IDENTIFICATION AND TEACHING OF LEARNERS WITH WRITING DIFFICULTIES AMONG CLASS SEVEN LEARNERS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT. A CASE OF NJIA SPECIAL SCHOOL MERU COUNTY, KENYA

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NOVEMBER, 2016
DECLARATION

I confirm that this research thesis is my original work and has not been presented in any other university/ institution for consideration. The thesis has been complemented by referenced sources duly acknowledged, where text, data (including spoken words), graphics, pictures or tables have been borrowed from other sources, including the internet, these are specifically accredited and references cited in accordance in line with anti-plagiarism regulations.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my wife Lucy Kathure, my daughter Esther Karimi and my son Nestor Gitonga.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This thesis is a product of contributions by persons from various backgrounds whose inputs made it possible for the successful completion of the study. They offered encouragement, assistance and co-operation for which I express my gratitude. I wish to thank my university supervisors Dr. Beatrice Bunyasi Awori Department of Special Needs Kenyatta University and Dr. Madrine King’endo Department of Special Needs Kenyatta University for their tremendous encouragement and support. I sincerely thank my family; my wife Lucy Kathure Chabari and our children Esther Karimi and Nestor Gitonga for the support they gave me when I was pursuing the course. May I also acknowledge the support given to me by Mr. Celestino Riungu Magana and Mr Nabea Kathare Mpanda. I cannot forget the inputs of Sharon Warneke and Matt Palma. To all those who gave their time as participants, I thank them. To all persons and institutions that made this study possible but have not been singly mentioned. I acknowledge you in a big way, thanks.
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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

D.E.O - District Education Officer
E.S.L - English as a Second Language
G.P.A - Grade Point Average
H.I - Hearing Impairment
I.F.H.O.H - International Federation of Hard of Hearing People
K.C.P.E - Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
K.I.C.D - Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development
K.N.E.C - Kenya National Examinations Council
K.S.L - Kenyan Sign Language
L 2 - Second Language
L1 - First Language
M.O.E - Ministry of Education
S C - Simultaneous Communication
S.L.L - Second Language Learner’s
S.E - Signed English
S.E.E - Signed Exact English
SPSS - Statistical Package for Social Sciences
T.L - Target Language
U.S - United States
The purpose of this study was to investigate the identification and teaching of learners with writing difficulties among class seven learners with hearing impairment at Njia Special School Meru County, Kenya. The study was based on Schumann (1976) theory of second language acquisition. The target population of the study was 75 learners with hearing impairment. 8 English language teachers and 1 Head teacher. A sample size of 8 learners with hearing impairment, 5 English language teachers and 1 Head teacher was used for the study. The researcher used questionnaires, observation schedules and interview schedules to collect data. Descriptive statistics in form of frequency distribution tables were used to analyze quantitative data. The data was analyzed majorly using excel, a computer program that makes number manipulation easy. Qualitative data was presented in narrative form. The results of the data analysis were discussed and presented in tables of frequency distribution and charts. It was established that teachers were not fully aware of the strategies to use for teaching writing, most of the teachers were able to identify learners who needed remedial programs, teachers faced major challenges in teaching writing and learners faced difficulties in writing, teaching of KSL did not fully complement the written form of English language and that remedial programs were not effective. The study recommends that; teachers for learners with hearing impairment should be frequently inducted on strategies for teaching writing, teachers for learners with hearing impairment should be fully exposed to ways of identifying learners with writing difficulties, the school administration should ensure that learners with hearing impairment are given adequate writing practices, learners should be exposed to KSL structures early enough and English language teachers should constantly evaluate the effectiveness of their remedial programs. The study is hoped to benefit curriculum developers, curriculum evaluators, book writers and teachers. It is hoped that the findings of this study may be of great help to the Ministry of Education policy makers in order to improve writing for learners with hearing impairment hence improve their English Language performance and consequently the overall academic performance.
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

The purpose of the study was to investigate the identification and teaching of learners with writing difficulties among class seven learners with hearing impairment at Njia Special School Meru County. This chapter presents background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study, Limitation and Delimitations, assumptions of the study, theoretical and conceptual framework and operational definition of terms.

1.1 Background to the Study

Learning to read and write is critical to a child’s success in school and later life. Cooper and Rosenstein in Quigley and Paul (1984-146) concluded that:

*Deaf children have been found to be markedly retarded in their achievement test scores. Their written language compared to that of the hearing children was found to contain shorter and simpler sentences, to display a somewhat different distribution of the parts of speech, to appear more rigid and more stereotyped, and to exhibit numerous errors or departures from standard eight English.*

Under the trend of globalization, English has become the international language that links the whole world together. For an individual, having English competence is not only the basic requirement for pursuing careers or jobs but also a means of obtaining latest knowledge and expanding horizons. For a nation, the English competence of its people has a great influence to its competitive advantage (Chiu – Ping, 2009)
In the U.S., most learners who are deaf (roughly 80 percent) are placed in a mainstream public environment with hearing peers (Salend, 2001). Their first and second language acquisition and literacy development affect their educational success. Although some progress has been made in improving the literacy achievement of students in American schools during the last twenty years, majority of the students still do not write well enough to meet grade - level demands (Lee, Grigg, and Donahue, 2007). Among those who graduate, many will not be ready for college or a career where reading and writing are required.

In Uganda, English Language is the only official language. At School, the learners who are deaf are instructed through use of Signed English (S.E). Sheilla. (2011) on a study on Teaching of Reading to Deaf Learners in primary schools in Uganda found that learners who are deaf make the same kind of mistakes in writing as those made by learners learning English as a second language.

In Kenya, English language is very important because it is an official language that is commonly used in various formal sectors such as courts of law, parliament, civil services, education, media, business and personal correspondences (Hancock and Angogo, 1982).

The English primary education syllabus for the learners with hearing impairment has the general objective that by the end of the primary course, the learner should be able to communicate fluently, independently and accurately in everyday life. Specifically, the learner should have acquired writing skills to be able to express own ideas
meaningfully and legibly in English, to convey information and to communicate effectively (K.I.C.D. 2004). A learner who does not have an adequate command of English language structures has problems with their National Examination, particularly writing the English Language compositions.

The poor performance of learners who have hearing impairment at K.C.P.E has been of much concern to curriculum developers, implementers and evaluators. For many years, learners with hearing impairment have been performing dismally and often lag behind their colleagues who are physically challenged and those who are visually impaired (M.O.E, 2004). English language has section A and section B of the examination. Section B tests the candidate’s ability to compose a personal and convincing account. They are to write an account that is accurate grammatically and fluent in that it is written well and is interesting and original. Mastery of plot development as well as proficiency in the use of a variety of structures and vocabulary is expected. This has possibly affected the performance in English as in 2013, 42 schools for learners who are deaf sat for KCPE and the mean score for English language was 29.02 (M.O.E, 2013). In comparison with learners who are hearing, Igembe south sub-county alone had an English mean score of 49.29 (M.O.E, 2013).

The introduction of Kenyan Sign language in the education of learners who have hearing impairment may have impacted negatively on the acquisition of English language structures, as many learners with hearing impairment keep writing Kenyan Sign Language sentences in English compositions. The use of Signed English (S.E), Signed Exact English (S.E.E) and Kenyan Sign language may be a source of
confusion to the learners who have hearing impairment. According to the K.C.P.E analysis report, the number of schools that dropped in performance increased from 16 (39%) in 2012 to 20 (47.6%) in 2013 (M.O.E. 2013). The overall mean score in 2013 for all subjects was 158.48. This was far much below the expected average mean score of 250 Compared to the performance of schools for learners who are hearing. Furthermore, English Language is used to test other subjects such as Science and Social Studies.

Table 1.1: Subject mean scores for K.C.P.E results year 2012 - 2013 in
Schools for the Deaf

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>ENG</th>
<th>KSL</th>
<th>MATH</th>
<th>SCI</th>
<th>SSR</th>
<th>M/S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>30.43</td>
<td>50.50</td>
<td>28.90</td>
<td>25.34</td>
<td>19.89</td>
<td>155.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>29.02</td>
<td>55.03</td>
<td>31.28</td>
<td>23.65</td>
<td>19.93</td>
<td>158.45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: M.O.E. Results analysis for K.C.P.E year 2012 and 2013

From the 2013 K.C.P.E results analysis, Science which was the most dropped subject had a mean score of 23.65 and a negative deviation of -1.29 while Social Studies had a mean score of 19.93. Mathematics was done better than English, Science and Social Studies with a mean score of 31.28 probably because some of the questions comprised numbers rather than English statements asking the question thus easier to understand.

Learners who are deaf or have a partial hearing impairment have considerable difficulty succeeding in an educational system that depends primarily on spoken word and written language to transmit knowledge. The learners who are deaf average three to four years below their age appropriate level (Gear, 2006).
Although writing is taught from standard one to standard eight (K.I.C.D, 2004) syllabus, many learners with hearing impairments have left school without any meaningful ability to communicate in written English. Water & Doehring (1990) argue that more than 30% of learners who are deaf leave school functionally illiterate and that at the same time, there are many adults and learners who are deaf but are excellent readers and writers.

When we look beyond English Grammar and vocabulary, we see that the meaning and conceptual structures of the writing of learners who are deaf is often fully comparable to that of hearing learners. Writing with learners who are deaf interactively or allowing them to write on themes that interest them similarly has shown that learners who are deaf are capable of producing coherent prose when they have control of the content and motivating reasons for writing (Albertini, 1993).

The acquisition and use of a second language is essential to the everyday lives of people around the world. The trend for acquisition of second language affects the careers and life styles of people (Cook, 2001). For acquisition and use of any language effectively and efficiently, it is essential to master four basic skills namely listening, speaking reading and writing. What disables people who are deaf is not that they cannot hear, but that they cannot read and write (Enns, 2006).

Writing is not a natural activity, so explicit instructions are required for learning this skill (Aronoff & Ree-Miller, 2007). Much research exists documenting the challenges facing learners with hearing impairment as they try to build English proficiency in
reading and writing. Much of the research done in Kenya looks at the errors they make and suggest some strategies to address them. This study looked at the identification and teaching of learners with writing difficulties among class seven learners with hearing impairment at Njia Special School Meru County, Kenya.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Educational outcomes of learners who are deaf have not been parallel to those of their hearing peers. Research has shown that learners who are deaf or hard of hearing have difficulty with written language and develop writing skills at a slower pace than their hearing peers. Learners who are deaf or hard of hearing score within the low-average range when tested on contextual conventions, contextual language, and story construction. The learners produce shorter and less structurally variable sentences than their hearing peers. The studies that have been carried out on written English of second language (L2) learners in Kenya have shown that learners exhibit errors in their written English.

The results of K.C.P.E conducted by K.N.E.C in Kenya since the year 2010 showed that learners with hearing impairment at Njia Special School performed poorly in English Language. The task of this study was therefore to find out how learners with hearing impairment and who exhibited writing difficulties were identified and taught at Njia Special School in Meru County since many learners who are hearing impaired leave school at class eight without any meaningful expressive writing ability.
1.2.1 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the identification and teaching of learners with writing difficulties among class seven learners with hearing impairment at Njia Special School Meru County, Kenya.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

i) Find out the strategies used in teaching writing to learners with hearing Impairment.

ii) Examine how learners with writing difficulties were identified.

iii) Establish the challenges faced during teaching of written English Language.

iv) Examine whether the teaching of Kenyan Sign Language complements the written form of English language.

v) Examine the interventions made by teachers to make writing suitable to the needs of learners with hearing impairment.

1.4 Research Questions

i) What strategies are used in teaching writing to learners who are hearing impaired at Njia Special School?

ii) How are learners with writing difficulties identified at Njia Special School?

iii) What challenges are faced during teaching and Learning to write English Language at Njia Special School?

iv) How does the teaching of Kenyan Sign Language complement the written form of English language at Njia Special School?
v) What interventions are made by teachers to make writing suitable to the needs of learners' with hearing impairment at Njia Special School?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are expected to be of benefit to curriculum developers, curriculum evaluators, book writers, teachers, the Kenya government and policy makers. It may be beneficial to curriculum developers in that the findings could help them to come up with appropriate teaching strategies and learning activities to guide teachers in teaching writing to learners who have hearing impairment. The study may assist curriculum evaluators to understand better the reasons behind poor writing ability among learners with hearing impairment hence make appropriate recommendations to the government.

The study may be of benefit to the book writers because they may come up with written material that could be used to support the ability to write in schools for learners with hearing impairment. The study may assist the teachers in making appropriate and fruitful remedial activities to improve writing ability among learners with hearing impairment. The study may sensitize the government on challenges faced in the teaching of writing. Finally, the findings may serve as useful feedback to educational policy makers because they may be able to make the right adaptations geared to improve academic performance in schools for learners with hearing impairment. The study would also prompt other researchers to undertake similar studies in other regions of the country.
1.6 Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

1.6.1 Limitation

One limitation was that the study was done in only one sub-county due to financial constrain.

1.6.2 Delimitations

The study was delimited to Njia Special School for learners with hearing impairment and class seven learners in Igembe south sub-county. Only the English teachers teaching class four to eight were used in the study. Special Education units were not sampled for the study because they cater for learners of with different disabilities.

1.7 Assumptions of the Study

The study was based on the following assumptions:

That the teachers were not fully aware of the strategies that they may use to teach writing. Writing remediation by special school teachers was not in practice or was not effective. Learners’ lacked supplementary material to enhance their creative writing hence their writing ability was affected. Learners’ were not adequately involved in meaningful writing experiences.

1.8 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

1.8.1 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of the study was based on Schumann (1976) theory of second language acquisition. Schumann (1976) suggests that a learner’s social and psychological factors are equally as important in acquisition of a second language.
Schumann hypothesizes that the greater number of negative social factors affecting a second language learners (SLL) relationship with the target language (TL), the more difficult it will be for the second language learner to acquire the target language. On the other hand, Schumann points out that if the learner associates with the target language and feels highly motivated to learn the language, the learner will have greater ease in acquiring the language.

Schumann (1978) describes psychological factors that affect an individual’s ability to acquire a second language. One of the factors, “Cultural shock” is where the SLL often complain about the target language and seek solace in situations similar to their own culture. As Schumann notes, it is not uncommon for SLLs to temporarily reject the target language (TL). This clearly depicts how learners with hearing impairment respond to English language learning. They find themselves rejecting its use and prefer to use Kenyan sign language in their communication. Schumann however indicates that if the SLL receives assistance and support during the culture shock phase and is encouraged to continue studying the TL, they will eventually acquire proficiency in the TL. This means that the teachers have a role to support the learner including enriching their environment and remediating their difficulties.

Schumann’s theory is in agreement with studies done by Water & Doehring, (1990) who found out that although more than 30% of deaf students leave school functionally illiterate, at the same time many deaf adults and children are excellent readers and writers. Schumann explains that motivation is psychologically essential in acquiring a second language. The learner must have a desire to learn the second
language for reasons such as furthering a career, gaining employment or college admission. Research by Lambert (1975), found out that motivation played a great role in language acquisition. This is very crucial to the learners' who have hearing impairment because they are so demotivated to learn the English language. The teacher has a big role to motivate them to learn the language through experiences that encourage acquisition of the language. The teachers also need to bear in mind that some of the learners with hearing impairment may have other disabling conditions.

1.8.2 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework indicates that writing performance highly depends on teaching strategies. The teaching strategies include language experience, writing, shared writing, guided writing and writers workshops. Learners who have exhibited difficulties in writing performance need to be identified and appropriate intervention strategies put in place. Such intervention strategies include writing wall stories on posters, re-writing stories, re-telling stories, writing stories, essays, poems and writing letters to parents, teachers or friends.
Figure 1.1: A Conceptual Framework of the identification and teaching of learners with writing difficulties

INDEPENDENT INTERVENING DEPENDENT

Teaching strategies

Adequate writing practices

Constant evaluation

Remediation programs

- Level of H.I
- Teaching materials
- Rich classroom environment
- Motivation
- Assistance and support

Performance in writing
- Adequate vocabulary
- Good spelling
- Fluency in organizing ideas
- Good grammatical structure

Source: Researcher's perception.

The conceptual framework was based on the social systems perspective developed by Bronfenbrenner (1979) who believed that the ecological context or settings in which an individual develops are nested. The researcher believes that support networks are very important because they influence the child. Such include remediation strategies by the educator.
### 1.9 Operational Definition of Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic Performance</strong></td>
<td>The extent to which a student has achieved their educational goal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Deaf</strong></td>
<td>Persons with a hearing loss of 81dB+ and/or chose to be members of a deaf community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hard-of-hearing</strong></td>
<td>All people who have a hearing loss and whose means of communication is by speech.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intervention</strong></td>
<td>Strategy to teach learners who have learning problems by use of Special methods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Literacy</strong></td>
<td>An individual’s ability to read, write and speak in English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Remedial Instruction</strong></td>
<td>A spiral process of assessment – instruction – re-Assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing</strong></td>
<td>The ability to put letters and words into sentences and paragraphs to communicate ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing difficulties</strong></td>
<td>Difficulties expressing thoughts in writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Written language</strong></td>
<td>The representation of language by graphic characters (a sequence of legible and meaningful visual symbols such as letters.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing process</strong></td>
<td>This is the entire procedure used by writers in developing a written document.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This chapter has presented the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives, research questions and significance of the study, limitation and de-limitations, assumptions of the study, theoretical and conceptual framework and operational definition of terms. The following chapter will review literature according to the themes of the study from the objectives of the study.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The purpose of the study was to investigate the identification and teaching of learners with writing difficulties among class seven learners with hearing impairment at Njia Special School Meru County.

This Chapter reviews the literature and is organized according to the themes of the study from the objectives of the study as follows: Strategies used in teaching writing, Identification of learners with writing difficulties, Challenges faced in teaching writing skills, Effects of teaching Kenyan Sign Language in written form on English Language, Intervention strategies for poor writing and gives a summary. The Chapter focuses on literature from various authors as well as other researchers.

2.1 Strategies Used in Teaching Writing

Aronoff & Rees-Miller, (2007) explains that writing is not a natural activity, so explicit instructions are required for teaching the skill. Harrison & Warnke, (2004) discusses some of the strategies that could be used for teaching writing to learners who are deaf:-

2.1.1 Language Experience /Writing

The teacher and students experience some events and then they write about the experiences. They can write a story, draw cartoon strip type story, write the sequence of events or draw a picture and label it. This writing can be polished and added to the
teachers' classroom library for reading. Students can do this individually; work as a
group or as a whole class.

2.1.2 Dialogue Journals

These are conversations between a student and teacher. The teacher does not correct
any grammar or spelling, but models the appropriate written language. This method is
most effective when the teacher and the learner write daily in the journal.

2.1.3 Journal and Logs

Journal and logs can be used in any subjects, but are easiest to use in Social studies
and Science. Records can be kept about observations, predictions, and outcomes.
Students can document their feelings during an activity as well. Journals and logs are
great for recording information usually such as graphs, charts, maps and pictures.

2.1.4 Shared Writing

This is the process where a teacher writes a passage with students while thinking
around about his/her process of deciding about grammar, spelling and punctuation.
The teacher can also solicit ideas from the class about what to include in the writing
and how to write it.

2.1.5 Guided Writing

This is the process where a teacher chooses a topic for the learners to write on.
Together, the teacher and the learners discuss the main points and the learners write
on their own. It could also be a picture story. In guided writing students are more
independent than in shared writing. They can work in small groups, pairs or individually. Students work together to draft, edit and produce a final draft.

2.1.6 Writer's Workshop

This can be the heart of a writing program. Students select topics of interest to write about in the future. They write, revise, edit and publish their work. Students work at their own pace and work on pieces they are interested in.

They usually keep a folder of “writing in progress” pieces. Writer's workshop begins with the teacher giving a mini-lesson on some grammar, spelling or punctuation topic and usually ends with the Author’s chair where a student or two shares their writing with the class and get feedback from peers. Harrison & Warnke (2004) identified some of the writing projects that might hook students to include writing wall stories on posters or manila paper and big books, stories, essays and poems, retelling or rewriting stories, class journal entries, shared experience (field trips, experiments and sporting events), weekly newsletter, books or book reports and letters to parents, teachers or friends.

Review of studies conducted by Conway (1985), and Williams (2004) in America looked at the purpose of writing for learners who are deaf or hard-of-hearing. Conway suggested that writing is a meaningful activity for learners who are deaf and also fulfills individual as well as social-cultural purposes alike to those of hearing children. In other words, writing in itself is a social process that represents a means to communicate a message to someone else and this applies to all learners. An important
common trend reported in the studies is that learners who are deaf or hard-of-hearing can and do write when given authentic opportunities to do so. The studies also suggest that although learners who are deaf or hard-of-hearing struggle with written language, there is commonality in the development of their written language in comparison to their hearing peers.

If development of written language is similar, that may suggest that instructional approaches to teaching writing to children who are hearing may also be appropriate for learners who are deaf or hard-of-hearing (Williams, 2004). This background informs researchers to explore methods of teaching writing to learners who are hearing and how they would be used with learners who are deaf or hard-of-hearing. This argument is highly supported as the only difference with learners with hearing impairment would be the use of Sign Language during instruction.

Writing is not a natural activity, so explicit instructions are required for learning this skill (Aronoff & Rees-Miller, 2007). In the history of pedagogic reform, one of the most successful approaches of teaching writing is the process approach which considers writing as complex cognitive recursive and evolving process. There are six stages of writing process: determine the topic; taking account of readers; editing; proof reading; and revising (Edwin & Grundy, 1996). This approach has drawbacks as it ignores the variety and differentiation of the process for writing, particularly social context and the fact that certain texts are produced for specific purposes (Gao, 2007).
Another approach which is prominent in the history of teaching writing is the genre approach. A genre is a text either spoken or written that serves a particular purpose in a particular context and is composed of a series of conventions. The idea behind this approach is that writers write not only for their own enjoyment, but also in different contexts, for different purposes and in different ways. However, this approach has its own drawbacks. Partridge (2004) says that fusion of textual and socio-cultural knowledge makes the identification of the exact knowledge a difficult task. Another limitation is that of over-focus on the reader while paying less attention to learner expression (Gao, 2007).

The ideal approach which was considered as the most effective and successful in the teaching of writing is the electric approach. The electric or process genre approach combines process theories with genre knowledge. This concept not only draws ideas from genre approach, such as knowledge of context, the purpose of writing and certain text features but retains part of process philosophy such as writing skill development and Learner responses (Badger & White, 2000). In other words, this approach provides the learner with opportunities for developing their individual creativity as well as helping them fully understand features of target genres (Kim & Kim, 2005). Giving the knowledge of form and language at the same time helps the students to understand how a particular form functions in a particular context: in this way, learners' writing proficiency can be enhanced.

Another method of teaching writing to the learners with hearing impairment was interactive writing. This is a program in which the teacher shares and guides the
writing process with a group of learners as they work together to compose and construct a written message. Interactive writing supports learners in making connections among oral language, writing encounter in reading and written language (Fountas, McCarrier, & Pinnel, 2000). Interactive writing is similar to other writing programs in that it stems from topics that are relevant instead of the teacher acting as a scribe for the learners’ thoughts; the learners are active participants in the construction of the text. The learners construct text with and alongside a more experienced and knowledgeable writer, the teacher, who then scaffolds the learners writing as they become more adept (Giddens, 2009).

Interactive writing is a bridge between written language and oral language and because of this, it is a good program for teaching written language to learners who are hearing impaired. A study done by Giddens (2009) in America found out that interactive writing was a useful method of teaching writing to learners who are deaf or hard-of-hearing.”

When we work with learners in interactive writing, we can involve them in an experience that expands their language competences while at the same time focusing their attention on the details of print and how it works” (Founta, McCarrier & Pinnel, 2000). Wqlbers (2008) conducted a study, which looked at the effect of writing instruction that is both balanced and interactive (interactive writing) in regards to lower and higher order writing skills of learners who are deaf. The learners were given pre and post-test assessments to measure potential growth. The study found that the students made significant gains in regards to primary traits, contextual language.
word identification and revision. During interactive writing, the teacher and the learner work together to write a text, or as the literature calls it “sharing the pen.”

2.2 Identification of Learners with Writing Difficulties

The students feel difficulties in writing when they face difficulty in reading. Reading and writing are two complementary skills and develop simultaneously (Mubagna, 2010). This argument is also supported by Rummel (2005) who believes that for a student to write meaningfully, they must have the ability to read. This is a common experience in a Kenyan Classroom for learners with hearing impairment as reading is a problem to many learners hence writing becomes challenging. Taxler (2000) notes that about 50% of 18-year-old learners who are deaf and hard-of-hearing read below the fourth grade level. This could be compared to what happens in Kenya as more than half of learners leaving class eight and who may be almost the age of 18 years read and write below the fourth grade. When they write, they have fewer vocabulary and many sentences that are not well connected. Waters & Doehring (1990), explains that many leave School functionally illiterate which is actually the case.

Good writing demands a fair amount of reading ability although some people are good readers, even good editors but fair writer. Ahmed (2011) conducted a study in Florida to find out the relationship between reading and writing. Participants included 316 boys and girls who were assessed-annually through grades 1 through 3. Measures of reading included pseudo word decoding, sentence reading efficiency measures and passage comprehension. Measures of writing included spelling, a sentence combining task and computational indices of linguistic features of writing prompt. He found out
that high status in reading led to improvement in writing across the years. Reading may contribute to writing in a number of ways. The type and amount of reading material which writers are exposed to may influence their choice of topic, genre, writing style, and vocabulary.

Selected experimental studies that have looked at the influence of selected reading experience upon writing suggest that what students read does indeed influence what they write. For example, Eckhoff (1983) found that what you read may have a negative impact on what you write. She looked at two second grade classes using two different basal series and found that children who used a series that had stilted language and format tended to produce writing that was also stilted in language and format.

Reading and writing skills develop together or are so entangled that they appear inseparable. It is generally agreed however that writing places even greater demands than reading on linguistic and cognitive processing (Moores, 2001; Mayer, 1999).

It is therefore not unexpected that learners who are deaf and hard-of-hearing show delays and difficulties in producing written work. Typical learners who are deaf of age 17 to 18 have been reported to write at levels of skill like those of learners who are hearing of age 8 to 10 (Marschark et al. 2002, Paul, 1998, 2001).
2.3 Challenges Faced in Teaching Writing skills

The act of writing is a cognitive process that involves comprehension of ideas, expressive language and mechanical skills" (Dorn & Soffos, 2001, ). For learners who have the skill, writing comes out so naturally and subconsciously. However, for the learners who do not have the skill, writing becomes so complicated like it so appears for learners with hearing impairment. Writing is not a skill that just develops in the primary school years but it has its beginning in the early life (Giddens, 2009). This means that practices of writing must be initiated for a learner with hearing impairment even before they come to school. This would be the role of parents and other caregivers.

According to Gunning (2008), "Writing develops from pre-speech gestures that learners make and from the language they hear and later use, as well as from developing realization that the spoken word is not the only way to represent ideas in reality".

Arguing from Gunning idea that writing develops from the language learners hear and use, then learners who have no complete access to hearing oral language being spoken would therefore have problems in development of written language. This means that because learners with hearing impairment have differing access to sound, then sound was impaired to some extent thus spoken language would also be affected and development of written language would be affected as well (Giddens, 2009).
Research has shown that learners with hearing impairment have difficulty with written language and do develop writing skills at a slower pace than their hearing peers. Anita, Kreimeyer & Reed (2005) reported that learners who are deaf or hard of hearing score within the low-average range when tested on contextual conventions, contextual language and story construction. Competence in written English is essential for success at school. For the learners who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, the ability to express themselves in written English with competence assures them clear communication with hearing people. However, learning to do so presents challenges to them and even their teachers.

Most learners who are deaf find it easy to express themselves in Kenyan Sign Language than in written English. Throughout their school life, they spend a lot of time struggling with the grammatical intricacies of English. Demands placed on the learners to produce a variety of written work are great. However, despite many years of instruction, many learners remain unable to produce clear, error-free texts.

The overall picture or writing shows that there is some disagreement as to what will be the most appropriate approach towards the teaching of writing. A problem lies in the assumption that one standard approach can be developed which will be appropriate for all students in all settings. In addition to difficulties created because of a wrong pedagogic approach selected by teachers, students face difficulties in writing English language due to a number of factors involved in the act of communication. The English language itself has a lot of irregularities and idiosyncrasies which create a myriad of difficulties in writing especially for second language learners. An
example is English spelling. A word that is incorrectly spelled is not only a deviation from the standard, but adversely affects the intended meaning.

Spelling is a skill of identifying a word in spoken or written mode. Spelling and decoding skills are closely linked; students who suffer from spelling problems need to memorize the spelling of heavily used irregular words, such as "right" "government ", etc. Due to irregularities in English spelling, learners have to memorize each word as a separate entity hence there is no logical connection between sound and symbol (Faroog, UL-Hassan & Wahid, 2012).

To convey the message properly, it is necessary that learners correctly use punctuation marks. Learners usually make mistakes in using commas, full stops, semi colons and colons which affects communication process. The misuse of capital letters is the most common writing problem, which is not derived from L1 interference. Capitalizations problems are part of the punctuation problem which may be the result of inadequate learning or inefficient teaching. Punctuation helps others to understand what you intend to say (Davidson, 2007).

Grammar is the most difficult area for L2 writers. Learners face difficulties in the use of correct sentence structure, paragraph development and in creating coherent form. Grammar skills include run-on sentences, fragments and verbiage, inclusion of necessary information, use of different type of sentences, subject verb agreement and placement of modifiers, tense agreements and parallel construction (Leisak, 1989). Grammar is more than just a set of rules; it is an ever evolving structure of language
(Kleisar, 2005). On the other hand, learning grammar can be so dull as no one likes rules; and the memorization of rules is worst than applying them.

Learners usually know how to build tenses, but when using them in written expression they are confused. The learners face difficulty in combining two complete sentences (Faroog, UL-Hassan & Wahid, 2012). The basis of these problems is the traditional style of teaching grammar on the part of the teacher and lack of practice on the part of the learner. Lack of vocabulary is another cause of difficulty which makes writing boring and ineffective. Vocabulary is divided in two parts: active vocabulary and passive vocabulary. Active vocabulary is learned for production and passive vocabulary is used for recognition. Learners usually face difficulties in the production area which is associated with meaning (specific/ general), form (Pronunciation/ spelling), possible word combinations and structures (Miller, 1984).

Language 1 interference has important implication in the learning of written expression. Language 1 learning is different from L2 learning, as the person already knows about meaning and use of one language. First language helps learners when it has elements in common with L2, but hinders the learning process when both language systems differ (Cook, 2001). Arguing from this point, it would explain how the learning of Kenyan sign Language would affect written English as the structures of the two languages are different. A person who speaks two languages has gone through the acquisition process twice, but Second language learning takes many forms and occurs in many situations other than natural circumstances which cause problems (Cook, 1993).
Another problem which learners of English face is that of a well-knit and well-organized presentation. The information which is well organized is easier to remember and understand. Rhetoric includes the study of cohesion and coherence, macro structure of text, logical arrangement of information and story structure (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). Coherence is an implicit feature of text which describes the logical relationship between the ideas and information embodied in discourse. Coherence is helped by cohesion which is the process of joining one sentence to the next sentence (Bex, 1996). In Kenya, English is an official language and the medium of instruction. Majority of the educators in schools for learners with hearing impairment may not be teaching English in a way that the learners are at ease communicating in English. They may be teaching English in a way that does not fulfill the need for developing communicative competence.

Lack of vocabulary, a poor grasp of grammatical structures, the incorrect use of punctuation marks, incorrect spelling, poor paragraph and sentence structure, and illogical sequence are some of the writing difficulties faced by the learners. These difficulties not only affect learner's academic success, but also hinder their professional progress.

2.4 How Teaching of Kenyan Sign Language complements the Written Form of English Language

While many Kenyans still doubt Kenyan sign language is a complete language, works by Akach (1991), Okombo (1994), Adoyo (1995) show that like other sign language, it is a formal socially agreed on, rule-governed symbol system that is generative in
nature and that it is equivalent with other spoken languages in their communicative
potentials. A study by Lewis (2009) reveals that KSL is used in 32 out of 71
institutions for learners with H1 in Kenya.

Various scholars have a greater need to be taught sign language which is a mother
tongue for persons with H.I. All learners who need a working language should receive
it during the time when humans are primed to learn a language from birth to 3 years
(Mulonda, 2013). Research carried out by Mayberry and Eichen (1991) as quoted in
Drasgow (1998) highlights the benefits of developing a string first language at the
appropriate critical age. Mayberry and Eichen (1991) for example report that the age
of initial language experience predicts future ability to process grammatical
information. As quoted by Mulonda (2013), “when learners who are deaf acquire
American Sign Language during childhood, there are benefits in language
comprehension abilities that persist throughout the individuals life time”. This shows
that early exposure to sign language has enduring linguistic advantages and that
increases in sign language fluency are associated with increase in English language
literacy.

According to Cummins (2006), people who are deaf and whose language exposure
was delayed until the age of six or older show low accuracy in English grammatical
judgment and comprehension compared to individuals who are deaf and hearing and
who had learned English as a second language in school after appropriate exposure to
signed or oral first language in a home during early childhood. The question to ask is
whether in a Kenyan context, the teaching of Kenyan sign language has been helping
learners acquire English grammar skills to enhance development of writing as Adoyo (2002) argues that many schools in Kenya still stick to simultaneous communication (SC) a form of contrived sign system developed to represent the morpheme syntactic structure of spoken languages.

Wilbur (1987) has observed that though the lexicon of sign language forms the basis of the simultaneous communication system, the signs do not retain their original syntactic and semantic property. Adoyo (2002) further explains that although simultaneous communication which most Kenyan deaf educators confuse with Kenyan sign language is popular in schools, studies conducted by Erting (1985), Mammor & Pettito (1979) have revealed that during its use, teachers fail to represent spoken language accurately due to modality difference, i.e. vocal and gestural output. Johnson et al (1989) reporting on the demerits of simultaneous communications argue that it suffers not only from distortion, but also from omission of obligatory words, which do not fit the rhythmic pattern of spoken language. A survey by Adoyo (1995) in Kenya also revealed that many teachers in schools for the deaf had great difficulties in communicating ideas to learners with H.I through simultaneous communication. This study will seek to find out how far the learning of K.S.L in its written form has been complementing writing abilities in English as a second language.

Kimani (2012) in a study on teaching learners who are deaf in a Kenyan classroom revealed that learning KSL and English subjects together would be easier because the words are the same and the two languages can be considered to be complementing each other. This argument by Kimani (2012) suggests that the learning of Kenyan
Sign Language would help learners acquire good levels of writing ability which the researcher does not agree especially bearing in mind that many teachers of learners with H.I have not mastered the K.S.L structures. It is still evident that many of them are struggling to acquire K.S.L fluency.

2.5 Intervention Strategies for Poor Writing

The goal of remedial instruction is to provide low achieving students with more chances to reinforce the basic knowledge in common subjects so that they can meet minimum academic standards. Basically, remedial instruction is a type of clinical teaching. It is a spiral process of assessment- instruction- re-assessment (Tseng, 2008). After the teacher diagnoses learners learning difficulties, a remedial course will be designed in accordance with learners needs. The teacher takes the initiative in offering the instruction; an evaluation will be conducted during and after the implementation of the remedial instruction to examine the actual effectiveness of the course. Remedial instruction is designed to help students who fall behind academically to catch up to a desired level.

2.5.1 Types of Remedial Programs

Remedial programs are usually offered during normal school hours; however, more and more schools offer after-school programs. Programs implemented after school are reported to be more successful as students do not have to miss the normal classroom instruction while attending the remedial course (Allington & Bennett, 2009). In addition, the intensive program can bring students up to speed quickly.
In the United States of America, remedial instruction has maintained a constant preserve at colleges and universities. It is estimated that 98% of 2-year public colleges and 80% of 4-year public institutions offered remedial courses (Boyer, Butner, & Smith, 2007).

Several studies examining the remedial programs demonstrate their positive effects on students' success in college. Zhai & Skirl (2001) investigated the impact of remedial English courses on students' college-level course work performance. The results indicated that the remedial course prepared students effectively for regular English classes and supported students overall academic success as measured by retention and graduation rates.

Aragon (2004) examined the influence of a community college remedial writing course on academic performance. The results showed that the participants had significantly higher cumulative grade point averages and higher English 101 grades than non-participants. Leake & Lesik (2007) used the regression discontinuity design to examine the impact of remedial English programs on first-year success in college. The programs focused on teaching sentence and paragraph formation and the development of the coherent essay. The result demonstrated that English remedial program could increase first-year Grade Point Average (GPA). Students who were assigned to the remedial program obtained higher GPA compared to equivalent students who did not participate in the program. Remediation is based upon sound instructional principles focused upon the need of the learner on the basis of careful diagnosis (Wilson, 1972). Proper remediation calls for skillful teaching of the learners.
who are in need. Remediation falls into the following three categories according to
(Wilson, 1972).

2.5.1.1 On-the-Spot Remediation
This type of remediation is conducted immediately. The teacher is expected to
directly observe the learner while teaching, pinpoint the errors the learners could be
making and correct them immediately through instruction. On-the-spot remediation
in written work requires the teacher to correct the learners' writing difficulties during
the learning process.

2.5.1.2 Classroom Remediation
This requires the child to be observed in class and helped individually. The teacher is
expected to adjust the instruction to be learner based on the diagnosis and the
learner's established problem. The instruction is more formal and more-less directed
by the teacher and may be with the help of special education expert.

2.5.1.3 Clinical Remediation
It involves either working with the learner outside the classroom environment for a
period of time or working with the learner in the classroom permitting the teacher to
observe clinical techniques. Clinical remediation assumes small group or
individualized instruction and mostly conducted by special education specialists. This
study will critically focus on any available remedial programs because the continued
failure in English in particular in national examinations may be an indicator that either
the remedial programs bear no fruit or they are not employed at all.
2.6 Summary

The ability to write is necessary for learners with hearing impairment because it gives them a means to communicate and especially a language to help them do better in academic performance. The learners with hearing impairment have been reported to have written productions that are not comparable to hearing children of their age. They have problems with aspects of morphology and grammatical structures.

In America, studies done by Giddens, (2009), Wolbers, (2008) found out that interactive writing helped students to make significant gains in their writing. This is unlike Kenya where nothing much has been documented on how learners with hearing impairment and exhibiting writing difficulties have been identified and taught or how their written form of English Language could be improved.

In Taiwan, the importance of English has received great attention from the government of Taiwan and a variety of projects have been supported to enhance English abilities. In fact, remedial instructions have been put in place to help low achieving students English performance. In Kenya, no much study has been conducted for learners with hearing impairment to demonstrate how writing difficulties in English Language were remediated.

The studies that have been carried out in Kenya by Njoroge (1987): Maina (1991): Nyamasyo (1992): Njoroge (1996); Akoth; (2012) have shown that Learners with hearing impairment exhibit errors in their written English. The studies have however
not focused on how learners with hearing impairment have been identified and taught to overcome the difficulties which formed the basis of this study.

This Chapter reviewed the literature according to the themes of the study from the objectives of the study. The following Chapter will cover the research design, variables, research methodology, location of the study, target population, sample size and sampling technique, research instruments, pilot study, validity, reliability, data collection techniques, data analysis, logistical and ethical considerations.
CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The purpose of the study was to investigate the identification and teaching of learners with writing difficulties among class seven learners with hearing impairment at Njia Special School Meru County, Kenya.

In this chapter, the researcher covered the research design, variables, research methodology, location of the study, target population, sample size and sampling technique, research instruments, pilot study, validity, reliability, data collection techniques, data analysis, logical and ethical consideration.

3.1 Research Design

The study adopted a case study design. A case study seeks to describe a unit in detail, in context and holistically (Orodho, 2004). A case study becomes particularly useful when one can identify a case rich in information - rich in the sense that a great deal can be learned from a few examples of the phenomena under study. The aim was to examine a case in detail because it would provide a comprehensive analysis of the identification and teaching of learners with hearing impairment who exhibited writing difficulties thereby providing information to fill in the gaps identified in chapter two of this study.
3.1.1 Variables

3.1.1.1 Independent Variable

The independent variable of the study was identification and teaching.

3.1.1.2 Dependent Variable

The dependent variable of the study was performance in writing. Schirmer (1994) indicates that educational performance of learners who are deaf have not been parallel to those of their hearing peers therefore: good writing skills may lead to good English Language performance.

3.2 Location of Study

The study was carried out in Igembe South sub-county of Meru County. Igembe South District is found on the slopes of Nyambene hills, an area that is well known for the growth of Miraa. The neighboring districts are Igembe North, Tigania East and Tigania West. The school used for the study, Njia Special School is located in Kangeta Education Zone in Mukululu location and Nturuba Sub-location.

The researcher sampled Njia Special School because looking at the Ministry of Education results analysis for KCPE for the last three years, out of two special schools for learners with hearing impairment in Meru County (Njia and Kaaga), Njia was not doing as good as Kaaga school for the Deaf in English language. In 2010, Njia had an English mean score of (27.0), (25.25) 2012, (32.2) 2013 while Kaaga had 30.79, 27.07 and 33.1. Thus, Njia was believed to be rich in the required data for the study (writing difficulties).
Table 3.1: Njia and Kaaga English performance in K.C.P.E Years 2010-2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KAAGA</td>
<td>30.79</td>
<td>27.07</td>
<td>33.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NJIA</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>25.25</td>
<td>32.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: M.O.E Schools for the Deaf results analysis 2010 – 2013

Njia Special School did not present any candidates for examination in the year 2011.

3.3 Target Population

The study targeted 75 learners with hearing impairment, 8 English teachers and 1 head teacher in Njia Special School. The total target population was 84.

3.4 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

3.4.1 Sample Size

The sample size comprised 14 respondents. This was an appropriate sample to represent the population under study. Gay (1992) suggests that at least 10% of the population is a good representation. The 14 respondents included 8 class seven learners (2 girls, the only in the class, 6 boys), 5 English language teachers (2 men, 3 ladies) and 1 Head teacher. The total represents 17% of the target population.

Table 3.3: Sample Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Njia Special school</th>
<th>Target Population</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hearing impaired learners</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English language teachers</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4.2 Sampling Technique

The study used purposive sampling technique. Njia Special School was purposively sampled because looking at the trend of performance in the National Examination, the
school had been doing better than Kaaga School for the Deaf which was the only other in the same County in the overall mean score for two years in the period that they presented candidates for examination since the year 2010.

Table 3.2: Njia and Kaaga overall mean scores in K.C.P.E Years 2010-2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KAAGA</td>
<td>142.75</td>
<td>131.78</td>
<td>168.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NJIA</td>
<td>161.25</td>
<td>142.75</td>
<td>160.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: M.O.E Schools for the Deaf results analysis 2010-2013

Since the study was intended to investigate the influence of writing difficulties on English Language performance, the researcher picked one school out of the only two special schools for the learners with hearing impairment in the Meru County. As Maxwell (1998) points out, purposive sampling is where an investigator hand picks the case on the basis of interest. Therefore selecting Njia Special School was appropriate. The choice of the class to use in the study was also done with a purpose. Since learners begin to write continuously in class four, the researcher used class seven that had only one year to go before joining class eight. Class eight is the final level in primary education. For the past three years, (Class 4 - class 7) learners wrote meaningful information. This was why the teachers from class 4 - 8 were picked for the study. The researcher chose to do the research in this particular district because; this was where he worked so the information gathered would be of use to him as an educator for the learners with hearing impairment in the same district.
3.5 Research Instruments

The research instruments that were used included Questionnaires, Observation schedules and interview schedules.

3.5.1 Questionnaires

Questionnaires with 12 items were used to collect data from the teachers. The technique was preferred because the questions were standardized: therefore, each teacher got the exact same question.

3.5.2 Observation Schedules

In this study observation schedules were used to provide a checklist on the type of work that learners engaged in which helped improve their writing ability. Learners were engaged in some writing exercises in order to give the researcher an overview of their level of writing ability. This elicited qualitative data. These schedules guided the researcher to observe how possible lack of remedial initiatives or inappropriate teaching approaches would have been a contributing factor as to why learners left school without any meaning writing ability.

3.5.3 Interviews Schedules

This instrument was used to gather information through verbal interaction between the researcher and the head teacher. The advantages of this tool was that the researcher was able to probe for further clarification and therefore was able to obtain more details and in depth information on the problem. The researcher conducted the interview on face to face while probing for clarifications.
3.6 Pilot Study

The main aim of pilot study was to ascertain the reliability of the research instruments. Questionnaires, Interview schedules and Observation schedules were used. This enabled the researcher to identify the major problems and deficiencies in instruments for improvement. The pilot study was conducted at Kaaga School for the deaf in Meru County. The sample for the study included 3 English language teachers, the Head teacher and 3 learners in class 7. The pilot sample did not take part in the actual study.

3.6.1 Validity

Validity is based on determining whether the findings are accurate from the standpoint of the researcher and the participants (Creswell, 2009). The researcher sought opinions from experts who included supervisors from the department of Special Needs Education in the area being investigated, after triangulating different data sources of information and by examining evidence from the sources and using it to build a coherent justification for the themes.

3.6.2 Reliability

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), reliability is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results of data after repeated trials. A pilot study was conducted in one Special School for learners with hearing impairment purposively selected in the same county. Reliability of the instruments was determined by test-retest method on the pilot sample. It involved administering the
instruments to the pilot subjects twice with a break of two weeks maintaining the same initial conditions.

Comparison of answers obtained from both occasions was done by calculating the correlation coefficient using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient formula. A correlation coefficient of at least 0.75 was considered sufficient as recommended by (Gay, 1992). A correlation coefficient of 0.81 was obtained.

3.7 Data Collection Techniques

The researcher visited the selected school and briefed the head teacher on the purpose of the study. The teachers were briefed on the purpose of the study, the need to give candid responses and prepare the learners. The researcher collected data by himself, first gave questionnaires to teachers, administered the observation schedule to class seven learners and interviewed the head teacher. The respondents were given adequate explanation before responding to items. The researcher took two weeks to collect the data. To ensure that data collected was valid and reliable, the researcher established rapport with the respondents assuring them that the information they gave would be treated with confidentiality.

3.8 Data Analysis

The data in this study was qualitative. After data collection, the researcher examined all questionnaires, interview schedules and observation schedules systematically. The data was coded and tabulated according to the objectives/themes. The data was then analyzed using percentages and frequencies facilitated by excel a computer program.
that makes number manipulation easy. The qualitative data generated was organized into themes and categories pertinent to the study. The data was then presented in narrative form in an effort to discuss the findings. From this, the researcher closely evaluated the usefulness of the information in answering the research questions. Data was presented in form of frequency distribution tables, and pie charts from which conclusions were made based on the variables of the study.

3.9 Logistical and Ethical Consideration

An introductory letter was obtained from Dean School of post graduate Kenyatta University and then a permit from National council for Science and research was obtained. The researcher also sought for permission from the County commissioner Meru, County Director of Education Meru and District Education Officer Igembe South District in Meru County to carry out research in the sampled school. The researcher then visits the sampled school to make arrangements on when to administer the questionnaires. The researcher discussed the protocol with the head teacher and the English teachers of class 4 - 8. This was to grant access to learners of class 7 and support in mobilizing them. The researcher delivered the questionnaires to the respondents in the school during working hours. The researcher explained fully the respondents the purpose of the study and assured them confidentiality and privacy of the information given. The questionnaires were collected after a few days as agreed upon by the researcher and the respondents. The researcher ensured anonymity of the respondents since some issues touching the school were discussed.
This Chapter covered the research design, variables, research methodology, location of the study, target population, sample size and sampling technique, research instruments, pilot study, validity, reliability, data collection technique, data analysis, logistical and ethical consideration. The following Chapter will present the findings, interpretations and discussion according to the research questions.
CHAPTER FOUR
FINDINGS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of the study was to investigate the identification and teaching of learners with writing difficulties among class seven learners with hearing impairment at Njia Special School Meru County, Kenya.

This chapter presents the findings, interpretations and discussion according to the research questions. The chapter has demographic data of respondents and the findings on the influence of writing difficulties on English language performance among class seven learners with hearing impairment. The following objectives guided the study:

1. To find out the strategies used in teaching writing to learners with hearing impairment in Njia Special School.
2. To determine how learners with hearing impairment were identified in Njia Special School.
3. To establish the challenges faced during teaching how to write English Language in Njia Special School.
4. To examine whether teaching of Kenyan Sign Language complemented the written form of English language in Njia Special School.
5. To examine the interventions made by teachers to make writing suitable to the needs of learners with hearing impairment in Njia Special School?

The sample of the study included two girls who were the only ones in class seven, six boys, five English teachers and one head teacher. Analysis of the data collected for
the study is presented here. The information analyzed was obtained by administering questionnaires to English teachers, interview was held with the head teacher and supplementary information was obtained through observation in class seven. Findings are presented in tables and pie-charts which show the number and percentages of the respondents. The statistical data in the tables and pie-charts are supplemented with some explanation.

4.2 Demographic information

4.2.1 Demographic information of the respondents

Demographic data is the general information of the respondents which is presented and analyzed in order to show their distribution in the study. The demographic characteristics of the respondents captured includes: - educational level, area of specialization, duration of stay in the school and proficiency in the use of sign language. The information was important to the study because it would help the reader to understand some issues that may be important in the analysis. Responses were obtained from the head teacher, teachers and class seven learners with hearing impairment.

4.2.2 Respondents Duration of Stay in the School

The study sought to establish the respondents duration of stay in the sampled school. The findings are presented in Table 4.1
Table 4.1 Respondent’s duration of stay in the school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>1-3 Yrs</th>
<th>4-6 Yrs</th>
<th>7-9Yrs</th>
<th>Over 10Yrs</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33.33</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33.33</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class seven learners</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14.29</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14.29</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the results in Table 4.1, the head teacher and 2 (25%) of the learners had stayed in the school for over 10 years, 1 (17%) of the teachers and 6 (75%) of the learners had stayed in the school between 7-9 years. 2 (33%) of the teachers had stayed in the school between 4-6 years and 2 (33%) 1-3 years respectively. This shows that majority of the respondents had stayed in the school for more than 5 years. A period of over 5 years suggests that they were in the school since it started enrolling students for KC.P.E in the year 2010 and could be in a position to explain how writing difficulties had affected English Language performance over the years.

4.2.3 Teachers Professional Qualification

The study sought professional qualification of the teachers. The findings are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Professional qualification of teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>PI</th>
<th>Diploma</th>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Masters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.2 shows 3 (60%) of the teachers had a university degree and 2 (40%) had a diploma. This implied that they had good understanding of education for learners with hearing impairment and their understanding on the influence of writing difficulties on English language performance was expected to be high.

4.2.4 Teachers Area of Specialization

The study sought to find out the areas in which teachers were specialized in. The findings are presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Teacher’s area of specialization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Education for the hearing impaired</th>
<th>Inclusive education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>No 2 40%</td>
<td>No 3 60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3 shows that 3 (60%) of the teachers had specialized in inclusive education and 2 (40%) had specialized in education for learners with hearing impairment. This implied that most of the teachers may not have been fluent in the use of sign language which is required for delivery of content thus the inability to teach the English structures as expected for mastery by the learners hence impact negatively on the learners written productions.

4.2.5 Teachers Fluency in Use of Sign Language

The study sought how teachers gauge themselves in the use of sign language during teaching. The findings are presented in Table 4.4.
Table 4.4: Teacher's fluency in use of sign language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the results in Table 4.4, 3 (60%) of the respondents gauged themselves as being good in the use of sign language during teaching while 2 (40%) gauged themselves as being fair. The findings implied that the teachers could effectively communicate with a learner which was a basic requirement in teaching writing to learners with hearing impairment.

4.3 Strategies Used in Teaching Writing

The study sought to find out the strategies teachers were using to teach writing to the learners. The findings are presented in Table 4.5

Table 4.5: Strategies used in teaching writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Percentages %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching new words &amp; using</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>them in sentences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuous writing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copying sentences</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the results in Table 4.5, all the respondents only knew a few strategies to teach writing to learners with hearing impairment. Teaching new words and using them in sentences and continuous writing both help in writing skills development and learners responses as explained by Badger and White, (2000). This however shows that the respondents have no broad knowledge of many other strategies that they could use to teach writing English Language. Such strategies have been outlined by Harrison &
Warnke, (2004). They include; Language experience/writing, Dialogue journals, Journal and logs, Shared writing, Guided writing and writers workshop. In fact, Harrison & Warnke (2004) even identified some of the writing projects that might hook students. They include; writing wall stories on posters or manila papers and big books, stories, essays and poems, retelling or rewriting stories, class journal entries and shared experience. The findings are not in line with the studies conducted by Conway (1985) and Williams (2004) in America who looked at the purpose of writing for learners who are deaf or hard-of-hearing. An important common trend reported in the studies is that learners who are deaf or hard-of-hearing can and do write when given authentic opportunities to do so. Williams (2004) also suggested that approaches to teaching writing to children who are hearing may be also appropriate for learners who are deaf or hard-of-hearing. The teachers don’t appear to have explored methods of teaching writing to learners who are hearing. The most likely reason as to why the respondents had limited strategies would be because nearly three quarters of the respondents had no special training on education for learners with hearing impairment. Furthermore, the number of composition written monthly was sought through observation using the observation schedule. The findings are presented in Table 4.6

Table 4.6: Number of compositions written monthly

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From the findings in Table 4.6, observation on the number of compositions written by learners monthly indicated that they were below average. It is expected that learners would write at least one composition in a week. The rate of writing was not adequate enough for language experience. They need to write more often in order to get used to correct sentence structures and in creating coherent form. As Faroog, Ul- Hassan and Wahid, (2012) explains, learners face difficulty in combining two complete sentences because of the traditional style of teaching grammar on the part of the teacher and lack of practice on part of the learner.

4.4 Identifications of Learners with Writing Difficulties

The study sought to find out how learners with writing difficulties were identified at Njia special school Meru County Kenya. The findings are presented in Table 4.8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>No of respondents</th>
<th>Percentages %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unable to spell words well</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20.00 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of fluency in writing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20.00 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inability to read</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>60.00 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100.00 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the findings in Table 4.7, 3 (60%) of the respondent identified learners with writing difficulty by their inability to read. 1 (20%) of the respondents identified learners with writing difficulties by inability to spell words and 1 (20%) of the respondents identified learners with writing difficulties by their lack of fluency in writing. The findings concur with what was found by Ahmed, (2011). He found that
good writing demands a fair amount of reading ability and that there was a relationship between reading and writing. Spelling was one of the measures Ahmed, (2011) used to check the linguistic features of writing prompts. Mubagna (2010) is in support of Ahmed, (2011) as he argues that reading and writing are two complementary skills and develop simultaneously.

Further, the learners ability to compose, ability to write a dictated item, ability to correctly spell words and their knowledge of vocabulary to the level of class seven was sought through observation using the observation schedule.
4.4.1 Ability to Compose

The learners were given the picture story below and were asked to write the story.

This was meant to find out how learners would communicate in written English in an effort to identify the difficulties they encountered. The findings of what each of the eight (8) learners wrote are represented in Dummy 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 and Appendix II A, B, C, D, E, F, G and H.
4.4.2 Ability to Write a Dictated Item

The researcher dictated the item below for the learners to write.

I go to Njia special school in Maua. It has permanent buildings and built on a small piece of land. There are sixteen classrooms in the school. There are also two offices, two stores and one school hall. At the neighbouring school, there is a playground. The head teacher is Mr. Nabea and the deputy head teacher is Mrs. Njeru. There are nineteen teachers, eleven are ladies and eight are Men. The name of my class teacher is Mr. Samuel Kaiyongi.

The findings of what each learner produced are represented in dummy 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and Appendix III A, B, C, D, E, F, G, and H.

4.4.3 Knowledge of Vocabulary to the Level of Class 7 and Ability to Spell Words

The researcher tested the knowledge of vocabulary by using a list of words selected from standard four to standard seven of follows;

1. High
2. Arrest
3. Pretend
4. Tractor
5. Neighbour
6. Advice
7. Robber
8. Nephew
9. Mountain
10. Certificate
11. Queue
12. Cough
13. Inject
14. Gloves
15. Accident
16. Irrigation
17. Referee
18. Bribery
19. Audience
20. Library
The findings of what each of the learner wrote are represented in dummy 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 and Appendix IV A, B, C, D, E, F, G and H.

The findings are presented in Table 4.8.

**Table 4.8: Ability to compose, writing a dictated item, correctly spell words and knowledge of vocabulary to the level of class seven**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Respondents no</th>
<th>Percentages %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ability to compose</td>
<td>2 out of 8</td>
<td>25.00 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to write a dictated item</td>
<td>2 out of 8</td>
<td>25.00 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to correctly spell words</td>
<td>3 out of 8</td>
<td>37.50 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of vocabulary to the level of class 7</td>
<td>2 out of 8</td>
<td>25.00 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the findings in Table 4.8, a quarter of the respondents could compose a meaningful written item, write a dictated item correctly, had knowledge of vocabulary to the level of class seven and nearly half of the respondents had the ability to correctly spell words. This finding is in agreement with Marschark et al, (2002) & Paul ,(1998, 2001) who argue that typical learners who are deaf of age 17 to 18 have been reported to write at levels of skill like those of learners who are hearing of age 8 to 10. In a Kenyan situation, this would be equivalent to learners with hearing impairment in class eight being able to write at the level of class three or four of learners who are hearing.
4.5 Challenges Faced During Teaching and Learning to Write

The study sought to establish the challenges faced by teachers when teaching writing and those faced by learners when learning to write. The findings are presented in Table 4.9 and Table 4.10 respectively.

Table 4.9: Challenges faced by teachers when teaching writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>No of respondents</th>
<th>Percentages %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inability to communicate effectively</td>
<td>1 out of 5</td>
<td>20.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time constrain</td>
<td>2 out of 5</td>
<td>40.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers lack experience</td>
<td>3 out of 5</td>
<td>60.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learners negative attitude</td>
<td>1 out of 5</td>
<td>20.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the finding in Table 4.19, 3 (60%) of the respondents did not have adequate experience in teaching writing to learners with hearing impairment. This probably would be because many of them had not specialized in education for learners with hearing impairment (66.67%). 2 (40%) of the respondents did believe that the time allocated for teaching writing was not adequate while 1 (20%) of the respondents were not able to effectively communicate with learners maybe because they were not able to sign fluently. Another 1 (20%) of the respondents strongly believed that learners had a negative attitude towards the subject.

This finding differed with Faroog, UL- Hassan & Wahid (2012) who argue that learners would face difficulties because of a wrong pedagogic approach to writing by teachers and that a problem lies in the assumption that one standard approach can be
developed which will be appropriate for all students in all settings. With 3 (60%) of the teachers lacking experience to teach learners with hearing impairment, it is a clear indication that pedagogy was not the problem.

Table 4.10: Challenges faced by learners when learning to write

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>No of respondents</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Misuse of capital letters</td>
<td>2 out of 8</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>3 out of 8</td>
<td>37.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluency in organizing ideas</td>
<td>3 out of 8</td>
<td>37.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of vocabulary</td>
<td>3 out of 8</td>
<td>37.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation difficulties</td>
<td>4 out of 8</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the findings in Table 4.10, half of the respondents had difficulties in punctuation, 3 (37.50%) had difficulty in spelling, 3 (37.50%) were unable to organize ideas and 3 (37.50%) lacked adequate vocabulary. 2 (25%) of the respondents were unable to use capital letters properly. These findings concur with Davidson (2007) who found out that learners usually make mistakes in commas, full stops, semi-colons and misuse of capital letters and Leisak (1989) who found out that grammar was the most difficult area in L2 writers. This occurs when teachers select a wrong pedagogic approach towards the teaching of writing. Indeed the respondents failed to demonstrate fluency in organizing ideas, lacked proper vocabularies, had difficulty in punctuation, spelling and misused capital letters.

The teachers were asked to indicate the percentage of learners in their classes who would convey information through writing. The findings are presented in Table 4.11.
Table 4.11: Percentage of Learners who can convey information through writing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classes</th>
<th>% of learners who can convey information through writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0 – 10 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>25 – 50 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>10 – 25 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>10 – 25 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>25 – 50 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the findings in Table 4.11, only about 10 – 25 % of learners in classes 6 and 7 would convey information through writing while 25 – 50 % of the learners in class 5 and 8 would convey information through writing. Only about 0 – 10 % of learners in class 4 would convey information through writing possibly because they had just joined the class and had not got used to writing fluently. This implied that in all classes, nearly half of the learners could not convey information through writing. These findings concur with Waters & Doehring (1990) who argues that more than 30% of learners who are deaf leave school functionally illiterate.

Further the percentage of learners leaving class eight with writing difficulties was sought through an interview schedule with the head teacher. It was found out that over 50% and above of the learners left class eight with writing difficulties.
4.6 Whether teaching of Kenyan Sign Language complements the written Form of English language

The study sought to establish how the teaching of Kenyan sign language complemented the written form of English language. The findings are presented in Table 4.12

Table 4.12: Whether teaching of KSL complements the written form of English language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>No of respondents</th>
<th>Percentages %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learners write KSL structures</td>
<td>4 out of 8</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>when writing English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omit articles</td>
<td>3 out of 8</td>
<td>37.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forget punctuation marks</td>
<td>4 out of 8</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use capital letters</td>
<td>2 out of 8</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the findings in Table 4.12, 4 (50%) of the learners use KSL structures when writing English and also forget punctuation marks. 3 (37.50 %) of the learners omit articles when writing English and 2 (25%) of the learners use capital letters to write English. Further the language used to answer oral English questions was sought through observation in class using the observation schedule. The picture in figure 4.1 was used to ask oral questions.
Figure 4.1: A picture story
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Why are the visitors meeting the father of the girl?</td>
<td>MAYBE MARRY WANT//</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In picture 2, where are the two men going?</td>
<td>MEN TWO COW BRING/GIRL MARRY//</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In picture 3, why is the man pulling the girls</td>
<td>'GIRL MARRY WANT NOTHING/STUBBORN//</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In picture 5, why is the man arrested?</td>
<td>'GIRL SMALL MARRY/MOTHER CHIEF ASK//</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The findings suggest that the teaching of Kenyan sign language does not fully complement the written form of English language because all the answers given were in the KSL structure. This deviates from the findings of Mulonda (2013) that “when learners acquire sign language during childhood, there are benefits in language comprehension abilities. The findings also differ from the findings of Kimani (2012) who on a study on teaching learners with hearing impairment in a Kenyan classroom argued that learning KSL and English subjects together would be easier because the words are the same and the two languages can be considered to be complementing each other. This deviation would be caused by lack of early exposure to Kenyan sign language or one teacher teaching both Kenyan sign language and English in pre-Primary.
4.7 Intervention Made by Teachers to Make Writing Suitable

The study sought to find out the interventions made by teachers to make writing suitable to the needs of learners with hearing impairment. The respondents were asked whether they had any remediation strategies for writing difficulties. The findings are presented in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13: Whether there are any remediation strategies for writing difficulties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>No of respondents</th>
<th>Percentages %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>00.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the findings in Table 4.13, all the teachers teaching class four to eight did have remediation strategies for their classes.

Further, the time when remediation was done was sought through a questionnaire. The findings are presented in Figure 4.2

Figure 4.2: When remediation is done
From the findings in Figure 4.2, 80% of the respondents did remedial work during the learners’ free time and 20% of the respondent did remedial writing during the lesson. The findings concur with Allington & Bennett (2009) who argues that more and more schools offer afterschool remedial programs. Allington & Bennett (2009) explain that such remedial programs have been reported to be more successful as students do not have to miss the normal classroom instruction while attending the remedial course.

The study further sought to find out some of the remediation strategies for poor writing used by the teachers. The findings are presented in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14: Remediation strategies used by teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>No. of Responses</th>
<th>Percentages %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual instruction</td>
<td>4 out of 5</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guided practice</td>
<td>3 out of 5</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-writing items</td>
<td>3 out of 5</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group work</td>
<td>2 out of 5</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the findings in Table 4.14, 60% of the teachers do use appropriate remedial instruction. Several studies examining the remedial programs demonstrated their positive effects on student’s success. Zhai and Skirl (2001) investigated the impact of remedial English courses on students’ college-level course work performance. The results indicated that remedial course prepared students effectively for regular English classes and supported students overall academic success as measured by retention and graduation rates.
Most likely the teachers have never thought why the remedial programs were not working. They may not be working in the school most likely because as Tseng (2008) explains, a remedial instruction is a spiral process of assessment—instruction re-assessment. There is likelihood that teachers do not evaluate the effectiveness of their remedial programs.

This chapter has presented the findings, interpretations and discussion according to the research questions. The following chapter will present a summary and implications of the main research findings.
CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The study investigated the identification and teaching of learners with writing difficulties among class seven learners with hearing impairment at Njia Special School Meru County, Kenya. The chapter presents a summary and the implications of main research findings, conclusions drawn from the analyzed data and recommendations as duly informed by the findings of this research. The chapter also makes suggestions for further research aimed at making writing suitable for learners with hearing impairment.

5.2 Summary

The study objectives were to:

1. Find out the strategies used in teaching writing to learners with hearing impairments in Njia Special School.
2. Find out how learners with writing difficulties were identified in Njia Special School.
3. Establish the challenges faced during teaching and learning to write in Njia Special School.
4. Establish whether teaching of Kenyan sign language complements the written form of English language in Njia Special School.
5. Find out the interventions made by teachers to make writing suitable to the needs of learners with hearing impairments in Njia Special School.

The following were the main findings of the study:
5.2.1 Strategies Used in Teaching Writing

The study found out that teachers were so limited in the strategies they used. Majority of teachers concentrated on teaching new words and using them in sentences and continuous writing. Observation done on the number of compositions written by learners per month revealed that they were not adequate as in most of the classes; they wrote an average of two compositions when the expectation is that learners should write at least one composition per week. This rate of writing was not adequate for language experience. This indicated that teachers needed to be introduced to strategies or projects that could hook the learners' interest in order to improve their writing.

5.2.2 Identification of Learners with Writing Difficult

The study found out that teachers identified learners with writing difficulties majorly by their inability to read. Other ways that were used to identify them was by their inability to compose written work through continuous prose and inability to spell words. This showed that teachers were able to identify learners who needed remediation and therefore stood a chance to help learners to improve their writing to such a level that they could compose a meaningful written item.

5.2.3 Challenges Faced in Teaching Writing Skills

The study established that most of the teachers lacked experience in teaching learners with hearing impairment in that they had not trained in education for learners with hearing impairment and again that they had been posted to the school from regular mainstream schools. This revealed that teachers needed refresher courses to strengthen their fluency in sign language, get educated on how to manage time in
classes for learners with hearing impairment and how to deal with learners’ negative attitude to the subject. The study also established that learners faced difficulties in punctuation as many did not use the punctuation marks, fluency in organizing ideas, misuse of capital letters, spelling and lacked adequate vocabulary to enhance writing.

5.2.4 Whether Teaching of Kenyan Sign Language Complements the Written Form of English Language

The study found out that teaching of Kenyan sign language did not fully complement the written form of English language. This is contrary to the expectation that a first language acquisition would enable the learner to acquire second language comprehension abilities. This showed most likely that learners were not exposed early enough to Kenyan sign language structures thus making the learning of KSL and English languages together not easy.

5.2.5 Intervention Strategies for Poor Writing

The study found out that teachers had remedial programs mainly done during learner’s free time. The teachers also did have good remediation strategies for writing difficulties such as guided practice, re-writing of items and individual instruction. This revealed that marked improvement was expected in learners' writing which was not the case.

5.3 Conclusions

In view of the findings of the study, five main conclusions are as follows:-
5.3.1 Strategies Used in Teaching Writing

Teachers did not have good knowledge of strategies and projects that could be used to improve writing among learners with hearing impairment. Instead they used teaching of new words and using them in sentences, copying sentences and continuous writing that was not done frequently. This could not bring learners up to the desired level of writing.

5.3.2 Identification of Learners with Writing Difficulties

It was evident that teachers were able to identify learners who needed remedial programs, thus stood a good chance to individualize the remedial practice to the need of each learner. This was observed as teachers could single out those who were unable to spell words well, those who lacked fluency in their writing and those who were unable to read.

5.3.3 Challenges Faced in Teaching Writing Skills

It was evident that teachers faced a major challenge in teaching writing because they lacked experience in teaching writing to learners with hearing impairment and that learners also faced difficulties in vocabulary as many could not cope with vocabulary to the level of class seven, punctuation, spelling, fluency in organizing ideas and misuse of capital letters.
5.3.4 Whether Teaching of Kenyan Sign Language Complemented the Written Form on English Language

Based on the findings that learners write KSL structures during English, omit articles, forget punctuation marks and use capital letters during writing English it was logical to conclude that the teaching of Kenyan Sign Language did not fully complement the written form of English language. This suggested lack of exposure to a first language (K.S.L) early.

5.3.5 Intervention Strategies for Poor Writing

Based on the findings that teachers had remedial programs for poor writing being done during learners' free time and that learners continued to have difficulties in expressing ideas through writing, it is logical to conclude that remedial program were not effective most likely because teachers did not evaluate the effectiveness of such remedial programs.

5.4 Recommendations

The following recommendations were made in light of the response from the respondents and in view of the research findings:-

i) It is recommended that teachers for learners with hearing impairment should be frequently inducted on strategies for teaching writing and projects that could be used to improve writing.

ii) It is recommended that teachers for learners with hearing impairment be fully exposed to ways of identifying learners with writing difficulties.
iii) The researcher recommends that the school administration should ensure that learners get adequate writing practices.

iv) The learners should be exposed to KSL structures early enough and that English language teachers should not teach KSL in the same class.

v) English language teachers should constantly evaluate the effectiveness of their remedial programs for poor writing.

5.4.1 Recommendations for Further Research

The researcher suggests further research in the following areas:-

i) A similar research should be carried out in other counties of our country in order to come up with findings on identification and teaching of learners with writing difficulties in the whole country.

ii) A study can also be done to investigate the impact of a remedial program on English language performance.

iii) A study can also be done to investigate the role played by K.S.L in acquisition of English as a second language.
REFERENCES


Wolbers, K. A. (2008). *Using balanced and interactive writing instruction to improve higher order and lower order writing skills to Deaf students*. Journal of Deaf studies and Deaf Education.

APPENDIX I (A)

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE TEACHERS

The aim of this questionnaire was to investigate the identification and teaching of learners with writing difficulties.

Please write your responses in the spaces provided or tick the most appropriate response.

1. Gender Male ☐ Female ☐

2. How long have you taught in this school? ____________

3. Highest level of education attained.
   O level ☐ A level ☐ Other specify ________

4. Professional qualification.
   M.ED Special Education ☐
   B.ED Special Education ☐
   Diploma in special Education ☐
   P1 ☐

5. What area of special education have you specialized in
   Hearing Impairment ☐
   Inclusive education ☐

6. How long have you taught in a school for learners with hearing impairment?
   1-5 years ☐
   6-10 years ☐
   Over 10 years ☐
7. How do you gauge yourself in the use of sign language during teaching

Poor
Fair
Good
Excellent

8. What strategies do you use to teach writing?

9. How do you identify learners with writing difficulties in your class?

10. What challenges do you face when teaching writing to learners?

11. What challenges do learners face in learning to write?
12. What percentages of learners in your class can convey information through writing?

- 0-10% □
- 10-25% □
- 25-50% □
- Over 50% □

13. How does teaching of Kenyan sign complement the written form of English language?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

14. a) Do you have any remediation strategies for writing difficulties

  - Yes □
  - No □

If the answer is yes:

b) What time is remediation done?

  - During the lesson □
  - During free time □

c) What are some of the remediation strategies for poor writing used by your class?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
### APPENDIX I (B)

**OBSERVATION SCHEDULE FOR CLASS SEVEN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Specific item</th>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Composition</td>
<td>No. of compositions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>written monthly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ability to compose</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fluency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictation</td>
<td>Ability to write a dictated item</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>Ability to correctly spell words</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>Knowledge of vocabulary to level of class 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>What language is used to answer oral English questions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX I (C)

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE HEAD TEACHER

This interview is part of an educational study that is being conducted by the researcher in this institution. The information will be treated with confidentiality during and even after the study. The researcher is therefore requesting for your cooperation and assistance.

The information you give will be very important for this study.

Instructions

Please answer all items as accurately as possible

1. What is the name of your school?

What is your academic qualification?

P1

Diploma SNE

B.ED in special needs

M.ED in special needs

Others specify

2. a. For how long have you been a head teacher in this school?

b. How many children with hearing impairment are in your school?
c. Does your school have enough teaching staff?

Yes
No

3. What is the language of instruction used in the school?

English
Kenyan sign language
Both

4. What is the common language of communication among children with hearing impairment in your school?

English
Kenyan sign language

5. How do you gauge your learners in writing ability as they leave class eight?

Poor
Fair
Good
Excellent

Give an explanation for your answer above:

6. What challenges do your teachers face when teaching writing?
7. What percentages of learners leaving class eight have writing difficulties?

- 0-25%  □
- 26-50% □
- 50 and above □

8. Do your teachers have remedial programs for learners with writing difficulties?

- Yes □
- No □

9. In your opinion, what affects the English Language performance of learners in your school?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Appendix II A
Dummy 1

A School Girl Forced To Marry

Last year, a man in a village wanted to marry a school girl. One day, he met his family with her friend. To both, he said about the girl marrying. The man asked her father to marry the girl. Her father said yes marry.

The man, rich and her friend, go home. The next day, the rich man came many. He counted to train cows and choice boy one to stay. Then, he began work at 7:30 in the morning. Time 9:30 am start journey. Time 11:27 pm home arrive.

Girl was walked beside house. She saw men with many cows. The girl was surprised and started worry. The rich girl get home and said why. The girl at home. Woman nice see. Man with girl and girl born home enter. Pull in the evening, mother your girl come. She did not see and her father call ask girl where father fall. The mother chief office arrive, be then report chief police collect. Then next day want going to many home for man rich. The police get man rich and arrested and girl mother get. The school continue learn continuously. The girl was very happy and jubilating.
APPENDIX II B

Dummy 2

H SCHOOL GIRL FORCED TO MARRY

1. Your home father wear colour with jacket. Man both follow arrive home welcome chair give sit how many three talk man coat blue. Say ask me want girl marry father think want marry man coat down ask want marry father.

2. Man both walk with follow boy to cattle allot graze but girl hide see surprise man coat blue money and cattle allot give father happy.

3. Man your home smart cattle allot. Man get girl home nice allot girl stubborn but give fear allot man rich house nice allot.

4. Mother arrive home see girl where father say many mother surprise. Mother neighbours say girl marry people surprise me went go ask.

Mother go chief’s office enter ask but advice but girl marry chief surprise.

5. People out wait think angry. Chief’s office say call police and people follow toward home police get man arresting leave cell stay mother has get girl home.

6. Girl went to school enter class in learn continue she me happy. Girl think me marry he not think how me daughter child. Girl future year allot. Girl me marry stubborn continue.
APPENDIX II C

Dummy 3

A SCHOOL GIRL FORCED TO MARRY

Mr. So home girl and a man chair bath for wash have girl boy Cow soze with man home have surprise see cow get hand girl man home with cow see surprise home nice chiefs office woman go talk ask police came man surprise get arrest man go woman surprise see get girl woman school and go learn girl came woman right give food out school have can girl see woman happy learn work hard get win woman see happy love learn hard learn have camp teach teacher and math get math and learn teach work happy win see woman go give happy are
A Seattle Girl. Forced To Marry 8007

TERM 2015

I 창

Father medall home visit welcome talking long story father grand sit what why ask father ask want marry girls wash beautiful. Valley house face.

Father and father with Cow many by.

Fareze and boy stand and stay.

Father and father with following girl surprise

Valley valley red and girl beautiful

Fate love one rich many Cow many.

Father and girl get first house or in enter father house boy nice face Cow many.

Father rich face beauty tank. House boy

nice many father want married girl today.

Beauty and mother arrive girl where girl.

Marry and mother angry very many mother and other friend follow.

Ask chefs officer mother ask. Chefs officer telling girl

Marry and mother tell ask Valley know

Chefs officer mother following house.

Father arrest then attack father tell arrest and chefs and mother surprise

Mother talk girl get mother house

The follow girl. School learning

Continue many mother happy girl.

good.
APPENDIX II E

Dummy 5

A school girl forced to marry.

1. tree girl wash plate water hut
2. father follow story father white talk red
3. father blue walk sit door cook
4. forest boy cows father sky red talk
5. girl look father see hut

A girl Sama Samba too cows house gate

4. chief office police bag call woman
5. man father house leaves

Cows police arrest house mother chief
talk walk back yellow

Pencil book chair seed girls boys

Chalk orange table yellow

Girl yellow red clothes blue plate sit father

tree fire door father yellow tell story

Boy cows white sisters man hat fire
daughter long cows mother chief walk

Police arrest police chief mother say way

Young cows bag say office teacher school

Happy girls arrest by reading banana.
A School Girl Forced To Marry

High man meet girl wash wash
with talk meet hall home blue
my home girl nice I wash see
start dangers drunk meet talk
long write go home follow ball

cows boy graze Cell men go

Suppose girl but get marry
Stubborn rich girl ball free
stubborn angry meet wife
get arrest ask police woman

give stop chiefs office

Strikes in school have effects

Our happy story fees hard free

arrest Cell ask police woman

meet follow late talk give
Stubborn angry get Cell
head teach meet ask talk police
A SCHOOL GIRL FORCED TO MARRY

2015

man see girl forced to marry
girl for father give money
girl and father for man girl
give house and to marry

mother for chief's office mother help school father happy to home
man for girl to home help wash
and father give money and mother
to school mother happy see girl
go school see teacher and
see girl come school to teacher
man girl forced to marry home
father to give money
man have house nice give

girl happy and work home to
man have money give father
mother have chief's office picture
father have girl help of man
another have girl help of school
A SCHOOL GIRL FORCED TO MARRY

1. Gilu Matheveve three
   males in the FATHAR
   MATHER MQRAPHEU

2. Bongane tša FATHAR, the sex the
   couch MATHER the FATHAR

3. Cillane the now
   MATHAR

4. Office chen's Mother
   FATHER and Mather CAMI

5. Father to the she sveme
   thef len she he home

6. Sheol and amemen
   thebver the she or
   e Mather ev home
APPENDIX III A

Dummy 9

I go to Migua special school in Maua. It is a stone built and bulided on a flat hake. There are sixteen classroom in the school. There are also two office, two small and one school hall on the neighbour school. There is a play around. The headteacher is Mr. Mebea and the deutc is Mrs. Mejeru. There are nineteen teacher, five, eleven are lady and eight are man. The name of my class teacher is Mr. Samuel.
I go to Mfilu Special School in mara. It is a stone building and building past on a small branch. There are sixteen classes room in the school. There are also two offices and one school hall at the neighbour. There is a playground. The headteacher is Mr. Mabeo and Deputy headteacher is Mrs. Mweru. There are nineteen teachers. Eleven are ladies and eighteen are men. The name of my class teacher is Mr. Samuel.
I go to a new school in Maua. It is a big building and build no litter.
These are sixteen classrooms in the school.
These are some casuals. Salutation too back and one school hall.
At the next school this is a play grass.
The head teachers is name and head teachers is name give.
These are nineteen teachers even one lucky and eight are man.
The name of my teacher is Samuel.
I go to Nija school in much. It is a can be hall and halling no a small candido were arr sixty. Classroom in the school were ninety two office, two small and one school home. There the Nemaser school were is a play treaty date is Mr Nakwen an damteacher is Mrs nurses, were are ninty teachers, weresem timen and eight many. The name of my class teacher Mr Kaigyongi.
APPENDIX III E

Dummy 13

STD TEAM 1 2015
STORY
I to SPECIAL Njie School in muk-
ill build and past on a hand yo are-
you ten six Class room in School in
Tham are sister stop.
small and one School hall.
Give stop is-
The one neighbour school is a prag.
Teacher head is Mr NabeAm and the
Head is Mrs.
Give are ninley are teachers,
11 are luck and eight are homans.
The name of my class teacher is
Mr of my Call.
This is a special school in mana. It has a large black area using 10% of one. The school has a large area for offices and a school hall. On the west, school king is a peak. The mobile phone is in the office. Mrs. is 20% led to the teacher. Mr. Clay and Clay by the name of my teacher. Class is the Samuel.
I go to Naye Special School in Mewa. It is a stone built building on a hill top. There are sixteen classes in the school, there are two officers, two smalls and one school hall. At the neighbour school, there is a play area, the head teacher is Mrs. Nijee. Those are our teachers. My class teacher is Mrs. Samuel.
I OT MY to school m.a.k.
It's a c.a.n. nurse and
home Fad not a colec. or
used a go sic. since vac. or.
L.N.C.N.D.
I.D.N.N.T.
Two T.A.E.A.O.N.E. /w.
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Me M.E.M. to the mon.
School is a is a F.A.A. The T.A.
E.P.M.E. M.M.T. M.M. R.
C.I.V.E.M. M.E.N. M.R.S.
T.N.T. D.N. C.R.E.W. W./
M.O.T. A.N. O.E. M.A.N.
C.A.N. I.T.
The M.E.M. E. M.
M.Y.C.A.S.S.S.N.S.
N.S. N.S
APPENDIX IV A

Dummy17

1. High
2. Affest
3. Pretend
4. Tractor
5. Neighbour
6. Advice
7. Robber
8. Nephew
9. Mountain
10. Certificate
11. Guene
12. Caught
13. Inject
14. Glove
15. Accident
16. Migration
17. Referee
18. Cloud
19. Library
APPENDIX IV B

Dummy 18

1. high
2. are arrested
3. pretend
4. tractor
5. neighbour
6. advice
7. brief
8. nephew
9. mountain
10. certificate
11. cough
12. cough
13. cocain
14. loops
15. accident
16. irrigation
17. referee
18. crowd
19. crowd
20. library
APPENDIX IV C

DUMMY 19

1. Hall
2. Offer
3. Mute
4. Refer
5. Same
6. Farmer
7. Nemos
8. Hall
9. Mother
10. Same
11. Femot
12. Nasem
13. Mezen
14. Tozen
15. He semen
16. Shash
17. Gratt
18. Habermes
19. Hatimbook
APPENDIX IV D

Dummy 20

1. Theave
2. Career
3. Kinobi
4. Jack
5. Home
6. Caluds
7. RecaUT
8. Sisuters
9. Money Hill
10. Comotion
11. Bus
12. Sick TB
13. Dlirtly
14. Heavy
15. Gaps
16. Waste
17. The building
18. Books
APPENDIX IV E

Dummy 21

1. High
2. Arrest
3. Herensb
4. Ste Dreem
5. Neighbr
6. Aduce
7. Robbet
8. Nha.
9. Toun
10. Clevebr
12. Arrange
12. Cough
13. Drug
14. Glove
15. Adduce
16. Irrigation
17. Referee
18. Bent brde
19. Wath
20. Libbrad
1. high
2. last
3. present
4. fire
5. neighbour
6. advice
7. rabbit
8. nice
9. hill
10. complex
11. bus
dwalk
12. cause
13. drugs
14. slow fast
15. accident
16. migration
17. referee
18. money help
19. Coriolis
20. Labray
APPENDIX IV G
Dummy 23

1. hill
2. Caven
3. person
4. Stop
5. Nighting
6. Strap
7. Robber
8. Bocil
9. hill
10. Covent
11. hall
12. BT
13. drug
14. Halle
15. abvo
16. song
17. ball Talker
18. pole money
19. hall
20. Book
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<td>CODINE</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>CATPIA</td>
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<td>Hacort</td>
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<td>VINEVE</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>BODD /rice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX V

RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Telephone: +254-20-2213471,
2241349, 310571, 2219420
Fax: +254-20-318245, 318249
Email: secretary@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke
When replying please quote

9th Floor, U talii House
Uhuru Highway
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref: No.

Date:

13th March, 2015

NACOSTI/P/15/6461/5086

Patrick Chabari
Kenyatta University
P.O. Box 43844-00100
NAIROBI.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "Writing
difficulties on English language performance among class seven learners
with hearing impairments. A case of Njia Special Meru County, Kenya," I
am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research
in Meru County for a period ending 31st May, 2015.

You are advised to report to the County Commissioner and the County
Director of Education, Meru County before embarking on the research
project.

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

DR. S. K. LANGAT, OGW
FOR: DIRECTOR GENERAL/CEO

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
Meru County.

The County Director of Education
Meru County.
APPENDIX VI

RESEARCH PERMIT

CONDITIONS

1. You must report to the County Commissioner and the County Education Officer of the area before embarking on your research. Failure to do so may lead to the cancellation of your permit.

2. Government Officers will not be interviewed without prior appointment.

3. No questionnaire will be used unless it has been approved.

4. Excavation, filming and collection of biological specimens are subject to further permission from the relevant Government Ministries.

5. You are required to submit at least two (2) hard copies and one (1) soft copy of your final report.

6. The Government of Kenya reserves the right to modify the conditions of this permit including its cancellation without notice.

This is to certify that:

MR. PATRICK CHABARI

of KENYATTA UNIVERSITY, 436-60600 MAUA, has been permitted to conduct research in Meru County on the topic: "WRITING DIFFICULTIES ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE PERFORMANCE AMONG CLASS SEVEN LEARNER WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT. A CASE OF NJIA SPECIAL MERU COUNTY, KENYA" for the period ending:

31st May, 2015

APPLICANT’S SIGNATURE

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation

RESEARCH CLEARANCE PERMIT

Serial No. A 4433

Penalty No.: NACOST/15/6461/5086

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Director General

National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation