwergen (2008) says that proficiency in reading is a reliable indicator of a learner's potential for academic excellence and consequent positive contribution to society. He further observes that as soon as pupils enter school at age five and six,

they are taught how to read and write (since they can already listen and speak). Reading becomes a major part of their learning. KIE syllabus (2002) says that reading is vital, both in school and for life. Skillful reading will improve performance in all subjects. Furthermore, McGregor (2002) notes that reading is the central skill in secondary school education: all new knowledge is acquired through reading. He adds that books are still the most powerful and accessible source of learning for our students.

However, several studies have revealed that there are discrepancies between the expected standards as stipulated in the syllabus, and the reading levels that pupils exhibit in class right from lower primary to secondary school. For instance Wasanga & Kyalo (2007) noted that in Kenya, 72% of Std 3 pupils failed to attain the Desired Competence Levels (DCL) in English to enable them receive instructions in English as per the language policy in Kenya (ROK1976). Upon testing the reading and writing skills only 18% attained Desired Competence Level (DCL), 23% Minimum Competence Level (MCL) and 59% did not attain even the MCL. For Std 6 pupils only 20.8% of the sample attained DCL when tested for listening, speaking and reading skills. Dorica and Hans (2013) working for Uwezo, an organization that carries out literacy and numeracy surveys in East Africa, revealed that the acquisition of reading and counting is wanting, though they are foundational in learning and development. In their survey they found out that only 28% of std 3 pupils had acquired standard 2 level English language competencies. The others had not even achieved this level. Also 94% of standard 7 pupils had only achieved std 2 level competencies. Reading stories in English established that only 51% of Std 7

pupils passed Std 2 level English Test. Pupils perform poorly with reference to established curriculum levels (Appendix I Uwezo report 2015 published in the Daily Nation). In addition, Barbara (2012) using Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) tests established that in Kenya only 30% of grade 3 pupils could answer Grade 1 questions after reading a Grade 1 passage. This failure to acquire the expected reading competencies is reflected in the poor performance of English in national exams.

For instance, KNEC (2013) in its annual KCSE report notes that the poor performance in English is due to failure by the students to comprehend the text they were supposed to read during KCSE, or to have read in preparation for KCSE, or failure to understand the exam questions. For example, in paper one question two, (cloze test) which tests the candidates' ability to read with understanding; predicting the missing words using the contextual, syntactic and discourse clues provided, most students score below-average marks. Furthermore, in question one in paper two (comprehension), the report notes that it appears as if the candidates do not understand the passage, leading to poor scores. Besides, the report notes that the consistent poor performance in English paper three has been attributed to failure to read and interpret the texts as required. The report records that the average score is 18%. In fact, this poor performance in English led the cabinet secretary of education, professor J. Kaimenyi (2013), to form a task force whose mandate was to establish the cause of this poor performance and come up with possible remedies. In addition, independent researches like the current one need to be carried out with a view determining possible causes of this dismal performance in areas that require reading of given texts. This is because there is cognizance of the many factors that play a

role in the success or failure of a reading programme. These factors could be attributed to pedagogy, learners or materials. This study focused on materials.

The phrase ‘failure to understand’ has been repeated severally in the KNEC (2013) report. This means that students’ reading does not culminate with comprehension. For learners to understand what they read, they must be taught the ‘how’ of comprehension. The KIE (2002) syllabus has taken care of that by stipulating that the comprehension skill, which teaches students how to extract meaning from texts should be taught in form one. To do so effectively, materials for teaching reading should be commensurate with the linguistic level of learners. This is determined by use of readability indices. Secondly, materials need to cater for the diverse interests of learners by offering a variety of texts in topic, setting and format. Moreover, students should be taught how to extract meaning from texts by use of comprehension strategies. All this places a heavy responsibility on textbooks, more so in Kenya where the textbook may be the only resource available for both teachers and students.

According to Tomlinson (2011), a textbook is an organized manual of instructions of the subject matter of a curriculum and facilitates teaching. It aids in syllabus coverage, students involvement, emerging issues and use of appropriate language. Hence, materials for teaching reading in form one should be of appropriate language, cater for students’ involvement and reflect their variations in interests. This is because materials are the crux of the matter in a reading lesson. In fact, Kasule (2011) acknowledges that there are many components of a reading programme, but the two most essential constituents are the textbooks and instructional materials used by language instructors. Sheldon (1988) also says that

textbooks represent the heart of an ESL programme. Indeed, Kasule (2011) adds that in many public schools the textbook is usually the only resource the teachers' explanation is based on. In fact, Research has proved that the textbook is part and parcel of a successful ELT programme. Kiai & Maroko (2013) observe that the textbook in most cases becomes the real curriculum that is filtered through the lived culture of teachers and students as they interact during their classes. Nunan (1999) adds that a textbook is the key component in ELT and it is impossible for a class to do without it. In Kenya, teachers use textbooks to meet curriculum needs. This study focused on ELT textbooks.

Despite their numerous roles, textbooks have been criticized for various reasons. Lakovos (2011) has raised issues against textbooks: first, he says that they are inflexible and generally reflect the pedagogic, psychological and linguistic preferences of their authors. Secondly, textbooks are often too contrived and artificial in their presentation of the target language. Skierso (1991) also observes that textbooks inhibit the teacher's creativity especially if the sequence in the book is to be followed to the letter. Ur (1991) has noted that textbooks undermine the teachers' role since, teachers become transmitters of superimposed teaching practices. Due to these weaknesses, it is important to evaluate textbooks from various dimensions with a view to eliminating them through a book review. Moreover, evaluation could help establish a way of mitigating the weaknesses through adaptation or supplementation. The study at hand evaluated textbooks for teaching reading in form one.

Actually, the Kenyan government recognizes the importance of textbooks and funds are set aside annually for the purchase of textbooks in public schools. This is done

through Free Primary Education (FPE) programme and Subsidized Secondary Education (SSE) programme. Consequently, there are bookshops all over the country which stock textbooks making them readily available. However, this availability poses a challenge to teachers when it comes to choosing the appropriate ones. This happens because the available selection is too wide. The Government foresaw this challenge and formed Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD). KICD is a Semi-Autonomous Government Agency (SAGA) under the Ministry of Education (MOE). One of its responsibilities is vetting and approving textbooks for schools. KICD approves up to six titles per subject per grade. The challenge comes in choosing the most appropriate title out of the approved ones for a particular area of study. This is the point at which evaluation comes in especially in ELT; evaluation aids the teachers in choosing the most appropriate course book for each language skill. (More on ‘importance of evaluation’ in section two.) This study evaluated textbooks approved by KICD for teaching reading in Kenyan secondary schools with a focus to the form one class. It is therefore necessary to understand what evaluation is.

Various researchers have defined materials evaluation differently. Tomlinson (2011) says that evaluation refers to attempts to measure the value of materials. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) say that evaluation is a straightforward analytical matching process; matching needs to available solutions. Sheldon (1988) adds that, evaluation is a matter of assessing the fitness of something to a particular purpose. Ellis (1997) says that evaluation is considered as a procedure that involves examining learning materials. He adds that evaluation involves matching the needs and assumptions of a particular teaching - learning context to available materials,

with a view to establishing how far the materials match the expectations. This Study adopted Ellis (1997) definition since it examined the course books approved by KICD for teaching reading in form one and established the extent to which they fulfilled the requirements of the syllabus as well as meet the proposals of the Schema Theory of reading. (More on evaluation in chapter two).

Ellis (1997) has brought out two categories of evaluation. He begins by identifying predictive evaluation. This is carried out before materials are put to use. KICD carries out this kind of an evaluation before approving textbooks. Secondly, there is the retrospective evaluation. This is carried out after materials have been in use for sometime to help establish their effectiveness in meeting learner needs. This study undertook a retrospective evaluation of textbooks approved by KICD for teaching reading in form one. They have been in use since 2003. Ellis (1997) has also distinguished between macro and micro evaluation. Macro focuses on a whole set of textbooks while micro delves on a particular aspect in a textbook like a language skill. KICD undertakes macro evaluation before approving textbooks for teaching. The current study was micro since it evaluated materials for teaching the reading comprehension skill.

Retrospective textbook evaluation has been carried out over the years. Outside Kenya, evaluation seems to have taken a macro approach. For example, Kahimbaara (2000) evaluated *Advance with English*, a textbook used in South Africa. Biswalo et al (1987) evaluated *Primary English for Tanzania*. Ahour (2014) has evaluated *English Textbook 2*, used in Iranian High schools. In Kenya, however, evaluation seems to have taken both micro and macro approaches. For example, Crouch and

Korda (2009) evaluated class two textbooks and Okoth (2003) evaluated the readability of class two and five English textbooks giving their studies a macro dimension. On the other hand, Kambuni (2005) took a micro approach since she evaluated the presentation of grammar in textbooks. No study known to the researcher has evaluated the current course books approved by KICD for teaching reading in Kenyan secondary schools.

There are various aspects that can be evaluated in reading materials; for instance, exploitability, suitability of content, readability and many others. This thesis focused on three aspects, establishing the readability index, examining the text types used to present reading materials and determining the comprehension strategies provided for teaching reading.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Textbooks have a responsibility to meet theoretical and syllabus requirements in the teaching of reading. KICD vets and approves the textbooks used to teach reading in Kenya. The current textbooks underwent a predictive evaluation by KICD and have been in use since 2003. However, the performance of English in general and of areas that require the application of the comprehension skill in particular, have continued to be dismal. In fact, KNEC (2013) in its annual report, attributed the consistent poor performance in KCSE paper three – which requires students to answer questions from set texts – to failure to read and understand the said materials. Many factors such as learner and teacher variables contribute to the success of a reading programme. However, materials are the crux of the matter in a reading lesson.

Consequently, given that KICD approves up to six textbooks per class and the crucial role they play in the teaching of reading, it was found necessary to evaluate the course books approved by KICD for teaching reading in form one with a view to establishing their contribution to the poor reading skills and performance in KCSE in particular and among secondary school students in Kenya generally. Consequently, this study undertook a retrospective evaluation of the aforementioned course books.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The following objectives guided the study:

1. To determine the readability index of materials for teaching reading in KICD approved English textbooks for form one.
2. Find out the text types used to present the materials for teaching reading in KICD approved English textbooks for form one.
3. Establish the comprehension strategies provided with the materials for teaching reading in KICD approved English textbooks for form one.

1.4 Research Questions

The study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the readability index of the materials for teaching reading in KICD approved English textbooks for form one?

2. What text types are used to present materials for teaching reading in KICD approved English textbooks for form one?
3. What comprehension strategies are provided with the materials for teaching reading in KICD approved English textbooks for form one?

1.5 Research Assumptions

The research was guided by the following assumptions:

1. Materials for teaching reading in KICD approved English textbooks for form one are of a verifiable readability index.
2. Varieties of texts are used to present materials for teaching reading in KICD approved English textbooks for form one.
3. There are comprehension strategies provided with the materials for teaching reading in KICD approved English textbooks for form one.

1.6 Justification for the Study

Other factors other than appropriateness of materials have been identified as having a strong influence on textbook selection for classroom use by teachers both internationally and locally. MacGrath (2002) notes that government authors and publishers all have a stake in materials. Besides, as Sheldon (1988) observes, once a specific title has been selected, an executive educational decision has been made, implying a professional, financial and political investment. She adds that textbook selection is sometimes a compromise between what is educationally desirable and financially viable. In Kenya, Kiai & Maroko (2013) identify the following as factors that influence textbook selection by teachers: ready availability of materials in the

market following curriculum review, familiarity of the textbook title as well as marketing by publishers. The other two factors are, teacher to teacher influence and requirements of the national exam. They add that books viewed as exam oriented become popular upon review of exam format. Hence, a non partisan evaluation as this study proposes to undertake becomes necessary.

Moreover, Ellis (1997) proposes that all materials are potentially relevant but irrelevance can occur when the learners are expected to achieve one kind of learning through the exploitation of materials which are capable of fostering a different kind of learning. This basically means that evaluation of available materials to ensure that they match the expected learner outcomes is crucial. Kiai & Maroko (2013) observe that no course book will ever embody everything that a teacher could desire for their particular learners. Teachers will need to supplement, adapt and develop content for their context. This evaluation will help teachers determine areas that they may require to supplement or adapt.

Furthermore, since 2003, KICD approves six different textbooks per subject per class. Each school is expected to choose one title out of the approved ones to be the course book. This means that schools have one title for teaching all language skills including grammar and vocabulary. This study hopes to establish the strengths and weaknesses of the textbooks approved by KICD for teaching reading in Kenyan secondary schools. This would help teachers determine the most appropriate textbook for teaching reading. Such an evaluation is necessary since teachers acknowledge their lack of knowledge in materials evaluation (Okoth 2003). In addition, Sheldon (1988) notes that, assessment of textbooks is fundamentally subjective and there is no formulae or system to provide a definite yardstick. Thus,

evaluation from various perspectives should be carried out. This study is part of this requirement since it carried out a micro and retrospective evaluation on materials that have been subjected to a macro and predictive evaluation by KICD.

1.7 Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study was limited to evaluation of textbooks approved by KICD for teaching reading comprehension in form one, using the Schema Theory. A survey of the content page of the approved textbooks reveals that topics are divided into sub-sections such as listening and speaking, study skills, comprehension, language practice and writing. Contents page adapted from *Excelling in English Form One* illustrates this (Appendix 2). This study focused on materials presented in the sub-category ‘comprehension’ since the interest of the study was the reading comprehension skill.

Form one textbooks were chosen since it is in this class where the foundation for reading in secondary school is laid (KIE 2002). Though students will have been reading in English right from class one, the secondary school curriculum demands more intensive and extensive reading than does the primary school curriculum. For instance, the mode of testing in primary school is multiple choice questions save *composition* and *insha*. These choices aid the pupils’ understanding of the texts. However, in secondary school, students have to read given texts and put down the answers in their own words. In addition, there is more of private and independent reading in secondary school since there are two-hour prep sessions both in the morning and evening. Hence the reading materials students encounter in form one

play a key role in forming either a positive or negative attitude towards reading in all subjects.

Furthermore, the choice of the Schema Theory is based on the fact that the theory views reading as an interactive process between the reader and the text. It recognizes both reader and text variables in reading competence. Since this study focused on evaluation of text variables, the Schema Theory sufficed in collecting and analyzing the data envisioned in the objectives. Though there are many factors that contribute to the success of a reading programme, this study focused on text variables. This is because texts are crucial in a reading programme. Both the teachers and the students connect at a text.

1.7 Summary

The chapter presented background to the study, statement of the problem as well as justification of the study. In addition, the objectives and the assumptions of the study as well as the questions that the study sought to answer were presented. Scope and limitations of the research were also discussed. Next is chapter two which presents literature review and theoretical framework.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This section reviewed the literature related to the topic. These include: theoretical definition of evaluation in addition to the place of evaluation in ELT. The objectives of the study were also expounded on: that is, readability index in texts, text types for presenting materials and comprehension strategies. Finally, the section elaborated the Schema Theory which the study adopted.

2.2 What is Evaluation?

Evaluation is a multifaceted process which can be viewed from various perspectives. To start with, McGrath (2002) observes that there are three basic methods of textbook evaluation: impressionistic, checklist and in-depth. He elaborates each one of them as follows. The impressionistic method seeks to obtain a general view of the materials. It involves glancing at the publisher's blurb and content pages of each textbook, then skimming throughout the book looking at various features of it. Secondly, the checklist method contains implicit assumptions about what desirable materials should look like. To highlight some of these assumptions a checklist adapted from Mieckley (2005), has been attached (Appendix 3). The material under evaluation is therefore scrutinized against these assumptions. Lastly, in-depth techniques look beyond the publisher's and author's claims. They consider the kind of language description used, underlying assumptions about learning and whether

the materials are what they claim to be; for example, the grade for which the book is meant.

Secondly, Ellis (1997) has identified two types of evaluation: retrospective and predictive. Predictive evaluation is carried out before the materials are put to use. KICD engages in this kind of evaluation. Ellis (1997) says that more attention has been paid to predictive evaluation, whereby researchers identify specific criteria for evaluating materials. In the selection of textbooks, teachers can rely on these researchers' findings or carry out their own evaluation by using the several checklists available on ELT journals and the internet. For instance, the checklist (appendix 3), has been downloaded from the internet. However, for individual course books, the criteria often remain inexact and implicit (Ellis 1997).

On the other hand, (Ellis 1997) adds that retrospective evaluation is done after the materials have been used to determine whether they have worked as expected. Retrospective evaluation provides information which can be used to determine whether it is worthwhile to use the materials again. It may also suggest how the materials could be modified to make them more effective for future use. Furthermore, it acts as a way of "testing" the validity of a predictive evaluation and may propose ways in which the predictive instruments could be improved for future use.

In addition, Ellis (1997) says that, evaluation can also be either impressionistic or empirical. Impressionistic evaluation is best carried out by teachers as they interact with the text in class with students. They observe the students' enthusiasm and their degree of involvement and make their judgment based on the observation. Empirical evaluation is more time consuming but more systematic. It is carried out at either

micro or macro level. Macro level requires an overall assessment of an entire set of materials, whereas in micro, one picks a particular task and subjects it to a detailed empirical evaluation. This study evaluated textbooks approved by KICD for teaching reading in form one, that have been in use for some time using criteria relevant to the objectives in the syllabus. It is therefore retrospective, micro, and empirical as explained by Ellis (1997) giving it an in-depth perspective as brought out by McGrath (2002).

2.3 The Place of Materials Evaluation in ELT

Materials evaluation plays a very important role in ELT. Hutchinson (1987) notes that evaluation of materials is so paramount that its potential for influencing the way teaching is carried out is considerable. This starts with the selection of materials as he adds that evaluation of materials should be a two-pronged fork: enabling textbook selection on one hand while developing teachers awareness of their own teaching/learning situation on other hand. Hutchinson & Torres (1994) add that textbook selection, evaluation, use, adaptation and supplementation are fundamental areas for professional development of teachers and should be key components in teacher education and development. It is hoped that the findings of the current study would help teachers select the most appropriate textbook for teaching the reading comprehension skill.

Besides, Hutchinson & Waters (1987) add that evaluation helps establish appropriateness of the materials to a specific objective. Litz (2005) has also observed that with a variety of textbooks available in the market, it is much more

difficult to choose the best suitable book for a particular teaching situation. Evaluation therefore empowers teachers with knowledge that enables them pick the most appropriate textbook for their purpose. Litz (2005) also says that textbook evaluation assists educators in identifying the particular strengths and weaknesses in textbooks already in use. Sheldon (1988) adds that evaluation helps teachers learn a lot about the contents of the textbooks as well as identify the strengths and shortcomings of the textbooks already in use. The study at hand hopes to determine the strengths and weaknesses of each course book used to teach reading comprehension in form one. This would go a long way in assisting teachers adapt and supplement their main course book appropriately.

Furthermore, Cunningsworth (1995) says that evaluation aids in adopting new course books. He adds that evaluation helps identify strengths and weaknesses in textbooks. This leads to maximum use of the strong points while the weaker points can be adapted or substituted from other materials. Ahour (2014) says that textbook evaluation is a requisite to qualifying the content of the textbooks and homogenizing it with the teaching/learning requirements in ESL/EFL settings. Tok (2010) points out that textbook selection involves fitting the content to the teaching/learning context. No textbook authored for a general market is ever suitable for specific learners. This study evaluated textbooks approved by KICD for teaching reading comprehension in form one with a view to determine their congruence with the syllabus.

2.4 Evaluation Studies Outside Kenya

Kahimbaara (2000) evaluated “*Focus on English*” (FE) a textbook used in South Africa from a sociolinguistic perspective. The book was found to be educationally sound. The book was rated at 46% in cultural and gender inclusiveness as well as use of neutral language. The study revealed that names and activities used in the book were exclusive to whites (for instance, surfing and gym). The research recommends that there should be an increase in the representation of all cultural groups living in South Africa, their activities and their lifestyles. Moreover, the study proposes use of comprehension strategies in addition to supplementing the book with newspaper cuttings and magazines that depict people of diverse cultural backgrounds working together. Furthermore, texts that capture the cultural diversity of South Africa should be included. The findings of the study are relevant to the current one since it recommends use of comprehension strategies with reading materials as well as supplementation to help depict the multicultural diversity of S.A. This study established the text types - KIE (2002) syllabus proposes texts rich in cultural diversity- used to present reading materials and the comprehension strategies presented with the materials in the KICD approved textbooks for teaching reading in form one.

Biswalo (1987) evaluated ‘*Primary English for Tanzania*’ (PET). The study revealed that the content meets the specific objectives for standard five English quite adequately. It was relevant to many learners’ environment and easy enough for the grasp of most class five pupils. Nevertheless, the study noted that the exercises were too few and the reading materials way above the pupils linguistic level. As a

remedy, the study recommended an increase in the number of exercises as well as a modification of the reading texts so as to make them more comprehensible. There was also need to include some light reading texts like stories. The recommendations are relevant to the current study since it established the readability index of materials in KICD approved textbooks for teaching reading in form one. Moreover, KIE (2002) syllabus recommends light reading materials in text books such as fairy tales. This study was able to establish that textbooks have fictional materials for teaching reading.

Ahour (2014) evaluated “*English Textbook 2*” used in Iranian high schools. She identified deficiencies in the textbook such as insufficient variety in the subject and content. There was also no balance in the presentation of the skills since only the reading skill was emphasized. The objectives of the study are relevant to this study since she established insufficient variety of subject and content in the textbook. The current study borrowed one of the objectives from Ahour (2014), that is, to establish the text types used to present materials in KICD approved textbooks for teaching reading comprehension in form one. KIE (2002) syllabus recommends a variety of texts such as literary and non-literary texts.

2.5 Evaluation Studies in Kenya

Crouch & Korda (2009) in their survey of grade two reading materials carried out in Malindi District, Kenya, found out that textbooks have content that is way beyond the capacity of grade two pupils. Pupils were expected to read a two - page story and answer comprehension questions yet many could not read simple words. Indeed,

their survey revealed that there is a phenomenon found in many countries: textbooks are too ambitious relative to what children can do. Consequently, the current study found it necessary to determine the readability index of the textbooks approved by KICD for teaching reading in form one, with a view to establishing whether the same phenomenon also permeates secondary school textbooks.

Kambuni (2005) investigated whether the presentation of grammar matched the KIE (2002) syllabus. He was able to establish that some grammar activities cannot be done without comprehension, for instance matching exercises. He focused on form one. The objectives of the study are relevant to the current one since, this study established the extent to which materials in KICD approved textbooks for teaching reading are commensurate with the requirements of KIE (2002) syllabus. Also, both studies are micro and retrospective in approach.

Okoth (2003) evaluated the readability of primary school English textbooks. Her focus was on class two and five. She was able to establish that class two texts were meant for pupils at a higher grade while class five texts should be for pupils at a lower grade. The objectives of the study are relevant to this one since this research established the readability index of materials in KICD approved textbooks for teaching reading.

2.6 Readability of Texts

Smith (2000) says that readability is only one of the 22 factors known to make written information more or less easily understood for readers at all skill levels. He adds that when materials exceed the reading skills of intended readers, other factors

in comprehension become largely irrelevant. Readability testing is a basic requirement for evaluating reading materials. Ling (2012) defines readability as surface features of a text in terms of structural and lexical complexity which in fact, affects readers' interest and responses to a text. Kasule (2011) says that readability is the ease or difficulty with which textbooks may be understood. Nuttal (1982) defines readability as the combination of structural and lexical difficulty. This study adopted Ling's (2012) definition since the study determined the structural and lexical complexity of materials in KICD approved textbooks for teaching reading comprehension in form one.

Readability index is determined by use of readability formulas. Redish (1985) explains that a readability formula is a mathematical equation that is applied to prose texts in an effort to predict how difficult the text will be for a given group of readers. Heydari (2012) says that readability formulas are procedures used to measure readability. He adds that readability formulas were first developed in 1920s and 1930s so that textbook publishers could assign children's school books to the appropriate grade level.

There are many readability formulas. Dean (2001) says that there are over thirty readability formulas. Examples of readability formulas include the Fry Reading Index, SMOG, Flesch Ease of Reading Formulas and Dale and Chall. Readability formulas have a wide range of applications. Nevertheless, they were originally created for testing the readability level of textbooks. But today, they are used to measure the readability index of many other types of writing. For instance Flesch Reading Formula is very popular with writings meant for adults (Heydari 2012). Ulosy (2006) adds that readability formulas give a rough estimate of text readability.

Reddish (1985) adds that the common uses of readability formulas are to see if a text meets a pre-determined numerical goal or to compare two versions of a text. This study will use the Fry Readability Formula because it is one of the two formulas (the other one is SMOG) that is popular for evaluating middle school, junior and senior high school texts. A copy of Fry Readability Graph adapted from the internet has been attached (appendix 4). Moreover, it was developed for ESL textbooks and is easy to use since it gives an index which is matched with the most appropriate grade level.

Readability is an important consideration in the teaching of reading. This is because it helps match the linguistic levels of students with the appropriate reading materials. Ulosy (2006) says that readability studies aim to analyze texts to find the right fit between students and texts since it is very important for comprehension. Also, Kasule (2011) says that the teacher's ability to determine readability levels of a textbook is crucial for effective teaching and learning. Establishing the readability levels of texts is very important particularly for Kenyan schools. This is because, as Kasule (2011) has observed, in many public schools the textbooks may be the only resource on which the teacher's explanation is based. This situation places a heavy responsibility on the course book in meeting appropriate criteria regarding the learners' age, cultural background and linguistic proficiency.

Readability formulas have several advantages, the main one being that they are objective and consistent. Secondly, they are easy to learn and use. Finally they are available on the internet hence making them even more user – friendly. However they have one disadvantage in that they rely heavily on the surface features such as word and sentence length (Ulosy 2006). Consequently, readability index alone

cannot suffice to determine the appropriateness of a text for the teaching of reading though it is a basic requirement. The linguistic schemata of the schema theory were used to collect and analyze data on the readability of texts.

2.7 Text Types for Presenting Reading Materials

Students should be provided with a wide range of reading texts. This is because different texts have unique characteristics that aid comprehension. Duke (2011) says that the range of texts that students are exposed to has an influence on their reading. He adds that students should be exposed to a full range of genres that we want them to comprehend. He identifies fiction, non-fiction, oral narratives, poems and plays. *Secondary Teachers English Handbook* (STEH 2006) states that, learners should be provided with adequate literary and non-literary materials. KIE syllabus (2002) proposes that, different literary genres should be introduced in form one. It proposes that both literary and non-literary materials should be read. These should include adventure stories, fairy tales, poems, plays, novels, magazines and periodicals.

Kambuni (2005) identifies five text types. To start with, he identifies authentic category – these are texts written for other purposes other than teaching for example, entertaining and persuading. Secondly, there is the Scripted type – these are texts written for teaching purposes for instance, how to scan and make notes. Moreover, he identifies the local type – these are texts with a Kenyan setting for example, a novel like *The River Between*. Furthermore, he talks of the intercultural type– these texts have a setting outside Kenya but within Africa, for instance, *The Floods*, a play set in Uganda. Finally, he mentions the biased type – these are texts whose setting is

outside Africa, hence are unfamiliar to students, for instance, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* which is a play set in Russia. The materials were investigated for these text types (appendix 5).

Secondly, reading materials are presented using different text types such as plays, poems, songs, oral narratives and passages. Passages can either be literary or non-literary. Li (2007) notes that, different text types use text organization, language structures, grammar and level of formality differently. He adds that different text types bear different characteristics thereby posing correspondent reading demands for readers. An (2013) adds that different kinds of text and discourse are distinguished by the ways in which the topic and other propositions are linked together to form a unit. To elaborate on this, there will be four appendices attached adapted from KICD approved English textbooks: appendices 6 an oral narrative, 7 a passage, 8 a poem and 9 an extract from a play. All are expounding on the topic of “love”. The oral narrative and the passage are adopted from *Explore English book one*. The poem from *Excelling in English Book One* while the play is from *Excelling in English Book Three*. This is due to the fact that none of the form one textbook had a play expounding on love. This will clarify how the different text types use language differently. Knowledge of this differentiation aids comprehension. Formal Schemata, which are one of the structures of the Schema Theory, were instrumental in collecting and analyzing data on the text types used in the course books.

2.8 Comprehension Strategies

Snow (1988) defines reading comprehension as the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language. Nuttal (1982) says that the aim of a reading lesson is to help students learn how language is used for conveying content. Students should develop the skills needed to extract the content from the language that expresses it. These skills are called comprehension strategies. NSW (2010) states that, comprehension involves responding to, interpreting, analyzing and evaluating texts. They add that in comprehending, learners strive to process texts beyond word level to get to the big picture. When comprehension is successful, learners are left with a sense of satisfaction. Pressley (2002) states that good readers deliberately apply specific strategies to aid their comprehension, particularly with regard to challenging texts.

A strategy is a means of achieving an end. Comprehension strategies are a means of achieving comprehension. NSW (2010) have identified what they call “six super strategies of comprehension.” They start with making connections – this is done at three levels: Text to self, text to another text and text to the world. Then, there is predicting – this is using information from graphics, and the title to predict what will be read. After that, they identify questioning – here readers pose and answer questions which promote deeper understanding. This is followed by monitoring – at this point, learners stop and think about the text. In addition they mention visualizing – readers create a mental image from the text read. This brings the text to life, engages the imaginations and uses all of the senses. Finally there is summarizing – readers identify and accumulate the most important ideas and restate them in their own words.

In addition, Duke (2011) has identified 8 comprehension strategies. He starts with setting purpose for reading, previewing, predicting and activating prior knowledge. In addition to that, there is monitoring, visualizing, drawing inferences, self-questioning and thinking aloud as well as summarizing and retelling. Comprehension strategies enable readers activate prior knowledge before the actual reading of the text. They also enable the readers to actively interact with the text as they read. After reading, readers are able to tell whether they have achieved comprehension or not. Comprehension strategies are presented as reading activities in textbooks. As students carry out these activities, they are making use of comprehension strategies. Comprehension strategies are therefore grouped into three major categories (of reading activities): pre-reading activities (PRRA), during – reading activities (DRA) and post-reading activities (PSRA).

PRRA are carried out before the actual reading of the text. Gibbons (2002) says that PRRA help prepare for linguistic, cultural and conceptual difficulties as well as activate prior knowledge. She adds that if students come to a text with a sense of what they'll be reading about, reading becomes a much easier task since they have more resources to draw on. The reader then becomes less dependent on the words on the page hence minimizing the disadvantage of the less than native speaker proficiency in the language. PRRA include semantic mapping, prediction and sharing existing knowledge. Examples of such activities are; a) looking at the graphics, what do you think is happening in this story? b) what does this title remind you of?

DRA are carried out while the actual reading is taking place. Barardo (2006) says that during reading activities encourage the learners to be active readers and promote

dialogue between reader and text. They include monitoring, visualizing, drawing inferences and questioning. Examples of DRA include: a) sketch a picture that comes to mind as you read paragraph two. b) Whose point of view is this? c) Does this make sense? d) stop after reading paragraph three and make suggestions on what you think will happen next. Compared to the other two, DRA should be the highest in number in any text for teaching reading comprehension.

PSRA are used to verify if comprehension has been achieved (Barardo 2006). They include summarizing, retelling, hot seating and true false questions. For instance, a) Suppose you were to tell someone this story, what would you say? b) What lesson do you learn from this story? Reading activities are therefore general and can be adapted to any text. The content schemata of the Schema Theory were used to collect and analyse data on comprehension strategies.

The readability index, the text types and the comprehension strategies available in textbooks are three text variables that are of paramount importance in reading. They were the focus of this study. The schema theory sufficed in collecting, analyzing and interpreting the data.

2.9 Theoretical Framework

This section will analyze the Schema Theory which this study adopted.

2.9.1 The Schema Theory

The role of background knowledge in reading comprehension has been formalized as Schema Theory (Bartlet, 1932). Every act of comprehension involves the

knowledge of the world as well. However the concept of schema started with Bartlett (1932). He claimed that there is an active organization of past reactions and experiences which are in operation in any well- adapted organic response. Bartlett (1932) adds that a person's understanding and remembrance of events is shaped by their expectations or prior knowledge. These expectations are presented mentally in some sort of schematic fashion. An (2013) defines schema as a hypothetical mental structure for representing generic concepts stored in memory. Li (2007) says that schema is prior knowledge gained through experiences stored in memory. The plural for schema is schemata.

In the process of selecting materials for teaching the reading comprehension skill (RCS), the schemata of the learners should be taken into consideration. Learners should be presented with materials they can relate to from three perspectives. To start with, there is the linguistic schemata. This relates to the knowledge of vocabulary and sentence structure. Words and sentences should be of a length and a structure that the learners can comprehend. Few difficult words should be included to enable learners increase their vocabulary (Carell 1990). Readability indices come in to help match the linguistic schemata of learners with the linguistic level of materials. By use readability formulars (RF), texts are assigned readability indicies (RI). Each RI is commensurate to a given school grade. For instance materials for form one should have RI of 9 when calculated using the Fry Readability Formular (FRF). The current study used the FRF to calculate the RI of each textbook approved by KICD for teaching reading in form one.

Secondly, form ones should be presented with all the text types that they are expected to comprehend by the end of the year. This is because it is in form one

where the foundation for secondary reading is laid (KIE 2002). This perspective of the Schema Theory is known as the formal schemata. Consequently, this exposure forms the schema that students draw from as they continue climbing the academic ladder and finally tackle the KCSE exam. Therefore, textbooks should endeavour to include all text types as recommended in the KIE (2002) syllabus. The current study focused on three categories of text types: first is authentic versus scripted, second is local, intercultural and biased and finally the plays, oral narratives, poems, fictitious passages and non-fictitious passages. The study at hand used the formal schemata to establish the text types used to present materials in the textbooks approved by KICD for teaching reading in form one.

Finally, there is the content schemata which points to the topical and cultural knowledge of the materials being read. A skim through the textbooks reveals that the texts used for teaching reading are extracts from novels, speeches or newspapers and magazines. Hence, it is unlikely for learners to have had a preview of the same. Therefore, in order for learners to extract meaning from the given materials, they need to raise their schema in relation to the topic and the cultural setting of the text. This is achieved by use of comprehension strategies which are presented as reading activities in course books. These strategies should be used in three phases of a reading session: before reading the text to enable learners form expectations (PRRA). The second phase is during reading (DRA) which assists learners to engage and interrogate the texts as they read with a view to constructing the intended meaning. The final phase is after reading (PSRA). It gives the learners an opportunity to recap on the theme of the text. The current study used the content

schemata of the Schema Theory to determine the comprehension strategies provided in each KICD approved text book for teaching reading in form one.

2.9.2 Tenets of The Schema Theory

An (2013) has identified four tenets of the Schema Theory. First, the Schema Theory assumes that texts do not carry meaning in themselves. Rather texts only provide direction as to how readers should retrieve meaning from their own previously acquired knowledge. Secondly, the schemata of a reader are organized in a hierarchical manner with the most general at the top down to the most specific at the bottom. Next, comprehending a text is an interactive process between the readers' background knowledge and the text. Finally reading comprehension operates in two directions: first from bottom up to the top. This bottom up process is activated by specific data from the text. Reading comprehension also operates from the top down to the bottom of the hierarchy. In the top down process, the readers' background knowledge plays a significant role. Carrell (1990) says that research on Schema Theory has shown that effective reading requires both bottoms up and top down processes operating interactively. The plural for schema is schemata. There are three types of schemata (Carrel 1990, Li 2007, An 2013). These schemata were used to interpret and analyse data envisioned in the objectives of this study.

2.9.3 Types of Schemata

There are three types of schemata. To begin with, there is linguistic schemata. This is the readers' language proficiency. An (2013) refers to linguistic schemata as the knowledge about grammar and vocabulary. It enables the reader to decode a text. Eskey (1988) says that language is a major problem in second language reading since even educated guessing at meaning is no substitute for accurate decoding. Comprehension of any text would be impossible without decoding skills which rely on the linguistic schemata of the reader. Consequently, reading materials should match the expected linguistic schemata of learners. In the Kenyan education system, students take one calendar year at each grade. There are linguistic competencies that learners are expected to attain at each level. On the other hand, there are readability formulars that are used to calculate RI of textbooks. One of them is the FRF which was developed for use with ESL materials (Fry 1930) which this study adopted. Each RI is appropriate for a particular grade in the school system. For instance, the linguistic level for form one is at FRI 9. This study used the FRF and the linguistic schemata to establish the RI of the KICD approved textbooks for teaching reading in form one.

The second category is called formal schemata. Carrel (1988) defines formal schemata as the background knowledge of the formal, rhetorical organizational structures of different types of texts. Li (2007) defines formal schemata as abstract, encoded, internalized, textual organization that guides expectations in an attempt to understand a text. For example, a poem is presented in stanzas while a passage is presented in paragraphs. They also use language very distinctly (appendices 6,7,8,9

as explained in the text type sub-section substantiate this). Readers use their schematic representation of the text type to help comprehend the information in the text. In this study, three categories of text types were identified: first, authentic versus scripted. Second, local, inter-cultural and biased. Thirdly, poems, oral narratives, plays, fictitious passages and non-fictitious passages. Consequently, learners should repeatedly be exposed to all these types of texts as they are expected to comprehend each one of them by the end of their secondary school life. This study used the formal schemata to establish the text types used to present materials in KICD approved textbooks for teaching reading in form one.

The last type is content schemata. Carrel (1988) defines content schemata as the background knowledge of the content area of the text. For example, schemata for a hospital would include information about drugs, diagnosis, prescriptions, admissions, outpatient, and medics. An (2013) says that content schemata contains conceptual knowledge about what usually happens within a certain topic, and how these happenings relate to each other to form a coherent whole. Li (2007) adds that familiarity with a topic, cultural knowledge and previous experience with a field adds to content schemata. The reader may not always possess the content schemata anticipated in the text leading to degrees of non-comprehension among ESL learners. Ajideh (2003) says that there is need to build bridges between students' existing knowledge and the new. Indeed, the syllabus (KIE 2002) recommends that students be presented with culturally and topically diversified texts. This presupposes culturally and topically bound language which could lead to levels of non-comprehension among readers. Actually, (Carrel 1988) argues that cultural bound language is a major hindrance to comprehension among SL readers of

English. This is where comprehension strategies come in. They help activate dormant content schema in the readers. They also help bring in information about the world that the readers did not possess and link it to the text.

Furthermore, (Nunan 2005) argues that learning is at its best when learners are given an opportunity to use the language that they are learning. They learn by doing and since language ‘grows’ gradually, learners should be given time to discuss what they are reading. Thus, opportunities should be created for learners to interact with and interrogate the texts as they read as well as summarize the message in the text after reading. This is made possible by use of comprehension strategies. In textbooks, comprehension strategies are presented as reading activities. The current study made use of the content schemata to determine the comprehension strategies provided in KICD approved textbooks for teaching reading in form one.

2.10 Summary

This chapter reviewed the literature relevant to the study. It discussed the various facets of evaluation and its role in textbook selection, adaptation and supplementation. In addition, the chapter examined textbook evaluation that has been carried out both within and outside Kenya. Furthermore, details of each of the objectives were discussed. Besides, the Schema Theory which the research adopted was analysed. The next chapter is on methodology.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research design besides identifying the population, sample and sampling procedures in addition to data collection instrument. Furthermore, data collection procedures, data analysis and the logistical and ethical issues considered in this study were also discussed.

3.2 Research Design

This study adopted the descriptive research design. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003), the descriptive research design describes the state of affairs as it presently exists. The current research determined the readability index of textbooks, established the text types used to present materials for teaching reading and determined the comprehension strategies provided in each textbook approved by KICD for teaching reading in form one. In data collection and analysis, the Content Analysis Approach (CAA) was used. Hsieh & Sharon (2005) say that content analysis refers to any procedure for assessing the relative extent to which specified references, attitude or themes permeate a given message or document. They add that content analysis has a degree of precision since it gives exact counts of frequency. Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) add that the main purpose of content analysis is to study existing documents such as books and magazines in order to determine factors that explain a specific phenomenon. This study evaluated KICD approved textbooks

for teaching reading in form one. This approach guided in collecting and analysing data on the three objectives of this study. Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) identify five steps that CAA follows. To begin with, decide on the unit of analysis then sample the content to be analyzed. After that there is coding, that is, logical groupings of data followed by data analysis and finally compiling results and interpretation. This study followed the above steps.

3.3 Target Population

The target population was the form ones textbooks for teaching reading. Form one course books were chosen because it is in this class where the foundation for reading in secondary school is laid (KIE 2002). Consequently, the class is crucial in determining the reading patterns adopted by students in secondary school. Moreover, the textbook may be the only resource available to both teachers and students (Kasule 2011). Hence the need to ascertain their congruence with the syllabus. Therefore, it is imperative that students are exposed to materials of an appropriate level and to as many text types as they are expected to comprehend right from form one. Furthermore, they should be taught skills that aid comprehension. In this study, form one textbooks for teaching reading were evaluated with a view to establishing the readability index, the text types used to present materials and the comprehension strategies provided with the materials for teaching reading.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Procedures

Purposive sampling was used in the current study. Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) explain that purposive sampling is a sampling technique that allows researchers to

use cases that have the required information with respect to the objectives of their study. Purposive sampling was used to select the six textbooks approved by KICD for teaching reading in form one. The MOE through KICD vets and provides a list of approved textbooks. In addition, the MOE remits money to schools under the Free Secondary Education (FSE) programme, part of which is for buying textbooks. Schools are required to select titles of their course books out of the approved list. Thus it is expected that each school would have at least one of the approved titles for teaching reading. This study evaluated all the course books approved by KICD for teaching reading in form one. These are: *Excelling in English*, *Advancing in English*, *Explore English*, *New Integrated English*, *Head Start English* and *New Horizons in English*. In addition, form one textbooks were picked through purposive sampling. The study at hand was interested on the foundational aspects of secondary school English textbooks for teaching reading. This would help determine if the materials for teaching reading at the foundation level contributed in any way to the dismal performance of English at KCSE level.

For determining the readability index purposive sampling was used to pick the texts used for the study. Nuttal (1982) says that in calculating RI, three texts of a hundred words each should be picked from the course book under study. The first should be picked from the beginning of the textbook, the second one from the middle and the last one towards the end of the book. She (Nuttal 1982) explains that texts are likely to be more difficult as the book progresses towards the end since the learners are also progressing and coming to the end of that grade. The researcher followed this procedure and picked the following texts from each course book.

Excelling in English

The following texts were picked:

1. Karani and Kemunto - page 5
2. Disability is not inability - page 80
3. The temptation - page 159

Head Start English

The texts picked were:

1. Jesse Owens defeats racism in the Olympics - page 1
2. The sweetness of stories - page 104
3. Education without school - page 200

Explore English

The following texts were picked:

1. Attitude, attitude, attitude - page 5
2. The old woman and the donkey – page 82
3. Drugs and drug abuse – page 161

New Integrated English

The texts picked were:

1. Obu's first day at CMS central school - page 2
2. Daily life in space – page 167
3. How historical events are recorded – page 274

Advancing in English

The texts picked were:

1. A night to remember – page 5
2. It is better in Murijo – page 120
3. Time management - page 244

New Horizons in English

Following are the texts that were picked:

1. Njoroge goes to school – page 3
2. I want to be a child again – page 123
3. The four girls and the ogre - page 246

After that, a passage of a hundred words each was extracted from each text. Then, the number of syllables and sentences were counted for each of the extracts. Three course books had eighteen texts while three others had twenty seven texts. Hence, eighteen texts were picked out of the one hundred and thirty five available in all textbooks. This sample was 13% of the population. It is recommended that a sample be 30% of the population. Nevertheless, this study had a smaller percentage due to the requirements of calculating FRI. A study should use three texts from a course book, one from the beginning, another one from the middle and the last one from the end of the textbook.

However, on determining the text types used to present materials and the comprehension strategies provided with materials for teaching reading, no sampling was done. This is because all the texts in the sub-section ‘comprehension’ had to be examined. Course books are divided into units. Each unit has five or six sub-sections depending on the organization of each textbook. Each sub-section focuses on a particular language skill and is titled accordingly. For example, a glance through the content page of *Excelling in English book one* reveals this (appendix 2). For example, ‘unit 1’ has the following sub-titles:

- ❖ Listening and Speaking

- ❖ Reading: Study Skills
- ❖ Comprehension
- ❖ Grammar
- ❖ Writing
- ❖ Further Work

The researcher picked all the materials for teaching reading under the sub-section 'comprehension' since the study focused on the reading comprehension skill. Three textbooks had eighteen texts each while three had twenty seven texts each. Hence, one hundred and thirty five texts were investigated for establishing the text types used to present materials for teaching reading and the same texts were used for determining the comprehension strategies provided in the textbooks.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

These were two; the Fry Readability Formula and an evaluation checklist.

3.5.1 The Fry Readability Formula (FRF)

FRF is one of the two most popular readability formulas used with textbooks. It was designed for use with ESL texts. Nuttal (1982) gives the steps to follow in its computation. Begin by choosing three typical passages of a hundred words each from near the beginning, middle and end of the text. Then, find the average number of sentences in the three passages. The answer is coded A. After that, calculate the average number of syllables in the three passages. The answer is coded B. Finally plot the answers A and B on the Fry Index Graph (Appendix 4 as explained in

section two). The point of intersection gives the RI. This will correspond to a certain reading grade level. The reading grade levels are infixed in the FRG (appendix 4). Thus, it will show whether the texts are of a lower, higher, or an appropriate grade. A lower grade level means that the materials are meant for a class lower than the one they are designated for while a higher grade level implies that the materials are appropriate for a class above the one they are assigned for. The text that records an appropriate grade level is the ideal one since it shows that there is a fit between the RI of the materials and the students' linguistic level. This study followed that procedure

3.5.2 Evaluation Checklist

An evaluation checklist contextualized to the syllabus and the tenets of the Schema Theory was developed and used to collect data on text types and comprehension strategies. Hutchinson (1987) says that a checklist enables the researcher to code a particular category whenever it occurs. This is necessary for quantification counts in order to establish the percentage of occurrence of items being investigated. There are many checklists that have been developed by, Mickley (2005), Litz (2005), Riazi (2008) and Sheldon (1988). Nevertheless, Mickley (2005) says, any checklist should be considered and adapted to the context in which it will be used. Consequently, the checklist by Mickley (2005) was considered and adapted for this study since it raises concerns such as: Are there varieties of literary genres? What about the vocabulary words, are they presented at an appropriate rate? Are the reading selections authentic? Is the textbook appropriate for the curriculum? All these

concerns were relevant to this study. The KIE (2002) syllabus provided the context for the adaptation (Appendix 5).

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

The following steps were followed in order to make data collection systematic and procedural. To start with, the researcher identified all the textbooks approved by KICD for teaching reading in form one. After that, all the texts under the sub-section “comprehension” were identified and coded “1” to “18” or “1” to “27”. This is because three course books had eighteen texts while three had twenty seven. Then data was collected as per each objective.

On determining the readability index of the textbooks approved by KICD for teaching reading in form one, the following steps were followed. Firstly, three texts were picked from each textbook. The first one was picked from the beginning of the book, the second one from the middle and the last one from the end of the textbook. The title of each text and the page from which they were picked were recorded. Next, a paragraph of a hundred words each was extracted from each of the three texts selected. After that, the textbooks were randomly arranged from number one to six to enable systematic data collection one course book after the other. Number one-*Excelling in English*, two-*Head Start English*, three-*Explore English*, four-*New Integrated English*, five-*Advancing in English*, six-*New Horizons in English*.

Then a table onto which data collected would be recorded was prepared. The researcher then counted the number of sentences in the one-hundred-words paragraph of the first text in *Excelling* and recorded the results. The number of syllables in the same paragraph was also counted and recorded. That exercise was

repeated for the paragraph extracted from the text in the middle of *Excelling*. It was also carried out for the paragraph gotten from the third text, identified at the end of *Excelling*. Then, the average number of sentences and the average number of syllables (for the three one-hundred-words paragraphs) were gotten. These averages were plotted on the FRG with the average number of sentences on the vertical side while the average number of syllables was on the horizontal side. The point of intersection was the RI. This process was repeated for each of the course books following the order in which they had been arranged. For instance, data collected from *New Horizons in English* was as follows:

New Horizons in English

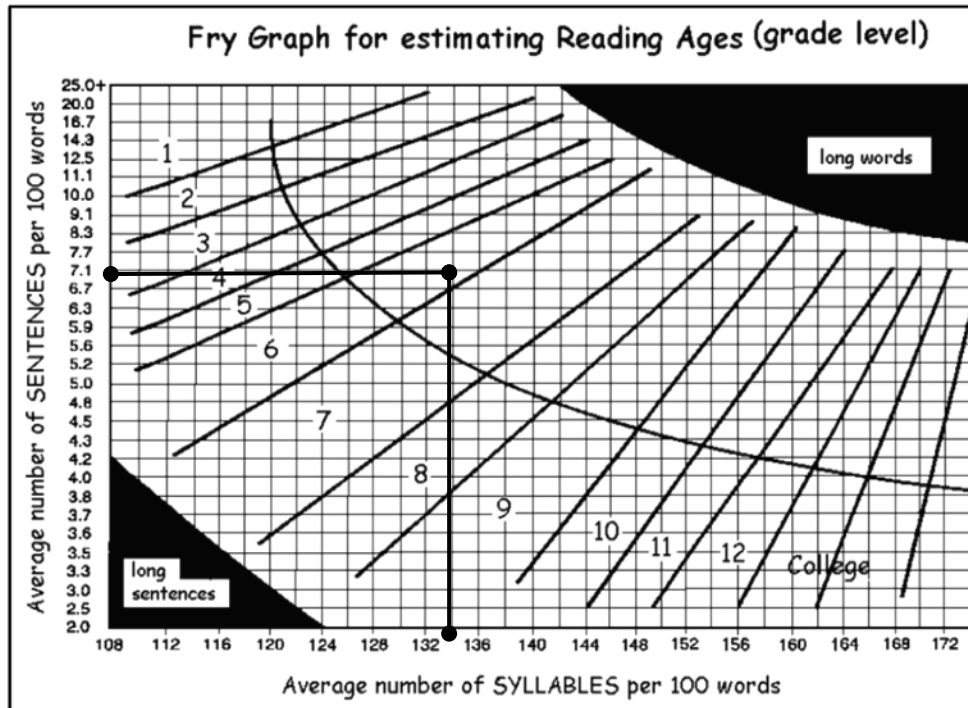
Following are the texts that were picked:

1. Njoroge goes to school – page 3
2. I want to be a child again – page 123
3. The four girls and the ogre - page 246

Number of Syllables and Sentences - *New Horizons in English*

Passage no.	No of syllables	No. of sentences
1	132	10
2	127	5
3	141	7
Av	133.33	7.33

Readability Index for New Horizons in English



In the FRG, the number of sentences and syllables are in a converse relationship. That means the fewer the sentences, the more difficult the materials while the fewer the syllables the easier the materials and vice versa. For instance, an examination of the FRG reveals that a class three course book should have about 11 sentences and 120 syllables. Comparatively, a form four book should have about 4.5 sentences and 150 syllables (appendix 4). When counting syllables, proper nouns were left out while initials and numbers were treated as complete words (Danielle 2011). This is because syllables are both morphological and phonetic units. For instance ‘1928’ has five syllables and ‘Mr.’ has two syllables. The same texts were used to establish the number of sentences. The study followed the above procedure in calculating the readability indices of the course books.

Data collection to determine the text types and the comprehension strategies started with the preparation of checklists. Two checklists were prepared one for each of the objectives. These checklists were adapted from Mieckley (2005) and contextualized in KIE (2002) syllabus and the tenets of the Schema Theory. On establishing the text types for presenting materials for teaching reading in KICD approved course books for form one, the checklist had three categories. First, authentic versus scripted text types. Second, local, intercultural and biased types of text. Third, poems, oral narratives, plays, fictitious passages and non-fictitious passages. Then, three tables were drawn, one for each of the categories identified and labeled accordingly. For example data collected from *Advancing in English* was recorded as follows:

Category ‘A’

Authentic	Scripted
27	0

Category ‘B’

Total Texts	Local	Intercultural	Biased
27	18	7	2
%	66.7 %	25.9 %	7.4 %

Category 'C'

Total Texts	Poems	Oral Narratives	Plays	Fiction	Non-fiction
27	2	2	2	12	9
%	7.4%	7.4%	7.4%	44.5 %	33.3%

Data collected was recorded on these tables. Since the textbooks had already been coded one to six, the researcher took *Excelling* which was coded "one". All the materials in the sub-section 'comprehension' were examined and coded as either authentic or scripted. Data collected was recorded on the table titled 'category A' with columns for 'authentic versus scripted'. The same materials were looked into and each text coded as either local, intercultural or biased. The results were recorded on the appropriate table (category B). The same exercise was repeated for the third category focusing on the very materials. Each text was investigated and coded as a poem, an oral narrative, a play, a fictitious passage or a non-fictitious passage. The results were recorded on the relevant table. This process was repeated for the other five textbooks and the results recorded on the appropriate table.

Finally, data was collected on the comprehension strategies provided with the textbooks. To start with, a table with seven columns was prepared. With the materials on the sub-section 'comprehension' having been labeled '1-18' or '1-27', the first column showed the text number. The other columns were for the different reading activities and the number of activities per each type. Each text under the sub-section 'comprehension' was scrutinized for the presence of PRRA. If present, it

was coded 'p' and recorded in the column titled 'PRRA P or A'. The number of activities present would also be counted and recorded in the column titled 'No of A'. If absent, it was coded 'A' and recorded on the same column. This is because some texts would have more PRRA than others. The same procedure was followed for DRA and PSRA. Finally, the total number of activities for each text was recorded in the last column. In the last row was recorded the total number of activities per each type. An example is data collected from New Integrated English. It was recorded as follows,

TABLE FOR COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

PSG NO.	PRRA A OR P	NO .OF A	DRRA A OR P	NO. OF A	PSRA A OR P	NO. OF A
6	P	1	A	0	P	2
Total		9		0		27

Key: A -absent P -present PSG –passage NO. of A -number of activities

The data on the last row labeled 'total' was presented and used for analysis since it was the summary of the 'Reading Activities' presented for teaching reading in the textbooks. A table showing only the total number of 'Reading Activities' was prepared and used to present and analyse the data. For example the table for New Integrated English looked like this:

Reading Activities -*New Integrated English*

PRRA	DRA	PSRA
9	0	27

According to Duke (2011), placement is crucial in identifying and using reading activities in addition to clear instructions on when to use them. PRRA should precede the text they are meant for. DRA should be placed after the PRRA with instructions that they should be carried out as learners read the text. PSRA are expected at the end of the text. Consequently, all the reading activities placed before the text were scrutinized and labeled as either PRRA or DRA. However, not all instructions placed before the text were coded as PRRA or DRA. This is because some of them did not have any activity for the students to carry out. For instance in *Head Start*, there is a story entitled ‘The twins’ on page 87. The sub-section titled ‘pre-reading’ is written:

‘Things and people are not always what they appear to be. Many people have opened their gates for policemen in uniform only to discover that they have opened for thieves. Stories have been told of beautiful girls who get married to handsome men only for the men to turn into ogres like in the following story,’

Such instructions, though preceding the text, had no activity for the students to carry out. Such were left out. Those placed after the text were coded PSRA.

Different textbooks differed on the number of activities per text. For example, a text would have three PRRA while another text had none. Another text would have two PSRA and lack both PRRA and DRA. The total number of activities per each

reading activity were identified and recorded on the appropriate table. These were used for data presentation and analysis. In addition, some of the PSRA were not as summative as expected. For example, in *Explore* on page 12 there is a text entitled ‘terrorism’. One of the post-reading activities reads, ‘What is terrorism and why is it becoming an issue of concern?’ Such an activity would have been appropriate in helping the reader connect the text to the world leading to a better understanding of it. Therefore, in order to be objective and avoid subjectivity on the part of the researcher, placement was used as the criteria to decide between PRRA and PSRA. Activities placed before the texts were identified and coded as PRRA. Those coming after the text and comprehension questions were taken to be the PRA.

3.7 Data Presentation and Analysis

For systematic presentation, data was analysed and presented as per the objectives. Data was also presented per course book following the order in which they were coded (as explained in data collection section). To start with, data on establishing the readability index was presented and analysed using using FRG and discussions. Secondly, data on determining the text types used to present materials for teaching reading was looked into. It was presented using tables. Percentages and discussions were used for analysis. That is, the presence of each text type was taken as a percentage of the total number of texts in that book. Finally, data on establishing the comprehension strategies was presented using tables and analysed by way of discussions.

3.8 Logistical and Ethical Considerations

These are laws and regulations that researchers should adhere to as they carry out their studies; whether for academic purposes or otherwise. Logistics are all the activities and actions that researchers must address to guarantee successful completion of the project. Some are carried out before the start of the research. To start with, The researcher prepared a work plan and presented it together with the proposal to the graduate school of Kenyatta University. Furthermore, the researcher applied for a research permit from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) and was granted the same. This is a document issued by the government to individuals or institutions allowing them to carry out research. In addition, the researcher filed a turnitin report which showed that plagiarism was at 11%. This is an acceptable level.

3.9 Summary

The chapter focused on research design, target population and sample and sampling procedures. Besides, the two data collection instruments, data collection procedures and ethical and logistical considerations that were used in the study were presented. Next is chapter four in which data is presented, analysed and discussed.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to carry out an evaluation of KICD approved textbooks for teaching reading in form one. The study had three objectives; to establish the readability index of the materials, to determine the text types used to present the materials and to find out the comprehension strategies provided with the materials. Six textbooks are approved by KICD for teaching reading in form one. These are *Excelling in English*, *Head Start English*, *Explore English*, *New Integrated English*, *Advancing in English* and *New Horizons in English*. The evaluation helped establish the extent to which the materials meet the requirements of the KIE (2002) syllabus. The syllabus is categorical that good foundation for reading in secondary school should be laid in form one. KIE (2002) syllabus says that secondary school students should be able to comprehend literary and non-literary materials as well as analyse literary works from Kenya, East Africa and the rest of the world. (The secondary school syllabus for form one reading section is attached - appendix 10). Furthermore, the KIE (2002) syllabus makes explicit the text types that the students are expected learn in form one. These include poems, plays and stories (Appendix 10.) It also explains the different reading skills that should be taught at this level; for instance comprehension and scanning.

In addition, among other proposals, the Schema Theory posits that reading should be an interactive process between reader and text. To make this possible, the theory

proposes that the linguistic level of texts for teaching reading should be commensurate with the average linguistic level of learners. Moreover, texts should be diverse topically, culturally and in the manner of presentation so as to cater for the diverse interest of readers as well as decrease monotony. Furthermore, there is need to awaken the linguistic and cultural schemata as it leads to better understanding of texts. These three proposals contextualized in the KIE (2002) syllabus form the objectives of this study. Data was analysed and interpreted using the Content Analysis Approach and the Schema Theory of reading. Data is presented using tables and FRG. In this chapter, data is organized and presented as per each of the three objectives of the study; that is, readability index of the texts, the text types used to present the materials and the comprehension strategies provided with the materials.

4.2 Readability Index

Readability testing is a basic requirement for evaluating reading materials. As Smith (2000) has observed, when materials exceed the reading skills of intended readers, then all other factors in reading become irrelevant. Readability indices are established by use of readability formulas. Reddish (1985) explains that a readability formulae is a mathematical equation onto which a prose text is subjected with a view to predicting how appropriate a text might be for a given group of readers. There are many readability formulas. This study adopted the Fry Readability Formula (FRF) since it was developed for use with ESL materials. Furthermore, it is accessible and easy to use since it is available in the internet. Being, graphically presented also, makes it easy to interpret. There are two standard Fry Readability Graphs (FRG) on which findings are plotted. One uses grade level while the other one uses years.

However, they can be used interchangeably since a given grade corresponds to a certain age. Below are samples of the two graphs. Figure 4.1 is in grade level while Figure 4.2 is in years. For example grade one in Figure 4.1 which is equivalent of class one, corresponds to six years in Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.1: FRG using grades

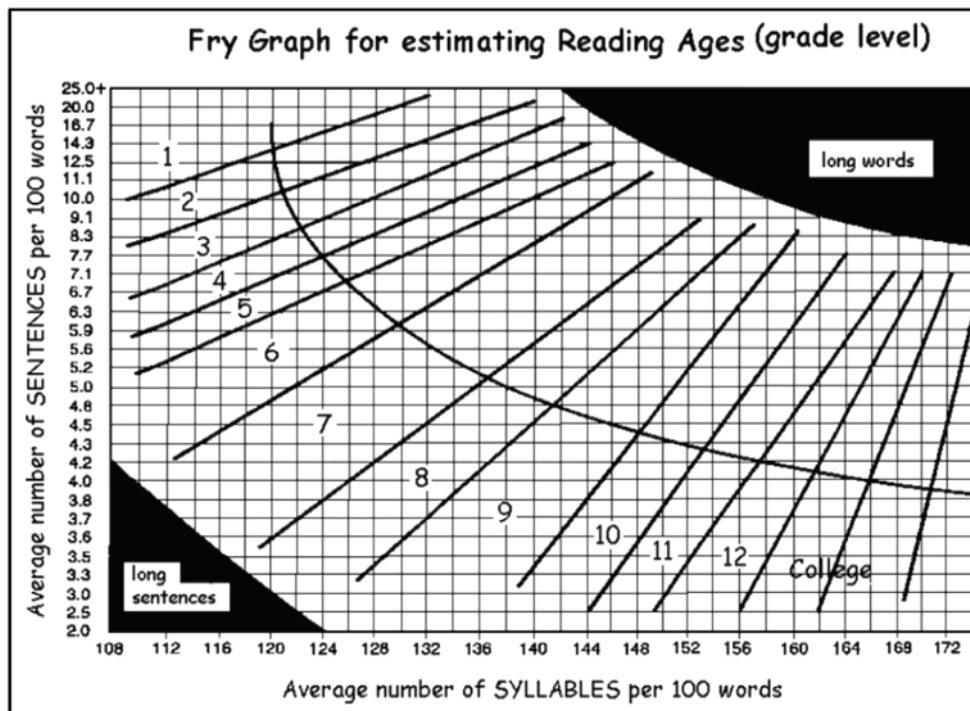
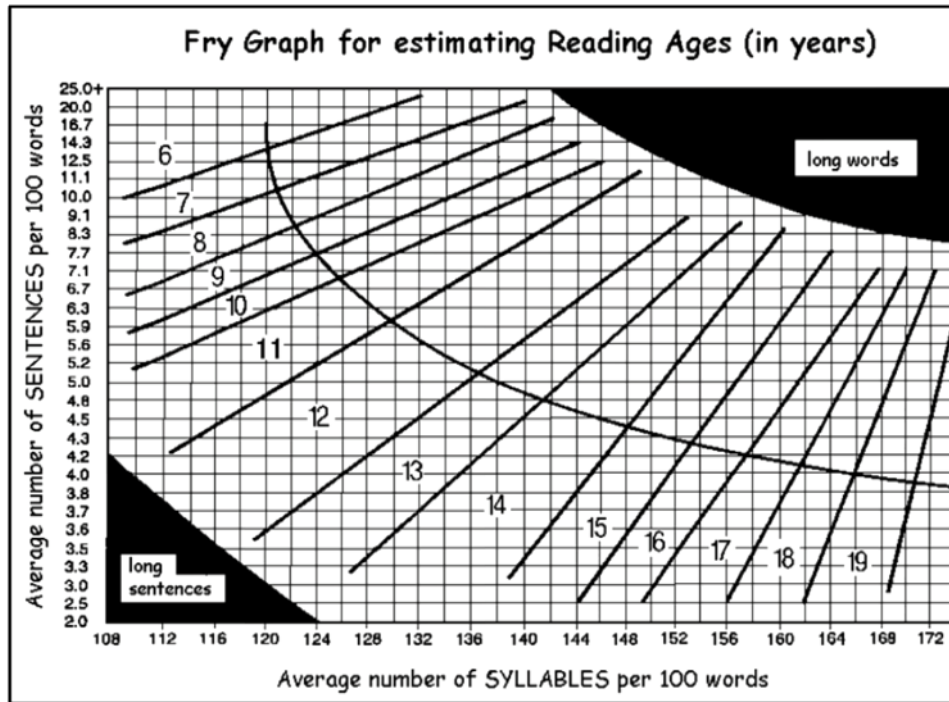


Figure 4.2: FRG using ages



All the same, there is need to understand the features of FRG in order to use and interpret it appropriately. To start with, just like any other graph, it has both the horizontal and vertical axis. The vertical axis shows the number of sentences (from 2.0 – 25) while the horizontal axis has the number of syllables (from 108 – 172). There is also a line that cuts across the graph from the left side of the upper horizontal axis to the lower part of the right vertical axis. That line represents the ideal index for each grade. Inside the graph, there are numbers that are running across the graph. These numbers can either be in grades (figure 4.1) or in years (figure 4.2). This study chose to use the FRG in grades since grade rather than age was the interest of this research. For instance, if a text has index 7, then it is appropriate for class seven pupils. This research was evaluating textbooks approved by KICD for teaching reading in form one; hence grade rather than age was a key factor. The ideal FRI for form one is 9.

There are other lines that cut across the graph separating the numbers. They separate the different grades. The number falling in between these lines is the index of a text. The space in between the lines reflects the one year progression in a grade. The point of intersection may fall in any section of the graph. The number in that section is the most suitable grade to read those materials. For instance, Figure 4.3 shows the point of intersection is at number 6. That means the book is appropriate for class six pupils. Another feature in the graph is found at the far left corner of the FRG labelled 'long sentences' while another one at the far right corner labelled 'long words'. Any intersection touching on these two corners would mean that such materials indices' are not verifiable (Fry 1963).

Data on this objective was presented using tables and analysed FRG and discussions. For each course book, there is a Table showing the number of syllables and sentences and the average. The data was then plotted on the FRG. Under this objective, the interpretation for the 'Table' and the 'Figure' were done together since the Figure was the graphic representation of the Table. The linguistic schemata of the Schema Theory were used to interpret this data. These schemata stipulate that the linguistic level of materials should be at par with the linguistic competence of the intended readers. Nuttal (1982) says that materials that are too difficult lead to frustration and kill the desire to read, while materials that are too simple lead to boredom and are a blow to enthusiasm. The study then proceeded to collect data from each course book in order to calculate the readability index of each. The readability index would help establish whether the course books were appropriate for form ones or not. Data collected from each course book was as follows:

4.2.1 *Excelling in English*

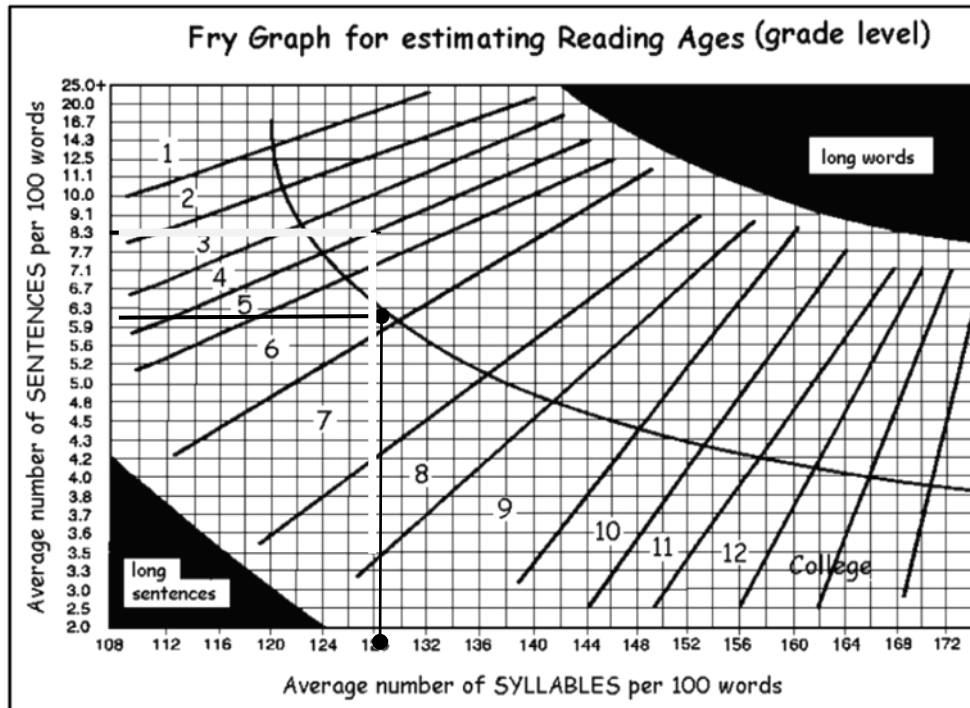
The following texts were picked:

4. Karani and Kemunto - page 5
5. Disability is not inability - page 80
6. The temptation - page 159

Table 4.1: Number of Syllables and Sentences –*Excelling in English*

Psg no.	No. of syllables	No. of sentences
1	127	5
2	116	7
3	143	5
AV	128.66	6.33

Figure 4.3 Readability Index for *Excelling in English*



The Table shows that the course book has relatively fewer syllables hence, an easier text. The sentences are also many at 6.33 indicating an easier text still. Indeed, when these figures were plotted on the FRG above, the point of intersection was at 6. In fact, it was touching the line that cuts across the graph. That means the course book is ideal for class six.

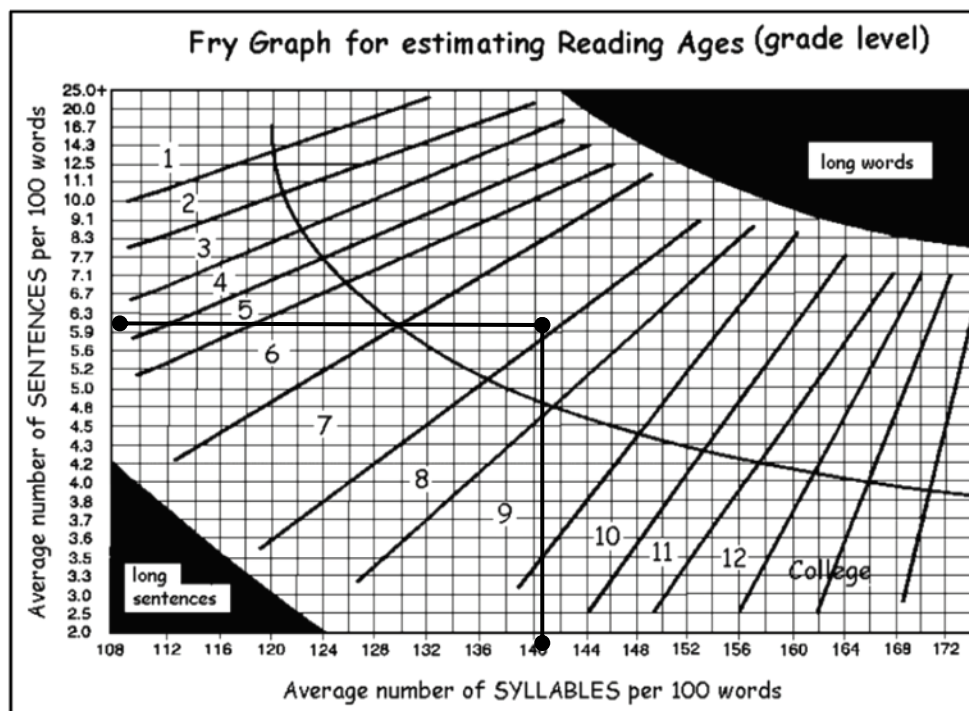
4.2.2 Head Start English

The texts picked were:

4. Jesse Owens defeats racism in the Olympics - page 1
5. The sweetness of stories - page 104
6. Education without school - page 200

Table 4.2 Number of Syllables and Sentences – *Head Start English*

Psg no.	Number of syllables	Number of sentences
1	143	6
2	144	7
3	133	6
AV	140.00	6.33

Figure 4.4 Readability Index for *Head Start English*

Compared to *Excelling*, *Head Start* had more syllables hence more difficult though the number of sentences was the same. Upon plotting the findings on the FRG, the index was 7. Hence, materials are suitable for class seven pupils.

4.2.3 Explore English

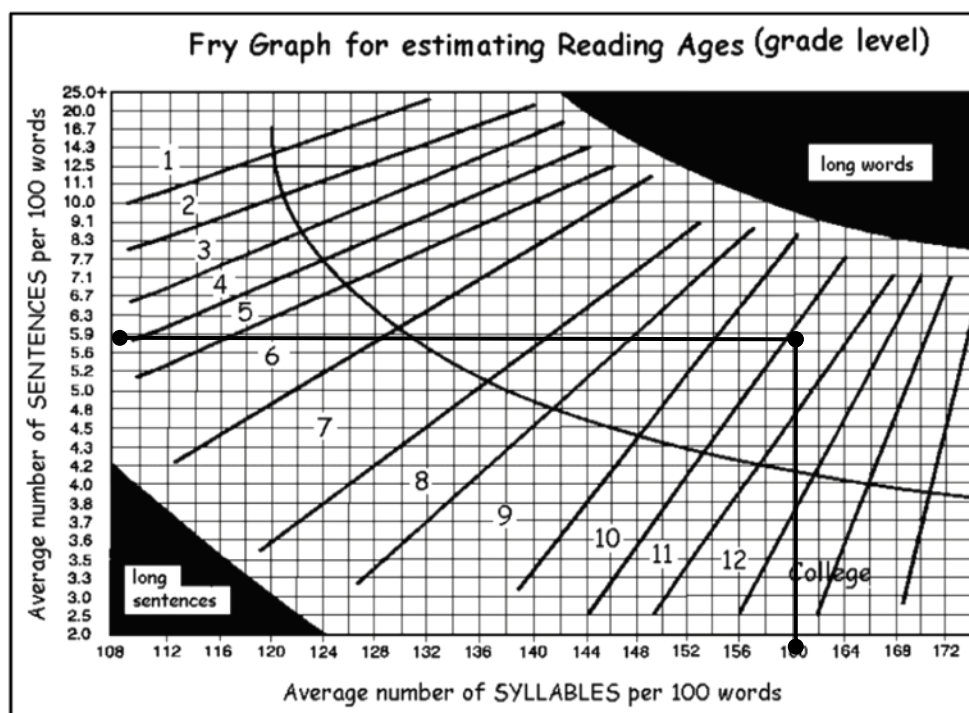
The following texts were picked:

4. Attitude, attitude, attitude - page 5
5. The old woman and the donkey – page 82
6. Drugs and drug abuse – page 161

Table 4.3 Number of Syllables and Sentences – *Explore English*

Psg no.	Number of syllables	Number of sentences
1	162	5
2	136	8
3	180	5
AV	159.33	6.00

Figure 4.5 Readability Index for *Explore English*



At 159.33, the syllables are too many, in fact, falling towards the end of the graph. However, the number of sentences is average at 6. From the syllabic perspective, the book is likely to be quite difficult for form ones. When the findings were plotted on the FRG, the index was 10/11 since it fell on the line separating the two grades. That means the book is suitable for form two and form three students.

4.2.4 *New Integrated English*

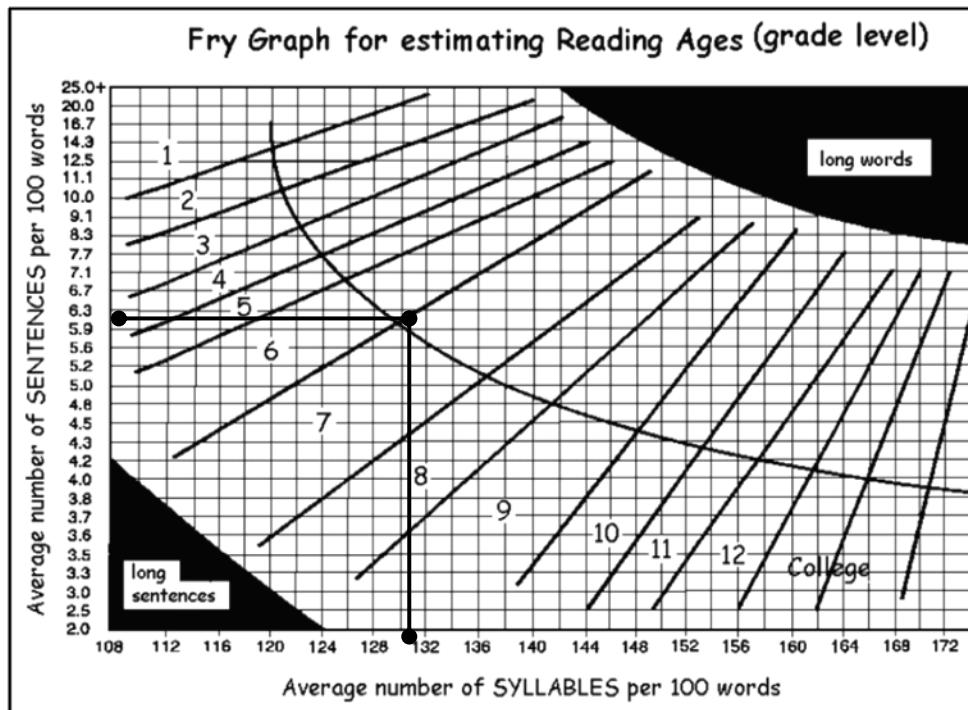
The texts picked were:

4. Obu's first day at CMS central school - page 2
5. Daily life in space – page 167
6. How historical events are recorded – page 274

Table 4.4 Number of Syllables and Sentences *New Integrated English*

Psg no.	Number of syllables	Number of sentences
1	135	8
2	119	6
3	138	5
AV	130.66	6.33

Figure 4.6 Readability Index for *New Integrated English*



The syllables were average and on the lower side of the graph at 130.66. Sentences were average at 6.33. Compared to Explore and from the syllabic point of view, this book would be easier to read. Upon plotting the findings on the graph, the index was six and seven. That means the book is suitable for class six and seven.

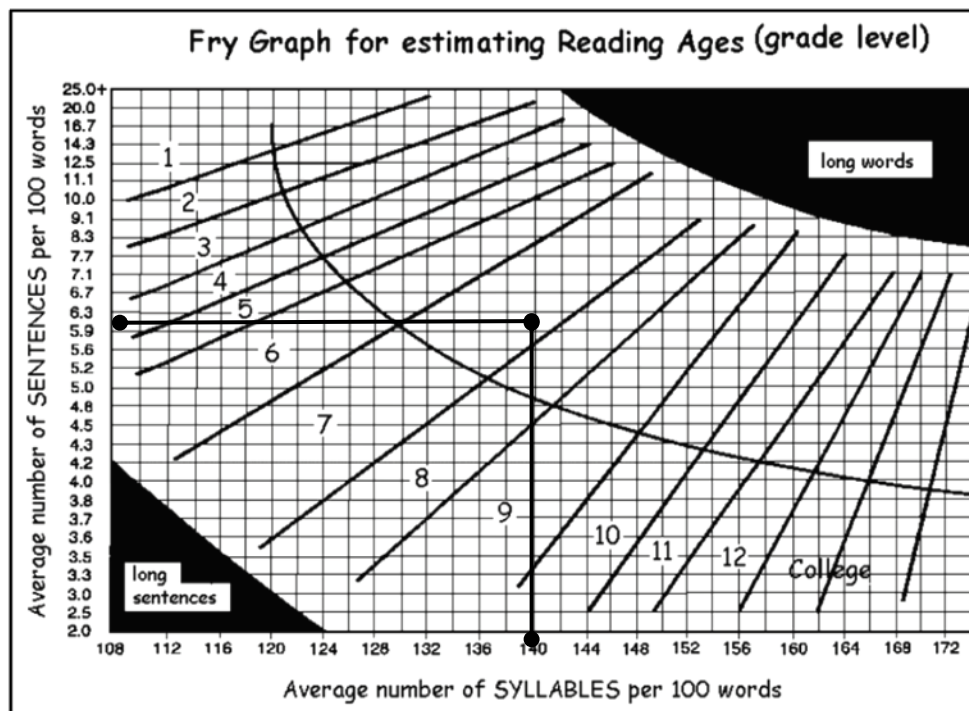
4.2.5 Advancing in English

The texts picked were:

4. A night to remember – page 5
5. It is better in Murijo – page 120
6. Time management - page 244

Table 4.5 Number of Syllables and Sentences - *Advancing in English*

Psg no.	No of syllables	No of sentences
1	136	8
2	143	6
3	138	5
AV	139.00	6.33

Figure 4.7 Readability Index for *Advancing in English*

Both the number of syllables and sentences were average, falling around the middle of the graph. That means the book is likely to be in the same category as *integrated*. When plotted on the FRG, the index was 7. The course book is therefore suitable for class seven.

4.2.6 New Horizons in English

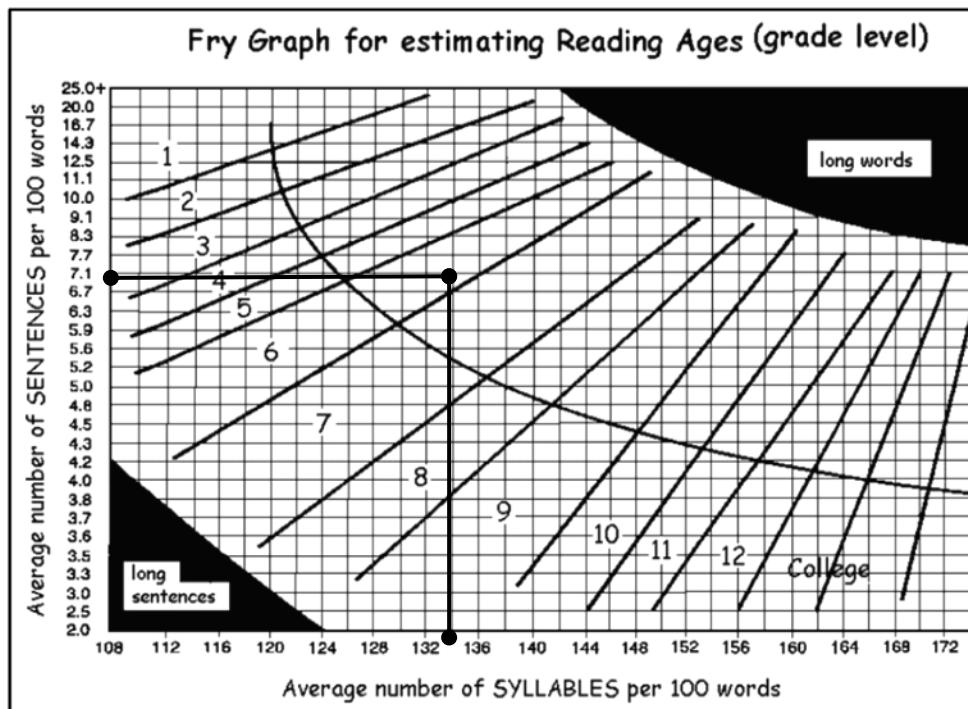
Following are the texts that were picked:

4. Njoroge goes to school – page 3
5. I want to be a child again – page 123
6. The four girls and the ogre - page 246

Table 4.6 Number of Syllables and Sentences - *New Horizons in English*

Passage no.	No of syllables	No. of sentences
1	132	10
2	127	5
3	141	7
Av	133.33	7.33

Figure 4.8 Readability Index for New Horizons in English



Compared to all the other course books approved by KICD for teaching reading, Horizons has the highest number of sentences at 7.33. With 133.33 syllables, it is likely to be a relatively easier text. On the FRG, the book had an index of 6. The implication is that it is suitable for class six.

Table 4.7 Indices for all Textbooks

TEXTBOOK	INDEX
Excelling	6
Head Start	7
Explore	11/12
Integrated	6/7
Advancing	7
Horizons	6

The first objective was to determine the readability index of the textbooks approved by KICD for

teaching reading in form one. A look at Table 4.7 reveals that five textbooks, *Excelling in English*, *Head Start English*, *New Integrated English*, *Advancing in English* and *New Horizon in English* were ideal for class six and seven since each had RI of 6 or 7. Nevertheless, *Explore in English* had RI of 11/12. This makes it ideal for form two and three. By using FRI only, no course book was ideal for form one students.

However, according to Ling (2012), readability takes cognizance of surface features of a text in terms of structural and lexical complexity. This complexity is determined

solely on the length of words and sentences. In fact, readability formulas assume that the longer a word is, the more syllables it has and hence the more difficult it is. This may not always be the case. For example, a word like ‘crux’ which has one syllable may be more difficult than ‘uncomfortable’ which has five syllables. That is why Nuttal (1982) asserts that readability formulas only give a rough estimate of the appropriate grade and are very useful in evaluation studies but should be used with caution. In fact, other studies such as (Ulosy 2006, & Ling 2012) propose that RI alone should not be used to assign textbooks to various classes. RI should always be used with other evaluative criteria.

Consequently, the current study evaluated the textbooks in other aspects such as text types used to present reading materials as well as comprehension strategies available in the textbooks. In addition, Schmidt (2000) asserts that RI is a basic requirement in evaluation of reading materials. She adds that should materials exceed the RI of intended readers, then other factors in comprehension become largely irrelevant. Hence, it is important to note that five books are below the ideal RI of form one which is 9; thus, though not ideal, could be suitable from the perspective of RI only.

4.3 Text Types

The second objective of this study was to determine the text types used to present the reading materials. Hence, this research scrutinized texts for inherent qualities that distinguish one text from the other. These qualities have to do with the rhetorical organization of a text that has an impact on how readers extract meaning from it. For instance, a poem is inherently organized differently from a passage. There are also culture bound qualities that have an impact on how students

read. Students need to be exposed to texts with different cultural settings. Indeed, KIE (2002) states that, students should be exposed to diverse texts from Kenya, East Africa and the rest of the world. This study had three categories of texts: category A- authentic verses scripted texts. category B- local, intercultural and biased texts. category C- poems, oral narratives, plays, fiction and non-fiction text types. The study scrutinized textbooks for these three categories of texts. The formal schemata of the Schema Theory were used to interpret and analyse the data. Below are the text types that were found in the textbooks.

4.3.1 Category A –Authentic versus Scripted Text Types

Authentic materials are those that are written for other purposes such as entertaining or passing information and not teaching. For example, pamphlets written by politicians persuading voters to elect them are authentic. Scripted materials are written with a view to teaching a particular linguistic aspect. The first few lines of two poems from *Advancing* illustrate this difference. The authentic one is from page 129 entitled *the face of hunger* from the ‘study skills’ section while the scripted one is from page 119 titled *A man with a rash* from the ‘listening and speaking section’.

The face of hunger

I counted ribs on his concerting chest
Bones protruding as if chiseled out
By a sculptors hand of famine

A man with a rash

A man with a rash
rushed past me
into the hut

Of a man with a hat

The scripted poem has been written mainly to teach sounds / ^ / and /æ /.

All the texts for teaching reading in all the course books were examined and found to be authentic. None was scripted. This fits the recommendations of both KIE syllabus and the Schema Theory. An (2013)emphasizes on the use of authentic materials since they give the learners an opportunity to interact with language as it is used in natural settings. This makes the scenario ‘real’ in the mind of the learners. Consequently, the students are able to relate with similar experiences they have had themselves or they may have witnessed in their neighbourhoods. All these factors aid comprehension (An 2013). For this reason, all the textbooks were found to be suitable for teaching reading in form one, in this particular category.

4.3.2 Category B: Local, Intercultural and Biased Text Types

This categorization depends with the setting of the text. In this study, local texts are those that are set in Kenya, intercultural texts are set outside Kenya but in Africa while biased texts are set outside Africa. The KIE syllabus (2002) recommends that pupils be exposed to all these text types. The Schema Theory also proposes cultural variations of texts. All the texts in KICD approved course books for teaching reading in form one were examined and each placed in the appropriate category. The data was presented using tables. The data collected for each course book was as follows:

Table 4.8: Category B -*Excelling in English*

Total texts	Local	Intercultural	Biased
18	17	0	1
Percentages	94.6%	0%	5.6%

The course book had a bias towards local texts. This would make the book very interesting to Kenyan learners since they can easily relate with the setting. Nevertheless, they would miss out on interacting with diverse multinational cultures. Learning about and appreciating other peoples' culture is one of the goals of education. Reading is one way of achieving this goal. Given that in most schools the textbook may be the only resource available for teaching reading then, deliberate effort has to be put to include materials from diverse cultural backgrounds in every course book; this one included.

Table 4.9: Category B -*Head start English*

total texts	Local	Intercultural	Biased
27	22	2	3
percentages	81.5%	7.4%	11.1%

The three text types were represented in this course book. Nevertheless, just like *Excelling*, the book had a bias towards local texts. Indeed, local texts took up 81.5%. Students using this textbook would therefore receive little exposure to international

cultural backgrounds. The course book may consider reducing the number of local texts in favour of the others.

Table 4.10: Category B -*Explore English*

Total texts	Local	Intercultural	Biased
18	13	4	1
Percentages	72%	22%	6%

Just like the two already mentioned, this course book is in favour of local texts at 72%. Texts from Africa are fairly well represented at 22%. The textbook therefore exposes learners to other African cultures outside Kenya. However, the exposure to cultures outside Africa is minimal. Only one text is biased. There is need to increase the biased text types in this book.

Table4.11: Category B -*New integrated English*

Total texts	Local	Intercultural	Biased
18	8	4	6
percentages	44.5%	22.2%	33.3%

This is the first course book to have a fair share of all the text types represented. The local texts take up 44.5%, intercultural 22.2% and biased 33.3%. This gives learners almost equal exposure to both local and international cultures.

Table 4.12: Category B -*Advancing in English*

Total texts	Local	Intercultural	Biased
27	18	7	2
percentages	66.7%	25.9%	7.4%

All the text types are present in this course book. However, the biased text types have received a minimal appearance at only 7.4%. Intercultural texts have a better representation at 25.9% with the local texts taking the lion's share at 66.7%. This means that this course book exposes learners fairly well to local and African cultures but only two texts would expose them to international cultures. Thus, there is need to increase their presence as per the recommendations of the syllabus as well as the Schema Theory.

Table 4.13: Category B -*New Horizons in English*

Total texts	Local	intercultural	Biased
27	18	6	3
percentages	66.7%	22.2%	11.1%

The study established that all the text types were represented albeit in varying degrees. Just like the previous ones, the local type took up 66.7% with the other two sharing 33.3%. There is need to expose students to more multinational cultures as the syllabus requires.

Table 4.13 Category B- Summary: all Textbooks

Total texts	Local	Intercultural	Biased
135	96	23	16
percentages	71.1%	17%	11.9%

In this category, the findings reveal that five textbooks, *Head Start English*, *New Integrated English*, *Explore English*, *Advancing in English* and *New Horizons in English* have used all the text types but in varying degrees. Only one textbook, *Excelling in English*, did not have a text in the intercultural category. *New Integrated English* had a fair representation of all text types (table 4.11). The other five textbooks are largely in favour of local texts; indeed, they take up 71.1%. Intercultural text types are second while biased texts are the least in number. They share 28.9% between them.

There is need to expose students in form one to all the text types as recommended in the syllabus (KIE 2002). It requires the teaching of these three text types. It is in form one where the foundation for reading in secondary school is laid (KIE 2002). It is important to note that in form three and four, students do study three set books two of which will be compulsory. Between these two, one has to be biased while the other one is either local or intercultural. Hence, in preparation for the intense study of set books, it is important to expose students to the three text types. In addition, duke (2011) argues that the range of texts that students are exposed to has an influence on their reading. indeed, the formal schemata of the Schema Theory encourage exposure to as many texts as the students are required to comprehend. This would help them build a schema from which to draw in their reading sessions.

This aids comprehension. Moreover, other studies such as Kahimbaara (2000) recommend that materials for teaching reading should be culturally diverse.

Consequently, this little exposure to biased and intercultural texts implies that the foundation laid for comprehension of such texts is limited. The textbooks do not give students adequate opportunities to build a schema that they could draw from as they go up the academic ladder. A balanced exposure to all types of texts that students are expected to understand is vital more so, at the foundational level.

4.3.3 Category C: Text Types for Presentation

Materials for teaching reading can be presented in different forms as explained on page 16 of this study. The KIE syllabus (2002) recommends five of them namely: poems, oral narratives, plays fictitious and factual passages. The differences between these text types is so inherent and subtle that they have to be experienced in order to be appreciated. Indeed, this study has included appendices 6(an oral narrative),7(a fictitious passage),8(a poem) and 9(a play) so as to bring out these differences. All these text types have one theme; love. Yet, their presentation of it are unique to each type, both physically and inherently. This study scrutinized the form one course books for these text types. Below are the findings for each book.

Table 4.15: Category C -*Excelling in English*

No. of texts	Poems	Oral Narratives	Plays	Fiction	Non-fiction
18	1	1	0	8	8
Percentages	5.6%	5.6%	0%	44.4%	44.4%

In this course book, 88% of all the materials for teaching reading were presented by use of fictitious or factual passages. This means that the learners are adequately exposed to prose-like materials. However, there is no exposure to plays. Practice on reading poems and oral narratives is also minimal. The KIE (2002) syllabus besides the Schema Theory, propose exposure to as many text types as the learners are expected to comprehend. There is therefore need to include a fair share of all recommended text types.

Table 4.16: Category C -*Head Start English*

Total texts	Poems	Oral Narratives	Plays	Fiction	Non – fiction
27	0	2	0	5	20
Percentages	0%	7.4%	0%	18.6%	74%

Two text types were not represented at all in this course book; poems and plays. Factual text types are the majority at 68%, followed by fictitious passages at 25%. There were only two oral narratives taking up 7%. The syllabus recommends light reading materials as well as fairely tales (appendix 10). The Schema Theory also proposes a variety of texts in order to cater for the diverse interest of learners. This textbook has more of the factual texts at the expense of the other text types. There is need to bring about a balance probably through a review.

Table 4.17: Category C -Explore English

Total texts	Poems	Oral narratives	Plays	Fiction	Non-fiction
18	0	3	1	3	11
percentages	0%	16.7%	5.6%	16.7%	61%

The factual texts had 61% of all text types used to present materials for teaching reading in this course book. No poem was used in this course book. Indeed, this book would require teachers to supplement all the text types save for the non-fiction category.

Table 4.18: Category C -New Integrated English

Total texts	Poems	Oral Narratives	Plays	Fiction	Non-fiction
18	0	1	1	8	8
percentages	0%	5.6%	5.6%	44.4%	44.4%

This course book had a balance between the fictitious and factual text types. The two took up 88% of all the types of texts used to present materials for teaching reading in this course book. No poem was used and only one oral narrative and one play have made their presence in the book. There is therefore need to reduce the number of fictitious and factual passages in favour of the other text types. That would fit in well with the recommendations of the Schema Theory as well as the KIE (2002) syllabus.

Table 4.19: Category C -*Advancing in English*

Total texts	Poems	Oral Narratives	Plays	Fiction	Non-fiction
27	2	2	2	12	9
percentages	7.4%	7.4%	7.4%	44.5%	33.3%

This course book has used the highest number of fictitious passages at 45% compared to all the others. In addition, all the text types are represented. This is commensurate with the syllabus since it proposes that contemporary issues should be presented in reading materials using both fictitious and factual texts. The Schema Theory recommends use of a variety of texts. This course book has followed these recommendations to a great extent. It would give learners a fair share of exposure to all text types.

Table 4.20: Category C -*New Horizons in English*

Total texts	Poems	Oral narratives	Plays	Fiction	Non – fiction
27	1	3	2	7	14
percentages	3.7%	11.1%	7.4%	25.9%	51.9%

This course book has used all the text types to present materials for teaching reading. Indeed, it is only *Horizons* and *Advancing* that have used all the text types that the syllabus recommends. However, the non-fiction category represents 52% of all the text types used. This study suggests that this text type be reduced in favour of poems, oral narratives and plays. This would expose learners adequately to all the recommended text types.

Table 4.21 Category C -Summary: all text books

Total texts	Poems	Oral narratives	Plays	fiction	Non-fiction
135	4	11	6	45	69
percentages	3%	8.2%	4.4%	33.3%	51.1%

In this category, textbooks were scrutinized for the presence of poems, oral narratives, plays, fiction and non-fiction texts. This is because the Schema Theory which this study adopted, proposes that learners should be exposed to as many categories of texts as they are expected to understand. The KIE (2002) syllabus stipulates the text types that learners are expected to comprehend and hence should be exposed to. The findings indicate that four textbooks did not have all text types as expected. *Explore in English* and *New Integrated English* had no poems, *Head Start English* had neither a poem nor a play, while no play was found in *Excelling in English*. Only *Advancing in English* and *New Horizons in English* had all the text types albeit in varying degrees.

However, all the textbooks were biased towards fiction and non – fiction categories. For instance, *New Horizons in English* and *Explore English* had over 50% representation in non-fiction category. Actually, it is only *Advancing in English* which gave the highest percentage to fiction category; 45%. *New Integrated English* and *Excelling in English* presented an equal number of fiction and non-fiction types. In all the textbooks, fiction and non-fiction types took up 84% leaving 16% for the other three categories. This means that all the course books give little exposure to poems, oral narratives and plays at this level. Yet, it is this level which is meant to prepare learners for both intensive and extensive reading as they progress through

the academic ladder. However, it is the factual passages that have been given prominence.

According to Li (2007), different text types use text organization, language structures, grammar and level of formality differently, hence posing different reading demands for readers. An examination of appendix 6-9 illustrates this. All are materials for teaching reading extracted from KICD approved textbooks but presented using different text types. The theme of love permeates all of them yet the topic and other propositions are linked very differently from one another. Thus students need to be taught how to extract meaning from each one of them through exposure. The Schema Theory suggests that readers must be exposed to as many genres as they are expected to understand and to cater for a variety of interests among readers.

Furthermore, in form three and four, the students will intensely study all these genres. Come KCSE, the same will be tested in paper two and paper three. For instance in paper two question one, they will answer questions on a passage which could either be fictitious or non-fictitious. Question two of the same paper will be an extract from either a play or a novel. Question three is either a poem or an oral narrative. Moreover, question two and three in paper three are based on set texts which are fictitious. Consequently, there is need for adequate exposure to poems, oral narratives, and plays in form one where the foundation for secondary school reading is laid.

4.4 Comprehension Strategies

These are the reading activities that students should engage in as they read since they help them extract meaning from texts. These activities are in three categories: pre-reading activities (PRRA) which should be carried out before the actual reading of the texts. These help bridge any cultural or linguistic gaps that the readers may have. Secondly, during-reading activities (DRA) should be carried out as the reading is taking place. They help the readers interrogate the text thus making them active participants in a reading session. Finally, the post-reading activities (PSRA) that enable readers grasp the meaning of the whole text. These activities are for teaching and not for testing. For example on page 41, *Excelling*, there is poem entitled ‘What about this child?’ the first two stanzas were used to illustrate these reading activities.

What about this child?

Ouch! That’s so painful!
 The slap. The clothes, not sparkling clean;
 But I;m only ten and two;
 Not ripe for such punishing chores
 Her own, like a sponge, absorb knowledge
 What about this child?

Oops! That’s so awful!
 The morsels.
 Mama baby declares,
 The family meal, too good for my uncivilized mouth;
 But my growing body demands;
 A nourishing meal not stale leftovers

Her own, like a volcano, belch with satisfaction.

What about this child?

Examples of reading activities to be used with such a text are:

Pre-reading activities: the first one is from the course book;

- a) Tell your classmates the rights you are entitled to.
- b) What is the difference between being responsible and child labour?
- c) Do you know children who work for money? What type of food do they eat?

During-reading activities:

- a) How old is the speaker?
- b) Why is she slapped?
- c) The speaker goes to school. True or false?
- d) Differentiate between the speaker's food and that of the other children.
- e) Describe how you feel about the speaker and mama baby.
- f) Mama baby is generous. True or false?
- g) Stop after reading stanza two and explain what you think will happen next.

Post-reading activities:

- a) With your desk mate, enact the scenario in the poem. One of you to be mama baby, the other one the speaker.
- a) Suppose you met with mama baby, what kind of questions would you ask her?
- b) In not more than three words, state what is happening in this poem.

These reading activities are general and adaptable to any text. Their purpose is to help readers interact with and interrogate the text with a view to extracting meaning from it. Ability to extract meaning from a text leaves readers with a feeling of satisfaction and fulfillment. (Nuttal 1982) This should be the objective of any reading lesson. The content schemata of the Schema Theory were used to interpret and analyse the data in this section. Data collected from each course book was as follows:

Table 4.22 Reading Activities -*Excelling in English*

PRRA	DRA	PSRA
24	0	0

All the texts in this course book had pre-reading activities. A few of them had even two or three such activities. This helps the learners build bridges between the text and the world before they start reading (NSW 2010). Any cultural and linguistic gaps are also taken care of. Nevertheless, neither during-reading nor post-reading activities were found in the text. During-reading activities make the learners interrogate the text and make sense of it as they read (Carrel 1988). For example, they help a reader distinguish a joke from a serious remark and hence appreciate the flow of a story. Their absence means that there is minimal interaction between learner and text, leading to low levels of comprehension. Post-reading activities help learners grasp the thesis of the story. Their absence also implies failure to resonate with the text. This study recommends an inclusion of the two reading activities, probably in the next review of the course book.

Table 4.23 Reading Activities -Head Start English

PRRA	DRA	PSRA
25	0	46

Almost all the texts had both pre-reading activities and post-reading activities. Indeed a text would have as many as six activities. However, some of them were not appropriate for the section in which they appeared. For instance, some pre-reading activities, though labeled so, had no activity for the reader to carry out but were simply instructional. For example, on page 53, there is a text entitled ‘the scandal’ and it is about street children. The pre-reading activity for that text was as follows: ‘There are many children on the street nowadays. At times, we ignore them and forget that they have a right to shelter, health care and good education. Read the following story and answer the questions that follow.’ On the other hand, the post-reading activity for the same story is very appropriate. It reads ‘Was it fair for the magistrate to let Juma free? Why?’ No DRA was found in the book. These activities need to be included.

Table 4.24 Reading Activities -Explore English

PRRA	DRA	PSRA
0	0	19

Only post-reading activities were used in this course book. However, they were unevenly distributed among the texts; one text had as many as seven activities,

others two while others had none. This study proposes a more balanced distribution of the activities; probably an activity per text. In addition, some of them would be suitable as pre-reading activities. For example, on page 12 there is a text entitled ‘terrorism’. One of the post-reading activities reads, ‘What is terrorism and why is it becoming an issue of concern?’ Such an activity would have been appropriate in helping the reader connect the text to the world before reading it, leading to better understanding of the text. The course book should incorporate the three reading activities so as to embody the recommendations of the Schema Theory.

Table 4.25 Reading Activities -*New Integrated English*

PRRA	DRA	PSRA
9	0	27

Both pre-reading and post-reading activities were used in this course book. However, the distribution was uneven. For example, only three texts had pre-reading activities with one having as many as five. Also, only five out of eighteen texts had post-reading activities. One had as many as eight while others had none. There is need to have at least an activity per category for each text. Just like the others, none of the texts had DRA. Having discussed their role in making learners active readers, this study recommends that they be included in the book.

Table 4.26 Reading Activities -*Advancing in English*

PRRA	DRA	PSRA
3	0	5

There was usage of both pre-reading and post-reading activities but with very few texts. The book had twenty seven texts for teaching reading. Out of these only one had three pre-reading activities and three had post-reading activities. No DRA was found in the course book. In order to make readers active participants in the reading process as the Schema Theory posits, there is need to include all the three categories of reading activities. Their presence and usage leads to fulfillment in reading, as levels of comprehension are raised.

Table 4.27 Reading Activities -*New Horizons in English*

PRRA	DRA	PSRA
0	0	28

Only post-reading activities were used in this coursebook. Nevertheless, some texts had as many as four activities while others had none. The Schema Theory recommends active participation by readers as they interact with a text. This is enhanced by use of pre-reading and during-reading activities. Their absence implies that learners are passive participants in a reading session. This lowers the comprehension levels. This study therefore recommends inclusion of all categories of reading activities.

Table 4.28: Summary -Reading Activities- all textbooks

PRRA	DRA	PSRA
80	0	132

Most of the course books had used either PRRA or PSRA. Four textbooks had pre-reading activities though in varying degrees. For instance, *Excelling in English* provided PRRA with all the texts. An example of such an activity is on page 41 (*Excelling in English*). The text is a poem on child labour entitled “*What about this child?*” The activity is, “Tell your classmates the rights that you are entitled to.” However, two textbooks, *Explore English* and *New Horizons in English*, did not present any PRRA.

The Schema Theory advocates for an interactive reading process. Indeed, one of the tenets of the Schema Theory posits that texts do not carry meaning in themselves. Rather they only provide directions as to how readers should retrieve meaning from their own previously acquired knowledge (An 2013). Hence, learners need to be accorded opportunities to link texts to their past experiences. This is achieved by use of comprehension strategies which are presented as reading activities in textbooks.

Students should carry out PRRA before the actual reading of texts. PRRA help awaken any linguistic, culturally or topically bound schemata that is dormant or the readers are not aware of. In fact, they help link the text to the world besides the reader’s past experiences and bring on board any new knowledge that could aid comprehension. NSW (2010) argues that PRRA enable students link text to self, text to another text or text to the world. In fact, KIE (2002) is explicit that PRRA should be part and parcel of teaching reading. Their presence therefore means that readers come to the text with a wealth of knowledge which will help them retrieve meaning from it (Carrel 1988). On the other hand, absence of PRRA implies that learners face the text without any clue of whatever they will be reading. They will have to rely

fully on the text to retrieve meaning from it. This inhibits comprehension greatly. RA therefore, play a very crucial role in a reading process.

Textbooks titled pre-reading activities differently. In *Excelling in English*, they were labelled “activity 3”, *Head Start English* labelled them “pre-reading. In *New Integrated English* and *Advancing in English*, they were not labelled. Whether labelled or not, pre-reading activities were placed immediately above the text. This was very appropriate and in line with the expectations of the Schema Theory because, students should engage in them before the actual reading of the text.

Secondly, DRA enable students interact with the text as they read. They are crucial in making the reading process between reader and text interactive as the Schema Theory requires (Duke 2011). For example, DRA will require readers to form mental pictures as they read. They will also be expected predict what would happen after a certain episode as well as question whether what they are reading is making sense (Duke 2011). All these activities promote deeper understanding of a text. Nevertheless, none of the textbooks approved by KICD for teaching reading had in form one had DRA. Another tenet of the Schema Theory states that reading comprehension operates in two directions: first from bottom up to the top. This bottom up process is activated by specific data from the text. It also operates from the top down to the bottom of the hierarchy. In the top down process, the readers’ background knowledge plays a significant role. Hence, effective reading calls for interaction of both the bottom up and top down processes (An 2013). Their absence means that as they read, learners will have to rely on the information in the text only in their attempt to grasp the meaning of the text. Actually, only bottoms up process will be available to the reader. This leads to low levels of comprehension making the

reader feel frustrated (Nuttal 1982). Though DRA should be the highest in number in a course book, none of them had any.

Finally, the study found out that (PSRA) were extensively used in almost all the textbooks though in varying degrees. PSRA help readers identify and accumulate the most important ideas and restate them in their own words. They actually help indicate that the interaction between text and reader has been successful (NSW 2010). This leads to a sense of fulfillment on the part of the reader. Their presence in the course books is therefore commensurate with the proposals of the Schema Theory. An example of such an activity can be found on page 196, *Head Start English*, after the text entitled “Battle at the maandazi kiosk”. The activity is, “Which of the two people involved in the fight are to blame and why?” This fits in well with Schema Theory which proposes an interactive reading process. Such an activity would help the learners interact further with the whole text enabling them to assimilate its theme.

Post-reading activities were labelled differently in different textbooks. In *Head Start* they were titled ‘*Let’s talk*’, *Explore English* ‘Discussion’ *New Horizons in English* ‘Discussion Questions’ and *Advancing in English* ‘Further Activities’. In *New Integrated English*, they were not labelled but were appearing as discussion question after the comprehension questions.

All the textbooks had placed post-reading activities after ‘comprehension questions’. This order seems to contradict the expectations of the Schema Theory. This is because readers are expected to make use of all categories of reading activities as they read the text. Indeed, though PSRA are used immediately after reading the text, learners have to continue reading it as they carry out those activities. In fact, PSRA

help cement the meaning that learners have retrieved from the text. Consequently, this study proposes that they should be placed immediately after the text so that learners make use of them as they finish reading. Thereafter, they can tackle the comprehension questions.

There was a challenge in collecting data on PSRA. Some of them were not as summative as is expected of PSRA (expounded earlier in this chapter). Indeed, some of them seemed more suitable as PRRA. For instance in *Advancing in English* there is a text entitled *From rags to riches*. (page 3-7) It is about corrupt government officials. The PSRA is, 'Imagine you are an officer appointed to eradicate corruption in the country. Suggest ways of going about this task'. A similar example is from *Head Start English* (page 95-97), a text entitled 'A day in the life of a first aid worker'. The PSRA is 'Discuss why you think people should risk their lives to save others'. These activities seem to call the readers to awaken any real life schemata that they may have. This would help link the text to the real world leading to a better understanding of it. Consequently, the activities would fit better as PRRA.

4.5 Summary

The chapter presented and analysed data collected on the three objectives of the study. Tables and FRG were used to present and analyse data on the 'Readability Index'. Furthermore, presentation and analysis on the 'Text Types and 'Comprehension Strategies' was done by use of tables and discussions. The Schema Theory, CAA and the KIE (2002) formed the basis of the analysis. We move on to chapter five which wraps up the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

Reading is very crucial in secondary school life. There are many prep sessions in which students are expected to read on their own, make notes and answer questions. The exceptional role played by reading in secondary school can therefore not be overstated. Consequently, the variables that have an interplay as the foundation for secondary school reading is being laid, need to be appropriate to a great extent. One of the paramount variables is materials. Hence, the study at hand undertook an evaluation of the KICD approved textbooks for teaching reading in form one. This chapter presents summary of findings, recommendations and suggestions for further research.

5.2 Summary of Findings

This study evaluated course books approved by KICD for teaching reading in form one. It had three objectives; to establish the readability index of the materials for teaching reading in the textbooks, to determine the text types used to present the materials and to find out the comprehension strategies provided with the materials. The summary of findings was organized as per the objectives.

5.2.1 Readability Index

The first objective was to establish the readability index of materials for teaching reading in form one in Kenyan secondary schools. This objective was calculated by use of FRF. The linguistic schemata of the Schema Theory were used to interpret the data. It was established that two course books, *Excelling in English*, and *New Horizons in English* had RI of 6 while the RI of *Head Start English* and *Advancing in English* was 7. *New Integrated English* had RI of 6/7 while *Explore English* had RI of 11/12. Thus, going by the RI variable only, none of the textbooks was found ideal for form ones. According to Schmidt (2000), materials for teaching reading should never exceed the linguistic level of learners. The ideal RI for form one is 9. Hence, those textbooks with RI of less than 9 can be used with supplementation and adaptation. Nevertheless, it is important to note that RI alone do not suffice to assign books to the various grades. Nonetheless, it is a basic requirement in evaluation of materials for teaching reading.

5.2.2 Text Types for Presenting Materials

The second objective was to determine the text types used to present materials for teaching reading in KICD approved textbooks for form one. The data was collected using a checklist contextualized in the KIE (2002) syllabus. Three categories of text types were identified. In the first one, the study was scrutinizing the materials for either authentic or scripted texts. It was established that all the texts were authentic. Authentic materials are those that are written for any other purpose other than teaching. This fits in well with the requirements of the syllabus. (KIE 2002). Also, other studies in reading such as Carrel (1988) and Nuttall (1982) recommend them.

This is because authentic materials reflect closely the natural usage of language since their settings are probable in real life.

In the second category, the materials were verified for the presence of local, intercultural and biased text types. The study found out that almost all the course books had used all the text types. In fact, only *Excelling in English* which had not used the intercultural type while New Integrated English had a fair representation of the three text types. However, all the textbooks were in favour of the local type. Evidently, local texts took up 71% of the texts available in all the textbooks. The syllabus recommends the teaching of all these categories of texts. Furthermore, the Schema Theory has provided the content schemata to bridge any cultural gap that may arise in intercultural and biased texts. Thus, to an extent, the textbooks satisfy the requirements of the syllabus and the expectations of the Schema Theory. Nevertheless, there is need to increase the presence of both the biased and intercultural categories of texts. This is very important since the course book plays a key role in Kenyan secondary schools. Indeed, it may be the only resource available for both teachers and students.

There was also a third category whose focus was on five text types that can be used to present reading materials. These are poems, oral narratives, plays, fictitious and factual passages. The study found out that poems were largely ignored followed by plays. Oral narratives were used but minimally. For example, *Head Star English*, *Explore English* and *New Integrated English* did not have a poem while *Excelling in English* and *New Horizons in English* presented only one poem each. As for the plays, *Excelling in English* and *Head Start English* did not have a play while

Explore in English and *New Integrated English* had only one play each. All the course books were in favour of fiction and non-fiction passages. Indeed, these two took up 84% of the texts available in all the textbooks. Actually, most of the textbooks were bent towards non-fiction category. The teaching of all these text types is recommended in the syllabus (appendix 10). In addition, the Schema Theory recommends that learners should be exposed to as many texts as they are expected to understand. In this light, this study suggests that textbooks present a fair share of all these types.

5.2.3 Comprehension Strategies

Finally, the study sought to determine the comprehension strategies provided with the materials in KICD approved textbooks for teaching reading. Comprehension strategies are presented as reading activities in course books. These activities are in three categories; PRRA, DRA and PSRA. The study established that PRRA and PSRA were extensively used in all textbooks. For instance, *Excelling in English* and *Head Start English* had PRRA with most of their reading materials. However, *Explore English* and *New Horizons* did not have any PRRA. On the other hand, *Excelling in English* was the only book without PSRA. PRRA help link the world and past experiences to the text. PSRA help readers surmise the theme of a text. Nevertheless, none of course books provided DRA. Their absence implies that readers were left to go through the text passively. This is because DRA provide a forum for readers to interrogate and engage the text. Course books should hence include them with every text for teaching reading.

5.3 Recommendations

Authors of course books should ensure that there is a fair representation of text types. For instance, texts with a multi cultural setting should be increased besides plays, poems, oral narratives and fictional passages. This will be in keeping with the requirements of the syllabus as well as catering for the diverse interest of learners. Moreover, it is in form one where the foundation for secondary school reading is laid, therefore, students should be exposed to all the text types that they are expected to understand. Indeed, not only will these text types be intensively studied in form three and four, but will also be tested at KCSE level.

Secondly, it is important to note that these course books have been in use since 2003. Teachers should therefore be aware of areas that need supplementation or adaptation as they use the textbooks. For instance, in teaching plays and poems as well as fiction.

Secondly, the three types of reading activities should be part and parcel of the materials for teaching reading in textbooks. These activities are key in rendering a reading session interactive as recommended by the Schema Theory. In addition, they help arouse any dormant schemata in the learners as well as bring in any new knowledge that is relevant to the text being read. All these activities lead to a better understanding of the materials.

Furthermore, it is important that reading activities be appropriately labelled and instructions on when to use them be clearly stipulated. This will read to a better

utilization of the activities. For example PRRA should be followed by instructions that they should be carried out before reading the passage. DRA ought to be carried out as learners read the text, while learners should engage in PSRA after reading the text. In this manner, students will be learning the skill of comprehension since they will be interrogating the text as they read.

Finally, there should be a fair distribution of reading activities amongst text. For instance, a text would have as many as three PRRA while another text in the same course book would have none. That means the comprehension of materials with reading activities would be better than for those without. Thus, to enhance the comprehension of every text, the appropriate reading activities should be provided.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

This study suggests further research on readability index of materials using other readability formula. This would help ascertain whether readability formulas yield similar results. Further research could also be carried out on effective comprehension strategies as well as their use. This could help authors come up with suitable ones for each text on one hand, while teachers would use them appropriately on the other hand. A similar study to this one can be carried out on form two, three and four textbooks. This would help determine whether similar strengths and challenges found in form one textbooks are also present in the course books for other classes.

5.5 Conclusion

The study at hand evaluated textbooks approved by KICD for teaching reading in form one in Kenyan secondary schools. The study was able to establish that the five of the course books have FRI of 6 or 7 while the FRI for one is 11/12. The ideal FRI for form one is 9. The one with FRI above 9 could be too frustrating for form ones but those other five, though not ideal, are acceptable. The study was also able to establish that all the texts for teaching reading were authentic. Besides, the findings indicate that all the text types that the study was interested in, had been represented in the textbooks to a certain extent. However, there is need to have a fair representation of all the text types in each course book. Consequently, depending on the textbook that a school may choose, supplementation and adaptation will be necessary. Finally, the research found out that PRRA and PSRA were extensively used in the textbooks albeit in varying degrees. Nevertheless, there is need to have a balance of activities among the texts. This is because there could be one text with as many as three PRRA while another had none. In addition, DRA should be included in the textbooks since none of the course books had any.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 UWEZO REPORT ADOPTED FROM DAILY NATION 13TH JUNE 201

to monitor their children instead of blaming teachers and the government

illiterate KCPE pupils



the time children reach Standard One in 10 cannot solve Standard One division.

3 per cent, Nyeri County has the best number of Standard Three pupils who can read and understand Standard Two-level story in English Swahili, and do division at the level.

followed by Kajiado (54 per cent), Nairobi (52 per cent), Kiambu (48 per cent) and Kirinyaga (42 per cent).

Counties at the bottom are Mandera (10 per cent), Samburu (13 per cent), Turkana (14 per cent), Busia (17 per cent) and Tana River (18 per cent). The report says although Nyeri is the best county in learning outcomes, its performance is still poor. Only one Standard Three pupil in Nyeri is able to do Standard Two work more than a child in Mandera. Mandera is the top county for English Swahili and division as six out of 10 Standard Three pupils can read and do division at the

BASIC LITERACY

Study based on Std Two work

Literacy: The pupils were assessed in basic literacy and numeracy, using a test based on the Standard Two curriculum.

Meetings: At 80 per cent, Nyeri County leads in the number of parents attending meetings in schools.

In school: In Elgeyo-Marakwet County, 96 per cent of enrolled pupils were in school during the Uwezo visit.

Standard Two level.

The top county for Kiswahili reading is Kajiado, where six out of 10 Standard Three pupils are able to read at Standard Two level.

In Nairobi, 96 per cent of schools provide clean drinking water to pupils

FILE | NATION

Teachers' colleges have been urged to seek out the best brains.

while 95 per cent of girls in Isiolo are given sanitary towels.

Isiolo has the highest proportion of schools providing training for special needs teachers, but this is still generally low at 19 per cent.

Speaking during the launch of the report at the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development, President Uhuru Kenyatta's adviser on Education, Kilemi Mwiria, asked parents to develop interest in what their children learn instead of blaming teachers and the government.

"The same applies to students who have to show commitment in their studies," Dr Mwiria said.

The report says almost all schools assessed in Mombasa provide in-service training for Standard Two teachers.

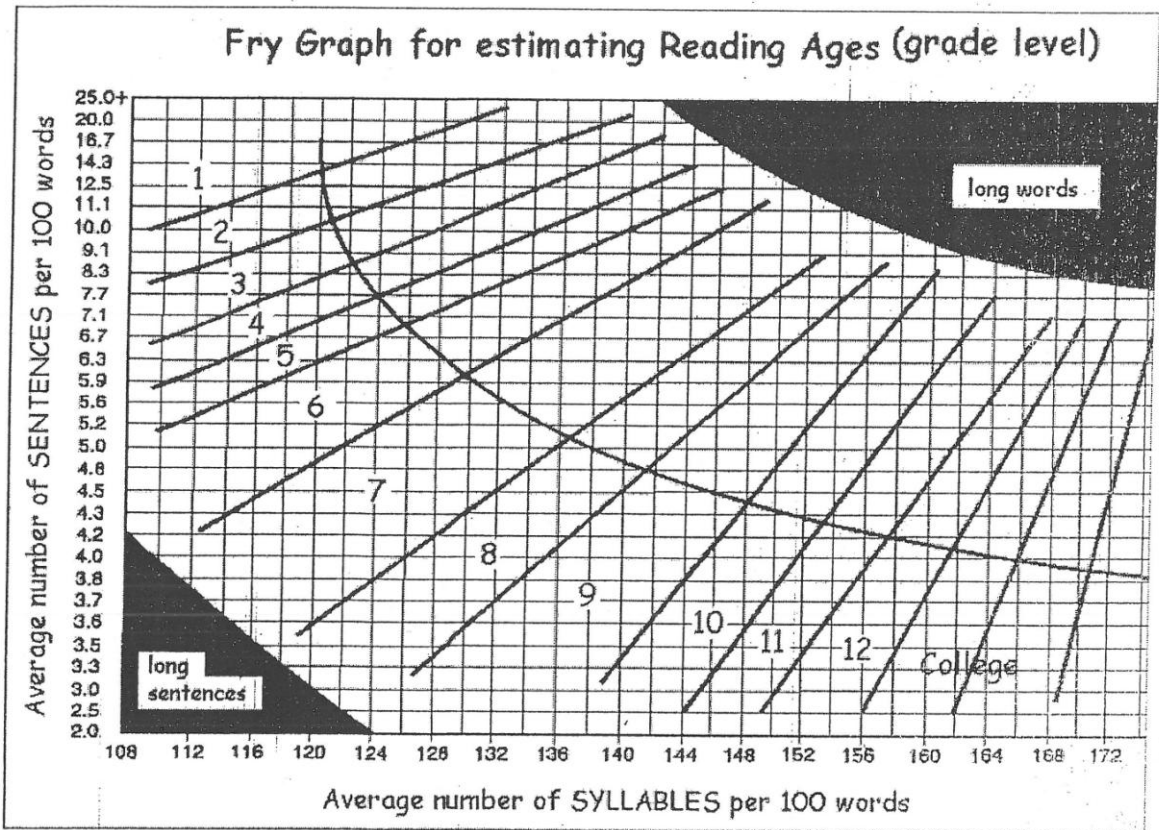
He also proposed that colleges and universities should go for bright students to train as teachers.

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APPENDIX 3 SAMPLE OF A CHECKLIST ADOPTED FROM MIECKLEY (2005)
 AVAILABLE AT www.readngmatrix.com

Textbook Evaluation Checklist		Excellent	Good	Adequate	Poor	Totally Lacking	Mandatory	Optional	Not Applicable
I. Textbook									
A. Content									
i.	Is the subject matter presented either topically or functionally in a logical, organized manner? (1,2,3) ⁱ	4	3	2	1	0	M	O	N
ii.	Does the content serve as a window into learning about the target language culture (American, British, ect.)? (2,18)	4	3	2	1	0	M	O	N
iii.	Are the reading selections authentic pieces of language? (5,10)	4	3	2	1	0	M	O	N
iv.	Compared to texts for native speakers, does the content contain real-life issues that challenge the reader to think critically about his/her worldview? (1,2,3,7,21)	4	3	2	1	0	M	O	N
v.	Are the text selections representative of the variety of literary genres, and do they contain multiple sentence structures? (1,13)	4	3	2	1	0	M	O	N
B. Vocabulary and Grammar									
i.	Are the grammar rules presented in a logical manner and in increasing order of difficulty? (1,2,3)	4	3	2	1	0	M	O	N
ii.	Are the new vocabulary words presented in a variety of ways (e.g. glosses, multi-glosses, appositives)? (2,3,12)	4	3	2	1	0	M	O	N
iii.	Are the new vocabulary words presented at an appropriate rate so that the text is understandable and so that students are able to retain new vocabulary? (1,2,3,5)	4	3	2	1	0	M	O	N
iv.	Are the new vocabulary words repeated in subsequent lessons to reinforce their meaning and use? (1,2,3)	4	3	2	1	0	M	O	N
v.	Are students taught top-down techniques for learning new vocabulary words? (7,8,9,11)	4	3	2	1	0	M	O	N
C. Exercises and Activities									
i.	Are there interactive and task-based activities that require students to use new vocabulary to communicate? (1,2,3,5)	4	3	2	1	0	M	O	N
ii.	Do instructions in the textbook tell students to read for comprehension? (6)	4	3	2	1	0	M	O	N
iii.	Are top-down and bottom-up reading strategies used? (17)	4	3	2	1	0	M	O	N
iv.	Are students given sufficient examples to learn top-down techniques for reading comprehension? (7,8,9,10)	4	3	2	1	0	M	O	N
v.	Do the activities facilitate students' use of grammar rules by creating situations in which these rules are needed? (1,2,3)	4	3	2	1	0	M	O	N
vi.	Does the text make comprehension easier by addressing one new concept at a time instead of multiple new concepts? (2,3)	4	3	2	1	0	M	O	N
vii.	Do the exercises promote critical thinking of the text? (2)	4	3	2	1	0	M	O	N
D. Attractiveness of the Text and Physical Make-up									
i.	Is the cover of the book appealing? (1,2,3)	4	3	2	1	0	M	O	N
ii.	Is the visual imagery of high aesthetic quality?(1,2,3,14)	4	3	2	1	0	M	O	N
iii.	Are the illustrations simple enough and close enough to the text that they add to its meaning rather than detracting from it? (1)	4	3	2	1	0	M	O	N
iv.	Is the text interesting enough that students will enjoy reading it? (15)	4	3	2	1	0	M	O	N

APPENDIX 4 SAMPLE OF A READABILITY GRAPH AVAILABLE AT www.shrockguide.net



APPENDIX 5:

**CHECKLISTS FOR COLLECTING DATA ON TEXT TYPES AND
COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES**

Category A :

- i. Authentic
- ii. Scripted

Category B

- i. Local
- ii. Intercultural
- iii. Biased

Category C:

- i. Poems
- ii. Oral narratives
- iii. Plays
- iv. Literary passages
- v. Non- literary passages

Comprehension strategies

- i. Pre-reading activities
- ii. during – reading activities
- iii. Post – reading activities

APPENDIX 6 AN ORAL NARRATIVE ADOPTED FROM *EXPLORE ENGLISH BOOK ONE*.

B. Reading

A young woman and an ogre

Once upon a time, a young woman eloped to meet her warrior lover out in the wilderness. He directed her to a place in the forest where he would meet her. He said, "When you reach a fork along the path, take the right path."



The young woman ~~set off~~, but when she arrived at the fork she followed the left path, forgetting what the warrior had told her. After a while she came upon an ogre who threatened to eat her up. The girl answered in song:

*Not here, my dear
Let us go to the water hole
Where you can eat me
And have a drink
Oh my dear warrior, where are you?*

The ogre led the young woman on, and when they arrived at another spot, he said to her, "I am going to eat you here."

The woman again broke into song, urging him not to eat her yet. They went farther on, and each time the ogre threatened to eat her, she sang so that the warrior could hear her:

*Not here, my dear
Let us go to the water hole
Where you can eat me
And have a drink
Oh my dear warrior, where are you?*

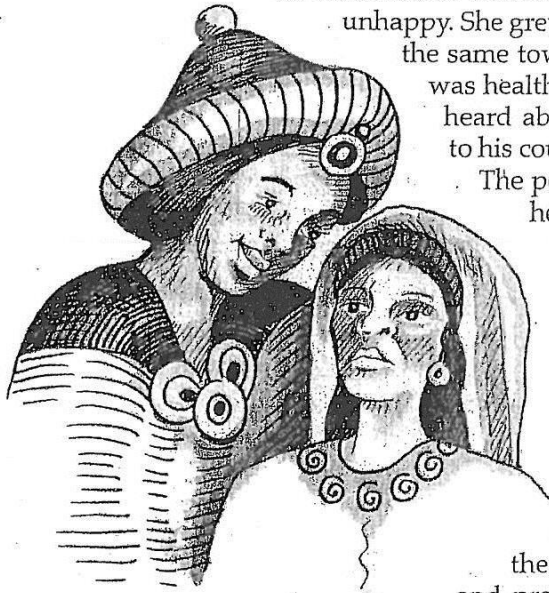
But still the warrior did not hear her.

When they reached a cave by a river, the ogre prepared a place where he would kill her. When he brought the leaves, she objected to ordinary leaves, saying she preferred the sweet-scented leaf of the matsuya plant. Eventually the sweet-smelling leaves of the matsuya plant were brought. The ogre then laid the leaves down on the ground and lit a big fire. All this while, the young woman kept singing the same song.

Just as the ogre was about to kill the woman, the warrior suddenly emerged from the bush. The woman said to the ogre: "It is now your flesh that will be laid on those leaves." The tables were turned on the ogre.

APPENDIX 7 A PASSAGE ADOPTED FROM *EXPLORE ENGLISH BOOK ONE***B. Reading**

Read the story below carefully:

Tongue meat

A sultan lived with his wife in his palace, but the wife was unhappy. She grew leaner and more listless every day. In the same town there lived a poor man whose wife was healthy and fat and happy. When the sultan heard about this, he summoned the poor man to his court, and asked him what his secret was.

The poor man said: "It is very simple. I feed her meat of the tongue."

The sultan at once called the butcher and ordered him to sell all the tongues of all the animals that were slaughtered in town to him, the sultan, exclusively. The butcher bowed and left.

Every day the butcher sent tongues of all the beasts in his shop to the palace. The sultan had his cook bake and fry, roast and salt these tongues in every known manner and prepare every tongue dish in the book.

This the queen had to eat, three or four times a day. But it did not work. She grew weaker and weaker.

The sultan now ordered the poor man to exchange wives. The poor man was unhappy about this, but he reluctantly agreed. He took the lean queen home with him and sent his own wife to the palace. Alas, there the poor man's wife grew thinner and thinner, in spite of the good food the sultan offered her. It was clear that she could not thrive in a palace.

The poor man, after coming home at night, would greet his new wife, tell her about the things he had seen, especially the funny things, and then would tell her stories that made her shriek with laughter. Next, he would take his banjo and sing her songs, of which he knew a great many. Until late at night he would play with her and amuse her. And lo! In just a few weeks the queen grew fat, beautiful to look at, and her skin was shining and taut, like a young girl's skin. And she was smiling all day, remembering the many funny things her new husband had told her. When the sultan called her back she refused to come. So the sultan came to fetch her, and found her all changed and happy. He asked her what the poor man had done to her, and she told him. Then he understood the meaning of *meat of the tongue*.

(Adapted from *Myths and Legends of the Swahili* by Jan Knappert, Heinemann Kenya Ltd, 1979.)

APPENDIX 8 A POEM ADOPTED FROM EXCELLING IN *ENGLISH BOOK ONE**Activity 3*

Read the poem below and write down what you think about it. Explain whether you like it or not. Explain further whether you are moved by the poem or not.

I Loved You

I loved you, and that love, to die refusing,
May still – who knows! – be smouldering
in my breast.
Pray, be not pained -- believe me, of my choosing
I'd never have you troubled nor yet distressed.
I love you mutely, hopelessly and truly,
With shy yet fervent tenderness aglow;
Mine was a jealous passion and unruly.....
May Heaven grant another loves you so!

[From Alexander Pushkin: *Selected works*. trans. from Russian. Moscow: Progr Publishers, 1974]

APPENDIX 9 AN EXTRACT OF A PLAY ADOPTED FROM *EXCELLING IN ENGLISH*
BOOK THREE

Read the following extract from the play *The Lion and the Jewel* by Wole Soyinka.

Setting

(Lakunle who is a school teacher in a local school has met Sidi, the most beautiful girl in the village as she is coming from the river. She is carrying a pail of water on her head which makes Lakunle unhappy for he thinks it is a primitive practice. He is also interested in her)

Lakunle: *(Meets Sidi. He is excited. He greets her and remains holding her hand.)*
Hello my angel. How are you?

Sidi: I am fine. *(Tries to wrench her hand from Lakunle's firm grasp.)* Now let me go. It's getting late. Let me go.

Lakunle: Not till you swear to marry me.
[Takes her hand, instantly soulful.]
Sidi, a man must prepare to fight alone.
But it helps if he has a woman.
To stand by him, a woman who ...
Can understand ... like you.

Sidi: I do?

Lakunle: Sidi, my love will open your mind
Like the chaste leaf in the morning, when
The sun first touches it.

Sidi: If you start that I will run away.
I had enough of that nonsense yesterday.

Lakunle: Nonsense? Nonsense? Do you hear?
Does anybody listen? Can the stones

APPENDIX 10 READING SYLLABUS FOR FORM ONE – EXTRACTED FROM KIE SYLLABUS (2002).

- f) **Prepositions**
Simple prepositions
e.g. in, of, at
- g) **Conjunctions**
Co-ordinating
conjunctions (and,
but, or)
- 2.3.2 **Phrases**
Constituents and examples of the
noun phrase
- 2.3.3 **Simple sentences**
- i) Sentence structure
(subject, predicate)
 - ii) Types of sentences
 - interrogative
 - imperative
 - exclamatory
 - declarative/affirmative
 - negative
- 3.0 **READING**
- 3.1 **Specific Objectives**
By the end of Form 1, the learner
should be able to:
- a) read efficiently and fluently
 - b) use the dictionary effectively
 - c) use the library effectively
 - d) enjoy reading literary and
non-literary materials
 - e) trace the sequence of events in
selected plays and short
stories
 - f) demonstrate appropriate
comprehension skills
 - g) build a wide range of
vocabulary
 - h) demonstrate awareness of
contemporary issues.
- 3.2 **Introduction**
A good foundation of reading
should be laid in Form One. This
is because reading is a very
important component of language
learning. It will also help in the
study of other subjects.
- Intensive reading should help form
a foundation for the study of
literary texts. However, the learner
- should also be encouraged to read
for pleasure.
- 3.3 **Content**
- a) **Reading Skills**
- i) Identification of the learner's
reading problems in silent
reading e.g. moving lips,
verbalizing words, use of
fingers and moving the head.
 - ii) Development of good
reading habits
in:
 - Silent reading
 - Reading aloud
 - Speed reading
 - iii) Using a dictionary
 - iv) Using the library
- b) **Intensive Reading**
- i) Study of poems, plays
and short stories.
 - ii) Focus on plot and literary
language.
- c) **Extensive Reading**
- i) Literary and non-literary
materials on
contemporary
issues such as:
 - children's rights
 - child labour
 - environment
 - HIV/AIDs
 - moral values
 - ii) Adventure stories
 - iii) Fairy tales
 - iv) Poems
 - v) Plays
 - vi) Novels
 - vii) Short stories
 - viii) Newspapers/Magazines/
Periodicals.
- d) **Comprehension Skills**
- i) Recall, comprehension
and application
 - ii) Summary and note-
making