USE OF TEACHERS’ FEEDBACK ON STUDENTS’ ENGLISH LANGUAGE COMPOSITIONS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MURANG’A COUNTY, KENYA

BY

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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university for consideration. This thesis has been complemented by referenced sources duly acknowledged. Where text, data, graphic, pictures or tables have been borrowed from other sources, including the internet, these are specifically accredited and references cited in accordance with anti-plagiarism regulations.

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Declaration by the supervisors

We confirm that the work reported in this thesis was carried out by the candidate under our supervision as university supervisors.

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DEDICATION

I wish to dedicate this work to my late sister Mrs Beth Kukubo and my son Ian Matheri for their support and encouragement. Their great love and understanding has also given me the morale to surmount the challenges along the way.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to acknowledge my supervisors Dr. Sophia Ndethiu and Dr. Florence Miima for their guidance and professional advice. It is through your dedication that I have come this far. I would also like to thank my lecturers in the Department of Educational Communication and Technology who taught me coursework.

Deep appreciation also goes to all my colleagues who were in many ways supportive during the entire period of my studies.

My heartfelt gratitude also goes to my respondents; students for availing their time to fill the questionnaires and teachers for finding time to respond to the interview. Without their cooperation, this work would not have been successful.

To all I say God bless you.
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<thead>
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CMC</td>
<td>Computer-Mediated Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DQASO</td>
<td>District Quality and Standards Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFL</td>
<td>English as a Foreign Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL</td>
<td>English as a Second Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ETS</td>
<td>Educational Testing Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K.C.S.E</td>
<td>Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KICD</td>
<td>Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNEC</td>
<td>Kenya National Examinations Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPSS</td>
<td>Statistical Package for Social Sciences</td>
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</table>
ABSTRACT

The main aim of this study was to highlight the use of teachers’ feedback on students’ English language compositions in public Secondary Schools in Kahuro Sub-County, Murang’a County, Kenya. The specific objectives of the research were: to establish types of feedback the teachers used on their students’ compositions, to establish students’ attitude towards teachers’ feedback in their compositions and finally to investigate the factors that influenced the types of feedback used by teachers of English in compositions. The study was based on the Model of Feedback by Hattie and Timperley (2007). It adopted descriptive survey design targeting 63 teachers of English language and 2,520 form 3 students’ compositions. Simple random sampling method was used to choose 184 form three students and 10 teachers from 3 public schools in Kahuro Sub-county, Murang’a County. The research employed questionnaire and interview schedules as the main tools for data collection. Before actual data collection, a pilot study was carried out in one school which was not incorporated in the actual analysis. The aim of the pilot study was to assess the clarity of the questionnaire items so that those items that were found to be insufficient were amended to improve the quality of the research instruments. Data collected was both quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative data was evaluated through descriptive statistics such as standard deviations, means, percentages, and frequency counts. On the other hand, qualitative data was analyzed thematically in proportion to the research objectives. The results of the study were put forward using bar graphs, pie charts and tables. Then conclusions and recommendations were presented.

The study found out that the most recurring type of observations given by the teachers on the students’ compositions were on general comments which majorly focused on grammatical errors. The study further revealed a significant relationship between the students’ attitudes towards teachers’ feedback on English language composition and their rating for various types of comments given by the teachers. The factors that influenced the various types of comments that teachers gave on English language compositions were: the students’ handwriting, the students’ spelling of different words, grammatical errors in the students’ compositions; wrong use of language by students; the teachers’ workload and strict deadlines. The study recommends that teachers should be more detailed and specific with the comments that they give to their students and should avoid giving their students general comments on compositions. Students should practise composition writing and initiate a culture of using English language as their mode of communication. The school management should ensure that they equip the schools with the necessary reading materials that will help students improve their composition writing.
CHAPTER ONE
BACKGROUND AND CONTEXTUALIZATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction
This chapter highlights the background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, scope and limitations of the study, assumptions of the study, justification of the study, significance of the study, theoretical framework, conceptual framework and operational definition of terms.

1.2 Background to the Study
Educational systems use a variety of methods to encourage student learning. In many educational settings, immediate feedback is used to improve learners’ performance (Stuart, 2004). One of the most valuable aspects of effective feedback is its ability to test learners’ autonomy. Students tend to become self-regulated learners when they are provided with detailed feedback on performance as well as guidance for future improvement (Butler and Winne, 1995). Feedback on performance, when effective, is widely considered to be integral to learning. People learn faster and more deeply if they know what the strengths and weaknesses of their performance are and most importantly, how to improve future performance (Boud, 1991). Feedback also plays a vital factor in supporting teaching, learning and assessment. This occurs when the feedback is unequivocally connected to learning outcomes, marking schemes and assessment tasks; which as a result lead to students-teachers reinforcement of the purpose of assessment and how it relates to learning outcomes (Biggs, 1999 & Dunn, et al., 2004).

Feedback can serve as guidance for eventual writing development as far as students are concerned (Hyland, 2003). Therefore, the researcher is interested in finding out if
teachers provide an opportunity for their students by giving feedback on their grammatical errors. Feedback is “a key element offered by the teachers to build learner confidence and the literacy resources to participate in the target communities” (Hyland and Hyland, 2006). It may also help learners to know how well they have performed, increase their motivation and build a supportive classroom climate (Richard and Lockhart, 1996). The feedback offered by the teacher can serve as an important tool to encourage students’ writing process if done well. According to Brookhart (2010), feedback includes two factors: Cognitive and motivational factors. It gives students the feedback they need so that they can have a better understanding of where they stand, for instance if their writing skills are good or average. Feedback will also make learners to think as they make the corrections pointed out by the teacher, thereby understanding better.

Writing is one of the most essential learning skills because it is used extensively in higher education and in the workplace (Chan and Yap, 2008). If students are unable to express themselves well in writing, they may find it difficult to communicate well with their peers, professors or just about anyone else. Additionally, professional communication is primarily conducted through writing reports, proposals, e-mails, preliminary interviews, memos and more are included in the day-to-day life of a student or successful graduate. Even if students manage to learn the material in their college classes without knowing how to write well, they will not be able to express their knowledge to the people who are making big decisions (Walsh, 2010). Writing is one of the main ways to articulating ones thoughts, opinions and ideas to others.

In spite of the critical role of writing, a majority of teachers rank their students as only “fair” or “poor” according to (Choo, 2001). Writing skills are not given preference as
far as teachers’ assessments are concerned. More than 55% of the teachers rank their students as fair (40%) or poor (15%) in writing examinations (Choo, 2001). Therefore, teachers are more likely to say students have been improving instead of deteriorating over the years the teachers have been teaching; as per the writing skills, teachers were evenly divided as to which direction their students’ progressed. According to research by Choo (2001), most of the lecturers revealed that their students mostly scored poorly in writing examinations or at best, performed at a mediocre level. It would be important to find out how much time the teachers of English in secondary schools allocate to composition writing, and the general performance of the students when it comes to writing compositions.

From the Kenya National Examinations Council (2008) report, the Minister for Education revealed that writing was not being performed well, because it was conceived as primarily a communicative skill rather than a process and product of critical thinking as it applied to oral communication. There has been a general outcry expressed by educationists, employers and ordinary citizens to the effect that most form four leavers are not fully equipped with proper communication skills as confirmed from oral interviews and written application letters for job employment (KCSE 2008). Universities have voiced concern about receiving first year students who can hardly write, read and hold discussions in English (Barasa, 2002). This was revealed by the study “The role of speaking and writing in communicative competence” (Bigambo, 2000). The Kenyan government is concerned about poor performance across the curriculum because English language is used to teach all other subjects excluding Kiswahili; African and other foreign languages. Therefore, lack of English mastery can be an impediment to the acquisition of skills and knowledge in
other subjects that require an English background for teaching and writing (KNEC Report, 2008).

The performance of K.C.S.E. in Kahuro sub-county in the last 3 years has been wanting compared to Kandara and Murang’a South Sub-counties, as illustrated in Table 1.1.
## Table 1.1: Kahuro, Kandara and Murang’a South Sub-counties English language ranking (2013-2015)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>Kahuro</th>
<th>Kandara</th>
<th>Murang’a South</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 Gitige Sec.</td>
<td>8.658</td>
<td>5.463</td>
<td>4.723</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Kibo Mxd</td>
<td>5.247</td>
<td>4.462</td>
<td>3.686</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Kagumo sec.</td>
<td>3.308</td>
<td>5.289</td>
<td>3.822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Kionjoi Sec.</td>
<td>4.830</td>
<td>5.520</td>
<td>3.964</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Quality Assurance and Standard Officer, Murang’a County (2015)
In Kahuro Sub-county, there are more day schools than boarding schools. Students in day schools perform poorly in writing as they spend more hours at home in a week, where the mode of communication is vernacular. In addition to this, these students have a first language, which they have used to communicate for the better part of their lives. From table 1.1, all schools, apart from the last three, which are boarding schools, do not pass the average mean of 6 out of 12 meaning their performance in English is below average.

Equipping students with effective feedback on their writing is important as it enables them to make corrections of their own mistakes and hence become more autonomous writers, which will consequently make them better writers. However, some research studies on the effectiveness of teacher feedback on ESL students’ writing report a grim picture as teachers’ feedback does not seem helpful for them to improve their writing (Handrickson, 1980; Semke, 1984; Robb, et al., 1986; Truscott, 1996).

In the Kenyan situation, certain factors may have contributed to teachers not giving feedback in writing skills as they ought to. One of the factors would be large classes, whereby the teacher feels that he or she does not have the time to go through the bunch of exercise books as this would be time consuming. Secondly, there is a biting teacher shortage in the country and this translates into a huge work load, hence overburdening the teacher. Moreover, the exam body (KNEC) does not train teachers on how feedback on writing should be administered, leaving teachers to use their own discretion when marking students’ compositions.
Fathman and Walley (1990) discovered that when students received feedback on grammar that indicated the place and not type of errors, they significantly improved their grammar scores on subsequent rewrites of the papers. Written feedback has also been found to be effective when it is coupled with student-teacher conferencing (Fregeau, 1999). Most students find written feedback challenging. Conferencing provides both teachers and students an opportunity to identify the causes of the problems arising from student writing and feedback and to come up with strategies for improvement. Teachers can ask direct questions to students in these sessions for them to better understand the students’ writings. Also students are able to express their ideas more clearly in writing and to get clarification on any comments that teachers have made. In addition, students are able to put forward their ideas with clarity in writing and to decipher the comments that the teachers might have provided.

Finally, conferencing can be used to help students with any particular problems related to their writing. In the Process Approach method, current emphasis focuses on the process of creating, writing rather than the end of the product (Tompkins, 1990). Generation of ideas for writing, thoughts on the purpose and audience, and writing of multiple drafts are paramount in the students’ learning process for them to present written products that relay their own ideas. Students are expected to be trained on how to generate ideas for writing, think of the purpose and audience, and write multiple drafts in order to present written products that communicate their own ideas. In the secondary school situation, it would be interesting to observe if learners write multiple drafts and also how writing skills are taught in secondary schools in Kenya.
1.3 Statement of the Problem

Feedback that students receive from teachers gives them information on what is acceptable and what needs to be corrected enabling them to combine and use the feedback in their revision and in the end result of their composition writing. A large number of studies for example Jamalinesari, et al. (2015) and Biber, et al. (2011) have examined the effectiveness of feedback on students’ composition writing although agreement on research findings to date is still inconclusive. Most of the studies indicate that feedback is useful and effective in developing students’ composition writing. However, there have been controversies on the effectiveness of feedback on student writing (e.g. Chandler, 2003; Ferris, 1999, 2004; Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Truscott, 2007) and conflicting findings in different areas of feedback such as feedback focus and strategy. In addition, most of the students in Kahuro sub-county registered low performance in English and especially in KCSE (DQASO, 2011). As shown in Table 1.1, most of the schools in Kahuro sub-county were day schools and they obtained an average mean of below 6 in English in KCSE in years 2013, 2014 and 2015. It was therefore against this background, that the current study intended to find out the use of teachers’ feedback on students’ language in public secondary schools in Kahuro sub-county, Murang’a County.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

i. Establish types of feedback the teachers used on their students’ compositions.
ii. Establish students’ attitude towards teachers’ feedback on English language composition writing.

iii. Investigate the factors that determine the kinds of feedback used by teachers of English in compositions.

1.5 Research Questions

The following questions were framed as the major research questions in this study.

i. What are the types of feedback used by teachers on their students’ compositions?

ii. How is the attitude of the students towards teachers’ feedback on English language composition writing?

iii. What are the factors determining the types of feedback used by teachers of English in compositions?

1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The aim of this study was to explore the use of teachers’ feedback on students’ language in public Secondary Schools in Kahuro Sub-county, Murang’a County. The study aimed at finding out various types of feedback used by teachers on their students’ composition and students’ attitude towards teachers’ feedback in their compositions. Also, factors influencing the kind of feedback used by teachers of English in compositions. However, other factors such as methods used by teachers to communicate feedback to students may have a great impact on students’ composition but this study did not address them. The study was conducted only in Kahuro Sub-county of the larger Murang’a County. Due to financial constraints, the study was confined only to 3 public secondary schools in Kahuro sub-county, which may not be representative of other parts of the country. As
such, the study findings may be generalized in other regions of the country cautiously. The study used questionnaires and interview schedule to collect data. Other methods such as document analysis e.g. students’ report books and teachers’ English performance records may be very useful for the research but the current study did not use them.

1.7 Assumptions of the Study

The assumptions of the study were:-

i. In Kenyan secondary schools, English language is taught by trained teachers who are committed to their profession.

ii. Teachers have an interest in teaching English language and that they appreciate good results in the subject.

iii. Teachers take a special interest in teaching composition skills.

1.8 Justification of the Study

The current study was carried out in Kahuro sub-county, Murang’a County with an aim of establishing the use of teachers’ feedback on students’ language in public secondary schools. The researcher selected this area because the sub-county has an abundance of day schools and the performance of candidates in KCSE English language examinations has been very poor as compared to Kandara and Murang’a South sub-counties (See table 1.1).

1.9 Significance of the Study

The results of the study may be used by relevant stakeholders to improve students’ performance in writing. The findings of the study may also benefit teachers by showing them the importance of giving adequate and appropriate feedback to their students.
Findings may also shed light to the curriculum developers like the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) by highlighting the problems encountered by teachers and students in this area. As such, curriculum developers may formulate curriculum guidelines which would lay emphasis on these particular skills. Other scholars would benefit from this study as they could carry out further studies on feedback in English composition writing.

1.10 Theoretical Framework

The study was based on a Model of Feedback by Hattie and Timperley (2007). According to the Model of Feedback (Figure 1.1), the main aim of feedback is to minimize discrepancies between existing understandings/performance and a goal.
Hattie and Timperley (2007) argue that the strategies used by students and teachers to reduce this discrepancy may be more or less effective in enhancing learning, so it is important to understand the circumstances that result in the differential outcomes. The model identifies alternative ways for students to minimize the gap between existing and
expected understandings in response to feedback, but which are not entirely effective in enhancing learning.

Hattie and Timperley (2007) identify the strategies that are likely to be effective including: students increasing their effort, particularly when the effort leads to tackling more challenging tasks; students developing effective error detection skills, which lead to their own self-feedback aimed at reaching a goal; students seeking better strategies to complete the task or be taught them, or obtaining more information from which they can then solve problems or use their self-regulatory proficiencies.

According to the Model of Feedback (Hattie & Timperley, 2007), effective feedback answers three major questions asked by a teacher and/or by a student: 1) Where am I going? (What are the goals?), 2) How am I going? (What progress is being made towards the goal?), and 3) Where to next? (What activities need to be undertaken to make better progress?) These questions relate to ideas of feed up, feedback, and feed forward. The effectiveness of the answers to these questions that serve to reduce the gap is relatively reliant on the level at which the feedback functions. These include the level of task performance, the level of process of understanding how to do a task, the regulatory or meta cognitive process level, and/or the self or personal level (unrelated to the specifics of the task). Feedback has differing effects across these levels ((Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

Each of the three feedback questions work at four levels, each with a distinct outcome on learning. These levels are: (1) feedback on the task, (2) feedback about the processing of
the task, (3) feedback about self-regulation, and (4) feedback about the self. Task level feedback is about how effectively tasks are understood or carried out. Process level feedback relates to the major process required to comprehend or perform tasks. Self-regulation level includes regulating of actions, directing and self-monitoring. The self-level of feedback relates to individual evaluations and positive effects about the learner. The Model of Feedback by Hattie and Timperley (2007) was applicable to the study on influence of teachers’ feedback on students’ language. The model acknowledges the importance of feedback in reducing discrepancies between current understandings and targeted goal performance. The model therefore assisted in establishing the link between teachers’ feedback and students’ performance in English language composition writing.

According to Hattie and Timperley (2007), the model of feedback delineates the three types of feedback that teachers should strive to give – feed up (where am I going?), feedback (how am I going?), and feed forward (where to next?). The feedback aided the study in determining the kinds of feedback used by teachers on English language composition writing.

1.11 Conceptual Framework

The aim of this study was to find out use of feedback given to students by teachers in English language composition writing in Secondary Schools. Figure 1.2 shows the conceptual framework of the study.
As indicated in figure 1.2, the independent variables of this study are types of feedback given by teachers on English language composition writing, attitudes of students towards feedback and responses of students to feedback. The dependent variable of the study is students’ performance in composition writing. It is clear from the figure that one of the significant factors which play a vital role in the feedback is the learners themselves. The learners’ perceptions and beliefs of feedback are key in defining their responses and reactions to feedback. In multicultural classrooms, with students from diverse backgrounds, it is most likely that most students, having gone through different learning experiences, will have differing beliefs and perceptions. Students’ beliefs regarding all aspects of learning, including feedback, are important because, as Leki and Carson
(1994) point out, students perceptions on learning affect their learning. These beliefs in turn determine how they approach the learning situation and could be in part responsible for the fact that “learners vary greatly in their response to feedback” (Cohen, 1991).

The present study sets out to explore some of the perceptions which students have regarding feedback. Cohen (1991) also states that research suggests that there may be a “misfit” between the feedback provided by teachers and what students would like to get. This may hinder learners from making the most out of the feedback given. Research indicates that students have definite preferences for certain types of feedback and have certain beliefs and attitudes towards feedback (Goldstein, 2004).

With reference to Ferris (1999), Goldstein (2004) states:

In order for teachers to comment as effectively as possible and for students to be open to using our commentary, we need to understand and acknowledge student reactions and preferences for feedback (p. 70)

Based on this regard, it was therefore important to find out students’ attitude towards feedback given by their teachers on English language composition writing in public secondary schools in Kahuro Sub-County.
1.12 Operational Definition of Terms

**Composition:** Continuous prose generated by students with the guidance of the teacher on a particular theme. It could be based on a Literature set book, a thought or a feeling. It usually has a word limit. The composition can either be a narration, exposition, argumentative or descriptive.

**Discourse markers:** Words used by writers or speakers to show intent. For example, define, conclude (to show the speaker or writer is finishing his comments) connectors e.g. however, then, but etc.

**Error:** An act or assertion that unintentionally deviates from what is correct or right e.g. where a student keeps on writing ‘play’ when he or she means ‘pray’.

**English language:** A subject in secondary schools which is compulsory and taught at all levels of secondary schools.

**Feedback:** The responses, grades, and comments a teacher writes on the students’ work when marking.

**Symbols:** Refers to signs used by teachers while marking students composition e.g. words or abbreviations like: Word spelling – sp, Poor structure- ps Wrong tense – wt, _____ Underlining, # – New paragraph, Figures e.g. 60% 20/40, Grades e.g. A,B,C,D, etc.

**Teachers’ Comments:** These can either be oral as the work is returned or written on the students work after marking.
CHAPTER TWO
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter aims at providing the literature review which covers the following sub-topics: importance of feedback in writing, types of feedback in ESL writing, teacher approaches to feedback, students’ attitude towards feedback. It also covers research on feedback, a process approach in ESL writing and barriers to effective feedback in ESL writing.

2.2 Importance of Feedback in Writing

According to Ismail, et. al. (2010), writing should always be communication between writer and reader, and therefore feedback is the best way to sample how that communication is developing. Teachers should be aware of how their feedback impacts on their students.

A lot of thought is required in feedback as emotion, Motivation and subjective opinion are its core components. It is also essential because one gets close to his or her own writing. It is therefore important to see something through someone else’s eyes and hugely valuable for reflecting on what you are doing because everyone will see it different (Brenda, 2007).

Giving constructive feedback to a student is very important as learners need to feel that they are making progress. It is imperative to give constructive feedback to students as it gives them a sense of progress. Feedback should not embarrass or appear to favour some
students more than others. The teacher should make sure that he/she has an opportunity to speak to each student individually on a regular basis to provide personal feedback (Brenda, 2007). Rogers (2001) says feedback should:

- be unambiguous and clear.
- not focus too many different aspects at the same time.
- be specific about why something was good or was not up to standard and what the student can do about it.
- contain encouragement.
- be prompt, closely following the event.

Feedback is useful to exercise the success or failure of performance. Feedback helps students understand the subject being studied and gives them clear guidance on how to improve their learning (Bellon, et al. 2001).

“Academic feedback is more strongly and consistently related to achievement than any other teaching behaviour. This relationship is consistent regardless of grade socio-economic status, race or school setting, (p. 10).”

As a result of feedback, students become more confident, self-aware and increasingly enthusiastic about learning. Providing students with feedback should enhance learning and improve assessment performance. Therefore, there is enhanced learning and improved assessment performance among them. There is a consensus among teachers that writing is a powerful and useful skill to students if it is carried out in a way that provides feedback to them on their errors to further develop their writing. Feedback
sessions can be a beneficial experience on the student if the teacher shows strong points as well according to (Costa and Garmston, 2002).

2.3 Types of Feedback in English as a Second Language Writing

Feedback on form and feedback on content are the two most commonly used methods of feedback as per available research. Feedback on form is based on outright teacher correction of surface errors, teacher markings that indicate the place and type of error but without correction, and underlining to indicate only the presence of errors. Feedback on form is based on the teacher only indicating the presence of errors through underlining and marking the type and place where the error is located but without making corrections. It entails the correction of surface errors. The first requires students to copy the corrections and the later two require students to correct the errors on their own (Williams, 2003).

According to Cohen & Calvacanti (1990); Leki, (1990), Fregeau, (1999); Fathman and Walley, (1990), many faults have been found with standard practices of providing feedback on content. According to Fregeau, Fathman and Walley, feedback on content is often unsystematic, contradictory, inconsistent and vague. As a result, students may feel neglected, frustrated and confused. This leads to various reactions by students including confusion, frustration and neglect of the comments. Fathman and Walley point out that rather than telling the students what they are doing right, the comments on content highlight problems and are negative. The study was interested in finding out if teachers lay a lot of emphasis on form or content, and the impact this has on the students’ performance.
Brender (1998) and Fregeau (1999) note that feedback has been found to be effective when it is coupled with students – teacher conferencing. Through conferencing, teachers and students alike can identify the causes of the problems arising from student writing and feedback, as well as come up with the right solutions to tackle these problems. Conferencing also enables teachers can engage students by asking direct questions in an effort to better understand their writing. The students find it easier to present their ideas through writing and to better understand the teachers’ comments. Lastly, the sessions enable the teachers to help students with any problems they might be facing regarding their writing. The study investigated whether the teachers of English language are informed of this method of feedback and what they think about it.

Peer communication is an important aspect in writing classes as it enables students to comment on each other’s writing, as well as make suggestions. According to Liu and Hausen, (2002) peer feedback not only increases an awareness of audience needs by creating a collaborative drafting process but also provides opportunities for ESL students to practice English language in a meaningful context.

Digiovanni and Giriji, (2001) observed that students in pre-college ESL writing classes participated in online peer feedback comfortably and remained on task. Similarly, Sullivan and Pratt (1996) found that computer-assisted ESL peer discussion has 100% participation compared to only 50% participation in the face-to-face class. Explaining how online interactions encouraged participation, Jones, Garralda, David Li and Graham (2006) suggested that the electronic environment freed ESL students from the embarrassment to speak English who shared the same first language versus what they
experienced in face-to-face encounters. Lin and Saddler (2007) also noted that the online environment facilitated participation of ESL students whose culture placed a strong value on listening and silence in traditional classrooms.

Connor & Asenerage, (1994) claim that peer feedback activities are at best, limited in their influence on student writing. Earlier, Mittan (1998) praises peer response citing a variety of advantages and benefits of this approach. Carson & Nelson, (1994), Leki (1990) and Zhang, (1995) claim that peer feedback activities are potentially harmful to students because of novice writers ineptitude in providing useful responses and because L₂ (language two) students’ have lukewarm, if not downright hostile feelings toward peer feedback. This intended research will investigate whether the students appreciate peer feedback or not.

Feedback on student writing is often provided through different forms such as teacher commentary and peer feedback. Peer feedback is useful in discussing questions regarding the details, structure and organization of the students’ essays whereas teacher commentary explores the same questions but in a more complex manner. It is provided electronically in the form of coded-in text notes and end of the document commentary (Saito, 1994).

Following peer feedback and teacher commentary is the whole group in-class feedback session. This provides an opportunity for students to further revise their writing before submission. Choosing in favour of such a combination of feedback forms is governed by
the fact that giving students a range of feedback types which may stand a greater chance” of success than reliance on a single technique” (Lynch, 1996).

2.4 Teacher Approaches to Feedback

There are numerous ways for teachers to provide feedback both for L₁ and L₂ situations that are discussed extensively in available literature. These methods include commentary, peer correction and self-correction, error identification, teacher correction and teacher-student conference.

The Teacher correction approach is often favored by second language teachers to modify mistakes in students’ writing. However, the approach is less favoured by many ESL teachers because it takes hours to correct papers; moreover, some researchers have criticized the inconsistency of direct error correction (Semke, 1984; Robb, Ross and Shortreed, 1986; Takashima, 1987). However, as Radecki and Swales (1988) and Cathcart and Olsen’s (1976) studies show, students may prefer teachers to correct all surface errors at least to the extent that is possible.

Research shows that error identification, or locating students’ errors by circling or underlining them, may be the most widely used technique for responding to the writing of second language learners (Cumming, 1985). Previous researchers such as Cardelle & Como (1981), Lalande (1982) and Robb, et al (1986) suggest that systematically identifying L₂ students’ grammar errors can increase their writing accuracy and improve their overall level of writing performance. Cardelle & Como (1981) resolved this stating,
Specific feedback on errors draws attention to material not adequately learned, allowing the students to focus there and not be distracted by too much reexamination of work done well (p. 260).

Zamel (1985) reveals that ESL teachers’ comment tended to ignore the content or ideas in students’ writing in favour of attention to grammatical errors. Other researchers have suggested that positive written comments along with specific comments on errors may be an effective way to motivate students to improve their revisions of their writing (Cardelle & Corno, 1981).

Research has shown that teacher-student conferences, where a teacher and student talk individually about the student writing, have become increasingly popular tools in writing instruction in L₁ settings (Jacobs & Karliner, 1977; Murray, 1979, 1985; Rose, 1982; Zamel, 1985; Sokmen, 1988; Wong, 1988) and recently this approach has started to become popular in L₂ situations as well (Goldstein & Conrad, 1990).

Available research indicates that teacher comments as a method of feedback on students’ writings is often inconsistent, unsystematic, unclear and contradictory. This leads to various reactions by students including confusion, frustration and neglects of the comments (Fatman and Walley, 1990; Fregeau, 1990). In addition, teachers who comments on every mistake made in an essay can very easily overwhelm a student. Numerous studies have revealed that grammar correction to second language writing for students is actually discouraging to many students and even harmful to their writing abilities (Semke, Kepler, 1991: Shepherd, 1992 & Truscott, 1996).
Zamel (1983) suggested that teachers should avoid mixing comments on contents and grammatical corrections in the same drafts while it was argued that a combination of both content and grammar feedback will not overburden students but help them with their writing (Ashwell, 2000; Fatman & Walley, 1990). According to Ferris & Hedgecock (1998), grammatical corrections are necessary but should not be given on first drafts of multiple essays. Therefore, commenting on grammar should be minimized during the earlier drafts and the teachers should rather look into content and organization.

In writing tasks, most teachers adopt a correction code: students should however be trained on how to properly use the comments otherwise they are likely to ignore the comments, misunderstand them or fail to use them constructively (Coher and Calvanti, 1990; Kroll, 2001). Further research has shown that teachers should prompt students about the location and the nature of errors rather than correcting every mistake (Lee, 1997). However, when students get any piece of written work with too many corrections, their confidence is undermined, and they experience frustration and demotivation (Edge, 1989). The research will look into the kind of feedback given to the students and whether it frustrates or demotivates them, leading to poor performance.

Research has shown that most teachers employ grammar corrections other than examining ideas. Teachers should emphasize on the importance of outside reading rather than looking for grammatical competence. Studies have shown that voluntary light, authentic reading (graphics, novels, comics, the easy section of newspapers, popular literature) in the target language greatly helps the overall writing and grammatical skills of second language students (Krashen, 2004a).
According to Truscott (1996), grammar correction does not work because it deals only with the surface appearance for grammar and not the way language develops. Also, the process of learning grammar in a second language is measured and arduous. Additionally, the learning curve is filled with ups and downs, with improvements and some regressions. Providing corrections on a stage the student is yet to reach would be ineffective. Thus, for grammatical correction to be successful, a student should be provided corrections that are relevant to the stage that he/she has reached. Cohen (1987) says that when teachers fail to provide sufficient grammatical explanations about the students’ writing, the students often find the teachers remarks vague, confusing and contradicting. The proposed study tried to investigate whether the students understand the teachers’ comments and if indeed the comments help them to write better.

Bitchener, Young and Cameron (2005) conducted a study to investigate the effect of the type of feedback (direct, explicit, written feedback only; no corrective feedback) on ESL student writing concerning three types of errors (prepositions, the simple past tense and the definite article). The study found that combining conference and written feedback often affected the use of the definite article as well as the use of the past simple tense.

Experienced teachers have undoubtedly found that providing the correct form/structure for students’ faulty sentences is a laborious ordeal which is disheartening to teachers, since similar types of errors are recurrent in compositions over a time-period. Furthermore, overt correction is also disconcerting to students, although many claim they want it (Sue Ling, 1986).
Research has shown that the traditional method of responding to ESL students’ written composition tends to stress linguistic accuracy, requiring the correction usually by the teacher of discrete grammatical items at the sentence level. Studies by Hendrickson (1976) and Sempke (1984) suggested that overt, indiscriminate and meticulous correction of student writing tended to have negative side effects on the quality of subsequent compositions and on student attitudes towards writing. A study by Zamel (1985) showed that ESL teachers ranked mechanical errors as the most important criterion for responding to student writing, stating that compared to L1 writing teachers, they were even more concerned with language specific errors and problems, responding to writing as if it were a final product.

2.5 Students’ Attitude towards Feedback

Available research posits that in general, teacher feedback elicits a positive outlook by both students and teachers. Student preference for teacher feedback stems from the realization that teachers determine the grades they will receive. According to research findings, specific teacher feedback was preferred by the students since it worked in their favor in the tension process. Feedback on form was regarded to be more supportive of students. Complaints were often raised by the students that the teacher feedback on content contradicted with their ideas. Moreover, the interview data illustrated that teacher feedback contributed greatly to students emotional state particularly their motivation and attitudes towards writing (Nugrahenny, 2007).

Fregeau (1999) notes that students want to participate in a process approach to writing that allows for multiple rewrites as well as conferencing of some sort. Brender (1998)
asserts that students want to take part in conferencing and find it more effective than written comments. Leki (1990) points out that students prefer error correction methods that label mistakes and let them make corrections on their own.

According to research by Robert and Melbourne (1999), some students preferred to see precisely the grammar and vocabulary errors because sometimes they are not able to understand the correction if they were only underlined. Leki (1991) study demonstrated that students found feedback of their errors very important and they wanted to have their errors corrected by their teachers. However, Truscott (1996) proposed that error correction should be abandoned.

He maintained that grammar correction was detrimental to both students and teachers and that direct correction would affect the students’ accuracy in grammar. Apart from time wasting, grammar corrections would only demotivate the students. He concluded that the effort on the fossilization of errors would not be aided by error correction. It would be vital to know the stance of students on teachers’ feedback and whether it helps them or not.

According to Murray (1978), writing means rewriting for most professional writers, and in support of his claim, he quotes 47 writers who state that they write and rewrite in order to discover / clarify what it is they have to say. Most beginning writers think that the first draft, the initial product, is equivalent to the finished product, and that the mechanical changes of spelling, punctuation, capitalization and grammar which are superficial or cosmetics changes, are all the shaping needed. Mature writers, on the other hand, know that the first draft is only the beginning and that at this point in the writing cycle, they
have completed only a part of the shaping process. Murray, (1978) also noted that the amateur thinks that the job is finished, but the professional knows that the job has just begun. This means that writing is a process that requires checks and balances as one progresses.

2.6 Approaches to Writing Instructions

The process approach is one method that has had a significant influence on second language writing. It has become a household name for language teachers today. Even though professionals have realized that there is no single method that is adequate in assisting students to develop their writing skills, institutional and curriculum practice teaching writing has been lauded as an effective practice in ESL writing.

The process approach originated from the process movement in teaching composition to native English language speakers, which began in the early years of the twentieth century and reached its Zenith in the 1960s and 1970s in North America (Johns 1990). It originated due to the fact that most teachers were dissatisfied with the traditional approach that emphasized “the product”, which is the completed students written texts. Critics of the product approach cited that the main objective of it was to teach literature rather than hone writing skills. They stated that the process of developing writing skills among students was a complicated and arduous process, and that stressing the need for correct grammar in traditional writing did not aid in developing these skills.

The interest in the writing process resulted in what Hairston called “a revolutionary paradigm shift” in teaching writing in American schools (Reid 1993). Due to the fact that
writing is regarded as a process of “self-discovery” which involves numerous stages, a non-threatening environment is paramount. Teaching writing was viewed as a process whereby effective strategies were used to guide students through their development.

Available research has found that students who are given error feedback from the teachers had greater self-correction abilities than those who were not given error feedback (Ferries 2001). Many L₂ teachers fear the fossilization of errors (a persuasive argument letter supported by Ferris (1990) and that teacher’s feel morally obliged to correct all mistakes in their L₂ students’ work. The proposed study will try to find out whether teachers give the students error feedback, and how students’ performance is impacted due to self-correction. Additionally, it would be of interest to observe whether students make more mistakes than errors.

Research shows that the validity of grammar based and pattern product approaches to ESL writing was questioned in the late 1970s and early 1980s; by several ESL specialists such as Zamel (1987) and Raimes (1985). The existing approaches to ESL writing were questioned by early ESL process advocates, who were inspired by the process movement which was prevalent in teaching native speakers to write compositions. Zamel (1976) for instance, in her frequently cited landmark essay on the process approach to ESL writing says “teaching composition in ESL classroom: what we learn from research in the teaching of English language (reprinted in Silva 2000), faulted the grammar based and pattern product approaches as “unfounded, though well indeed,” she argued that emphasis on surface level correctness was of little value “in helping students learn to
write and the mastery of textual structures had little to do with “the creative process of writing”.

A study done by Zamel (1976), urged teachers to abandon traditional approaches to teaching writing and look for new options from “well established approaches used in the composition class to native English speakers; in her later essay (1982); she further advocated that the ESL writing class should intervene throughout the process and that students should learn to view their writing as someone else’s reading. Many teachers responded positively to Zamel’s call for a change in ESL writing. This proposed study will try and find out if teachers of writing in secondary schools follow a process approach to ESL writing.

Research has shown that the process response to product provides a more progressive outlook towards the task of rewriting in that teachers intervene (in students’ writing) most opportunely and provide appropriate help without usurping the student’s role as a writer, without distorting author intent and without overloading him / her cognitively with a dual injunction to revise for meaning and edit for mechanics at the same time (Ling, 1986).

Lindeman, (1987) explains the merits of prewriting:

Prewriting techniques help students assess the dimensions of a rhetorical problem and plan its solution. They trigger perceptual and conceptual processes, permitting writers to recall experiences, break through stereotyped thinking, examine relationships between ideas, assess the expectations of her audience, find
an implicit order in their subject matter, and discover how they feel about the work (p.109).

2.7 Research on Feedback

Majority of the research that has been carried out regarding feedback involved teacher feedback methods and successive revisions that student do (or fail to). As much as the use of written feedback elicits competing views, researchers agree that written feedback is important and that ESL students value it. The use of written feedback is contentious but most research agrees on 2 points: the importance of written feedback and value ESL students place on feedback. Feedback came to be viewed as having a powerful potential with the possibility for “a revision of cognition itself that stems from response” (Freedman, 1985). In fact, in research done by Kroll (2001) it was found that written feedback is one of the two components most central to any writing course, the other being the assignments the students are given. The intended research also agrees that ESL students greatly appreciate written feedback, as shown by ESL surveys (Leki, 1991 and Saito, 1994). In addition to these two points, Ferris (2006) argues that researchers also agree that “accuracy in writing matters to academic and professional audiences and that obvious L2 error may stigmatize audiences in some contexts and that L2 student writers themselves claim to need and value error judgment from their instructors.”

Although ESL students greatly appreciate feedback, there is controversy among L2 writing researchers and teachers about whether teachers should provide any grammar correction at all to student writers and if the feedback has any value to improving the students writing. Even though ESL students greatly value feedback, the issue of whether
teachers should provide corrections regarding grammar has been contention. In addition, there have been questions on whether such grammar corrections have any value on improving the students’ writing. Ferris (1997) for instance found that:

Although three quarters of substantive teachers’ comments on drafts, were used by students, only half of their revisions in response to these should be considered as improvements and a third actually made matters worse. Conrad and Goldstein also found the same in their study (p.35).

Research on feedback has been discouraging. Students often find teacher comments unclear, confusing and inconsistent or vague (Zamel, 1985). It has been noted that feedback that places emphasis on error correction while ignoring explicit teaching is unproductive. Research conducted in the 1980’s suggested that error correction feedback is inadequate. Teachers should instead give priority to commenting on “meaning” not grammar (Zamel, 1985). Truscott (1999) has gone so far as to argue for “correction-free” approach. He suggests a “correction-free approach” in his 1996 essay, arguing that error correction is not impactful to developing student writing. He suggests that students base their revision on teachers’ comments while failing to comprehend why they were incorrect in the first place.

Research that has been done on feedback has come up with two terms to define corrective feedback. These are direct and indirect feedback (Ferris and Hedgecock, 1998; Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Lalande, 1982; Robb, Ross and Shortred, 1986; Terry 1989; Zamel, 1985). Though Ferris (2000) points out that such expressions have not always been used consistently among researchers, generally speaking, direct feedback is provided when
the teacher gives the student a particular correction (coded) and indirect feedback is provided when the teacher simply marks the error but does not correct (non-coded) in providing indirect feedback, some teachers tend to code mistakes to indicate the precise location and type of error, while other provide un-coded feedback that simply locate the error without disclosing the error type. Students are therefore tasked with using un-coded feedback in diagnosing and correcting the mistake.

Despite the feedback offered, some students are unable to use it effectively. For example some students with lower proficiency levels may not have adequate linguistic awareness to correct mistakes, even if they are identified for them (Ferris, 2006; Ferris & Hedgecock, 1998). This could lend some support to the claims of Truscott (1996), who has argued that error feedback may be harmful. Nevertheless, Ferris (2004) has suggested that since students have demonstrated an overwhelming desire for feedback, to withhold feedback may be detrimental due to legitimate affective concerns that may determine the learning process. Though most learners want and expect feedback from their teachers, there is evidence to suggest that they tend to prefer direct over indirect feedback (Ferris, Roberts, 2001; Komura, 1999; Rennie, 2000 and Roberts, 1999).

Research shows some evidence that suggests that indirect feedback may result in accuracy levels that are at least as effective, depending on what is being analyzed (Ferris and Helt, 2000; Frantzen, 1995; Lalande, 1982; Lee, 1997; Robb, Ross & Shortred, 1986). For example Ferris (2002) observed that though direct feedback led to greater accuracy in text revisions, indirect feedback resulted in the production of fewer initial errors. Thus, some have suggested that students might be served best when the method
of feedback is dictated by error type and context (Chaney, 1999; Ferris, 2006 and Hadruckson, 1980).

The following conditions are necessary for feedback to support learning: first, it is essential for feedback to be supportive. Shute (2008) outlines the importance of formative feedback defining it as “information communicated to the learner that is intended to modify the learners thinking or behaviour for the purpose of improving learning.”

White, Spada, Lightbown and Ranta’s (1991) research shows that feedback that is linked to revisions can result in both improvements to the current text and a reduction in errors in later assignments (Ferris, 2002). The study sought to find out if students’ performance improves when this method is used.

Second, it is important that the formative feedback is timely (Gibbs & Simpson, 2004; Wiggins, 1998). The teachers need to be prompt in providing feedback to the students after they have submitted their assignments. Research suggests that giving feedback one week after the student has written the assignment is too late (Hattie & Timperly, 2007). The feedback must be swift for it to be effective to the students.

The third condition is that feedback has to draw attention to the error. The question of whether the feedback should be direct or indirect is still debated. In a recent article, Dana Ferris (2007) shows that error correction feedback is effective. Using material from 92 L2 undergraduates in ESL composition classes, she studies approximately 200 preliminary and revised dates. She uses this data to find out the significance of teacher feedback in developing and improving students’ writing. Out of the 200 students, she
found that 80% were successful in using the feedback to edit out their errors while 9.3% failed to make any changes.

The fourth condition is that teachers should desist from appropriation and avoid offering line by line text corrections. It is better to provide indirect feedback as it avoids appropriation and pushes the student to participate in problem solving, thereby empowering them. Moreover, it hones their editing skills. However, it has been noted the students with lower L2 lack the cognitive know how to deal with indirect feedback and self-correction (Ferris and Hedgecock, 1998). A combination of direct and indirect feedback has been suggested as the most impactful to students.

Fifth, feedback should be linked to an assessment that is linked to criteria and specific outcomes (Gibbs and Simpson, 2004). A recognized set of criteria as well as rubrics are recommended. According to Hyland, (2004) current theories of language assessment emphasize the importance of assessing student writing with a set of clear criteria created by the teacher. A standardized evaluation of cohesive links, organization and grammar is possible due to the use of the rubric. Transparency is therefore improved while grading papers. A rubric, or criteria guide helps teachers “apply consistent standards to judge each task performance fairly but also so that they can communicate to the student (Hyland, 2004).” In conclusion, feedback is ineffective if it is unclear or sets unrealistic standards. The current study established whether the feedback given to secondary school writing classes is effective or not, and how it impacts on the students’ performance.
2.8 Threats to Effective Feedback in English as a Second Language Compositions

One of the threats to effective feedback in ESL writing lies with traditional methods of correcting grammatical errors. The outright correction of surface errors has been found to be inconsistent, unclear and overemphasis the negative (Fregeau, 1999; Cohen & Calvalcanti, 1990). This type of feedback makes students prone to simply copying the correction into their final texts. The mistakes noted from the feedback are rarely recorded or studied by majority of the students. They are unable to learn to correct errors themselves. Fregeau (1999) discovered that the method of teachers indicating the presence or types of errors without correction is also ineffective. Moreover, marking student errors inhibits students from concentrating on the clarity of their ideas as they emphasize on surface errors, which is quite negative.

Providing feedback on context also has its own faults. Fathman & Walley (1990) as well as Fregeau (1999) report that teacher feedback on content in the form of teacher comments is often vague, contradictory, unsystematic and inconsistent. Students thus feel neglected, confused and frustrated. Leki (1990) reports that when presented with written feedback on content, students react in three main ways. The students, may understand them and not know how to respond to them, may fail to understand them or may not read the annotations at all. Students are unable to improve their skills if they cannot understand teacher comments on content or know how to use this feedback. Fathman and Walley (1990) note, much like correction of grammar mistakes, comments on content tend to be negative and point out problems more than tell students what they are doing.
right. The study aimed at analyzing various kinds of feedback provided by the teachers and how the students interpreted them.

Most researchers agree that in order to do any meaningful revision, students need to receive feedback earlier than in final drafts (Ferris, 1993 and Leki, 1990). Also, it is a typical recommendation that content and form revision should be strictly separated. Moreover, it is recommended that form and content revision should be firmly separated. This means that students’ writing should be closely monitored and feedback given immediately. This is not usually the case in our Kenyan secondary school due to the current teacher shortage and high enrolment owing to free secondary education. The researcher analyzed how often the students gave written assignments to the teacher for marking and how soon they received the feedback.

Another threat to effective feedback is lack of professionalism in those handling English language as a subject. Due to the integration of English and literature, some teachers are not competent in English language since they were trained in literature and another art subject like History or Christian Religious Education. We also find that owing to the current teacher shortage, most day schools employ peer teachers (Those students who have just finished their KCSE) and these teachers have not received any training in the subjects they handle. It therefore becomes a challenge to give appropriate feedback to the students’ writing since the peer teacher may not even have passed in English language in the first place. It would be important to find out how many teachers are trained to handle English language as a subject and how this impacts on the students’ performance.
2.9 Role of technology in English as a Second Language Feedback

The potential of computer-mediated communication (CMC) for enhancing the social dynamics of the classroom is among the findings of a study by Bloch (2002). His research demonstrates how the limitations in time and space brought by a traditional classroom can be broken down using cyberspace communication. Cyberspace allows for an extension of social relationships beyond the classroom, another essential component in the communicative curriculum proposed by Savignon (1997). Multiple identities can be formed by a variety of learners due to this extension, thus enabling them to play a range of roles in a range of social contexts.

In composition writing, human input can be replaced by using computer generated models to generate feedback on written work, making it cost-effective. These programs provide a range of feedback from individualized reports on grammatical errors for ESL student (Bolt, 1992; Dalgish, 1991; Liou, 1994; Warden and Chen, 1995) to holistic evaluations that attend too many of the content, organizational, mechanical aspects of essay writing for both first and second language writers (Brook, 1990, 1993; Burston, 2001; Ferris, 1993 and Leacock, 2004).

Ware and Warschauer (1994) says that on the instructors’ end of automated electronic feedback, the sheer number of hours spent commenting on students papers is reduced dramatically when instructors can rely on automated electronic feedback systems. It is without a doubt that a human reader cannot match the speed with which a computer can provide individualized feedback data. Arguably, by using such systems, instructors can
free their time to turn their attention to other aspects of teaching in the process writing approach (Chen, 1997; Yao & Warden; 1996).

One of the better-known automated evaluation systems is the criterion e–rater (Bursten et al, 2003), developed by the Educational Testing Services (ETS). The e-rater is designed to provide feedback in usage, style, organization and grammar by analyzing topical content, syntactical variety, lexical complexity and grammatical errors. Students can use a web-based system to pick from a variety of practice essay topics that are categorized by grade.

Another automated electronic feedback program, MY Access!, developed by Vantage Learning (Eliot & Mikulas, 2004), has found its way into a growing number of public school classrooms. As with the e-rater, students can post numerous essays and receive complete scores on their final texts. At the moment MY Access! does not offer individualized feedback like the e-rater. However, it provides a useful array of writing tools such as spell checkers, rubrics, graphic charts, world banks, a writer’s checklist and on-line portfolios.

Despite the advantage of the time saving capabilities of automated feedback, many developers of this software nonetheless insist that computer generated feedback should only be considered a supplement to classroom instruction (Burstein, Chodorow & Leacock, 2003; Burstein & Marcie, 2003).
2.10 Existing Research Gap

From the literature review presented, it is obvious that feedback plays a very significant role in a student’s writing skills. If feedback is wholly embraced, it would help students in improving their writing skills and hence churn out graduates with superb writing skills who consequently would become good writers. However, the previous studies have revealed that most of the teachers rely on the two forms of feedback; that is feedback on form and feedback on content (Williams, 2003). Feedback on form is based on underlining to indicate only the presence of errors, teacher markings that indicate the place and type of error but without correction and outright teacher correction of surface errors. In contrast, Fathman and Walley, (1990), note that comments on content tend to be negative and point out problems more than telling students what they are doing right. These two forms of the feedback are more likely to have a great impact towards students’ attitude on feedback they receive from their teachers on English language composition writing. The current study therefore sought to find out types of feedback teachers give to students on English language composition writing and how students perceive teachers feedback. The study also looked at factors influencing types of feedback used by teachers on students’ English language composition writing.
3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the procedures used to collect and analyze data are covered. Emphasis is placed on the research design, study location, target population, sample size and sampling procedures, sampling grid, data collection and data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

A descriptive survey research design was employed in this study. According to Best (1992), descriptive research studies have specific characteristics. They use the logical methods of inductive-deductive reasoning to arrive at generalizations. They often employ methods of randomization so that error may be estimated when inferring population characteristics from observations of samples. Additionally, randomization is used when the variables and procedures are as accurate and complete as possible. It allows replication of studies by other researchers.

This design lends itself to qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis. In a broad sense, survey research includes all measurements and processes that encompass asking questions to respondents through questionnaires as well as interviews. A sample of respondents is selected from a population by the researcher, who then presents a standardized questionnaire or applies an interview schedule. It allows for generalization of findings (Ogula, 1998). A descriptive survey has advantages in that it is flexible and can permit a wide range of information to be collected. As a result of being standardized,
surveys are relatively free from several types of errors. The design that was used for this study is diagrammatically represented in figure 3.1

**Figure 3.1: Descriptive Research Design used in this Study**

- **Research population**
  - Secondary schools of Kahuro

- **Stratified systematic sampling technique**

- **Sample**

- **Data collection: Data on feedback in English writing classrooms**

- **Data analysis and description**
  - Descriptive statistics
    - Percentages
    - Means
    - Frequencies

- **Subjects: Form 3 writing teachers and**

- **Instruments for data collection**
  - Questionnaire
  - Interview schedule checklist

- **Data presentation**
  - Tables
  - Graphs
  - Charts
  - Description

- **Summary and Conclusion**

- **Recommendations**
3.3 Study Locale

The location of the study was Kahuro Sub-county in Murang’a County. This area was selected because the district has an abundance of day schools and the performance of candidates in KCSE English language examinations has been very poor as compared to Kandara and Murang’a South sub-counties (See table 1.1). This background is important to the researcher because the present study intends to relate the teachers’ feedback in ESL composition writing and how this affects students’ performance.

3.4 The Target Population

A population is a group of individuals, objects or items from which samples are taken for measurement (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). In this study the target population was 2,520 form three students in all secondary schools in Kahuro Sub-county, 63 teachers of English language. The district has 35 public schools, of which 26 are mixed day schools, 4 girls’ boarding schools and 5 boys’ boarding schools. Form 3 compositions were selected as target because the students at this stage have already developed good writing skills and their range of vocabulary is wider than that in the lower forms. They are also at a stage where they can understand appropriate feedback and hence perform better in their compositions.

3.5 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

3.5.1 Schools’ Sample

To select the schools to participate in the study, the researcher used stratified sampling technique. The schools were categorized into three categories depending on performance namely: above average, average and below average. Simple random sampling method
was used by the researcher for each school category to select one school to take part in the study hence giving a total of 3 schools. The three schools comprised 10% of the total number of schools in the sub-county. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), in a descriptive research, a sample size of 10% - 50% of the target population is acceptable. This sample size was considered suitable because the researcher was able to respond to the key sub groups of the population as well as the overall population. Table 3.1 illustrates a sampling frame for the schools which took part in the study.

Table 3.1: School Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School type</th>
<th>Number of schools in the Sub-county</th>
<th>Sampled schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mixed day schools</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls Boarding</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys Boarding</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>35</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.5.2 Students’ Sample

The students’ sample was obtained through stratified random sampling. The researcher divided the population into two groups, boys and girls. Luck drip procedure was used to choose a random selection of subjects from group A and group B. The sample reflected the precise proportion of males and females in the whole population. The researcher obtained 10% of 1840 students, which is 184 and is the minimum sample size of the population under survey.
3.5.3 Teachers’ Sample

Simple random sampling was used to get the teacher’s sample. As the proponents of random sampling state, each individual of the sample had an equal chance of being chosen. The researcher obtained 10% of 100 teachers, which is 10 teachers and is therefore the minimum size. Table 3.2 shows the sample size of the study.

Table 3.2: Sampling Grid

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Target population</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>1840</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1940</strong></td>
<td><strong>194</strong></td>
<td><strong>10.0%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.6 Research Instruments

3.6.1 Students’ Questionnaires

The researcher used questionnaires for gathering data from the students to assess the impact of feedback in ESL compositions. The questionnaires sought information on whether students made corrections as indicated by the teacher, whether they wrote multiple drafts and whether they understood the symbols the teacher wrote on their work. Among the well known advantages of questionnaires is that they save on time hence information can be collected from a large sample. Confidentiality is also upheld.

3.6.2 Teachers’ Interview Schedule

The researcher used an interview schedule for teachers of English language. This was done in order to find out how many compositions the teachers gave the students per term, whether they revised and made corrections with students or whether they were more
interested in form or content. A structured interview schedule had the advantage in that
the information gathered was highly reliable as the interviewer directly engaged with the
interviewee. It was also systematic as well as time saving since the respondents simply
answered what was asked by the researcher.

3.6.3 Essay Analysis Checklist

The researcher used students’ compositions. She photocopied the marked essays and
returned the books to their owners. The feedback was studied by the researcher so that
she could know the kind of symbols used to indicate feedback, the kind of grade the
teacher awarded to students, the marking of content versus form, as well as the teachers’
comments. In addition, the researcher was able to know what kind of essays the students
wrote in relation to their knowledge of writing skills, being form three students who
ought to have adequate knowledge of writing skills at their level. Correction of students’
work had the advantage of authenticity.

3.7 Pilot Study

Before beginning the actual data collection, a pretest on a small sample of respondents
was carried out. The researcher did a pilot study in one of the schools in Kahuro Sub-
county, which was not among those included in the main study. Three teachers and 60
students were randomly picked to take part in the pilot study. To ensure that the study
objectives were met, the researcher used the pilot study results to measure the level of
consistency in questionnaire results. The research instruments were tested, their reliability
established and validated. Modifications were made to various research questions to suit
the research objectives. The pilot study was used to establish the feasibility of the study.
During the pilot study, the researcher arranged to visit the selected schools and obtained the necessary permission from the respective administrators. The researcher established rapport with the teachers and the students.

3.8 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher applied for and was granted a letter of introduction from graduate school, Kenyatta University to seek authority of conducting the research. Subsequently, the researcher sought authority from National Council for Science Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) for conducting the study. After acquiring the research permit, the researcher visited the selected schools to request the head teachers to allow her to carry out the research in their schools. This enabled her to consult the English language teachers in these schools. The researcher then arranged with the selected teachers the convenient time when she could conduct the interview and administer questionnaires to the students. The researcher needed to win the confidence of the teachers by establishing rapport so that they could view the observation positively.

3.8.1 Students’ Questionnaire

Questionnaires are ideal research instruments for survey study as postulated by (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003) and are widely used in education to obtain information about current conditions and practices and to make enquiries about attitude and opinions quickly and in price form. The researcher administered questionnaires to collected data from students in form three from the sampled schools. Section one captured students’ demographic data, section two consisted of various types of feedback teachers used on their students’ composition while the last section of this instrument consisted of various statements.
measuring students’ attitudes toward teachers’ feedback in their composition. Before administering of the questionnaires, the students were guaranteed confidentiality of their responses as was stated in the questionnaires. The researcher then personally administered questionnaires to the students, gave them time to complete answering them, and collected the questionnaires once they were done.

### 3.8.2 Teachers’ Interview Schedule

An interview schedule was used to pose questions to the teachers on the influence of their feedback on students’ language in public secondary schools in Kahuro sub-county. The interview schedule had probing questions covering all the study objectives. Prior to the interview, the researcher explained to each potential respondent the purpose of the study and the intended uses of the data. The researcher then booked an appointment with the teachers to conduct the interviews and hence collect the data.

### 3.8.3 Students’ Essays

The researcher used the students’ essays to collect information on various types of feedback provided to students by the teachers with regards to their compositions. To get this information, the researcher liaised with the teacher so that the essays were collected from students categorized as above average, average and below average. The essays were then photocopied and the exercise books returned to the students.

### 3.9 Data Analysis

Data analysis entails examining what has been collected in a survey and making deductions and inferences. Upon collection of the data, the Statistical Package for Social
Sciences (SPSS) tool was used to code and enter data in the computer. Analysis of data from the three research instruments was carried out both qualitatively and quantitatively. Quantitative data collected through the questionnaires was analyzed using descriptive statistics which included frequency counts, percentages and means.

On the other hand, for qualitative data, content analysis was applied, whereby verbal data obtained from interview sessions was categorized for purposes of classification, summarization and tabulation. Qualitative data was analyzed in order to organize and attribute meaning to the data (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). In order to do this, the researcher used the 3-stage process proposed by Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2013). The first phase was data reduction, and it involved selection, simplification, and extraction of themes and patterns from written interview notes and transcripts. This entailed reading and re-reading transcripts of the interviews in order to search for differences and similarities in themes. The researcher then assigned code names to detected themes, which were then organized into various categories of related concepts, patterns, topics, or ideas emerging from perspectives of the participants. After this, data displayed in form of tables was used to present the outcomes of data reduction. As noted by Miles et al. (2013), displays are used to incorporate information into an accessible summary to facilitate later conclusion drawing. Finally, initial conclusions were drawn based on cross-case data displays after which these initial conclusions were subjected to verification procedures. The results of the analysis were then presented using frequency tables, bar graphs and pie charts. Table 3.3 illustrates matrix table on data analysis plan.
Table 3.3: Matrix Table on Data Analysis Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research objectives</th>
<th>Nature of data</th>
<th>Statistic used</th>
<th>Output</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To establish types of feedback the teachers use on their students’ compositions.</td>
<td>Quantitative data</td>
<td>Frequency counts</td>
<td>Tables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Qualitative data</td>
<td>Percentages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To establish students’ attitude towards teachers’ feedback on English language composition writing.</td>
<td>Quantitative data</td>
<td>Frequency counts</td>
<td>Tables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Percentages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Means</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chi-square</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To investigate the factors that influence the types of feedback used by English teachers in compositions.</td>
<td>Quantitative data</td>
<td>Frequency counts</td>
<td>Tables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Qualitative data</td>
<td>Percentages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.10 Ethical Considerations

The researcher maintained confidentiality at all times. Only people conducting the survey knew the identity of the participants. Secondly, the researcher obtained informed consent from any subjects used in the study and ensured that all subjects participated voluntarily. Finally, the researcher was open and honest in dealing with other researchers and research subjects. This means that the researcher did not exploit subjects by breaching agreements made with them.
CHAPTER FOUR
DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter entails the data analysis, presentation and interpretations of the study findings. The purpose of the study was to find out the use of teachers’ feedback on students’ language in public Secondary Schools in Kahuro sub-county, Murang’a County. The chapter is divided into four sections. The first section captures the demographic characteristics of the study respondents. The remaining three sections capture information based on the study objectives listed below:

i. To establish types of feedback the teachers use on their students’ compositions

ii. To establish students’ attitude towards teachers’ feedback on English language composition writing

iii. To investigate the factors that influence the types of feedback used by English teachers in compositions

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of the Study Respondents

In this section the study respondents’ demographic information is captured. The researcher considered this information essential as it assisted the reader to better understand the respondents, hence making it easy to have discussions based on the study objectives. The demographic information included gender and age of the respondents, as well as the type of school used in the study.
4.2.1 Students’ Gender

The study was interested in obtaining the students’ gender in the schools selected. The results are as shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Students’ gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sampled schools</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total no. of students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above average</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below average</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>61</strong></td>
<td><strong>33.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>123</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1 shows that of the 184 students who took part in the study, 123 (66.8%) were females while the remaining 61 (33.2%) were males. Among the 61 males, 14 were from schools performing above average, 35 were from averaged schools and 12 were from schools performing below average. Results in the table further illustrates that 46 female students were from schools performing above the average, 27 were from averaged schools and 50 were from schools performing below average. This is an indication that the researcher did not consider gender balance during the data collection process and hence the number of female students was greater than that of the males.

4.2.2 Students’ Age

To know the age brackets of the students who took part in the study, the researcher asked them to indicate their age. Table 4.2 illustrates results obtained.
Table 4.2: Students’ Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age bracket</th>
<th>Performance of the sampled schools</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Above average</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 15 years</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-18 years</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>29.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-21 years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 21 years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>60</td>
<td>33.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Information presented in Table 4.2 indicates that majority (89.1%) of the students who took part in the study were aged between 16-18 years. Only 4 (2.2%) of the students were below 15 years while the remaining 2 (1.1%) were aged above 21 years. This is an indication that the students were within the typical age bracket to be pursuing their secondary education and it was therefore expected that the data gathered would be a representation of the overall student population.

### 4.2.3 Type of School

The study sought to find out types of schools which were involved in the study. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 4.3.
Table 4.3: Type of School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of school</th>
<th>Performance of the sampled schools</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Above average</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys’ only</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls’ only</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed students</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>60</strong></td>
<td><strong>33.6</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As presented in Table 4.3, among the 184 students who participated in this study, majority of them 77 (41.8%) were in Girls’ only schools, 54 (29.3%) were in mixed day and boarding schools and an almost equal number of 53 (28.8%) students were in boys’ only schools. Results in the table further illustrates that Boys’ only and Girls’ only schools performed better compared to mixed day and boarding. This is an indication that the students used in this study are representative of the composition of students from across all secondary schools.

4.3 Types of Feedback given by Teachers to Students on English Language Composition Writing

The first objective sought to determine the types of feedback given by teachers to students on English language composition writing. To address this objective, the researcher sought to ascertain whether teachers gave students assignment on composition writing as well as whether teachers marked students’ composition books. Additionally, the researcher sought to obtain students’ performance in composition writing and various
types of comments teachers’ gave on the students’ composition. The results of this analysis were as follows.

4.3.1 Assignment on Composition Writing

The quality of academic composition writing among students is determined by various factors among them teachers’ role of giving students assignment on composition writing and students’ engagement in composition writing. Table 4.4 illustrates students’ responses regarding assignments on composition writing.

Table 4.4: Students’ responses regarding assignments on composition writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance of the sampled schools</th>
<th>Are you given composition assignment</th>
<th>Total no. of students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above average</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>28.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below average</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>110</strong></td>
<td><strong>59.8</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 4.4, a high number of students 110 (59.8%) said that their teachers gave them assignments on composition writing whereas the remaining 74 (40.2%) held a contrary opinion. Among those who indicated that they were given assignments by their teachers, 28.8% were from schools which performed above the average, 21.2% were from averaged schools and 9.8% were from schools which performed below average. This is an indication that the teachers did their teaching roles as expected through assigning tasks to their students. Contrary with the study findings, Njuguna (2012) established that 11.5% of English teachers never gave students tasks of writing
compositions, 69.3% gave students these tasks once a term, 15.4% about once a month and 3.8% about once a week.

### 4.3.2 Rate of Performance in Composition

A further analysis was also carried out to find out how the students rated their performance in English language composition writing. The results are shown in Table 4.5.

#### Table 4.5: Students’ Performance in English language Composition Writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students’ performance in Composition</th>
<th>Performance of the sampled schools</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Above average</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below average</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>49 26.6</td>
<td>47 25.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above average</td>
<td>11 6.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never did composition assignment</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>15 8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>60 33.6</strong></td>
<td><strong>62 33.7</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in Table 4.5, of the 110 students who indicated that they were given assignments in composition writing by their teachers, majority 97 (52.7%) of them rated their performance in English language composition as being average, 11 (6.0%) rated it as above average while the remaining 2 (1.1%) students indicated that their performance was below average. Findings in the table also shows that all the 11 students who indicated that they performed above the average in composition writing were from schools which performed above the average. However, majority of the students (32.1%)
who indicated that they never did composition assignment were from school which performed below average.

A further analysis of the teachers’ interview schedule also revealed that majority of the teachers rated their students’ performance in English language compositions as being average. This implies that the students’ performance in composition writing could be rated as being okay although not excellent.

4.3.3 Composition Marking by the Teachers

The researcher enquired from the students whether their English teachers marked their composition books. The responses were as shown in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Responses on whether Teachers Marked Composition Books

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance of the sampled schools</th>
<th>Marking composition books</th>
<th>Total no. of students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above average</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>26.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below average</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>134</td>
<td>72.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in the Table 4.6, majority 134 (72.8%) of the students indicated that their English teachers marked their composition books while the remaining 50 (27.2%) said that their composition books were not marked. Among the 134 students who reported that their teachers marked composition, 26.1% were from schools which performed above the average, 14.1% were from averaged schools and 15.8% were from schools
which performed below the average. This provides an indication that the teachers marked the composition assignments that they gave to the students. However, a notable number of students from schools which performed below average reported that their English teachers did not mark their composition books.

### 4.3.4 Comments on Composition Writing

The researcher further probed whether the teachers gave comments on the compositions that they marked. Findings are as indicated in Table 4.7.

**Table 4.7: Responses on whether Teachers Commented on Compositions Given**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance of the sampled schools</th>
<th>Do teachers give comments on compositions</th>
<th>Total no. of students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above average</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>31.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>27.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below average</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>146</td>
<td>79.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>184</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As illustrated in Table 4.7, majority 146 (79.3%) of the students said that their teachers gave comments on their compositions while the remaining 38 (20.7%) said that they did not. Among the students who reported that their teachers gave comments on compositions, 31.5% of them were in schools which performed above the average, 27.2% were in averaged schools and 20.7% were in schools which performed below average. This is an indication that the teachers gave feedback regarding their views of the
compositions marked. Regarding the types of comments provided by the teachers, the students’ responses are as shown below.

**Table 4.8: Teachers’ Comments on Compositions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation mistakes</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>58.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling mistakes</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>52.2</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>47.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor paragraph construction</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>81.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrong vocabulary</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>77.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammatical errors</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As presented in Table 4.8, most students 115 (62.5%) indicated that the comments they received from their teachers were on grammatical errors. The table further shows that 96 (52.2%) of students received comments on spelling mistakes while another 77 (41.8%) had punctuation mistakes as the major comments from their teachers. From the analysis, it is clear that poor paragraph construction was the comment mentioned by the least number of students 35 (19.0%). However, although Ruscott (1996) claims that grammatical corrections do not work because they deal only with the surface appearance for grammar and not the way language develops, this study established that comments on grammatical errors were the most commonly made by the teachers. In another study, Seker & Dincer (2014) established that most of the teachers give students feedback on organization, grammar, and spelling. Other comments given were on content, vocabulary, capitalization and punctuation.
Table 4.9: Ratings for the Various Types of Comments on Composition Writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating for various types of comments</th>
<th>Performance of the sampled schools</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Above average</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General comments</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative comments</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive comments</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detailed and specific comments</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>33.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in Table 4.9, out of the 184 students who participated in the study, most of them 65 (35.3%) rated the composition comments they received from their teachers as being general. This is in line with findings by Nugrahenny (2007) which established that students often complained that teachers’ feedback on content tended to be general and sometimes, contradictory to student ideas. As further shown in the table, 54 (29.3%) students also indicated that the comments they got were negative. As shown further by the table, 34 (18.5%) students said that they had positive comments while the remaining 31 (16.8%) students said that they received detailed and specific comments from the teachers after they marked their compositions.

4.4: Students’ Attitudes towards Teachers’ Feedback on English Language Composition

This was the second objective for the study. It aimed at finding out the students’ attitudes towards teachers’ feedback on English language composition. The study looked into the respondents’ attitudes towards teachers’ feedback on English language composition.
writing which were measured on a five point likert scale. The scale ranged from 1 to 5, with 5 denoting strongly agree, 4 agree, 3 undecided, 2 disagree and 1 strongly disagree. Three was used as the midpoint for the scale. Any scores above 3 indicated that the students agreed to the aspects provided while a score below 3 showed a disagreement with the teachers’ feedback.
Table 4.10: Students’ Attitudes towards Teachers’ Feedback on Composition Writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>SA f</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>A f</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>U f</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>D f</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>SD f</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My teacher’s remarks and corrections assist me in knowing where my mistakes are and correct them</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>1.117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My teacher’s feedback is too negative and discouraging</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>1.483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like the teacher’s remarks on my composition writing</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>1.374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher’s comments challenge me to improve my writing</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>1.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My teacher’s remarks and corrections assist me in knowing what to avoid/improve next time</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>1.424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel that my writing has improved because of the feedback given on my paper</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>1.110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The feedback given makes me feel good about myself</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>1.339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generally, I like the way my composition is marked</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>35.9</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>1.252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My teacher comments are too general</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>1.263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback in compositions is very important</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>57.6</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.29</td>
<td>1.060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My teacher only confines herself/himself to grammatical mistakes</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>1.360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like discussing feedback with the teacher verbally</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>1.404</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 4.10, the students’ responses on aspects measuring their attitude towards teachers’ feedback on English composition writing ranged from a mean score of...
2.55 to 4.29. The highest ranked statement at a mean score of 4.29 was that feedback in composition writing was very important. Other highly ranked statements were:

*The teacher’s comments challenge me to improve my writing (3.99); I feel that my writing has improved because of the feedback given on my paper (3.91); my teacher comments are too general (3.46).*

Williams (2005) also observed that most teachers gave general comments on students’ compositions. He further found out that the collective types of feedback teachers gave included; underlining to indicate the presence of errors, teacher markings that indicated the place and type of error but without correction and outright teacher correction of surface errors.

As further shown in the table, the lowest ranked statement at a mean score of 2.55 was that:

*I like the teacher’s remarks on my composition writing.*

Other lowly ranked statements were:

*I like discussing feedback with my teacher (2.75); I generally like the way my composition is marked (2.90) and my teacher’s comments and corrections help me to know what to avoid/improve next time (2.90).*

### 4.5 Factors Influencing the Types of Feedback Used by Teachers on English Language Composition

This was the final objective for this study. It sought to find out the factors influencing types of feedback used by teachers on English language composition. The students who
took part in the study were first provided with a question in which they gave their opinions as to whether there were any factors which influenced the various types of feedback their English teacher gave on composition writing. The responses are as shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Responses on Factors Influencing Teachers’ Feedback

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance of the sampled schools</th>
<th>Are there factors influencing teachers’ feedback</th>
<th>Total no. of students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above average</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below average</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>20.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in the Table 4.11 above, majority of the students (50.0%) held the opinion that there were factors which influenced the various types of feedback their English teachers gave on composition writing while 88 (47.8%) of them disagreed on the existence of such factors. A significant number of the students who felt that there were factors influencing types of the feedback given by the teachers were students from schools which performed below the average.

Further analysis of the findings revealed that the most common factors mentioned by the students that influenced their teachers’ feedback on English composition were: the students’ handwriting, the students’ spellings of different words, grammatical errors in the students’ compositions and the wrong use of language by the student. However, from the teachers’ interview schedule, majority of them indicated that the most common
factors that influenced the kind of feedback that they gave their students on English compositions were: too many students thus a lot of workload and strict deadlines. These findings however differed with those of Nthiga (2010) which established that workload, teachers’ attitudes, examination culture and lack of training in responding to learner writing as factors that influenced teachers’ feedback practices. In their study on the problems of teaching and marking English Language Essays, Alowonle and Gloria (2015) found out that one challenge faced by English teachers was heavy workload due to large classes. The study finally asked the respondents to indicate what they thought would be done by the students, English teachers, school and the parents in order to improve their performance on English language composition writing. A summary of the responses is provided in Table 4.12.
Table 4.12: Strategies to Improve on the Performance of English Language Composition Writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Measures taken</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>Avoid using local language</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading and revising on composition writing</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Using English as the mode of communication</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>27.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading reference materials like novels and story books</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Practice composition writing</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>30.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English teachers</td>
<td>Teach English composition writing skills</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Giving composition assignments to students and marking them</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organizing for symposiums</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Encouraging students to read novels, magazines and story books</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>Buying reading materials like books and novels</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>38.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introducing clubs e.g. debate club where students can participate in debates</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>22.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introduce composition writing contests with other schools</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strict rules on use of English as the mode of communication by the students</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>29.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>Buying reading materials for their children</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Encouraging their children to work harder in composition writing</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Making follow-up on their children’s performance</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.12 above provides suggestions given by students on the various strategies that would be employed by different groups in order to improve performance on English composition writing in their schools. Specifically, 60 (30.0%) of the students said that
practising composition writing was the most effective measure that students would employ to improve their performance in English language composition. Additionally 27.4% of the students said that using English language as the mode of communication was the most effective measure employed to improve performance. From the interview schedule, the researcher clearly noted that students did not practise imaginative composition writing. As further illustrated by the table, 32.0% of the students felt that giving composition assignments and ensuring that they were marked, and organizing symposia for students (26.4%) would be the most suitable measures employed by the teachers to improve the performance in English language composition writing. This concurs with Kroll (2003) who recommends that classroom interactive activities such as group discussions should be put into place to help students improve on their writing skills. Through essay analysis checklist, the researcher noted that English teachers dwelt so much on the set books as opposed to writing as a skill, thus giving very few composition assignments to students. This differed with KNEC report (2010) which indicates that in order to improve students’ writing skills; teachers should provide students with ample practice in essay writing in order to strengthen their learning abilities in essay writing.

When it came to the schools, a great number of students were of the opinion that schools providing reading materials like novels and storybook (38.1%) and enhancing strict rules on English speaking in the school (29.4%) would be good measures adopted to improve the performances in English language composition writing. This is similar to Nyasimi (2014) who in her study recommended that school management committees should strive
to purchase adequate learning resources in order to overcome the identified challenges facing secondary students essay writing skills.

Finally, for the parents, (35.0%) students said that buying reading materials for their children and encouraging their children to work harder in composition writing (22.8%) would be best measures employed by the parents to improve performance in English language composition writing. From the interview schedule, the teachers also backed this finding by indicating that in order to improve English composition writing in their schools, parents ought to be providing reading materials for their children and also encouraging them to develop a reading culture. These results were supported by Orr (2003) who emphasized that it is the duty of parents to provide essential books to their children in order to succeed in English. This researcher further established that the availability of educational resources such as books in the students’ homes had a positive impact on the academic achievement of these students. Hence, this research supports the view that the educational environment in the home supports positive academic achievement of the students.
CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction
This chapter outlines the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study. It also suggests areas for further research.

5.2 Summary of the Findings
The purpose of the study was to find out influence of teachers’ feedback on students’ language in public secondary schools in Kahuro sub-county, Murang’a County. The specific objectives for the study were: To establish types of feedback the teachers used on their students’ compositions; to establish students’ attitude towards teachers’ feedback on English language composition writing and to investigate the factors that influenced the types of feedback used by English teachers in compositions. The study used simple random sampling to collect data from 197 respondents. The study was based on the Model of Feedback by Hattie and Timperley (2007) and employed structured questionnaires and interview guide as the main tools for data collection. The following are the main findings of the study:

5.2.1: Types of Feedback given by Teachers to Students on English Language Composition Writing
The study established that a majority of the students (79.3%) said that their teachers gave comments on their compositions with the major comments being on grammatical errors. Other comments identified were: punctuation mistakes, spelling mistakes, poor
paragraph construction and wrong vocabulary. In addition to this, most of the students indicated that comments given by the teachers on composition were so general.

5.2.3: Students’ Attitudes towards Teachers’ Feedback on English Language Composition

Regarding this objective, the research findings showed that majority of the students had a positive attitude towards teachers’ feedback on composition writing. Further, Chi-square statistics showed that there was a significant relationship between the students’ attitudes towards teachers’ feedback on English language composition and their rating for various types of comments given by the teachers at $p \leq 0.05$ level.

5.2.4: Factors Influencing the Types of Feedback Used by Teachers on English Language Composition

The study established that majority of the students (50.0%) held the opinion that there were factors which influenced the various types of feedback that their English teachers gave on composition writing. The most common factors listed included their handwriting, spellings for difficult words, grammatical errors in their compositions and the wrong use of language. On the other hand, teachers indicated that the major factors which influenced them while giving out feedback on the English language compositions were that they taught too many students thus had a lot of workload as well as having strict deadlines.
5.3 Conclusions of the Study

Based on the study findings presented, the following conclusions were made:

i. Teachers gave comments regarding the student compositions that they marked.

ii. The most common type of comments given by teachers on students’ compositions was on grammatical errors.

iii. Most comments given by the teachers were general.

iv. There was a significant relationship between the students’ attitudes towards teachers’ feedback on English language composition and their rating for various types of comments given by the teachers.

v. The factors that influenced the various types of comments that teachers gave on English language compositions were: students’ handwriting, students’ spellings for difficult words, grammatical errors in the students’ compositions; wrong use of language by the students; teachers’ workload and strict deadlines.

5.4: Recommendations of the Study

With regard to the study findings, the following recommendations were made:

5.4.1 Recommendations for Language Teachers

i. The teachers should be more detailed and specific with the comments that they give to their students and should avoid giving them general comments on compositions.

ii. Teachers should improve the English composition writing performance in their school by giving composition assignments to students and ensuring that they marked them.
iii. They should encourage their students to speak in English

5.4.2 Recommendations for Students

i. Students should practise composition writing.

ii. Students should initiate a culture of using English language as their mode of communication.

5.4.3 Recommendations for School Management

The School Management should ensure that they

i. Equip the schools with the necessary reading materials such as novels that will help students improve their composition writing.

ii. Ensure that students strictly adhere to the school rules and regulations especially with regard to the school language policy.

5.4.4 Recommendations for Parents

i. Parents should purchase reading materials for their children and encourage them to develop a positive reading culture.

ii. Where possible, parents should use English Language as the medium of communication at home.

5.4.5 Recommendations for Policy Makers

i. The Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) should give more emphasis to the writing skill to enable students to communicate effectively.

ii. The Ministry of Education (MoE) should consider providing reading materials like novels and plays which will expose students to an array of writing styles, consequently improving their grammar.

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5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

i. A further study should be conducted on the influence of teachers’ feedback on students’ subject selection.

ii. The same study can be done in other areas/regions to find out whether the same findings will be obtained.
REFERENCES


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Walsh, S. M. (2010). *New Directions in Research on Writing Apprehension*. ERIC Database.


APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

This study will help me find out about your feelings, thoughts and ideas about what your teachers write as they mark your compositions. I request you to be as honest as possible in your responses.

Section I: Demographic Information

1. Gender  [ ] Male  [ ] Female

2. Indicate your age bracket
   [ ] Below 15 years
   [ ] 16-18 years
   [ ] 19-21 years
   [ ] Above 21 years

3. Kindly specify type of your school
   [ ] Mixed day school
   [ ] Boys only
   [ ] Girls only
   [ ] Mixed day and boarding

4. Does your English teacher give you assignment on composition writing?
   [ ] Yes  [ ] No

5. If yes, how do you rate your performance in English language composition writing?
   [ ] Below average  [ ] Average  [ ] Above average

Section II: Types of feedback given by teachers to students on English language composition writing

6. Does your English teacher mark your composition books?
   [ ] Yes  [ ] No

7. If yes, does he/she give comments on your composition?
   [ ] Yes  [ ] No
8. From the list provided below, what are some of the comments does he/she gives?

[ ] Punctuation mistakes
[ ] Spelling mistake
[ ] Poor paragraph construction
[ ] Wrong vocabulary
[ ] Grammatical errors

9. In your opinion, how do you rate the various types of comment you receive from the teacher on composition writing

[ ] General comments
[ ] Negative comments
[ ] Positive comments
[ ] Detailed and specific comments

10. From 9 above, which types of comments do you prefer most?

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………

Section III: Students’ Attitude towards Teachers’ Feedback on English Language Composition

11. The table below presents some aspects measuring students’ attitude towards teachers’ feedback on English language composition writing. Please indicate using a tick[ √ ]your response on each statement. Use the following key while responding.

SA – Strongly Agree; A – Agree; U – Undecided; D – Disagree; SD – Strongly Disagree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>U</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1   My teachers’ remarks and corrections assist me in knowing where my mistakes are and correct them</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2   My teacher’s feedback is too negative and discouraging</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3   I like the teacher’s remarks on my composition writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4   The teacher’s comments challenge me to improve</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Statement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>My teachers’ remarks and corrections assist me in knowing what to avoid/improve next time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I feel that my writing has improved because of the feedback given on my paper.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The feedback given makes me feel good about myself.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Generally, I like the way my composition is marked.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>My teachers comments are too general</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Feedback in compositions is very important</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>My teacher only confines herself / himself to grammatical mistakes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Do you think there are some factors that influence various types of feedback your English teacher give on language composition?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>If yes, which are these factors?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>What do you think the following should do in order to improve performance on English language composition writing in your school?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a)</td>
<td>Students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section IV: Factors Influencing Types of Feedback Used By Teachers on English Language Composition

12. Do you think there are some factors that influence various types of feedback your English teacher give on language composition?

[ ] Yes  [ ] No

13. If yes, which are these factors?

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………

14. What do you think the following should do in order to improve performance on English language composition writing in your school?

a) Students

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
b) English teachers

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………

c) School

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………

d) Parents

…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………

Thank you for participating
APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR TEACHERS

Please respond to the questions below.

1. How do you rate students’ performance in English language composition writing?
2. Do you give your students assignment on composition writing?
   b) If no, why?
3. Do you mark students’ composition books?
4. What are some of the feedback comments do you give to your students on compositions?
5. How do you rate students’ attitude towards various types of feedback you give on composition writing?
6. How do you rate students’ attitude towards composition writing?
7. How often do you revise and make corrections with your students on the compositions they write?
8. Do the symbols / marks you put on the students work help them improve in writing?
9. Do you think there are factors which influences various types of feedback you give to your students on English language composition writing?
   b) If yes, please list them and then give a brief explanation of on each one of them.
10. What do you think the following should do in order to improve performance on English language composition writing in your school?
    a) Students
    b) English teachers
    c) School
    d) Parents
APPENDIX C

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Through document analysis, the researcher was able to find out what type of feedback was given to the students and if some areas were given more attention than others.

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Suddenly, I started feeling dirty and I fell unconsciously on the cold floor. When I opened my blue eyes, I found myself lying on a hospital bed and I felt so restless. I tried to recall what had happened but I could not link the events in my mind. The door flew open and a nurse carried a tray with medicine. I asked her what had happened to me and why I was in hospital. She explained to me that I was found on the hospital gate and that I was given cocaine and the doctors had attended to me immediately before the drug had alternated with the normal functioning of my body.

My parents walked into the room with my sister following them. I thought that they would scold me, but they told me that it was not my fault. Since I did not know that my best friend was going to betray me like that, they were right since Arabella turned to be a black sheep and I preserved a devil that you know than an angel you do not know.

I tried to figure out what could have happened to me and the idea of becoming a drug addict made me shiver. I needed to destroy my future but thankfully I was rescued and the doctors did not bear grudges. I did not want to know what had happened to her and as I was going to sleep due to the medicine that the nurse had given me, I remember a proverb that goes: all that glitters is not gold and the time that I had got the complete meaning of it.
A VILLAGE ATTACK.

I had left home very early that morning to visit my beloved grandmother who lived along way from home. On getting into her house I found her lying on her small bed. At first I thought she was only asleep but on uncovering her head, I saw blood all over her face.

My uncle came running, my father asked him what was happening. My uncle said that yesterday there were villagers in the village. There were loud bangs on the main door of the houses. The noise was as loud as atomic bombs. All men, women and children were running helter-skelter stampeding for safety. As my uncle confided, loud cries of "kill! kill!" from the villagers could be heard.

The attackers were armed to teeth, some of the men had their hair on end, eyes that seemed to have popped out of their sockets. The attackers removed sharp, well-sharpened knives, attacked villagers boldly and furiously like soldiers in a battlefield. Villagers in return attacked back in a spur of the moment. A number of the attackers lay dead in a pool of blood.

Shouts of "kill! kill!" from the enraged villagers filled the air. Some people were killed like my mom lying on the bed. My uncle continued, they decided to attack the attackers with flying bricks caught them unaware and left them sprawling on the ground. With growing pain in their bodies, the attackers screamed for help as they pleaded for mercy but all their pleas fell on deaf ears.

From a distance the wailing of the police vehicles' sirens could be heard. The attackers were apprehended by the police before they could escape. They were taken to the police to answer for their crimes. The women in the village lulled at men sang and danced vigorously expressing their heroic defeat. Finally the villagers felt the flag of victory when I went back home. I saw my mom lying on the bed. I took her to the hospital, as my mother called.
was none. My body was trembling like thunder. Guests were raging in my mind like an overflowing river. TashaKle arrived at her office.

To my surprise it was my father who was the so-called guest. I knew something was a mess somewhere. Suddenly I remembered on Sunday evening we argued about the amount of pocket money he used to give me which was barely enough. Since Monday I have been taking his money without him knowing. Surely the saying that goes thieves days truly are forty was reflecting on me.

My father had no doubt that I was the one taking his money and I had no other chance other than to let the cat out of the basket. Everything was so embarrassing I'll forgive you for now but all shall be squared at home.” My father said without being told I knew it was going to be the last day that I will be alive.

As I left the office I swore never to repeat the mistake again for once bitten twice shy.
ALL THAT GLITTERS IS NOT GOLD

It was on a Saturday morning when I woke up and opened the windows, the sun rays penetrated to my room as bright as a button and the cool breeze made my room fresh as a daisy.

I first took a shower and dressed then went down stairs for my breakfast. The sweet aroma of fried eggs was all over the kitchen. I entered the kitchen and said yebo to my mum. I helped her in preparing the breakfast and when we were done my dad and sister were ready set in the dining room to have our delectable breakfast.

When we were done with breakfast I cleaned up the utensils and by the time I was almost done my parents were ready to leave for work, they bid us goodbye and went.

When my parents went I heard a knock on the door and headed straight to the door and was surprised to see that it was my best friend Aurelia. I was happy as a sandboy to see her and hugged her as I welcomed her in the house. My little sister Stephanie came and greeted her and went back to her room saying that she was going to watch a kids cartoon. To my surprise Aurelia had come to remind me of a party she had welcomed me before and she didn’t want me to miss it since it would be fantastic as her cousins from Canada were also welcomed.

At first I hesitated as I knew that I was not granted permission for the party by my parents, and secondly I was not sure leaving my sister alone in the house would be
A SPINE-TINGLING INCIDENT

I recall vividly waking up and wondering why the night had seemed so long. On opening my eyes, what caught my sight sent my spine tingling. I was all alone in the dormitory. Thoughts ran through my mind like dry grass being up by fire. What was I to do? Go back to bed and meet with the dorm patron? Or continue sleeping and face my fear of darkness? No; I was so afraid of darkness than strokes of cane, but I could not take myself to be punished.

I assumed the saying, "the shortcut is always a wrong cut." I decided to jump over the fence to escape the stroke. I started running towards the fence. I tripped over a stone and fell down only to kiss the innocent floor. I got badly injured but yet wouldn't stop. As I was about to jump over the fence, my shirt got torn. It was split into two.

Not wanting the shame, I went back to the dorm to get another shirt. I didn't know I was jumping right into a pool of boiling water. The dorm patron had sensed people's presence in the dorm. I came into a standstill when we had an eye contact. My hair stood at one side of the head and my eyes wide like pancakes.

"Why are you so shabby? And what are you doing in the dormitory compound?" I was tongue-tied. My hair resembled my grandmother's makiiti boom of not a foreplantation. She hit me so hard that I was sprawling to the ground. Unluckily, the school's principal was around and on hearing the commotion, she came to check. She gave me six strokes that made my buttocks burn.

"You are going to wash the whole school." She told me. I got the necessary materials and get down to work. My schoolmates laughed at me and nicknamed
A DAY WORTH REMEMBERING

I padded my long hooves at home. When I had arrived from school, I took a cold refreshing shower which left me as clean as a new pin. Then did my mountain of homework and ate my fingernail-yucky supper. After I had finished my revision, I took a candle, since everyone had gone off to slumberland.

I switched off the lights and used the candle on my way to my bedroom. After that, I said a short, brief prayer to God and vigorously threw myself to my cozy, money bed. But the cold night was so silent as a grave apart from the slumbering crying babies and the hooting of owls which indicated a bad omen.

Suddenly, I started coughing endlessly and felt very hot. To my great surprise, my house was on fire. I thought that I was just imagining it but no, it was as real as life. The smoke appeared my nostrils and I gasped. I stopped and remembered the old sage where there is smoke, there is fire. I kicked my blankets and shot out of bed like a bullet from a pistol. I couldn't believe the sight that met greeted my eyes. My eyes almost changed positions and popped out. Tears rolled down my nasty cheeks. I hurriedly woke my siblings up and my folks. They didn't know the sight that was there. They were struggling to see.

Our neighbors were alarmed and they all came out to our rescue. They hurriedly ran to a stream near by and helped to put off the fire. Everyone was in a panic and poised of putting off the fire. Everybody was at their best but the discouraging wind blew strongly thus increasing the flames. A cloud of smoke rose and danced in the air.

One of the neighbors decided to call the fire brigades which were far gone in the city. I was in great sorrow that I remembered that I had left my young brother in the house. I swiftly ran to the house to rescue my brother but a strong
"Should I commit suicide, no that is not the solution."

I have nothing, I wasted my life chasing elusive returns. My wife, who was a gathered and brought expertise in disposing of wealth. Here now I am, I have only one pair of shoes which suffer from dangerous disease called friction and its symptoms is by being worn out, one set of houses with a lot of decorations of five different colours. My life is in a bad dimension."

Matthew, please forgive me. I come in. I have learned a lesson by myself. I will be a good teacher because I have the experience."

"John, look now, I told you to change, but you beat me and my Ben away. Since I loved you and I will still love you come in the house and make sure you change your arrogant behaviour and go back to your profession. You are a good student and you will earn."

"We can still leave our dreams when we were twenties and when we are not very old, our dates."

"We are so happy to announce that John now henceforth you are graduates go and serve your country. You are the best doctors; serve the world. As the lecturer of Burnell University I wish you all the best."

"Mum, I am back and I got a job at an online interview in the best hospital in our place. Who is this?"

"He is your father and my husband."

"And where was he during our struggles, days?"

The narrative is not well described. The plot is not very
BEAUTY HAS THE EYES OF THE BEHOLDER

As the evening was approaching, and the Cows were coming back to their shed. As I was cleaning my dog at the door I heard the phone. I kept my hand steady without the cows coming back. It was desirable to have Cows to come to where the Cows to both with me.

I answered the (Hello! Cows were just days since we prepared our cow house on the right) and a young person: on the dog. I rushed to the be, to the girl to be with them at Cows. sich was known as the boy. When I rushed the girl to my leg. I could see, as my leg came. On. The dog bedroom to have a hair on them. When more came. Girl and family could agree it. Exactly, my grand-daughter.

I know my things to wear.

With full of edges and excitement.

On the way to the bedroom I met a man who was a new people. He had his hand to his mouth, his hand to his mouth. He had a hair on them. When more came. Girl and family could agree it. Exactly, my grand-daughter.

As I was going. Bit that Cows, the Cow with that spot and the person was doing was obvious. Oliver. Which I could not see. But it was interesting. Which was moving on me. I could not know to imagine whether I was the one who I have moved them without seeing permission from my parents. So, I punch myself. So that I could believe myself. As so as I saw my Cows when he was sitting on the stool and was called the cowman. I called him to him to have the important information which he called for me. He said: made a remark, he had the cows on the field and other there for option. Which Cows was self to fall into. A Cows to the side of him, it was very greedy so I had a change to leave the area and to be close to option. When I went, it was raining, because it was staying for long time without being H.O. So I was staying.
APPENDIX E

MAP OF KAHURO:
APPENDIX F
RESEARCH PERMIT

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
MISS. JANET WANJIKU MATHERI
of KENYATTA UNIVERSITY, 133-10202
kangema, has been permitted to conduct
research in Muranga County
on the topic: INFLUENCE OF TEACHERS’
FEEDBACK ON STUDENTS’ LANGUAGE IN
PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN
KAHURO SUB-COUNTY, MURANGA COUNTY, KENYA
for the period ending:
22nd September, 2017

[Signature]

APPLICANT’S SIGNATURE

[Signature]

DIRECTOR GENERAL
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

[Stamp]