

**THE TEACHING AND LEARNIG OF POETRY IN ENGLISH AND ITS  
INFLUENCE ON CRITICAL THINKING AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL  
LEARNERS IN KIAMBU, KENYA**

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**A RESEARCH THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
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OF THE KENYATTA UNIVERSITY**

**JULY 2024**

**DECLARATION**

I hereby certify that the content of my thesis is completely original and has not been prearranged for certification purposes to any other university or organization. Referenced sources with proper attribution have been used to supplement this research thesis. If text, graphics, or tables were taken from another source, such as the internet, they must be properly acknowledged and the sources must be mentioned in accordance with anti-plagiarism rules and the current APA style.

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to Mrs. Sarah Payuway, my late and cherished mother, whose prayers, inspiration, and blessings have brought me this far. Her greatest wish and prayer are that I would success in both school and life and that I would become a dependable person who would support the development of my family and society. Additionally, I dedicate this thesis especially to my spouse, Betty K. Varkpeh for taking care of our kids in my absence and her encouragement to me. Also, to my beloved children, Freemanlyn M. Dorker and Freeman M. Dorker, Jr., who I know missed me so much while I was away pursuing a master's degree in language education.

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## **ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

CT	Critical Thinking
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
KCSE	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
C.D	Compact Disc
EL	English Language
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
LTM	Learning Together Models
SWP	Spoken Words Poetry
CATs	Classroom Assessment Techniques
TQ	Teachers Questionnaire
SQ	Students Questions

## ABSTRACT

Poetry teaching and learning has not only the potential to influence Critical Thinking (CT), but it also helps in the growth of students' self-assurance and independent problem-solving skills. In spite of these benefits, both teachers and students around the world, share the opinion that poetry is difficult to understand and that only literary experts can appreciate it. Students can become more self-assured and solve problem on their own with the aid of critical thinking (CT). However, the majority of teachers and students to a great extent everywhere, agree that poetry is challenging, difficult and puzzling. In their believe, only scholars of literature can understand and enjoy it. The objectives of the study were to establish the methods of poetry teaching among secondary school learners, determine the influence of poetry teaching on critical thinking and examine teachers and students' attitudes towards poetry. The research was founded on Vygotsky's social constructivist theory, which contends that learners should build new information through social interaction. The theory was suitable for the study because it was founded on knowledge construction. The research adopted a descriptive survey design. A mixed method research approach was used. The target population of the study was 76 English teachers, 1520 Form three students and 37 public secondary schools. The researcher used the sample size of 10 secondary schools with 10 English teachers and 349 Form three students. Schools were chosen using stratified random sampling and teachers were selected purposively. A purposive sampling strategy entails choosing individuals or groups of individuals from the sampling guide that meet specific criteria relevant to the research questions or objectives. The students' sample was chosen using simple random sampling. Data was collected from teachers and students using questionnaires, structured interviews and observation checklist. To analyze the data, descriptive statistics was utilized, which included tables, pie charts, frequency, mean, and standard deviation. The acquired data were then coded and analyzed using statistical package for social science (SPSS). The research results were conveyed in frequency distribution tables and charts. For qualitative data, thematic interpretation was done and documented either in tables or pie charts while quantitative data were analyzed using statistical analysis or tabulation. The study established that although teachers mostly teach poetry using interactive classroom setting, disparities were observed on students' responses. Students reported that they did not work in groups to solve problems in the process of poetry teaching. In addition, the study found out that there was limited use of classroom discussion, brainstorming, group work, analysis of poetic devices, asking questions, evaluating, analyzing, and interpreting poetic texts. The findings were significant to policy makers, school administrations, teachers and students. The study, therefore, recommends that teachers should continue teaching poetry using different methods as this is likely to enhance student's critical thinking. Teachers should emphasize to students the importance of learning poetry. The teachers should use the necessary resources and materials to facilitate teaching and learning of poetry to promote CT.

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The study's history is the main topic of Chapter one. The gaps that form the foundation of the research problem, the study's aim, objectives, and research questions, as well as the study's significance, scope, limitations, and underlying assumptions, are the primary topics it covers. Finally, the chapter covered operational definitions.

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Critical thinking has consistently been acknowledged as one of the skills with the greatest potential for steering economic and technological advancement of any society. It is one of the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills that include communication, collaboration and creative thinking (Sigvardsson 2017). It is evident that teaching poetry to impact critical thinking will primarily effect students' job aspirations, their function in the public, and even their level of individual pleasure in the complicated, mechanized, and globalized economy of the twenty-first century (Norton & Gregson, 2020). Likewise Cooney & Alfrey, (2008) claim that there is widespread agreement that having a CT skill set is necessary for employment in the general public, research community, and governmental organizations. Critical thinking is a necessary skill for life. Therefore, teaching and learning of poetry to promote CT has several benefits including increasing student' self-confidence and values, enhancing the implementation of the Competence Based Curriculum (CBC) which involves hands on classroom activities and developing CT skills (Nyaboke et al., 2021).

According to (Azizi, et al., 2022), Poetry can be seen as a useful and efficient technique to assist pupils build critical thinking skills. Analyzing poetry can be an effective way to teach students critical thinking skills. Poetry is a good type of writing because it lets you study the words and how the poem is put together. Poetry is usually shorter than a short story or novel.

Teachers can use poetry to help students practice similar ideas many times with different texts (Fowler, 2019). Poetry uses complicated language and pays attention to how something is said, not just what is said (Weaven & Clark, 2013). The many ways language is used makes it possible to analyze things in a deep and intellectually satisfying way.

At the global level, how poetry is taught is a contentious issue (Speare & Henshall, 2014). Students who chose to be English language teachers in the United Kingdom, were trained in how to teach poetry as a tool to facilitate CT. This is because of the challenges faced by students in understanding abstract concepts in poetry lessons (Speare & Henshall, 2014). For example, in York, England, Xerri (2015) points out that the methods teachers use in the classroom and the attitude of students towards poetry, are some of the obstacles to learning and teaching the genre of literature to promote CT. According to Sigvardsson (2017), poetry has been grossly understudied across the globe. During preparation of teachers, not much attention is given to poetry teaching. The textbooks to help teachers with their work, are fewer, and to a large extent, teachers have to depend on their experiences and those of their colleagues in order to improve their strategies for teaching poetry (Sigvardsson, 2017).

In India, Khatib (2011) identified that most teachers who have years of experience in teaching the English language, face many problems in poetry recitation, pronunciation of difficult words, lack of facilities in schools and not being aware of effective ways of teaching poetry. Similarly, Cushing (2018) admits that teachers in Germany shunned poetry and consider it as puzzling and impossible to solve. According to Syed and Wahas (2020), teachers in western Asia, consider poetry as a thought-provoking genre of literature because of its metaphorical language, difficult grammar, and complex structures. (Lain, 2017) stated that the potential of teaching of poetry to influence CT are rarely applied in many classrooms in Iran. The methods of teaching poetry do not promote independent thought, rational and logical expression

(Savaedi 2014). Savaedi (2014) emphasized that the teaching of poetry to elicit curiosity, interest and participation, are not exploited in classrooms as would be expected. Pokharel (2020) in Nepal, states that because of the complicated nature of poetry, teaching and learning of poetry are considered less important such that vital poetry elements such as visual and aural effect are not used in classrooms.

In Africa, though other studies on teaching of poetry indicate that poetry teaching can influence CT, many teachers lack interest in the genre of literature. Prozesky (2020) in South Africa, established that teachers are afraid of teaching poetry in secondary schools. According to Prozesky (2020), teachers feel that they teach poetry poorly because of a tendency to focus mainly on the mechanical features rather than probe the deeper meaning of the poetry. They feel they lack the necessary knowledge and skills for effective teaching. Moreover, learners share the teachers' pessimistic viewpoint that learning poetry is boring and meaningless. Poetry is evaluated in national examinations by questioning students on figurative speech and language, including images. The South African Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) and national curriculum is highly assessment-driven and mainly prescriptive (Prozesky, 2020). This means, more strategies are needed in the teaching of poetry to influence CT.

In Nigeria, poetry is considered as a type of literature that has intrinsic problems that make it difficult for teachers to teach. Teachers use teacher-centered methods to teach poetry, making it harder for learners to appreciate and understand poetry. Although these teachers have undergone professional development training, most of them experience difficulties in poetry teaching (Okonkwo, 2016). Studies in Kenya indicate that most secondary schools' students find poetry hard and mysterious and many avoid discussions related to poetry (Mwawasi,

2002). Poetry is always labelled as the most challenging genre to comprehend (Mwawasi, 2002). Teachers and students do not like poetry and they brand it as complicated.

In Kenyan schools, love for, and fame of poetry continues to diminish (Mwawasi, 2002). In paper two of the KCSE (2020) English examinations, students obtained low marks in poetry. Such poor results could be attributed to a lack of effective strategies in teaching of poetry. For a lot of candidates, language used in the poem proved difficult hence making the poetry harder to tackle. The results revealed that many students missed the marks for questions which required higher order thinking skills like making inferences and integrating information from different intrinsic poetry devices (form, tone, verse, rhyme and so on). Instead of thinking critically and paraphrasing information to indicate comprehension, many students simply present chunks of lifted information on their responses, indicating that poetry is not being taught to influence critical thinking in secondary schools in Kenya.

According to Kwach (2017), a summary of the KCSE report for the last four years showed that candidates were unable to grasp context in the poetry session. Moreover, many missed the marks for questions which required CT skills. Many respondents simply presented chunks of lifted information as their responses, rather than summarizing information to show understanding. The marks obtained in the poetry session contributed to the marks in English. It means if candidates perform poorly in poetry, this affects their overall grade in English language. Therefore, the study intended to establish the methods used in poetry teaching to influence CT in secondary schools in Githunguri Sub-County, Kiambu County, Kenya.

With the help of world-class standards in the knowledge and skills that Kenyan students deserve and require to succeed in the twenty-first century, the basic education curriculum reforms aim to empower every Kenyan citizen to become an involved, capable, and moral citizen.

This shall be achieved through the delivery of exceptional teaching, school environments and resources and a sustainable visionary curriculum that provides every student with seamless, competency based high quality knowledge that values every learner. The mission of the basic education curriculum reforms is „nurturing every learner’s potential’. The curriculum will be designed to ensure that it provides opportunities to identify the potential that every learner brings to school and nurture this potential through the learning pathways and tracks that will be provided at Senior School. The mission will ensure that no child is labelled a failure at the end of basic education (Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development, 2017).

Sessional Paper No. 2 of 2015 on improving education in Kenya suggests changing the curriculum to focus on learning specific skills. In the Kenyan Competency Based Curriculum (KCBC), competency means being able to use the right knowledge and skills to do a job well. In this situation, the curriculum was made to show how important it is to not just learn things, but also use them in real life. The mixing of important current issues and service learning into the framework allows students to improve their skills and apply what they know, in other words, their abilities (Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development, 2017).

Based on the Needs Assessment Study carried out by KICD, and the vision and mission of the BECF, among the seven core competencies to be achieved by every learner in basic education in CBC is critical thinking. Critical thinking is very important for learning throughout your life. It is important for students to keep an open mind and be willing to listen and appreciate information and opinions that might be different from what they already believe. Thinking carefully and solving problems are important for students of all ages and in every subject they study in school. These competencies are also important for solving problems in their lives and communities, and will ultimately help them to fulfil their potential, which is the vision for the basic education curriculum. This will contribute to addressing the unemployment challenge in Kenya (Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development, 2017).

Critical thinking and problem solving is developed through age-appropriate activities and programmes in the school curriculum. For example, at pre-primary school level learners can be asked to come up with the best ways of using and keeping their books, stationery and other personal items safe. At the other end of the basic education spectrum, learners can be asked to come up with the best ways of addressing the challenge of scarce resources such as water in the school and community (Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development, 2017)

### **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Poetry teaching and learning have the potential to influence students' CT and ensure independent evaluation and application of knowledge. Teachers and students around the world both consider poetry teaching and learning as challenging, difficult and mysterious (Arja et al, 2022). In Kenya, this is no exception and poor attitude towards poetry affects both teachers and learners. For the past four years, the poetry section of the KCSE English examinations, has reported low results. Several students failed to receive full credit for tasks that called for higher order thinking abilities, such as drawing conclusions and combining data from various poetic devices. Many students gave replies that consisted mostly of lifted information rather than applying critical thinking to interpret the meanings of lyrical phrases. Perhaps it is because most teachers do not teach poetry in a thorough way, and students are not provided enough chances to practice. Some of the studies conducted in this topic have shown gaps that need to be filled. The question that motivates this study therefore is; what poetry teaching methods can influence English language learners' critical thinking in secondary schools in Githunguri Sub-County, Kiambu County.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The study was intended to investigate the teaching and learning of poetry in English and its influence on critical thinking among secondary school learners in Kiambu, Kenya.

#### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

This study was based on the following objectives:

- i. Investigate methods used in poetry teaching and learning to influence CT among public secondary school learners in Githunguri Sub-County.
- ii. Establish the influence of poetry teaching on critical thinking among public secondary school learners in Githunguri Sub-County.
- iii. Find out teachers and students' attitudes towards poetry teaching and learning among public secondary school learners in Githunguri Sub-County.

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

This study is based on the ensuing study questions:

- i. What are methods used in poetry teaching and learning to influence critical thinking among public secondary school learners in Githunguri Sub-County?
- ii. How does poetry teaching and learning influence critical thinking among public secondary school learners in Githunguri Sub-County?
- iii. What are the attitudes of teachers and students towards poetry teaching and learning among public secondary school learners in Githunguri Sub-County?

#### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The results will be beneficial to secondary school teachers of literature in improving their concepts of poetry teaching and learning to influence CT. They will be able to implement different methods, hence enhancing their teaching competency of poetry. The findings will increase knowledge in teaching and learning of poetry to promote CT. Through small group discussion, students will improve their oral communication skills and this enhances their higher order thinking and hence improve their problem-solving skills. The study's results will also be beneficiary to teachers in developing new strategies that will improve students' love towards learning poetry. From the findings, school administrations will establish instructional resources

most useful in teaching and learning of poetry. Besides, the research findings will be useful to teacher trainers in practical teaching as they determine which teaching methods are the most suitable in poetry teaching and learning to promote CT. The results will enable researchers to conduct studies to determine the causal-effect relationship between methods used in poetry teaching and learning, and students critical thinking.

### **1.7 Scope of the Study**

The scope of the study was limited to investigating the teaching and learning of poetry in English and its influence on critical thinking among secondary school learners in Kiambu, Kenya. The study was therefore conducted among learners in secondary schools in Kiambu county and specifically Githunguri sub county. The target population was teachers and learners in Form three. Teachers were purposefully picked, and schools were selected via stratified random selection. The students' sample was chosen by simple random sampling. Data were gathered from teachers using questionnaires and structured interviews while data from students was obtained using a questionnaire and observation checklist. The study was conducted in the year 2023.

### **1.8 Limitations of the Study**

The questionnaires were only filled out by experienced and professional poetry teachers. There was a potential that untrained teachers would reply to the questionnaires because there weren't many trained teachers. To address this, the Githunguri Sub-County Education Office provided a list of all certified poetry teachers. School tradition and culture might have influenced the results the researcher collected. To reduce this interference, the questionnaires for the students, which were completed in the researcher's presence, were gathered right away after the activity.

## **1.9 Assumptions of the Study**

The following assumptions guided the research:

- i. That the methods teachers use in poetry class are characterized by student- centered instruction.
- ii. That poetry teaching and learning influence critical thinking to enable students solve problems independently.
- iii. That teachers and students consider teaching and learning of poetry as essential for developing critical thinking.

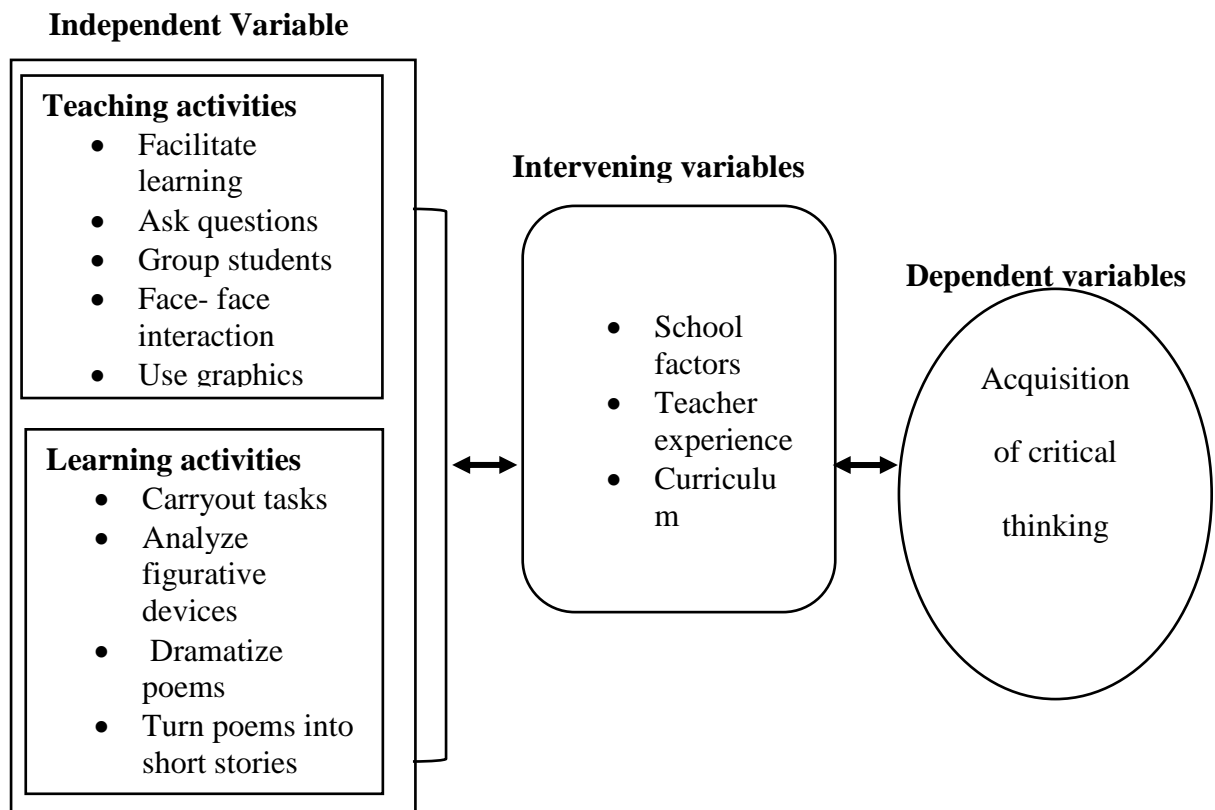
## **1.10 Theoretical Framework**

The study's foundation was the social constructivism theory of Vygotsky (1978), which emphasizes learner-centered classrooms. According to the hypothesis, social contacts help with cognitive processes, so students should take part in those interactions as well. Students can develop abilities such as inquiry, self-determination, critical thinking, and problem-solving through the application of Vygotsky's theory of social constructivism. It also places a strong emphasis on learning via investigation and discovery. The research was grounded on Vygotsky's social constructivism theory that is centered on learner-centered classroom. The theory holds that social connections help students' cognitive processes, hence they should engage in similar activities. With the help of Vygotsky's social constructivism theory, students can develop abilities like critical thinking, self-determination, problem-solving, and inquiry. Additionally, it emphasizes learning via investigation and discovery (Liu, 2005). In addition, the theory argued that students should assume a growing amount of responsibility for their education, contrary to prior educational perspectives, which held that teachers had the primary responsibility for teaching and that students had a passive, receptive role. The theory emphasizes the value of students participating actively in the learning process (Deeba, 2021).

Azizi et al (2022) assert that the teacher should serve as a facilitator in the poetry teaching and learning process and that students should be encouraged to learn from one another on an equal basis. This indicates that the learning process in the classroom is both subjective and objective, and that the interaction between students and activities in the creation of sense requires that the teacher's values, culture and background crucially matter. To arrive at a new, informally verified form of context, students compare their version with the teacher's version and the versions of their classmates. This is likely to encourage CT in poetry teaching and learning. The degree of motivation the teacher provides the learners, which enables them to create a good attitude towards poetry learning, is another important factor considering the nature of the student.

### 1.11 Conceptual Framework

Conceptual framework gives operational variables in the study. It also relates to the theoretical framework as shown.



**Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework**

Figure 1.1 depicts a variety of poetry teaching and learning activities that are carried out to have an impact on CT. The study's independent variables included the poetry classroom's teaching and learning activities. Teachers and students' attitudes toward poetry, school-related characteristics, teachers' experience and knowledge, and curriculum were the intervening variables and critical thinking skills acquisition was the dependent variable.

The conceptual framework states that the instructional strategies used by teachers in a poetry class, the availability of instructional resources, the attitudes of teachers and students, including school-related factors, all contribute to students' achievement of CT skills in poetry teaching and learning. A teacher could use a participatory approach, in which students build their own knowledge while the teacher facilitates their learning of poetry to influence CT, or a traditional approach, in which the teacher controls the learning process by having students mimic the formulas and procedures used in poetry teaching and learning. This indicates that in order to promote CT, there must be interactions between the independent and intervening variables including between the intervening and dependent variables. In this context, teachers' attitudes about the subject matter, including their level of content knowledge and readiness to teach poetry, can also have an impact on students' critical thinking in poetry teaching and learning.

## **1.12 Operational Definition of Terms**

**Attitude:** The feeling teachers and students develop towards poetry.

**Challenges:** The struggles teacher and students face in poetry teaching and learning, e.g.: difficulty in explaining figurative language and writing poems.

**Critical thinking:** A skill developed in teaching and learning of poetry which enables students to develop self- confidence and independently solve problems.

**Genre:** Refers to poetry as a type of literature which style of words and painting help improves students' critical thinking.

**Influence:** Refers to the capacity of poetry to lead to a change in critical thinking by learners

**Intonation:** This means the rise and fall or the pitch of a student's voice which creates mood when reading a poem.

**Learning:** Refers to the acquisition of knowledge and skills in poetry through being taught

**Methods:** These are techniques used by teachers in poetry class to ensure student's participation and that they achieve learning outcomes and influence critical thinking.

**Poetry:** Refers to the work where the feelings and ideas of students are expressed by using individual style and rhythm to influence critical thinking.

**Rhythm:** It is a beat in a poetry or prose as indicated by the connection between long and short syllables, or stressed and unstressed syllables noticed when students are reading a poem.

**Teaching:** Refers to all the activities carried out in the poetry classroom to impart knowledge and skills to promote student's critical thinking.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter examines the relevant literature in poetry teaching in English and its influence on critical thinking. The chapter is assembled under the headings: The methods teachers used in poetry class in secondary schools, the influence of poetry on critical thinking, attitudes of teachers and students towards poetry and challenges faced in teaching of poetry. It also emphasizes the role of poetry in problem-solving and the benefits in teaching and learning poetry.

#### **2.2 Methods of Poetry Teaching in the English Language**

Poetry appears to be difficult to teach and learn because of its abstract nature and maybe the teacher-centered approaches used to teach this form of literature. In teacher-centered classroom, students focus attention on the teacher. The teacher explains, providing the important details while the students listen entirely. Due to this, poetry learning is a challenging process for many students. A number of scholars have examined that teaching strategies to affect learners' CT in poetry lessons, is a challenge for most teachers (Guttesen & Kristjansson, 2022).

According to Guttesen & Kristjansson (2022) students should regularly be challenged with activities that are just a little bit more than their existing level of proficiency in poetry. This reflects their motivation while also building on previous achievements to improve students' self-confidence. The study used 150 students and 10 teachers from the Gainesville High School in North Florida., using questionnaires, interview and classroom observation to collect data. The study established that some teachers were not better placed in explaining new strategies and students do not understand figurative language in the teaching and learning of poetry. This

showed that the methods used in teaching and learning poetry were not effective in influencing critical thinking. This study intended to fill the gap by investigating the methods used in poetry teaching and learning to influence CT.

Khatib (2011) noted in his study that though teaching of poetry is challenging, teachers should be involved in learning strategies based on exploration which provides a thorough process to promote CT. Khatib (2011) argued in his study carried out in a Finnish secondary school that teacher should use hands on or group discussion that fosters the process of knowledge development in poetry teaching. Guttesen & Kristjansson (2022) study aligns with Khatib's (2011) study that poetry tasks and classroom should reflect the involvedness of the environment that allow the function of students in poetry learning. Students must take ownership of not only the learning or issue-solving process, but also of the problem itself in poetry to influence CT. The studies used descriptive survey design, questionnaires, interview and classroom observation to collect data from 15 teachers and 300 students in five secondary schools in India. The studies established that schools have been challenged by their ability to design appropriate methods in poetry teaching and inspire teachers to structure new strategies that match curriculum. The study however did not show how the methods of teaching and learning poetry influence critical thinking. This study investigated the methods used in poetry teaching and learning to influence CT.

Effective poetry teaching would result to CT and better learning (Alagumalai, 2019). Students would certainly perform well if teachers used strategies that take advantage of the past knowledge of students; graphic organizers, tapping into group ideas and work groups, among others (Alagumalai, 2019). Scholars have argued for new, more efficacious ideas and methods, yet the majority of teachers continue to use the old approaches to teach (Alagumalai, 2019).

According to this study, teachers have not been using the appropriate teaching and learning methods for poetry that would influence critical thinking among the students.

Dhumal (2020) investigated the methods used in poetry teaching in India, using design of a descriptive study and 30 secondary students as sample size. The study adopted questionnaire, observation and interview to collect data. According to the study's findings, poetry teaching in English is a challenge in the Indian classroom and most of the methodologies practiced in teaching poetry are traditional teacher-centered, which is not helpful to develop students' CT. While the study points out teacher-centered method of teaching poetry, it is noticed that participatory method can help influence students CT in poetry lessons. The study was however conducted in India hence the findings may differ for Kenya and methods that work in India may not be effective in Kenya due to other factors such as cultural and school factors.

According to Sinha (2017) research findings in Ireland, comprehensive practical approach to teaching poetry to facilitate CT is missing in Ireland classrooms. The study pointed out that teachers do not involve students in role play. Role play, according to the study, is a good learning process for poetry in promoting CT. Students praise role play as a good learning approach to teaching poetry (Sinha, 2017). The research was conducted with eighteen students in an Ireland secondary school. The researcher collected data by using questionnaire, essays, surveys, focus groups, and classroom assessment tools (CATs). The role-play preparation and implementation required group work, which the students who partook in the study, embraced with great enthusiasm. Role play is examined as good in making students understand (Sinha, 2017). The study however focused on just one method hence did not investigate other methods that could lead to acquisition of critical thinking. Therefore, this study intended to promote student-centered methods and enable teachers involve students in role-play in poetry teaching and learning to promote CT.

Pokharel (2020) conducted research on the approaches employed in the teaching of poetry in ten randomly chosen secondary schools in Dang, Nepal, and established that most teachers used traditional methods in poetry teaching and learning. The research also established that graphics or videos are not used during poetry class. The approaches are not helpful in influencing students' CT (Pokharel, 2020). Questionnaires, observation, interview as well as observation checklist were used in the data collection process. The study was conducted in Nepal which presents a geographical gap.

According to the results of Lamjel (2018) investigation on the most preferred techniques and the least preferred techniques by learners in teaching poetry, most teachers are used to teacher-centered techniques in the teaching of poetry. The study's results detailed that teacher like lecturing, theme description and giving notes, which make students not interested and non-participatory in poetry lessons. The student-centered techniques influence CT and are highly preferred by students. The method helps students completely engage in learning (Lamjel, 2018). During the study, the researcher selected three schools and 40 students. A simple random sampling procedure was used and a set of questionnaires employed for data collection on poetry teaching that enable students develop CT. The researcher also involved questions with open and closed ends for students. Also, classroom observation, discussion, interview and group discussion were used. The study however did not identify the student-centered techniques that may influence critical thinking hence not conclusive.

The student-centered method, as stated in Okonkwo (2016) study, is the preferred method because it increases students understanding as they become involved in poetry lessons. The study revealed that the methods adopted in poetry teaching, are teacher-centered, making poetry learning hard for students and not promotive to CT. The research was carried out in Nigeria. Descriptive survey design was used for the study. The study's population constituted

9,300 students and 182 English language and literature teachers. The study used 320 students sampled from 15 secondary schools, using simple random sampling technique. Though the study was carried out in Nigeria with 182 secondary students as sample from 15 schools, this current study was conducted in Kenya, focusing on poetry teaching and learning and its influence on CT among Form three students in Githunguri Sub-County, Kiambu County.

In Kenya, the KCSE English result in the year 2020, revealed that poor teaching methods used in poetry class were probably responsible for the low performance of students in poetry. Similarly, Kiprotich (2009) study conducted with public secondary school learners in Kenya's Turbo Division, Eldoret District, showed that inappropriate teaching approach that are explanation based, compounded with the nature of poetry, contribute to student's low performance in KCSE examinations. A descriptive survey design with questionnaires, observation and interview were used for data collection. While the study revealed explanation-based method, method like copying poems on the chalkboard are boring and always waste of time. This process of instruction does not let students the chance to enough poetry, influence CT, and teachers find it hard to involve students in group discussions (Kiprotich, 2009). Hence, the study intended to fill the gap by teachers developing different discovery-based teaching strategies that will increase students' interest in teaching and learning of poetry to influence CT.

### **2.2.1 Teaching Poetry to Promoting Critical Thinking to Help in Problem-solving**

Teaching of poetry promotes CT, and CT aids students in solving problems. Putri (2019) mentioned in his study that teaching poetry requires the right strategy which is the stage of planning or activities designed to effectively conduct poetry class and overcome problems that may occur. According to Putri (2019), problems- solving in teaching and learning poetry offers

interesting activities that can improve student's CT and oral communication skills. Problem-solving in poetry lesson depends on the text and the type of activities carried out by the teacher. Therefore, students are afforded the opportunity to use their critical thinking effectively in resolutions of real-life problems (Yanda & Dina, 2018). In another study, Hope (2018) noted that poetry has been discovered as a useful tool for educating about climate change, which will enable the achievement of long-term objectives for development. He found out in his study that poetry has the potential to effectively develop CT in fostering climate change education. Maspul (2024) investigated the educational effects of poetry. A qualitative study written based on group discussion that was undertaken in the master of education program for Advanced Practices in Literacy. Participants were chosen for their interest in literature and poetry, and they read relevant research articles and scholarly papers ahead of time. Participants shared their results, experiences, and perspectives on the impact of poetry on student learning and development during the discussion. The further discussion, conducted by an experienced facilitator, plunged into a variety of topics, including the promotion of language development, creativity, critical thinking, and empathy. The study established that students gain critical thinking abilities through poetry. The study however focused on higher education students and not secondary school learners.

Azizi et al (2022) investigated how critical thinking can be cultivated using poetry in Iran. To explicitly bring learners' attention to the importance of CT, a poetry curriculum was created. A poetry program with an emphasis on culturally unique knowledge was integrated into the course using a case study methodology. Through a series of exercises, the four female students were able to develop their critical thinking skills by considering and analyzing the given poems. Through teacher diaries, a checklist was created and utilized to observe and score students' CT before and after the intervention. After participating in the intervention, students' critical thinking skills improved and they formed constructive critique

habits, according to an analysis of the case study data. Thus, it was concluded that poetry could be regarded as a useful and effective source for developing critical thinking skills among students. The study however was not conducted in Kenya hence the findings in Iran may not apply to Kenya schools.

Involving a group of Indonesian teachers of English, the study by Gandana, Nafisah and Imperiani (2021) aimed to explore the teachers' initial conceptions of critical thinking as reflected in their planned classroom activities. Specifically, the data collected were in the form of written instructional activities that used literary works as learning materials. These data were collected after the teachers took part in an online course for English teachers from the MGMP (English Teachers Working Group) in Bandung Regency, on encouraging critical thinking via literature. During the workshop, a model for teaching critical thinking abilities through literary works was presented, and the teachers were challenged to create their own lesson plans based on the suggested CT model. Our first findings, which employed content analysis as the methodological tool to examine the teachers' produced materials, showed that, generally speaking, the teachers lacked sufficient understanding of how to integrate critical thinking abilities into their instruction. It was no longer believed that literature served as a bridge between "the word and the world," but rather that it helped pupils become more proficient language users. The study however did not show how poetry as a literacy work may influence critical thinking. Fowler (2019) examined the impact of poetry annotations on students' critical thinking skills.

Eight high school students participated in this action research study, which was conducted in the spring of 2019. The participants were a mix of juniors and seniors enrolled in an English IV Honors program. A public high school in the United States served as the scene.

A mixed methods design was used; however, the study was more dominantly a qualitative study, and data was collected from participant pre- and post-surveys and interviews, student-participant work, teacher-researcher observation notes, journal entries, and rubrics for

including selecting age-appropriate and culturally relevant poems, utilizing interactive activities, and adopting a flexible approach to meet individual learner preferences and needs. Findings reveal that poetry integration has cognitive benefits through enhanced critical thinking skills and a more holistic understanding of language structures and usage. The study however did not collect primary data which could provide a more reliable information.

### **2.2.2 Benefits of Teaching Poetry to influence Critical Thinking**

It's critical to the future of the students that they develop the capacity to observe situations or problems and think through all the angles. Students can do that by learning the art of critical thinking. Importantly, poetry teaching and learning can influence CT to enable students make independent decision and solve problems (Azizi et al, 2022). According to Azizi et al (2022) teaching and learning of poetry to influence CT skills can bring about a host of advantages, like increases students' comprehension of their own mental processes and helps them get good test scores on both in-class and standardized exams. The use of poetry to influence CT can also help students become more skillful at applying newly acquired material knowledge to new situations and making wise decisions in their personal and civic lives. Furthermore, one of the most crucial abilities in the fast-paced world of today is the development of students' CT through poetry instruction and learning. Additionally, poetry is thought to be the cornerstone and a crucial element of literary teaching to affect CT (Azizi et al, 2022).

To this end, Azizi et al (2022) conducted a case study on poetry teaching and learning to promote CT with an emphasis on details unique to a given culture. Through a series of exercises, four female students gradually developed their critical thinking skills by considering and analyzing the assigned poems. Through teacher diaries, a checklist was created and utilized to observe and score students' CT prior and after the intervention. After participating in the intervention, students' critical thinking skills improved and they formed constructive critique

habits, according to an analysis of the case study data. Therefore, it was determined that poetry might be considered a helpful and efficient resource for students to build their CT skills.

This study current revealed that among the advantages of teaching and learning poetry are, the genre of literature helps in developing students' CT, students learn poetry to help develop their careers and students learn poetry to pass examinations.

Poetry teaching has many benefits such as promoting multiculturalism, developing critical minds and understanding of students' diversities. (Ó Riain, 2019) examined poetry teaching and learning and found out that poetry conveys cultural value and improves teaching and learning of rudimentary language skills that influence CT. (Hanauer, 2003) noted in his study that in the teaching of poetry, metaphor serves as the most prominent connection to CT. Poetry offers a substantial learning experience and metaphor is one of its components that consciously helps in developing the mind of learners (Cronin & Hawthorne, 2019). By breaking down poems into their component parts, students learn to appreciate the writing process, which leaves readers feeling satisfied. Lyric poetry, in particular, is centered on feelings and helps the emotions. Thus, Mirzaee et al. (2016) emphasized concluded that poetry is one of the most

### **2.3 The Measure of the Acquisition of Critical Thinking**

The teaching of poetry encourages self-exploration, self-expression and influences the way students' critically think. Norton & Gregson (2020) examined the influence of teaching poetry on critical thinking and established that using poems of well-known authors and allowing students to invent their own poems, provides support to CT and enables creative choices. Selected poems ultimately provide a strong foundation for understanding, improve conduct and enhance literacy learning (Norton & Gregson, 2020).The study was carried out in two high

schools in the United Kingdom and targeted 20 participants. The research employed a descriptive survey design, adopting questionnaires, observation and interview to collect data.

As noted in Salleh & Lin (2019) study, the influence of teaching poetry to promote critical thinking plays an important part in students' learning. The study which targeted a Malaysian secondary boarding school in Penang, used a sample size of 42 students. The International Critical Thinking Test by Linda Elder and Richard Paul, which consists of eight semi-structured questions and one brief writing question, was employed by the researchers as the pre-test and post-test. The study was conducted based on Bloom's Taxonomy Critical Thinking model's six stages (Gonen, 2018). There were two groups of students: the experimental group and the control group. In the experimental group, film clips from "Brave New Voices" were used to present SWP. In the study's findings, student participants in the test group using SWP, scored better than the participants in the oversight group, who were taught the teacher-centered approach. Therefore, the study established that many teachers do not teach poetry to influence CT, and that they use teacher centric approach in poetry teaching and learning. The study assumed that using SWP strategy in poetry teaching and learning is important and would probably promote the acquisition of CT skills and increase students' confidence and enable them to independently solve problems.

According to Fowler (2019) investigation on poetry teaching and learning, the primary source for CT is the use of poetry annotations and collaborative classroom. The results of his study disclosed that teachers use lecture-based approach to teach poetry. Results in the Fowler (2019) study revealed that teacher-centered strategy promotes the supremacy of the teacher within the classroom setup. According to Fowler, the approach is not able to challenge students' ability and influence the acquisition of CT. The study was conducted with eight

students in a public high school. The researcher used mixed method design. The researcher collected data from pre- and post-surveys, interviews with learners, students' work, teachers' observation checklist, diary entries, and scoring criteria for annotating and answering questions on poetry. While the study established that teachers use teacher-centered or lecture-based approach in poetry teaching to influence the acquisition of CT, this current study revealed that teachers show interest in teaching poetry and keep students working harmoniously. The study also indicates that teacher involved in effective questioning, face-to-face interaction between students with confidence, but students do not actively participate in poetry lessons, and students are not adequately able to do class presentation or dramatize poems, perhaps because they do not have interest in poetry.

#### **2.4 Teachers and Students' Attitudes towards Poetry**

The teaching of poetry in the context of promoting CT has demonstrated to be a contentious issue among academics in the subject for a number of decades. Most teachers of literature are hesitant to use poetry in their lessons, and scholars look into why they might be hesitant while also examining the advantages of teaching and learning of poetry to influence CT in the classroom. A study by Mellgren (2022) aimed to shed light on teachers and students' attitudes towards poetry in an American upper secondary school, the findings showed that, with the exception of teachers who do not comprehend the significant and benefits of the genre , both teachers and students have general positive attitude towards poetry. Development of knowledge of the English, promotion of CT, individual-expression, analytic skills and historical and political comprehension were some of the benefits the results of the study indicated (Mellgren, 2022). The study was however conducted in America.

Although poetry is often seen favorably by teachers and students alike., some gaps were acknowledged by both teachers and students, mostly in reference to the lack of adequate materials and English language skills and experience in term of poetry teaching to influence CT. The study's aim was to compare and contrast both teachers and students' attitudes in order to investigate any similarities or differences. Three teachers and six students took part in a semi-structured, qualitative interview whereby topics related to poetry and their attitude towards poetry were covered. While the study used three students and six teachers in an American upper secondary school, this current study used 349 Form three students and 10 teachers of English in 10 secondary schools in Kenya.

As indicated by Razgathoglu & Ulusoy (2022), poetry is a literary genre that is central to development of CT, noting that there are several factors that affect poetry teaching and learning including attitude, intelligence motivation and experience and unavailability of poetic instructional materials. Further, Razgathoglu & Ulusoy (2022) revealed in the results of their research attempted to measure the attitude of students towards learning the text of poetry and its effect on the CT skills of students that they had a positive attitude towards the text of poetry as literature teaching material to promote CT. A one-group pretest-posttest research strategy was used in this experimental study. The study's participants were forty students from the University of Murham's faculty of social sciences, United Kingdom. The responders were given an attitude questionnaire. The scores of the students on the pretest and posttest were analyzed through paired samples t-test and the findings showed that the students performed greatly on the posttest. The study's findings suggested that poetry be used in the development of CT. The current study used a descriptive survey designed and it was intended to determine the methods used in poetry teaching and learning to influence CT. The study's finding showed

that the teachers use diverse strategies to teach poetry, except group discussion, graphic organizers, turning poetry in short stories and writing poems to promote CT.

The attitudes of both teachers and students play important roles to the successful instruction and understanding of poetry. If teachers and students develop constructive attitude towards poetry, the application of poetry as sort of educational resource, can help both teachers and students. Liao (2018) conducted research on the attitudes of teachers towards poetry and found out that teachers have different level of experiences that are unique to them, which are negative and positive. The research indicated that the teaching of poetry has difficulties even for teachers who appear to like poetry. The researcher also noted that the experiences of teachers were ingrained in many factors ranging from their previous education; the way they learned poetry in school which did not promote CT. The factors, however, influenced sometimes unwittingly, the methods used in poetry teaching and the negative attitude they held towards poetry (Liao, 2018) The study employed a qualitative technique within the explanatory paradigm, as well as a qualitative case study with educators in the Pinetown district of KwaZulu Natal. Questionnaires and interviews were used in this qualitative study to generate data. Besides, it is believed that some of the teachers' attitude towards poetry are self-doubt, inability to think critically to understand poetry and the difficult terms used in poetry. Similarly, Timothy and Obiekezie (2019) investigated the attitude of pre-service teachers towards poetry teaching and found out that teachers fear poetry teaching due to its complicated nature. About 67 pre-service teachers of English participated in the study. The study employed questionnaire and interview to gather data in three secondary schools in South-Eastern Nigeria. According to the research's findings, most teachers expressed hesitation that they cannot teach poetry because it is difficult to understand while some teachers said they enjoy teaching poetry with participatory approaches that influence CT. The research further disclosed that students did not show interest

in learning poetry. Additionally, the results indicated that poetry teaching is a hard task to integrate, teachers do not spend more time with students to evaluate and analyze poetic devices.

Danesh & Shirkhani (2015) findings are similar to previous studies that most students are not interested in learning poetry because of its hard-to-understand nature and methods chosen by teachers. The study used 63 students sampled from the Azad secondary school. Questionnaire designed by the researcher was used in the study. The study used 12 teachers and it was focused on learners and teachers' attitude towards poetry. Similarly, in Kenya (Yanda, 2018) carried out a study on students' attitude towards poetry teaching and learning and found out that learners' low scores in poetry in the KCSE English examinations, is because of the negative attitude students have towards poetry instruction. The researcher established that negative attitude of students can be improved through effective learning together models (LTM) which will ably boost students' academic attainment, attitudes and influence CT. The pretest-posttest quasi experimental design was chosen due to school authorities disallowing random selection of students. One hundred and ninety-nine Form three students in six secondary school participated in the study. The study results showed better score among students using LTM to teach poetry to influence CT rather than those taught using traditional methods in poetry teaching to promote CT.

Additionally, the findings stated that LTM has a pedagogical implication that can enable students develop CT through poetry teaching. Though this study used quasi experimental design to sample 199 Form three students in six secondary schools, the current study used descriptive survey design, using questionnaire, scheduled interview and classroom observation to collect data from 10 teachers of English and 349 Form three students in 10 public schools. The study showed that teachers have positive attitudes toward poetry, but they do not spend

time in analyzing poetic devices to promote CT. Despite the teachers' positive attitude, students do not like learning poetry and they only learn poetry to pass examinations.

## **2.5 Summary of Existing Gaps in the Literature Reviewed**

From the studies reviewed, evidence amassed propose that teachers use traditional means in teaching and learning of poetry. The evidence detailed that most teachers used lecture-based teaching approach which is teacher-centric method in poetry teaching and learning. Such method of teaching and learning of poetry gives the supremacy of the teachers in the classroom setting and it is not able to challenge students in developing CT. Despite the importance of CT to develop students' confidence and independently solve problems in this globalized technological 21<sup>st</sup> century, teachers fear poetry teaching and they have not been able to effectively integrate poetry teaching in the literature classroom. Though effective teaching and learning of poetry would result to CT and better learning, students do not like learning poetry because of its complicated nature and hard to understand figurative terminologies. Students would certainly be able to independently solve problem if teachers use strategies that take advantage of the past knowledge of students; graphic organizers, tapping into group ideas and work groups, among others to influence CT. Most of the studies conducted in this area were however conducted in developed countries that have developed education systems hence have tested the methods and are able to adopt the methods that work

Moreover, many teachers of literature hesitate to incorporate poetry into their instruction, and researchers want to understand why, while simultaneously investigating the benefits of teaching and studying poetry to influence CT acquisition in the classroom. According to the studies reviewed, no available instructional materials and lack of training are some of the problems faced teachers in poetry instruction and learning. Additionally, teachers do not

motivate students towards the learning of poetry. The reviewed literature established that, many teachers do not teach poetry to influence CT, and that they use teacher centric approach in the teaching and learning of poetry. This reveals a gap in assessing the poetry teaching and learning methods that influence critical thinking especially in less developed countries such as Kenya and whose education system is still developing and hence may not have established the methods that work best. Therefore, these gaps underscore the need for the present study.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

The chapter explains on the research design, study variables, study region, target population, sample size, sampling methodologies, research instruments, piloting, reliability and validity, data collection and processing procedures, and legal and ethical considerations.

#### 3.2 Research Design

The research applied a descriptive survey design. The design was appropriate for the study because it allows for accurate and systematic descriptions of the phenomena by using qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection. Descriptive survey design uses questionnaire, interview and classroom observation and it is appropriate for collecting vast amounts of information. A mixed method research approach was used in the study where both quantitative and qualitative data was obtained and analyzed. Mixed methods' is a research approach whereby researchers collect and analyze both quantitative and qualitative data within the same study. The quantitative data was obtained through a questionnaire while the qualitative data was obtained from interview guide. Quantitative data was analyzed using **statistical analysis or tabulation** while qualitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics (Connell, 2016). Therefore, the design was chosen since it was appropriate to the study's objective of establishing methods used in poetry teaching and learning to influence CT in the English language. Content analysis was used to analyze qualitative data.

of English and secondary school learners in the Sub-County, like other teachers and students around world, face challenges in teaching and learning of poetry to influence critical thinking. CT is an important life skill that students need to pace them through their academy journey, enable them to independently solve problems and compete with the growing complex economic and technological globalized world. Additionally, students need to develop CT to enhance the application of the Competence Based Curriculum (CBC) which component deals with CT. Importantly, poetry teaching and learning has the potential to influence CT, though teachers fear integrating the genre of literature in their English language classroom and students do not like learning poetry. It is on this basis that the researcher selected schools in the area.

### **3.3.1 Study Variables**

The study's independent variables are teaching methods, effective questioning, group discussion and motivation. The intervening variables are teachers' and students' attitudes towards poetry, school factors and teacher experience and knowledge including curriculum, while the dependent variable is critical thinking.

### **3.4 Target Population**

The study targeted 37 public secondary schools, 76 teachers and 1520 Form three students in Githunguri Sub-County, Kiambu County. The Form three students were appropriate for the research because they have studied many topics in English and acquainted with the materials in the institution.

### **3.5 Sampling and Sample Size**

The following three samples were selected for the study.

### **a) Schools Sampling**

The researcher used 10 schools out of the 37 public secondary schools in Githunguri Sub-County, utilizing a stratified random sampling approach that accounts for 27% of the total sample size of the study's sampled schools. There were two levels of educational stratification: county schools and sub-county schools. The schools were therefore stratified into county and sub county schools. Using the sample strategy, the researcher was able to choose schools with data relevant to the objectives of the study. These categories were made in accordance with the facilities, faculty size, and entry behaviors of the students at the respective institutions. Sibona & Walczak (2012) posit that in descriptive research, a sample of 10% - 30% is suitable for the study.

### **b) Teachers' Sample**

Out of 76 teachers, 10 teachers were chosen purposively which represents 13.16% of the total target teachers. Purposive sampling suits the study because it relies on the researcher's judgment in selecting teachers of English who can offer the most accurate data to meet the objectives of the study. A purposive sampling, according to Sibona & Walczak (2012), entails choosing at random participants from the sampling guide and selecting at random the desired number of research participants. Purposive sampling was used in order to ensure that English teachers who teach poetry were selected since they are the ones directly involved in poetry teaching hence had the potential of providing reliable data. Further, simple random sampling method was used in selecting the teachers who participated in the study.

### **c) Students' Sample**

A sample size of 349 Form three students out of 1520 students, were sampled for the study, representing 22.9% of the total students. This was based on the high percentage representation of students in the population as opposed to teachers. Simple random sampling was used by the researcher to choose participants. A list of the students from each of the streams was obtained.

Numbers were assigned to each of the students. Random numbers were then picked and then the students with the numbers were selected. Simple random sampling was used because it ensures that every student in the sample guide has an equal opportunity to be chosen for the study (Mirzaee et al., 2016). According to Kothari (2004), a 10% sample size is sufficient to accurately reflect a sizable population. Therefore, the study was employed a sample size of the population of 10.53%. Table 3.5.1 below shows size of the sample. **Table 3.1: Sampling Grid**

Target Population		Sample Size	Percentage
School	37	10	27%
Students	1520	349	22.9%
Teachers	76	10	13.16%

### 3.6 Research Instruments

The following data collection tools were used in the study.

#### a) Teachers' Questionnaire

The aim of the teacher questionnaire was to collect relevant data from teachers of English (Appendix II). The questionnaire comprised of four sections. Section one carried statistics about participant's ages and the other three sections carried questions relative to the specific objectives. The questionnaire had questions related to establishing the method used in poetry teaching in English to promote CT and finding out teachers' attitude towards poetry.

The questionnaire was designed using measurable indicators; take against the suitable response and Strongly Agree (SA); Agree (A) Not Sure (NS) Disagree (D) Strongly Disagree (SD) in line with the objectives of the study to influence CT. The take against the suitable response and the Likert scale enabled the researcher to rate the level of students CT. The researcher chose these methods because of their objectivity. This approach was chosen by the researcher for its objectivity. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected for the teachers' questionnaire.

### **b) Students' Questionnaire**

In order to get pertinent data from students in Form 3, the researcher used questionnaires (Appendix IV). There were four sections in the questionnaires. Section one contained demographic information about the students while the other three sections had questions in relation to the specific objectives of the study. The questionnaires were designed with a Likert scale and quantifiable markers (Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A) Not Sure (NS) Disagree (D) Strongly Disagree (SD) aligning with each study' objective. The students' questionnaire had questions related to establishing the method used in poetry learning in English to promote CT and finding out the attitude of students towards poetry. The Likert scale allowed the researcher to rate the level of students CT. Quantitative data was collected for the students' questionnaire.

### **c) Teachers' Interview Guide**

Interviews were specifically for teachers and the aim was to get first-hand detailed on methods teachers use in teaching and learning poetry to influence CT teachers' attitude towards poetry (Appendix III). Interviews generated participants personal experiences, views, emotions and ideas on poetry teaching and learning to promote CT. Semi-structured interview helped the researcher acquire detailed information that validated the data gathered from the questionnaire. The researcher collected qualitative data for the teachers interview guide.

### **d) Classroom Observation Guide**

Classroom observations was conducted by the researcher in accordance with the study's objectives (Appendix V). The researcher used classroom observation to investigate the

influence of poetry teaching and learning on CT and to capture in detail approaches teachers use in instruction of poetry lessons teachers and students' attitudes towards the genre of literature. The researcher used 40 minutes for each observation. The 40 minutes observation helped document data on the objectives of the research. During the observation, the researcher acted as a non-participant. This technique was used to minimize the distraction and influence on the teacher's teaching decision routines. Qualitative data was collected for the classroom observation which was scheduled based on the teachers' preferences.

### **3.6 Pilot Study**

The researcher conducted a pilot study selecting a school which did not participate in the real study. Using a pilot enabled the researcher to approximate expected time duration during conducting the actual interview sessions and the time it would take to conduct the interviews and fill up the questionnaire. The pilot study involved 40 Form three students and two teachers of English in Juja Sub County which borders Githunguri sub county hence share the same learning and teaching environment. The data that were collected from the participants were not used in the actual study. Students were selected at random while the teachers were purposively selected. The pilot study was carried out to check the correctness of the instruments used in the study.

### **3.7 Validity**

In deciding the instruments' content validity, the researcher ensured care that the tools covered every issue under investigation. To determine construct validity, clarity of the items and language level were checked. Content validity was assessed by the help of the course supervisors to scrutinize the appropriateness of the items content, and need for modification to fulfill the objective of the research. The research also considered face validity and construct validity. Face validity entailed subjective assessment of the

and review of literature. The construct validity was based on logical relationships among variables and how they reflect the study’s theoretical framework.

### 3.7.1 Reliability

To assure the instruments’ reliability, a summarized Likert Scale questionnaires was administered as a trial test to a group of 40 students and 2 teachers. The 40 students and 2 teachers did not form part of the actual study. As stated by Taherdoost (2016) regarding the reliability of qualitative research, the questionnaires and observation were crosschecked to make sure there are no errors. There was a pilot study conducted with 40 students and two (2) teachers to test the research instrument’s reliability. The 40 students and two (2) teachers did not take part in the study itself. Piloting the study helped in noticing parts of the research that needed enhancement prior to carrying out the study. The pilot research results were correlated to determine the instrument dependability by using the Cronbach’s Alpha correlation to estimate the internal coherence of the research instruments. Cronbach’s Alpha is suitable for calculating the reliability of the Likert scale questionnaires which is principle for this study (Gliem & Gliem, 2003). Cronbach’s Alpha has a relationship coefficient which comes in value from 0 to 1. The reliability coefficient value closeness to 1, the more reliable the test, and the reliability coefficient value closeness to 0, the less reliable the test (Gliem & Gliem, 2003). Table 3.2 presents reliability results. Values that were 0.7 and above were considered to be reliable and hence the questionnaire was deemed reliable.

Table 3.2: Reliability Results

<b>Constructs</b>	<b>No of Items</b>	<b><math>\alpha \geq 0.7</math></b>	<b>Comment</b>
Teachers’ Questionnaire	2	0.739	Reliable
Students’ Questionnaire	40	0.714	Reliable

### **3.8 Data Collection Procedures**

After delivering an introductory letter of approval from Kenyatta University's Graduate School, a research permit was received from the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI). A copy of the research permit and an introduction letter from Kiambu County's director of education were provided to the Githunguri Sub-County education director in order to obtain permission to visit sampling schools for the study. Before involving teachers and students during the data collection visit to each of the ten sampled schools, approval from the principals was requested. Following principals' approval, the researcher distributed two sets of questionnaires (see to Appendices I and II), which were filled out by 349 Form 3 students from ten schools and 10 English teachers each.

The researcher subsequently made earlier arrangements regarding the timing of class observations and interview during poetry lessons. During filling in of the questionnaires, students used 15 minutes to fill the questionnaire for students while each teacher took eight minutes to complete the questionnaire for teachers. Classroom observation and interviews were carried out after collection of teachers' questionnaire and students' questionnaire. The questionnaire, interview and classroom observation were related to the objectives of the study, teaching and learning of poetry to promotes CT. The researcher used 40 minutes which is a classroom allocated period to conduct class observation in Form three of each of the schools and used one month to complete data collection.

### **3.9 Data Analysis**

In accordance with the study's objectives, the researcher assigned numbers to the questions and used code numbers to enter data using SPSS. Each respondent was identified by code number, such as SS1 for School Sample 1 and L2 for Learner 2. SPSS was employed to analyze descriptive data into frequency tables, percentages, mean, and standard deviation. To produce

personal opinions of the respondents, qualitative analysis using the Likert scale was performed. Quantitative data was analyzed using statistical analysis or tabulation. Through tabulation, the data analysis was used to develop quantitative reports. The information gathered through questionnaires, interview schedules, and observation was both qualitative and quantitative. The interview schedules and other open-ended questions were analyzed qualitatively. Descriptive analysis was conducted using statistical packages for social science (SPSS). Further analysis was carried out in accordance with the study's objectives. Quantitative was done once the data was collected and entered into the computer. The findings were given in chapter four as frequency tables, pie charts, mean and standard deviation.

### **3.10 Logistical and Ethical Considerations**

The researcher sought relevant permission from the Department of Educational Communication and Technology of Kenyatta University, and research permit from the National Council for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) to conduct the research. The researcher sought consent from the County Director of the Education Office of Kiambu, before conducting the study in Githunguri Sub-County. Participants filled out the questionnaire that explained the study's objectives, guaranteed their privacy, and asked for their voluntary involvement in the study. Further, the researcher ensured confidentiality by ensuring that respondents did not provide any identifying details in the research instruments. Further, the researcher sought consent from the respondents so that they voluntarily engaged in the study.

### **3.11 Summary**

This chapter has given an in-depth explanation of the methodology the researcher used in the research; the study variables which are independent, intervening and dependent and the research design which is descriptive research design. The chapter further detailed on sampling of the target population, a piloting study conducted with 40 Form three students and two (2)

English language teachers in Githunguri Sub-County, instruments used in data gathering, namely; questionnaires, classroom observation and structured interviews, methods used in analysis of data and how the instruments' reliability and validity were established. Also, the chapter emphasized on the logistics and the legal consideration that were followed by the researcher during the study. In conclusion, the chapter gives a vivid description on how the research was conducted to achieve a reliable data.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESEARCH FINDINGS, INTERPRETATIONS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 Introduction

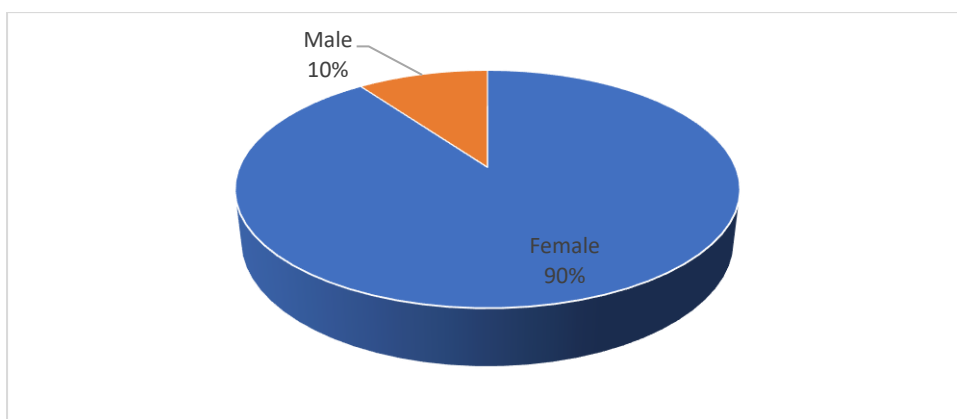
The chapter presents research findings, interpretation and discussion. The findings are presented as follows: response rate, background information, and findings as per study objectives. The objectives were to: Establish the methods of poetry teaching in English, determine the influence of poetry teaching on critical thinking, and examine teachers and students' attitudes towards poetry.

#### 4.2 Response Rate

The researcher administered and collected 349 questionnaires from students, 10 questionnaires from teachers and 10 observation checklists from teachers. These resulted to 100 percent response rate for all instruments. The high response rate can be attributed to data collection process employed that involved physical distribution of instruments and regular follow ups.

#### 4.3 Background Information for the Respondents

Teachers were asked their gender and the findings are shown in Figure 4.1.

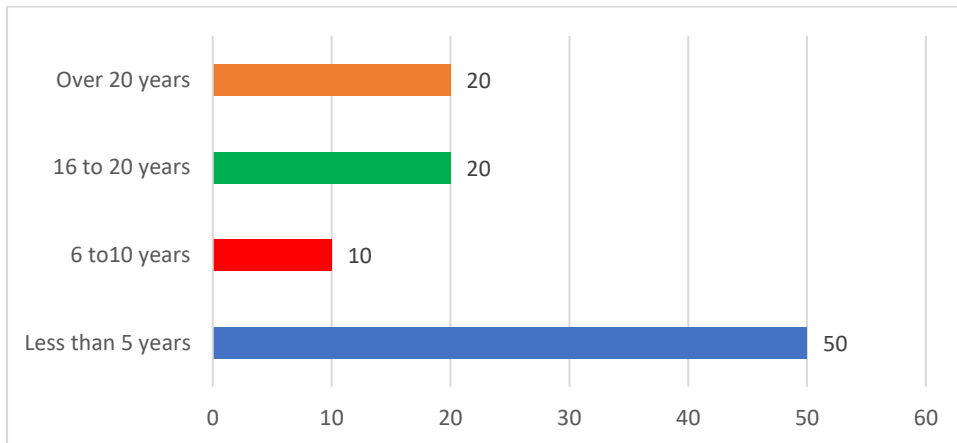


**Figure 4.1: Gender of Teachers**

The findings indicate that 90 percent of the teachers were female compared to 10 percent male. The results imply that more female teachers participated in this study than male teachers. This

implies that more female teachers teach poetry compared to male Githunguri Sub-County, Kiambu County.

The respondents were further asked to state how long they had taught English in the current school. Results are shown in Figure 4.2.



**Figure 4.2: Teaching duration**

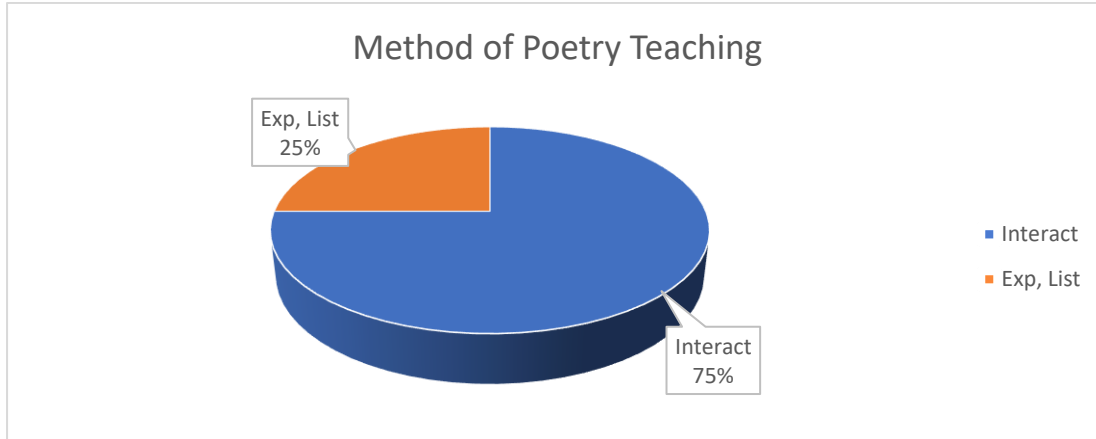
According to the results, 50 percent of teachers had taught English for less than 5 years, 20 percent for 16 to 20 years and over 20 years respectively, while 10 percent reported 6 to 10 years. The findings denoted that teacher had adequate teaching experience and therefore provided reliable information on poetry teaching and learning and its influence on critical thinking among secondary schools' learners in Githunguri Sub-County. The findings support Khatib (2011) study that though teaching of poetry is challenging, teachers should be involved in discovery-based instructional strategies which provides a wide-range process to promote CT.

#### **4.4 Methods of Poetry Teaching in English**

The study's first objective was to establish the methods of poetry teaching in English. The findings from teachers and students' questionnaires are presented below.

#### 4.4.1 Findings on Methods of Poetry Teaching in English from Teachers' Questionnaire

The teachers were asked to indicate how they teach poetry to influence students' critical thinking. The results are shown in Figure 4.3.



**Figure 4.3: Poetry Teaching Methods**

The findings in Figure 4.3 indicate that majority (75%) of teachers claimed that they teach poetry using interactive (interact) class while 25% used explanations and listening (list). According to (Dhumal, 2020), teaching poetry using traditional teacher-centered is not helpful to developing students' CT.

The respondents were asked to indicate how often they use graphics or pictures, videos and poetic audios to teach.

**Table 4.1: Use graphics or pictures, videos and poetic audio**

	<b>Frequency</b>
To a significant extent	2
To a moderate extent	7
Not at all	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>

The findings in Table 4.1 indicates that two teachers, graphics or pictures, videos and poetic audios to a significant extent, seven teachers, to a moderate extent and one teacher to a less extent. The findings of the study revealed that only 2 out of the 10 of teachers use graphics or

pictures, videos and poetic audios to teach poetry to influence CT. This may be ascribed to the unavailability of the requisite materials for teaching and learning. The study is in support of Pokharel (2020) that teachers of English do not use graphics or videos during poetry class. The approach is not helpful in influencing students' CT.

**Table 4.2: Students analyze and interpret poetic devices**

	<b>Frequency</b>
To a significant extent	3
To a moderate extent	7
Total	10

On whether students analyze and interpret poetic devices, three teachers, reported to a significant extent while seven teachers, indicated to a moderate extent. This means, teachers use limited time for analysis of poetic devices, students asking questions, students evaluating, analyzing, interpreting texts and students independently solving problems in poetry class to influence CT. This could be the result of allocation of limited instructional time and the difficult nature of poetic devices. Thus, this study aligns with Egggen & Kauchak, (2012) findings that some teachers are not better placed in explaining new strategies and students do not understand figurative language in poetry teaching and learning.

The respondents were asked whether they keep students working in group and the findings are shown in Table 4.3.

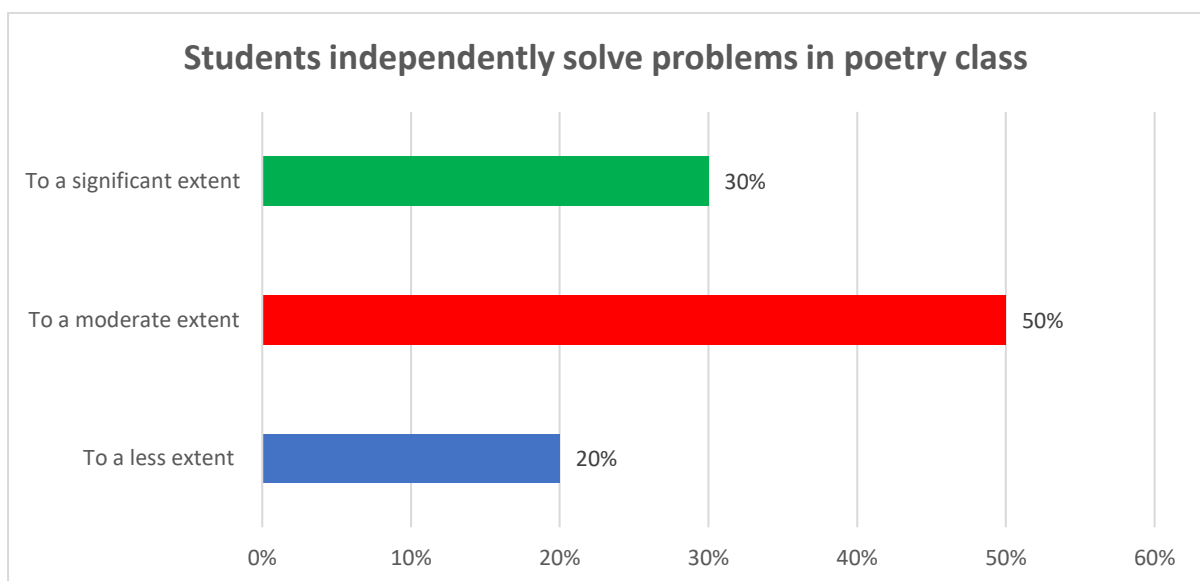
**Table 4.3: Student working in group**

	<b>Frequency</b>
To a significant extent	2
To a moderate extent	4
To a less extent	1
Not at all	3
Total	10

According to the findings, two teachers in Githunguri Sub-County, noted to a significant extent that students work in groups, four teachers revealed that students work in group to a moderate

extent, one teacher stated that students work in group to a less extent while three teachers reported that students do not work in group. The findings showed that teachers do not have interest in making students work in group during poetry lessons in class and such will may not help learners develop CT. This could be ascribed to students lack of interest in the subject and limited classroom time. This concurs with Khatib (2011) that though teaching of poetry is challenging, teachers should be involved in teaching methods based on discovery, group work which provides a thorough process to promote CT. There should be enough classroom time allocated and teachers should use hands-on activities or group discussion that encourages knowledge building in poetry teaching and learning.

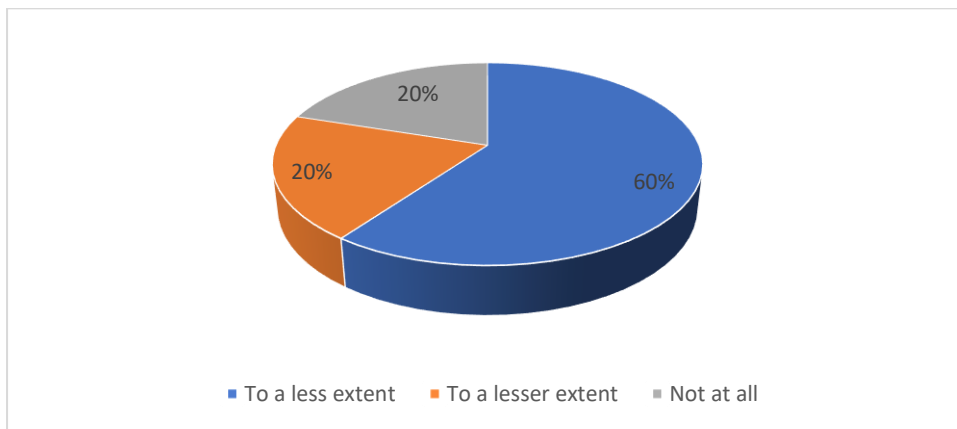
On whether students independently solve problems in poetry class, results are reported in Figure 4.4.



**Figure 4.4: Students independently solve problems in poetry class**

The findings indicate that 30% of teachers agreed to a significant extent that students independently solve problems in poetry class, 50% agreed to a moderate extent, while 30% agreed to a less extent.

The respondents were further asked whether students turn poem into short stories during poetry lessons. The findings are shown in Figure 4.5.



**Figure 4.5: During poetry lessons, students turn poem into short stories**

Majority (60%) of teachers noted that to a less extent students turn poem into short stories during poetry lessons, 20% indicated to a moderate extent while 20% noted not at all. This means secondary schools' English learners in Githunguri Sub-County do not turn poem into stories during poetry lessons. According to Alagumalai, (2019) effective poetry teaching and learning entail teachers involving students in activities including students turning poem into stories which would result to CT and better learning.

#### **4.4.2 Findings on Methods of Poetry Teaching in English from Student's Questionnaire**

The students were asked to rate their degree of understanding/satisfaction by ticking according to statements on methods used in poetry teaching and learning to influence critical thinking. The scale used was: Strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), not sure (3), agree (4), and agree (5). The findings are reported in Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4: Methods Used in Poetry Teaching and Learning to Influence Critical Thinking**

	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>Std dev</b>
Teacher introduces poetry lessons and asks for previous knowledge	5.7%	3.2%	6.0%	41.0%	44.1%	4.2	1.1
Teacher usually explains poetry lessons and students only listen	9.2%	22.9%	9.5%	31.8%	26.6%	3.4	1.3
Teacher involves students in group discussion and monitors the group	14.9%	17.2%	14.0%	20.1%	33.8%	3.4	1.5
Teacher clarifies students doubt and gives details	7.4%	6.9%	24.4%	30.9%	30.4%	3.7	1.2
Students write their own poems	34.4%	35.2%	12.9%	9.7%	7.7%	2.2	1.2
Poems are usually turned into stories during poetry lessons	19.8%	25.5%	20.9%	17.2%	16.6%	2.9	1.4
Students dramatize poems to create more understanding	23.5%	23.5%	15.8%	16.3%	20.9%	2.9	1.5
Teacher asks questions that make students think well before answering	3.7%	6.0%	6.9%	33.0%	50.4%	4.2	1.1
Teacher uses graphics or pictures, videos and poetic audios in poetry class	46.1%	21.5%	8.3%	11.2%	12.9%	2.2	1.5
The class spends time in analyzing poetry to understand author's purpose	12.0%	10.3%	16.3%	30.7%	30.7%	3.6	1.3

According to the findings, students agreed that teacher introduces poetry lessons and asks for previous knowledge (mean=4.2, deviation=1.1), teacher clarifies students doubt and gives details (mean=3.7, deviation=1.2), teacher asks questions that make students think well before answering (mean=4.2, deviation=1.1), and, however, the class do not spend time in analyzing poetry to understand author's purpose because of limited instructional time (mean=3.6, deviation=1.3). The findings imply that students acknowledged the teachers use different methods in poetry teaching and learning. This is expected to likely enhance students' critical thinking. The results are consistent with (Alagumalai, 2019) that effective poetry teaching would result to CT and better learning.

### 4.4.3 Findings on Methods of Poetry Teaching in English from Teachers' Interview

#### Schedule

The teachers were asked to explain the kind of methods used in teaching poetry to influence critical thinking. According to the findings, most teachers indicated questioning methods. Others noted recital, introducing the poem and what the poem is about.

When asked to indicate participatory approaches used in teaching poetry to influence critical thinking, most of the teachers reported asking questions and giving assignments. Further, the respondents indicated that curriculum has guidelines on teaching poetry to influence critical thinking. However, there are not many poems provided. Majority of teachers also noted that they do not use graphic organizers in teaching. According to the findings, there is lack of finance from the school. Teachers only use the pictures provided in the poem's books. The findings concur with those of Pokharel (2020) who established that most teachers do not use graphics or videos during poetry class.

The teachers were asked whether students were well versed with the methods used in poetry teaching to influence critical thinking.

**Table 4.5: Students versed with poetry teaching methods**

	Frequency
To a significant extent	6
To a moderate extent	3
Not at all	1
Total	10

According to the findings in Table 4.2, 6 of teachers revealed that students were well versed with the methods used in poetry teaching and learning to a significant extent, 3 to a moderate extent and 1 to not at all. This means 60% of students do not understand the methods used by teachers, probably because they do not consider poetry as one of their favorite subjects of study nor enjoy learning poetry. This could be due to the learning experiences that students are

exposed to by teachers during poetry lessons in class, which cannot influence CT. This study, therefore, agrees with Vygotsky (1978) social constructivism theory that the role of teachers in poetry teaching and learning in the social constructivist viewpoint is, teachers should be facilitators and students should equally be involved in mutual learning. This will make the learning experience in the classroom both subjective and objective which enable students to develop CT and understanding.

#### 4.5 Influence of Poetry Teaching on Critical Thinking

The study's second objective was to determine the influence of poetry teaching on critical thinking. The findings from observation checklist are presented in Table 4.6.

##### 4.5.1 Findings on Influence of Poetry Teaching on Critical Thinking from Observation

###### Checklist.

**Table 4.6: Statement on Poetry Teaching and Learning and their Influence on Critical Thinking.**

	No Count	%	Yes Count	%
Teacher shows interest in teaching poetry	0	0%	10	100%
The teacher uses many approaches while monitoring learning activities	1	10%	9	90%
The teacher tries to keep students working harmoniously	0	0%	10	100%
Stylistic approach	0	0%	10	100%
Effective questioning	2	20%	8	80%
Classroom discussion	9	90%	1	10%
Brainstorming	10	100%	0	0%
Group work	9	90%	1	10%
Students uttered behavior change- they show interest in poetry lessons: They enjoy participating in classroom activities.	10	100%	0	0%
Students ask questions	5	50%	2	20%
Students analyze poetic devices.	5	50%	2	20%
Students evaluate, analyze, and interpret texts	10	100%	0	0%
Face-to-face interaction between students with confidence	0	0%	10	100%
Students independently solve problems in poetry class	10	100%	0	0%
Students actively participate in poetry lessons	5	50%	5	50%
Ability to do class presentation or dramatize poems	2	20%	5	50%

Based on the observation checklist, the researcher observed that: teachers showed interest in teaching poetry, the teachers tried to keep students working harmoniously, teachers used effective questioning and face-to-face interaction between students with confidence. However, students less actively participate in poetry lessons, and they are not to do class presentation or dramatize poems because they lack interest in poetry lessons. The findings revealed that teachers utilized some methods of poetry teaching in English, and this is likely to positively influence students' critical thinking. The results agreed with the work of (Ó Riain, 2019) who found out that poetry conveys cultural value and improves teaching and learning of rudimentary language skills that influence CT. Similarly, Hanauer (2012) observed that in the teaching of poetry, metaphor serves as the most prominent connection to CT.

Additionally, the researcher observed that due to instructional time factor, there was limited use of classroom discussion, brainstorming, group work, analysis of poetic devices, students asking questions, students evaluating, analyzing, and interpreting texts and students independently solving problems in poetry class. The findings revealed that teachers do not utilize some methods of poetry teaching in English, and this is likely to negatively influence students' critical thinking.

#### **4.5.2 Findings on Influence of Poetry Teaching on Critical Thinking from Teachers'**

##### **Interview Schedule**

The participants were asked to explain how they view poetry teaching to influence critical thinking. The teachers noted that poetry is interesting and influences critical thinking. It is good in helping students independently solve problems. It shifts the minds of the learners. Further, it makes students to understand past and present issues in the society. The respondents also

noted that figurative language is hard to understand. The respondents explained that students including some teachers are not interested in poetry lessons.

#### 4.6 Teachers and Students' Attitudes towards Poetry

The study's third objective was to examine teachers and students' attitudes towards poetry. Results from teachers and students' questionnaires are presented in Table 4.7.

##### 4.6.1 Findings on Teachers and Students' Attitudes Towards Poetry from Teachers' Questionnaire

The teachers were asked to rate their level of understanding/satisfaction by ticking according to statements on attitude towards poetry teaching. The scale used was as follows: strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), not sure (3), agree (4), and strongly agree (5). The findings are shown in Table 4.7.

**Table 4.7: Statements on Attitude towards Poetry Teaching by Teachers**

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Std dev
I enjoy teaching poetry with participatory approaches that influence critical thinking	0%	0%	0%	20%	80%	4.8	0.4
Students show interest in learning poetry and participate actively.	0%	10%	10%	30%	10%	2.4	1.0
Poetry teaching is a hard task to integrate. Hence, I do not like to teach poetry.	70%	20%	10%	0%	0%	1.4	0.7
The curriculum has guidelines on how to teach poetry to influence critical thinking	40%	0%	10%	20%	30%	3.0	1.8
The curriculum guidelines are easy to follow during poetry lessons	10%	10%	10%	60%	10%	3.5	1.2
Poetry has helped teacher-student interactions and they always have an interest in teaching and learning poetry.	0%	50%	20%	30%	0%	2.8	0.9
Limited classroom time impedes poetry teaching and learning	10%	10%	0%	50%	30%	3.8	1.3

During poetry lessons, I don't like students evaluate and analyze poetic devices	80%	20%	0%	0%	0%	1.2	0.4
Group work and effective questioning do not influence critical thinking	40%	40%	0%	10%	10%	2.1	1.4
Poetic languages are hard to understand, confusing and difficult to teach.	20%	10%	20%	30%	20%	3.2	1.5

Findings in Table 4.7 revealed that teachers highly agreed that they enjoy teaching poetry with participatory approaches that influence critical thinking (mean=4.8, deviation=0.4), students do not show interest in learning poetry and participate actively (mean=1.2, deviation=1.2), the curriculum guidelines are easy to follow during poetry lessons (mean=3.5, deviation=1.2), and limited classroom time impedes poetry teaching and learning (mean=3.8, deviation=1.3). Further, teachers disagreed with the statements that poetry teaching is a hard task to integrate (mean=1.4, deviation=0.7), during poetry lessons, teachers do not like students evaluate and analyze poetic devices (mean=1.2, deviation=0.4), and group work and effective questioning do not influence critical thinking (mean=2.1, deviation=1.4). The results imply that some teachers had positive attitude towards poetry teaching and this is likely to enhance students' critical thinking. According to Liao (2018), poetry teaching is a challenging task even for teachers who appear to like poetry. Additionally, Timothy and Obiekezie (2019) study established mixed findings on teachers' attitudes towards poetry teaching.

#### **4.6.2 Findings on Teachers and Students' Attitudes Towards Poetry from Students' Questionnaire**

The students were asked to rate their level of understanding/satisfaction by ticking according to statements on attitude towards poetry teaching. The scale used was as follows: strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), not sure (3), agree (4), and strongly agree (5). The findings are shown in Table 4.8.

**Table 4.8: Statements on attitude towards poetry teaching by students**

	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>Std dev</b>
I do not like learning poetry	32.7%	34.4%	16.0%	8.9%	8.0%	2.3	1.2
It is difficult to understand poetry	26.4%	34.7%	14.6%	16.6%	7.7%	2.5	1.3
Teacher does not motivate students in learning poetry	43.6%	24.6%	12.3%	11.5%	8.0%	2.2	1.3
It is easy to write poems during poetry class	15.2%	13.8%	20.1%	30.4%	20.6%	3.3	1.3
Learning poetry will help develop my thinking to enable me solve problems	8.3%	6.0%	15.2%	26.6%	43.8%	3.9	1.3
I do not do well in poetry, even if I try	23.6%	28.4%	18.1%	18.7%	11.2%	2.7	1.3
Learning poetry is a waste of time	43.8%	27.5%	12.0%	7.2%	9.5%	2.1	1.3
I learn poetry to help develop my career	10.3%	14.0%	19.5%	25.2%	30.9%	3.5	1.3
I learn poetry to enable me pass examinations	7.4%	12.0%	13.2%	35.5%	31.8%	3.7	1.2
It is easy to understand figurative words in poetry	24.2%	15.9%	24.8%	18.2%	17.0%	2.9	1.4

Based on the findings in Table 4.8, students agreed that learning poetry will help develop their thinking to solve problems (mean=3.9, deviation=1.32), students learn poetry to help develop their careers (mean=3.5, deviation=1.3), and students learn poetry to pass examinations (mean=3.7, deviation=1.2). Further, students agreed with the statement that they do not like learning poetry (mean=2.2, deviation=1.3), it is difficult to understand poetry (mean=2.1, deviation=1.3), teacher does not motivate students in learning poetry (mean=2.3, deviation=1.2) and learning poetry is a waste of time (mean=2.5, deviation=1.3). The results imply that students have negative attitude towards poetry teaching and this is likely to affect their critical thinking. The findings are consistent with those of Danesh & Shirkhani (2015) who found that most students are not interested in learning poetry because of its hard-to-understand nature and methods chosen by teachers. Similarly, (Yanda, 2018) found out that learners' low scores in poetry in the KCSE English examinations was because of the negative attitudes students have towards poetry instruction.

### **4.6.3 Findings on Teachers and Students' Attitudes towards Poetry from Teachers' Interview Schedule**

The respondents were asked to state their likes and dislikes about poetry teaching to influence critical thinking. Based on the findings, the teachers noted that poetry digs deeper into culture and broaden the minds, makes students thinks outside of the box, helps students with pronunciation and setting aspects, and enhances students critical thinking. On the other hand, most students lack interest to learn poetry and students do not understand themes of poems and the opposite meanings of figurative languages.

The respondents revealed that students' attitudes towards poetry is poor. They do not like poetry. They face challenges in understanding figurative languages. They do not like analyzing poem and spending time in teaching poetry is like a waste of time because the students don't like to pay attention. Additionally, there are teachers who do not like poetry teaching. They sometime ask their colleagues who also teach English to help them teach poem during their class time. This is due to lack of interest and the figurative nature of the poem.

### **4.7 Discussion of Findings**

The first objective of the study was to establish the methods of poetry teaching in English. In figure 4.4, the findings indicate that majority of the teachers reported that they teach poetry using interactive class as well as explanations. The findings support Vygotsky (1978) social constructivism theory which focuses on leaner-centered classroom. The theory believes that cognitive functions are facilitated by social interactions and students need to involve in the similar. According to (Dhumal, 2020), teaching poetry using traditional teacher-centered is not helpful to develop students' CT.

The findings in table 4.1 reveal that only a few teachers use graphics or pictures, videos and poetic audios to teach poetry to influence CT. This may be ascribed to the unavailability of the requisite materials for teaching and learning. The findings of the study oppose to Vygotsky social constructivist theory which believes that cognitive functions are facilitated by social interactions and students need to involve in the similar. The use of graphics, video and poetic audio in the teaching and learning of poetry, facilitate social interactions, enable cognitive development and promote CT. However, the study is in support of Pokharel (2020) that teachers of English do not use graphics or videos during poetry class which is not helpful to influence students' CT.

On whether students analyze and interpret poetic devices as in table 4.3, the findings indicate that majority of students analyze and interpret poems to a moderate extent. This means, teachers use limited time for analysis of poetic devices, students asking questions, students evaluating, analyzing, interpreting texts and students independently solving problems in poetry class to influence CT. This could be the result of allocation of limited instructional time and the difficult nature of poetic devices. Thus, this study aligns with Egggen & Kauchak, (2012) findings that some teachers are not better placed in teaching new strategies and students do not understand figurative language in the teaching and learning of poetry.

In table 4.4, the findings showed that teachers do not have interest in making students work in group during poetry lessons in class and such will may not help learners develop CT. This could be attributed to students lack of interest in the subject and limited classroom time. The findings of the study do not align with Vygotsky's social constructivism theory which states that students develop problem-solving, enquiry, self-determination, and critical thinking skills through interacting in group. Nonetheless, the finding concur with Khatib (2011) that though teaching of poetry is challenging , teachers should be involved in discovery-based teaching

techniques, group work which provides an extensive process to promote CT. The study argued that there should be enough classroom time allocated and teachers should use hands-on activities or group discussion that encourages knowledge creation in poetry teaching and learning.

The findings in figure 4.5 of the study indicate that majority of teachers agreed that most students do not independently solve problems in poetry class. According to Vygotsky's constructivist theory, students can improve problem-solving abilities and critical thinking when teachers employ interactive learning via exploration and discovery-based teaching. As noted in Putri (2019) findings, problems- solving in teaching and learning poetry offers interesting activities that can improve student's CT and oral communication skills. The findings further revealed that problem-solving in poetry lesson depends on the text and the type of activities carried out by the teacher.

On teachers' question in figure 4.6 whether students turn poem into short stories, majority of teachers noted that to a less extent students turn poem into short stories during poetry lessons. This means secondary schools' English learners in Githunguri Sub-County do not turn poem into stories during poetry lessons. According to Alagumalai, (2019) effective poetry teaching and learning entail teachers involving students in activities including students turning poem into stories which would result to CT and better learning.

Findings in table 4.5 show that students agreed teachers introduce poetry lessons and asks for previous knowledge, teachers clarify students' doubt and gives details, teacher asks questions that make students think well before answering and, however, the class do not spend time in analyzing poetry to understand author's purpose because of limited instructional time. The

findings imply that students acknowledged the teachers use different methods in poetry teaching and learning. This is expected to likely enhance students' critical thinking. The study's results support Vygotsky's assertion that teachers should serve as a facilitator and that students should be encouraged to learn from one another on an equal basis. The results are consistent with (Alagumalai, 2019) that effective poetry teaching would result to CT and better learning.

The study's second objective was to determine the influence of poetry teaching on critical thinking. The findings from observation checklist in table 4.6 reveal that teachers showed interest in poetry teaching, teachers tried to keep students working harmoniously, teachers used effective questioning and face-to-face interaction between students with confidence. However, students not do actively participate in poetry lessons, and they do not do class presentation or dramatize poems because they lack interest in poetry lessons. The findings show that teachers utilized some methods of poetry teaching in English, and this is likely to positively influence students' critical thinking. The findings aligned with the work of (Ó Riain, 2019) who found out that poetry conveys cultural value and improves teaching and learning of rudimentary language skills that influence CT. Similarly, Hanauer (2012) observed that in the teaching of poetry, metaphor serves as the most prominent connection to CT. Additionally, the researcher observed that due to instructional time factor, there was limited use of classroom discussion, brainstorming, group work, analysis of poetic devices, students asking questions, students evaluating, analyzing, and interpreting texts and students independently solving problems in poetry class. The respondents also noted that figurative language is hard to understand. The respondents explained that students including some teachers are not interested in poetry lessons. The findings revealed that teachers do not utilize some methods of poetry teaching in English, and this is likely to negatively influence students' critical thinking. This contrasted with the social constructivism theory of Vygotsky (1978) which asserts that social contacts

help with cognitive processes, so students should take part in those interactions as well. According to the theory, students can develop abilities such as inquiry, self-determination, critical thinking, and problem-solving through the application of Vygotsky's theory of social constructivism

The third objective of the study was to examine teachers and students' attitudes towards poetry. Results from teachers and students revealed that teachers highly agreed that they enjoy teaching poetry with participatory approaches that influence critical thinking, students do not show interest in learning poetry and participate actively, the curriculum guidelines are easy to follow during poetry lessons, and limited classroom time impedes poetry teaching and learning. Further, teachers disagreed with the statements that poetry teaching is a hard task to integrate during poetry lessons, teachers do not like students evaluate and analyze poetic devices and group work and effective questioning do not influence critical thinking. The results imply that some teachers had positive attitude towards poetry teaching and this is likely to enhance students' critical thinking. According to Vygotsky social constructivist theory, the degree of motivation the teacher provides the learners, can enable them to create a good attitude towards poetry learning, is another important factor considering the nature of the student. Liao (2018) study's findings noted that poetry teaching has difficulties, even for teachers who seem to enjoy poetry.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The chapter provides a summary of the important findings, conclusions, and recommendations. The research aimed to establish the methods used in poetry teaching and learning and their influence on critical thinking among secondary schools' learners in Githunguri Sub-County, Kiambu County. In the study, a descriptive survey research design was used. Target population comprised of 1520 students and 76 English teachers. Questionnaires were used to obtain data. structured interviews and observation checklist. Descriptive and thematic analysis were used to analyze quantitative and qualitative data respectively.

#### **5.2 Summary of the Findings**

The findings of the study are summarized in accordance with the objectives.

##### **5.2.1 Methods of Poetry Teaching in English**

The study's first objective was to establish the methods of poetry teaching in English. The findings revealed that teachers majorly teach poetry using interactive class as well as explanations. Additionally, students do not independently solve problems in poetry class and do not turn poem into short stories during poetry lessons. The findings revealed that only 2 out of the 10 of teachers use graphics or pictures, videos and poetic audios to teach poetry to influence CT. Further majority of the students acknowledged the teachers use different methods in poetry teaching and learning. The findings revealed that teachers introduce poetry lessons and ask for previous knowledge, clarifies students doubt and gives details, asks questions that make students think well before

### **5.2.2 Influence of Poetry Teaching on Critical Thinking**

The second objective of the study was to determine the influence of poetry teaching on critical thinking. The findings indicated that teachers show interest in teaching poetry, keep students working harmoniously, there is effective questioning, there is face-to-face interaction between students with confidence, students less actively participate in poetry lessons, and students are not adequately able to do class presentation or dramatize poems. Additionally, the findings indicated that there is limited use of classroom discussion, brainstorming, group work, analysis of poetic devices, asking questions, evaluating, analyzing, and interpreting texts and students independently solving problems in poetry class. According to majority of the students, teachers utilized some methods of poetry teaching in English, and this is likely to positively influence students' critical thinking.

### **5.2.3 Teachers and Students' Attitudes towards Poetry**

The study's third objective was to examine teachers and students' attitudes towards poetry. The findings revealed that teachers enjoy teaching poetry with participatory approaches that influence critical thinking, students do not show interest in learning poetry and participate less actively, the curriculum guidelines are easy to follow during poetry lessons and limited classroom time impedes poetry teaching and learning. The results however revealed that some teachers had positive attitude towards poetry teaching and this is likely to enhance students' critical thinking. Further, the results indicated that poetry teaching is a hard task to integrate, teachers do not spend more time with students to evaluate and analyze poetic devices. Additionally, the findings also indicated that learning poetry will help develop students CT, students learn poetry to help develop their career and student learn poetry to pass examinations. Further, students do not like learning poetry, it is difficult to understand poetry, teachers do not motivate students in learning poetry and learning poetry is a waste of time. The results showed

that majority of the students have negative attitude towards poetry teaching and this is likely to affect their critical thinking.

THE conclusions should be in reference to each objective

### **5.3 Conclusion**

The study's first objective was to establish the methods of poetry teaching in English. The findings from teachers and students' questionnaires are presented below.

The findings in Figure 4.3 indicate that majority (75%) of teachers claimed that they teach poetry using interactive (interact) class while 25% used explanations and listening (list). According to (Dhumal, 2020), teaching poetry using traditional teacher-centered is not helpful to developing students' CT.

The respondents were asked to indicate how often they use graphics or pictures, videos and poetic audios to teach. The findings in Table 4.1 indicates that two teachers, graphics or pictures, videos and poetic audios to a significant extent, seven teachers, to a moderate extent and one teacher to a less extent. The findings of the study revealed that only 2 out of the 10 of teachers use graphics or pictures, videos and poetic audios to teach poetry to influence CT. This may be ascribed to the unavailability of the requisite materials for teaching and learning. The study is in support of Pokharel (2020) that teachers of English do not use graphics or videos during poetry class. The approach is not helpful in influencing students' CT.

- i. The study concluded on in investigating methods used in poetry teaching and learning to influence CT among public secondary school learners in Githunguri Sub-County that, teachers majorly do not use graphics- video, audios, pictures and posters in poetry teaching and learning. The study also concluded that most teachers use explanations and teacher centered methods in poetry teaching and learning.

- i. The study concluded on establishing the influence of poetry teaching on critical thinking that poetry teaching influences critical thinking of students. The study also concluded that there is limited use of classroom discussion, brainstorming, group work, analysis of poetic devices, asking questions, evaluating, analyzing, and interpreting texts and students are not able to independently solving problems in poetry class.
- ii. The study concluded on the attitudes of teachers and students towards poetry teaching and learning among learners that, students have negative attitudes towards poetry. In particular, most teachers do not enjoy teaching poetry and some of them do not use participatory approaches. Additionally, students do not show interest in learning poetry and participate less actively.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

The first objective of the study was to investigate methods used in poetry teaching and learning to influence CT among public secondary school learners in Githunguri Sub-County. The findings of the study showed that teachers use different methods to teach poetry. The study therefore recommends that teachers should continually use different methods in teaching poetry. Teachers should also encourage students to embrace different methods used in teaching poetry to influence CT.

The second objective of the study was to establish the influence of poetry teaching on critical thinking among public secondary school learners in Githunguri Sub-County. The study found that poetry teaching influences critical thinking of students. The study hence recommends that teachers should develop strategies for improving learners thinking towards poetry. Teachers should continue teaching poetry using different methods and this is likely to enhance students' critical thinking.

The third objective sought to find out teachers and students' attitudes towards poetry teaching and learning among public secondary school learners in Githunguri Sub-County. The study established that teachers have positive attitudes towards poetry, but students have negative attitudes towards the literary genre. Teachers should use the necessary materials to facilitate teaching and learning of poetry. Teachers should motivate students on importance of learning poetry.

### **5.5 Suggestions for Further Studies**

This study sought to establish the methods used in poetry teaching and learning and its influence on critical thinking among secondary schools' learners in Githunguri Sub-County, Kiambu County. The study relied on descriptive survey to collect data on the influence of methods used in poetry teaching and learning on students critical thinking. It is recommended that other studies should also conduct inferential statistics to determine the causal-effect relationship between methods used in poetry teaching and learning, and students critical thinking.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX I: INTRODUCTORY LETTER**

**Dear Respondent:**

This questionnaire is aimed at collecting information on poetry teaching and learning and its influence on critical thinking amongst secondary schools' English learners in Githunguri Sub-County. Information acquired through this procedure will only be used for search purposes and will be handled with care and confidence.

Therefore, kindly answer all the questions as instructed.

Thank you.

## APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

### INSTRUCTIONS

Please tick (✓) against the suitable response.

1. Kindly state your sex.  
 Male  Female
2. Your education level is:  
 Degree  Masters  
 PhD  Other
3. How long you have taught English in your present institution?  
 Less than 5 years  6 to 10 years  
 16 to 20 years  over 20 years  
 11 to 15 years

### SECTION A: METHODS USED BY TEACHERS IN POETRY TEACHING AND LEARNING TO INFLUENCE CRITICAL THINKING.

1. Do you teach poetry?  
Yes ( ) No ( )
2. If yes, indicate how you do teach poetry to influence critical thinking.
  - a. Interactive class
  - b. Explain, students listen
  - c. Students write poems
  - d. Any other

---

---

3. Why do you use such method(s)?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_

4. Do you use graphic organizer to teach poetry?

Yes ( ) No ( )

5. If yes, how often?

6. To a significant extent ( )      iii) To a less extent ( )

7. ii) To a lesser extent ( )      iv) Not at all ( )

a) Give reasons for answer above.

- 
- b) \_\_\_\_\_
- c) \_\_\_\_\_

8. Are students well versed with the methods you used in poetry teaching to influence critical thinking?

i) To a significant extent ( )      iii) To a less extent ( )

ii) To a lesser extent ( )      iv) Not at all ( )

a) Give reasons for your answer above.

- 
- b) \_\_\_\_\_
- c) \_\_\_\_\_

9. Do you like teaching poetry

Yes ( ) No ( )

a) Give reasons for your answer

b) \_\_\_\_\_

10. Do you face challenges while teaching poetry?

Yes ( ) No ( )

11. If yes, what are those challenges?

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_

### SECTION C: TEACHERS ATTITUDE TOWARDS POETRY.

12. Is there a positive attitude among teachers relating to poetry teaching in the English language?

i. To a significant extent ( )

iii) To a less extent ( )

ii. To a lesser extent ( )

iv) Not at all ( )

a) Give reasons for your answer above

b) \_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_\_\_

13. Rate your level of understanding/satisfaction by ticking according to the following statements on attitude towards poetry teaching.

14. *Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD).*

	Description	SA	A	D	SD
1	I enjoy teaching poetry with participatory approaches that influence critical thinking				
2	Students show interest in learning poetry and participate actively.				
3	Poetry teaching is a hard task to integrate. Hence, I do not teach poetry.				
4	The curriculum has guidelines on how to teach poetry to influence critical thinking				
5	The guidelines are easy to follow during all English lessons.				
6	Poetry has helped teacher-student interactions and they always have an interest in teaching and learning poetry.				
7	Limited classroom time impedes poetry teaching and learning				
8	During poetry lessons, students evaluate and analyze poetic devices				
9	Group work and effective questioning do not influence critical				
10	Poetic languages are hard to understand, confusing and difficult to teach.				

15. How do you view students' attitudes towards poetry learning and their participation in poetry lessons?

i) Satisfactory ( )

iii) Not satisfactory ( )

ii) fair ( )

iv) Poor ( )

a) Give a reason for your answer above:

\_\_\_\_\_

a) \_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_\_\_

15. How will you rate poetry teaching and learning in helping influence students' critical thinking?

i) Satisfactory ( )

iii) Not satisfactory ( )

ii) fair ( )

iv) Poor ( )

a) Provide reasons for your answer above:

\_\_\_\_\_

b) \_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_\_\_

16. Suggest strategies you think could be employed to ensure poetry teaching is effectively carried out to promote students' critical thinking.

a) \_\_\_\_\_

b) \_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX III: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS**

1. Please explain the kind of methods used in teaching poetry to influence critical thinking.?

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

2. Please indicate participatory approaches used in teaching poetry to influence critical thinking.

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

3. Are students were well versed with the methods used in poetry teaching to influence critical thinking?

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

4. How do you view poetry teaching to influence critical thinking?

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

5. Kindly state your likes and dislikes about poetry teaching to influence critical thinking.

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

## APPENDIX IV: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

### INSTRUCTIONS

Please tick (  ) against the appropriate response in the given space.

1. Indicate your sex. (  ) Male (  ) Female

### SECTION A: METHODS USED BY TEACHERS IN POETRY TEACHING AND LEARNING TO INFLUENCE CRITICAL THINKING.

Rate your level of understanding/satisfaction by ticking according to the following statements on methods used in poetry teaching and learning.

*Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD).*

	Category	SA	A	D	SD
1	Teacher introduces poetry lessons and asks for previous knowledge				
2	Teacher usually explains poetry lessons while the class pays attention only				
3	Involves students in group discussion and monitors the group				
4	Teacher clarifies students doubt and gives details				
5	Students write their own poems				
6	Poems are usually turned into stories during poetry lessons				
7	Students dramatize poems to create more understanding				
8	Teacher asks questions that make students think well before answering				
9	Teacher uses graphics or pictures, videos and poetic audios in poetry class				
10	The class spends time in analyzing poetry to understand author's purpose				

### SECTION C: STUDENTS ATTITUDE TOWARDS POETRY.

9. Rate your level of understanding/satisfaction by ticking according to the following statements on attitude towards poetry teaching.







*Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD).*

	Category	SA	A	D	SD
1	I do not like learning poetry				
2	It is difficult to understand poetry				
3	Teacher does not motivate students in learning poetry				
4	It is easy to write poems during poetry class				
5	Learning poetry will help develop my thinking to enable me solve problems				
6	I do not do well in poetry, even if I try				
7	Learning poetry is a waste of time				
8	I learn poetry to help develop my career				
9	I learn poetry to enable me pass examinations				
10	It is easy to understand figurative words in poetry				

### APPENDIX V: OBSERVATION GUIDE

	<b>Descriptive statement on poetry teaching and learning and their influence on critical thinking</b>	Yes	No	Comments
1	Teacher shows interest in teaching poetry			
2	The teacher uses many approaches while monitoring learning activities			
	The teacher tries to keep students working harmoniously			
	Stylistic approach			
	Effective questioning			
	Classroom discussion			
	Brainstorming			
	Group work			
2	Students uttered behavior change- they show interest in poetry lessons: They enjoy participating in classroom activities.			
	Students ask questions			
	Students analyze poetic devices.			
	Students evaluate, analyze, and interpret texts			
	Face-to-face interaction between students with confidence			
	Students independently solve problems in poetry class			
	Students actively participate in poetry lessons			
	Ability to do class presentation or dramatize poems			
3.	Classroom associated			
	Teacher's training related			
	Resource- linked			
	School-related			
	Students - related			

**APPENDIX:**

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APPENDIX VI



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Telephone: Nairobi 3318581  
FAX. NO: 254-2-214287  
Email: ps@education.go.ke  
Web: [www.education.go.ke](http://www.education.go.ke)  
When replying, please quote

JOGOO HOUSE "B"  
HARAMBEE AVENUE  
P.O. BOX 30040  
NAIROBI

Ref. No: MOE.HQS/3/6/85 Vol. II (64)

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> April, 2023

Freeman M. Dorker  
C/O. Ed. Comm. Tech  
Kenyatta University  
P.O. Box 43844-00100  
NAIROBI

**RE: AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT DATA COLLECTION FOR RESEARCH  
STUDY IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN KIAMBU COUNTY**

Reference is made to your application dated 30<sup>th</sup> March, 2023 over the above-mentioned subject.

Your request to collect data for research by interacting with teachers and students in public schools in Githunguri Sub-County, in Kiambu County, is hereby granted on condition that the exercise will be carried out professionally.

A report on the exercise will be required on completion.

Evelyne Owoko  
For: PRINCIPAL SECRETARY

Copy to: County Director of Education: - Kiambu

**APPENDIX:**



**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**  
**State Department of Early Learning and Basic Education**

Telephone: Kiambu (office) 0768 970412

Email: [directoreducationkiambu@yahoo.com](mailto:directoreducationkiambu@yahoo.com)  
When replying please quote

KBU/CDE/DEPT/ 8/VOL.II

COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION  
KIAMBU COUNTY  
P. O. Box 2300  
KIAMBU

12<sup>th</sup> April, 2023



Freeman M. Dorker  
Kenyatta University  
P.O Box 43844-00100  
NAIROBI - KENYA

**RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION**

Reference is made to NACOSTI letter NACOSTI/P/23/24217 dated 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2023.

You have been authorized to research on “**Poetry teaching and learning and its influence on critical thinking among secondary school learners in Kiambu County, Kenya**” for a period ending 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2024.

Please accord him the necessary assistance. You are requested to share with us a copy of your research findings when you conclude your research.

  
  
**EMILY NYAGA**  
For: COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION  
KIAMBU COUNTY

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*MY EDUCATION, MY FUTURE*

*MY EDUCATION, MY FUTURE*

**APPENDIX:**



**KENYATTA UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL**

E-mail: [dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke](mailto:dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke)

P.O. Box 43844, 00100

Website: [www.ku.ac.ke](http://www.ku.ac.ke)

NAIROBI, KENYA  
Tel. 020-8704150

**Our Ref:** E55F/21803/2020

**DATE:** 15<sup>th</sup> February 2023

Director General,  
National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation  
P.O. Box 30623-00100  
**NAIROBI**

Dear Sir/Madam,


**RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION FOR MR. FREEMAN M. DORKER – REG.  
NO. E55F/21803/2020**

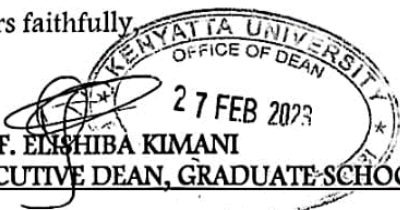
I write to introduce Mr. Freeman M. Dorker who is a Postgraduate Student of this University. He is registered for M.Ed. degree programme in the Department of Educational Communication and Technology.

Mr. Freeman M. Dorker intends to conduct research for a M.Ed. Thesis Proposal entitled, “Poetry Teaching and Learning and Its Influence on Critical Thinking Among Secondary Learners in Kiambu County, Kenya.”

Any assistance given will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

  
**PROF. ELISHIBA KIMANI**  
**EXECUTIVE DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL**



MM/2023