INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES USED BY TEACHERS TO TEACH ENGLISH LANGUAGE WRITING SKILLS TO STANDARD 4 PUPILS IN NYANDARUA NORTH SUB-COUNTY, KENYA

BY

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E55/20162/2010

A RESEARCH THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTERS OF EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

NOVEMBER 2014
DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents Stephen Muya and Evelyn Muya for their overwhelming support.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to express special thanks to my supervisors Dr. A. Bwire and Dr. S. Ndethiu for their encouragement and excellent supervision.

Many thanks go to all the teachers who comprised my study sample. This project would not have been successfully completed without their enormous contribution.

I also wish to thank my parents, my brothers, Ishmael and James for their unconditional love, encouragement and constant support during the entire period spent on this project.

Special thanks to my colleagues and friends for their continuing support and encouragement throughout the course of my study.

Above all, am grateful to the almighty God for helping me through.
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ABSTRACT

Writing competency is an important aspect of children's academic performance in school and life after school. Despite its critical role, learners are not able to exhibit the appropriate writing skills. Various studies conducted in Kenya reveal that most pupils experience writing difficulties such as spelling mistakes, illegible handwriting among others. The purpose of this study was to investigate the instructional practices used by teachers to teach writing skills to standard 4 pupils in Nyandarua North district. The study aimed to achieve the following objectives: to examine the various writing approaches employed by teachers to teach writing, to identify writing activities that teachers engage their pupils in, to identify the instructional resources utilized in teaching writing, and how these resources are utilized and finally to identify the methods used by teachers to assess writing of standard 4 pupils. The pilot study was conducted in two randomly selected public primary school in Nyandarua North district. The study design is descriptive survey. The population comprised 67 public primary schools. Stratified sampling was used to select public primary schools in Nyandarua district while a simple random technique was adopted to sample 21 schools. Twenty one standard 4 teachers of language responded to teacher's questionnaires while nine teachers from nine schools were selected for classroom observation. Data was collected using questionnaires, interviews and classroom observation schedule. Data was analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. The statistical package for social scientist was used to process the data using frequency tables, percentages and means. The analyzed data was presented through tables, graphs, and pie charts. The study found that the majority of the teachers of English employed the product approach while process genre and process approach were hardly utilized. The study further revealed that they did not utilize a variety of instructional resources. In addition, the available instructional resources were not effectively utilized. A variety of instructional methods were used although some effective ones were underutilized. The study recommends that seminars and intensive courses that equip teachers of English with the necessary skills on how to teach all the four skills should be organized. In addition, in-service courses should be offered to all teachers of English in primary with a view to improving their instructional skills. More instructional resources should be provided with a view to improving writing skills among learners.
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Ability to write effectively and appropriately is regarded as an important aspect of learner’s proficiency. Children who exhibit proficiency in writing are well placed as opposed to those who are not proficient. Graham and Perin (2007) observe that children who are proficient in writing score higher grades because written tests and reports are normally the primary means for assessing learners’ progress. In addition, writing can be a way for children to express problems or feelings that they would not otherwise express. It provides a means of communicating that can liberate them from embarrassment, shame or fear that may cause them to keep feelings to themselves (Zinkosky, 2011).

Despite the critical role played by writing, most learners are not able to demonstrate the appropriate writing skills. (Kamil, 2003; Snow and Biancarosa, 2003) observe that large numbers of high school graduates are unable to write at the basic level required by colleges and employers. They further note that 7,000 young people drop out of school because they lack the basic literacy skills to meet the increasing demand of the high school curriculum.

Reading skills serve as a foundation for writing skills. Developed and mastered, effective reading skills lead to development and improvement of writing skills. If children are given an opportunity to read extensively, they in turn learn how to write fluently. Inability to read implies that it would be difficult for them to write as expected. While looking into the reading abilities of learners, SACMEQ (1998) found out that reading skills of learners in Southern African countries (Mauritius, Namibia and Zambia) were extremely low. Similarly, in
Nigeria, low level of writing skills was noted among standard 4 learners when a study that examined reading skills among standard 4 pupils was done (Chienje, 1999).

To address low achievement in writing, some countries have developed innovative ways of teaching writing skills. In industrialized countries, technology plays a crucial role in promoting pupils' writing competencies. Goldberg, Russell and Cook (2003) analyzed the impact of technology on writing by focusing on three major variables in children's writing namely quantity of writing, quality of writing, and frequency of revisions during the writing process. The study shows that students who used word processors tend to produce longer and higher quality passages and make more changes to their writing between drafts. The word processor allows the writer to delete and move text easily. It also contains spelling checkers as well (Graham, 2006). Technological advances would substantially promote pupils' writing competencies if adopted by teachers.

Guided by theory, research and insights from their own work with students, teachers have formulated instructional approaches that acknowledge the developmental trajectories of writers of various ages. Although teachers continue to guide children toward the standard forms, many are encouraging students to explore sound-letter correspondences through their own invented spellings, drawing on research that explores these approximations as important developmental building blocks (Freedman, 2001). Teachers can use children's invented spelling to determine how a child is applying information about a word and thus would be able to relate spelling instruction to the child's level of understanding (Nelson, 1994).

Writing is not a silent and solitary activity but a process where the teacher works collaboratively with the pupils in order to achieve effectiveness. However, the Kenyan English syllabus recommends the use of the product approach in language classes. Learners manipulate fixed patterns often the substitution tables and they imitate model text such as
filing in gaps. They in turn, use the pattern they have developed to write a composition. Gathumbi, and Masembe (2005) observe that while using the product approach, the teachers concentrate on form which is syntax, grammar, mechanics and organization rather than the content. The content is only seen as a vehicle for the correct expression for grammatical pattern.

In Kenya, the situation is not different from the other countries. Several reports indicate that low achievement in writing is prevalent across the country. In a report from Uwezo Kenya (2011), it has been revealed that only 28% (or three out of 10 children) in standard 3 can read a standard 2 level story. Similarly, SACMEQ (1999) did a study on reading literacy of standard six pupils in Kenya. They constructed a total test score of 44 essential items. To achieve the minimum level and desirable level of performance, a pupil was expected to obtain 22 and 31 correct answers respectively out of 44. Those who reached minimum level of masterly were 64.8% while those who reached desirable level were 23.4%. These results present dismal performance with only one quarter of the pupils in Kenya reaching the desirable level.

Criteria Referenced Test was administered by Kenyatta university English Literacy Norms (ELN) researchers to standard 3 and standard 6 pupils in 2008. It measured the pupils' ability to listen and read with understanding and later respond in writing. Difficulties noted among learners were: gross spelling errors, lack of understanding in the use of punctuation marks, wrong use of tenses and inability to complete dictation exercises. Most candidates were unable to correctly spell words like creature, habits and surprised (ELN Newsletter, 2009).

In Nyandarua North District, performance in writing among standard 4 pupils has been dismal. Table 1.1 shows that the mean score has been below average. In 2008, performance had deteriorated in second term where the pupils managed a mean score of 15.36. This report
clearly demonstrates that large numbers of pupils in this district are experiencing writing difficulties.

Table 1.1 End of term results for standard 4 -mean score in composition writing in Ndaragwa West Zone from (2008-2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No of pupils</th>
<th>Mean score for 1st term</th>
<th>No of pupils</th>
<th>Mean score for 2nd term</th>
<th>No of pupils</th>
<th>Mean score for 3rd term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>1088</td>
<td>16.02</td>
<td>1084</td>
<td>15.36</td>
<td>1089</td>
<td>16.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>1086</td>
<td>14.23</td>
<td>1084</td>
<td>17.16</td>
<td>1088</td>
<td>19.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>1093</td>
<td>16.28</td>
<td>1090</td>
<td>18.34</td>
<td>1095</td>
<td>18.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>1090</td>
<td>16.56</td>
<td>1096</td>
<td>17.78</td>
<td>1099</td>
<td>16.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry of Education; Ndaragwa West Zonal Quazo Report 2011)

Many reasons could be advanced to explain this situation.

Language policy in Kenya partly promotes learning achievement in writing among pupils. Bunyi (2008) argues that children in schools that use mother tongue or Swahili as the medium of instruction have a harder pathway to trek in their struggle to attain English language literacy as compared to children in schools that use English as their medium of instruction right from standard one. This is because their access to language in school is not as high as that of other children. In addition, the language policy states that five lessons per week should be allocated to teaching English language in upper primary school. With this policy, it is not possible to sufficiently explore all the skills.
Teachers' subject mastery is of paramount importance in a writing class. A teacher who is well grounded in writing skills will be able to teach effectively. However, teachers with insufficient content knowledge cannot deliver effectively. Lack of subject knowledge among teachers can be evidenced by the fact that 50% of teacher trainees at various primary teachers college had performed poorly at their KCSE as many of them had attained grade C- and below (ELN report no 1, 2001). This further compounds the problem because the same trainee who scored grade C and below is expected to teach in English language after two years of training (ELN Report No.1, 2001).

Finally, learning resources are paramount as far as teaching of writing skills is concerned. This can be done by increasing pupils’ access to books and other learning resources by making them closer to ordinary daily classroom activities. In a writing class, each pupil should own a text book and a writing book that would enable him practice writing as many times as possible. However, this has not been possible since the introduction of free primary education in 2003. EGRA (2011) reports reveal that in Kenya as a whole 75.5% of the standard 6 pupils lacked their own English textbooks. In Coast province, 49.5% of the learners did not have notebooks. Lack of textbooks and notebooks means that learning will not take place and this is because students need to practice by writing a lot.

This study acknowledges that the above factors could have contributed to low achievement in pupils writing skills. Low achievement in learners could be as a result of issues related to instructional methods, utilization of resources, and writing activities used by language teachers to teach writing. Therefore, the study sought to establish the instructional practices used by teachers to teach writing.
1.2 Statement of the problem

Although writing has been recognized as an important skill due to the enormous benefits accrued from it, pupils' low level of writing competencies is still prevalent. A gap in research on writing is clearly evident from various studies that have focused on pupils' competencies in writing at the primary level. In 2008, Kenyatta University English Literacy Norms (ELN) researchers established various shortcomings in pupils' writing competencies, ranging from spelling to lack of picture interpretation, which made the task of composing a story problematic (ELN newsletter, 2008). Similarly, in June 2010, KNEC reported that 52% of class three pupils could not read or write. In Nyandarua North Sub-County, performance in writing skill has been poor over the years. In the light of the above claims, low achievement among pupils in writing could be attributed to factors such as language policy issues, existence of large classes, inadequate resources etc. However, dismal performance could as well be as a result of instructional practices used by teachers to teach writing skills. This is because the instructional practices, employed by teachers are central to any teaching situation and without them, learning may be hampered. Some of the instructional practices are; teaching techniques, writing activities, instructional resources and assessment methods. Therefore, this study attempted to explore the instructional practices used by teachers to teach writing skills.

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this study was to investigate the instructional practices used by teachers to teach English language writing skills to standard 4 pupils in Nyandarua North District.
1.4 Objectives

The objectives of this study were to:

a) Examine writing techniques employed by English Language teachers in teaching writing skills.

b) Identify writing activities used by standard 4 teachers to teach writing.

c) Identify resources that teachers of English utilize, and how they utilize them when teaching writing skills.

d) Examine the methods used by teachers to assess writing skills.

1.5 Research Questions.

This study was guided by the following research questions:

a) What writing techniques do teachers employ to teach writing skills?

b) What learning activities do standard 4 teachers engage their pupils in?

c) What instructional resources are utilized by teachers?

d) How are instructional resources utilized when teaching writing skills?

e) What methods are used by teachers to assess their pupils’ performance?

1.6 Assumptions.

This study was guided by the following assumptions:

a) Instructional techniques and activities employed by teachers enhance acquisition of writing skills.
b) The presence of the researcher in the classroom would not modify the teaching behaviour to what is perceived as better teaching patterns.

c) The information gathered through questionnaires and interviews would be valid.

1.7 Scope and Limitations.

The study specifically dealt with standard 4 teachers of English in selected public primary schools in Nyandarua North District. This is because it at this level that pupils should be taught carefully in writing in order to remedy issues that could have interfered with a smooth progression from class 1 to 3. Use of appropriate instructional practices would yield learners with a mastery of effective writing skills as they transit into the upper classes.

In addition, the study focused on the effect of instructional practices on pupils’ writing competencies. Other competencies that contribute in the development of English such as speaking, reading, and listening were not explored. Writing skills such as handwriting, organization and creativity skills were the focus of this study while style and summary skills were not emphasized. The study was carried out in a rural setting. Therefore, the findings may not be generalized to urban setting or other regions.

1.8 Significance of the study

The findings and recommendations of this study will be important to the following:

Learners will benefit from effective teaching methods and appropriate utilization of resources by teachers which might improve their writing skills.
Teachers will use the findings of this study to improve their instructional practices as well as utilization of learning resources.

Curriculum developers might use the findings of this study to conduct in-service course and workshops for language teachers and language trainers who are normally the implementers of the syllabus. This would be done with a view to updating them about the effective practices used to teach writing. In addition, the findings and recommendations would also help them to review the existing learning resources.

Policy makers will use the findings to come up with policies that will support learners' achievement in writing. In addition they could also review the existing policies.

Researchers will benefit from the information provided by the study which will guide them to conduct more research on learners' achievement in writing.

1.9 Theoretical framework/model

This study adopts an eclectic approach by synthesizing product, process and genre theories. Product approach by Pincas (1982) views writing as being primarily about linguistic knowledge, with attention focused on the appropriate use of vocabulary, syntax and cohesive devices (Pincas, 1982 cited in Badger and White (2000). In this approach, learning to write has four stages: familiarization, controlled writing, guided writing and free writing. The familiarization stage aims to make learners aware of certain features of a particular text. In the controlled and guided writing sections, the learners practice the skills with increasing freedom until they are ready for the free writing section, when they use the writing skill as part of a genuine activity such as letter, story or essays (Pincas, 1982 cited in Badger and White (2000))
The process approach by Tribble (1996) stresses that writing activities move learners from generating ideas and the collecting data, through to the publication of a finished text. In process approach, the predominant skills are planning and drafting. Linguistic knowledge such as knowledge of grammar and text structure are given much less emphasis. Tribble (1996) identifies four stages: prewriting, composing, drafting, revising and editing. He further points out that this process is a cyclical one in which writers may return to prewriting activities. For example after doing some editing or revising. In process approach, feedback is the main focus as it assists learners to produce better writing. In addition, learners should be guided at every stage by being provided with correct feedback.

Like product approaches, genre approaches emphasize that writing varies with the function and the social context in which it is produced. So there are a range of writings such as sales letters, research articles and reports linked with different situations (Flawerdew, 1993). Genres are also influenced by other features of situations such as subject matter, the relationship between the writer and the audience and also the pattern of organization.

This study proposes an eclectic use of the product, process, and genre approaches because it is apparent that adopting one approach may overemphasize on some aspects of writing at the expense of others. For instance, if writing teachers adopt a product approach then they will focus on teaching the pupils grammar and proper language structure at the expense of process skills which is of paramount importance. This means that it is only through synthesizing the three that the teaching of writing can be effective.

Process genre model by Badger and White (2000) has been found to be informative. They suggest its five features which are; situation, purpose, consideration of model/field/tenor, planning/drafting publishing and text. According to them, the teacher should replicate real life situation as much as possible and provide sufficient support for learners to identify the
purpose and other aspects of social context such as tenor, field and mode of their writing. They further divided the teaching procedure into a six step writing process in which the teacher guides pupils but also works together with them to arrive at effective writing. These are:

**Preparation:** - In this step, the teacher begins preparing the pupils to write by defining a situation that will require a written text and placing it within a specific genre such as formal letter to a friend. This activates the schemata and allows students to anticipate the structural features of this genre.

**Modeling and reinforcing:** - The teacher introduces a model of the genre and lets students consider the social purpose of the text including who the audience will be. Next the teacher discusses how the text is structured and how its organization develops to accomplish its purpose. The pupils may do some comparisons with the other texts to reinforce what they have learnt about the particular genre.

**Planning:** - In this step many meaningful activities activate the students' schemata about the topic, including brainstorming, discussing and reading associated material. The aim is to help the students develop an interest in the topic by relating it to their experience.

**Joint constructing:** - During this step, which will later facilitate later independent composing, the teacher and the pupils work together to begin writing a text. While doing so, the teacher uses the writing processes of brainstorming, drafting, and revising. The learners contribute information and ideas and the teacher writes the generated text on the black board.

**Independent constructing:** - At this point, learners have examined model texts and have jointly constructed a text in the genre. They now undertake the task of composing their own texts on related topic. Class time can be set aside for students to compose independently so
that the teacher is available to help, clarify, or consult about the process. The writing task can be continued as a writing assignment.

**Revising:-** This is the final step where the pupils will eventually have a draft that will undergo the final revision and editing. Pupils may check, discuss and evaluate their work which will impart a sense of achievement and motivate the students to become better writers.

Process genre model acknowledges that writing entails knowledge of language (as in genre and product approaches), knowledge of the contexts in which writing happens (genre approaches) and skills in using language (process approach). Learning guided by process genre model not only helps the learners to become creative writers through the process of writing but also helps them acquire the knowledge of linguistic features as well features of various genres. Teaching writing in turn becomes effective because learners are prepared to write beyond the classroom level. Raimes (1983) points out that even if writing lessons are done in classroom, they relate strongly to real life situation motivating them and preparing them to write for audience outside the classroom. In this study, the researcher examined the focus of teachers in teaching writing, the stages and processes they follow and the activities they involve learners in as they teach writing. It also investigated the extent of teachers’ preparation, the planning, the joint construction and revising process involved in writing. In addition it was important to find out how teachers model and reinforce writing skills among learners in class 4.
1.10 Conceptual framework:

The diagram below (figure 1.1) is a conceptual framework of the relationship between learners' achievement in writing and instructional practices used by teachers to teach writing.

Figure 1.1

Source: self (2012)
The conceptual framework represents one dependent variable which is competence in writing and four independent variables namely, teaching approaches, teaching resources, teaching activities and assessment techniques. All these variables are teacher related and they could determine whether learners will acquire the appropriate writing skills or not. If inappropriate teaching approaches are used by teachers to teach writing skills, then smooth learning would be hampered. In addition, if instructional resources are not utilized effectively, learners’ achievement in writing may not be realized. Inappropriate writing activities will not facilitate learning of the skill. Finally, if learners are not assessed, the teacher may not identify their strengths and weaknesses. Apart from teacher related factors, there are intervening variables which are: learners’ attitude, language policy, existence of large classes and home environment which could contribute to low achievements in writing where the teacher does not interact with the learners on a one-to-one basis hence individual attention is inhibited. However, learning achievement would be realized if effective teaching approaches are used. The same would apply to learners if learning resources are utilized while teaching the skill. In addition, exposing learners to a wide range of writing activities would facilitate learning. Frequent assessment would ensure that the teacher identifies the major weaknesses of the learners and he/she is therefore able to give feedback. Implementing the above intervention measures will ensure a supportive environment that would enhance learning achievement in writing.
1.11 Operational definition of terms.

Competence: - having the necessary ability, skill or knowledge.

Genre approach: - this is an approach to writing that acknowledges that writing varies with the social context in which it is produced.

Instructional practices: - constituent patterns of behaviour that recur and are applied in various teaching situations by majority of teachers of English.

Instructional methods: - it is a set of behaviour that dominates in any one teaching situation for instance the lecture method, discussion, project etc.

Learner: - standard 4 pupils.

Lower primary: - this term refers to standard 1, 2 and 3.

Process approach: - this is an approach to writing that places more emphasis on stages of writing process more than the final product. These stages are: prewriting, composing, revising and editing.

Product approach: - the teacher focuses on the final product and then measures it against the criteria of vocabulary use, grammatical use and mechanical considerations such as spellings, punctuations as well as content and organization.

Proficient: - ability to write in a skilled or an expert way because of training or practice.

Pupil: - a primary school child

Upper primary: - this term refers to standard 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8.
Writings skills:-they are specific abilities which help writers put their words in a meaningful form and to mentally interact with the message e.g. recognizing the linear sequence of sounds, mastery of writing motions and letter shapes, writing quickly, etc.
CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

The review looked at importance of writing, approaches to teaching writing, factors that influence writing instruction, assessment of children in teaching, research on writing and the conclusion.

2.1 Importance of writing

Writing proficiently has often been linked to academic success in school and occupational success after school. Graham and Perin (2007) observe that children who are competent in writing are able to score higher grades because written tests and reports are normally the primary means for assessing learners' progress. The authors further point out that these children are able to use writing to support and extend what they are learning in other subjects. At work, writing competence paves way for employment and job promotion particularly in salaried positions. For instance, employees who are proficient in writing are often the most coveted ones by companies because apparently they are good at communicating with other companies or other employees (Bapat, 2007). Similarly, employees in the government are considered for their ability to produce clearly written documents, memorandum, technical reports, electronic messages, research reports and newspaper articles. (National Commission on Writing, 2004). It was important for this study to establish the extent to which teachers ensured that learners were assisted to develop their writing skills which are essential not only for their academic success, but also for occupational success.
Writing provides children with an opportunity to express their problems or feelings that they wouldn't otherwise express through speaking. It therefore becomes an important means for communication that can liberate them from embarrassment, shame or fear that may cause them to keep feelings to themselves (Zinzonky, 2011). In addition, writing competency substantially helps children to build their confidence. Since writing is a solitary activity it results in something that belongs solely to the writer (Zinzoky, 2011). The ability to write proficiently does not only help the child to be confident in writing but also helps her in the other areas of the curriculum. Since writing competency has been regarded as an important tool, it was therefore important to find out whether standard 4 teachers of English language understand their role in developing writing skills among learners. This would be reflected on the instructional practices they use when teaching writing skills.

Writing contributes to the development of critical thinking skills (Kurfiss and Association for the study of Higher Education, 1998). Applebee (1984) stresses that writing improves thinking because it requires an individual to make his or her ideas explicit and to evaluate and choose among tools necessary for effective discourse. Resinc (1987) indicated that writing provides an opportunity to think through arguments and that if used in such a way could serve as a cultivator and enabler of higher order thinking. Similarly, Marzano (1991) points out that writing provides opportunities for students to think through arguments and use higher order thinking to respond to complex problems.

For one to participate in the affairs of the nation and the community at large, he/she has to demonstrate the ability to write, owing to the fact that the use of electronic for instance email and text messaging has become so widespread. Corolado (2008) observes that writing letters and emails is a common way of keeping in touch with friends, relatives and professional colleagues. To fulfill this, one is required to demonstrate knowledge of organizing information effectively with a view to conveying the intended meaning. This observation is
important because it emphasizes on the need for the learner to be competent in writing. This would ultimately enable them to utilize technology. This therefore demands that the teacher employs the appropriate instructional practices to enhance writing achievement among learners. Whether this is done was subject to investigation.

2.2 Approaches to teaching writing

Initially, writing was taught via the technical aspect of grammar, spelling and punctuation and other conventions. Grammar instruction or how English language works was thought to be essential to learning how to write (Hillocks, 1987). In their review of existing literature, Braddock, Lioyd-Jones, and Schoer (1963), found out that teaching and studying grammar had no effect on the quality of one's writing. Therefore writing instruction began to change as researchers found more holistic approaches to teaching writing (Mc Carthey and Abbort (1994). Hillocks (1987) and Murray (1982) observe that writing instruction shifted focus from spelling, grammar and other writing conventions (product approach) to a holistic process which emphasizes the actual process of writing (process approach). However process approach soon came under criticism from writing researchers who were of the opinion that purpose of writing and social context are inseparable.

It was the dissatisfaction with the process approach that had been widely adopted in writing classes that sparked the genre movement which began as an experiment in Australia (Martin, 1986; Cairney, 1992). The genre approach was however criticized because it undervalues the process needed to produce a text and see learners as largely passive (Badger and White, 2000). Currently ESL researchers have recognized that teachers should not adopt one approach in writing classrooms. A combination of the three would result in a new way of thinking about writing, which Badger and White (2000) have termed as process genre approach. The following are the approaches used in teaching writing.
2.2.1 Product approaches

The product approach to the teaching of writing mainly focuses on the end product. Brown (1994) observes that a teacher focuses on what a final piece of writing will look like and then measures it against the criteria of vocabulary use, grammatical use and mechanical consideration such as spelling and punctuation as well as the content and organization.

Writing using this approach involves appropriate grammatical structures and so instruction may employ slot and filler frame works in which sentences with different meanings can be generated by varying the words in the slots. Writing is controlled through guided compositions which give learners short texts and ask them to fill in gaps, complete sentences, transform sentences or personal pronouns and complete other sentences which focus other students on achieving accuracy and avoiding errors (Hyland, 2003). This approach is normally teacher centered and learners remain passive as the teacher provides knowledge to them. Mujidi (2008) observes that teaching of writing is teacher centered and pupils are hardly provided with any opportunity to express their ideas through speaking or acquisition of sufficient reading skills in order to provide sufficient grounds for development of writing skills. Therefore the study sought to find out whether this approach is utilized in writing classes.

Criticism has been leveled against this approach because process skills such as planning a text are given a relatively small role and the knowledge and the skills that learners bring to the classroom are undervalued (Badger and White, 2000). Similarly, Nunan (1999) points out that the product approach emphasizes controlled writing activity in which students mimic and transform the models supplied by the teacher. Therefore, thinking creatively is inhibited where the learner cannot produce any form of writing on their own. Nevertheless, this process is credible because it acknowledges that the final draft should be focused on grammar,
spelling and punctuation. The studies above have focused on the shortcomings of this approach while the present study looked at the nature of the environment where this approach is used.

2.2.2 Process approach

The process approach began to replace the product approach in the mid 1970's, after an extensive research was conducted on first language writing. The main focus of process approach is how writers generate ideas; record them and finally how they refine them in order to come up with a text. According to Leki (1991), process approach is an approach to teaching writing that places more emphasis on the stages of writing process more than the final product. This kind of approach is learner centered and not specifically related to examinations. Badger and White (2000) indicate that process approach is predominantly to do with linguistic skills such as pre-writing, planning, drafting, and revising and there is less emphasis on linguistic knowledge such as knowledge about grammar and text structure.

Responding to the need for innovative instruction and pedagogies, new practices that moved beyond rote repetition and central instruction were developed. Instead, writing was taught as a vehicle for creative expression and critical thoughts as opposed to focusing on spelling grammar and other writing conventions. The holistic process emphasizes the actual process of writing for it concentrates on writing as recursive process in which the writer has the opportunity to plan, draft, edit and revise their work (Hillocks, 1987; Murray, 1982). This study sought to investigate whether process approach is utilized in writing classes.

Like product approach this process has some short comings. White and Arndt (2000) assert that this approach is time consuming because learners take more time to generate their points and organize them in the right order. In addition they have to get feedback which consumes a lot of time. They further note that it is not possible for a teacher to implement the process
approach within class time especially in large classes due to time constraints. In real sense, this approach can only be implemented in small classes. Therefore, this study aimed at finding out whether the teachers who taught large number of students were able to adopt it.

2.2.3 Genre approaches

This approach acknowledges that writing varies with the social context in which it is produced. In this case there is a range of writing such as sales, letters, research articles, reports. While the process approach focuses on the writer, the creativity and individualism of writing and the process writing, genre approaches focus more on the reader and on the conventions that a piece of writing needs to follow in order to be successfully accepted by its readership (Municie, 2002). This study is informative because it acknowledges that all texts must conform to some certain conventions and that a learner can only be successful in joining a particular English language discourse community if he/she is able to produce texts which meet the expectations of its readers in regard to grammar, organization and content.

Badger and White (2000) observe that genres are influenced by other features of the situation such as the subject matter, the relationship between the writer and the audience and the pattern of organization. Dudley and Evans (1997) identify three stages in genre approaches to writing. First a model of a particular genre is introduced and analyzed. Learners then carry out exercises which manipulate language forms and finally produce a short text. Though this approach recognizes that writing happens in a certain context, it views learners as largely passive since it undervalues the skills needed to produce a text. The present study established whether this approach is utilized in writing classes.

Technology plays a crucial role in promoting pupils writing competencies. Goldberg, Russell and Cook (2003) found out that learners who use word processors tend to produce longer and higher quality passages and make more changes to their writing between drafts. This could be
particularly helpful for low achieving writers. In this type of an instruction, pupils might work collaboratively on writing assignments using personal laptop computers, desktop or they could learn how to process a composition under the guidance of the teacher (Graham, 2006). Reed (2003) observes that writing with a pen or a pencil is often a tedious task for the learners and teachers are frustrated at their learners’ handwriting, and at times they overlook good content due to poor handwriting. On the other hand, word processor allows the writer to write, add, delete, and move a text easily. The text produced is normally, neat and legible (Graham, 2006). This study sought to establish whether technology is being adopted in writing lessons.

2.3 Factors that influence writing instruction

The following are some of the possible factors that could influence writing instruction among learners.

2.3.1 Selection of resource materials

Among the factors that are important in promoting learning of writing skills is selection of instructional materials. It is vital to select materials that are most suitable and most appropriate for a particular writing activity. Additionally, Selection should be based on how well instructional resources help the learners to achieve the desired goal. Wittich et al (1962) asserts that selection will depend on how well the media performs the intended task. He further states that the materials chosen or presented for classroom instruction should bring out clearly the message the teacher wants to put across to his/her learners for better understanding. This study emphasizes that the instructional material should be selected on the basis of how well they meet the learners’ needs. However, a standard 4 teacher of English language may be compelled to use instructional materials that are available, regardless of
whether they meet the learners’ needs or not. The study aimed at establishing the instructional resources that are utilized by teachers of English.

2.3.2 Utilization of resources

Use of various individual media could be beneficial to students. This is because when various senses are used in learning; there will be greater perception, understanding, reinforcement and retention of the subject matter as opposed to use of Individual media which do not possess these properties if used on their own. It is therefore important for the teacher to use a multimedia approach in communicating ideas to his learners (Ayot, 1984). Using a multimedia approach helps the learner to understand a concept better therefore improving their writing skills. This study established whether a multimedia approach is adopted by teachers in a writing class.

2.3.3 Feedback on learners writing

Feedback is a central aspect of English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL) writing programmes around the world (Hyland and Hyland 2006). It is therefore a fundamental component of writing instruction that provides information to learners and teachers about their learning. Brown Bull & Pendlebury (1997) state that effective feedback is timely, perceived as relevant meaningful and encouraging and offers suggestions that are within a student’s grasp. On the other hand, feedback that is not provided at the right time and is demoralizing is not helpful at all and therefore cannot support learners writing development. Verbal or written feedback can be a powerful teaching tool if it is given while the students are in the process of writing drafts. Comments on drafts of writing provide students with timely information about their clarity and the impact of their writing (Peterson, 2008). This study attempted to find out whether feedback is provided by teachers after marking students work.
2.3.4 Language policy

Language policy states that in monolingual settings, the local language or the children’s first language (a language spoken by the majority of learners) which is either mother tongue or the language commonly spoken in the schools catchment area (i.e. English or Kiswahili), should be used as the language of instruction in lower primary up to primary class three. During this time, English language is studied as a subject (Gathumbi, 1985). This policy seems to favour children who live in linguistically heterogeneous communities and particularly those who use English language as their first language. On the other hand it does not favour those who use mother tongue as their first language. Bunyi (2008) points out that those children who use Kiswahili or mother tongue have got a harder pathway to trek in the struggle to attain English language literacy skills as opposed to children who use English as their first language for they have a more direct pathway to English language literacy. This implies that those who use mother tongue as LOI may experience difficulties as they transit into standard 4 since they don’t have enough English input to write proficiently.

2.3.5 Teacher’s content mastery

Content knowledge refers to the amount and organization of knowledge in the mind of the teacher (Shulman, 1986). Roberts, (1998) points out that having content knowledge means that the teacher shows knowledge of the systems of the target language competence in it. He further notes that effective teachers take learners systematically through sets of tasks that lead to content mastery. They also provide clear objectives, adjust the pace of teaching, make efficient use of class time, clarify misunderstanding, answer question, provide timely feedback and correct errors. In spite of the critical place of content knowledge, there is clear evidence that teachers in Kenya do not seem to possess mastery of content knowledge. No trainee who has a grade below C in English Language is denied admission to a teacher
training college even if s/he is expected to teach in English language after two years. Furthermore, much of the training is on the teaching methodology and not improvement of communication skills in English (ELN Report no. 1, 2001).

2.4 Assessment of children in writing

Assessment is kind of a measurement carried out on a subject to find out an existing ability achieved through a process of learning (Kiminyo et al; 1988). Therefore, assessment is an important part of effective teaching. In addition, the teacher is able to identify the progress of his/her students.

Airasan (1996) distinguished three types of classroom assessments. The first type is sizing up assessment, which is done during the first week of school to provide the teacher with quick information about the students when beginning their instruction. The second type of instruction assessment is primarily used for the daily tasks of planning instruction giving feedback and monitoring students’ progress. The third type is referred to as official assessment, whose main purpose is grouping, grading and reporting. All these assessments are administered to identify strengths and weaknesses, planning instruction to fit diagnosed needs, evaluating instructional activities, giving feedback, monitoring performance and reporting progress. It is evident that assessing learners frequently is integral to effective writing. It is therefore paramount to answer some critical questions such as, are these assessments administered by writing teachers? To what extent do they help them to develop writing skills among learners? If not, what constrains them to administer these assessments? The study attempted to answer these questions.

Isaacson (1996) reiterated that a teacher’s first responsibility in writing instruction is to provide opportunities for writing and encourage students who attempt to write. A teacher’s second responsibility is to promote students success in writing. According to him, the teacher...
does this by carefully monitoring students' writing to assess strengths and weaknesses, teaching specific skills and strategies in response to students' needs, giving careful feedback that will reinforce newly learned skills and correct recurring problems. These responsibilities reveal upon inspection that assessment is clearly an integral part of good inspection. This has also been emphasized by Fountas and Pinnel (2001) where they point out that assessment which involves collecting information about or evidence of the students learning, is a continual and integral part of quality teaching. They further say that teaching without continual assessment is akin to teaching without children. Assessment in this case becomes an essential component of effective instruction and without it the teacher may not be in a position to locate the learners' progress, points of strengths and weaknesses. The above studies have focused on the need to assess learners while the present study looked at the methods used by teachers to assess writing skills.

Ratcliff (2001) points out that the teacher must select a type of assessment that will document what the child can do as well as what the child knows. She further identifies some types of authentic or performance assessment a teacher could use to document the writing skills being demonstrated in the classroom. The major ones are checklist and anecdotal notes/observations.

A checklist is a list of sequential skills or behaviours arranged into categories and used to determine whether a child exhibits the skills or skills listed (Mandel, 2000; Puckett and Black, 1994; Wortham, 2001). A checklist could be used to document the children's writing skills as they work on menus and signs. Careful observation will allow the teacher to quickly determine if the children are writing form left to right, using capital or lower case letters, creating spaces between words, showing an understanding that print has a purpose and demonstrating any other skill listed on the checklist. The teacher places a check by observing skills or behaviours. As the teacher moves round the classroom, she can easily document the
presence or absence of a variety of literacy skills (Ratcliff, 2001). Checklist helps the teacher to observe the students progress in writing and then give the appropriate feedback.

Anecdotal notes /observation are written descriptions that provide a short objective account or an incident. Only the facts are reported—what happened, when and where it occurred. This type of information can be used to provide insights that will help the teacher more fully understand a child’s behaviour or use of skills. They are especially useful for documenting interesting, humorous and significant incidents involving individual children (Puckett and Black, 1994; Wortham, 2001). For instance the teacher can observe children writing letters where he can easily record whether the child knows the principals of directionality in written English. The study sought to establish whether these forms of assessments are used to monitor learners’ progress.

It is evident that assessing learners’ written work is integral part of effective teaching. It is invaluable to students who can learn from their errors and later improve and teachers who can check the students’ progress to identify specific problems. Though correcting learners’ work is usually a time consuming activity, teachers should set aside adequate time to do the same.

2.5 Research on teaching writing.

In Kenya several studies have been done on writing. Thiga (1997) did a study on cohesion and compactness in composition written by Kenya urban schools. She mainly wanted to examine how standard four and standard eight pupils use cohesive devices when it comes to writing compositions. Findings revealed that pupils in both classes had a problem in using some devices but in general class eight texts were more cohesive and compact than class 4 ones. While Thiga’s study focused on use of cohesive devices in writing among standard 4 pupils and standard 8 pupils in an urban setting, the present study focused on instructional practices used in teaching standard 4 pupils in a rural setting.
Kamau (1996) looked at the role played by science teachers in fostering listening, speaking, reading and writing. This study found out that science teachers rarely used skills that enhance writing and reading skills. It was revealed that in 32(67%) of the 48 lessons that were observed, teachers wrote notes on the chalk board for the students to copy and only in 4(8%) did teachers give students assignments. In 25(52%) lessons teachers dictated notes to their students. Her study concluded that most of the teachers were exam oriented i.e. they make the learners pass the exam at the expense of their proficiency in writing. While Kamau’s study looked at the role of science teachers in fostering the four skills at the secondary level, the current study specifically looked at the role of English teachers in fostering one skill: writing at the primary level.

Ouma (2005) carried out an investigation on the relationship between achievement motivation and performance in English composition writing among secondary schools. The findings indicate that though students are highly motivated in composition writing there is no significant correlation between motivation as obtained through self attributed motives and performance. Lack of correlation has been attributed to the fact that students tend to overrate the effort they invest in writing practices which may not be commensurate with their actual performance in writing tasks especially when self-report questionnaires are administered. On the other hand data collected through achievement motivation and TAT shows that though motivation is low in students, it slightly but significantly correlates with performance. He acknowledges that motivation may not be the only variable that accounts for better composition writing but factors like intelligence, aptitude, learning strategies and instructional methods are paramount in enhancing learners achievement in writing. While Ouma addressed the issue of motivation as a possible variable that could enhance writing achievement in learners at the secondary level, the present study focused on instructional practices as possible factor that could enhance writing achievement at the primary level.
Matuu (2008) carried out an investigation on the instructional practices used by teachers to teach reading and writing in mother tongue in Kitui district. She purposely wanted to find out whether deficiency in Kamba language and negative attitude stems from the methods employed in teaching the language. The findings revealed that most of the teachers predominantly used lecture method to teach these two skills at the expense of group instruction and individual instruction. Research further revealed that resource materials were inadequate and unavailable in many schools. Though Matuu's study substantially focused on reading and writing in Kamba language, at lower primary level, this study narrowed down to writing achievement in English among standard 4 pupils.

Inyega (1996) did a study whose aim was to find out the teacher -factors that affect English written composition among secondary school students with specific reference to teachers experience, academic achievement, methodology improvisation and utilization of resources, commitment and attitude towards English written composition. The analysis established that there was indeed some relationship between performance in English written composition and the above variables. It was pointed out however, that most teachers gave very few compositions assignments. Compositions are given once or thrice a term. This is indeed very little practice. Some teachers were not committed to marking students' books after a task in written composition. In addition, they did not do remedial work neither did they make up for the lost lessons. Teachers should be more committed if they are to improve students' performance in written composition.

Sure (1982) investigated some factors which influence achievement in written composition in primary schools. From his findings, pupils performed better in English written composition because the schools were better staffed. They had an extra teacher deployed for remedial work. He therefore, agreed that the status of the teacher is likely to have a marked influence on performance. This study stresses that the teacher is charged with the responsibility of
organizing learning resources and creating the best possible condition for learning. Similarly Okwara (1989) investigated factors related to achievement in English composition among secondary school students. These findings from the study showed particular relationship between these factors and achievement in composition. School factors included professional training of teachers of English, availability of learning resources, e.g. course books, class readers and libraries. The results further indicated that lack of proper foundation in primary school was a major cause in low performance in English composition.

The findings of the three researchers above are important because they acknowledge that the teacher is an important variable in determining learners' achievement in writing which is the key area of study in the present research. The difference is that these studies did not delve deeper into looking at the instructional practices. In addition Inyega's and Okwara's studies were done at the secondary level while the present study was based on primary school. Sure's research was done in Thika district while the present one was carried out in Nyandarua North district.

2.6 Conclusion

Review of related literature gives an overview of instructional practices employed by teachers to teach writing among standard 4 pupils. Various studies have focused on various approaches to teaching writing skills. Other studies have concluded that adopting one approach in a writing class may not result to effective teaching. They further stress that combining genre and process approaches allows students to study the relationship between the purpose and form for a particular genre as they use recursive process of writing, drafting, revision and editing. Using these steps develops students' awareness of different text types and composing process (Yan, 1995). The current study attempted to establish whether these approaches are adopted in writing classes.
It is evident from the literature review that apart from the instructional practices employed by English Language teachers, there are other possible factors that could influence writing instruction such as language policy, feedback, and teachers' mastery of content and existence of large classes. In the light of the above, the present study looked at the extent to which these factors influence writing instruction.

Research in composition writing reveals that learners exhibit low writing skills at both primary and secondary level. These studies also reveal that there are various factors that influence learners' achievement in writing ranging from motivation, teacher professional training, and teacher qualification to learners' attitude. Though some of the studies have focused on teacher related factors, they have not exhaustively addressed the instructional practices employed by teachers (teaching approaches, utilization of resources, integrating writing activities in writing lesson). Therefore, this study delved into this area of study at a greater length.
CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to gather information on the writing approaches used by teachers to teach writing skills. It mainly focused on research design, research variables, target population, sample size and sampling technique, research instruments, pilot study, data collection procedure, data analysis and finally ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Design

This research used descriptive survey research design. According to Kombo and Tromp (2006), this kind of a design can be used when collecting information about people's attitudes, opinions, habits, or any of the variety of education or social issues. Descriptive survey helped in obtaining information about the instructional practices, employed by teachers to teach writing skills. Good (1972) suggests that descriptive methods are widely used to obtain data useful in evaluating present practices and providing a basis for decision making. The researcher used both primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained using questionnaires, observations schedule and interviews while secondary data was found from journals, books and the internet.
3.3 The Research variables

3.3.1 The Independent variables

The Independent variables for this study are instructional methods, instructional resources, teaching/learning activities and assessment techniques employed by teachers to teach writing skills and assessment techniques. They are important to this study because they determine whether the learners will acquire the appropriate writing skills or not.

3.3.2 The Dependent variable

The dependent variable is performance in writing skills among standard 4 pupils.

3.4 Location of the study.

This study was conducted in Nyandarua North district, Central Province of Kenya. The reason for selecting Nyandarua North as the location of study is because English language performance over the years has been dismal. In 2010, the end of 1st term results and end of term two results were 45% and 46% respectively in English language. These marks are below average and much needs to be done to avert this situation.

3.5 Target population

This study targeted 67 public primary schools, 67 standard 4 teachers of English and 3,015 standard 4 pupils. Standard 4 pupils were selected because they are assumed to have had less exposure in English language writing at the lower primary levels since the language of instruction is normally mother tongue or Kiswahili while English language is studied as subject. Some of these issues could have interfered with a smooth progression from standard 1 to 3 in writing. It is therefore at this level that the teacher of English is expected to use the appropriate teaching methods, utilize instructional resources appropriately and use the right
assessment techniques with a view to monitoring the learners' progress. This would ultimately enable the learners to cope up with the demands of the syllabus as they transit into the upper classes.

3.6 Sampling technique and sample size.

Stratified random sampling was used to select public primary schools in Nyandarua district. Three subsets or strata were obtained from three categories of schools namely high performing, average performing and low performing. Stratified random sampling was deemed appropriate because it represented different categories of schools in terms of their performance. A total of 21 schools were selected from 67 schools. Seven schools were then selected randomly. This number is equivalent to 30% which has been regarded as an acceptable sample size in survey research (Orodho, 2003). To obtain seven schools from each category, all the schools were given a number, which was put in a box. Finally the numbers were picked from the box. These represented the required sample of 21 schools.

One standard 4 teacher of English language from the 21 sampled schools responded to a questionnaire. For the purpose of classroom observation, three schools from each category were randomly selected from the 21 sampled schools. Nine schools from the three categories are equivalent to 15% which constitutes an acceptable number in a survey research (Ary, 1972). The researcher observed nine classes to confirm the information that had been given in the teacher's questionnaires.
3.1 Sampled schools and teachers from Nyandarua North district.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population group</th>
<th>Target population</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public primary schools</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std 4 teachers of English</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std 4 classes</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.7 Research instruments

Data was collected using three research instruments namely, teacher’s questionnaire, classroom observation schedule and an interview schedule. All the instruments were administered to all the sampled teachers.

3.7.1 Teacher’s questionnaire

Questionnaires are appropriate in collecting information that is not directly observable as they can inquire about feelings, attitudes, accomplishments, as well as experiences of individuals (Gall et al., 1996). They consisted of both open ended and closed questions. They were administered to 21 standard 4 teachers of English to gather information about teacher’s characteristics such as age, gender and experience, teaching approaches that are commonly employed by teachers of English and ways in which instructional resources are utilized.
Activities that teachers engage their pupils in as well as assessment techniques were also explored.

3.7.2 Teachers’ Interview schedule

An interview schedule was used to cross-check the information that was collected through the observation schedule and teacher’s questionnaire. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), they provide in depth data which is not possible to get using a questionnaire. The researcher interviewed standard 4 teachers of English from three sampled schools. Information such as assessment techniques and instructional resources was gathered.

3.7.3 Classroom observation schedule.

Classroom observation schedule was used to observe live lessons. Nine teachers were observed once to gather information about the teaching approaches they frequently employed to teach writing skills, teacher’s content mastery, instructional resources that are utilized and the forms of activities that teachers engage their pupils in.

3.8 Pilot Study

The pilot study was conducted in two randomly selected public primary school in Nyandarua district. The schools were not among the schools sampled for the main study. A teacher’s interview schedule and questionnaire were piloted to test their validity and reliability. Items in the instruments that were found ambiguous or unclear to the respondents were modified.
3.8.1 Validity

Validity of an instrument is a measure of how well an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure (Kombo and Tromph, 2006). Borg and Gall (1989) assert that validity of an instrument is improved through expert judgment. The instruments were scrutinized by experts in the department to establish their validity.

3.8.2 Reliability

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) define reliability as a measure of the degree to which a research instruments yields consistent result or data after repeated trials. To determine reliability, a pilot study was conducted in two public primary schools. Irrelevant items were removed while ambiguous ones were rephrased to enhance clarity.

3.9 Data collection procedure

The researcher obtained a permit to allow her to visit the identified schools. She later visited the identified schools to seek permission from the head teacher. The researcher consulted with standard 4 teachers of English language so as to explain the purpose of the study, how she intended to carry out the study and more importantly to assure them of the confidentiality of the data to be collected. The researcher made prior visits before the actual collection of data basically to create a rapport with the teachers and to avoid Hawthorne effect among teachers and pupils. On the agreed upon days the researcher sat at the back of the classroom to code observations using a classroom observation schedule purposely developed for the study. Arrangements were later made with teachers of English on when to conduct interviews and also when to administer teacher’s questionnaires.
3.10 Data analysis.

Data collected was checked for completeness. It was then coded, tabulated and entered in the computer for final analysis. Interview schedule and observation were thoroughly inspected for accuracy.

Data from the three research instruments was analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Analysis was done using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics such as mean enabled the data to be organized in a meaningful way for presentation, interpretation and discussion. The analyzed data was presented using percentages, frequency table, graphs, and pie charts.

3.11 Ethical considerations

The researcher obtained a permit from the graduate school Kenyatta University. She was also issued with a permit by the permanent secretary in the ministry of education. Permission was also sought from the head teachers and standard 4 teachers of English from the schools that were selected. Willing respondents were assured of confidentiality and that data collected was to be strictly used for the purpose of this study only.
CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an analysis of data and discussion collected from the field. Teachers’ questionnaires, observation schedule and an interview schedule were used. Data is presented in form of frequency tables, graphs, pie charts and percentages. Data is computed from 21 questionnaires, nine observation schedules and nine interviews. The objectives of this study were to:

• Examine writing approaches employed by teachers of English in teaching writing skills.

• Identify writing activities used by standard four teachers of English to teach writing skills.

• Identify instructional resources utilized and how they are utilized by teachers of English when teaching writing skills.

• Examine the methods used by teachers of English to assess writing skills.

4.2: Writing Approaches

Acquiring writing skill is a laborious and a demanding task. A learner is considered to be an effective writer if he/she produces a coherent and a fluent piece of writing. He/she should also be able to demonstrate the ability to use the correct sentence structure, style and organization. To achieve this, the teacher should adopt an approach that would prepare the standard four pupils to be better writers. Data on writing approaches employed by teachers was collected using questionnaires and observation schedule.
Table 4.1 Distribution of approaches of teaching writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Often Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Occasionally Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Not at all Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Total frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Product approach</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process approach</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process genre</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>61.9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both product and process</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All the approaches</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>61.9</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>90.5</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>90.5</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1 shows that 14 (67%) teachers of frequently employed the product approach in teaching writing skills. Only 4 teachers (19%) pointed out that they occasionally utilized it.
while 3 teachers (14.3%) did not employ it at all. Nine teachers did not use the process approach at all, while only 4 (19%) teachers adopted it frequently and 8 (38.1%) teachers used it occasionally. Process genre approach was frequently adopted by 1 teacher (4.8%) while 9 teachers (42.95%) did not adopt it at all. The study revealed that only 8 teachers (38.1%) occasionally employed it. Six teachers (28.6%) adopted both approaches while 10 teachers (47.6%) did adopt them occasionally and 5 teachers (23.8%) did not adopt them at all.

Nineteen teachers (90.5%) indicated that they had never used technology while only two teachers (9.5%) occasionally used it. The study sought to find out whether there were other approaches that the teachers of English adopted apart from the ones given. Only 2 (9.5%) teachers occasionally used resource persons.

From the findings, the product approach is the dominant approach in writing classes. Since writing is undoubtedly one of the most difficult skills to foster, it is expected that the teacher employs an approach that suits that learner. Luchin (2003) asserts that writing is a challenging and a complex task that requires the making of decisions and choices at different cognitive levels involving a lot of intellectual effort rather than the accurate use of linguistic competence. He further points that teachers should adopt an approach to writing that provides useful support for students writers. In the product approach, students are required to concentrate more on the final product or the linguistic form more than the process itself. While using this approach, students are supposed to mimic a model text which is later presented and analyzed. Brown (2001) asserts that in product approach, successive learning is measured by how well structured and grammatically correct a composition is. Additionally, Robertson (2008) observes that in product based approach students rarely acquire the skills required for creating and shaping their work because of the overemphasis on linguistic forms.
It is therefore critical to note that effectiveness in writing cannot be achieved by adopting the product approach. The present study is of the view that poor achievement in writing is attributed to the fact that product approach was dominantly adopted in writing classes. Process genre approach is undoubtedly the best approach that would give learners an opportunity to learn because it caters for learners needs. Adopting a separate writing approach in a writing class may not be suitable since the shortcomings of each writing approach hampers students writing development.

The present study also revealed that technology is hardly utilized hence the dismal performance in writing. Using computers could assist pupils a great deal. This is supported by Graham and Perin (2001) who observe that use of a word processor can help students foster their writing ability. They further point that revision can be made easily between the drafts.

Through observations schedule, the study revealed that two teachers of English (9.6%) employed the product approach while 2 teachers (4.8%) teachers adopted the process genre approach in teaching writing skills.

4.3: Teaching /writing activities

Active learning is only possible if the teacher of English will actively engage his/ her learners by increasing the writing activities. It is of paramount importance if the teacher of English gets all his /her students focused on the writing task throughout the lesson, lest they will keep on drifting. Integrating a variety of writing activities yields enormous benefits. For instance, learners’ understanding is improved. They are also able to participate in learning as well as retaining what they have learnt.

Therefore, this study sought to find out various writing activities that teachers engaged their learners in when teaching various writing skills. Information was gathered using teacher’s questionnaires and classroom observation schedule.
4.3.1: Writing sentences from substitution tables

Substitution tables are used as a guide to help pupils learn the structure of a sentence before they move to constructing advanced sentences. Teachers of English are therefore supposed to integrate a variety of writing tasks that will facilitate mastering of this skill. Their responses are shown in the table below.

Table 4.2 Distribution of writing activities from substitution tables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing sentences from substitution tables</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asking learners to formulate their own sentences and later sharing with the entire class</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guiding learners on how to write correct sentence structures by reading the sentences aloud and then repeating after the teacher individually</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging learners in discussions, later learners would write their own sentences</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matching sentences</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filling gaps using selected answers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupils constructing sentences orally and later writing them down with the help of the teacher</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joining parts of a sentence</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing sentences</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to table 4.2, two teachers (9.5%) reported that they were asking learners to formulate their own sentences and later present them to the rest of the class. Similarly, two teachers (9.5%) indicated that they guided the learners on how to write correct sentence structure by reading the sentences aloud. Three teachers (14.2%) engaged their learners in
matching sentences while a similar percentage engaged the learners in filing gaps using selected answers. Those teachers who said that they engaged their learners in joining parts of sentences were 3 teachers while 2 teachers reported that pupils would write their sentences.

From the findings some of the activities that learners were engaged in could not assist the pupils to learn the skill. For instance, three teachers of English indicated that the learners would fill gaps using selected answers while 3 other teachers indicated that they would just write sentences. It is worth noting that this kind of a skill requires strong engagement activities that would facilitate learning of the skill among standard four pupils. These two activities are not useful and therefore cannot promote writing skills among learners.

Organizing learners into groups is important because it provides them with an opportunity to make their own substitution tables. Additionally, learners are able to ask one another questions from the substitution tables. It also gives all the learners an opportunity to participate thereby improving their writing skills. However, from the findings this skill is hardly utilized by teachers. The majority of the teachers did not engage their pupils in other useful activities such as adding phrase to those given in the substitution tables as well as organizing pupils into small groups, hence dismal performance in writing.

It is worth noting that some of the activities that learners were engaged in would not assist them to improve their writing skills a great deal. For instance, 3 teachers (14.2%) indicated that learners would fill gaps using selected answers while 3 teachers (14.2%) would just write sentences. Evidently, lack of achievement in writing could be attributed to the fact that standard 4 teachers of English did not engage the learners in useful activities while handling this skill such as adding phrases to those given in the substitution tables, guiding learners to make simple substitution tables as well as organizing pupils into groups.
4.3.2: Writing guided compositions

It is of paramount importance that the teacher guides the learners on how to write a composition owing to the fact that writing is a complex task, which requires proper organization of abstract ideas. The teacher of English in this case plays an important role by integrating appropriate activities that will engage the learners’ imagination as well as generating ideas from them. The results are presented in the table below.

Table 4.3 Distribution of writing activities during guided composition writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing activities</th>
<th>frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing the topic on the black board and the pupils would be given a chance to</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contribute their ideas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing the topic of the composition and then guiding the pupils to plan the</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>story creatively and freely</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noting the main important ideas on the black board and pupils would later use</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>them to write a composition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging them in filling in blank spaces</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matching words</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group activity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guiding them in writing on the chalk board following their suggestion</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revising the vocabulary and sentence structure learnt, in relation with the topic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>given</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of pictures</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From table 4.3, two teachers of English (9.5%) indicated that they engaged their learners in writing the topic on the blackboard and the pupils would be given a chance to contribute their ideas. Those who discussed the topic of the composition and then guiding the pupils to plan the story creatively and freely were 2 teachers of English (99.5%). Four teachers of English (19%) indicated that the learners would fill in blank space while those who engaged their learners in planning were two teachers of English (9.5%). Only one teacher of English indicated that he used pictures to generate ideas from the pupils. Similarly, only one teacher of English reported that he engaged learners in group activity where the learners could be given an opportunity to develop a story together and later present it to class. Group activity was hardly utilized. Gathumbi and Masembe (2005) observe that pictures could be used in creative writing to develop a story. Some of the useful activities are using cloze passages, completion exercises and jumbled sentences. These were left out.

Though some of the activities that learners were engaged in were useful, it is clear that some learning tasks could not promote writing guided compositions among the learners.

Information collected using observation schedule shows that the majority of the teachers, (66.6%) did not organize the learners into groups while teaching guided composition. Instead, they asked individual learners to contribute their points and then they would write them on the board. In one of the schools, the teacher asked the pupils to generate points without giving them outline notes, questions or pictures to stimulate their ideas.
4.3.3: Writing legibly and neatly

Legible and neat handwriting allows pupils to convey their ideas and opinions. This is the foundation on which they build their ability to write. Therefore, this demands that handwriting should be explicitly taught since it is a daunting task. To achieve this, the teacher should adopt the right teaching approach alongside the appropriate activities that would assist learners to develop essential handwriting skills. This question sought to find out the activities that pupils were involved in when learning how to write legibly and neatly.

Table 4.4 Distribution of writing activities to write legibly and neatly

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing activities</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing exercises</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaping letters</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing patterns</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copying a written text</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guiding them how to space the letters and writing capital letters and small letters on the black board</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictating</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learners observing and imitating them</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual writing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraphing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4 shows that three teachers of English (14.2%) engaged learners in writing exercises while seven teachers (33.3%) reported that learners were involved in shaping letters. Those that engaged their learners in copying a written text and individual writing were 2 teachers
(9.5%) and 3 teachers (14.2%) teachers respectfully. One teacher of English indicated that the learners observed and later imitated them.

Writing legibly and neatly is an important skill because it allows the learner to be fluent in writing. If a learner is not well versed with this skill, he/she will shift focus from the process or content of writing to shaping letters. This eventually hampers their writing development as they transit into the other classes. It is therefore important that the teacher of English integrates the correct activities.

Some of the activities presented in the table above are important as they would enhance development of handwriting skills among the learners. However, it is not clear how some activities such as pupils observing and later imitating would facilitate acquisition of the skill.

In addition, dictation cannot provide an opportunity for the learners to practice writing legibly.

4.3.4: Writing a guided friendly and formal letter

Mastering letter writing skills is necessary as learners are required to write letters at some point. Learners who are not competent in writing letters are devoid of communication skills as well as good social skills. The teacher is therefore supposed to make the lesson more interesting and more engaging by introducing a variety of writing activities that focus on how to structure the letter and use the appropriate style and vocabulary.
### Table 4.5 Distribution of writing activities while writing a guided friendly and formal letter

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing activities</th>
<th>frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussing and the writing a letter</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading a sample friendly letter</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing the structure of an official letter on the black board, learners later copy before writing their own</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>28.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraphing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving format first</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing in groups</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Following principles of a formal letter: writing address, salutation, body and ending</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to table 4.5, 4 teachers of English (19.0%) indicated that they engaged their learners in a discussion. Teachers who indicated that they wrote the structure of an official letter on the black board and learners would later copy before writing their own were six (28.5%). Two teachers of English indicated that they engaged their learners in planning and paragraphing while those who said that they gave a format first were 3 teachers (14.2%). Other activities such as reading a sample letter and writing in groups were integrated by 5 teachers (23.5%) and 2 teachers (9.5%) respectfully. Writing the structure of an official letter on the black board and the learners copying it later before writing their own, could be interpreted as wrong task. This is because giving learners an opportunity to copy the structure of an informal letter cannot promote learning of this particular skill. Planning and paragraphing were also cited as some of the tasks that learners were engaged in though they
are not useful as far as letter writing is concerned. Only two teachers (9.5%) indicated that they engaged their pupils in group discussions where learners get an opportunity to discuss several aspects such as salutations, format and organization of content. Five teachers of English indicated that they read sample friendly letters to pupils. This is an important task as the teacher is able to discuss the format language as well as the style. Poor achievement in writing could therefore, be attributed to the fact that most of the activities that learners were engaged in were not useful and hence could not foster writing skills in standard four pupils.

4.4: Instructional materials

Instructional materials are of vital importance in any learning situation. Undoubtedly, there is always a positive relationship between instructional resources and students achievement in writing. Firstly, learners' interest is stimulated so that they are able to concentrate on their work. Secondly, they are able to understand abstract ideas better and finally they become motivated in learning. This question sought to establish the instructional materials utilized by teachers while teaching writing skills. Teacher's questionnaires and classroom observation schedules were used to gather information.

The results of instructional resources utilized by teachers are summarized in table 4.6 below.
### Table 4.6 Distribution of instructional resources utilized by teachers of English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th></th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th></th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pictures</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charts</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flash cards</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuttings from newspapers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>61.9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black board</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>95.2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story books</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplementary</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text books</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictionary</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paints</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise book</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From table 4.6, the most frequently used instructional materials were textbooks by 21 teachers (100%), blackboard by 20 teachers (95.2%) and exercise books by 18 teachers (85.7%). Table 4.6 also shows that 11 teachers of English (52.4%), 9 teachers (42.9%) and 8 teachers (38.1%) often used pictures, story books and charts respectfully. The findings further revealed that 11 teachers (52.4%) occasionally used dictionaries while 8 teachers (38.1%) frequently used them in teaching writing skills. Only 7 teachers (33.3%) used a radio and 3 teachers (14.3%) occasionally utilized a TV while 4 teachers (19.0%) and 5 teachers (23.8%) utilized supplementary readers.

Table 4.6 indicates that using a radio and a television as instructional materials is low when compared with other resources. It is expected that the two instructional resources would have been utilized in a language class since they have numerous benefits. According to Tajani (2009), a radio plays an important role in developing learners' imagination, in creating pictures in the mind through the power of words; it stimulates the imagination to fill in the visuals. Thus when the radio is used in the classroom, it helps students promote their imagination to voice their creativity. A television and a radio are excellent sources for teaching writing skills as the stimulate learners thinking but are hardly utilized by teacher of English. These two resources are not utilized because they are not available and many public primary schools are not connected to electricity.

The Findings have revealed that the chalkboard board is commonly used by teachers of English probably because it is always available in the classroom. Textbooks are also commonly utilized in writing classrooms because they play an essential role. Ur (1998) points out that text books are the cheapest teaching materials compared to other types of instructional materials and require less preparation time. Flash cards can be used for a wide variety of activities such as matching activities but they are underutilized with only 4% of teachers of English frequently using them. For learning to be successful, teachers of English
should employ a wide range of learning resources. It is therefore clear that learners’ achievement in writing was low because the teachers of English did not employ a wide variety of instructional resources.

Information gathered using classroom observation schedule revealed that all the nine teachers used English textbooks, the chalk board and exercise books. Charts, supplementary readers were hardly used, contrary to what had been reported in the questionnaire. Out of the nine observations made, only two teachers of English utilized pictures in teaching writing. These findings could mean that the commonly used resources were available in all the schools and probably these teachers lacked knowledge on how to improvise other media like charts and newspaper cuttings.

4.4.1 Utilization of instructional resources

Data on utilization of resources was gathered through observation schedule. The researcher found that teacher of English utilized textbooks, chalkboard, and pictures. This information is contrary to what was reported in the teacher’s questionnaires. Out of nine teachers of English that were observed, 5(55.5%) teachers would write on the chalk board as they talked to the students. This approach is not appropriate as the teacher is supposed to create a rapport with the learners by establishing an eye contact in order to sustain their attention throughout the lesson. In addition, while using this approach, the teacher is not able to control the class. Ryan (1993) observes that if the chalk board is to be used while teaching, it is important that the points be written on the board as the lesson progresses. He further says that the teacher should write as quickly as possible to prevent him/ her from writing on the board as he/she talks. One teacher of English (11.1%) divided the blackboard into three columns, but started writing in the middle and then moved left. Learners seemed confused at some point because they were not able to follow the sequence of ideas. The teacher did not present what he taught in an organized way and hence could not facilitate understanding among the learners.
Using textbooks has numerous benefits if utilized appropriately. For instance they help learners to acquire English language skills. In addition, they arouse pupils' interest as well as their motivation. This study found that the majority of teachers of English (77.7%) ignored some of the illustration and activities that were provided in the textbook. Only a few exhausted all the illustration and engaged their learners in all the activities. It was important for the teachers to read all the illustration for better understanding.

English text books were not enough in five classes that the researcher visited. As a result, one textbook was shared among six pupils. This compelled some pupils to learn while standing and could hardly understand what was going on. It also hampered them from writing what they were taught yet it was a lesson about writing. All students should be able to see the book and its writing clearly. A smaller normal size book should be used with a smaller group of students so that all of them can see the words and the pictures (Sub-Saharan Africa www.bookaid.org)

Teachers from two schools (22.2%) did not involve the whole class in reading the guiding questions provided as prescribed in the textbook. In fact, they only engaged two pupils who were seemingly bright. This was inappropriate because the other pupils were not given a chance to practice using the language skills. The teacher could have involved at least half of the class.

Out of 9 teachers of English that were observed, only two teachers (22.2%) utilized pictures. Wright (1989) observes that pictures give contribution to students’ interest and motivation, as well as stimulating students’ ideas. One of the topics of the composition was ‘my school’ and pupils were supposed to write everything pertaining their school. The picture that was displayed to the students was not big enough to be viewed by all the pupils especially the
ones who were at the back. In addition, the teacher of English did not give her pupils enough
time to study the picture in order to answer the questions. Brown et al (1983) stresses that, the
pictures should be big enough, interesting and clear for students to see and in turn describe
them. Ayot (1984) observes that the teacher has to stimulate his/her audience to interact
actively with the pictures.
This research deemed it appropriate to find out how often learners were assessed in writing skills. Learning would not be complete without assessing learners’ progress. The ultimate aim is to improve learners’ performance in writing as well as paying attention to their needs and interest. Information was collected using teacher’s questionnaires. The results of frequency of assessment are presented in figure 4.5

Figure 4.1: Frequency of Assessment
Figure 4.1 shows that the majority of those who administered tests were 11 teachers (52.38%) who did it weekly while only 8 teachers (38.1%) administered tests on a daily basis. Teachers who gave tests fortnightly were only two, which constituted 9.5%.

Assessment is regarded as an integral part of effective teaching. The fact that that majority of the teachers did not assess their learners on a daily basis raises questions whether they were able to gather information about the learners' progress. Good, Kingston and Miller (2010) observe that assessment for learning occurs as part of everyday teaching and learning and uses information from ongoing assessment to shape classroom teaching and learning. Similarly, assessing learners informs them about their learning and they are able to rectify on their weaker points.

This data shows that most teachers of English did not embrace the idea of testing learners daily, which would help them identify learners' strong and weak points. The present study is therefore of the view that teachers of English do not perceive assessment as an important tool that can foster writing skills. The implication here is that learners are not able to identify patterns of strengths and needs of each learner.

4.5.1: Evaluation

Evaluation is integral to learning. Effective evaluation enables the teacher English to identify the learners' level of progress in relation to the expected learners' outcome. In addition, the teacher is able to address the learning needs of the learner in an appropriate manner. Effective evaluation also entails use of a variety of methods to evaluate learners' progress. Use of a single assessment method might not provide the teacher of English with an opportunity to make decisions about the learners' progress. Therefore, this calls for multiple sources of information that can assist the learner as well as the teacher. Information was gathered using teacher's questionnaires as well as coding live classroom observations.
Table 4.7 Frequency and percentage distribution of methods of Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Often Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Occasionally Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Not at all Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Total frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diagnostic Tests</td>
<td>10 47.6</td>
<td></td>
<td>11 52.4</td>
<td></td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examinations</td>
<td>4 19.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>17 81.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>21 100</td>
<td></td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td></td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>7 33.3</td>
<td></td>
<td>11 52.4</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 14.3</td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checklist</td>
<td>1 4.8</td>
<td></td>
<td>7 33.3</td>
<td></td>
<td>13 61.9</td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.7 reveals that 10 teachers of English which represents 47% teachers often administer tests, and 11 teachers (52.4%) administer tests occasionally. Examinations are frequently administered by 4 (19%) while 17 (81%) occasionally administered them. All teachers gave assignments while 10 (47%) used observations, 11 teachers (52.4%) occasionally used observations while 3 (14.3%) did not observe their students. Minority of the teachers which represents 1 (4.8%) used checklist, 7 teachers (33.3%) occasionally used them while 13 teachers (61.9%) did not use checklist to assess their learners’ progress.

Classroom observation schedule show that teachers of English in all the nine schools gave assignments after teaching writing skills. The results indicate that teachers of English used a variety of methods to evaluate their learners. However, some of the other methods such as diagnostic tests, observations as well as checklist were underutilized. According to Mandell and Wortham (2001) a checklist is an important technique of assessing learners as it allows the teacher to quickly and easily...
Table 4.7 Frequency and percentage distribution of methods of Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Often Frequency</th>
<th>Often Percentage</th>
<th>Occasionally Frequency</th>
<th>Occasionally Percentage</th>
<th>Not at all Frequency</th>
<th>Not at all Percentage</th>
<th>Total frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diagnostic Tests</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>47.6%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>52.4%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examinations</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>81.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>52.4%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checklist</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>61.9%</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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The results indicate that teachers of English used a variety of methods to evaluate their learners. However, some of the other methods such as diagnostic tests, observations as well as checklist were underutilized. According to Mandell and Wortham (2001) a checklist is an important technique of assessing learners as it allows the teacher to quickly and easily...
observe groups of children and check the behaviour or skill each child is demonstrating at a particular moment. They further observe that anecdotal notes or observations capture the richness or depth of children interaction as they engage in literacy activities. It is therefore paramount for the teacher of English to use observations and checklists to gather more information about the learner.

Evaluation without these techniques implies that the teacher of English is not able to gain insights that will help her understand a child’s behaviour use of certain skills. This in turn impedes the learner from acquiring the skill.

From the above table, only 10 teachers of English administered diagnostic test to assess their learners. Diagnostic tests help teachers of English identify students who experience writing difficulties since writing is a daunting task. The fact that these techniques were hardly utilized implies that the teachers of English were not able to identify specific learning strengths and needs. This could mean that most of the teachers gave assignments based on the course book. On the other hand, tests and examinations were occasionally administered, because they would require them to take a lot of time to set them. Observations and checklist were seldom used probably because they did not have knowledge on how to use them. In addition, they would consume a lot of time.
Feedback is an essential part of effective learning. It supports learners writing development and natures their confidence as learners. This research question therefore, sought to find out how teachers provided feedback to their learners. The results are presented below.

Figure 4.2: Frequency of feedback

Figure 4.2 shows that 12 teachers of English (57.14 %) provided feedback to learners on daily basis while 3 teachers (14.29%) pointed out that they provided it immediately, (14.29%) provided it weekly, and (14.29%) provided it rarely. Feedback provided by teachers can be useful to learners writing development. The main objective is to provide the learner with information about his progress so that they can in turn improve. Additionally, the teacher is able to diagnose his or her own strengths and weaknesses. While it is important to provide
feedback on daily basis, teachers should ensure that they provide effective feedback to learners so that they can improve their writing skills. Brown, Bull and Pendleybury (1997) point out that feedback is most effective when it is timely, perceived as relevant, meaningful and encouraging and offers suggestions for improvement that are within a student's grasp. Additionally, Chamberlain and Dison (1998) assert that effective feedback is constructive and points students to ways in which they can improve their learning and achievement. It is clear that the role of the teacher is not just to provide feedback for the sake of it but also to provide feedback that will assist learners to develop their writing skills. For instance, providing feedback based on grammatical errors is not enough as writing is not all about grammar. Instead, the teacher should provide feedback based on aspects such as content, organization as well as purpose. This data contradicts what was reported in the interview schedule where most of the teachers indicated that they were not able to provide feedback on daily basis. This was occasioned by existence of large classes as well as heavy workload for teachers of English.
4.6. Discussion of findings

4.6.1: Approaches employed by teachers of English to teach English writing skills.

This study found that product approach was the dominant approach employed by teachers of English to teach standard four pupils while process genre approach was utilized by few teachers of English. Using a product approach impedes the learner from becoming a creative writer. This is because the learner is judged by his/her ability to use appropriate grammatical structure, syntax and organization. Product approach is a traditional approach in which students are encouraged to mimic a model text usually presented and analyzed at an early stage (Gabrielatos, 2002).

The process approach was often utilized by four (19%) teachers. O'Brien (2004) points out that while using this approach, teachers encourage learners to see writing as a discovery of meaning and ideas as opposed to grammar exercises. Learners writing is developed using five steps which include, prewriting, first draft composing, feedback, second draft writing and proofreading. However, this approach has some limitations owing to insufficient linguistic input to write in 12 successfully (Badger and white 2000). This implies that learners do not have a clear understanding and hence their writing cannot be successful.

The process genre approach entails combining genre, product, and process approaches with a view to developing learners writing competence. It was often utilized by 4 teachers of English and occasionally utilized by 13 teachers of English. According to Yan (2005), the teacher should adopt the role of assistant and guide and work closely with the students to encourage them and at the same time offering helpful feedback and suggestions. He further states that the teacher should also make an effort to arouse curiosity and self confidence by matching students interests to the writing topic. They should be sensitive to any individual differences that arise in the writing process. This will eventually enable the learner to be
successful in writing. Since only four teachers of English often employed process genre approach in writing classroom, standard 4 pupils were not equipped with the necessary skills.

Technology was hardly utilized by a few teachers of English. Kharbach (2012) argues that technology has an answer to writing crisis. It can drive away boredom from the classroom and spur up students’ creativity and engagement. Technology does not only help the learner improve their writing skills, but also makes them love writing.

Writing is a fundamental skill and at the same time a difficult skill to master. This poses a challenge to teachers of English to develop writing competence. Therefore, it is important that the teachers consolidate the three approaches for writing to be successful.

This study ascertained that poor performance could also be attributed to the fact that process genre approach was hardly utilized. For learners to become successful writers, the focus should shift from spelling, grammar, and other writing conventions to a holistic view that emphasizes writing as a recursive process.
4.6.2: Writing activities that teachers engage their learners in.

Success in writing cannot be achieved without the teacher of English fully engaging his/her learners in a variety of writing activities. Jablon and Wilkson (2006) observe that learners who are engaged in various activities are intrinsically motivated by curiosity, interest, and enjoyment. They further point out that engaged children demonstrate behaviours of concentration, enthusiasm and effort. Yopp and Yopp (2007) hold the same view that active learning engages and motivates students while enhancing understanding and performance. Silberman (1996) underscores the importance of making learning active because to learn something well, a student needs to hear it, ask questions about it, and discuss it with the rest. Washington (2013) observes that engaging students in the learning process increases their attention and focus. Additionally, it motivates them to practice higher level critical thinking skills and promotes meaningful learning experiences.

It is of paramount importance that the teachers of English create an engaging context by introducing a variety of writing activities. This encourages active learning as opposed to passively listening to the teacher. Additionally, it generates motivation for the learner to write and also develop an interest in writing.

This study revealed that some of the activities that learners were engaged in were not useful. This implies that they would not assist the learners to learn the skill. Some teachers indicated that they engaged their learners in a planning activity while teaching guided composition. In real sense it is not clear what the activity entails and how it would be utilized. Two teachers (9.5%) reported that they engaged learners in discussing the topic of the composition and guiding the pupil to plan the story creatively and freely. It is also not clear how the teacher would develop the learners' creativity.
It is worth noting that some activities that would be useful in promoting writing skills among the STD 4 pupils were utilized by few teachers. Group activity was hardly utilized yet it creates an environment for interaction that enables pupils to freely contribute their views without being intimidated. Eliciting information through a series of pictures was also not given emphasis. The study therefore concluded that useful activities that would enhance writing skills among the pupils were not utilized which resulted to poor performance in writing.

4.6.3: Methods used to assess the learners' writing skills.

Assessment plays a pivotal role in the learning process. Assessment is purposely done to identify learners' strengths and weaknesses. It also helps the teacher to provide helpful feedback to the learner, with a view to improving their writing skills. Mujidi (2009) points out that learners are required to handle the language with some independence through writing skills at this particular level since it is the medium of instruction. This, therefore, calls for constant assessment that would help the teacher of English meet the learners' needs. Brown (2005) suggests that assessing learners does not only entail what the teacher is assessing but also the methods and the approaches that are used.

The findings reveal that teachers of English used a variety of assessment methods but some that could substantially help in identifying the learners' progress were underutilized. For instance, diagnostic tests were frequently utilized while 11 teachers occasionally utilized them. These tests are important as they assist the teacher to identify the learners who need extra help or those who experience writing difficulties. If they are not identified, they transit into the next level having not mastered some writing skills that would help them learn more complex skills. Similarly checklists and observations were hardly utilized. A checklist allows
the teacher to identify whether the learner exhibits a particular skill or not. This gives him/her
insight on how to provide feedback to the learner.

Giving assignments alone cannot adequately assist the teacher of English to trace the
problems that learners experience while writing. For achievement to be accomplished in
writing, then a variety of assessment methods must be utilized on frequent and consistent
basis. This in turn enables the learner to get regular feedback that significantly improves their
writing skills. This study is of the view that assessment was underutilized. The implication is
that teachers could not identify learners' strengths and weaknesses hence could not provide
feedback.

4.6.4: Instructional materials utilized by teachers

Teaching how to write effectively is one of the most important lifelong skills educators
impart to their students when teaching writing. Educators must be sure to select resources
and support materials that not only aid them in teaching how to write, but also those that will
be the most effective in helping their students to learn (www.time 4 writing.com). Agun
(2003) states that instructional materials in teaching are some of the most important devices
which both teachers and learners can use to enhance good quality, learning instruction.
Similarly, Nworgu (2003) pointed that effective instruction is not possible without instruction
materials in teaching.

Instructional materials are important as they assist the learner to grasp the ideas faster and
better. In addition, they provoke motivation and interest such that the learner is able to learn
with a lot of ease. Findings show that some resources were maximally utilized while some
were underutilized. Ayot (1984) suggests that teachers should adopt a multimedia approach
in communicating instructional ideas to his/her students. He further says that use of
individual media cannot be effective. Evidently, the majority of the teachers largely relied on
Textbooks and the chalk board. These are useful aids that the teacher of English cannot do without but they cannot aid learning of writing skills by their own.

Visual materials such as pictures, charts, flash cards and newspaper cuttings were underutilized. Gathumbi and Masembe (2007) suggest that pictures can be drawn or be obtained from magazines, newspapers or photographs. They are therefore, many and easy to find but they are hardly utilized. Flash cards can be used for a wide variety of activities. For instance, they can be used to teach sentence structure, spelling and word recognition. Similarly, audio visual materials were not used at all yet they substantially stimulate learners thinking. Most of the teachers of English indicated that they used supplementary books occasionally and not frequently. This is an indication that they relied on their course book hence could not make reference to the other books where they could draw a variety of concepts and ideas.

Conclusion

The study found that the product approach impeded learners' achievement in writing. Learners are required to produce a perfect product by writing the first draft but this is not possible. Process skills are undervalued while aspects such as vocabulary, grammatical use, spelling and punctuation are given more prominence. This is an indication that learners cannot write beyond the classroom, hence are not prepared to write for the real world.

The writing activities influence writing achievement significantly. The study found that the writing activities that learners were engaged in could not assist them to a great extent. In addition, teachers did not engage learners in a lot of activities. As a result they were not able to create an engaging environment that would ultimately motivate and develop an interest in the learner.
The study found that lack of utilizing a variety of teaching resources constrained standard four pupils from acquiring writing skills since the major teaching resources were text books and the black board. Other teaching resources such as supplementary books, pictures, newspapers, magazines cuttings and TV were not fully utilized.

Teachers of English used a variety of assessment methods although some of them were underutilized. If teachers of English employed all the methods, undoubtly, they would be able to identify the learners’ writing difficulties and in turn provide appropriate feedback.
5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a general summary of the study findings, conclusions and recommendations with regard to instructional practices used by teachers of English language. Suggestions for further research are also presented.

5.2 Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate the instructional practices used by teachers to teach writing skills to standard four pupils. The study was conducted using descriptive survey while data was collected using questionnaires, observation schedule and interview schedule.

5.2.1 Writing approaches commonly used by teachers to teach English writing skills

This question sought to find out the writing approaches employed by standard four teachers when teaching writing skills. Findings indicated that the frequently employed approach in writing is the product approach while approaches such as the process approach and the process genre approach were hardly used. The study further revealed that technology was not utilized at all.

5.2.2 Teaching/learning activities that teacher of English involved their learners in

In a writing class, it is imperative that the teacher engages his/her pupils in a variety of activities that would enhance better understanding of a certain concept. This question sought to find out the type of activities that teachers of English engaged their pupils in. The majority of them did not introduce a variety of activities when teaching writing skills. For instance, while teaching a guided formal/informal letter, most of the teachers indicated that they
engaged their learners in only one activity, which was either reading a sample letter or discussing it. It is therefore not clear whether the teacher would read a sample letter and then ask the pupils to write a similar letter or he/she would move ahead to explain the format and the style of the letter.

The study further revealed that some of the activities were inappropriate and hence would not enhance better understanding. While teaching a guided composition, one of the teachers of English did not organize his learners into groups where they could generate points, but instead, he only involved two or three students who were seemingly brighter than the rest. As a result the rest of the pupils who were not involved did not understand what was being taught.

5.2.3 Instructional resources utilized and how they were utilized by teachers of English

This question sought to identify the instructional resources utilized by teachers. The findings showed that the common resources utilized by teachers were, English text books, chalk, blackboard, exercise books and pencils. On the other hand, resources like pictures, charts, story books, supplementary readers, radio and TV were hardly utilized. The study further sought to find out the way some of three instructional resources were utilized. The results show that they were not effectively utilized. Low achievement in writing, therefore, could be attributed to the fact that learners were not exposed to a wider variety of instructional resources and the fact these resources were not appropriately utilized.
5.2.4 Methods of Evaluation

All teachers of English indicated that they gave their learners an assignment after a writing lesson. The majority of the teachers reported that they administered a diagnostic test while examinations were administered at the end of the school term. Very few teachers used observation and checklist to assess their learners’ progress.

After assessing learners’ progress, it was paramount to find out how teachers regularly provided feedback to their learners. Half of those who were involved indicated that they provided feedback on daily basis while a small number indicated that they did provide feedback immediately, weekly and rarely. Through the interview schedule, most of the teachers indicated that they were not able to provide feedback on daily basis. They attributed this problem to existence of large classes and a heavy workload.

5.3 Conclusion

The following conclusions were made based on the discussions and summary presented in this chapter,

a. The study found out that the appropriate approaches in teaching writing skills are not adopted. Product approach was the dominant approach used by teachers of English while the process genre approach was seldom adopted. Product approach does not effectively prepare pupils to be best writers since it mainly focuses on vocabulary use, grammatical use and mechanical considerations such as spellings and punctuation. Since writing skills is a laborious task, this study found out that a holistic approach that would cater for all aspects of writing would be better. Therefore the process genre approach would enhance proficiency in writing among learners.
b. This study also concludes that majority of teachers are not well versed with other approaches of writing and hence could not adopt them. Lack of enough time and existence of large classes could also be some of the factors that constrained them from adopting this approach.

c. The writing activities that teachers engaged their learners in would certainly not allow any learning to take place. The study found out that only one activity was introduced and sometimes learners were exposed to inappropriate activities. Engaging learners in a variety of activities as well as appropriate ones would no doubt create a supportive environment where standard 4 pupils would acquire the skill with ease.

d. Teachers did not utilize a variety of instructional resources apart from chalk, black board, textbooks, pencils, and pens. Utilizing instructional resources like pictures, charts, supplementary readers, story books would enable the learners to generate more ideas. This would in turn help them to write extensively and appropriately.

e. Teachers involved in this study gave assignments while the majority administered diagnostic tests to their learners. However, observations/anecdotal notes and checklist were not utilized. These two methods of assessment are important as they help the teacher to ascertain whether the learners exhibit a series of skills or not with a view to providing the appropriate feedback.

f. The study further revealed that feedback was not frequently provided by teachers since they were overwhelmed by large numbers and they also had a heavy workload. The fact that these learners were not provided with feedback after a writing test and assignments, could not enhance better acquisition of writing skill. Immediate feedback helps to point out the errors when the composition content is still fresh in the learners mind.
5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following measures are recommended,

a) In-service courses should be offered to all teachers with a view to improving their instructional writing skills.

b) Organize seminars and intensive courses that would equip teachers with the necessary skills on how to teach all the four basic language skills.

c) Teachers should explore and involve learners in a variety of teaching activities that would reinforce their understanding.

d) Apart from utilizing chalk, black board and English textbooks, teachers should improvise instructional resources that would make learning more interesting.

e) The school should provide more instructional resources such as English textbooks, supplementary readers and story books etc that would help improve learning.

f) Teachers are overwhelmed by the large number of students in their classroom. This in turn hampers the teacher from giving individual attention. The government should therefore recruit more teachers of English in a bid to avert dismal performance in writing.

g) Teachers training colleges, in conjunction with Kenya Curriculum Development should give student teachers an opportunity to specialize in subjects of their interest. This would enable them to be well grounded in the specialized subjects.
5.4 Suggestions for further study

a) This study was confined to public primary schools in Nyandarua district Nyandarua County. Further and related study could be carried out in other regions.

b) The study focused on instructional practices as a factor that could be attributed to dismal performance. Other possible factors could be explored to find out the extent to which they affect performance.

c) This study involved standard 4 pupils. Further studies could be carried out in other classes.
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University Press

EastAfrica*

www.twaweza.org/uploads/files/uwezo%2520EA%250Report%2520FINAL.


University Press


Building Word Knowledge. The Reading Teacher, 157-167


Questionnaires for standard 4 teachers of English

This questionnaire is meant to collect information about the instructional practices employed by teachers to teach writing skills.

The information you will provide might be of great help in enhancing learners' achievement in writing. In addition, it will be used for research purposes and not for victimizing you. You are therefore requested to be honest in answering all the questions provided. This questionnaire is divided into 5 parts. Please read the questions carefully and answer all the questions by either ticking or giving an appropriate answer.

**General information**

1. Teachers’ sex  female  [ ]  Male  [ ]

2. Teachers age
   - Below 20 years  [ ]
   - 21-30 years  [ ]
   - 31-40 years  [ ]
   - 41- 50 years  [ ]

3. What is your highest professional qualification?
   a) Graduate teacher  [ ]
   b) Diploma  [ ]
   c) Sl  [ ]
d) P1  

e) UT(untrained)  

f) Others(specify)  

4. For how long have you taught?  
   a) 0-5 years  
   b) 6-10 years  
   c) 11-15 years  
   d) 15-20 years  
   e) More than 20 years  

5. How many lessons do you teach per week?  
   Less than 30 lessons  
   31-35 lessons  
   36-35 lessons  
   More than 40 lessons
6. How many lessons are allocated to English subject per week?

7. How often do you teach writing skills in a week?
   a) 1 lesson
   b) 2 lessons
   c) 3 lessons
   d) Others (specify)

Teaching approaches

8. The following are the approaches used in teaching writing. Each approach has been broken down into stages for better understanding. Indicate with a tick how often you use them in the table below.

Product approach

- Familiarization stage where learners study a text to understand is grammar and vocabulary
- Controlled writing – learners manipulate fixed patterns often the substitution tables
- Guided writing – where learners imitate model texts e.g. filing gaps
- Free writing- where learners use the pattern they have developed to write a composition

Process approach

- Prewriting- gathering information through brainstorming, reading, listening to tapes and records
Drafting – students review the ideas and revise them before making the first draft
Editing- done to ensure grammatical accuracy

Process genre approach

- Modeling and reinforcing-where the teacher discusses the structure of a certain genre i.e. a letter
- Planning- where learners gather information through discussing, listening to tapes and reading associated materials
- Joint constructing- where the teacher and the pupils work together to begin writing the composition
- Independent constructing- where learners undertake the task of composing a text alone

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>occasionally</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Product approach</td>
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<tr>
<td>Process approach</td>
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<tr>
<td>Process genre approach</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Both product and process</td>
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<tr>
<td>All the approaches</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Others(specify)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
10. Below is a list of instructional resources which are used in the teaching of writing skills at the primary school level. Show with a tick how often you use them:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Not at All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pictures/photographs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Charts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flip charts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cuttings from newspapers and magazines</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black boards</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chalk</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crayons</td>
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<td>Pencils/pen</td>
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<td>Story books</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supplementary readers</td>
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<td>Text books</td>
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<td>Dictionaries</td>
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<td>Paints</td>
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<td>Radio</td>
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<td>TV</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exercise books</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

11. Do you use more than one instructional resource?

   Yes [ ]    no [ ]

   a) If the answer is yes, explain the reason:

   .......................................................... ..........................................................
   ..........................................................
   ..........................................................
   ..........................................................
   ..........................................................
   ..........................................................

   b) In your own view, what is the importance of using instructional resources in the teaching of writing skills?

   .......................................................... ..........................................................
Teaching /writing activities

12. Which writing activities do you engage your learners in when teaching the following skills?

a) Writing sentences from substitution tables

b) Writing guided compositions

c) Writing legibly and neatly

d) Writing a guided friendly letter

e) Writing a guided formal/informal letter

f) Writing answers to comprehension question

g) Writing compositions from pictures

15. According to you, do these activities enhance learning?
   Yes
   No
a. Give reasons for the answer above.

Assessment

16. How often do you administer writing tests to your pupils?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>frequently</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weekly</td>
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<td>Fortnightly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monthly</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At the end of term</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. Among the following guides of setting writing tests, which one do you use most?

a) English text book

b) Syllabus

c) Past exam papers

d) Teacher's notes
18. Show with a tick ( ) the techniques you use to assess your pupils in writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>often</th>
<th>occasionally</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tests</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checklist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a) Explain the reason for using the above techniques...

19. How often do you give writing assignments?
   a) Daily
   b) Weekly
   c) Fortnightly
   d) Rarely
20. How often do you provide feedback to your learners?
   a) Immediately
   b) Daily
   c) Weekly
   d) Rarely
   e) Never
APPENDIX B

Observation schedule

School.................................................................................................................................
Class........................................................................................................................................
Topic........................................................................................................................................
Subtopic.....................................................................................................................................

Schemes available

Not available

1. Lesson plans available
   Not available

2. Teachers content mastery
   I. Excellent
   II. Good
   III. Fair
   IV. Poor

3. Teaching approaches used in teaching writing

4. Are instructional resources used during the lesson

5. List the instructional resources used.

6. How are the instructional resources utilized by the teacher in developing content

7. Which writing activities does the teacher engage pupils in?

8. Are there any writing assignments given
APPENDIX C

Interview schedule for standard 4 teachers of English.

The following questions seeks to solicit views on instructional practices used by teachers to teach English language writing skills in selected primary schools in nyandarua North District

1. Why are you interested in teaching English?

2. What teaching preparations do you make before teaching writing?

3. What is the general performance of learners in writing skills?
   a) If poor, what could have caused this situation?

4. What problems do you experience when teaching writing skills?
   a) Large classes
   b) Lack of enough resources
   c) Lack of enough time to explore all the writing skills
   d) Nature of the content

5. Which instructional resources are available in your school?

6. How often do you use them when teaching writing skills?
7. What methods do you use to assess learners in writing


8. How often do you provide feedback to the learners


## APPENDIX D

### RESEARCH BUDGET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost in Kenya shillings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1 Secretarial services</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Typing and printing final proposal</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Photocopying questionnaires</td>
<td>3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2 Stationary</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Writing materials</td>
<td>4000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3 Travelling expenses</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Piloting</td>
<td>3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) To administer questionnaires</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) To collect questionnaires</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4 Binding expenses</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Draft proposals</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Final proposal</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Final report</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5 Contingencies</strong></td>
<td>5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>63,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX E

### WORK PLAN SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schedules</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 2011-November 2011</td>
<td>preparation of the topic to be studied&lt;br&gt;-writing a concept paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2011-april 2012</td>
<td>-writing chapter one ,two and three</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2012</td>
<td>Submission of the research proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2012-December 2012</td>
<td>-correction of errors and the submission of the final copy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2013-august 2013</td>
<td>Piloting and data collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2013-march 2014</td>
<td>-Data analysis and report writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2014</td>
<td>Submission of the final report</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FROM: Dean, Graduate School

TO: Ms. Muya Rachel Njoki
C/o Educational Comm. & Tech. Dept.
Kenyatta University

REF: E55/20162/2010

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL

This is to inform you that Graduate School Board at its meeting of 8th May, 2013 approved your Project Research Proposal for the M.Ed. Degree, entitled "Instructional Practices used by Teachers to Teach English Language Writing Skills to Standard 4 Pupils in Nyandarua North District, Nyandarua County".

You may now proceed with your Data collection.

Thank you,

DAVID NJOROGE
FOR: DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL

c.c. Chairman, Educational Comm. & Tech. Dept.

Supervisors:

1. Dr. Bwrie M. Aldelheid
   C/o Educational Comm. & Tech. Dept.
   KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

2. Dr. Sophia M. Ndethiu
   C/o Educational Comm. & Tech. Dept.
   KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

JN/cao
Rachel Njoki Muya  
Kenyatta University  
P.O Box 43844-00100  
Nairobi.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application dated 12th July, 2013 for authority to carry out research on “Instructional practices used by teachers to teach English language writing skills to standard four pupils in Nyandarua North District, Nyandarua County.” I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in Nyandarua North District for a period ending 31st December, 2013.

You are advised to report to the District Commissioner and District Education Officer, Nyandarua North District before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf of the research report/thesis to our office.

DR. M. K. RUGUTU, PhD, HSC.  
DEPUTY COUNCIL SECRETARY

Copy to:  
The District Commissioner  
The District Education Officer  
Nyandarua North District.
THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:

Prof. Dr. / Mr. / Mrs. / Miss / Institution
Rachel Njoki Muya
of (Address) Kenyatta University
P.O Box 43844-00100, Nairobi

has been permitted to conduct research in
Location
Nyandarua North
District
Nyandarua
County

on the topic: Instructional practices used by teachers to teach English language writing skills to standard four pupils in Nyandarua North District, Nyandarua County

for a period ending: 31st December, 2013.

Applicant’s Signature

For Secretary
National Council for Science & Technology

Signature