

**FACTORS THAT AFFECT STUDENTS PERFORMANCE
IN ENGLISH IN SOME SELECTED SECONDARY
SCHOOL IN SIAYA DISTRICT.**

BY

SYLVESTER HANNINGTON WAUYE

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Wauye, Sylvester
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DECLARATION:

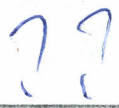
This project is my original work and has not been presented for degree in any other University.

Signed: 

SYLVESTER H. WAUYE.

1/10/2004
DATE

This project has been submitted with my approval as University Supervisor.

Signed: 

Dr. Sammy Tumuti
Senior Lecturer
Department of Educational Psychology
Kenya University

??
DATE

DEDICATIONS

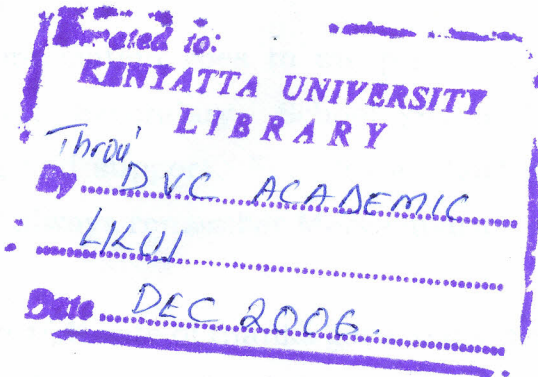
This project is dedicated to the following personalities who have made immense contribution to my life.

To my parents, Frederick A.Wauye and Crescentia A.Wauye

To the parents of my wife and my sisters-in-law Janet and Nancy.

To my supervisor, Dr. Sammy Tumuti.

To my dear wife, Jenipher H. Wauye, my two loving daughters Sandra and Gabriella and the yet to be born child, for all their devotion, love and encouragement.



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May the Love, Mercy and Grace of God be with you all.

ABSTRACT

Stratified random sampling was used to select the schools that were involved in the study to delineate factors that affect the performance of students in English in some selected secondary school within Siaya District.

One hundred and five students and three teachers were utilized for the study. The population sample was derived from the three secondary schools categorized into high, average and low performing. The teachers were purposively selected while the classes from which the students participated was done through simple random sampling technique.

A teacher questionnaire containing twenty one items (21 items) a student a questionnaire containing twenty five items (25 items) and a student attitude scale containing twenty items (20 items) were used to elicit the needed data.

The data was coded and then analysed by a computer package known as EXCELL to generate frequencies, percentages and means.

The findings of the study showed that lack of teacher effectiveness is a factor in students not performing well in English.

Contrary to the expectations of the study, the data revealed that teachers had professional competence in their work.

The students tended to believe that there was lack of parental support in their bid to be competent in English language.

It was recommended that teachers try to strike a rapport with students in class for effective content delivery.

It was also recommended that parents should try to buy the necessary reading materials and offer a conducive atmosphere for language learning.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Rationale/Background to the problem

English is an international language. As a medium of international communication its usage is quite widespread in terms of the number of people who speak it and the geographical spread of its speakers. There are also a large number of non-native speakers who use it for part of their international contact.

The predominant use of English is mainly the result of British Imperialism in the 19th Century and the economic influence of United States of America in the 20th Century. The combination of British and American political influence and technological superiority over the years has given English an advantage over other major languages such as French and Spanish (Brumfit 1985).

British and American imperialism has made sure that in many parts of Africa such as Nigeria, South Africa and Uganda. English is the language for commercial, administrative and educational Institutions. In educational institutions, the language of instruction in both primary and secondary schools in many parts of Africa is English. This is also the case with Kenya where the use of Kenyan languages in schools has diminished.

The reasons being that they are neither literate nor international. The ideas and civilizations of the west and east can also not be learnt through African Languages (Kenya Languages) because they are simply too many (41 Languages) (McGregor 1971)

In Kenya, English is learnt as a second language. There are already sufficient motives for this.

- a) It enhances ones self-esteem as an-educated individual.
- b) It is an International Language.
- c) English is the official Language and also the medium of introduction in schools.

The use of English Language therefore becomes an integral part of our educational curriculum. It is the one language through which we can relate regionally and internationally. Professor Okombo a linguist at the University of Nairobi puts it thus: "Human learn Language going by the Language forces. That is why English is snow balling across the world. Its market force in this age and time is great." (Daily Nation, 31st May 2002, pg. 8).

As already stated above, English is the Language of official institutions such as the Law courts local and central government. It is the language of the mass media, commercial and industrial

organizations. A good command of English as a second language is the passport of social and economic advancement. It is perhaps with this in mind that the Report of the National Committee on Education Objectives and Policies, (1976) made certain recommendations concerning the teaching of Languages. The recommendations were as follows:

To use as a Language of instruction the predominant language spoken in the schools catchment area for the first three years of primary Education (and) to introduce English as a subject from primary 1 and make it supercede the predominant Local Language as the medium of instruction in primary 4 (p.54,55)

Similar sentiments were echoed by the Koech Report (1999). Children would be taught in their mother tongue in rural areas to enhance concept formation and articulation in communication from primary 1 to 3. From primary 4-7, English and Kiswahili would remain the medium of instruction.

The teacher is a very important factor in Learning a Language mainly because he or she finds himself or herself responsible for teaching it to students. In spite of this, the commission of Enquiry into the Educating System of Kenya (1999) observed that teacher trainees absorbed into primary teacher colleges were enrolled with as low as grade D+. This meant that they had failed in most subjects they took at form IV level, including English. Further after graduation, they were

expected to teach 14 subjects in primary schools. At diploma and graduate level they were either trained to teach English Language or literature in English.

Having joined the teaching profession, teachers found themselves face to face with the realities of the profession such as an overloaded curriculum. When the Ministry of Education recommended the integration of English language and literature into one subject, more demand was put on the teacher in terms of syllabus coverage. Following the merger of these subjects, it meant that the subject had to be taught by one teacher who had to have sufficient appreciation of Literature of Kenya, Africa and the rest of the world. Teachers who found themselves unable to teach one of the two put more, emphasize on what they knew best. This made the subject unmanageable for both teachers and students.

The above scenario being the case, points to the fact that these teachers did not have what Bennet (1976) calls "desirable professional attributes". These attributes are listed as: hardwork, positive attitude towards the subject of specialization and positive teacher self-esteem.

Derville (1966) points out that a child's progress in school is influenced by attitudes towards the subject he or she is expected to learn. Attitudes towards a subject depend upon the

experiences associated with it. A child could still hold positive attitudes to a subject and not perform well in it due to various reasons.

McGregor (1971) borrows from Frenchman, Montayne, who said 4000 years ago that to learn a language, one must use it. This applies to learning a second language in the same sense that its usage entails listening and speaking it. McGregor believes that some of the attitudes students acquire, towards English begin at the primary school level. When teachers talk nearly all the time and students work is to listen, the students loose interest in the purpose of education and in the subject. An expert teacher who has knowledge of the subject, who knows its structures and challenges, who is able to understand how the subject works, may help the students surmount many difficulties associated with English language. As a consequence, the learner may be able to acquire knowledge with it, grasp it and solve new problems with it (Turney, 1974)

During the early secondary school years students carry with them negative attitudes towards English. They also carry with them numerous faults which the secondary school teacher needs to work hard at remedying, (McGregor, 1971). Therefore at the secondary school level, the teacher of English needs to develop new attitudes and correct many faults carried forward

from primary schools. McGregor says, "A good teacher of English must show his pupils from the very first day of their course, that they can succeed in learning English as a second language really well" (p. 10)

Apart from the child's attitude, there is the aspect of motivation. Charlot (1990) believes that one of the most important characteristics in students or pupils learning a second language is motivation. Steinberg (1982) also stresses the same point when he avers that in learning a second language, motivation is an even more important factor when learning is taking place in a formal setting such as a school classroom. In the classroom the student has an element of choice involved in attending the class listening, to the teacher participating in activities and doing assignments. McLelland (1953) points out that a necessary ingredient for excelling in what we do is the motivation for achievement. Our achievement motivation is influenced by such factors as the culture we live in, the models we are exposed to and the standards for excellence.

1.1 Conclusion

It is therefore worth concluding that English Language has become a core part of our educational curriculum and a medium of communication at various forums. The more we know how to

use it the better it is for us in terms of knowledge acquisition, and in terms of how we relate to others.

1.2 Statement of the problem:

A review of Literature on factors that affect students performance in English shows that little effort has been expended towards unraveling the reasons why students continue to perform dismally in the subject nationwide.

The Daily Nation (January 7, 2002) reported that majority of students had failed) in English Language. It further revealed that most students were unable to write good sentences, had inferences in “sheng” and poor reading habits. Similarly according to the results released by the Provincial Director of Education (2002), Siaya District had an average mean score of 4.992, in English. This translates to a mean grade of C-. Evidently, both nationally and within Siaya District students had not performed well in English language.

There are various factors that could have led to this poor performance. The aim of the study was to find out what factors lead to poor performance in English Language in some selected secondary schools in Siaya District.

1.3 Research Questions:

The following Research Questions were generated:

- i) What are the teacher factors that affect students performance in English as a subject?
- ii) What are the student factors that affect students performance in English as a subject?
- iii) What are the home factors that affect the students performance in English as a subject?

1.4 Objectives:

The objectives of the research are as follows:

- i) To find out the teacher factors that affect the students' performance in English as a subject.
- ii) To find out the student factors that affect the students' performance in English as a subject
- iii) To find out the home factors that affect the students performance in English as a subject.

The researcher intended to use form IV students because being a final year class in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE), it would help bring out such factors as attitudes clearly given that attitudes are learned through experience and are enduring. (McGuire, 1969)

1.5 Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study covered three schools. There are a total of 59 schools that seat for Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education in Siaya. The researcher was aware that the schools chosen were not a representative sample because constraints of time and resources were limiting a factor to the study.

There are also numerous variables that affect performance in English Language but the researcher chose to concentrate on the three variables because he felt they merited being researched on.

To infer attitude or motivation directly is not possible. The researcher sought to capture them through students' responses to questionnaires and attitude scales. Although a majority of students are believed to have been honest, there might have been a lack of seriousness with a few cases. It is hoped that most answers to the instruments were honest.

1.6 The Significance of the Research:

Tibble (1963) has much to say concerning the role of educational psychology. Teachers and other stakeholders in the field of education are also agreed that educational psychology is important and indispensable in modifying educational thought and practice. The successful practice of the art of teaching to

quote from Tibble (1963) is dependent upon; "An understanding of childhood, of difficulties and failures and achievements of children in learning, of the fundamentals of human motivation and of the conditions under which adults and children can most successfully cooperate". (p. 135).

In view of the fact that this research is concerned with the study of factors that affect student performance in English language ; it is hoped that it will have a direct bearing on learning situation in the classroom. It will enable teachers modify their methods of teaching and incorporate more and more the use of incentives and rewards to motivate students. This may go a long way in changing students attitudes in English.

The results of this study will be of benefit to parents. By their actions, they may improve the performance of their children in English Language. Such actions will involve provision of various English tests other than the prescribed texts. Although this is by no means a large scale research its findings will still be of relevance to as mentioned above, various stakeholders in the field of education.

1.7 Definition of terms:

- Attitude:** A feeling or response in a positive or negative way such as like or dislike to a subject.
- Performance:** The scores or marks that a student attains in Pre-mock English Examinations in this study..
- Integrative Motivation:** Learning a second Language so as to identify with another group.
- Instrumental Motivation:** Learning a second language to gain social recognition and economic advantages.
- Sheng:** A hybrid speech variety spoken by Kenyans. It has the grammatical framework of kiswahili and an assortment of words from mainly English and other languages.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

In looking at factors that affect students performance' in English languages, the following issues merit being given due consideration in this chapter.

- i) Theoretical framework of language acquisition
- ii) Literature related to teacher factors that affect performance in English language.
- iii) Literature related to student factors that affect performance in English language.
- iv) Literature related to home environment factors that affect students performance in English language.

2.1 Theoretical framework of Language acquisition:

There are many definitions of language by various authors and scholars. However, the one by Kenrick and Seaman (1972) will suffice. They define language as "a system of gestures, sounds or written symbols that embodies units of meaning

(words) arranged according to set rules (grammar) for purposes of communication” (p. 253)

Symbols are the spoken and written words that represent objects, events or ideas. Examples of such symbols are; lamp, doll or mama. Hocket (1960) postulates that languages are productive, structured and generative. By productive he means that there is no limit to the number of sentences one can generate. For instance, when we speak, express ourselves or write, we do it in new ways all the time. By structured, he means that language has rules of grammar (syntax). For example, mature language users while speaking or writing, have to form or construct acceptable and meaningful sentences. To say that language is referential means that in language usage, there is a relationship between words and their meanings. The words “babble” and “quack” in the sentences “the babbling of a brook” and “the quack of a duck” are words that sound like the things they refer to.

Some psychologists and linguists have proposed certain theories that throw some light into how children manage to acquire language. The Nativist, the Behaviourist and the Interactionist approaches that will be dealt with below are quite illuminating.

2.2 The Nativist Approach:

Naom Chomsky (1968, 1975) is a leading protagonist of this view. The Nativists espouse the idea that children are born “pre-wired” to learn language. They believe that children possess a type of language Acquisition Device (LAD) that needs only minimal exposure to adult speech to unlock its potential. The LAD enables the child to analyze language and unconsciously extract the basic rules of grammar. To lend credence to this view, Chomsky points out that children all over the world go through stages in language development at about the same age and in a pattern that parallels that of motor development. He also cites the fact that babbling of babies is the same in all cultures and that deaf children babble just like hearing children. Chomsky stresses that language is unique to humans.

In support of Chomsky’s ideas, Hayes and Hayes (1951) did a research in which they put in six years of hard work to train a chimp named Viki how to talk. After the six years, Viki only managed to say a grand total of three words, that is “mama”, “papa” and “cup”. They concluded that chimps did not have the appropriate vocal apparatus to acquire human language.

Lennebergh (1967) and McNeill (1966) also believe that only humans have an innate capacity for language acquisition. In one of their researches, they concluded that almost all human beings

acquire language irrespective of I.Q. Lennebergh's (1967) research with down's syndrome children suggested that while the rate of both motor and language development is slower in down's syndrome children, there is a very similar correlation between motor and language development for all children. This research also seemed to suggest that to some extent language acquisition is a matter of maturation. The years before puberty are regarded by Lenneberg as critical for language development such that the so called "wild" children (those thought to have been brought up by wild animals) who have passed the critical period before having contact with humans, do not acquire language.

Critics of the nativist theory question the existence of the language Acquisition Devise (LAD). They wonder where it resides in the human mind and what it is. This theory also seems to suggest that the environment is inadequate for learning language. It ignores the fact that parents modify and simplify their language to structure the language input for their children. It also ignores the fact that language has a social function and that it is not just about learning structures or rules (Bruner, 1983).

2.3 The Behaviourist Approach:

The behaviourists are sometimes referred to as the Naturists or learning theorists. A leading exponent of this theory

is B.F. Skinner (1957). In his book "Verbal Behaviour", he argues that children learn language through imitation, reinforcement and other established principles of conditioning. Through a complex system of rewards, punishments and imitations children learn language.

Any vocalization attempts from young infants is rewarded with smiles and encouragement. For example, when a child babbles, "mama" or "baba" the proud parents are even more enthusiastic in their response. In the early stages of learning a child needs to be reinforced. A child not so reinforced would theoretically not learn, (Mowrer 1960). The parent is usually the conditioning agent who reinforces the infants natural babbling, especially sounds which resemble words of adult language, and gradually become willing to accept only progressively better approximations to adult language. By controlling reinforcement, parents encourage their children to learn the correct meanings and pronunciations. When children grow older, parents insist on closer and closer approximations, of for instance, the word "water", before supply it.

Mowrer (1960) posits that as a child grows older he or she will become habituated to the use of language, perhaps recognizing its utility as a means of gaining control over his environment.

Critics of the behaviourist approach invoke some salient limitations of this theory. They contend that infants cannot possibly be reinforced for every utterance they make. How do the infants learn to make utterances they have never heard before? Further, they state that more observation of parent-child language interaction indicates that parents pay more attention to the child's message more than the correct responses.

2.4 The Interactionist Approach:

There are various camps of Interactionists. Piaget (1935), Meltzoff and Gopnik (1989) belong to one camp known as the cognitive theorists.

The Cognitive theorists assert that language development is simply, an aspect of more general cognitive development. To them, language acquisition is tied to children's thinking, which depends on maturation and experience.

According to Piaget (1935), a child passes through a number of fixed developmental stages. Each stage is characterized by certain types of cognitive organization and behaviour both linguistic and non-linguistic. Language develops along with a child's capacity for logical thought, judgment and reasoning. These capacities are reflected at each stage.

Developmental progress is thus caused by a combination of heredity, growth, and experience.

The interactionist's see language as a medium of representation, which is influenced throughout the child's growth by his or her overall capacities for thought, logic his/her perception of the environment, and other people in it. Language and thought reflect each other. Attainment of rational and logical thought and of adult language ability are parts of the same development process.

The other camp or mould of interactionists is known as the social communication theorists. Bohannon, Warren Leuberker (1989) and Farrar (1990) belong to this group. They emphasize the functional value of interpersonal communication and the social context in which language evolves.

One of their contention is that Language development is modulated to some extent by mature language users and the feedback they provide. They point out that adults in most cultures intentionally try to foster language acquisition by adopting the speech for young children. Parents use short well formed sentences, simplified vocabulary, high pitched and exaggerated intonation while speaking slowly, enunciating carefully, and pausing between ideas. This is dubbed

“motherese”. This contributes to children’s language development (Fernald, 1991).

Like nativists, the interactionists also believe that the human organism is biologically well equipped for language learning. On the other hand, they concur with behaviourists that verbal exchanges with parents and other people play a critical role in moulding language skills.

The above three mentioned theories play an important role in helping Language experts in formulating appropriate curricula for language teachers and learners.

2.5 Literature related to Teacher factors that affect performance in English Language

According to McGregor (1971), learning English as a second language is not the same kind of experience as learning a first language. However, the teachers’ job is to make the learning of English as a second language more or less the same as that of learning a first language. McGregor believes that the first year of secondary school life is very important. It is during this period that faults carried forward from primary school are remedied. At the same time, new and positive attitudes towards the learning of English are developed. Relaxed and purposeful atmosphere in which pupils can develop new attitudes of enjoyment and

enthusiasm towards the study and use of English must be formed. If pupils enjoy something, they tend to want to go on with it. If pupils are helped to enjoy, understand, speak, read and write English then they will go on practicing the skill for the rest of their lives.

According to learning theorists, attitudes are acquired in the same manner as other types of behaviour. We learn attitudes from being exposed to similar views on the part of others (social learning). Attitudes are also learnt from being rewarded for expressing those attitudes (operant conditioning). When associations between attitude objects and positive and negative emotions are made, attitudes develop (classical conditioning)

A number of researches have shown that attitudes towards the second language are based on learners experiences with the language. Derville (1966) states that if the learning experience is associated with success, then the student will have a positive attitude to the subject. Caroline Stern (1967) observes that attitudes towards a second language can be an intrinsic motivation depending on the child's views on the advantages found in learning the language. As such, success in learning a language has some influence on the pupil's attitude towards the language

Morrel (1968) points out that the relationship between the teacher and student should be productive for continued learning to take place. Teachers should have some understanding of the nature and purpose of a language and its relationship to society, if students or pupils are to be helped to develop their full potential as users of language. That potential whether in speech or writing is developed more by experience than by correction.

Rosenthal's (1970) research into the relationship between teacher and pupil suggests that a reasonably uncritical approach to pupils work may be beneficial to pupils. Thus, children who are frequently criticized by a teacher, especially if they are low in self-esteem, will lose confidence in their own ability and will tend in consequence to underachieve.

Teachers who believe in pressurizing children to come up to a certain standard could do more long term harm to the progress of a particularly vulnerable child than the teacher who is more inclined to let the child find its own level.

Fontana (1981) argues that teachers may be busy professionally to listen to inarticulate children or even plan various class activities that motivate learning. These kind of teachers antagonize children because they convey a lack of interest in students activities hence the child gives up trying to communicate.

Hergie (1978) found that some 40% to 60% of linguistic interactions between teachers and pupils appear to take the form of teacher questions. The teachers on average ask questions every 70 seconds or so. The great majority of these questions are of factual recall kind. Children are simply asked to give back to the teacher information in the precise form in which it was first offered to them. Approximately 40% of these questions are answered by the teachers. There are also a few questions that invite evaluative answers.

The overreliance on factual questions was noted to inhibit children's acquisition of linguistic skills hence children concluded that learning only requires memorization.

Brown (1973) reports that 40% of questions asked by his sample of children received irrelevant teacher replies. Barnes (1971) showed that many teachers used unfamiliar words hence children did not follow their meanings. For instance, when faced with the need to define an unfamiliar term to the class, many teachers did so using equally unfamiliar equivalent.

Research also indicates that successful teachers are also more likely to prepare their lessons well and to be interested in students (Bennet, 1976). Shunke (1990) observed that lack of proper planning of learning activities and lack of self confidence in the teacher could contribute to the teacher not putting in

more effort to help the student learn. Tan (1970) revealed that special training in language and the ability to speak well were necessary ingredients in a competent teacher.

Other studies of the effects of teacher experience on student learning have found a relationship between teachers' effectiveness and their years of experience but not always a significant one (Murnane and Phillips, 1981, Klitgaard and Hall, 1974). Many studies have established that inexperienced teachers (those with less than three years experience) are less effective than more senior teachers. Nevertheless, the benefits of experience appear to level off after about 5 years (Rosenhottz, 1986). This is explained by the fact that older teacher may grow tired of their jobs. However, veteran teachers who find themselves in settings that emphasize continued learning and collaboration continue to improve their performance (Rosenhottz, 1984).

Studies of teacher effects at the classroom level using the Tennessee value-Added Assessment System and a similar data base in Dallas, Texas, have found that a differential teacher effectiveness is a strong determinant of differences in student learning. (Sanders and Rivers, 1996; Wright, Horn and Sanders, 1997; Jordan, Mendro, and Weerasinghey 1997). Students who are assigned to several ineffective teachers in a row have

significantly lower achievements and gains in achievement than those who are assigned to several highly effective teachers in sequence (Sanders and Rivers, 1996). These studies did not, however, examine the characteristics or practices of more and less effective teachers.

In summary, teacher related factors would therefore seem to play an important role in what students learn.

2.6 Literature related to student factors that affect performance in English Language:

Motivation is among the most important characteristics in learning a second language in pupils (OMalley and Charlot, 1990). When learning is taking place in a situation such as the classroom, motivation is an essential element. The reason is that there is an element of choice involved in attending classes, listening to the teacher, participating in activities and doing assignments. Motivation is affected by the amount of attention and effort one devotes to learning (Steinberg, 1982).

Gardner and Lambert (1972) have identified two types of motivation. These are “integrative” and “Instrumental” motivation. In integrative motivation individuals learn language so as to identify with another group. On the other hand in instrumental motivation individual’s learn language to gain

social recognition and economic advantages that emanate from learning the second language.

Ellis (1988) observed that when language is learnt as a foreign language, instrumental motivation appears quite crucial, but when language is learnt as a second language integrative motivation portends more success.

To elucidate on the aspect of motivation further, Gardner (1985) notes that a motivated individual displays some goal directed activity and the individual also expends some energy. Hence, motivation involves four aspects; a goal, effort behaviour, a desire to attain the goal and favourable attitudes towards the activity in question.

Dunkel (1948), in his analysis of second language learning, made a distinction between the goal of the language study and the nature of the behaviour involved in achieving that goal. He distinguished between the kind of motivation and the intensity of motivation.

The kind of motivation refers to the degree of effort the individual expends to achieve a goal while the type of motivation refers to the reason why the individual is studying the language. It may be because the individual wants; to get a job, to improve his education, to travel, to please the parents or even to gain social power.

Therefore, when one learns language instrumentally, he or she needs it for operational purposes, that is, to be able to read books in the new language or to be able to communicate with speakers of that language. But when one tries to learn a language for integrative purposes, he or she is trying to identify much more closely with a community which uses that language variety.

The link between attitudes and human behaviour is not easily identifiable. However, attitudes can determine human behaviour (Peak 1955). Attitudes can direct people towards or against stimulus objects.

Young (1955) states that attitudes arouse behaviour. They regulate and organize behaviour. Attitudes express themselves towards classes of objects. The direction towards objects is the driving force behind behaviour. This arouses human activity such as liking and disliking, favouring and not favouring. In other words, attitudes towards certain objects influences choice of either of the objects. This determines the direction that behaviour will take, (Young 1973).

Tesser and Shaffer (1990) argue that "the primary purpose of holding an attitude is object appraisal, that is, making, evaluative judgments about an attitude object that will have clear behavioural implications" (P. 383). Thus researchers believe that

students attitude to language are of great importance because they influence the way students learn languages, dialects and written forms of language.

The above assertions therefore make the learning at English language important. In a second language situation English is the language of the mass media; newspapers, radio and television are largely English media. English is also the language of official institutions, of law courts, local and central government and education. It is also the language of large commercial and industrial organization. Clearly, a good command of English in a second language situation is the passport of social and economic advancement and the successful user of the appropriate variety of English identifies himself as a successful, integrated member of that language community. (Broughton, Brumfit, Flavel and Pincas, 1978:8).

2.7 Literature related to Home environment factors that affect students performance in English Language:

There are factors both in an out of class that affect pupils performance in tasks related to academics. The parents and other members of the family who know English and use it at home can help in enhancing the child's performance in Language (Jones 1950).

Davidson (1993) states that parents send signals to the children about the level of education they expect their children to reach. One such signal is the willingness of parents to finance schooling to the level they believe is sufficient to their children. Other parents go to the extent of hiring teachers to teach their children after school hours expecting their children's performance to improve. Sometimes it is the same teacher tutoring the pupils after school hours. Pupils performance in Language also seems to depend on availability of materials coupled with parental encouragement for their utilization.

Gardner (1968) distinguishes between two potential roles of parents. He identifies the active role. When parents encourage their children to do well, when they monitor their language learning performance and when they reinforce students successes, they are playing an active role. Other active roles are teaching additional words or phrases and commenting on some aspects of pronunciation. These activities influence children's acquisition of a second language.

The second role identified by Gardner (1968) is the passive role. Gardner argues that parents who have positive attitudes seem to support an integrative motive in the student. On the other hand, parents with negative attitudes inhibit the development of positive attitudes in second language learning.

Parents with negative attitudes can hardly encourage their children to do well in second language learning, can hardly monitor children's progress and are unlikely to reinforce children's success. Parental attitude could influence language learning context even when parents play supportive role. Milner (1981) states that;

parents undoubtedly do make explicit statements about their beliefs and attitude on a variety of social issues, and there is usually an implicit encouragement for the child to feel likewise. Second, attitudes development are not consciously taught but are implicit in what parents say or do (p. 124)

In the process of identifying with the parent children incorporate much of their value systems. Identification promotes the desire to emulate the parents, and to appear grown up, hence the final process is role learning (Milner 1981). As children mature they learn to behave, feel, and see the world in a manner similar to other persons occupying the same position (Second and Backman 1964).

Conclusively, the provision of a warm and supportive environment that encourages the child will have clear effect on language acquisition.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction:

This chapter discusses the research method that will be used in this research. It outlines the research design, describes the instrument, subjects in the study, procedure of administering the instruments and methods of data analysis that is used.

3.1 Research Design:

This research has utilized single element survey because the research only deals with factors affecting performance of English at Form IV level. Even then factors such as attitudes are learned through experience and are enduring (McGuire, 1969). From IV students, thus, have well formed attitudes.

3.2 Sample.

Stratified random sampling was used to select the schools. They were grouped in terms of high, medium and low achieving schools. There after, one school was picked from each group. This formed a total of three. They included: St. Mary's School Yala, Ambira Secondary School and Ukwala Secondary School.

The researcher used 105 boys. Their ages ranged from 17 to 22 years. To get the three streams, names of the streams were

written on pieces of paper folded and the assisting teacher from the school picked one piece of the folded paper. The stream that was picked was used for the study. These were form IV classes.

The researcher purposively picked 1 teacher from each school. The teachers to be picked were those who teach form IV students. They formed a total of 3 teachers that is, 2 males and 1 female teacher.

3.3 Research instruments:

Attitude Scale:

One of the instrument used for collecting data is a Likert 5 point attitude scale. Likert (1932) has each subject giving answers along a 5 point, scale; that is strongly agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree. This method was deemed suitable because it is easy to construct and students would find it easy to understand the items and respond to them. The scores in the scale is summed up and arranged to give individual overall attitude score. The results is then analyzed descriptively. Their responses are then correlated with scores in the subject to reveal their attitude towards the subject.

3.4 Preparation of the Attitude scale:

Each student responded to the attitude scale and indicated his answers by strongly agreeing, agreeing or by showing that he is undecided or is disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with each statement. A value is assigned to each statement; strongly agree-5, agree-4, undecided-3, disagree-2 and strongly disagree-1. For negative statements the above values are reversed .

The researcher prepared the attitude scale piloted it among 20 students, crosschecked with fellow colleagues before it was finally validated by the supervisor. The researcher administered the attitude scale to the students in the month of May/June. The results was analyzed descriptively.

3.5 Questionnaires:

The researcher prepared two sets of questionnaires; teacher and student questionnaires. These were then validated. This involved other colleagues going through the questionnaires. Modifications were done. Later the supervisor went through them and made his approval. With the help of a covering letter from the Institute of Continuing Education the researcher went to each school and administered the questionnaires with the help of the English teacher of each school. The questionnaires were

administered to each student and teacher selected for the interview between the months of May/June.

3.6 Analysis of Data:

The data was analysed mainly using descriptive statistics; the use of means, frequency distributions and percentages were employed while analyzing the questionnaires.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents results and statistical analysis of data collected from 105 boys and 3 teachers (2 males and 1 female) from three secondary schools in Siaya District.

The objectives that guided this study were:

- (i) To find out teacher based factors that affect students performance in English as a subject.
- (ii) To find out student based factors that affect students performance in English as a subject.
- (iii) To find out home based factors that affect students performance in English as a subject.

The data is presented mainly using descriptive statistics, tables, bar graphs and pie charts.

4.1 Teacher based factors that affect students performance in English language.

This study sought information from students on how often assignments were given, students views of teachers' comments, students rating of class teacher's attendance and student rating of their English teachers effectiveness. Teachers on the other

hand were asked to provide information on their personal characteristics; that is, academic qualifications, teaching experience, teaching load, teaching methods and availability of teaching resources. The data is summarized and presented in form of frequencies and percentages.

4.1.1 Frequency of giving assignments

Table 1 presents frequency of giving assignment

Table 1:
The frequency of giving assignments

	Overall (n=105)	
	<i>f</i>	%
Once a week	2	1.9
Once a fortnight	3	2.9
After topic completion	57	54.3
Once a term	9	8.6
Others	38	36.2

According to the results above, 54.3% of respondents observed that teachers usually gave assignments after completion of particular topics. Only 1.9% indicated that the teachers give assignment once a week.

4.1.2 Students rating on teachers comments on assignments

This study sought views from the students on the comments teachers gave on assignments. The result is presented in table 2.

Table 2:**Student view of teachers comments**

	Overall (n=105)	
	<i>f</i>	%
Very useful	73	69.5
Sometimes useful	31	29.5
Not useful	1	1.0

Results in table 2 reveals that 69.5% of students rated their teachers' comments as being very useful, 29.5% rate their teachers' comments as sometimes useful, while only 1% rated their teacher comments as not useful.

4.1.3 Students rating on class teachers attendance

The students were also asked to rate their class teachers attendance. This is summarized and presented in table 3.

Table 3:**Students rating of class teachers' attendance.**

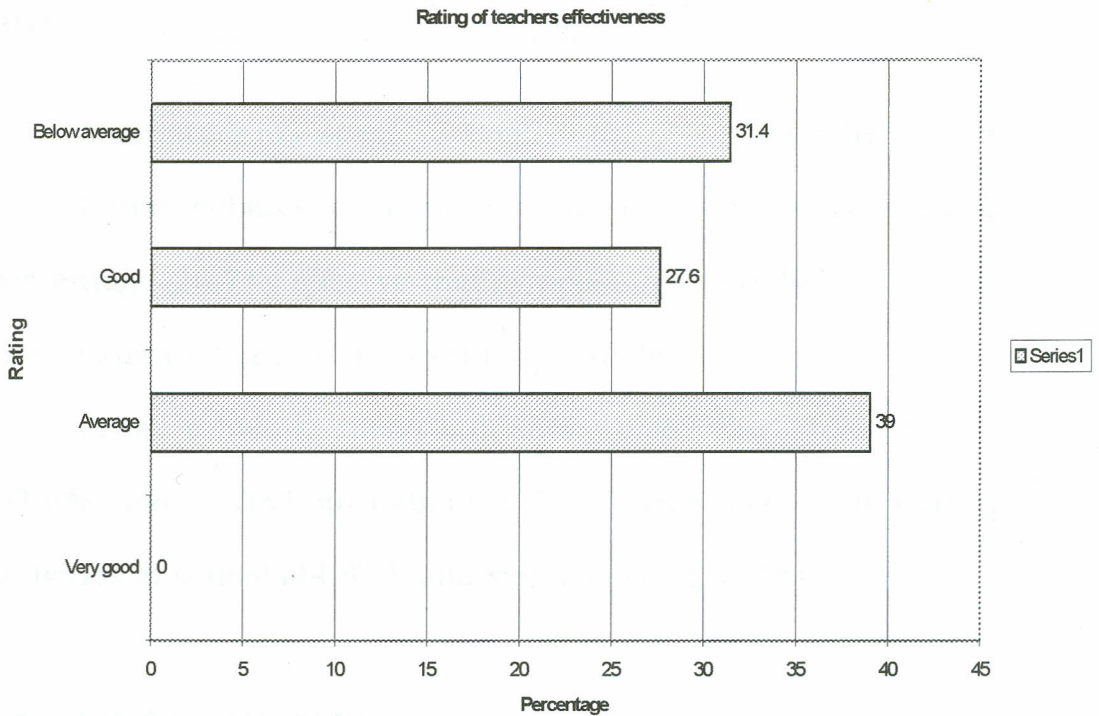
	Overall (n=105)	
	<i>f</i>	%
Very good	47	44.8
Average	27	25.7
Good	30	28.6
Below average	1	1.0

The results indicate that 44.8% of students rated the overall attendance of lessons by their class teacher as very good, 28.6% as good, 25.7% as averaged and only 1% as below average.

4.1.4 Student rating of their classteachers effectiveness in class

Students were asked to rate their class teachers effectiveness in class. This is presented in figure 1 below.

Figure 1:
Students rating of the class teachers' effectiveness in class



The results reveal that majority (39%) of the students rated their class teachers effectiveness in class as average. None rated their effectiveness as very good, 27.6 rated their effectiveness as good and an overwhelming, 31.4% as below average.

4.1.5 Activities in the school to promote English

Table 4:
Activities carried out in school to promote English competency

		Overall (n=105)	
		<i>f</i>	%
Debates		60	57.1
Writing		47	44.8
Symposiums		28	26.7
Speaking in English		71	67.6
Others		7	6.7

Most students speak in English (67.6%). The other 57.1% agreed that debates were carried out in school while a small percentage (26.7%) observe that symposiums were held in school. This is summarized and presented on table.

From table 4, most students spoke English in school (67.6%) and carried out debates (57.1). There was less of writing activities in school (44.8%), and symposiums (26.7%).

4.1.6 Teachers attributes

The research further sought to find out teachers attributes and their perception of effectiveness of teaching methods. This is presented in table. 5.

Table 5:**Teachers' personal characteristics**

Experience	Academic Qualifications	Teaching Methods	Effectiveness of teaching methods	Reasons for the answer	Frequency of Assignments	Frequency of marking books	No. of lesson per week	Av. Class size
Over 11 years	ATS	Group discussion	Yes	Provides learners with opportunities	Daily	Daily	16-25	41-45
Over 11 years	ATS	Class discussion	No	Needs to combine other methods	Daily	Daily	16-25	41-45
Over 11 years	Bed	Group discussion	Yes	Learners communicate and participate	Daily	Once a week	16-25	36-40

Information presented in the table indicates that teachers gave and marked assignments daily. They incorporated various teaching strategies in their work, namely; class discussions and question and answer methods. All the teachers had been trained and had over 11 years teaching experience.

4.2 Student based factors that affect students' performance in English as a subject.

In this section, availability of resources, motivational and attitudinal factors are presented.

4.2.1 Distribution of various titles of texts per student

The rate of students text per title per student is presented on table 6.

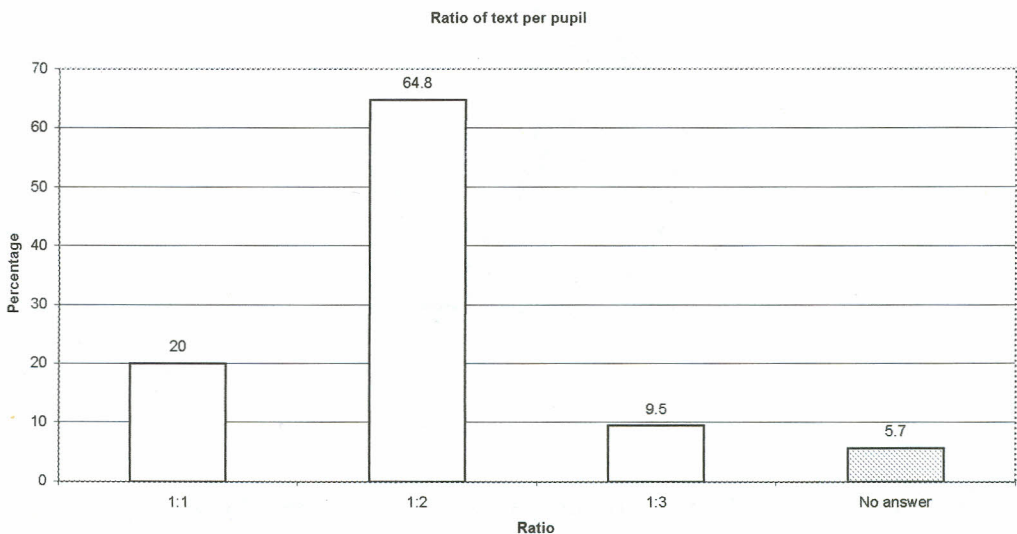
Table 6:
Distribution of various titles of texts per student.

Ratio for Integrated English	Overall (n=105)	
	<i>f</i>	%
1 per student	21	20.0
2 per student	68	64.8
3 per student	9	8.6
4 per student	0	0.0
Kept in library	0	0.0
Ratio for Aminata		
1 per student	7	6.7
2 per student	30	28.6
3 per student	15	14.3
4 per student	4	3.8
Kept in library	9	8.6
Ratio for A Man of the People		
1 per student	24	22.9
2 per student	44	41.9
3 per student	16	15.2
4 per student	3	2.9
Kept in library	0	0.0

The results reveal that 64.8% of students had access to “Integrated English book IV”. The ratio of 1:2, 28.6% of students share “Aminata” in the ratio 1:2. Forty one point 9 percent (41.9%) of students share, “A Man of the People” in the ratio of 1:2. 26.7% share “Encounters from Africa” in the ratio of 1:3. Around 19% stated that other books were kept in the library. The ratio of student to textbooks is presented on Figure 2.

Figure 2:

Ratio of texts per pupil

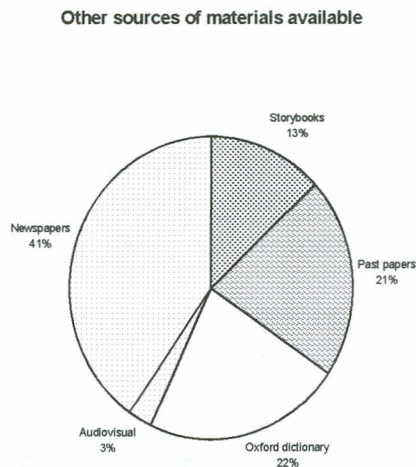


The bar graph indicates that 64.8% of students had in their possession the necessary prescribed texts in the ratio of 1:2.

4.2.2 Other sources of materials available for use in English Class

The study further sought to establish the existence of other source of materials available for use in English class. This is presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3:
Other sources of materials available for use in the English class



The pie chart provides interesting observation. Most of the materials available for use in the English class were newspapers (41%) and English past papers (21%). Novels and story books were scant. It was also important to find out the list of materials read outside the class. This is summarized and presented on table 7 below.

Table 7:**List of materials read outside the class**

	Overall (n=105)	
	<i>f</i>	%
Novels	60	57.1
Newspapers	58	55.2
Journals, Magazines	34	32.4
Grammar texts	15	14.3
Poetry books	11	10.5
Plays	2	1.9
Others	21	20.0

Majority of the students (57.1%) read novels, (55.2%) mostly read newspapers, while the minority read poetry (10.5%) and play books (1.9%).

4.2.3 Students attitude towards English

This study solicited information on how well students think of English language. The result is presented on table 8.

Table 8:**How well students think of English language**

	Overall (n=105)	
	<i>f</i>	%
Poorly	1	1.0
Fairly	11	10.5
Good	40	38.1
Very good	31	29.5
Excellent	18	17.1

From the above table 38.1% of students thought favourably of English language, 29.5% thought that learning English was a very good activity, 17% felt it was excellent while only 15 felt it was not worthwhile.

4.2.4 Students view on how they would perform in English

Students were asked to state their views on how they will perform in English language exam. Their views is presented in figure 4.

Figure 4:

Students view on how they would perform in English Language examination

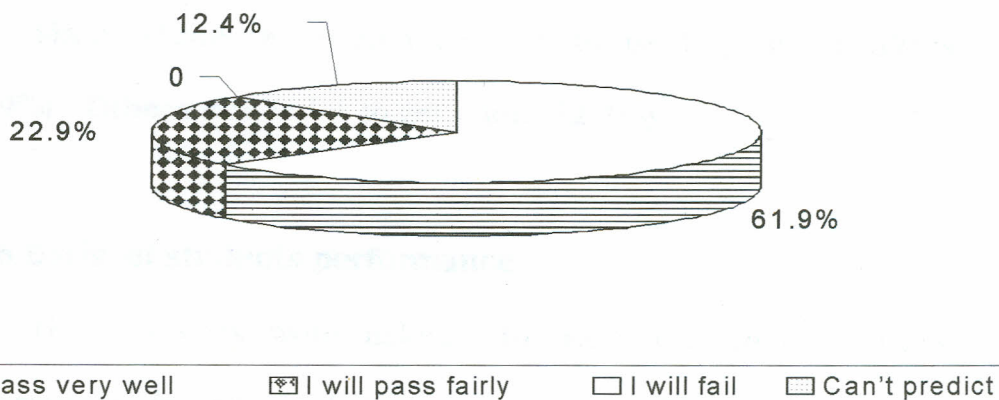


Figure 4 revealed that an overwhelming 61.9% of students felt they would perform well in English, 22.9% felt that they

would fairly pass, 12.4% stated that they couldn't predict and none felt they would fail.

4.2.5 Reasons for studying English language

Students reasons for studying English language is presented in table 9.

Table 9:

Reasons for studying English language

	Overall (n=105)	
	<i>f</i>	%
Compulsory subject	3	2.9
To be an English speaker	44	41.9
To get a good job	34	32.4
To pass form 4 exams	18	17.1
Others	3	2.9

Many students studied English to be English speakers (41.9%). Others studied it to get a job (32.4%).

4.2.6 Basis of students performance

The students were asked to state the basis of their performance in an English language test. Their response is presented in table 10 below.

Table 10:

What best describes a students' performance in an English language test

	Overall (n=105)	
	<i>f</i>	%
Luck	0	0.0
Personal effort	65	61.9
Test being easy/difficult	9	8.6
Ability	25	23.8

A majority of students stated that their performance was based on personal efforts. A few (8.6%) showed their performance was dependent on the difficulty level of the test.

4.2.7 Students' perception of English as a subject

The students were presented with a list of various aspects of English as a subject and asked to rate their perception according to the scale Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree, Strongly Disagree. The results are presented in table 11.

Table 11 and 12 show frequencies and percentages of students' attitude towards English per item. Table 12 reflects the level of disagreement to each statement in terms of means and score according to the Likert scale.

Table 11**Frequencies and percentages of students' attitude towards English language**

	n=103	Strongly agree		Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1	I enjoy doing my English homework	37	35.9	57	55.3	5	4.9	4	3.9	0	0
2	I don't care when I fail English	2	1.9	6	5.8	0	0	13	12.6	82	79.6
3	I wish English lessons would take 20 minutes	1	1.0	1	1.0	7	6.8	27	26.2	67	65
4	English syllabus is too difficult for form IV students	1	1.0	8	7.8	12	11.7	29	28.2	53	51.5
5	Performing well in English depends on my English teacher	12	11.7	30	29.1	9	8.7	28	27.2	23	22.3
6	I feel very happy when I pass my English exams	89	86.4	14	13.6	0	0	0	0	0	0
7	When my English teacher delays in class, I do other subjects	9	8.7	31	30.1	11	10.7	31	30.1	21	20.4
8	I am given a lot of unnecessary English assignments	3	2.9	1	1.0	6	5.8	37	35.9	56	54.4

Table 11 continued

9	Among the subjects taught in school English is my favourite	14	13.6	24	23.3	9	8.7	28	27.2	28	27.2
10	I feel like reporting late to school when I have English as the first lesson	2	1.9	3	2.9	0	0	30	29.1	68	66
11	I enjoy doing English	42	40.8	50	48.5	7	6.8	4	3.8	0	0
12	It is important for Kenyans to be fluent in English	71	68.9	21	20.4	0	0	1	1.0	0	0
13	I am always under stress in the English class	8	7.8	5	4.9	4	3.9	34	33	52	50.5
14	I would like to join a club for those interested in English	34	33.0	49	47.6	16	15.5	3	2.9	1	1.0
15	I can get good marks in English if I work hard	30	29.1	4	3.9	10	9.7	23	22.3	37	35.0
16	English is difficult to learn	1	1.0	6	5.8	8	7.8	41	39.8	47	45.6
17	I am well provided with English text books	26	25.2	36	35.0	21	20.4	13	12.6	7	6.8
18	English is an important subject	0	0	1	1.0	0	0	14	13.6	88	85.4
19	English examinations make my mind go blank	14	13.6	24	23.3	0	0	13	12.6	52	50.5
20	English should be a compulsory subject	13	12.6	25	24.3	5	4.9	7	6.8	53	51.5

The performance were further summarized into scores and means based on the Likert scale. This is presented in table 12.

Table 12
Degree of students' attitude to English language

	n=103	Mean	Score	
1	I enjoy doing my English homework	4.1	423.2	positive
2	I don't care when I fail English	4.5	461.9	negative
3	I wish English lessons would take 20 minutes	1.4	146.8	negative
4	English syllabus is too difficult for form IV students	4.1	422	negative
5	Performing well in English depends on my English teacher	3.1	316.3	undecided
6	I feel very happy when I pass my English exams	4.7	486.4	positive
7	When my English teacher delays in class, I do other subjects	3.1	323.4	undecided
8	I am given a lot of unnecessary English assignments	4.2	436.9	negative
9	Among the subjects taught in school English is my favourite	2.6	268.9	undecided
10	I feel like reporting late to school when I have English as the first lesson	4.4	454.1	negative
11	I enjoy doing English	4.1	426.2	positive
12	It is important for Kenyans to be fluent in English	4.2	428.1	positive

Table 12 continued

13	I am always under stress in the English class	4.0	413.8	negative
14	I would like to join a club for those interested in English	3.9	408.7	positive
15	I can get good marks in English if I work hard	2.6	270.7	undecided
16	English is difficult to learn	4.1	423.2	negative
17	I am well provided with English text books	3.5	359.2	positive
18	English is an important subject	1.1	116.6	negative
19	English examinations make my mind go blank	3.5	363.1	positive
20	English should be a compulsory subject	2.3	240	negative

With the reference to table 11, 55.3% of students agreed to the statement in item I (I enjoy doing English homework), 35% strongly disagreed and no one strongly disagreed. Seventy six point nine percent (76.9%) of the students strongly disagreed to the statement "I do not care when I fail English". One point nine percent (1.9%) strongly disagreed. Sixty six (66%) strongly disagreed to the reduction of time allocated for English lessons. Eight six point four percent (86.4%) of the students felt very happy when they had passed English examinations. In statement six, 66% of students strongly disagreed with the statement "I feel

like reporting late to school when I have English as the first lesson”.

In statement 12, 68.9% of students strongly agreed that it was important for Kenyans to be fluent in English. In statement 13, 50.5% of students strongly disagreed with the statement that they were always under stress in the English class. Thirty three percent (33%) disagreed while 7.8% agreed that they were always under stress in the English class. Forty nine percent (49%) of students agreed that they would like to join a club for those interested in English. In statement 15, 29.1% of the students strongly agreed that they could get good marks in English if they worked hard and 35% strongly disagreed. Forty five point six percent (45.6%) of the students in statement 16 strongly disagreed that English was difficult to learn. A big number (85.4%) strongly disagreed that English was an important subject. Fifty point five percent (50.5%) in statement 19 strongly disagreed that their minds went blank in the English examinations. Thirteen point six percent (13.6%) strongly agreed, 23.3% agreed 53% strongly felt English should not be a compulsory subject.

Results in table 12 reveal that majority of students enjoyed doing English (4.1 %), some felt happy when they passed English examinations (4.7 %) and were of the opinion that it was important for Kenyans to be fluent in English (4.2 %). Others had

a positive opinion of joining an English club (3.9 %) and were well provided with English texts (3.5 %).

In the same table, students expressed negative views to certain statements. They were negative to the statement "I do not care when I fail English", (4.5 %). They were negative to item 3 (1.4 %), item 4, (4.1%), item 5, (3.1 %), item 10, (4.4 %), item 13, (4.0%), item 16, (4.1%), item 18, (4.1 %) and item 19, (3.5%) and item 20, (2.3%).

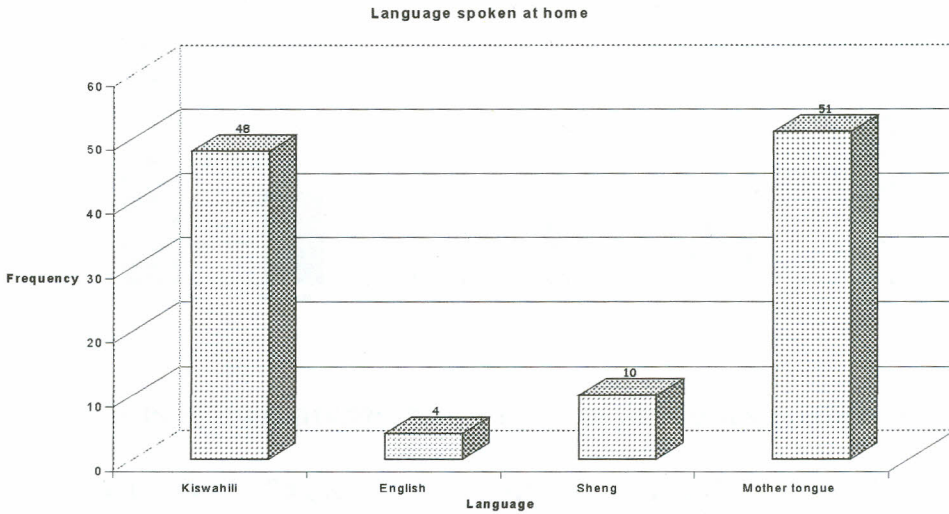
4.3 factors that affect the students performance in English as a subject

In this section, home based factors that militate against favourable performance in English are presented.

4.3.1 Language most spoken at home

Figure 5:

Language mostly spoken at home

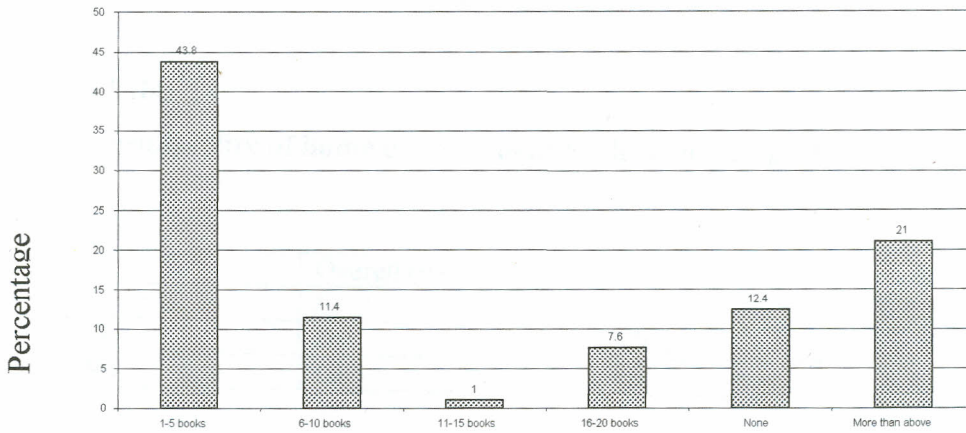


What can be deduced from the above figure is that mother tongue was the most predominantly used language at home (51.1%), this was followed by Kiswahili (48% and “sheng” at 10%. It is unfortunate to note that English is the least spoken language.

4.3.2 English textbooks at home

Figure 6:

Percentage of English textbooks at home



It is shown above that 43.8% of students possessed at least 1 to 5 books. Twelve point four percent (12.4%) had no books. One percent (1%) had between 11 to 15 books. The students were further asked to state the willingness of their parents to pay someone to coach them in English. This is presented in table 13.

Table 13

Willingness of parents to pay someone to coach children English

	Overall (n=105)	
	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	18	17.1
No	85	81.0

An overwhelming majority of students (81%) portrayed parents as unwilling to pay someone to coach them English. The

suitability of home environment was also sought. This is summarized in table 14.

Table 14:
Unsuitability of home environment for learning English

	Overall (n=105)	
	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	36	34.3
No	66	62.9

According to the respondents, home environment, 62.9% was unsuitable for learning English. The reasons for unsuitability of home for learning English were stated as the speaking of vernacular, sheng and Kiswahili (31.4%) made home environment unsuitable for learning English(table 15).

Table 15:
Reasons for unsuitability of home for learning English

	Overall (n=105)	
	<i>f</i>	%
No parental involvement	1	1.0
Lack of reading materials	5	4.8
Noisy	3	2.9
People speak Vernacular, Sheng and Kiswahili	33	31.4

4.4 Conclusion

Data generated from the study has been presented. The next step involves a synthesis of the data to give insight into the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

DISCUSSION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings of this study, makes conclusions and finally makes recommendations based on the findings of the study. Further, conclusions are drawn and recommendations made based on what transpired in light of the objectives that were cited in Chapter 3.

5.1 Teacher based factors that affect students' performance in English language

The first four items in the teacher questionnaire (Table 5) sought to delineate teacher characteristics. The information yielded, revealed that all the three teachers were trained and each had over 11 years teaching experience. Their class sizes ranged from between 41-45 students with lessons of between 16-25 periods.

All the teachers gave and marked students' assignments daily. However, this information contradicted what students gave. Fifty four point three percent (54.3%) of the respondents observed that assignments were usually given after each topic.

Observation derived from table 2 highlighted that majority of students rated their teachers comments as being very useful (69.8%). Fourty four point percent (44.8%) (table 3) rated their teachers overall class attendance as very good. This was an indication, perhaps, that most teachers took their professional work very seriously. A notable contradiction was the students rating of their teachers' effectiveness. In figure 1 the teacher was portrayed as being less effective. None thought their teacher was very good.

To deliberate on the above findings, it is clear that lack of teachers' effectiveness in class is a teacher factor that militates against students performance in English. Tan (1970) reveals that special training in language and the ability to speak well are necessary ingredients in a competent teacher. This bolsters the earlier findings that all the three teachers were trained.

Rosenholtz (1986) believes that experience in teaching is a major determinant in a teacher's effectiveness. In fact, he contends that experience of less than 3 years may be an impediment to teacher effectiveness. On the other hand, a more than 3 years experience gives a teacher an advantage in class effectiveness. Beyond 5 years the benefits of experience level off since an older teacher is likely to get more tired. This conforms to the student view (figure 1) where they thought the teacher was

less effective, probably owing to the many years they had in teaching. When 13.6% of students strongly agreed and 23.3% of students agreed that their minds went blank in an English examination, then this could mean the teacher was not effective (item 19, table 12).

A view put forth by Hergie (1978) shows some 40% to 60% of linguistic interactions between teachers and pupils as taking the form of teacher questions. Results obtained from the teacher questionnaire (items 6,7 and 8) revealed that the teachers incorporated class discussions, group discussions and question and answer sessions in the work.

Therefore the research findings indicate that teachers are less effective in class. However, they are trained, have experience and are not dependent on question and answer methods of teaching.

5.2 Student based factors that affect students performance in English as a subject

Although 64.8% of students had prescribed books in their possession (figure 2), in pie chart (fig 3) most of the material available for use in the English class were newspapers (41%) and English past papers (21%). Novels and story books were hardly available.

Outside the class many students read novels (57.1 %) and (52.2 %) read newspapers. A minority (10.5 %) read poetry and play books (1.9%). Most students were also shown to possess a favourable attitude towards English language (figure 8). Asked about their performance, 61.9% felt they would pass and none thought they would fail. A majority (61.9%) observed that their performance was based on personal effort. Most studied English to be good speakers (41.9%).

Omalley and Charlot (1990) state that motivation is an important element when learning is taking place in a classroom. Attending classes, listening to the teacher, participating in class activities and doing assignments are various actions that denote a student's level of motivation. When students are instrumentally promoted, (figure 10), they learn language to gain social recognition and economic advantages (Gardner and Lambert, 1972). Gardner (1985) noted that motivated individuals displayed some goal directed activities in order to attain a goal. The researcher was able to prove that although the students were well motivated to learn English, they lacked varied learning materials. The students neglected the reading of poetry and play books which accounts for a good percentage of marks at Kenya certificate of secondary education, hence they did not perform well.

Peak (1955) states that attitude determines human behaviour. Young (1955) also believes attitude arouses human behaviour. A student's attitude towards English will determine his degree of liking of the subject. In table 11 the researcher was able to prove that most students enjoyed doing English. Seventy nine point six (79.6%) would care if they failed English, 89% strongly agreed that they felt very happy when they passed English examinations. 68.9% strongly agreed that English was an important subject. In table 12, the degree of student's attitude to each item was measured according to the Likert Scale. Many students expressed positive opinions towards classes of items that favoured English language. Many rejected statements that expressed negative sentiments towards English language. The researcher's findings therefore revealed that majority of students have positive attitude towards English language. Therefore attitude was discounted as a factor that limited the students' performance in language. Thirty percent 30% of the students felt that performing well in English depended on their English teacher. In Table 11, (item 5), 35% strongly disagreed to the statement "I can get good marks in English if I work hard". In item 15 (table 11), 47% strongly disagreed to the statement "English is too difficult to learn".

The conclusion drawn from above was that students had positive attitude towards language but generally lacked to perform well. They expected their teachers to be instrumental in equipping them with language skills. The teacher still came out as a factor in limiting students acquisition of language.

5.3 Home Based Factors that Affect Students Performance in English Language

Results from the study show the predominant language spoken at home to be mother tongue (5.1%). English is the least spoken language (figure 5). In figure 6, 43.8% of students observe that they have between 1 to 5 books at home. Only 1% had between 11 to 15 books. Eighty one percent (81%) of students portrayed, their parents as not paying anyone to coach, them English (Table 13), while 62.9% believed home environment was unsuitable for learning English. Asked why the home was unsuitable, vernacular, sheng and Kiswahii were found to be the predominant languages spoken at home (Table 15).

Jones (1950) observes that parents and other members of the family who know English and use it at home, can help in enhancing the child's performance in language. Davidson (1993) states that parents send signals to their children about the level of education they expect their children to reach. This could be

through hiring teachers to tutor their children after school hours and also buying the necessary reading materials. The data reveals that there is very minimal support from parents to promote the English language ability of their children. They do not pay for tuition, do not buy additional learning materials and do not endeavour to make the home environment suitable for learning English. The home environment was therefore identified as a factor contributing to poor performance in English.

5.4 Conclusions

The following conclusions were drawn from this study:

- a) It was concluded that one of the most important characteristics that students have towards English is motivation. Most students put in a lot of effort towards their work, did assignments and were willing to join even the English clubs.
- b) The students expressed positive attitude towards English. This directed what they did. Most students enjoyed doing English homework. A good performance in English elicited a lot of positive response from the students.
- c) All the teachers appeared to incorporate various teaching strategies in their work. This included class discussions ,

group discussions and question and answer methods.

Marking of students work was done on a regular basis.

- d) An impediment to the students overall success in English appeared to be the teachers' ineffectiveness, though not defined this would mean that the students found the English teachers language expression difficult resulting in lack of communication.
- e) Another observation made from the findings indicated that poetry and drama books were scarcely read by many students. Quite a number concentrated on reading novels and newspaper articles. The students mostly concentrated on doing school assignments.
- f) Home environment came out as a strong factor that in limiting students language proficiency. The environment was not conducive for promoting the learning of English because English is hardly spoken there. The dearth of learning resources at home was observed. Parents were seen to send the wrong signals that played a part in students not being well versed with English Language.

5.5 Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of this study. They are directed to teachers, parents and researchers.

- (a) Teachers should strive to be effective in class. They should communicate at the level well understood by students. Concepts should be explained clearly to students.
- (b) There appeared to be an over emphasis on the grammar part of English at the expense of poetry and drama. Teachers should demystify the teaching of drama and poetry to students. They should advocate for availing of a large variety of drama and poetry materials for students.
- (c) Parents need to be informed by the school authorities to supply their children with varied learning resources for English. They should start doing this when the children are still young.

5.6 Suggestions for further study

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher suggests that:

- (a) This study needs to be carried out on a large scale with a larger population sample that involves many students. The research may need to be expanded to various district.

- (b) A further study needs to be done which incorporates girls or even possibly mixed schools involving many parts of Kenya.
- (c) Another research needs to delineate teacher characteristics that affect students performance in English Language. This is because the teacher is a very important part of the learning process.

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APPENDIX 1

ENGLISH TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

Introduction:

The purpose of this survey is to find out the factors that affect the performance of English in secondary schools. The information given will be held in strict confidence.

Directions:

Read each statement carefully and answer as honestly as you can. Tick the appropriate answer.

1. What is your academic/professional qualification?

- (i) Dip. In Ed./SI []
- (ii) ATS I []
- (iii) PGDE []
- (iv) B.Ed. []

2. How long have you been teaching?

- (i) 1 to 3 years []
- (ii) 4 to 6 years []
- (iii) 7 to 10 years []
- (iv) 11 and above []

3. Have you had any training in teaching English?

Yes [] No []

4. How many English lessons do you teach per week?

- (i) 10-15 []
- (ii) 16-25 []
- (iii) 26-30 []
- (iv) 31-35 []

Any other (specify) _____

5. What is the average size of your class?

- (i) 30-35 []

- (ii) 36-40 []
- (iii) 41-45 []
- (iv) 46-50 []

6. Which teaching methods, from the ones listed below, do you use to convey the contents to the students.

- (i) Lecture []
- (ii) Class discussions []
- (iii) Group discussions []
- (iv) Role play []

Any other (specify) _____

7. Is the method you have mentioned above in question 6 the most effective?

- (i) Yes [] No []

8. Give reasons for the answer above in question 7.

9. How often do you give your students English assignments?

- (i) Daily []
- (ii) Once a week []
- (iii) Once in two weeks []
- (iv) Once a month []
- (v) Any other (specify) _____

10. How often do you mark your students' English exercise books?

- (i) Daily []
- (ii) Once a week []
- (iii) Once in two weeks []
- (iv) Once a month []
- (vi) Any other (specify) _____

11. Do you have a Library/English resource facility in your school?

- (i) Yes [] No []

12. Are the materials found in your Library useful for the teaching of English?

(i) Yes [] No []

13. Is there any time assigned for Library usage during your English Lessons?

(i) Yes [] No []

14. In your opinion how often do you think your students read novels/story books?

(i) 1 book per week

(ii) 1 book per two weeks

(iii) 1 book per month

(iv) 1 book per term

(v) Any other (Specify)

15. Please give a list of the prescribed texts you use for teaching English?

1) _____ 5. _____

2) _____ 6. _____

3) _____ 7. _____

4) _____ 8. _____

16. For each of the textbooks listed put a tick under the appropriate comment on its distribution among the students in your class.

Textbook Title	Distribution among students in class				
	A text per Student	A text per two students	A text per three Students	A text per three Students	Kept in Library
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
Any other (Specify)					

17. How does the availability/unavailability of course books and other relevant facilities affect the teaching and learning activities of English Language?

18. Which of the listed activities do you do to promote the English competency of your students?

(i) Debates []

(ii) Writing activities []

(iii) Discussions with other schools []

(iv) All []

(v) If so or non, specify _____

19. Do these activities help your students do well in English?

(i) Yes [] No []

20. What is your opinion of the integrated English syllabus?

(i) It is excellent []

(ii) It is good/average []

(iii) It is not a good syllabus []

21. Give reasons for the above question 20 answer. []

(i) _____

(ii) _____

(iii) _____

Thank you

APPENDIX II
STUDENTS ENGLISH QUESTIONNAIRE

Name _____

Index No. _____

School _____

Introduction:

The purpose of this questionnaire is to find out the factors that affect the performance of English in Secondary Schools. The information given will be held in strict confidence.

Directions:

Read each statement carefully and answer as honestly as you can. Tick the appropriate answer.

1. What grade did you obtain in English in your Pre-Mock/Mock Examinations?

2. List the titles of the main English texts used in Form IV.

(i) _____

(ii) _____

(iii) _____

(iv) _____

(v) _____

(vi) _____

(vii) _____

3. What is the ratio of each per student? Use the table below by ticking the appropriate comment.

Textbook Title	Distribution among students in class				
	A text per Student	A text per two students	A text per three Students	A text per three Students	Kept in Library
1					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
Any other (Specify)					

4. What other sources of materials are available for use in the English class?

5. Does your school have a Library?

(i) Yes [] No []

6. Please rate your library in terms of availability of English resources.

(i) Well stocked []

(ii) Averagely stocked []

(iii) Poorly stocked []

7. Do you read other English materials besides the basic class text books.

(i) Yes [] (ii) No []

8. If Yes to question 7, give a list of the materials other than class textbooks you read outside class:

(i) _____

(ii) _____

(iii) _____

(iv) _____

(v) _____

9. How often are you given assignments?

(i) Once a week []

(ii) Once in two weeks []

(iii) After completion of every topic []

(iv) Others

(Specify) _____

10. How do you find the teachers' comments?

(i) Very useful []

(ii) Sometimes useful []

(iii) Not useful []

11. Please rate the class attendance of your teacher of English

(i) Very good []

(ii) Average []

(iii) Good []

(iv) Below average []

12. Please rate the effectiveness of your English teacher in class.

(i) Very good []

(ii) Average []

(iii) Good []

(iv) Below average []

13. Which of these activities do you do in school to promote your English competency?

(i) Debates []

(ii) Writing []

(iii) Symposiums []

(iv) Speaking in English []

(v) Any other (Specify)

14. How often do you carry out the activities in question 13 above?

- (i) Once per week []
- (ii) One per two weeks []
- (iii) Once per term []
- (iv) Daily []
- (v) Any other (Specify) _____

15. Which language is mostly spoken home?

- (i) Kiswahili []
- (ii) English []
- (iii) Any other (Specify) _____

16. Do your parents buy you English books to learn English language?

- (i) Never []
- (ii) Sometimes []

17. If sometimes what kind?

18. How many books in English are there at home?

No. of books

- (i) 1-5 []
- (ii) 6-10 []
- (iii) 11-15 []
- (iv) 16-20 []
- (v) None []
- (vi) More than above _____

19. Do your parents pay someone to coach you English Language?

- (i) Yes [] (ii) No []

20. Do you think the environment at home enables you to learn more English?

- (i) Yes [] (ii) No []

Give reasons for question 20 above.

21. How well do you think of English Language.

(i) Poorly []

(ii) Fairly []

(iii) Good []

(iv) Very good []

(v) Excellent []

22. How do you think you will fair in Form IV KCSE English Examination?

(i) I will pass very well []

(ii) I will pass fairly []

(iii) I will fail []

(iv) I cannot predict []

23. Which of the following best describes your reasons for studying English Language?

(i) It is a compulsory subject []

(ii) To be one of the English speaking people []

(iii) To get a good job in future []

(iv) To pass form IV examinations []

(v) Others (Specify) _____

24. Which best describes your performance in an English Language tests?

(i) Luck []

(ii) Personal effort []

(iii) Test being easy or difficult []

(iv) Ability []

Thank you

APPENDIX III
ENGLISH ATTITUDE SCALE
(ADOPTED)

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Index No: _____

School: _____

District: _____

Class: _____

Directions:

Each of the statements on this questionnaire expresses a feeling, which a particular student has toward English. Express your opinion by indicating the extent to which you agree with the feelings expressed in each statement. Tick [✓] the box which best indicates how closely you agree or disagree with the feelings expressed in each statement that is,

Strongly Disgrace [SD]

Disagree [D]

Undecided [U]

Agree [A]

Strongly Agree [SA]

	SA	A	UD	DA	SD
1. I enjoy doing my English homework.					
2. I do not care when I fail my English Examinations					
3. I wish English lessons would take 20 minutes only					
4. English syllabus is too difficult for form IV students					
5. Performing well in English depends on my English teacher					
6. I feel very happy when I pass my English Examinations					
7. When my English teacher delays for class I do other subjects.					
8. I am given a lot of unnecessary English assignments.					
9. Among the subjects taught in school English is my favourite.					
10. I feel like reporting late to school when I have English the first lesson.					
11. I enjoy doing English					
12. It is important for Kenyans to be fluent in English					
13. I am always under stress in the English class.					
14. I would like to join a club for those interested in English.					
15. I can get good marks in English if I work hard.					
16. English is difficult to learn.					
17. I am well provided with English textbooks					
18. English is not an important subject.					
19. English examinations make my mind go blank.					
20. English should not be a compulsory subject.					