FACTORS AFFECTING STUDENTS’ ACQUISITION OF SPEAKING SKILLS IN ENGLISH AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN TURKANA EAST DISTRICT, KENYA

MEKONGE, KERUBO VERAH

E55/CE/23775/2012

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

JULY, 2017
DECLARATION

I confirm that this research thesis is my original work and has not been presented in any other university/institution for certification. The thesis has been complemented by referenced sources duly acknowledged. Where texts, data, graphics or pictures or tables have been borrowed from other works including the internet, the sources are specifically accredited through referencing in accordance with anti-plagiarism regulations.

Signature………………………………..Date………………………………………………

Mekonge Kerubo Verah

E55/CE/23775/2012

Department of Educational Communication and Technology

We confirm that the work reported in this thesis was carried out by the candidate under our supervision as University Supervisor(s).

Signature………………………………..Date………………………………………………

Dr. Adelheid Marie Bwire

Department of Educational Communication and Technology,

Kenyatta University

Signature………………………………..Date………………………………………………

Prof. Samson Ondigi

Department of Educational Communication and Technology,

Kenyatta University
DEDICATION

I wish to dedicate this thesis to my beloved father and Baby Eugy for constantly reminding me to continue with my studies and the humble time and support they offered whenever in need. May the good Lord continue showering them with lots of blessings forevermore. Amen.
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**ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>Acquired Competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIC</td>
<td>African Inland Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC</td>
<td>Communicative Competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CI</td>
<td>Comprehensible Input</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEO</td>
<td>District Education Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELT</td>
<td>English Language Teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL</td>
<td>English as a Second Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>FL</td>
<td>Foreign Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HoD</td>
<td>Head of Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KCSE</td>
<td>Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KIE</td>
<td>Kenya Institute of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNBS</td>
<td>Kenya National Bureau of Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNEC</td>
<td>Kenya National Examinations Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2</td>
<td>Second Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAD</td>
<td>Language Acquisition Device</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LC</td>
<td>Learning Competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LL</td>
<td>Language Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LP</td>
<td>Lesson Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MT</td>
<td>Mother Tongue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NACOSTI</td>
<td>National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP</td>
<td>Received Pronunciation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLA</td>
<td>Second Language Acquisition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOW</td>
<td>Schemes of Work</td>
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<td>SPSS</td>
<td>Statistical Package of Social Sciences program</td>
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to identify the factors affecting the acquisition of speaking skills in English amongst secondary students in Turkana East District, Kenya. Teachers use Standard English for instruction yet the learners find it difficult to communicate using Standard English and this is reflected when expressing themselves. The main concern was to identify factors affecting students’ acquisition of speaking skills in English. The objectives were to: establish the instructional resources used in teaching speaking skills in English, establish the methods teachers of English use in the teaching of speaking skills, establish the common errors that students made when speaking in English and to identify other factors affecting the acquisition of speaking skills in English. The findings of the study were to provide teachers of English, students and the heads of English department with insights on the problems that students face in the process of acquiring speaking skills in English as well as help them improve their verbal communicative ability. The scope involved students from 5 public secondary schools in Turkana East Sub-county, Kenya. The research was guided by Krashen’s theory of language acquisition and learning. Literature was reviewed as per the study objectives and a descriptive survey design was employed to gather information on the factors that affected students’ acquisition of speaking skills in English. The variables under investigation were independent, intervening and dependent variables. The target population comprised 1210 students and 9 teachers of English out of which 4 were Heads of Department. In one school, a Kiswahili teacher was the HoD. The total population was 1219 respondents. The sample size comprised 3 randomly and purposively selected public secondary schools, 137 form three students, 6 form three teachers of English out of whom were 3 were heads of the English department making a total of 145 respondents. Data was collected using questionnaires, interview schedule, observed schedule and a checklist then analyzed using the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) program. The analyzed data were presented descriptively using tables, charts, graphs and percentages. The findings indicated that English course books, literary texts and the chalk board were the most available and accessible instructional resources in the schools. Teachers used few learner-centred teaching methods that enhanced students to speak English in the classroom. Role play was disliked by teachers as it was time consuming. However, in the questionnaires teachers indicated that they employed the method in teaching English speaking skills. Students made errors when they spoke in English. Students’ acquisition of speaking skills in English was affected by their age of enrolment, lack of motivation and lack of practice. It was concluded that schools lacked variety of instructional resources. Age of enrolment in school affected acquisition of speaking skills. Teachers did not employ enough teaching methods that could give students opportunities to practice speaking good English. This would minimize the errors they made while speaking English. The researcher recommended provision of a variety of instructional resources and teachers to vary the teaching methods that enable students to acquire speaking skills in English successfully. Children should start school at the right age.
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Language is very important in the daily lives of people since it is the means by which people communicate. In the school curriculum, English language performs a very vital role in the learning process in terms of the learners’ proficiency in all the four language skills. For instance, it is the language of instruction in the Kenyan education system in all the subject areas except Kiswahili and foreign languages (FLs) like French (Kimemia, 2001). English language is one of the languages used in the Kenya especially in our education systems, law and the constitution (Kimemia, 2001). In Kenya today, English language has become a Lingua Franca for communication, business and opportunity in general because it is spoken by several communities and individuals (Kenya law, 2015). Economic and technological factors have to a great extent played their part in keeping English at the centre of communication. English language has four main language skills which develop in order; listening, speaking, reading and lastly writing (KIE, 2002). Following this order, it is apparent that reading and writing greatly depend on listening and speaking skills as it will enable the learner to write and read what he or she understands and speaks. Second language acquisition refers to the process of learning a second language (L2) after the first language. It becomes one’s mother tongue if it takes place where the target language is used. Gass & Selinker (2001) claim that this process of learning a L2 can sometimes occur in a classroom context or sometimes not.
Speaking, therefore, as a skill is defined as the oral mode or the productive skill which is more complicated and which involves more than just pronouncing words (Iqbal, 2012). While speaking, people get involved in three major kinds of speaking situations and these are: interactive (discussion and dialogues), partially interactive (lecture) and non-interactive (sermons and speeches) speaking situations. Interactive speaking situations include face-to-face conversation and telephone calls, in which we are alternately listening and speaking. In this situation, one has a chance to ask for clarification, repetition or slower speech from our conversation partner. On the other hand, partially interactive situations involve giving a speech to a live audience, where the conversation is that the audience does not interrupt the speech. The speaker can nevertheless see the audience and judge from the expressions on their faces and body language whether or not he or she is being understood.

In the acquisition of a second language, speaking is a vital skill to master. In spite of that, according to Baker and Westrup (2003), in many countries, because speaking skills are not assessed teachers usually disregard the skill and focus on other areas of language learning features such as grammar or vocabulary. That was especially true in the case of English Education in Vietnamese high schools. However, in numerous colleges, students’ ability to speak in English is appreciated and has become a criterion in evaluating linguistic performance. As a result, at the English department of Hanoi University, speaking English is a subject on the curriculum taught during the first two years.

Mistakes, therefore, should be welcome (Iqbal, 2012) in Communicative language teaching and in speaking activities like imitating, answering verbal cues and interactive
conversation. Oral presentation of content should be practical and functional in real life. Appropriate feedback should also be provided, but one should not interrupt the communication process as this will discourage further verbal communication. In addition, both fluency and accuracy in the use of English should be addressed and strategies like asking for clarification, paraphrasing, use of gestures, and initiation of talk using words like; hey, so and by the way should be encouraged. Thus listening and speaking skills need a lot of emphasis in the learning process since these skills form a strong foundation in the teaching of English.

1.2 The Kenyan English language syllabus

In Kenya, English and Kiswahili are the official languages stipulated in the current Constitution. In Kenya, English is one of the subjects learnt at primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education and the medium of instruction in schools. A good mastery of both spoken and written English gives one an added advantage to many opportunities ranging from getting good jobs, academic success and improved social relations (K.I.E, 1985). The current Kenyan English syllabus stresses the incorporation of an integrated approach in the teaching of English language. Learners’ exposure to literature during the English language teaching is expected to improve their language skills by enriching their vocabulary and also use of English in a variety of ways. Similarly, improved knowledge of the language would enhance the learners’ appreciation of literary material. Integration thus means that, no language skill (listening, speaking, reading and writing skills) should be taught in isolation but should complement one another. The integration of language and literature provides students with opportunities to use language in a variety of
contexts, as students become accustomed to the rules and forms used in the written form. It has been found that teaching language structures separately is boring and tends to produce learners who cannot freely express themselves. Bwire (2007) maintains that the capability to make use of expressions such as idioms which are an indisputable part of language, enables one to speak and write inherently and precisely. Adequate vocabularies are also gained from extensive use of language in various contexts (K.I.E, 1985). Literary works help students develop their critical thinking which is a crucial element in intellectual development. It is through literature that life’s conflicts and challenges are resolved because language is learnt through exposure. This exposes the learner to issues revolving around and those which affect the learner daily through all the language skills. For example, when one is required to give information or solve a complex situation like a disagreement between and amongst parties.

The life-long goal in the teaching of English is acquisition of communicative competency in English language rather than just passing of examinations. In the English syllabus, the time allocated for the teaching of English is 6 lessons a week in Form 1 & 2 and 8 lessons in Form 3 & 4 respectively. The integrated approach employed in the teaching of English is highlighted to maximize the utilization of this time and ensure timely coverage of the syllabus.

Listening and speaking skills play a very important role in one’s social and academic life by becoming responsive and receptive to information hence creating a favourable impression of oneself. As a result, these two skills also contribute greatly to the development of confidence and effective interaction skills like socialization as well as
reading and writing skills. In order to develop verbal fluency and confidence, learners ought to practice and be exposed to good English structures, as well as be involved in oral productive activities like role-play, debates, listening comprehension and drama. Oral literature is recommended for use in the teaching of the speaking and listening skills as detailed in the syllabus, so as to give students a broader scope within which they could express themselves as learners. Literature also enables students to study the oral literature genres in a relaxed and interesting atmosphere.

Listening, speaking, reading and writing are all integral skills that are inseparable and should be given equal attention. However, over the years a lot of attention has been given to testing reading and writing whereas listening and speaking remain neglected skills. For this gap to be bridged then, the current English language syllabus recommended the evaluation of speaking skills. Assessment of the four language skills can be done through tasks including role-play, dictation, making oral speeches, listening comprehension and reciting poems. However, where the classes are large, testing the skills becomes cumbersome.

The syllabus moreover emphasizes the teaching of grammar. A mastery of grammar is important as it aids students’ awareness of how to apply the rules of grammar to communicate appropriately in acceptable language forms in day-to-day life situations. This implies that for a learner to acquire a comprehensible grasp of the language holistically, grammatical structures ought to be presented in the right context, both in written and spoken forms. For that reason, a story in the written form from the students’ course book can be used for constant practice for purposes of enriching their grammatical
knowledge (Iqbal, 2012). For grammatical proficiency to be achieved, teachers of English must devise correct ways of making use of, for example, language games, films, recorded videos, role-play, writing compositions and drama.

1.3 Teaching speaking skills in Kenya

Speaking skills in Kenya are not taught separately from the skills of listening, writing and reading, but are taught as English language. This entails selecting a piece of writing especially from literature which can enable the learner identify various aspects of the four language skills. In English language, there is a strong relationship between oral language skills and success in the written language (DeGelder & Morais, 1995). Bruner (1983) observes that, when one starts to write, s/he has already a good knowledge of how to use spoken language in ordinary social interaction. For that reason, people come to write language with a concept of spoken language. In view of this, Floden (1997) stresses the need for teachers of English to examine the teaching of speaking. KNEC (2014) observed that lack of good speaking skills in English made students perform poorly in the National examinations due to lack of good skills of expression. Floden (1997) further advocated for content and methodology that would help learners to learn to speak English. This is because English language plays a crucial role in the learning process in the school curriculum and largely depends on a learner’s proficiency in all the language skills. Speaking and listening skills form a strong foundation for the development of reading and writing skills respectively and in the general teaching of English.

Regardless of the great importance attached to English in Kenya, there has been an outcry over the poor performance in both primary and secondary schools. On releasing of the
KCSE results of the year 2013, the then Minister of Education lamented that there was a decline in performance in English that previous year (Kaimenyi, 2014). The minister further observed that, the failure in English was consistent with the use of ‘sheng’ among the youth. Sheng’ is defined as a language variety that blends English and Kiswahili. The use of digital devices like mobile phones and computers was another threat which gave spelling checks, text predictions and short forms of writing messages (sms). That translated to an overall decline in the 2013 KCSE performance compared to 2012 candidates who had been considered for admittance into University (KCSE, 2013). In the same vein, during KCSE 2013 examination results prize-giving day held in Turkana East district on 14th June, 2014, the then District Education Officer (DEO) stressed that, good performance in the district would only improve if students possessed good spoken English language to express themselves, regardless of their social backgrounds. Such skills would translate to good writing skills (verbalized speech). In addition, employers, educationists and ordinary citizens have raised a general concern over Form Four school leavers who are insufficient in communication skills, as evidenced in written application letters for employment and oral interviews (Mang’eni, 2010). Barasa (2005) added that Universities and colleges were concerned about the 1st Year university students they received who could hardly write, read and hold discussions in English.

Poor performance across the curriculum has been a great concern of the Kenyan Government since English is the language of instruction which impacts on the general literacy of its citizens. Consequently, lack of its understanding and grasp can hamper the acquisition of skills and knowledge in other subjects that need an English background for
teaching and writing (KNEC Report, 2005). Table 1.1 summarizes the performance in KCSE English examination in Turkana East secondary schools, from the year 2009 up to 2013 and its impact on general literacy in the district.

Table 1.1: KCSE performance in English in Turkana East boarding secondary schools:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Mean score for Girls’ School</th>
<th>Mean score for Boys’ School</th>
<th>Mean score for Mixed School</th>
<th>Overall Mean score for the District</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DEO’S Office, Turkana East District 25th July, 2014

From the KCSE results shown in Table1.1, it was apparent that the performance of English was still poor and below average. This was worst in 2013 where the English district overall mean score went as low as a 3.800 (DEO’s office, Turkana East). However, the failure was evident in all secondary schools in Kenya as reported by the Minister of Education during the release of the KCSE 2013 results. The KCSE National students’ mean mark for English was as follows: 2007 (19.4), 2008 (19.7), 2009 (21.3), 2010 (21.1), 2011 (21.2), 2012 (22.0), 2013 (28.7) (KNBS, 2014). However, a slight improvement was realized in the year 2011, where mean score of English in Turkana East district rose from 4.8 up to 5.1. This was a positive indication that the two secondary
schools that had registered candidates performed fairly well. At the time of this study, the performance of English in Turkana East District was persistently poor in comparison to the performance of schools from Turkana central and Loima districts whose performance was above average. The performance in these two districts is as seen in Table 1.2.

### Table 1.2: KCSE performance in English in Turkana Central and Loima boarding secondary schools:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Mean score for Girls’ school (X)</th>
<th>Mean score for Boys’ school (Y)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>6.81</td>
<td>7.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>7.79</td>
<td>7.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>8.13</td>
<td>8.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>8.25</td>
<td>8.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>8.01</td>
<td>7.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>7.67</td>
<td>8.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Teachers’ Service Commission Director’s Office, Turkana County 10th April, 2017

The data in Table 1.2 indicated that the two schools from the same county under the same climatic conditions but different sub counties posted good results over the years compared to the schools from Turkana East district. That kind of performance as indicated in Table 1.1 in a crucial subject like English is very pathetic since English is an international language, a medium of instruction and also one of the subjects taught in schools in Kenya lending many students disadvantaged. The general failure could be attributed to several factors. The study therefore was a response to this need with the main purpose being to salvage this pathetic situation by looking at factors that affected
secondary school students’ acquisition of speaking skills in English. The focus was on speaking skills because speaking preceded writing and reading in any learning experience.

1.4 Statement of the problem

The ability to speak fluently in English is the chief goal of many learners. Successful language communication through speaking and writing modes require constant practice. This implies that teachers of English need to examine the teaching of speaking as a skill by taking into consideration the content and methodology that would help learners learn to speak English (Floden, 1997). It is argued that speaking skills have not developed because they are not tested in KCSE. The reason for difficulties in testing speaking being speaking skills involve a combination of skills which may have correlation or do not lend themselves well to objective testing (Kitao & Kitao, 1996). This, therefore, means that English language cannot be learnt by just mastering the rules of grammar or through the lecture method. Rather, English is learned through conversation and discussion in context. This is true because the main purpose of learning English language is to improve the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) to enable them use English language communicatively.

The perennial poor performance in English in the schools in Turkana East district and the type of form four leavers who join universities and colleges has raised a lot of concern to the general public. Some can hardly construct a grammatical English sentence as evidenced in the application letters written for admission to various institutions of learning. However, as much as English language proficiency plays a vital role in the
learner’s day-to-day life, many students still perceive speaking in English a hard subject to learn. Speaking in English is considered hard to acquire, leading to poor performance in English and in other subjects that require English language proficiency to learn.

In view of the above arguments, proper attention needs to be given to factors affecting the acquisition of speaking skills in English among learners at the Secondary school level. The essence of this research was, therefore, to investigate the various factors affecting students’ acquisition of speaking skills in the English language.

1.5 Research objectives

The specific objectives that guided the study were to:

i. Investigate which instructional resources are used in the teaching of speaking skills in English.

ii. Establish the teaching methods used in teaching speaking skills in English.

iii. Establish the common errors that students make when speaking in English.

iv. Identify other factors affecting students’ acquisition of speaking skills in English.

1.6 Research questions

The study sought to answer the following research questions:

i. Which instructional resources are used in the teaching of speaking skills in English?

ii. Which teaching methods do teachers of English use when teaching English speaking skills?

iii. Which errors did students commonly make when speaking in English?
iv. Which other factors affect students’ acquisition of speaking skills in English?

1.7 Significance of the study

The findings of the study will provide teachers of English, Heads of English Department, students and administrators with insights on some of the problems learners face in the process of acquiring speaking skills in English and help them where possible. In addition, it will help teachers improve their teaching methodology with a view of bringing up students who are able to speak good English. This can be achieved through involving them in tasks like brainstorming, discussions and information gap. These activities will encourage students to speak English.

Moreover, the findings will help HoDs and administrators appreciate the importance of students acquiring speaking proficiency in English. This will make them invest in speaking skills by providing teachers and students with enough and varied instructional resources to ensure acquisition takes place effectively. Besides, students will recognize that English is a very important subject. This will make them cultivate a positive attitude towards speaking in English thus facilitating the acquisition process.

1.8 Delimitations

The present research involved only public secondary schools in Turkana East District. The research was confined to Turkana East and the information provided will be relevant to this area. Secondly, because of the nature of the study, only teachers of English, English HoDs and students were sampled. The sample size for the study encompassed only three schools out of five schools in the district and a total of one hundred and thirty seven (137) form three students and six (6) teachers of English. Out of this number, two
teachers were HoDs. In one school, there was only one teacher who was also a HoD. Also acquisition of speaking skills in English and not any other language skill was the area of investigation. Form three students in each of these schools filled questionnaires and were later observed during the actual teaching.

1.9 Limitations

The researcher faced a number of challenges while carrying out the study. The region, being inhabited by 99% nomadic people, delayed collection of data as some students transferred to other schools as they moved with their livestock. Early marriages also delayed the process as some of the female students left school to attend to their families while others got married then resumed school at a later time. Many of the male students, on the other hand, overstayed at home herding livestock or waiting for a well-wisher to pay school fees for them. Because of the sparse population, the researcher was forced to spend a lot of money and time travelling to reach the sampled schools.

Insecurity was another hurdle as the region is characterized with frequent inter-ethnic wars between the Turkana and neighbouring communities. This forced the researcher to seek the services of a local home-guard to ensure the data collection exercise was not interrupted. The harsh climate (hot) and terrain made the researcher collect data in the evenings because in the afternoons there were very few students in the schools. Also, mid-term breaks, continuous assessment tests and end of term examinations interrupted the process of collecting data. This forced the researcher to collect data at varied times both before and after mid-term break. Despite the challenges faced, care was taken to ensure this did not adversely affect the kind and quality of data collected.
1.10 Assumptions of the study

The study was guided by the following assumptions:

i. Students encounter various challenges in the process of acquiring speaking skills in English.

ii. All teachers of English have the competence to use the various learning resources available and teaching methods in teaching speaking skills.

iii. Students make errors when using English in context.

iv. All teachers of English in public secondary schools in Turkana East District teach their lessons in English.

1.11 Theoretical framework

Krashen’s (1985) theory of Second Language Learning-Language Acquisition informed the study. In this theory, Krashen argues that language acquisition requires neither extensive use of conscious grammatical rule nor tedious drill. However, it requires meaningful interaction in the target language in which speakers are concerned with the messages they are conveying and understand rather than the form of their utterances. Krashen therefore suggests that the best methods to be used in order to acquire a language are those that supply ‘comprehensible input’ in low anxiety situations and those that contain messages that students really want to hear. Comprehensible input is the language input that can be understood by listeners despite them not understanding all the words and structures in the language. It is described as one level above that of the learners if it can only be understood (i+1). Krashen (1985) further points out that, these
methods should not force early production in the L2, but to allow students to produce when they are ‘ready’, recognizing that improvement comes from supplying communicative and comprehensible input, and not forcing and correcting production. In this theory, emphasis is laid on silent period in the production of language. It also focuses on exposure to input instead of grammar practice and on emotional preparedness (anxiety) for acquisition to take place. The author in this approach regards ‘communication’ as the main function of language, thus the focus on teaching ‘communicative abilities.’ In that respect, superiority of ‘meaning’ is given prominence. According to Krashen (1985), ‘acquisition’ can take place only when people comprehend messages in the TL. Also the messages need to be organized and interpreted correctly. Krashen’s three main hypotheses: the input, monitor and affective filter hypotheses informed the present study as detailed below:

a) Monitor hypothesis

As explained earlier, adult L2 learners have two means for internalizing the target language (TL). Firstly, through ‘learning’ which involves a conscious learning process in which learners attend to form, figure out rules and are generally aware of their own process. The monitor in this respect (learning) consciously corrects and edits what has been learnt. According to Krashen (1985), we speak as a result of what we have learnt thus the implication here is that adults ought to acquire a lot in order to achieve fluency in spoken English. From the variables under study in the conceptual framework, the teaching methods and the school language policy were the monitors that sieved the
content knowledge received by the learner. The monitor should, therefore, be sparingly used in the process of gaining communicative competence.

b) Input hypothesis

This hypothesis is more related to acquisition than learning. Krashen (1985) claims that people acquire language best by understanding input that is a little beyond their present level of competence. He consequently believes that ‘comprehensible input’ (i+1) should be provided. The input should be relevant, not grammatically sequenced and be provided in sufficient quantity. As Richards (1986) points out that a child’s acquisition of a first language are provided with samples of ‘care giver’ speech, and rough tuned to their present level of understanding. The author further adds that adult acquirers of a second language should be provided with simple codes that facilitate second language comprehension (Richards, 1986). The variables in this study that fit in this hypothesis include the content knowledge that is given to the learners during teaching and learning. This content should be given in simple codes that will facilitate easy comprehension. After this content is learnt, it undergoes sieving in which learners consciously attend to the rules of grammar in order to become fluent speakers of English. In addition, the instructional resources used to teach speaking should be readily available, enough and accessible for learning at all times. The more students practice to speaking English, the higher the chances of them becoming fluent. This implies that students should be given enough opportunities and contexts to communicate verbally as this would help them improve on their verbal communication.
c) Affective filter hypothesis

Krashen (1985) in this hypothesis argues that the learner’s emotional state can be compared to a filter that can be regulated to freely allow or deter input necessary for acquisition to take place. That is to say, input must be achieved in low-anxiety context because acquirers with a low affective filter receive more input and interact with confidence. The author further postulates that this filter is ‘affective’ because there are some factors which regulates its strength. These factors include self-confidence, motivation and anxiety state acts as ‘a mental block’ prevents input from reaching the Language Acquisition Device (LAD). The LAD is a hypothetical module of the human mind posited to account for childrens’ innate predisposition for language acquisition. This device enables an infant to acquire and produce language naturally. Krashen further argues that humans have an innate ability that enables them to use what they have learnt about the rules of a language in self-correcting their language output. Variables like motivation, students’ attitude towards speaking English, students’ home environment and peer influence can greatly affect acquisition as they depend on the present condition of the student and willingness to participate in the learning activities done in class.

Therefore, the study was guided by Krashen’s monitor hypothesis which posits that fluency in language performance is due to what we have acquired and not what we have learned. This meant that we speak as a result of what we have internalized and understood and does not necessarily mean to master every word learnt and the rules attached to it. The learned competence (LC) is used as a monitor in editing and correcting consciously what we have acquired. Meaning that, for communicative competence to be
achieved, the monitor (LC) should be sparingly used. However, this hypothesis was greatly supported by the input and the affective filter hypotheses. The input hypothesis argues that for acquisition to be achieved, the comprehensible input should be provided in sufficient quantity, relevant and not grammatically sequenced just like the ‘care giver’ speech rough tuned for a child. The affective filter on the other hand emphasizes that there are things that can hinder input necessary to acquisition like anxiety, motivation, age and one’s self confidence. Implying that for acquisition to take place, input must be achieved in low-anxiety contexts, free from the aforementioned factors to enable the second language learner to receive more input and interact freely.

The study was therefore guided by this theory in relation to acquisition of speaking skills in English. For instance, as students each time try to learn how to use English in communication and expressing themselves, filtering may occur because of anxiety, poor self esteem or low motivation. Therefore, learners with a low affective filter not only become effective acquirers of comprehensive input but also increase the amount of that input because they are likely to interact with other learners unembarrassed by making mistakes. Secondly, when speaking to learners, this ought to be done based on the communicative ability of the learners and should allow for a silent period, free from close monitoring and correction. Thirdly, the more the comprehensible input, the greater the speaking proficiency, while lack of it impedes language acquisition process. Lastly, teaching methods work according to the extent that they make use of comprehensible input. That is, students learn best when they get involved in the learning process using the
appropriate methods of teaching. For example, immersion teaching as a strategy is successful because it provides comprehensible input to learner there and then.

1.12 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework that guided the study is as shown in figure 1.1 below:

Figure 1.1: Conceptual frameworks for the study

Key

CI: Comprehensible Input

The  

arrows mean that the independent and intervening variables must interact favourably for proficiency to be achieved

From the above conceptual framework, it was clear that for effective acquisition of English speaking skills to be achieved the independent and intervening variables should interact favourably. This implied that the independent variables given in figure 1.1 are
not enough to say a student has acquired fluency in speaking English. These independent variables could be influenced by intervening variables like the student’s home environment which could motivate or demotivate the student from acquiring good spoken English. Peer influence was another variable which meant that if a group of students used English to communicate then it would be easy for a beginner to copy them very fast since that is the language used. Other intervening variables include the motivation that a student receives from the environment and the student’s attitude towards speaking in English and how this can influence the acquisition process. However, if fluency in speaking English is not successfully acquired, then one ought to go back to the initial stages of the cycle to assess the interaction between the variables and see how they can be improved for proficiency in speaking English to be achieved.

This conceptual framework is related to the theory framework. The independent variables school language policy and teaching methods form the monitor hypothesis. The intervening variables like motivation, age, attitude, anxiety and peer influence form the affective filter hypothesis. Lastly content knowledge formed the input hypothesis.
1.13 Operational definition of terms

**Acquisition:** Refers to using language for real communication.

**Classroom interaction:** Describes the form and content of behaviour or social interaction in the classroom that enhances the development of speaking and listening skills among learners.

**Communicative ability:** This refers to one’s capacity to use a language both willingly and readily in various situations, forms and functions effectively.

**Communicative act:** The ability to use language to pass message.

**Communicative competence:** The knowledge of rules of a language and application of these rules in the context of speech.

**Comprehensible input:** Comprehensible input is the language input that can be understood by listeners despite them not understanding all the words and structures in the language. It is described as one level above that of the learners if it can only be understood (i+1).

**Fluency:** This is the ability of having appropriate things to say in a wide range of contexts so that you do not miss words should a situation arise.

**Language lab:** Laboratory used to teach speaking proficiency (English) using English models therein.

**Lingua franca:** Language of wide communication.
**Native language:** The first language (L1) that a person has been exposed to from birth or within the critical period (father tongue/ mother tongue).

**Repertoire:** A bank/ the much one knows in a language.

**Standard English:** The approved British English used for communication.

**Target language:** The language learners are expected to use when speaking, English.

**Target population:** All the items or people under study. Also called the universe.
1.14 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the background to the study has been given in detail, statement of the problem, the research objectives and research questions, significance of the study, delimitations and delimitations. The theoretical framework, conceptual framework and the definition of the operational terms. The focal point of the ensuing chapter was reviewing of related literature. The review was done according to the given subheadings and study objectives.

1.15 Organization of the Study

Chapter one focused on the background to the study was given in detail, statement of the problem, the research objectives, theoretical and conceptual frameworks and lastly the operational definition of terms while chapter two dealt with reviewing of related literature. Chapter three explained the methodology employed whereas chapter four dealt with the presentation and discussions of findings. Lastly chapter five focused on the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations.
CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter involved the review of literature related to the problem under investigation. It was also done as per the objectives of the study under the following sub-titles:

i. Review of related literature.

ii. Instructional materials used in the teaching of speaking skills in English.

iii. Methods used in the teaching of speaking skills.

iv. The common errors students make when speaking English.

v. Other factors affecting the acquisition of speaking skills in English.

2.2 Review of related literature

Tarone (2005) argues that speaking English is usually viewed as the most complex and difficult skill to master. In a recent study, Bygate (2009) agreed with the aforementioned statement by claiming that learners with reading and writing proficiency do not always have fine speaking skills.

Chaney & Burk (1998) describe speaking as a crucial part of second language teaching and learning involving building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols in a variety of contexts. Despite the importance attached to speaking, teaching speaking skills for many years has been undervalued and English language teachers have continued to teach speaking just as a repetition of drills or memorization of dialogues. However, today's world requires that students develop and improve on their communicative abilities because that is the only way students can express themselves and
learn how to follow the social and cultural rules appropriate in each communicative circumstance. Fluency according to Nunan (2003) refers to the use of language in a quick and confident manner with few pauses.

Many linguists and second language teachers agree that students learn to speak in the second language by interacting. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) enables students to learn how to speak in English through interaction in real-life situations. If this method is employed in the classroom context then, students will have the opportunity to use spoken English by engaging their teachers and peers through authentic activities and meaningful tasks that promote oral language development. Activities such as group work, brainstorming, information gap, storytelling, simulations and brief dialogues foster the development of speaking skills in English (Chaney & Burk, 1998). This study, therefore, seeks to establish the teaching methods employed that could foster the development of good speaking skills in English among students from Turkana east secondary schools.

2.3 Instructional materials used in the teaching of speaking skills

In today’s technologically advanced society, language resources have become part and parcel for effective classroom interaction to take place. Instructional resources thus ought to be varied over time to cater for varying teaching and learning contexts and learners’ needs. Research has shown, students who have an exposure to variety of instructional materials like charts, tape recorder, radio, television programmes and pictures develop their speaking proficiency easily than those least exposed to teaching and learning resources. Onyejemezi (1998) learning becomes effective when learners are wholly involved in the instructional process through the use of variety of resources because they
stimulate and motivate the teaching and learning process and provide learners with the
opportunity to observe touch, manipulate things and interact freely. Onyejemezi (1998)
further adds that when instructional resources are properly used, in good supply, rich in
variety and range, they emphasize the spoken message, capture students’ attention and
enable them to freely interact in the physical and social environments.

For any instructional process to be accomplished, teaching and learning aids need to be
adequate and properly utilized. According to Ibe-Bassey (1991), an instructional material
serves as a tool of communication. He further adds that utilization of these resources in
teaching is the function of the teacher who should plan for their presentation in order to
make the material meaningful during lesson presentation. The author, however, regrets
that the instructional materials in teaching are in many cases few in schools and or
sometimes totally lacking, thus rendering teachers’ efforts unproductive (Ibe-Bassey,

This brings us to the point of concern of the current study which was whether
instructional materials in teaching are available and well utilized in schools for
acquisition of speaking skills in English to be achieved. This uncertainty is provoking
doubt on the type of learners we have and their future as English speakers.

a) Availability of instructional materials in teaching English

When teaching English, instructional materials when availed to the classroom motivates
learning and heightens efficacy in the act of imparting knowledge and skills. In a study
done in Nigeria, unavailability of these materials in teaching was found to hamper the
achievement of educational objectives (Agupusi, 2003). Agupusi in the same vein requested concerned parties to collectively avail them to ensure learning takes place. In a similar study done in Kenya, Mutai (2006) in his study observed that learning is reinforced by having enough reference materials such as exercise books, textbooks and others.

The unavailability of these resources was noted in studies done by Orina (2001); Wambua (1988); Mueni (1999) largely attributed to the high poverty levels amongst Kenyans. This situation has resulted into inadequacy of physical and material resources in the instructional processes. This was found to be a true case as most parents could barely support and implementation the cost sharing education policy in schools. Luckily, the Kenyan government has addressed the resource problem by providing funds to schools to buy the instructional materials. On the other hand, Bright (1970) observes that reading helps learners improve their speaking skills. As a result, teachers of English ought to encourage learners to do extensive reading which though due to insufficiency of reading materials might be impossible. The current study thus intends to find out if the instructional resources used to teaching speaking skills in English are available and their contribution to acquisition of those skills in English.

b) Adequacy, accessibility and utilization of instructional resources

Successful teaching will only be realized if instructional materials are availed adequately for use in the classroom (Igwe, 2014). Mutai (2006) in his study observed that academic
success largely depends on the correct use of the instructional materials. On the same
note, Kitheka (2005) carried out a study in Mbeere south, Embu county on factors
contributing to students’ poor performance in KCSE. Findings from the study indicated
that at times schools with enough instructional resources may not at all times utilize them
efficiently. This scenario eventually leads to students’ poor performance in examinations.
On the same disposition, in 2005 KCSE examination results published in the Daily
Nation and the Standard newspapers of March 2 2006 Munyori (2006), noted that some
national schools were a national shame. The remark was attributed to the poor
performance of three national secondary schools that tailed that year in KCSE exam
despite having variety of instructional resources. In the same disposition Okeke (2005)
affirms that lack of these materials in the instructional process deters the whole process of
teaching and learning. However, Kitheka (2005) contends that some schools may have
few instructional materials but use them efficiently hence enhancing learning and
attainment of educational goals and objectives. Kitheka (2005) in his study observed that
availability of instructional resources in schools is one factor that affects academic
performance of students. The author further adds that inadequacy of these materials could
lead to poor performance in schools. Okeke (2005) argues further that the teacher who
uses these materials ought to have the knowledge on how to manipulate and operate the
available aids and therefore needs to have the knowledge in the instructional resources to
ensure they are effectively used. Some of these instructional resources include:
2.3.1 Resource centre

This includes instructional resources like: a language lab, a library and a variety of audio-visual materials. Communication is vital in oral communication lessons in general. Krashen and Terrell (1988) argue against language teachers who use teaching methods which hardly engage students in real communication. This implies that teachers in communicative classrooms ought to talk less but listen more while students do most of the talking because the teacher already knows more English than students. Doff (1988) claims that language teachers should teach using examples and repetition in addition to explanations to enable students acquire enough meaningful English vocabulary for use in various situations.

Teaching aids too are very helpful in language teaching in promoting perception, understanding reinforcing the verbal message, help in memorizing what has been learnt, act as motivation and stimulates students’ interest towards the learning through students’ use of the five senses to appropriately learn. These teaching aids include wall charts, weather charts, maps of a local area or picture cards which can be displayed by the teacher on the chalk board or wall for students’ viewing (Doff, 1988). Krashen (1985) contends that teaching aids enable the teacher understand how much the learners have developed their communicative ability by looking at the use of fillers and hesitation. In addition, use of audios like radio and cassette recorders can help students develop their pronunciation and articulation of words through imitation of the models in the radio and also replaying the recorded sounds. Also learners can improve on their verbal
communicative ability by trying to describe their personal profiles which will need them to look for the right words to use in English corners for speaking hence fluency.

Kavulani (1996) carried out a related study in Kenya on teachers’ resource centres and their role in the teaching of English in secondary schools. Findings of the study indicated that the Bukembe Teachers’ Resource Centre has improved some teachers’ teaching skills through in-service courses. The same study in addition found that the resource centre provided teachers and students in member schools with reading materials. This implies that the availability of a resource centre in a school can greatly students access enough reading materials that they can use to enrich their vocabulary and later use the new words learnt to build on their speech.

2.3.2 Language Games

Language is a very important tool for communication as it enables one to express himself/herself well in order to be understood by other people. These games are one of the modern invented teaching aids that has been developed in the teaching of speaking skills in English to boost students’ confidence and socialization aspects. It is therefore the duty of the teacher to vary these games to suit learners’ needs in an instructional discourse. For instance, a teacher can use the class register, pick out few student names and ask meaningful English language questions for the students to respond. If this activity is repeatedly done, it can improve students’ use of the spoken English.
2.3.3 Language laboratory

A language laboratory is one of the modern facilities that has been devised to assist in the teaching of languages and in remedial classes. It constitutes a variety of audio-visual teaching aids and English speaking models that can help learners build their self-confidence when speaking English language, through oral practice and the feedback received from the English speaking models. The lab also exposes students to native speakers of English who model and teach students how to speak correct English through correct pronunciation of English words (Lightbown & Nina, 2013). Due to the immediate feedback native speakers provide, students who are learning a second language with no wide access to native speakers of English are likely to experience slower acquisition of the spoken English because they will be slow in oral aspects of acquisition than those extensively exposed. The current study will involve finding out if there are language labs in the schools for effective teaching and learning of speaking skills.

2.3.4 Newspapers in the teaching of English

Newspapers are one of the instructional resources used in the teaching of English language skills. Teachers of English can use newspaper materials to successfully prepare an activity like writing a letter to the editor, selecting a given material like the column for book reviews and also in task designing like description of a cartoon on a given page. So, the teacher should use the newspaper activities, very carefully because when effectively used in the teaching of English, newspapers motivate learners’ reading and speaking skills. The present study will therefore investigate if newspaper resources are available in the English departments for use in the classroom.
2.4 Methods used in the teaching of speaking skills

Each teacher is unique in his or her teaching when it comes to delivery of content. That is why some teachers can be described as effective or ineffective pedagogically. It therefore becomes the duty of all teachers to involve students in practical exercises which will foster the development of students’ speaking skills and also test these skills. Claesen (1984) views talking as a means of learning through exposure for students’ linguistic development to be achieved. Barnes (1969) adds that learners shape and reshape ideas through talking. Therefore spoken language is very important thus learners are expected to talk during classroom interaction. To enhance speaking in class, a teacher of English can employ various methods to enhance the development and acquisition of speaking skills in English. Barnes (1969) conducted a study in language to establish the effect of the language teachers use on the learning process. The author found out that the style of language used by the teacher could prevent the content from getting through to the learners and prevent some from contributing to the classroom dialogue.

Muthwii (1981) carried out a study on teacher pupil discourse events and teaching styles of 14 chemistry teachers in Machakos district, Kenya. The author found out that teacher’s talk dominated pupil-talk. In a related study by Gathumbi (1995) on pedagogy in verbal discourse events in a bilingual formal setting in the classroom, it was found that teacher talk dominated learner-talk. She added that learners were mainly participating in form of responding to teacher utterances. Njuguna (2000) also conducted a research on verbal classroom interaction patterns of selected secondary schools Home science teachers with
their students. Findings indicated that teachers highly controlled lessons and determined the type of learning to take place. This made learners not to participate creatively.

Mang’eni (2010) carried out a study to interrogate learners’ verbal communication in the English language during classroom interaction and it was found that group work was one of the methods which involved engaging students in debates and lively discussions. Learners should therefore be exposed to situations where they can use language in context (Gecaga, 1986). In this context, learners should be encouraged to express themselves orally, for example, in class discussions and be provided with opportunities for role-play, drama and debates. Gecaga (1986) goes on claiming that, if students are well exposed in their learning, minimal guidance is needed because they are able to gain more vocabulary and build in their use of language.

Mang’eni (2010) posits that, learning should take place by doing in order to produce the best results. Therefore, practical methods like group activities, inquiry, discovery and discussions should be very much emphasized by educators. The author further contends that, learners should be encouraged to express themselves orally in class discussion and where possible and be provided with radios, televisions (TVs) and videos because they promote students’ oral skills, aural skills and appeal to their senses. Moreover, the teacher of English too should continue perfecting own spoken English so as to serve as a role model for students to emulate. Kaye and Rogers (1968) support this argument by claiming that group work when managed well can lead to increased prospects for learners to speak English. This small group setting provides favorable context for the learners to use language freely from the teacher’s domination. In this respect, classroom teachers
should only be facilitators and enablers but not providers of knowledge. Besides, repetition and imitation be employed in the learning of speaking skills (Mang’eni, 2010).

Margret (2010) conducted a study on linguistic strategies teachers of English use to teach language oral skills. The study findings revealed that teachers taught using various strategies for learners to develop their English oral proficiency skills like dialogue, group and pair discussions and storytelling. Margret however in the study noted that debates were not adopted by the teachers due to the fact that debates seemed boring to teachers.

Mundui (2002) carried out a related study to scrutinize the interaction in English language lessons with a view to investigating the role teachers played in encouraging learners to speak. Findings for the study indicated that teachers used teacher-centred methods in teaching, that is, explanation, questioning other that discussion methods. Mundui (2002) found questioning method used to check the understanding of concepts by learners.

According to Gredler (1997), classroom and social contexts are very important for language learning to take place. As a result, teachers should help the learners learn by themselves by exposing them to contexts rich in English input instead of expecting learners to acquire new vocabulary naturally in an L2 just as children when acquiring their first language (Krashen & Terrel, 1988). This implies that, for a learner to competently speak in English, first, this learner should understand the meaning of the new vocabulary learnt in the second language and then use this new words within a given context hence successful language acquisition and learning. The present study thus seeks
to establish if teachers employ teaching methods that could motivate students to communicate fluently in English and if not, suggest the necessary recommendations.

2.5 The common errors that students make when speaking in English

Non-native users of English almost always tussle with all aspects of English (listening, writing, reading and speaking). Many also commit errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation. This is because there are aspects of English that make it very confusing and utterly difficult for non-native English learners. For example, in the study of ESL, students have the knowledge of using a number of adjectives when describing somebody or something. This therefore means that, students ought to be very keen in using these adjectives in their correct order in the sentence; Opinion, Size, Shape, Age, Colour, Nationality and finally Material. These errors are particular to the English language, with no clear rules stating when to use the prefix or the suffix forms and mostly due to unfamiliarity with vocabulary. For example; Did you buy the Maasai bluish blanket? (Wrong) did you buy the bluish Maasai blanket? (Right).

Wrong use of English articles also lend many speakers of English to use the language erroneously. Bautisa (2011) suggests that: a) article *a, an* is used for a non-specific, singular, count noun. Example: a cow, an egg. b) *The* is used for specific, singular or plural nouns. Example: the heroic Luo legend Lwanda Magere, the award-winning song. Inappropriate use of prepositions, tenses in English as well as repetition are the other common aspects that need to be scrutinized for fluency in speech to be realized.
Muriungi and Mbui (2013) conducted a related study to investigate how mother tongue influenced the acquisition of English language among day secondary school students. In this particular study it was found that the environment is key for a L2 to be acquired effectively as it helps minimize on the impediments that could hamper the successful attainment of reasonable competence in English language. From their findings, it was observed that pronunciation was the most common error instigated by lack of constant practice in speaking English. Students were found making pronunciation errors when reading a loud or when participating in class discussions. The other errors found out included: a) Phonological errors where students pronounced words wrongly like ‘acadamia’ instead of ‘academia’, ‘leave’ Vs ‘live’. b) Morphological errors where students were found adding morpheme‘s’ in every word without knowing that not all words form plurals by adding ‘s’. For example, ‘Advicés’, ‘furniturés’ instead of ‘advise’ and ‘furniture.’ That showed that students suffered faulty overgeneralization and incomplete application of rules as well as not knowing when to apply the rules. c) Syntactic errors where students constructed sentences without Agreement and that was attributed to mother tongue influence. For example, one student greeted another saying:

‘How is you?’ The use of ‘is’ makes the sentence to sound like slang language instead the sentence was supposed to be; ‘How are you?’

This showed that students did not conform to English syntactic rules of Subject Verb Agreement. All these errors made the researchers conclude that learners from day secondary schools in Imenti South lacked communicative competence in English language.
Other errors common to other speakers of English like the Spanish and Malaysians apart from the above discussed ones include: the omission of the subject, confusing the gender, making literal translations of statements, incorrect pronunciation of words as a result of accent and the use of homophones and subject verb disagreements which end up confusing many speakers (Aditya, 2011).

Some of the common verb problems Malaysian students encountered similar to Kenyan students and their correct counterparts:

1a) She friended me on facebook (wrong).

b) She added me as a friend on facebook (right).

2a) I asked him to less the price but he said no (wrong).

b) I asked him to lower the price but he said no (right).

3a) My grandfather dead last year (wrong).

b) My grandfather died last year (right).

2.6 Other factors affecting the acquisition of speaking skills in English

English language is not the first language to Kenyan students. It is rather learned as a second language. Through this process of acquisition, students face a number of challenges that obstruct them from being fluent speakers of English. Early scholarly works done in a similar field in other countries indicate that acquisition of speaking skills in English is influenced by a number of factors. These factors include:

a) Family background and environment

The students’ home environment and background is fundamental in the acquisition of a second language process. For example, Indian students whose parents are peasants with
a poor educational background experience difficulties when asked to speak in English. In addition, the poverty levels in Indians is found to force most parents to involve students in money-generating activities at the expense of sending these students to schools resulting into poor speakers of English due to lack of exposure (Spratt et al, 2005). This scenario shows that students’ family background apparently affects the acquisition of speaking skills in English.

b) Mother-tongue

Findings in a study conducted in India by Kansakar (1998) on the effect of mother tongue (Indian) on acquisition of a foreign or a second language, indicated that articulation of words, their speech pattern, pitch, and the sound system impacted greatly on the acquisition of a FL or L2. Therefore, the mismatch between Indian mother tongue and English language in terms of these features earlier mentioned, ends up confusing students. The confusion comes as students are required to first unlearn all the linguistic features in their MT then start to learn the English features for acquisition of English to take place (Kansakar, 1998). In relation to this, students learn to communicate in English while bringing in MT interference which leads to varieties of ‘Englishes’ and misunderstanding.

In the same context, learners tend to do literal mother tongue translations when speaking in English. According to (Baker and Westrup, 2000; KIE, 2006; Kisilu & Lelei, 2008), making translations into MT as a way of conveying the meaning of new items should be avoided at all costs. In a similar study done in a University in Vietnam, languages used by students while thinking and speaking English were examined. Findings of the study
revealed that a substantial number of students thought in Vietnamese language when they were speaking in English. Wenden (2005) observed that designing the spoken word in the local (native) language and then translating it to another language is disastrous for students as it affects the acquisition of the target language (English). This is a similar case with Indian students who are fond of using their mother tongue when involved in English speaking and writing activities. Mother tongue influence therefore prevents students from acquiring the correct English and increases students’ vulnerability to English spoken errors which could be managed through practicing to speak good English in various contexts. This same scenario applies to Kenyan students.

In a similar study done in Malaysia, it was found that the factors that caused low English language learning and acquisition among students included: students lacked self confidence when using English language as they saw English as a difficult language (Souriyavongsa et al, 2013). Muriungi and Mbu (2013) also conducted a similar study to investigate how mother tongue influenced the acquisition of English language and the findings of the study indicated that mother tongue hindered students from acquiring the language. The authors in the study pointed out that in order to acquire an L2 successfully, the students’ learning environment should be enabling for reasonable levels of competence in English language to be achieved. This suggests therefore that, English language ought to be taught in contexts rich in English input and support (Belchamber, 2007).
c) **Motivation**

Motivation is key in second language learning and acquisition process. Reece & Walker (1997) emphasize that a less able student who is highly motivated can achieve greater success than the more intelligent student who is not well motivated. Crookes & Schmidt (1991) view motivation from various perspectives; in terms of choice, engagement and persistence as determined by interest, relevance, expectancy and outcome. The authors further argue that motivation depends mainly on the social interaction between teachers and learners. Cooper & McIntyre (1998) claim that highly motivated students necessitate strong interpersonal and social interaction hence creating an effective learning environment.

Macaro (2010) observes that intrinsic motivation is greatly associated with educational success. Implying that students who are persistently encouraged to learn eventually do better than those less encouraged. Thus students from families that value English language learning are likely to acquire English faster than those who less value the language. Clearly, students who enjoy language learning and take pride in their progress will do better than those who do not. The author further maintains that students who are given continuing, appropriate encouragement to learn by their teachers and parents will generally fare better than those who are not. For instance, students from families that place little importance on English language learning are likely to progress less quickly.

According to Philpot (2007) lower motivation levels or lack of motivation hinders learners from actively participating in speaking activities. This therefore implies that learners need to be given ample time free from interruption when involved in any
conversation with minimal correction of what they are saying as this motivates them a great deal. Also teachers should always appreciate any slight improvement made by students towards using English correctly in the right context. The consequence of close monitoring and correcting learners’ spoken language by the teacher will translate to reluctance by the student in participating in the speaking activities leading to poor practice or no practice at all.

d) Poor orientation

Research has shown that many students can hardly communicate in English correctly without grammatical errors despite completing their ‘O’ level of education or even going up to university. This inefficiency is well attributed to the fact that students view English as an examination subject rather than a language to be practiced for use in various contexts. This perception makes students to give English less emphasis hence ignoring the language. According to Spratt, Pulverness and Williams (2005), learners’ speaking skills can be developed regularly by emphasizing on fluency and pronunciation aspects of speaking through the achievement of grammatical competence and accuracy when speaking English language.

e) School language policy and speaking skills in English

In Kenya, there are two main languages acceptable to be used in the school domain: English and Kiswahili. Others are foreign languages like French, Arabic and German. English is the official language since the leadership of the 1st president of Kenya, His Excellency, President Jomo Kenyatta after independence 1963. Kiswahili (Swahili), on the other hand, is the Kenyan national language spoken by majority of Kenyans and a
lingua franca. It also attempts to unify other African countries like Tanzania, Burundi, Uganda and Zaire. However, in 2010 the 3rd president of Kenya Honourable Mwai Emilio Kibaki in the new promulgated Constitution declared Kiswahili an official language, which had been initially used as a national language. This made Kenya have 2 official languages English and Kiswahili in addition to Sign Language (Kibui, 2014).

f) Poor listening skills

The central role of listening comprehension in the second/foreign language acquisition process is now largely accepted. Listening plays an extremely important role in the development of speaking abilities. Usually, one person speaks and the other responds by means of the listening process. In fact, during interaction, every speaker plays a duo role (as a listener and a speaker). If one cannot understand what is said, one is certainly unable to respond. So, speaking is closely interwoven with listening skills.

Bwire (2007) supports the view that there is a direct relationship between listening and speaking skills in a communication process, that is, “speaking and listening are reciprocal activities with both playing different roles” (Bwire, 2007: 59). Research has shown that, there is reciprocity between reading and oral language. DeGelder and Morais (1995) argue that as skills in some aspect of oral language increase, they help development in reading, and as a person improves his reading skills, that improvement seems to enhance further improvement in the spoken language. Bwire (2007) maintains that spoken language relies greatly on intonation and paralinguistic features like gestures and facial expressions for its meaning. This means that meaning precedes speaking in the language learning process. This statement is in agreement with Syomwene (2013) who argues that
the meaning of new words is affected by the characteristics associated with spoken Language like presence of hesitation, use of fillers like “er”, ”em”, and continuous repetition of phrases. Another problem associated with spoken language is “the contradiction of the standard dialectal or standard written form which may sometimes be dialectal or results of rhythm and stress in the flow of speech” (Bwire, 2007:p.60). Also emotions associated with spoken language like annoyance and excitement as expressed in intonation can be difficult to represent in writing except when complemented by phrases like “said excitedly”. This shows that spoken Language has a great impact on listening as well as writing because the listener will not print to describe these emotions explicitly.

In addition, the spoken Language limits the freedom of listener in terms of what to listen to and at what pace. This is so because in spoken Language, the words are spoken once and the listener may or may not hear them all. If the listener’s mind starts to wander looking for the lost information, the listener may totally lose things said later unless the speaker decides to repeat it or print speech (Bwire, 2007). The author moreover, says that sometimes propaganda and inflection in speaking might render the listener misunderstanding, misinterpreting, being influenced adversely or being misled in listening than in reading. Therefore for effective speaking to be said to take place, the listener should be able to grasp and understand all that is said and the spoken word should translate to a written form with a lot of ease. Thus speaking and listening co-exist mutually.
g) Lack of confidence

According to a research done in India, this is the most common problem encountered by learners in the language acquisition process. Speaking activities require a learner to have all eyes on him. This exposure to an audience can often give learners stage fright due to lack of confidence and shyness. In relation to a study done in Hanoi University, Vietnam, students did not speak fluently due to lack of confidence. (Baker & Westrup, 2003) observe that shyness is very likely to occur when students speak English because most students do not prepare what to say and also underestimate speaking as a skill. Instead, a majority of the students only picture what to say in mind but remain silent.

h) Anxiety

Anxiety can be caused by a student speaking a foreign language (FL) or second language (L2) in public. This can make many students be tongue-tied or lost for words in an unexpected situation leading to discouragement and a general sense of failure in the learners. Adults view making errors as a public display of ignorance which will be an obvious occasion of losing face (Cao, 2011). These learners may also be worried about making mistakes, being criticized or losing face in front of the rest of the class. This results in their performance where they either make a lot of mistakes in spite of having a very good knowledge in the area or totally keeping silent.

i) Lack of proper vocabulary

Students of English sometimes face the problem of having to search for an appropriate word in order to fit into a particular context (Tarone, 2005). This happens because of lack of exposure to a variety of vocabulary. Baker and Westrup (2003) argue that
learners sometimes may have little idea about what to say, may not know the words to use, or may not be sure how to use the grammar. Celce-murcia, Brinton & Goodwin (1996) claim that the acquisition of good pronunciation is commonly held to be the most difficult of all tasks in second language learning. This was evident in a study conducted in Hanoi University, Vietnam where most students reported to be one of the problems hindering them from being proficient speakers of English. This will eventually lead to failure in communicating fluently in English language, which will again lead to losing of confidence and lack of motivation to speak.

j) Peer influence

To establish influence of peers on acquisition of speaking in a second language, 2 classroom experiments were organized to examine the effects of peer tutoring intervention on the second language acquisition of secondary school students. English acquisition by limited English-speaking Mexican American students was measured in the 1st experiment and was measured Spanish acquisition by limited Spanish–speaking Mexican American students was measured in experiment 2. The subjects were matched on an overall language proficiency and on a verbal interaction score and assigned to treatment and control groups. In experiment 1, it was found that there was significant group differences in frequency of English utterances to peers in a structured setting with the difference favouring the treatment group. The correlation analysis indicated significant relationship between English proficiency and verbal interaction in English with peers.
From both the experiment group and control group in experiment 2, the frequency of Spanish utterances to peers in free play decreased, resulting in the almost total absence of Spanish use by the students. These findings suggested that peer tutoring may be an effective means of encouraging interaction between Mexican American students acquiring English and their fluent English-speaking peers (Diane, 2012).

k) Age and enrolment

Although there is no particular policy regarding the optimum age for sitting for the national examinations, there should be an appropriate age for a pupil to enroll in school. Mugo (2016) suggested a child to be in class one at 7 years. Mr Mugo John, Uwezo Kenya Country Co-ordinator observed in the Standard Newspaper of 2nd November, 2016 in the released KCPE exam results that children should get to standard one at 7 years. This should be so because this is the time they are emotionally, psychologically developed and are ready to do class work (p: 8).

Further, in the same released KCPE results among the Counties that registered overage candidates for KCPE 2016 was Turkana County. The said County had registered the highest number of candidates above 19 years of age 2,850 in total. This case was attributed to the harsh living conditions in the area that could have contributed to delayed enrolment. This apparently affected their KCPE performance to be poor compared to Counties like Nairobi with majority of average aged candidates (14 years). However, a number of Counties recorded underage students for standard 8 nationally including Nairobi and Bungoma.
This scenario was attributed to the fact that most parents are working class and they have no time to take care of their children and are forced to keep them in school making them start school early (The Standard, 2016:8).

In a related study done in Malaysia, it was found that the factors that caused poor acquisition of English proficiency among students included: poor training of teachers, the language of instruction (Lao language), learners had a poor English language foundation, the students lacked self confidence when using the language, an inappropriate curriculum, saw English as a difficult language, did not practice speaking the TL and also the learning environment was crowded and noisy not fit for learning to take place (Souriavongsa et al, 2013).

In another study done in Australia, the factors that affected acquisition of English language among Australian students included: the learners changing habits, the cultural backgrounds, lack of strict rules in the pronunciation of their MT (Cao, 2011). Cao in addition found that anxiety was another factor where students were found out to be afraid of making mistakes in the classes. Also students had a poor socio economic background (Khattak et al, 2011).

In a related study conducted in Arabia on problems encountered by Arab L2 learners showed that learners preferred to use Arabic rather than English when communication both outside and inside the classroom. The students also lacked exposure to the TL as spoken by its native speakers, the language teaching context and lack of their personal motivation (Loae, 2011). Loae presented the various factors that impact the L2 learners to have poor English language learning and acquisition as follows:
i. They regarded English as difficult (attitude).

ii. Learners depended on the English teachers as authorities.

iii. Not motivated to use English in the home environment and community.

iv. Learners lacked exposure to the language as they rarely use English outside and inside the classrooms.

v. Learners had limited vocabulary proficiency and lacked enough reading materials.

vi. Lack of motivation and negative attitude towards English as the target language.

2.7 Summary of the Literature

From the reviewed literature, it is clear that speaking in English is a very important skill in people’s as it the means by which communication takes place and that acquisition of speaking skills in English in countries like India and Vietnam is greatly affected by various factors. Therefore, a lot of emphasis needs to be put to ensure higher levels of proficiency are achieved among the learners in terms of communicative ability.

However, no research has been conducted to show the factors affecting the acquisition of speaking skills in English among students in public secondary schools in Turkana East District. This study therefore, will be a response to this need.

The ensuing chapter focuses on the research design employed, variables under study, the study locale, target population, sampling procedures and sample size, research instruments, piloting, data collection techniques, data analysis and lastly ethical and logistical considerations.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the research design, the study locale, target population, sampling procedures and sample size, research instruments, piloting, data collection techniques, data analysis and lastly ethical and logistical considerations.

3.2 Research design

This study employed a descriptive survey design which enabled the researcher access information on the teachers’, students’ and heads of department views on factors affecting students’ successful acquisition of speaking skills in English during classroom interaction. This research design entails finding out what is so observational and the collected data is analyzed descriptively. Borg and Gall (1989) note that descriptive survey research is intended to produce statistical information about aspects of education that interest policy makers and educators. Gay (1992) contends that the descriptive survey approach enables one to obtain information that describes existing phenomena by asking individuals about their perceptions, attitudes, behavior or values. The author further argues that the advantage of using descriptive survey method is, economical because one can study a large sample within a short time.

This design, therefore, fitted well into this study since it allowed the researcher investigate variables like attitudes and characteristics that could not be investigated by direct observation but are best studied using the qualitative method (Mugenda and
Mugenda, 1999). By involving teachers and students, the present study fitted within the cross-sectional sub-type of descriptive survey study.

3.3 Variables

The independent variables included: teaching methods used, the instructional resources used to teach speaking skills in English, the time students were given for contextual use of language and school language policy in place. Intervening variables in the study included: the student’s home environment, the age of the learner, motivation of learners and teachers, student’s attitude towards English, peer influence on the acquisition process, confidence, vocabulary, anxiety and the student’s listening skills. All these factors directly or indirectly influenced the achievement of proficiency in speaking of English which was the dependent variable in this study.

3.4 The study locale

The study was conducted in Turkana East District in Turkana County, Kenya. At the time of this study, the district had five public secondary schools (as illustrated in chapter 1). The district was selected for study because of the perennial poor performance in English in Secondary Schools in the District (see background to the study) also provoked an investigation in the particular area of study. Pupils in this district started school late because of the region’s nomadic lifestyle and when they were too old to learn the four basic language skills. The four skills include: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Ideally, these skills, according to the curriculum, are supposed to be taught and learnt at the elementary level which was not the case here due to the delayed enrolment. This is also evidenced in students’ pronunciation when expressing themselves especially in
debates, classroom discussions and interactions despite going through the English language syllabus which emphasizes the teaching of speaking skills. Lastly, Turkana East was an area of interest as compared to the other districts in the county. Singletone (1993) in support of this argument contends that, the ideal setting for any study is one that is directly related to the researcher’s interests.

The district is bordered by other districts: Turkana Central, Turkana North, Turkana South and Turkana West (Loima). Turkana East is located about 720 km away from Nairobi and about 560 km away from Nakuru town (the Rift Valley headquarters). The district has five (5) public secondary schools, three of which (at the time of the study) had registered students for KCSE while two are newly established. The inhabitants of the district live a nomadic lifestyle with livestock being their source of livelihood (domestic and economic). They are ever migrating in search of water and pasture for their animals. Historically, Turkana Community has always been in an unending warring conflict with the neighbouring Pokot community over local banditry, water and pasture and this has greatly hampered the development of sectors like education. The district is also characterized by unrelenting famine and drought which has to a great extent affected the lives of the residents, thus putting priority on relief food from well-wishers rather than greatly investing in education.

3.5 Target population

Target population is described as the population of interest from which the individual participant for the measurement is taken (Cooper, 1998). This study targeted public secondary schools in Turkana East District which has five public district secondary
schools of which two (2) were boys’ boarding Schools, two (2) mixed gender boarding Schools and one a girls’ boarding School with a total population of 1210 students. Teachers of English at the time of study were nine (9) out of which 4 were heads of department (HoD) except in one school where a Kiswahili teacher was the head of department. Both teachers and students made a total of 1219 respondents.

3.6. Sampling procedures

In order to obtain a sample for the study, stratified random sampling technique was first used in order to achieve desired representation from the various sub-groups in the population. It was also used to ensure that the existing sub-groups in the population were more or less reproduced in the sample (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). All the five public secondary schools were chosen for the study because there were no private secondary schools in the district. Out of these 5 public schools, three (3) schools were used for the study while two (2) were used to conduct a pilot study. Out of the two mixed schools, one school was selected randomly; one boys’ school was selected from the two boys’ boarding schools and the only Girls’ Boarding School was purposively selected being the only Girls’ school adding up to 60% of the schools in the district. The selected sample formed a representative sample of the public secondary schools available in Turkana East sub-county. Form three students were selected for the sample because they had already gone through the form two syllabus which emphasizes the teaching of speaking skills. In addition, all form three teachers of English from the three secondary schools were selected for the study since their number was small.
3.7 Sample size

For the sample size, three public secondary schools, form three students, form three teachers of English and the heads of English department were selected. It is therefore important to note that, since the district had few schools and students, then all students, teachers and HoDs formed the sample. Table 3.1 shows the sampling grid for the study:

Table 3.1: Sampling Grid

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. #</th>
<th>School category</th>
<th>Total schools</th>
<th>Sampled schools</th>
<th>Total population sampled</th>
<th>English language teachers</th>
<th>HoD</th>
<th>Total respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Boys’ Boarding</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Mixed Boarding</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Girls’ Boarding</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Total respondents 145 instead of 146 because one teacher was also the HoD.

3.8 Research Instruments

The study employed four instruments: questionnaires for teachers of English and students, lesson observation schedule, interview schedule for English HoDs and a checklist for instructional resources. Below is a detailed description of the instruments.

(a) Questionnaire for teachers and students

The researcher used semi-structured questionnaires for teachers and students which were administered to teachers of English and form three students. The questionnaires for teachers and students were preferred in the study because they were the best instruments to gather information about peoples’ opinions and attitudes and also efficient in collecting facts and easy to administer ((Baker and Westrup, 2003). Questionnaires for students
were used to gather important information on the errors students made when speaking in English as well as factors which affected acquisition of speaking skills in English. On the other hand, questionnaires for teachers were used to gather information on instructional resources used in teaching speaking skills, factors affecting the teaching and acquisition of speaking skills in English, methods used in teaching speaking skills and the errors students made when speaking in English.

(b) **Interview schedule for English HoDs**

The researcher used an interview schedule for collecting data on the instructional resources used in the teaching of speaking skills in English and the factors that affected students’ acquisition of speaking skills.

(c) **A Lesson observation schedule for teachers and students**

The researcher observed actual teaching in the classrooms twice in each of the three selected secondary schools in two different sessions. The purpose for observing teachers teach was to enable the researcher draw conclusions on the instructional resources used in teaching of speaking skills in English. Moreover, the researcher investigated the teaching methods used and how these methods motivated students to spoken English in the right context. In addition, errors students made while speaking English were another issue to be looked into. Besides, teachers’ language of instruction was also noted for further analysis.

(d) **A checklist for instructional resources available in English departments**

A checklist was constructed to purposely summarize information on the availability, adequacy and accessibility of the instructional resources used by both teachers and
students in the classroom. These resources were listed in a table against which the researcher checked them by ticking where appropriate.

3.9 Piloting

The research instruments were pre-tested in two of the five public secondary schools (one Boys’ and one Mixed Boarding Schools) within the area of study but the schools were not included in the main study. During the pre-testing form three teachers of English and 20 students from each of the two schools filled questionnaires while English HoDs were interviewed. The results obtained from piloting helped improve the research instruments by removing irrelevant questions unrelated to the study objectives, spelling errors in some questions, wrong ordering of questions, and ambiguities in some of the questions. Moreover, piloting helped measure the validity and reliability of the research instruments.

(a) Validity

Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) define validity as the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of the data actually represent the phenomenon under study. The study was interested in content, criterion and construct validity. Content validity was used to assess whether the content of the questionnaires, lesson observation schedules and the interview schedules measured what they were supposed to measure. The instruments were presented to experts in the area of study who then helped improve them. In addition, the opinion from the researcher’s supervisors was of great help concerning how relevant the content in the instruments was with regard to the objectives of the study. Lastly, piloting, testing and re-testing the instruments helped limit the discrepancies that could have arose in the actual study. The researcher’s supervisors’ opinions and feedback from
piloting in form of recommendations to the researcher were all incorporated in the final instruments for validation.

(b) Reliability

Reliability is defined as the measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results on data after repeated trials. Van Dalen (1966) describes a reliable research instrument as that which consistently yields the same results over repeated measurements taken on the same respondents under the same conditions. Questionnaires for teachers and questionnaires for students were tested for reliability using test-retest test. The analysis of the test-retest test was done using Spearman’s correlation coefficient. The analysis indicated that teachers’ questionnaires correlation coefficient was at 0.78 while for the students’ questionnaires was at 0.86. The questionnaires were reliable because as the correlation coefficient approaches 1, the more reliable the instrument is.

3.10 Data collection techniques

Both quantitative and qualitative techniques were used in collecting and analyzing data because the methods supplement each other. The qualitative methods provided in-depth explanations while quantitative methods provided hard data needed to meet the objectives of the study. Quantitative technique enabled the researcher collect data using questionnaires whereas qualitative technique involved use of interviews, checklists and observation to collect respondents’ views and information intended. Using the qualitative technique, the researcher gathered information, interpreted, summarized and presented the analyzed data, whereas the quantitative technique was useful in calculating and presenting the analyzed data by use of tables, charts and graphs for summary.
The researcher thereafter embarked on data collection process using the research instruments as follows:

(a) **Questionnaires**

The researcher collected data by first visiting the schools and after creating rapport and receiving permission from the school administration. After that, teachers of English were given questionnaires to fill and agreed the researcher to pick them after two weeks. The researcher organized with the class teachers on a day and agreed time to meet and administer questionnaires to students. Then after, the researcher visited the schools as agreed, assembled the students in one classroom and administered the questionnaires for the students. After students had satisfactorily filled the questionnaires, the researcher collected the instruments. This ensured 100% collection.

(b) **Interview schedule**

The researcher visited the schools, met the HoDs and agreed on when to meet and the venue. Later, the researcher met each HoD in a quiet place and in about twenty minutes conducted the interview using the interview schedule.

(c) **Lesson observation schedule**

The researcher visited the schools and met the sampled teachers of English and agreed on when to observe their lessons. Then after, each teacher was observed teach twice in each of the three schools. The area of concern was on how the teacher taught speaking skills in English and the instructional resources used in teaching speaking skills. The researcher made general comments regarding the instructional resources used in teaching speaking skills in English (See Appendix V).
(d) A checklist for instructional resources

As stated earlier, the researcher was interested in investigating the availability of instructional resources used in the teaching of speaking skills in English, their adequacy and accessibility for successful teaching of speaking skills and acquisition to take place. This was done by the researcher who visited the English department to ascertain the reality on the ground about all these aspects.

3.11 Data analysis

In this study data were analyzed as per the objectives and the research questions. The Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) was used. Quantitative data was collected using questionnaires where the instruments were collected from teachers and students immediately upon being well filled. Then after, the instruments were carefully inspected, sorted out, cleaned, verified and then finally coded then entered in the computer for descriptive analysis. The analyzed data was presented using tables, figures, graphs, percentages and frequencies. While the qualitative data collected using interview schedules, lesson observation schedules and the checklists were qualitatively analyzed by first being organized into various themes based on the variables under study then finally coded and entered in the computer for analysis. The analyzed data was presented using tables, percentages, charts, and graphs. Research findings were then drawn from the analyzed data and research conclusions and recommendations made. Conclusions and recommendations arrived at, paved way for making suggestions on areas that needed further investigation.
3.12 Ethical and logistical considerations

The researcher first obtained a permit to do research on the area under study from Kenyatta University Graduate School, the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI), Turkana County Director of Education through Turkana County District Commissioner and the Principals from the selected schools prior to data collection to ensure access into the field.

The researcher also assured the respondents that the data provided by them was to be kept confidential. by first creating awareness on the purpose of the study. The researcher moreover, ensured that the collected data was kept under key and lock with a view to safeguard the respondents’ privacy. The researcher also ensured that conclusions made based on the findings drawn from the data collected was going to be used for any other reasons other than for the intended research purposes only.

The next chapter focused on presentation of data as collected and the discussion of the research findings.
CHAPTER FOUR

REPORTING AND DISCUSSIONS OF THE FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings and discussions of the study that sought to establish the factors that affect students’ acquisition of speaking skills in English in Turkana East Sub-County, Kenya. Data was collected using questionnaires, interviews, lesson observation schedules and checklist for instructional resources and analyzed using the SPSS program. Data analysis was done according to the research objectives and presented descriptively using charts, tables and bar graphs. The objectives of the study were to:

i. Find out which instructional resources were used in the teaching of speaking skills in English.

ii. Establish the teaching methods used in the teaching of speaking skills.

iii. Establish the common errors that students made when speaking in English.

iv. Identify other factors which affected students’ acquisition of speaking skills in English.

Data was analyzed by looking at the demographic information first. The findings were presented and discussed in 4.2.

4.2 Biographic information of the participants

The biographic data for this study included the age and gender of the students. In terms of age, 4 students were aged below 15 years, 132 between 15-20 and one aged 23 years. On the basis of gender, there were 54 male and 83 female students. The schools categories used in this study were public secondary schools which included; a Boys’
Boarding School, a Girls’ Boarding School and a Mixed Boarding Secondary School. Form three students formed the sample for the study in each of these schools with 36 students from the Boys’ Boarding School, 33 students from the Mixed Secondary School and 68 students from the Girls’ Boarding School respectively.

4.3 Objective 1: Instructional resources used in teaching speaking skills in English

Instructional resources are very important for teaching, learning and acquisition of English language to take place effectively. However, lack of these resources can have a negative impact on students’ acquisition of good spoken English because learners are limited from learning more vocabulary which can help them improve their speech. Cohen (1996) argues that students who are exposed to a variety of instructional resources develop their speaking proficiency easier than those less exposed to these resources. The success of any learning process greatly depends on the instructional procedures which should be adequate and properly utilized. Onyejemezi (1998) posits that, when instructional resources are properly used, they reinforce verbal message, get hold of the learners’ attention, provide for direct interaction of students with the reality of the social and physical environments and also facilitate teaching and learning if in good supply, rich in variety and range.

For satisfactory findings to be obtained on the instructional resources used in the teaching of English for speaking proficiency to be achieved, heads of department (HoDs), teachers and students were cross-examined on the availability, adequacy, accessibility and utilization of the instructional resources. Further verification was done through observation of actual teaching in the classroom and the resources used. A checklist for
instructional resources was also used to ascertain the availability of the resources in English department.

When respondents were asked to indicate the availability, adequacy and accessibility of the resources used in the teaching and learning of speaking skills in English, their responses are discussed herein. The responses came from students, teachers, HoDs and researcher’s observation.

4.3.1 Students’ responses on availability, adequacy and accessibility of instructional resources

When students were asked about the instructional resources used in the teaching and learning of English speaking skills, their responses are indicated in figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1: Students’ responses on the availability, accessibility and adequacy of instructional resources

n=137 students
The respondents, when asked to indicate the availability, accessibility and adequacy of the resources used for teaching and learning English speaking skills, their responses are as summarized in figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1 indicates that (93%) of the students agreed that English course books were readily available followed by (91%) literary texts. This was so because these course books and literary texts are the ones recommended by the Ministry of Education to be used in the English language curriculum. In terms of accessibility, majority of the students, (77%), indicated that English course books were mostly accessible followed by, 75%, literary texts respectively.

Out of 137 students only a negligible number of students, 09%, indicated that language laboratories were available. However, this response was not true because from the visitation done to the schools, no language lab was found available. The contradiction came about as students failed to distinguish them from science labs. Consequently, lack of English language laboratories denies students opportunities to have enough practice in speech work to improve their fluency. In addition, lack of these language laboratories made it difficult for learners to identify the verbal errors they made while communicating for self-correction through playback. This limits learners’ exposure to English language input.

Research has shown that a language laboratory is very useful for assessing students' speech as it provides students with the technical tools to get the best samples of pronunciation of the language. The electronic devices used in the laboratory stimulate the eyes and ears of the learner to acquire English language quickly and easily. The
laboratory’s collection is designed to assist learners in the acquisition and maintenance of aural comprehension, oral and written proficiency (Richards, 2001).

In terms of adequacy, out of the 137 students, 69% indicated that the English course books were adequate followed by literary texts, 58% respectively. The reducing availability of mobile phones, 39%, in the classroom was attributed to the policy from the Ministry of Education and KNEC which directs that students not be in possession of mobile phones while in school. Out of the 137 students, 25%, indicated that the radio was available in two schools and 32% of the students indicated that the television was also available in two schools though kept in the staffroom for teachers’ viewing and listening thus not accessible for classroom use (See Appendix II). This implies that despite the instructional resources being available in the schools, they are not effectively utilized in the teaching of speaking skills in English. The availability of instructional materials has a direct impact on learners’ acquisition of English skills since the learner is denied enough input, exposure and context to practice use of the language.

From research, it is argued that those students who have an exposure to varieties of these instructional materials like charts, tape recorders, radio, television programmes and pictures develop their speaking proficiency easily than those not exposed to these materials (Cohen, 1996). This is true because these resources provoke their senses as well providing good English models that students imitate. Instructional materials in teaching are functional and serve a useful purpose in the teaching and learning situation. These resources, therefore, should be changeable over a period of time in the teaching and learning process and the environment where they are used too. Instructional materials
help in stimulating and motivating learning as this makes students to learn best by doing. Therefore, for educational objectives to be achieved these resources should be made available in the classroom.

Onyejemezi (1998) stresses that these resources are pre-requisite for learning. The author further adds that, learning takes place when learners are fully involved in the learning process through the use of proper and variety of instructional materials in teaching.

4.3.2 Teachers’ responses regarding availability, adequacy and accessibility

When teachers were asked about the availability, adequacy and accessibility of instructional resources used to teach English speaking skills, they gave varied opinions. The responses were based on a ‘Yes’ ‘No’ scale as shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Teachers’ responses on the adequacy, availability and accessibility of teaching resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Resource</th>
<th>Availability</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Accessibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English Course Books</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literary and Non-literary texts</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chalkboard</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio Cassettes and recorders</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recorded speeches</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 4.1, all the teachers (4) indicated that English course books, literary and non-literary texts and the chalkboard were readily available, while audio cassettes and recorders and recorded speeches were not. On adequacy, all the 4 teachers reported that
the chalkboard was the only resource which was adequate while the course books, literary and non-literary texts were inadequate. The reason for inadequacy was said to be relative depending on the size of the class at the time when the books were purchased. Any variation in the class sizes affected the use of the available texts hence the sharing whenever a situation arose. It was also noted that audio cassettes, recorders and recorded speeches were not available. On the other hand, in terms of accessibility, English course books, literary texts and the chalkboard were accessible for classroom use.

From the teachers’ responses, it was apparent that the most readily available resources were English course books, literary texts and the chalkboard. Availability of English course books and literary texts was attributed to the fact that these were the recommended texts by the Ministry of Education and the syllabus, which emphasizes the integrated approach in teaching English. For the chalkboard, it is the central instructional resource used in the teaching and learning process as it is used for writing by the teacher.

On the same note, there was need to assess the number of students who shared one English course book in teaching speaking skills in English. Teachers were asked to indicate the number of students who shared an English course text book in an English lesson. Figure 4.2 presents how students shared these reading materials in class.
From figure 4.2, out of the 4 teachers, 3, indicated that at least four students shared an English course book while 25% of the teachers indicated that one text book was used by at most three students. This meant that the available resources were strenuously used through sharing. This could imply that majority of students had less interaction with English reading materials mostly during and after the lesson. One student retained it after the lesson.

4.3.3 Heads of Department responses on the availability, accessibility and utilization of the instructional resources

The HoDs were asked to respond to the availability, accessibility and utilization of the instructional resources used in teaching speaking in English and their responses were as shown in figure 4.3.
Figure 4.3 shows that all HoDs (3 out of 3) reported that all the schools (3 out of 3) under study had computers meant to teach English speaking skills. On accessibility, one HoD reported that the computers were only accessible in one school because they had a central Information Technology room where the resources were kept though not properly utilized. According to the HoD’s argument, the reasons for the underutilization of the computers included: most of the teachers lacked computer skills to manipulate the computers. Secondly, teachers had large classes thus preferring to use lecture method in order to cover the syllabus on time.

4.3.4 Checklist of instructional resources

From the researcher’s observation checklist, the following were the resources that were available in the English departments as shown in figure 4.4.
Figure 4.4: A Checklist on available instructional resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Availability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English Text books</td>
<td>Available 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>Available 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
<td>Available 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer</td>
<td>Available 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wall charts</td>
<td>Available 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassette recorder</td>
<td>Available 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language laboratory</td>
<td>Available 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picture charts</td>
<td>Available 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral literature materials</td>
<td>Available 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspapers</td>
<td>Available 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key

- **GB**: Available
- **BB**: Available
- **MB**: Available

1= Available

Figure 4.4 shows that, none of the three schools had a language laboratory though 9% of the students in figure 4.1 indicated that there were language laboratories. In figure 4.3 discussed earlier, the HoDs said that computer resources were available in all the schools. However, from the checklist in Figure 4.4, it was found that one school had computers available. This could have been so probably due to Hawthorne effect where the HoDs and students were not genuine on their responses. The findings also show that there were no newspapers found in the English department but one HoD from one of the schools explained that in many occasions teachers borrowed the newspapers to read. The information from the checklist could therefore imply that the HoDs were aware of the variety of instructional resources needed to enable students develop fluency in English.
though they did not make them accessible for classroom use. Thus the reason for using mainly the recommended English course books and literary set texts.

This study also found that the English course books and literary texts, which are very basic in developing fluency in English, were insufficient. The observations in the three schools made during actual teaching, noted that in one school, two students were sharing one English course book. In another school, when students were given a reading task, seven students were observed sharing one English course book in order to do the reading.

The findings of this study concur with other research works which show that reading helps learners improve their speech as it enriches students’ vocabulary (Bright, 1970). The researcher proposed that teachers of English ought to encourage learners to do extensive reading by providing enough and varied reading materials to ensure proficiency is achieved. Hence, this implies that students need sufficient instructional resources for speaking proficiency in English to be acquired as instructional materials in teaching stimulate and motivate learning by providing learners with the opportunity to talk. Further to this argument Hilferty (2000) argues that, we don't speak the way we thought we did but our model of speech mimicks our model of reading. Thus materials like English course books, newspapers and literary texts need to be adequately availed in the classroom for the learners to improve their speaking skills.
4.4 Objective 2: Methods used in the teaching of English speaking skills

4.4.1 Teachers’ responses on the teaching methods used when teaching English speaking skills

When teachers were asked to indicate the methods they used to teach English speaking skills, the responses are shown in figure 4.5.

Figure 4.5: Teachers’ responses on the methods used to teach English speaking skills

![Bar chart showing teaching methods](chart.png)

n= 4 Teachers

Findings in figure 4.5 indicated that, 75% of the teachers used group/pair discussions, 75% of them used role play, 75% used dialogue, 75% employed debates and storytelling (75%), whereas 50% of the teachers indicated that they used lecture method.

When the researcher asked teachers why the preferred: discussions, role play, dialogue, debates and storytelling, the response was that group/pair discussions enabled the
learners to share information through conversation amongst themselves. This made all students to participate actively. In addition, it enabled the low achievers to learn from their fellow students, especially the academically-gifted. Moreover, teachers added that debates, role play and dialogue enabled learners to use English language in context. Further enquiries as to why teachers liked using the lecture method, half of the teachers, (50%), said that the method enabled them to cover the syllabus on time. Another justification for this was that, most of the learners found it difficult to ask or answer questions or participate in class thus leaving the teacher to be in control of the learning process. Teachers’ responses indicated that they were aware of the methods used to teach speaking skills in English.

4.4.2 Observation during actual teaching

From the teachers’ responses on the methods used to teach speaking skills in English, there was need to verify that. Before the observation began, teachers’ preparedness to teach was assessed through checking if they had the schemes of work and lesson plans for the lesson at hand. All teachers were found ready to teach because they had these professional records. Teachers were observed while they taught to assess the methods used and how they helped to develop fluency in English. Instructional resources used to teach speaking skills was another aspect of investigation in addition to the errors students made when they interacted in English. Finally, the language used by students and teachers in the classroom during teaching and learning was of importance. This information was summarized as follows.
Table 4.2: Teaching methods teachers use when teaching speaking skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of sessions</th>
<th>No. of teachers</th>
<th>Teaching method</th>
<th>Frequency (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Discussions</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Debates</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Storytelling</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Dialogue</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n= Number of teachers (4); n= Number of sessions (8)

Findings from table 4.2 indicate that 3 out of the 8 sessions observed, 3 out of 4 teachers, 75%, organized students into small groups, gave out a discussion topic to be done in each of those groups. Of the three teachers, 2 (50%) guided and supervised the discussion exercise and allowed students present their answers before the class. Within the discussion groups students mixed English and Kiswahili as they were expressing their views. Keller (1987) maintains that group and pair discussion are good since they enable the teachers be free to help the low achievers as they need extra attention. The author continues by saying that through this, shy learners are encouraged to participate more and become free with the teacher.

In three other sessions observed, 3 teachers arranged students for debate sessions. Upon getting ready, students were then given the topic for debate. And in these particular sessions, learners were seen participating. However they made a number of grammatical errors when they spoke English whereas other students kept quiet fearing to be chosen to participate. When the debate was over, two out of the three teachers took students over the general mistakes they made as far as debating is concerned. Among the mistakes were
the errors they ought to correct when they spoke in English. In another different session, a teacher, 25%, entered the class, reviewed the previous lesson, introduced that day’s topic which was oral literature (oral narratives). The teacher then read a story to students, explained its content and summarized the main issues in the narrative. Later, the teacher asked the students if they had any questions, gave them notes to write and left the classroom. This method made the teacher dominate the classroom interaction. As a result, students passively participated in the learning process. In another observation made, a teacher, tried to engage students in a conversation to test their use of the English vocabulary to communicate in the classroom. Newspaper cuttings were brought to class by the teacher and students were asked to describe what the cartoons therein were doing. Through probing, most students kept quiet rather than talk because they lacked enough English words and confidence to express themselves.

After the observation exercise, the four teachers were asked as to why dialogue was disliked used by students. The explanation given indicated that students were disinterested in the learning activity. Role play, on the other hand, was not used at all. The reason being the teaching method was time consuming when employed in a 40 minutes lesson. From the 8 observation sessions made in the three schools, teachers used teaching methods that heightened the development of speaking skills among students though not well managed. For example, discussions and storytelling while dialogue and role play were not well utilized. It was also observed that debates and discussions in the classroom were initiated by teachers and later students were left to follow the lead. These
methods of teaching encouraged students to talk in English as they were free to express their opinions and ideas within their groups.

4.5 Objective 3: Errors students make when speaking in English

Speaking is one of the main language skills. It is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing verbally, receiving and processing of information. In general, it is the second skill to be acquired after listening, followed by reading and then writing skills. Its form and meaning are dependent on the context in which it occurs including the participants themselves, their collective experiences, the physical environment and the purposes for speaking. It is often spontaneous, open-ended, and evolving. Speaking thus requires that learners not only know how to produce specific points of language such as grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary but also understand when, why, and in what ways to produce language (Brown, 1994; Burns & Joyce, 1997).

Speaking skills involve a number of micro skills which range from accuracy in pronunciation and in the use of words, appropriate use of vocabulary that is comprehensible and suitable for the audience. Other sub-skills of speaking are repair and repetition which can apply to parts of a conversation. In addition, appropriate use of English language in context and the correct use of sentence constituents like the subject, verb and object when involved in a speech activity (Lackman, 2010). Repair in speech entails stating and re-stating what has been said for clarification or summary.

Professional experience as a teacher indicates that non-native users of English almost always struggle with all aspects of English (listening, writing, reading and speaking).
Many also make errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation. This is because there are aspects of English that make it very confusing and difficult for non-native learners.

### 4.5.1 Spoken errors students made in the classroom

When teachers were asked to rate the errors that commonly affected students’ use of spoken English language, their responses are as shown in figure 4.6.

**Figure 4.6: Teachers’ responses regarding common errors made by students**

![Bar chart showing common errors made by students](chart.png)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Error</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mispronunciation of words</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repetition in a sentence</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrong use of tense</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother tongue interference</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of words (Vocabulary)</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n= 4 teachers; Multiple responses

Figure 4.6 indicates that most students, (31%), had a problem in using the appropriate tense when speaking in English. Students mixed present, past and future tenses unknowingly because they did not know when it was appropriate to use which tense. Teachers claimed that, that was the case because students lacked exposure to natural
speech (English). Though rated the highest, tense was more of a grammatical than spoken error. Another most common error students made was wrong pronunciation of words (28%) due to mother tongue interference (21%). The problem of poor pronunciation was attributed to the poor educational foundation, the environment surrounding the learner and mother tongue influence. Meaning the nomadic lifestyle of the Turkana community denied some students the opportunity to begin school on time and at an appropriate age. Instead, most students started school when they were more than six years which is the appropriate time to be in standard one. This forced them to join any class depending on how old they were. Lastly, repetition (6%) was the least rated error as indicated by teachers. This response was an implication that teachers rarely noted the error, probably because in many occasions they dominated the learning process, thereby denying students enough time to practice use of English in context.

Gass & Selinker (2001) argue that second language acquisition occurs in an environment in which the nonnative speaker has easy access to speakers of the language being learnt. This means that for students to be good speakers of English, there should be enough supply of English input from fluent English speaking models, in this case, teachers. Students are also required to learn English under conditions of high language support (Gersten & Baker, 2000).

4.5.2 Observation during actual teaching

From observation during actual teaching, most of the students lacked good communication skills especially during class discussions. The following were the errors that students made when they spoke in English.
Pronunciation was the major problem associated with spoken English where students substituted some phonemes from Turkana language and with those in English. This made it difficult for someone unfamiliar with Turkana language to understand some aspects spoken in English. Examples of the wrongly pronounced words were:

1. *Waching* instead of *washing*
2. *Shair* instead of *chair*
3. *Mens* instead of *men*
4. *Phorredge* instead of *porridge*
5. *Shildren* instead of *children*
6. *Kishin* instead of *kitchen*
7. *Washman* instead of *watchman*
8. *Bwisy* instead of *busy*

The mispronunciation of words came about as a result of mother tongue interference hence difficulties in communicating meaning. In addition to pronunciation, was direct translations made from mother tongue. Some of the direct translations made included:

1. *My nouns is*; instead of, *my name is.*
2. *We entered in the house*; instead of, *we got into the house.*
3. *Put the food on the burner*; instead of, *put the food on fire.*
4. *I am afraid from the dog*; instead of, *I fear the dog.*
5. *She aimed on the target*; instead of, *I aimed the target.*
6. *He travelled with the bus yesterday*; instead of, *he travelled by bus yesterday.*
vii. *It depends from her; instead of, it depends on her.*

These translations made it hard for communication to take place since the meaning intended was unclear.

Turn-taking skills also posed another challenge as students during the lesson were not able to hold constructive conversations. Some of them wanted to dominate the talk most of the time and this made every student to join the discussion without order. The scenario created a chaotic situation rather than an organized classroom. This called for the teacher’s intervention in order to put the situation to order. For any teaching and learning episode to be successful, order and discipline must be of priority. This will enable all students to have equal chances to participate in all the activities taking place in the classroom. That is why turn-taking should be embraced always.

Students compensated for their lack of words by repeating themselves like:

*The students went to the market and they came back to school (wrong).*

*The students went to the market and came back to school (right).*

In addition, wrong use of the personal pronouns was identified where a male was referred to a “*she*” while a female as “*he*”. Pronouns are one of the parts of speech learnt in English grammar. An instance occurred where the teacher in the girls’ school enquired from a student where the desk mate was before the lesson began. The student’s response was:
He went to the toilet (wrong).

She went to the toilet (right).

The above response was wrong as the absent student was a female. Thus ‘he’ was not appropriately used. This brought confusion as to what and who a student was referring to thus lack of coherence and fluency in language use.

Moreover, tense was another issue though a grammatical error where majority of the learners did not know when to use simple present, past or future tenses. For example, a student was heard saying:

The students were wanting to go for half term (wrong).

The students wanted to go for half term (right).

Besides, the sentence constituents were often misused by students. For example, the subject sometimes did not agree with the verb in a verbal statement made. In one instance, a student observed another student’s hair and said:

"Your hairs are looking silky today." (wrong)

"Your hair is looking silky today." (right)

The plural of ‘hair’ from the example above is ‘hair’. Therefore the subject ‘hair’ and verb ‘is’ ought to agree.
Research has shown that many students repeat themselves when speaking more especially when it comes to the use of nouns and pronouns in order to compensate for lack for their wordlessness. In the same vein, erroneous verb tense forms is another big hurdle in oral communication where majority of the learners mix the usages of the simple, past and future tense forms.

Apart from communication, proficiency in speaking in English is very crucial for a student who wishes to compete favourably for career and job opportunities. Teachers thus can help students improve their spoken English and overall oral competency. This could be possible by considering what good speakers do, what speaking tasks can be used in class, and what specific needs learners report.

4.6 Objective 4: Factors affecting students’ acquisition of speaking skills in English

The researcher asked students to identify other factors that affected their acquisition of speaking skills in English and the responses are as indicated in figure 4.7.
Findings from students’ responses in figure 4.7 indicated that majority of the students (52%) agreed that mother tongue influenced acquisition proficiency in speaking in English. Peer influence, 46%, did not influence acquisition as 31% of the students disagreed with the view that it could affect acquisition. This response was, however, disputable since, Diane (2012) argues, peer tutoring has been found to be the best way of fostering interaction between peers.

This meant that mother tongue and lack of confidence greatly affected acquisition of English speaking skills. Whereas interaction and influence by their peers did have an
effect on acquisition of English speaking skills though many of the students’ were not aware of this.

The current study findings concur with other studies earlier done in Australia, Malaysia and Kenya respectively. Mother tongue as a factor affecting acquisition of speaking skills in English was also found to be a factor in Malaysian students (Cao, 2011). In a related study in done in Kenya by Muriungi and Mbui (2013) found that mother tongue hindered students from acquiring English language. The authors in the study emphasized that in order to acquire a second language successfully, the environment should be enabling in order to lessen difficulties that could hinder achievement of reasonable competence in the language.

Lack of confidence as another finding in this study agrees with findings from a study done in Malaysia that students lacked self confidence when speaking in English (Souriyavongsa, Rany, Abidin and Mei, 2013). This implied that students were anxious when speaking in English with the fear of being corrected and embarrassed in public because of their mother tongue accent in English.

Further to the same response, the researcher wanted to establish the English language skills that learners liked. The respondents indicated the following as shown in figure 4.8.
Figure 4.8: Students’ responses on the English skills they liked

Figure 4.8 shows that the majority of the students, (47%), found reading interesting, compared to the other language skills. Out of the 137 students, only 20% found speaking as a skill easy. This implies that majority of the students had a negative attitude towards speaking English. Productive skills are very important in our day-to-day life but are not popular. Brown (2001) argues that speaking involves many language features that influence oral testing. Listening and speaking are inseparable hence difficult to know the specific skill being tested of the two skills. Heaton (1988) suggests that testing speaking is cumbersome with large classes especially when testing phonological accuracy/pronunciation, direct observation of students perform oral tests and orthographic accuracy in writing.

Research has shown that, there is reciprocity between reading and oral language. DeGelder and Morais (1995) argue that as skills in some aspect of oral language increase, they help development in reading, and as a person improves his reading skills, that improvement seems to enhance further improvement in the spoken language. However,
though 47% of the students in this study said that they liked reading they were expected to be fluent in the language according to research. The failure to achieve fluency in speech was attributed to lack of practice in speaking English. In one of the observation sessions made in the present study, students were found reading comprehension passages assigned to them by the teacher in the classroom as a learning activity. In this particular observation some students shared English course books due to inadequacy of the textbooks which could have enabled them do more practice to improve their speaking proficiency.

Bwire (2007) contends that there is direct relationship between listening and speaking skills in a communication process. That is, speaking and listening are reciprocal activities with both playing different roles. The author further argues that during interaction, every speaker plays a dual role (as a listener and a speaker). Usually, one person speaks and the other responds through attending by means of the listening process. If one cannot understand what is said, s/he is certainly unable to respond thus listening plays an extremely important role in the development of speaking abilities. So, speaking is closely interwoven with listening skills. The students who like listening need to be provided with tasks which can provoke them to respond to some given information or question. This will help them gradually develop speaking as a skill. Those students who like speaking need to be given opportunities to develop their speaking proficiency like engagement in debates and group discussions. This was further emphasized by the heads of the English departments from the schools studied.
Further to this issue, Heads of Department (HoDs) were asked to state factors that affected students’ acquisition of English speaking proficiency. The following was their feedback as indicated in fig 4.9.

**Figure 4.9: HoD responses on the difficulties teachers experience in teaching English speaking skills**

![Pie chart showing factors affecting student acquisition of English speaking proficiency](image)

Mother tongue interference 33%
lack of interest 67%

Figure 4.9 shows that out of the 3 heads of the English Department, 67% indicated that students lacked interest and embraced a non-participatory attitude towards speaking English, as this skill was not tested in the examinations. Mother tongue interference (33%) was cited by the HoDs as a less influential factor in students’ acquisition of English speaking proficiency. The silence by students in a speech act was as a result of the students’ lack of interest and confidence in speaking English as well as motivation since speaking is not tested in the examinations.
Mother tongue is another major factor which needs to be carefully addressed for acquisition of English speaking proficiency to be achieved. Kaniu (2003) claims that if learners are allowed to use mother tongue in most of the students’ interaction activities, then their opportunities to practice the use of English is limited. In the present study, it was observed that pronunciation errors were caused by lack of practice in the use of the language.

4.6.1 School language policy and speaking skills in English

A policy on the language to be used in school is very important. It helps reinforce the language and thus becomes a tradition and culture for every member in the school.

There was need to establish from teachers if the three schools had an English speaking language policy, state it and indicate if the policy was implemented. The following were the responses.
Figure 5.0: English Teachers’ responses on the existence of English language policy in their schools

![Bar chart showing school policies and frequency]

Figure 5.0 shows that all the teachers (100%) indicated that they did have the English speaking policy in their schools. The respondents clearly indicated that for RC school students and teachers were supposed to use either English or Kiswahili when communicating; MM school the English language policy was stated ‘English is power’ and KG school students were required to speak English on Monday to Thursday and Kiswahili on Fridays and weekends respectively.

When the researcher further enquired from the teachers whether the language policy was being implemented, one out of the four teachers indicated that the language policy was only implemented under strict supervision. Whereas three out of the four teachers said that it was not being implemented because of the following reasons:
i. Students tended to bend on it when teacher’s relaxed on it.

ii. Most of the students used mother tongue when communicating and only a few used Kiswahili.

iii. Most teachers preferred using Kiswahili for better understanding of the students.

This finding makes it clear that, it requires a combined effort between teachers and students to implement and reinforce the English speaking policy. Teachers have the major obligation of being role models to students by speaking in English which will later be emulated by students. Therefore, for proficiency to be achieved students ought to practice using spoken English voluntarily in various contexts without any supervision by teachers.

In the same vein, teachers of English were asked to indicate the language used by other subject teachers when teaching. The responses were as indicated in figure 5.1.
Figure 5.1: English teachers’ responses on language mostly used by other subject teachers

Figure 5.1 shows the English teachers’ responses implied that majority (75%) of the other subject teachers used Kiswahili language comfortably when communicating, whereas few teachers (25%), used English. This therefore means that teachers did not provide students with enough comprehensible input from which students could enrich their English vocabulary to heighten the acquisition of speaking skills in the language. Another implication is that teachers ought to set a good example by being eloquent in English.

Further, students were asked to indicate the language used when communicating in the classroom. Their responses were as in the figure 5.2.
From figure 5.2, majority of the students, (56%), said that they used English more in the classroom whereas the least used languages were vernacular language, 4%, and sheng’ 1% respectively. The use of English language was rated the highest because of the speaking policy in place in schools which directed English language to be used for communication. English is also the language of instruction in the classroom. Out of the 137 students, 39%, indicated they use Kiswahili language because it is a language of instruction in Kiswahili as a subject. The school language policy also dictated students to speak Kiswahili language in some days of the week although its use is not given much emphasis as English language. Vernacular and sheng’ languages, on the other hand, were rarely used since the language policy forbade their use within the school domain.

When the researcher visited the schools to observe actual teaching take place, 75%, of the teachers were found mixing English and Kiswahili language when teaching arguing that
they did so to clarify concepts to students. This scenario limited students’ opportunities to interact with the target language which is English.

Kaniu (2003) argues that if learners are allowed to use mother tongue in most of their interaction activities, then their opportunities to practice the use of English is limited. Apparently, it is clear from teachers’ responses that English and students’ language was used in rare circumstances due to competition from the other languages especially Kiswahili language.

4.6.2 Contextual use of language

Speaking is a very important interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing information (Brown, 1994; Burns & Joyce, 1997). Its form and meaning are dependent on the context in which it occurs, including the participants themselves, their collective experiences, the physical environment, and the purposes for speaking. For a learner to acquire a new language, there has to be enough time for interaction with the Target Language (English). The researcher’s experience when collecting data indicated that the schools were located in a rural village composed of an indigenous population. This made it easier for students to communicate in their vernacular than English while at home as a few members were conversant with the language. When the researcher asked the teachers how often they engaged their students in the use of spoken English in a week, their responses were as shown in figure 5.3.
The responses in figure 5.3 showed that teachers were split-even, that is, half of the teachers (50%) said they engaged students frequently in contextual use of language in a week while another half (50%) responded that they engaged the learners occasionally in a week. This was challenging as some teachers still used Kiswahili when teaching. This could therefore imply that given the amount of workload (see appendix I) and having at least 40 students in a class making the class large, teachers had less interaction with students as they mainly focused on covering the syllabus in good time.

On the same note, when schools under study were visited, it was found that 2 out of the 8 sessions observed, one out of the 4 teachers in a literature lesson gave students an extract to read in turns. The teacher was observed summarizing the extract read through narration then later asked students to respond to a few comprehension questions orally. To conclude the lesson, the teacher gave summary notes to students which were to be copied after that lesson. In these particular sessions, students had limited opportunities to speak
in English freely. In connection to this finding, Nunan (2003) argues that fluency in a language means using a language quickly and confidently with few unnatural pauses. The implication here is that teachers ought to create learning situations that allow students to speak English more like summarizing the text read in their own words. In 3 other observations, 2 out of 4 teachers were spotted giving a discussion question which required students to be organized into small groups. In 3 other sessions, students were engaged in a debate though with a number of English spoken errors.

4.6.3 Attitude towards speaking English

Attitude refers to a perception one has towards somebody or something and this perception can influence the outcome of a given relationship. As a result, there was need to establish from students whether their attitude affected the use of spoken English. Students’ interest in speaking English was used to assess their attitude towards speaking. The responses are as shown in Table 4.3.
Table 4.3: Students’ Attitude towards speaking in English

SA= Strongly Agree; A= Agree; SD= Strongly Disagree; D= Disagree; NR= No Response

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>I like speaking in English</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SA</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Gender</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>46.3%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Gender</td>
<td>33.7%</td>
<td>51.8%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Gender</td>
<td>28.5%</td>
<td>49.6%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the analysis in Table 4.3, 71 female students (85.5%) agreed that speaking English was their favourite activity, with only a negligible number (1.2%) strongly disputing the response. As for the male students, 66.7% agreed that English was their best subject which equally had an effect on acquisition of speaking skills.

Research done by Mang’eni (2010), found that students disliked English because of poor attitude towards speaking English, negative peer influence, low motivation and home environment which did not support the use of spoken English. Njuguna (2000) in her study maintained that it was the teacher’s obligation to help students develop a positive attitude towards that particular subject. The author further added that if learning has to be successful then, students should have a positive attitude towards the subject.

4.6.4 Age versus enrolment

Age is a very crucial factor when it comes to enrolment in school. The age at which a child begins school greatly affects the speed at which the child learns things. Mugo
(2016) suggested that the appropriate age for children to get to standard one should be 7 years. This is because that is the right time they are emotionally and psychologically developed and ready to do class work. However, this was not the case in Turkana East since majority of children started school late and did not necessarily begin school from class one. The biographic data indicated that, out of the 137 students, 121 of them were aged between 18-23 years. This implied that the students were older compared to the class level they were in (Form three). One of the contributing factors in this case was the late enrolment. The class a pupil joined was dependent on how old he/she was. Late enrolment was attributed to the high poverty levels amongst majority of the households who could not support the education of their children and the nomadic lifestyle which consumed most of their time migrating and living unstable lives. This denied them opportunities to learn the basic skills in all the subjects learnt as this gave pupils a good foundation in the entire learning period. The scenario has made it difficult for them to acquire good English speaking skills since they missed to learn the basic English language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) at the early elementary level.

4.7 Chapter summary

From the above discussed findings, it is apparently clear that the present study concurs with other research done elsewhere. For example, mother tongue, lack of confidence, limited vocabulary, lack of interest in English, lack of practice, lack of motivation and the environment surrounding the learner are major factors that inhibit acquisition of speaking skills. Attitude and the language teachers use greatly influence acquisition of English speaking skills. However, anxiety though indicated as a minor factor in this study, was of major significance in Australia and India, since many students feared to make mistakes
and, therefore, did not practice speaking the English language. From other studies done in Malaysia, India, Arabia and Australia, there were unique factors that affected acquisition though not found in this study. These factors included: the teachers’ training, the students’ English foundation, the English curriculum and the cultural backgrounds of the learners. This study also found other factors unique to the studies reviewed. These are school language policy and the time set for contextual use of English language by students, greatly affected the acquisition of speaking skills.

The next chapter focuses on the summary of findings, conclusions made and the recommendations drawn from the findings presented.
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents summary, conclusions and recommendations based on the findings of the study. The purpose of the study was to investigate the factors that affected students’ acquisition of speaking skills in English. The specific objectives were to:

i. Find out which instructional resources were used in the teaching of speaking skills in English.

ii. Establish the teaching methods used in the teaching of speaking skills in English.

iii. Establish the common errors that students made when speaking in English.

iv. Identify the factors which affected student’s acquisition of speaking skills in English.

5.2 Summary of the findings

i) Instructional resources used in teaching speaking in English

This study found that English course books, literary texts and the chalkboard were readily available for classroom use in the three schools. However, the instructional resources were inadequate, hence sharing the course books and literary texts between and amongst students served the purpose. This limited students’ opportunities to maximally interact with the resources since students were forced to share them. Newspapers though necessary for teaching speaking skills in English, were hardly available in the English departments in the schools where data was collected. Language laboratories provide
students with opportunities to practice how to speak English because of the immediate correction and feedback given for improvement of speaking skills. In this study language laboratories were found completely lacking in the three secondary schools while the radio and television inaccessible though available in the schools. This was so because teachers used them for entertainment in the staffroom hence inaccessible to students for use in practicing how to speak in English. Limited exposure to variety of instructional resources was found to hamper the acquisition of speaking skills in English by students in Turkana East.

ii) Teaching methods used in teaching speaking skills in English

Majority of the teachers used teaching methods that enhanced the acquisition of speaking proficiency in English like group/pair discussions and debates. Dialogue was also employed though students disliked the method and in many occasions it was teacher initiated. Lecture method was also used to enable the teacher cover enough content on time as prescribed in the English syllabus. It was also used in situations where students failed to participate in the teaching and learning process due to lack of interest. Role play was not used completely by any teacher as the 40 minutes time allocated for English lesson was not enough for teachers to give students opportunities to participate.

iii) Errors students made when speaking in English

Findings of this study indicated that wrong pronunciation of words was one of the errors students made when they spoke in English. This happened in situations where a student made borrowed from their mother tongue phonemes. The vocabulary students used as
well as the word order were directly borrowed from Turkana language which is very different from English. This made the direct translation from mother tongue erroneous. Students also had poor turn taking skills where they did not give each time to speak ending up in incomplete arguments and speech episodes. These errors hindered students from becoming fluent speakers of English as well as making them not to practice speaking in English due to lack of confidence.

iv) Factors affecting student’s acquisition of speaking skills in English

This was the fourth objective of the study and the findings indicated that the three schools had English speaking language policy though its implementation was dependent on the teachers’ and students’ willingness to adhere to the policy. The flexible English Language policy created a loop-hole for students to communicate in Kiswahili at times since Kiswahili was also one of the languages used though on some specific days only. Mother tongue influence affected students’ English speaking skills due to lack of practice and enough exposure to English language through models and a variety of instructional resources which could be motivating factors. This made some students speak in vernacular especially when there was no close supervision by teachers. Use of vernacular was also attributed to the fact that the surrounding environment where the schools were set was composed of indigenous population (Turkana) which promoted the use of mother tongue as noted during data collection period.

Findings in the study indicated that some teachers taught while switching codes between English and Kiswahili. Teachers claimed that this was for clarification and students’ better understanding. The use of Kiswahili language by teachers in illustrating concepts
in the classroom further made it difficult for students to practice using English as they were forced to switch to the language teachers used.

Attitude also had an influence on acquisition of speaking skills in English. In the study, female students had a positive attitude towards speaking English. This made them enjoy speaking in English than male students. The male students’ attitude was based on the assumption that, English language was a girls’ subject. The time students were given to practice speaking English was insufficient because teachers had less time to engage students in dialogue, especially when the lecture method was used. Age also affected acquisition of speaking skills as students joined school late when they were too old to learn. This was the case because the students lacked a good foundation in the four basic English language skills that should be learnt at the elementary level in school. To get the effective acquisition of speaking skills in English to take place, all the above factors need to be taken into consideration.

5.3 Conclusions

From each of the research findings, the following conclusions were made:

i) **Instructional resources used in teaching speaking skills in English**

Acquisition of proficiency in speaking English can be achieved if students interact freely with variety of instructional resources because this helps improving their vocabulary for use. Practising speaking English is also vital as it enhances students’ confidence in the use of the target language, thereby improving the students’ speaking skills. From the HoDs, teachers and students, it was observed that the instructional resources that were
available and accessible were the English course books, literary texts and the chalkboard. Other resources were the radio, television and language laboratories which were either inaccessible or completely lacking in the schools. English course books were inadequate since majority of the students shared course books and literary texts in the ratio 1:4 to compensate for the reduced number. Computers were available in one school though not properly utilized. There was lack of computer skills amongst some teachers to manipulate the devices for classroom use. It is through practice that students can gain enough confidence and vocabulary to use when speaking correct English in real speaking contexts. Practice, therefore, can only be successful if students are presented with adequate instructional resources which should be easily accessible to both teachers and students any time they need them.

This study found that there were neither sufficient nor a variety of instructional resources that could enable students to acquire correct English to be used in the spoken context.

ii) Teaching Methods used in the classroom

The methods teachers use in the classroom instruction can motivate or demotivate students to participate in the learning process. Teachers therefore have the duty of ensuring that the teaching methods used and the classroom environment are enabling for acquisition of speaking proficiency to be achieved. The findings of this study indicated that teachers used group/pair discussions and debates to teach. This was evidenced from observation during actual teaching. These learner-centred methods motivated the acquisition of speaking skills in English. However, there were cases where the discussions were poorly managed. In this particular instance, a teacher organized students
for a discussion, gave them a discussion task and left students to do the discussion on their own. This made the activity unproductive since students needed guidance and direction which could have helped in monitoring the progress made and the language used. Students, therefore, ended up switching codes between English and Kiswahili and when things got hard to be expressed, they switched to their vernacular. From observation, lecture method was also employed especially in cases where students were not interested in the lesson and also when the teacher wanted to cover enough content in a 40 minutes lesson. This limited students’ interaction and speaking English in context. The poor management of group discussions as a method of teaching did not give students enough practice as well as it inhibited students’ exposure to speaking skills in English as students had the freedom to use any language they wished thus inhibiting their acquisition process.

These findings meant that teachers did not exhaust varieties of learner-centred teaching methods that could motivate students to use the spoken English. Students’ interaction was limited to the teachers’ tasks given in the classroom.

It is, therefore, imperative for teachers to vary the methods they use when teaching, while taking precaution not to use methods that would bore and disinterest students in English lessons.

iii) Errors students made when speaking in English

English is a second language to all learners who have the first language (mother tongue). Any new language, when learnt as a second language has its rules and conventions to be
followed. Errors made when speaking in English are as a result of learning to acquire a foreign language. For second language acquisition to occur, it has to be in an environment in which the nonnative speaker has easy access to speakers of the language being learnt. This implies that students in Turkana East District should learn English under conditions of high language support (input) like teachers, parents and peers.

In this study students pronounced words wrongly, directly translated information from mother tongue to English and possessed poor turn taking skills instead of paying attention to one another. Acquisition is a continuous process just as learning. Therefore students should be exposed to variety of instructional materials and appropriate contexts for practice and students to be motivated for acquisition to be achieved. Teachers and parents in this respect have an obligation to ensure this happens by providing students the support they need. This, therefore, meant that students in this study did not read extensively English language materials as well as practice speaking in English in order to gather sufficient vocabulary to use when expressing themselves freely. It is professionally believed that practice makes perfect. This means that students need to do a lot of practice in speaking English, for them to achieve fluency in speaking in English.

iv) Factors affecting acquisition of speaking skills in English

Fluency in English is very beneficial to an individual both at personal, professional and international levels. There are many factors that come into play for one to successfully acquire proficiency in speaking English. The findings of this study indicated that the attitude of students influenced acquisition in that female students had a positive attitude towards speaking English than male students. A positive attitude is in most cases
attributed to success. This implies that when students have a favourable attitude towards English, then, they speak the language with passion without necessarily being forced to. Male students’ low affinity to speak English was as a result of a negative attitude which acted as a ‘mental block’ to the acquisition process hence preferring Kiswahili to English. Attitude can be created and influenced. Therefore, it is the duty of the teacher to help students cultivate a positive attitude towards speaking English through the use of learner-centered teaching methods, motivating students who show commendable progress and also being a role model to be imitated. The teacher too as a role model should strive to use grammatically correct English. This has not been the case some instances. This implied that students speak in Kiswahili and mother tongue despite the strict English language policy in the schools. This inhibits the acquisition of fluency in speaking in English.

Motivation is key to effective teaching and learning process. Lack of motivation can hinder achievement of a set goal (proficiency in English). Findings of this study indicated that students were lowly motivated to speak English. Insufficiency of instructional resources used to teach speaking, use of teacher-centred methods like lecture, lack of interest by students; poor modeling and insufficient time for contextual use of English, demotivated students from becoming proficient. This therefore means that most students saw no need of speaking a language which they had to struggle so much, whereas there are simple languages like mother tongue and Kiswahili to be used.

Age affected the acquisition of speaking skills in English. The age at which students enrolled at the primary level was important as it determined what is to be learnt at what
stage. Students in this study started school late when they could not grasp the essential skills needed in learning to speak well. This has made it difficult to speak good English due to a poor foundation received.

Code-switching was another factor which encouraged students to use Kiswahili more than English. Teachers were mixing the two languages when teaching and this made it easy for students to follow suit through imitation. However, this should have not been the case as teachers were supposed to set good examples by speaking in English.

Contextual use of language is important for practice purposes. For acquisition to take place, second language needs enough time for students to interact. Findings in this study indicated that teachers did not have enough time to help students interact with English for the learners to develop their speaking proficiency. This was due to teachers’ use of teacher-centred methods like lecture discouraged the development of speaking skills.

5.4 Recommendations

Several recommendations were made from the findings of the study. They are directed to the teachers, school administrators, HoDs, students and parents. Nonetheless, more research can be done to help improve students’ acquisition of speaking skills in English.

i) Instructional resources used in teaching speaking in English

Instructional materials are very useful in the teaching of English speaking skills and should be varied over time. Thus, the English course books and literary texts needed to develop learners reading skills should be availed adequately by the schools administration. They should also be easily accessed by teachers and students through
HoDs for classroom use for effective instruction to take place. Schools administration should liaise with teachers through the heads of departments to know the instructional materials needed for teaching through placement of requisitions. The HoDs should also conduct regular checks on the instructional resources available in the department to ensure they are well kept ready for classroom use any time when needed. They should also ensure their suitability at various levels of learning.

ii) Teaching methods used in the teaching of speaking skills

Apart from debates and discussions, teachers should incorporate other learner-centered strategies like storytelling, role play and dialogue. These strategies help in boosting students’ confidence and minimize on mother tongue use. They should also enable students to be proficient in English language by using the language in context. All teachers in the school ought to serve as role models in speaking English and using English while teaching (except for Kiswahili and other foreign languages taught in school). Teachers should also help reinforce the English language policy in school. Curriculum developers, Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) and the Ministry of Education (MoE) officials should consider re-structuring the English curriculum. This will pave way for the incorporation of testing of English speaking skills in the examinations to ensure that speaking skills are given enough attention. This will motivate students to struggle to be fluent as well as help improve students’ attitude towards speaking skills in order to perform well in English oral skills. Teachers should take the responsibility of facilitators not providers to see that debates and discussions are
conducted effectively through maximum guidance and supervision. This will also involve correcting students whenever they made errors.

iii) Errors students make when speaking in English

Students should be encouraged and motivated by teachers in order to develop self-drive to do wide reading of variety of reading materials like newspapers, educational magazines, articles and story books. Reading extensively will help students improve on their vocabulary when speaking English. Students should practice speaking English in school and at home instead of being forced to adhere to the language policy when in school only. Students to embrace turn taking when speaking. Teachers should also be role models to be emulated by students through speaking and teaching in English.

iv) Factors affecting student’s acquisition of speaking skills in English

School administrators and teachers ought to strengthen the schools’ English language policy in order to curb MT influence on the acquisition of English speaking skills. In addition, students also ought to be exposed to contexts where they can develop self-confidence in themselves, for example, being encouraged to participate in debates and impromptu speeches. Also any slight improvement made by students in terms of proficiency should be appreciated by teachers and parents in order to further improve on this skill. Parents should be sensitized and encouraged to take their children to school on time when they are of age to start school. This will enable children to get a good foundation in the skills needed in life like speaking good English. On attitude, students
should be sensitized on the importance of having good English speaking skills and be encouraged by teachers to practice speaking correct English.

5.5 Suggestions for further research

i. A similar study should be done in schools in an urban set up to establish if the factors that affected acquisition of speaking skills in English in this study are similar.

ii. A study should be done to establish the effect of language policy on acquisition of English speaking skills among secondary school students.

iii. Another study should be carried out to establish how Turkana culture influences acquisition of English speaking proficiency.

iv. A study could also be conducted to establish the effects of having speaking skills proficiencies on each of the four basic language skills, as well as grammar and vocabulary.
REFERENCES


Website


APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information on factors affecting students’ acquisition of speaking skills in English.

1. Indicate the type of your school:
   - Mixed
   - Girls’
   - Boys’

2. Gender
   - Male
   - Female

3. In which classes do you teach English?
   - Form I
   - Form II
   - Form III
   - Form IV

4. What is total number of students in the class (eses) you teach? Tick (✓) where appropriate.
   - (i) 30 students
   - (ii) 40 students
   - (iii) 50 students
   - (iv) Above 60 students

5a) Does your school have enough English textbooks, class readers and other teaching resources?
   - Yes
   - No
b) Give reasons for your answer in (a) above

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________


c) i. How many students share one English course book during English lessons?

   a. Two students  
   b. Three students  
   c. Four students  
   d. More than four students 

6. Is there a radio in your school used in teaching speaking skills in English?

   Yes  
   No  

7(i). Do you have a language laboratory in your school?

   Yes  
   No  

(ii). If yes, comment on the suitability of using this language laboratory in the teaching of English.

8. The listed instructional resources below are used to teach speaking skills in English.

Complete the gaps therein in terms of their availability, adequacy and accessibility.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional resources</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Available</th>
<th>Accessible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i. English course books</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. Literary &amp; non-literary texts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. Chalkboard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv. Audio cassette recorders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v. Recorded speeches</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9A) What language is mostly used by other subject teachers when communicating;

a) Mother tongue  

b) Kiswahili

c) English

d) All

e) Others (specify)

B) i) Does your school have a language policy?

Yes

No

ii) If yes, what or how does it state?

iii) Is it being implemented by students? Explain your answer.

C) How do you encourage your students to use English in their communication in school?

10a) Which of the following method(s) do you mostly use when teaching speaking skills in English (tick as many responses as they apply).

i) Lecture method

ii) Group/pair discussion
ii) Role play  
iv) Dialogue  
v) Debates  
vi) Story telling

Vii) Others

b) Briefly explain why you prefer the method(s) listed in 10(a) above.

11. Rate on a scale of 1-5 (1 being the highest rated error), how the following common errors affect your students’ acquisition of English speaking proficiency. Tick (√) where appropriate:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serial No.</th>
<th>Common errors</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i.</td>
<td>Mispronunciation of words</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii.</td>
<td>Repeating themselves</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii.</td>
<td>Wrong use of tense</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv.</td>
<td>Mother tongue influence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v.</td>
<td>Lack of words (vocabulary)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

vi. Others (specify)

12. Rate on a scale of 1-5 (1 being the highest rated factor), how the following factors affect students’ acquisition of English speaking skills. Rate them appropriately by ticking (√) the correct level.
13. How often do you engage students to use spoken English in a week?

   i) Rarely       ii) Frequently
   iii) Occasionally iv) Not known

14. (a) What other language do you use in school?____________________________

   (b) Explain your answer in (a) above_______________________________________

   Thanks

   ___________________________________________ End _____________________________
APPENDIX II

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

Introduction

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information that will be used to establish factors that affected the acquisition of speaking skills in English in order to achieve speaking proficiency. You have been selected as one of respondents and your responses are going to be of great contribution to this study. The information that you are going to provide will be treated confidentially and for research purposes only. Please be sincere and honest in your responses. DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME. Put a tick (√) on the appropriate response or write your response in the space provided.

SECTION A. General Information

1. Indicate the type of your school: Mixed ☐ Girls’ ☐ Boys’ ☐
2. Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐
3. Indicate your age group:
   Below 15 years ☐ 15-20 years ☐ 21-25 years ☐ Over 26 years ☐
4. (a) Which language do you often use for communication at school?
   i) English ☐ ii) Kiswahili ☐ iii) Vernacular ☐
   iv) All ☐
   Others (specify) __________________________
(b) Which language do you use while in the classroom?

[ ] English  [ ] Kiswahili  [ ] Vernacular  [ ] All  [ ] Others (specify)

______________________________________________________________

SECTION B. Students’ Common Errors

5 (a) Which skills in the English language syllabus do you find easier to understand?

[ ] Reading  [ ] Listening  [ ] Speaking  [ ] Writing

(b) Explain your answer in (a) above__________________________________

6. From the options given, tick (where appropriate) the problem(s) you encounter when speaking in English?

  i. Mispronunciation of words  [ ]  ii. Repetition in a sentence  [ ]

  iii. Wrong use of tenses  [ ]  iv. Mother tongue interference  [ ]

  v. Lack of words (vocabulary)  [ ]

  vi. Others  ________________________________________________________
SECTION C. Factors Affecting the Acquisition of Good English Speaking Skills

Instructions

7. In the statement given below, indicate your level of agreement using a tick (√) where appropriate.

**Key**: SA= Strongly Agree  A= Agree  SD= Strongly Disagree  D= Disagree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I like speaking in English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Below are factors that affect students from becoming fluent speakers of English. Tick (√) the appropriate response(s) based on the degree of influence using the scale given below:

**Key**: SA=strongly Agree  A=Agree  SD= Strongly Disagree  D= Disagree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Family background</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Mother tongue influence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Lack of motivation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Lack proper use of vocabulary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) Poor listening skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f) Lack of confidence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g) Anxiety</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h) Peer interaction and influence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Others

Others

126
SECTION D. Instructional Resources used in the Teaching of English Oral Skills

Below is a statement requiring you to provide information on some of the teaching and learning resources used in the teaching of speaking skills in English. Tick (✓) the correct responses where possible.

9. Instructional resources used in teaching English speaking skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of teaching/ Learning resource</th>
<th>Availability</th>
<th>Adequate (quantity)</th>
<th>Accessibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Course books</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Radio</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Television</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Computer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) Wall charts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f) Speaking model</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g) Cassette recorders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h) Language laboratory</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i) Mobile phone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j) Oral literature texts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thanks

_________________________________End_________________________________
APPENDIX III

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR HOD

The purpose of this interview schedule is to solicit information on the factors affecting the acquisition of speaking English in order to ensure effective speaking proficiency and general literacy among learners is achieved. Please be honest and sincere in your responses.

1. Type of school Mixed □ Girls’ □ Boys’ □

2. Gender: Male □ Female □

3. For how long have you served as HoD?
   (i) 2 years and below □  (ii) 2-4 years □
   (iii) 5-6 years □  (iv) Over 6 years □

4. (a) Are computers in your school used to teach speaking skills?
   (i) Yes ________  (ii) No ________

   (b) If yes, are they utilized well by teachers and students? Explain your answer____________________________________________________________
       ____________________________________________________________

   a) List the examples of errors students made when they spoke English.

      i) ____________________________________________________________

      ii) __________________________________________________________

      iii) __________________________________________________________

      iv) __________________________________________________________
b) Give two ways in which teachers of English teach English speaking skills for students to overcome these errors in (5a) above.

i. ______________________________________________________________

ii. ______________________________________________________________

5. Which factors influence the way teachers of English teach English speaking skills in English?

i) ______________________________________________________________

ii) ______________________________________________________________

iii) ______________________________________________________________

6. As a HoD, what measures have you put in place to ensure effective teaching of speaking skills takes place?

i. ______________________________________________________________

ii. ______________________________________________________________

iii. ______________________________________________________________

Thanks

_________________________________________________________________End________________________________________
APPENDIX IV

A CHECKLIST FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES IN THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

The purpose of this checklist is to establish whether the teaching and learning resources used in teaching speaking skills are available, adequate or inadequate and accessible. The researcher managed to get this information by ticking (√) where appropriate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serial No.</th>
<th>Type of instructional resource</th>
<th>Available</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>Accessible</th>
<th>Not there</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>English text books</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Radio</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Television</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Computer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Wall charts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Cassette recorder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Language laboratory</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Picture charts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Oral literature materials</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Newspapers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THANKS

--------------------------------------------
APPENDIX V

LESSON OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Professional records</th>
<th>Learning activities</th>
<th>Focus skills</th>
<th>Instructional resources</th>
<th>Language used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SOW</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LP</td>
<td>Debates</td>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>Text book</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Story</td>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>Kiswahili</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Discussions</td>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Cassette recorder</td>
<td>Mother tongue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments on instructional resources used in teaching speaking skills and the spoken errors students made when speaking in English

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THANK YOU

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APPENDIX VI

MAP OF TURKANA EAST SUB-COUNTY

Source: Internet (Retrieved on 15\textsuperscript{th} May, 2016 at 4:34 pm)
APPENDIX VII

RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION NACOSTI

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

NACOSTI/P/15/4412/5923

Verah Kerubo Mekonge
Kenyatta University
P.O. Box 43844-00100
NAIROBI.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on “Factors affecting students acquisition of speaking skills in english among secondary school students in Turkana East District Kenya,” I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in Turkana County for a period ending 30th December, 2015.

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

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

DR. M. K. RUGUTI, PhD, HSC
DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO

Copy to:
The County Commissioner
Turkana County.

The County Director of Education
Turkana County.
APPENDIX VIII

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:

MS. VERAH KERUBO MEKONGE

of KENYATTA UNIVERSITY, 430-30500

has been permitted to conduct research in Turkana County

on the topic: FACTORS AFFECTING STUDENTS ACQUISITION OF SPEAKING SKILLS IN ENGLISH AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN TURKANA EAST DISTRICT KENYA

for the period ending:

30th December, 2015

Permit No : NACOSTI/P/15/4412/5923
Date Of Issue : 30th June, 2015
Fee Churred :Ksh 1,000

Applicant's Signature

Director General
National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation
APPENDIX IX

RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION KENYATTA UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL

KENYATTA UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL

E-mail: dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke
Website: www.ku.ac.ke

Our Ref: E55/CE/23775/2012

DATE: 18th April, 2015

The Principal Secretary,
Higher Education, Science & Technology,
P.O. Box 30040,
NAIROBI

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION FOR MEKONGE KERUBO VERAH REG. NO. E55/CE/23775/2012

I write to introduce Ms. Mekonge Kerubo Verah who is a Postgraduate Student of this University. She is registered for M.ED. Degree programme in the Department of Educational Communication and Technology.

Ms. Mekonge intends to conduct research for a M.ED. Proposal entitled, “Factors Affecting Students’ Acquisition of Speaking Skills in English Among Secondary School Students in Turkana East District, Kenya.”

Any assistance given will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

MRS. LUCY N. MBAABU
FOR: DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL
APPENDIX X

RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION COUNTY COMMISSIONER

THE PRESIDENCY
MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND COORDINATION OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

Telegraphic address: COUNTY COMMISSIONER LODWAR
Telephone: LODWAR 21240
Telex:
Fax: When replying please quote

REF: CC.CONF.ED.12/1/VOL1/ (88)

The Deputy County Commissioner,
Turkana East.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION: VERA KERUBO MEKONGE

The above mentioned who is from Kenyatta University is authorized to carryout research in your Sub County on “factors affecting students acquisition of speaking skills in English among secondary school students in Turkana East Sub County,” the research period ends on 30th December 2015.

Any assistance accorded to her will be appreciated.

M.K. MWANGI
FOR COUNTY COMMISSIONER
TURKANA COUNTY

C.C. The County Director of Education
TURKANA COUNTY