

**EFFECTIVENESS OF TASK-BASED APPROACH ON LEARNERS'  
COMPOSITION WRITING IN FRENCH LANGUAGE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS  
IN NAIROBI CITY COUNTY, KENYA**

**BY**

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UNIVERSITY**

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**DECLARATION**

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

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my mother Juliette Isichi and my father Cypriano Lutiali. I also dedicate it to my children; Abigael Mawenzi, Belinda Virhenda, Cyrus Mukalla, Dinah Merline, Esther Elsie and Faith Juliet and my husband Hannington Bulinda for their care and support.

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May the Good Lord bless you abundantly and extend your territories in a mighty way.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

AU – African Union

BOM – Board of Management

CECRL - Common European Cadre for Reference in Languages

CLT – Communicative Language Teaching

COMESA – Common Market for East and South Africa

DALF – Higher Diploma in French Language

DELF – Diploma in French Language

DTE – Diploma Teacher Education

FFL- French Foreign Language

ICT – Information Communication Technology

KCSE – Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education

KICD- Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development

KIE – Kenya Institute of Education

KNEC – Kenya National Examination Council

MOEST – Ministry of Education Science and Technology

NCEOP -National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies

TBA- Task-Based Approach

TBI- Task-Based Instruction

TBLT- Task-Based Learning and Teaching

TSC – Teachers Service Commission

UN – United Nations

## ABSTRACT

Writing in French as a foreign language is difficult and therefore requires extra skills for most students. Writing is important in acquisition of French language. However, teachers and learners seem reluctant to focus on composition writing because it requires special effort. One of the ways of achieving perfect writing skills is through the use of Task-Based approach in teaching and learning composition writing. According to the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) reports, performance in French composition writing is poor and this has raised the concern of all stakeholders. Moreover, there is little research in Kenya on Task Based Approach (TBA) in composition writing in French language. The purpose of this study was to establish the effectiveness of TBA in teaching of French composition writing. The objectives were; to establish the methods used in teaching and learning composition writing, to establish the nature and extent of TBA use, to investigate the effect of TBA on learners' performance in composition writing, to determine (i) teachers' and (ii) learners' perceptions towards TBA and to explore the challenges of TBA. The study was carried out in Nairobi City County where eight (8) secondary school teachers of French in Form three and one hundred and twenty-four (124) Form three students studying French formed the study sample. A quasi-experimental research design was used. The data collection instruments were; student test, teachers' and learners' questionnaires and a lesson observation guide. The experimental group was taught by teachers who had been trained using TBA while teachers in the control group were not trained in TBA. A composition writing test was administered to the students and after 6 weeks, the same test was given to compare performance before and after TBA. The teachers' and learners' questionnaires were used to establish their perceptions towards TBA. The lesson observation guide was used to establish the methods used in teaching and learning composition writing. The instruments were refined through piloting. Data was analyzed quantitatively using descriptive statistics (means, ranks, frequencies, percentages, standard deviation). It was presented in frequency tables, pie and bar charts. The findings were that 8 methods were used for composition writing and letter writing was the most used task. All the eight teachers understood all the characteristics of TBA while 99% of learners agreed that TBA was a pleasant method through which quality writing was learnt. Students' mean score improved slightly in composition writing after TBA use. (Mean = 3.43 before and Mean = 4.65 after). There was a significant correlation in both pre and posttest on the four evaluation indicators at  $P > 0.00$ . Limited time was the major challenge of TBA. Based on these findings, it was recommended that Ministry of Education organizes in-service training for teachers on TBA. KICD could encourage teachers to use on-line resources in teaching composition writing and Curriculum developers could include TBA among the approaches necessary to teach writing. The study is important in helping Quality Assurance and Standards officers to establish, maintain and improve standards in training, assessment and implementation of teaching methods. The research will help teachers to connect with sources of information and network for professional support.

# **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXTUALIZATION OF THE STUDY**

## **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, the topic of the study which was the Effectiveness of the task-based approach on learners' quality writing of French composition in secondary schools in Nairobi City County is contextualized. This chapter consists of; background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives and questions, significance, limitations, delimitations of the study, theoretical and conceptual framework.

## **1.2 Background to the study**

French is an official language in 29 countries in the world and it is shared by 84 countries for official and teaching purposes. Around 300 million people speak French which makes French to be ranked 5<sup>th</sup> most spoken language globally behind Chinese, English, Spanish and Arabic (The local, 2019). Moreover, French learning is important because it is a language for the world, the international job market, culture, travel, higher education and international relations. French opens up the world, is fun to learn, is used for learning other languages and is a language of love and reason.

Belchamber, (2010) posits that increasing globalization has led to a need for people in the workforce who can communicate in multiple languages in areas such as education, tourism, science, trade, international relations and technology. This has led to the need

for several organizations to demand that employees should acquire more than one international language of which French is included. In order for many people to acquire French, there is need to have teaching and learning approaches that are appropriate and effective.

Among the four national objectives of teaching French in Kenya, Omusonga (2009), found out that teachers think giving learners access to written materials in French as one of the national objectives is the second most important reason for teaching French in secondary schools in Kenya. On the other hand, students ranked this objective as third by attaining a mean score of 2.81. There is increasing presence of French language in the Kenyan society, especially in towns where it is common to come across French language eg; Buffet, Boutique, Café, Bureau de change, Discotheque, Dessert, Maisonnette, etc. Therefore, it is essential that the kind of education learners receive should prepare them to access written materials in French in order for them to excel in composition writing skills.

The traditional 3Ps approach (Presentation, Practice and Production) led teachers and learners to be more concerned about the end product neglecting the content and ideas of writing. This approach was based on input-output hypothesis. In addition, according to Clearinghouse, (1984) with PPP approach, exercises in the class were usually dull and students could not decide the topics they wanted to write on. Most researches in language writing tend to agree that children learn to write by writing but there has been a distressing lack of classroom time devoted to extended periods of writing.

Writing, among all the language skills is one where teachers and learners seem more reluctant to focus on because it requires them to make special effort. As a result, it sometimes tends to be neglected (Hamer, 2015). The three types of writing are: controlled, guided and free writing.

According to Mulama (2008) French teaching methods have evolved from the Traditional method or Grammar – translation where translation of passages from the native language into the target language was the main activity in the classroom. This was done through the presentation of rules in a grammar book and a list of vocabulary to be memorized in learning. From the traditional method, learning and teaching was done through the Direct Method, where all conversations were in the target language and maximum contact was created with the learner. In the Global structure audio visual method, notions of grammar and linguistic competences are taught by hearing and comprehension. In the recent communicative approach, an artificial situation is created and the main activity is communication in the French class where learning is done successfully through communicating real meaning. The main classroom activity is producing meaningful and real communication at all levels.

The Task Based Approach (TBA) was an outcome of Communicative language teaching which creates a free instructional environment in which learners and teachers work together and collaborate in a relaxed atmosphere favorable for composition writing. Branden (2006) defines TBA as an approach to language education in which learners are given functional tasks that invite them to focus primarily on meaning, exchange and use

of language for real-life, non-linguistic purposes. According to Larson (2001), in Task Based approach, teachers ask students to perform meaningful tasks that resemble authentic real-life situations using the target language rather than completing simple language questions or vocabulary. It is a student-centered approach which allows meaningful communication and provides practical extra-linguistic skill building. This approach encourages authenticity, teamwork and gives provision for feedback and evaluation. Additionally, Task-Based Approach advocates that all language skills be integrated in the process which makes learning more interesting (Zhaachun, 2015).

The difference between PPP and TBA is that PPP focuses solely on teaching elements of grammar and language to aid the student communication while TBA is open and language emerges through meaningful tasks. Students have more exposure to a variety of languages, lexical phrases and patterns of language in TBA than PPP.

The theory of language in TBA assumes that language is a means of achieving real-life goals, involves a variety of different skills and language is primarily a means of making meaning. The theory of learning states that Tasks can aid the learner to notice the gap and that learning is determined by the learner internally rather than externally. It also states that learning is an organic process where interaction offers scaffolded learning naturally.

Several theories have been applied to support the Task-Based Approach. Among these are Piaget Theory of Cognitive development (Piaget, 1936), Sociocultural theory

(Vygosky, 1987) and Activity Theory (Engestrom, 1987). The cognitive theory involves two basic elements in learning, thus fluency and accuracy. Fluency refers to the learner's capacity to communicate in real time while accuracy is the ability for the learner to use language according to its norms (Skehan, 2003). According to the socio-cultural theory, the external activities that learners participate in are the main source of mental and cognitive development. Social interaction mediates learning in that learners first succeed in performing new functions with the assistance of another person, then they internalize the task so that they can perform it without assistance.

The Engestrom theory, (1987) of Activity which was developed from individual to inter-organizational learning is visualized in the form of a triangle. The Activity system theory has three main elements namely; subject, object and outcome. There are also sub-elements in the theory that include: rules, tools and community. The subject works towards the object which is transformed into outcome. In this study, the subject was the learner and teacher while object was poor composition writing skills and the outcome was quality composition writing evidenced by improved performance in the 4 language indicators of adherence to instructions, communicative, linguistic and textual competences after use of TBA.

Rules are established to guide members, promote best practices, ensure a safe and productive environment for learners, teachers and school staff leading to high level of achievement by students. These study made reference to some reports; in education, policies in teaching and learning, teachers' code of regulations and school rules. The

tools were; French text books, language and internet resources while the community was the school.

The task-based approach has been embraced globally, regionally and nationally in the teaching and learning of French. In the United States of America, Task-Based Approach led to the emergence of Web 2.0 concepts where a potential educational environment was created in which students got access to a widely distributed, authentic audience with a simple click on the mouse (Julian & Kimberly, 2016). An investigation into teacher perceptions towards TBA in the Canadian context showed that teachers used TBA in all their lessons and that teachers used essays, interviews and presentations as forms of writing in TBA.

The Malaysian Communication Syllabus (1978) and the Bangalore Project (1987) were some of the studies done in TBA. The research by Leaver & Kaplan (2004) assessed the benefits of TBA which included: curriculum flexibility, natural correction of error, high proficiency, greater motivation, promoted how to learn, there was repetition without boredom, promoted risk taking and increased student satisfaction.

In Reunion Island, Olivier (2018) differentiates between two types of tasks, thus tasks that reflect real-life use and pedagogical tasks. The study established the role of the teacher in TBA. These were; the teacher energized and motivated learners in the task, provided adequate and appropriate instructions for task and provided support and interacted with learners when needed.

A research on ‘Cognitive Task Analysis in Task-Based Syllabus Design for the teaching of Kiswahili as a Second Language’ in Uganda (Caeser,2018) showed that in order to design a task-based Kiswahili syllabus, task themes, task description, simulated task dialogues were used as a primary input. Findings indicated that while designing task-based syllabuses, all the task features such as cognitive, interactional and syntactic properties were taken into account.

According to Willis (2011), the Task-Based Approach has five types of tasks, which are; Jigsaw, information gap, problem solving, decision making and opinion exchange tasks. All these tasks are important in improving the learners’ writing skills which is important in that it opens up more possibilities for learners compared to the other language skills of reading, listening and speaking (Panavelil ,2015). Despite training and competence in teaching using various approaches, teachers still face the challenge of teaching composition writing in French. The major problems in the writing skill according to both teachers and students include; finding suitable vocabulary, use of appropriate tenses, correct spelling, punctuations, organizing ideas neatly and coherently in paragraphs.

Writing ability of learners has to some extent been interrupted by technology which has almost deprived learners an opportunity to practice and improve their writing ability. Darshman (2020) study on ‘Positive and Negative effects of Technology on Academic Writing skills found out that some students fail to use original words because of cyber slang, over reliance and plagiarism. It takes time to develop strong writing skills. However, writing remains a critical area of the school curriculum and an important part

of students' life after school. It contributes to the development of a person's initiative, courage and reading skills.

Learners' achievement in composition writing is higher when the teaching approach emphasizes writing as a process rather than as a product. According to Parson (1985), examples of tasks that enhance composition writing include; regular reading, journaling, story prompts, creating blogs, e-mail writing, crossword puzzles, word games, picture stories and free writing. The teacher has the role of creating a language rich environment through grammar instruction, sentence combination, audio-visual stimulation and encouraging poetry writing.

According to the Basic Education Sector Report (2012), in Kenya, the Task Force (TF) on the re-alignment of the Education Sector to the Constitution was formed in 2011 to realign the education with the Constitution 2010 and Vision 2030. According to TF report, the target of the education sector was to improve the quality of education and training so that measurable learning outcomes in literacy, numeracy, scientific and communication skills are recognized on international standardized tests by 2017. The task-based approach which was recommended in the Common European Cadre for references in languages (2001) offers international tests on six levels: A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2. In addition, TBA, the topic of this study gives independence to the learner to become imaginative and creative in acquiring writing skills. Moreover, language is acquired through performance of real-life and pedagogical tasks.

The policy in the system of education in Kenya has been 8.4.4 where learners take eight years in primary, four years in secondary and four years at the university. According to this system, French was to be taught officially at secondary school (Ministry of Education, 1984). Mulama (2008) posits that children acquire language easily during their initial years in primary school with appropriate syllabuses, trained teachers and well developed resource materials. In 2017, the Ministry of Education launched the Competency Based Curriculum (CBC), designed by KICD. The main objective of CBC was to emphasize the significance of developing skills and knowledge and applying competencies to real life situations as compared to the 8.4.4 design which was more academic. This means that learning would take 2 years at pri-primary level, 3 years in lower primary, 3 years in upper primary, 3 years in lower secondary, 3 years in Senior School and 3 years at the Higher education level (2:3:3:3:3:3). Under the CBC design, French learning and teaching would start at Grade 4 in Primary School up to Higher education level.

The policy on instructional resource materials stipulates that Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) has the role to vet and recommend learning resources. These resources are then published in the “Orange Book” which gives a list of recommended instructional materials to be used in teaching and learning. In the teaching of French in secondary school in Kenya, four text books have been authorized, which are; ‘Au Sommet’, ‘Entre Copains’, ‘Tour de Force’ and ‘Parlons Français’. The text books have tasks which enhance composition writing. In an interview by Crawford (2013) on “Why publishing in Kenya is Tougher than Boxing”, it is evident that publishing of

French books can be like fighting an endless round, with the same intensity, and yet you must still know how to pace yourself in order to go the distance. One has to contend with multiple moving targets in a constrained but still fast-changing environment where rules, do not really count.

The Ambassador of France in 2010 presided over the opening of a website for teachers of French to enhance easy access to information on new approaches of French language teaching and learning. (Ufaransa Leo). This information was posted on the teachers of French in Kenya website ([www.katf.co.ke](http://www.katf.co.ke)) which is interactive and one can easily tell that majority of teachers of French access it. Schools with internet connection or satellite dish are able to use selected programs on TV 5 Monde and Radio France International (RFI 89.9 FM) where learners are guided on how to write compositions in French. Additionally, there are twenty (20) resource centers with internet connectivity in specific learning institutions offering French language. Teachers and students of French are allowed to visit and make reference to these materials in order to improve on composition writing skills.

As concerns policy on co-curricular activities, the Ministry of Education (MOE) rolls out a calendar for co-curricular activities every year. The activities include; Kenya National Drama Festivals (first term) Kenya Music Festivals, (second term) and the East African Community and E-Kitabu French Essay Writing Competitions (third term). These activities help in the intellectual, emotional, social, moral, physical and aesthetic development of the learner. However, despite all this effort, French Composition writing

is still performed poorly compared to French comprehension and French oral examination not only in national examinations, but also in learners' class work.

The Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) was established in 1980 and was mandated under the Ministry of Education policy to carry out assessment of students at class 8 and form 4. Wanjiru (2017) on Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examination (KCSE) results of 2016, found out that 295,463 candidates were labeled failures because they obtained D and E grades in this national examination. It was evident that the biggest failure of the 8.4.4 system was its academic and examination focused approach. The policy on this system laid a lot of emphasis on summative tests, examinations and competition which might have led to the downfall of the system.

The Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) which replaces 8:4:4 provides that at the end of the learning period, every learner should have achieved 7 core competences which are: communication & collaboration, creativity & imagination, critical thinking & problem-solving, citizenship, learning to learn, self-efficacy and digital literacy. Most of these competencies corroborates well with Task-Based Approach (TBA). Communication for example encompasses the knowledge, skills, processes and dispositions associated with interactions among students. During performance of tasks in TBA, there is a lot of interaction through group-work.

Creativity, being another competence of CBC is the ability to come up with new and exciting ideas. Creative thinking involves the generation of ideas and concepts that are innovative in the context in which they are generated, reflection on their value

to the individual or others, and the development of chosen ideas and concepts from thought to reality. When learners think creatively they become curious and open-minded, develop a sense of wonder and joy in learning. In addition, they demonstrate a willingness to think divergently and are comfortable with complexity. TBA corroborates with creativity in CBC as it is valid for interpreting new materials, comprehension, communication, stimulating interest, reflecting on personal experiences and learning from them (Ellis, 2003).

According to the policies of the Kenya National examination council, composition writing is tested in KCSE under paper 1 (501/1). Form Four candidates are expected to write two compositions of which one is functional writing and the other is a narration or descriptive writing and is marked out of 45 marks. This therefore means that composition writing carries more marks than the comprehension and oral examination. The candidates may be asked to write a dialogue (conversation), curriculum vitae, letter, advertisement, recipe, poster, report, program or e-mail. Paper 2 is French grammar and comprehension (30 marks) while paper 3(25 marks) entails the French oral examination.

According to the reports of KNEC (2011, 2012, 2013), composition writing in French was poorly performed compared to the other two examinations. The point of weakness in composition writing was that the candidates had problems with accents, punctuation, tenses, spellings and grammar (KNEC, 2013). According to these reports, it was evident that there was absence of essay writing practice. Other observations made by KNEC

included students having challenges with the format and various forms of register while many tended to reproduce text book essays learnt in class and memorized.

Nairobi City County being metropolitan and the capital city of Kenya has the highest number of secondary schools offering French and it is assumed that the schools have enough instructional resources and well trained teachers. The neighboring counties are Kiambu and Machakos which are assumed to have fewer schools, insufficient instructional materials and fewer trained teachers. However, according to the national examination results, Nairobi schools do not show any exceptional performance in composition writing. That is why Nairobi was chosen as the locale of this study. Table 1.1 shows the performance of French in KCSE in composition writing (Paper 1) for three counties (Nairobi, Kiambu and Machokos) from 2011 to 2015.

**Table 1:1 Performance in French composition writing in Nairobi, Machakos and Kiambu counties for 5 years (2011 – 2015). Paper 1 (501/1)**

| <b>YEAR</b> | <b>COUNTY</b> | <b>MAX SCORE</b> | <b>MEAN SCORE</b> |
|-------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <b>2011</b> | NAIROBI       | 45               | 23. 80            |
|             | KIAMBU        | 45               | 24.26             |
|             | MACHAKOS      | 45               | 24. 10            |
| <b>2012</b> | NAIROBI       | 45               | 22.29             |
|             | KIAMBU        | 45               | 24.28             |
|             | MACHAKOS      | 45               | 22.30             |
| <b>2013</b> | NAIROBI       | 45               | 22.50             |
|             | KIAMBU        | 45               | 22. 78            |
|             | MACHAKOS      | 45               | 24.19             |
| 2014        | NAIROBI       | 45               | <b>22. 86</b>     |
|             | KIAMBU        | 45               | 24.13             |
|             | MACHAKOS      | 45               | <b>22.34</b>      |
| 2015        | NAIROBI       | 45               | 22.18             |
|             | KIAMBU        | 45               | <b>25.21</b>      |
|             | MACHAKOS      | 45               | <b>24.97</b>      |

**Source: Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) 2011 & 2015**

From the table, it is evident that schools in Nairobi have not been doing well in composition writing despite being in the best environment to teach and learn French. In the year 2015 for example, Nairobi City County performed the poorest in composition writing (22.18 out of 45) compared to Kiambu (25.21) and Machakos County (24.97).

As a result of this poor performance, it was essential to carry out a study on the Effectiveness of the task-based approach on learners' quality writing of French composition in secondary schools in Nairobi City County.

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

Learning French gives one the pleasure of learning a beautiful, rich, melodious language that is often called the language of love. It is a major language of international communication, the second most widely learned after English and the sixth most widely spoken in the world. Moreover, learning French develops one's skill set which increases career opportunities and reaps cognitive benefits like being smarter, better multitasking, memory improvement, changes in perception and decision making.

Task-based approach is important in the teaching and learning of French composition writing in Kenya as the learner is the social actor while the teacher is a facilitator. According to the Kenya National Examination Council reports (KNEC, 2015), learners still lack the appropriate vocabulary to write a quality composition in French. Some of the reasons given for low quality writing include, but not limited to lack of proper guidance, flow of ideas, poor grammar and lack of understanding of the topic. The reasons may be attributed to the traditional teaching approaches used by the teachers of French. It is evident that when learners are not involved in the teaching and learning process, there is a possibility of them missing on the key areas of the content and therefore affecting their performance and understanding. Obi & Ene (2019) writing on the Effect of Task-Based Approach on Achievement showed that students taught with TBA performed better than those taught with the conventional approach.

French has been accorded five lessons of 40 minutes each per week for teaching in Form 3 as directed by Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development. Teachers are supposed to use these lessons to teach language skills which are; listening, reading, writing and speaking, interaction and grammar. It is not clear how the lessons are distributed and therefore, it is left to the individual teacher to decide. This may make some teachers to focus more on other skills at the expense of writing and therefore they may use little time for teaching composition writing.

The low learner achievement on French composition writing in secondary schools in Kenya is an issue of concern to many stakeholders in the education system. This has attracted the attention of school administrators, parents, teachers and learners. According to the teachers, learners are writing very little or nothing at all on foolscaps meant for composition writing tests. Other teachers have observed that learners may write only two sentences in a composition that is marked out of ten or fifteen marks. The study investigated the effectiveness of Task-Based Approach in teaching composition writing in French in order to ascertain its impact on the learners which emphasizes learners carrying out various tasks as they learn.

#### **1.4 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of the task-based approach on learner's writing of French composition in secondary schools in Nairobi City County, Kenya. It focused on the methods used in teaching composition writing, the nature and extent to which TBA is used, teachers' and learners' perceptions towards TBA and the challenges of TBA.

### **1.5 Objectives of the Study.**

The objectives of this research were to;

- i) Establish the methods used in teaching and learning French composition writing among secondary school learners in Nairobi City County.
- ii) Establish the (i) nature (ii) extent to which Task-Based Approach is used to teach French composition writing among secondary school learners in Nairobi City County.
- iii) Investigate the effects of TBA on learners' performance using the 4 evaluation indicators in French composition writing in secondary schools in Nairobi City County?
- iv) Determine (i) teachers' (ii) learners' perceptions towards use of TBA in French composition writing in secondary school in Nairobi City County.
- v) Explore the challenges in the use of Task-Based Approach in French composition writing in Secondary school in Nairobi City County.

### **1.6 Research Questions.**

- i) Which methods are used to teach French composition writing among secondary school learners in Nairobi City County?
- ii) What is the (i) nature and (ii) extent of use of Task-Based Approach in French composition writing among secondary school learners in Nairobi City County?
- iii) How does TBA impact learners' performance in composition writing in secondary schools in Nairobi City County.

- iv) What are the perceptions of (i) teachers and (ii) learners on use of TBA in teaching French composition writing among secondary school in Nairobi City County?
- v) Which challenges arise when using' Task-Based Approach in French composition writing in Secondary schools in Nairobi City County?

### **1.7 Significance of the Study**

This study is significant because French language teachers will benefit as they will keep abreast of the methods and approaches in teaching quality writing in French in class. The research will help teachers connect with sources of information and network for professional support. This research will enhance the teacher-learner interaction in the classroom. This will consequently lead to improved grades at Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE). Students studying French will become autonomous in learning French and improve on their composition writing skills.

The study is significant to administrators as it will help them solve educational problems and to address their own school professional practice and improve student learning and achievement. The institutions teaching French will use the research findings to improve their competences in teaching and learning process. Publishers of instructional materials will review content in text books to include Task-Based approach. The study will help the Quality Assurance and Standards officers to establish, maintain and improve standards in training, assessment and implementation of co-curriculum activities. Finally, the findings of the study will stimulate further research in appropriate methodologies in the teaching of French.

### **1.8 Delimitations of the Study**

The study was delimited to the following factors;

First and foremost, the basic structure of the study was delimited to the objectives and research questions. Secondly, the study was delimited to quasi experimental research design. Lastly, the interpretation of the research findings is delimited to urban setting since data of the study were drawn from Nairobi City County.

### **1.9 Limitations and Scope of the study.**

The following were limitations of the research;

Firstly, the study had a sample size of 132 participants who were 124 students taking French in Form 3 and 8 teachers of French in Form 3. Secondly, the study was limited by the data collection instruments; thus questionnaires, student test and lesson observation form.

The scope of the study was based on specific variables which were independent, intervening and dependent variables.

### **1.10 Assumptions of the study**

The study assumed that;

- i) Teachers are using various methods to teach composition writing.
- ii) Teachers and learners are using Task-Based Approach without proper knowledge.

- iii) Learners and teachers have varied perceptions towards TBA use in composition writing.
- iv) Teachers are using the available resources to teach quality composition writing using Task -Based Approach.
- v) Quality composition is based on adherence to instructions, textual, linguistic and communicative competences.
- vi) Instructional resources are available for use in composition writing using Task-Based Approach.

### **1.11 Theoretical framework.**

The present study on Effectiveness of task-based method of teaching on learners' achievement in French composition writing employed Activity Theory (Engestrom, 1987) in trying to understand the Task-Based Approach in teaching and learning of French among Kenyan students in secondary schools in Nairobi City County. The Activity theory which originated in Russia in the 20<sup>th</sup> century was originally a psychological theory with human beings and social interaction as their main factor.

The Engestrom theory (1987) is based on the cultural historical Activity theory which was developed from individual to inter-organizational learning visualized in the form of a triangle. The Activity system theory has three main elements namely; subject, object and outcome. The subject works towards the object which is transformed into outcome. Therefore, in this study on the Effectiveness of the task-based approach on learner's quality writing in French composition, the subject was the teacher and learner. The object in the system was poor composition writing skills by learners and use of TBA.

The outcome was quality teaching and learning which resulted in quality composition writing evidenced by improved performance in the 4 language indicators of adherence to instructions, communicative, linguistic and textual competences.

This helped to understand the objectives of the study and the different types of tasks, using specific tools and their performance in order to achieve a particular outcome. According to Kain and Wardle (2013), researchers use Activity theory to study how people engage in all kinds of activities. The rationale for using this theory was that it was useful for investigating tasks in context (Engestrom, 1987). In this case, the school was the social context in which learning took place. The social event of TBA also involved activities outside the school such as Music, Drama and Essay writing competitions as well as classroom activities like; dictation, pictorial compositions and e-mail writing.

Activity theory has goal-oriented as the main focus. The motives of the learners determine how they respond to a particular task. They will ask themselves if the task has any meaning in their life. In the case of this study, writing a dialogue between a ticket seller and a prospective buyer would benefit learners who may find themselves in a francophone country where they would be expected to purchase a ticket at the railway station.

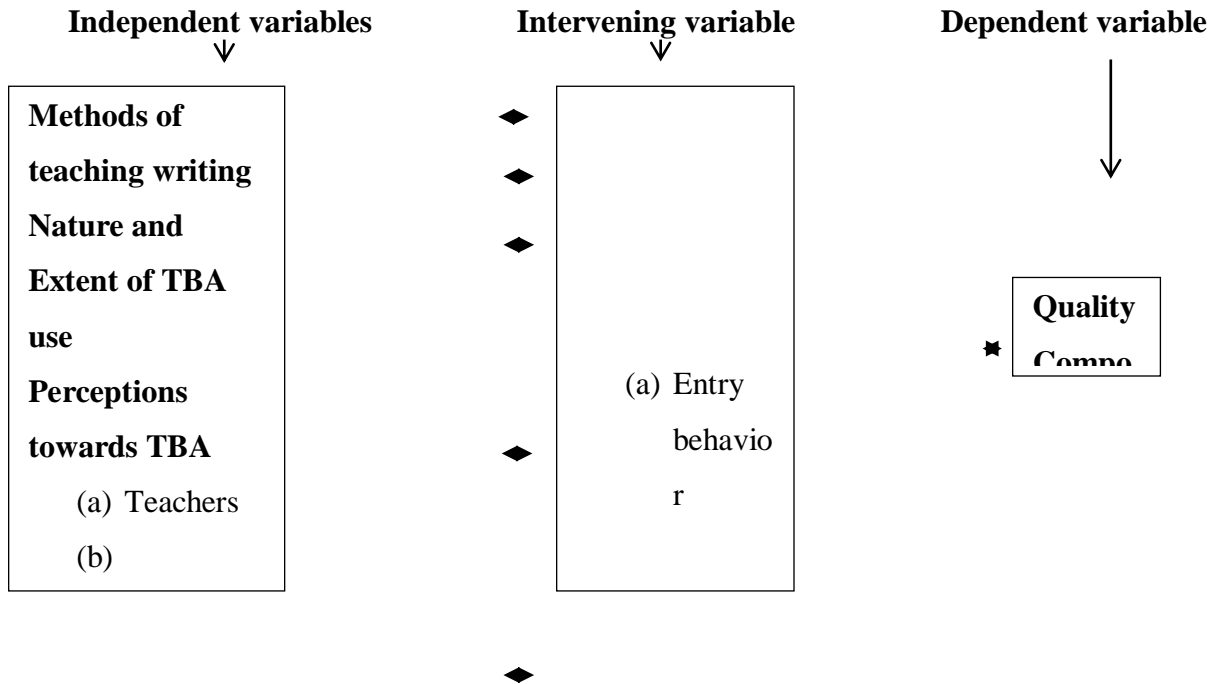
Innovation and transformation which sought to give answers to the objective on the challenges of TBA directs educators on how they can improve on composition instruction. This falls under historical conditions because methods have been evolving over time from the traditional to modern methods. Thorn (2004) contends that Activity theory can be used as a research framework and a heuristic supporting innovation.

Moreover, it enables researchers to define and analyze an activity system. Possible problems are diagnosed and a framework for implementing innovations is provided.

This theoretical framework helped to understand the objectives and variables of the study. It was suitable for this study on effectiveness of Task-Based Approach on learner's achievement as it helped to understand how tasks are used to achieve quality composition writing through proper adherence to instructions, communicative, linguistic and textual competences. It also helped to understand the methods used in teaching composition writing, the extent to which TBA is being used, resources, teacher and learner perceptions and the challenges of TBA.

### **1.12 Conceptual Framework**

The study was guided by the following conceptual framework that was derived from the theory and the objectives of the study. Figure 1.1 shows the interaction of independent, intervening and dependent variables



**Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework.**

Figure 1.1 shows the variables of the study which include independent, intervening and dependent variables. The study sought to conceptualize the model of Activity System by Engestrom. It was useful for understanding how a wide range of factors work together to impact an activity. To transform the objects into outcomes, the subjects needed tools and instruments which included knowledge, training in TBA and instructional resources. For Activity system theory to be effective, there had to be the community in which the subjects had the same problem. This community was the school where there was division of labour among the subjects. Learners were drawn from different backgrounds, had

different entry behavior and ages and their role was to learn. Teachers were to take care of learners' needs and teach while administrators made policies.

In the learning and teaching of French, various tools are developed and used. These include; video and audio tapes, charts, maps, text books, computers and internet and non-material tools like language. The study sought to find out the appropriate resources to make the actionable perspective effective in quality composition writing. The teaching and learning objectives are geared towards both formative and summative evaluations. In this study, a pre-test was given to students before teaching them using TBA. After six weeks of teaching using TBA, a post-test was administered to the same students and the results were compared to determine the effectiveness of TBA.

The independent variables were; nature and extent of TBA use, teachers' and learners' methods used in composition writing, perceptions towards TBA, instructional resources and evaluation indicators; adherence to instructions, communicative, linguistic and textual competences. The intervening variables were; entry behavior, learning environment and institutional policies. Finally, the dependent variable was quality composition writing in French.

### **1.13 Operational definition of terms**

**Adherence to instructions** – Write a dialogue of between 80 – 120 words.

**Challenges** – Setbacks encountered in using TBA.

**Co-Curricular activities** – Activities performed outside the classroom with the aim of perfecting French acquisition.

**Composition Writing:** A learning task where the student expresses himself through writing in prose while adhering to instructions to show communicative, textual and linguistic competencies.

**Communicative Competence** – Ability to pass the message in writing a composition.

**Competence** – Ability to effectively accomplish a given activity in a given timeframe.

**Common European Framework of References for Languages** – a framework of reference designed to provide a transparent, coherent and comprehensive basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses and curriculum guidelines, design of teaching and learning materials and the assessment of foreign language proficiency: A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2.

**Effectiveness** - the ability of Task-Based approach to realize the intended outcome which is language fluency and accuracy.

**Evaluation indicators** – Standards on which assessment is based: Adherence to instructions, communicative, linguistic and textual competences.

**Form 3 students** – Learners in their 3<sup>rd</sup> year in secondary school aged between 15 to 19 years.

**Instructional methods** – Methods used in teaching and learning composition writing.

**Instructional Resources materials** - Materials used in teaching and learning.

**Learner** – The person who performs real-life tasks in the learning process so that he/she can be fluent and accurate in the French language.

**Learner's performance** – Scores attained by the learner in composition writing.

**Linguistic competence** – Ability to use grammatical expressions eg pronouns, verbs etc. correctly in a composition.

**Nature and extent of TBA use** – Types of tasks, when and how TBA is used

**Perceptions** – the way teachers and learners understand, regard or interpret Task-Based Approach

**Task** – A learning activity that engages learners in logical thinking in the target language while their attention is focused on meaning rather than form.

**Task-Based Approach** – A learner-centered method of study where learners perform real-life tasks to acquire language fluency and accuracy.

**Textual competence** – Ability to write a neat, legible and presentable dialogue.

## **CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The literature reviewed was done in line with the study objectives which are; to establish the methods being used to teach quality writing, to establish the nature and extent to which TBA is being used, to investigate the effect of TBA on learners' performance, to determine (i) teachers' and (ii) learners' perceptions towards TBA and to explore the challenges of TBA. From the related literature, the study isolated the gap of the study.

### **2.2: French language curriculum, objectives, teaching methods, resources and assessment methods.**

French is an official language of the African Union, COMESA, U.N. and several other international organizations. Kenya has become a center of international activity, a communication center, a popular conference venue and plays host to many international organizations. Therefore, it requires a significant number of French speakers, bilingual secretaries, translators and interpreters. In addition, the increasing number of Francophone concerns in Kenya and its developing export trade to Francophone countries creates a demand for French-speaking personnel in the technical, manufacturing and tertiary sectors. Moreover, the area of scientific and technological research for national development entails information exchange in French. Hence the importance of French language learning for future scientists and technologists. French speakers are needed in Agriculture, Medicine, Engineering and Industry. Finally, the learning of French is vital for the promotion of African unity and global understanding.

The French Language Curriculum describes the minimum content required to achieve the common learning objectives. The content for the French language curriculum has been created following a pragmatic approach, based on well-known publications for French as a second language (CECRL, 2001) and experience in creating, developing and delivering French language training.

As concerns learning the language framework to local language, each level will require between 150 and 300 hours of instruction depending on contextual or language-intrinsic factors; deciding on course type (regular or specialized), length and format (face-to-face, online or blended), based on the UN levels covered in each language; taking into account existing best practices and currently used in-house or mainstream learning materials.

The KICD syllabus (2002) has recommended the following learning and teaching resources: maps, songs, audio-visual materials, photographs, real objects mobile phones sample letters, school rules, language games, calendars, documentaries, flow charts, video clips, currencies, travel documents puzzles, poems, skits magazines, posters, flash cards, drawings, postcards, timetables (Report of Kenya, 2002. P. 134)

In addition, the assessment methods in writing according to the KICD syllabus are; writing a sample e-mail, guided compositions, writing dialogues, articles, recipes, writing improvised arrival/departure schedules, writing programmes, curriculum vitae, posters, advertisements etc.

The communicative approach to language learning and teaching was recommended in the Kenyan French syllabus (KIE, 2002 p.116). Topics to be covered in the four-year course

according to the syllabus included: French speaking world, socialization aspect of humanity, family, school, leisure & hobbies, health & environment, transport, tourism & other economic activities, media and information technology (KIE, 2002).

French curriculum objectives refer to four official objectives of teaching and learning French in secondary schools in Kenya as stated in the KICD syllabus. These are: equip learners with basic communicative skills, give learners access to oral and written materials, facilitate further studies in Francophone institutions and promote global peace through understanding and appreciation of cultures of French-speaking peoples. (Republic of Kenya, 2002).

### **2.3: Methods of Teaching Writing Skills**

Several methods and instructional resources are recommended by curriculum developers and education stakeholders on teaching writing skills. The teacher is at liberty to choose which methods are appropriate. Some of these methods include;

#### **2.3.1: Product-Process Approach**

Writing is a productive skill and a way of communicating which enhances learning and self-expression. The product approach of teaching writing presents a model text which is discussed and analyzed. In process writing, pre-writing strategies like formulating a topic, discussion and having an organizer are taught. These strategies include: re-reading, reviewing, editing, post writing, getting feedback from peers and text structure of introduction, body and conclusion. Klimova (2013) in an experiment to assess performance in writing using product-process approach used the following criteria;

Content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics. He evaluated the results in order to find out whether the product or process approach was more suitable for development of students' writing skills where he used a t-test. The results showed that the product approach to writing was better for teaching writing skills. Contrary to this study, the present study, which used a quasi-experimental design focused on composition writing and evaluation was done using the criteria of adherence to instructions, communicative, linguistic and textual competences.

### **2.3.2: Audio-visual**

Barile (2014), observed that Audio-Visual methods such as use of videos, CDs, DVDs, radio and television bring writing concepts to life helping students to understand how writing in school applies to the real-world. In this method, students may listen to a sample text before writing their own. According to Divya (2019) audio-visual method provides a variety of visual aids to both the teacher and learner which provides an opportunity to see, handle and manipulate. This method creates more zeal and accurate concepts are taught. It improves the learners analytical and critical thinking skills. The study noted that one disadvantage with this method is that visual aids are more of a distraction if used throughout the presentation as compared to giving key points and they take more time to prepare. Unlike this study which was done using students of EFL in listening, the present study used students of French and it tested writing skills.

In a research on Audio-visual teaching in college Physics, Xiaojie (2011), a survey was used with 132 students to find out if they recognized audio-visual method. 93% of the students recognized this method and reported that they grasped the content. It was noted

that audio visual method has to be combined with traditional teaching to enhance the quality of teaching. Although this study used a survey in Physics, the present study was quasi-experimental and it tested composition writing in French on 124 students.

### **2.3.3: Group discussion**

Cashin(2011) defines group discussion as an activity involving oral or written expression of different points of view in a given situation. Discussions offer collaborative exchange of ideas among learners and teachers which furthers thinking and understanding. Student centered discussions enable learners to be at the center of their learning. Creating groups of three to four students ensures that all students participate in the learning process. Creating team building projects and letting students write reports on the projects enhances quality writing and teamwork.

In a study on group discussion, Abdulbaki (2018) used group discussion as the independent variable. General preferences, improvement of language, cognitive enhancement and personal development were the dependent variables in the study. The results showed that students agreed that they never feel bored during discussion and they believed that discussion was a time saver. This research also showed that teachers do not use discussions because in most cases, it becomes a limited dialogue between the teacher and a few pupils, classes tend to become noisy and uncontrolled which threatens teaching. Unlike the above research, the present research had resources, evaluation indicators, perceptions and nature and use of tasks as the independent variables. The dependent variable was quality composition writing and it was carried out in secondary schools.

#### **2.3.4: Demonstration**

According to Tersoo (2018), demonstration is based on demonstrating skills, principles and theory via performance, movie, slide presentation and live display. It should be planned ahead of time in order to make a better explanation of the technical steps to students and help them repeat the activity. Complex skills and principles are understood, it motivates students to study and knowledge becomes permanent as different human skills are used. However, in this method, there may be lack of equipment for making demonstrative models and it requires significant effort from the teacher. Although this study looked at demonstration method in the university in teaching science subjects, the present study looked at demonstration in teaching French composition writing in secondary school.

#### **2.3.5: Grammar-translation**

According to Germain (1993), the traditional approach of composition writing emphasized grammar-translation. One of its major characteristics was that the learner began learning by deduction. The objective of this method was to enable the learner to write literature and translate from the first language to the target language. The learners were directed by the teacher to learn through reciting and memorizing techniques and so they could not develop their critical thinking, problem solving and decision making skills. Contrary to the traditional approach, in Task-Based Approach which was the focus of this study, learning is through induction, the learner is the social actor while the teacher is the facilitator and grammar is taught in context. The objective of TBA is to execute communal actions and tasks with others.

### **2.3.6: Problem Based Learning**

According to Ellis (2003), the Problem Based Learning (PBL) is a student-centered pedagogy in which students learn about a subject in the context of complex, multifaceted and realistic problems. Larson (2001) writes that one of the virtues of PBL is that it displays a significant advantage over traditional methods on how the communicative skills of the students are improved. By building a language course around assignments that require students to act, interact and communicate, it is possible to mimic some of the aspects of learning a language. In a PBL classroom, vocabulary is introduced in a real-world situation, rather than as words on a list. Students are not passive receivers of knowledge, but are instead required to actively acquire the knowledge. Contrary to the PBL, in the Task Based Approach which is the method in the present study, priority is given to group sense coming from social solidarity and the learner is taught about needs in language until they achieve the set objective of writing a quality composition through carrying out various tasks.

### **2.3.7: Communicative Approach**

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) according to Widdowson (1983) is favored by many because it focuses on the communicative skills of the language; reading, writing, listening and speaking. Unlike in communicative approach, in TBA, on which the present study focused, the fifth language skill which is interaction is taught. This skill gives learners an opportunity to communicate in a real-life scenario and not an imaginary situation. Grammar and language structures are taught and learned in context by using the language and not memorization. Hamer (2001) states that the communicative

approach requires one to know the use of sentences in dialogues and texts. Swan (1985), a critique of communicative approach says that this approach is deemed a success if the teacher understands the student. However, native speakers of the target language may still have difficulty understanding the students.

In a comparison between Communicative Approach (CA) and Task-Based Approach, according to Rosen (2009), Communicative approach focuses on skills based on knowledge. (*les saviors; savoir être, savoir apprendre, savoir-faire, savoir vivre*)'. In this case, the learner has knowledge, behaviour, mastery and experiments with the knowledge acquired. Secondly, while in Communicative approach, the role of the learner is a communicative actor, in TBA, the learner is a social actor. The teacher in the communicative approach is an analyst of needs, provider of communication tools and corrects errors, in TBA the teacher is a facilitator, a guide and an organizer of content. Finally, while the mode of teaching in communicative approach is by speech acts, role plays and simulation, TBA uses tasks, projects, tools and conducive ambiance. Table 2.1 by Rosen (2009) shows a summary of the differences between Communicative approach and TBA.

**Table 2.1: Differences between Communicative and Task-based approaches.**

| <b>Aspect</b>       | <b>Communicative Approach</b>                                   | <b>Task-Based Approach</b>  |
|---------------------|---|---|
| Theory              | Cognitivism theory  | Constructivism theory   |
| Role of the learner | Learner acts as a Communicative actor who expresses him/herself | Learner acts as a Social actor who reacts.                                  |
| Role of the teacher | Analyses needs, provides communication tools, corrects errors   | Facilitator, guide, organizer of content.                                   |
| Mode of teaching    | Teaching by speech acts, role plays and simulation              | Teaching by tasks, projects, tools and conducive ambiance                   |
| Content             | Language skills   | Skills based on knowledge ( <i>les competences</i> )                        |
| Evaluation          | Evaluation of the communication competence                      | Evaluation of communicative, linguistic individual and social competencies. |

**Source : Le Français dans le monde (2009) (French in the World)**

### **2.3.8: Shortcomings of the Communicative Approach.**

According to Firtina (2012) the following are disadvantages of Communicative approach;

1. It does not emphasize learning structural grammar and yet achievement of communicative competence is difficult without mastery of grammar.
2. Cultural bias may affect the reliability of tests.
3. Less attention is given to the context in which teaching and learning take place.
4. Focusses on fluency but not accuracy which may lead to incoherent and grammatically incorrect sentences.
5. The weaker learners who struggle and cannot use the target language continue to make mistakes and may eventually give up.

6. It is good for intermediate and advanced level learners but not beginners.
7. Its adoption raises important issues on teacher training, material development, testing and evaluation.

As a result of these limitations, the Task-Based Approach (TBA) was recommended by the Common European Cadre Reference for Languages (CECRL) in 2001.

### **2.3.9: Task-Based Approach (TBA)**

In a research in France on “Implementing a TBA plurilingual program in a University”, Starkey (2017) used Foreign languages and International Business post-graduate students. A mixed-methods approach was employed where a questionnaire, interview and observation schedule were used to test the degree to which the students accepted the program. The results showed that majority of the students accepted the program. The weaknesses in TBA were identified as lack of necessity for collaborative language techniques. The threats were socio-cultural and contextual in nature where French students did not generally appreciate teamwork and preferred to work individually. Although the above study used questionnaires, interview and observation schedule with university students, in the present study, secondary school learners and teachers formed the sample of the study and a quasi-experimental method was used with questionnaires, lesson observation form and student test as data collection instruments.

In Reunion Island, writing on ‘Real-life task using Web 2.0 technologies’ Olivier (2018) found out that the Common European Cadre Reference for Languages (CECRL)

differentiates between two types of tasks, thus tasks that reflect real-life use and pedagogical tasks. The research presented the core results of analysis of interactions between Irish students and their French partners on a dedicated forum. The results showed that the teacher in TBA was perceived as the initiator of the task, owner of the forum and evaluator of the students who contributed a lot in modifying how students interact with partners and as one who can inhibit communication. The above study looked at real-life tasks using Web 2.0 technologies and showed the interaction between Irish and French students. Contrary to the above study, this study on TBA in quality writing tested composition writing among form 3 students studying French in Kenya. The methods discussed are important to the current study since they lay the basis and highlight some of the ways writing skills are taught of which TBA which is the focus of the study forms part.

#### **2.3.9.1. Types of tasks and Co-curricular activities that enhance TBA**

The type of tasks in TBA include letter writing, filling in blanks, essays, writing of narratives and descriptions, report writing, pictorial compositions, recipe & CV writing and drawing of posters. Co-curricular activities like drama and music are used in order to improve the learners' writing skills. Yuli (2015) writing on the techniques of teaching writing to Seven Grade students found out that there are two techniques which are group and individual writing. He also found out that limited vocabulary and boredom are the problems faced by the teacher and students in learning writing. Although Yuli (2015) researched on techniques of teaching writing skills, he used Seventh Grade students in Surakart while the present research on effectiveness of TBA in composition writing used Form 3 students who are in secondary school in Kenya.

Farman, (2018) in a research on ‘Academic performance and co-curricular activities’ showed that students who participated in activities had high academic performance as compared to those who did not participate. Although the above study examined co-curricular activities, its focus was on academic performance but the present research on quality writing focuses on co-curricular activities that enhance tasks in French teaching and learning

Co-curricular activities are included in the academic curriculum in order for students to develop skills beyond the subject knowledge. According to Anjum (2019), co-curricular activities are meant for moral values, intellectual skills, personality progress, social skills and character appeal in the learners’ life. According to the Ministry of Education in Kenya, some of the co-curricular activities in teaching and learning French include; essay writing competitions, drama, music festivals, exchange programs, school trips and French clubs among others. According to Reginier (2019), school trips have budgetary constraints. This is because they may require travel from one region to another which means schools or parents have to take care of transportation and meal costs which amounts to much expenses.

#### **2.4 Nature and extent of Task-Based Approach use.**

The nature and extent of TBA use in this study involved information on type of tasks, forms of writing, instructional resources, assessment in TBA. The two types of writing are communicative and academic writing. Examples of activities that enhance composition writing include; regular reading, journaling, story prompts, creating blogs, e-mail writing, crossword puzzles, word games, picture stories and free writing. The learners are taught how to write a dialogue (conversation), curriculum vitae, letter,

advertisement, recipe, poster, program or e-mail. The teacher has the role to create a language rich environment through grammar instruction, sentence combination, audio-visual stimulation and encouraging poetry writing.

Task Based Approach was introduced as an approach of teaching French in the Common European Reference for Languages (CECRL, 2001). A task has four main characteristics; (a) it involves a primary (pragmatic) focus on meaning, (b) it has some kind of gap, (c) participants choose the linguistic resources needed to complete the task and (d) it has a clearly defined, non-linguistic outcome. It emphasizes purposeful and functional language use by using real-life tasks in the classroom for students to experience learning. Although this method is not a departure from other methods, it presents a model that is based on sound theoretical foundations and it takes into account the need for authentic communication. Although the characteristics of tasks are given in the above study, in this study on effectiveness of TBA in quality writing, the learner was given the task of writing a composition before and after being taught using TBA.

Nunan (2004) defines the communicative task as a piece of classroom task which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating or interacting in the target language while their attention is focused on meaning rather than form. Examples of tasks involve visiting a doctor, carrying out an interview, booking a ticket or calling customer service for help. While the study reviewed focused on the type of tasks, the current research focused on the extent to which these tasks are used in teaching writing. In the present study, a task is defined in terms of writing a dialogue between a seller and buyer of tickets at the railway station.

Ellis (2003), categorizes tasks into focused and unfocused tasks depending on the way they are performed and not on their design. Listening tasks are valid for comprehension and interpreting new materials. Writing tasks which is the focus of this study are valid for communication, stimulating interest or reflecting on personal experiences and learning from them. Although Ellis (2003) gives us the categories of tasks, the linguistic competence of a task is not considered. Contrary to the above research, the current study used the linguistic competence on the marking scheme as one of the evaluation indicators that tested quality composition writing.

Prabhu (1987) identified three main types of tasks as; Information gap which involves a transfer of given information from one person to another. Reasoning gap involves deriving some new information from given information through processes of inference, deduction or reasoning. Opinion gap activity involves identifying and articulating a personal preference, feeling or attitude in response to a given situation. In this study where the nature and extent of TBA was assessed, the researcher observed the tasks in the classroom thus; role playing, dramatizing, filling in gaps, listening and watching video clips. These tasks fall under the above three main types as identified by Prabhu. Although Prabhu (1987) identified the main tasks, the extent to which they were used was not studied. In the current study, the extent to which tasks were used in writing was investigated.

Youssef, (2010) outlines the characteristics of the TBA class as follows; when the students' attention is focused on the task, it is much easier to learn the grammar items well. The purpose of language learning is not just learning grammar knowledge, but

practical use of grammar knowledge. Contrary to the study by Youssef (2010), the present research evaluated grammar in writing a quality dialogue between a seller and a buyer of tickets under linguistic competence.

In order to make the tasks in TBA more meaningful and interesting, according to Youssef, (2010) the grammar class asks for student co-operation. A teacher is no longer a dominator in class but a facilitator of learning. The student individuality is appreciated and learners learn from one another. More fun and interest in learning together where learners are allowed to use whatever language they want is experienced in TBA. This makes it closer to a real-life communicative situation. While the studies reviewed above focused on the role of the teacher and learner to make TBA meaningful, the current study focused on how often teachers use TBA, instructional resources, co-curricular activities that enhance tasks in order to make TBA interesting and meaningful.

According to Skehan (1994), TBA has two important goals thus; (i) Accuracy which is defined as how well language is produced in relationship to the rule system of the target language and (ii) Fluency – which concerns the learners' capacity to produce language in real time without undue posing or hesitation. While the above study focused on the rule system of the target language to test accuracy and fluency, in the present study, accuracy and fluency were evaluated through the 4 evaluation indicators of adherence to instructions, communicative, textual and linguistic competences and various other assessment methods used in TBA.

Seetha (2004) in a research on 'A critical review of the Tamil Language and Syllabus in TBA' notes that grammar teaching is not central because learners will acquire the

required grammar as a by-product of carrying out tasks and activities. The researcher suggested the introduction of a drama syllabus and texts with approaches to oral language. While the studies above looked at Tamil language and TBA syllabus, in the present research on TBA in quality writing of French composition, the focus was on French language and the resources used to make TBA effective in writing.

#### **2.4.1: Type of tasks and use of Task-based lesson plan**

Three type of tasks have been identified by Prabhu (1987) as; information gap tasks, reasoning gap tasks and opinion task gaps. The activities at the information gap tasks are: creating two versions of a document each with different information missing, students ask and answer questions to find the missing information, debriefing the activity to ensure accountability and accuracy, planning ways to use the information they gathered.

Reasoning gap tasks are those in which students are asked to derive some information from what they have been given. They are required to comprehend and convey information. Opinion gap tasks are those that students are asked to convey their own personal preferences, feelings or ideas about a particular situation. On a higher level, they may be asked to take part in a discussion or debate about a political or social issue. On a lower level, learners may be asked to complete a story.

Willis (2011) sample of the Task Based Lesson Plan proposes three cycles; pre-task, task and language focus(post-task) levels. At the pre-task level, the teacher introduces the topic and the task. Techniques such as brainstorming, matching phrases to pictures and choosing the odd one out can be used. At this stage, the teacher may divide the learners

into pairs or small groups. The learners engage in activities that will either help them to recall words and phrases that will be useful during the performance of the main task or to learn new words and phrases that are essential to the task.

At the task cycle, the teacher walks around the groups to listen to what the students are discussing without correcting them. At this level, the learner performs the task using the language they already know and the learner is given an opportunity to improve on that language. The tasks may include either a reading, listening, writing or speaking or a problem-solving exercise. By this stage, the learner has experienced motivation and use of the language. The students will then prepare a report for the whole class on how they did the task and what conclusions they reached. Reports are important because that is when students start worrying more about accuracy rather than fluency. In addition, reports are useful for creativity, listing, comparing and problem solving.

At the language focus emphasis is laid on learning language form. The teacher examines and discusses specific structures that are used during the task and corrects students' mistakes. Specific language features from the task are highlighted and worked on. The teacher gives feedback on the learners' performance and corrects them at this level. Practice on these features, such as drillings, listening and completing, memory challenge, dictionary exercises and computer games are given at this stage. Although Willis (2011) presents an ideal TBA lesson plan, in the current study modifications were made on it to include the methods and resources used, non-verbal communication and assessment of tasks.

In this study on effectiveness of TBA in quality writing, the learner was required to write a dialogue using the conditional '*conditionnel*', which is the polite form of conversing with a seller of tickets who is a complete stranger. Therefore, the learner was to be taught how to use this tense before writing the dialogue. Clandfield (2014) illustrates the practical use of Willis (2011) flexible task-based learning lesson plan to teach the grammar conditional tense 'would have' 'in French, '*Le conditionnel*'.

At the pre-task level, the learners watched a video clip of four people from different cultures Thailand, Seychelles, Serbia and France. After this, students were expected to say what they thought the people were saying and the teacher accepted all the answers making no corrections at this level. At the task level, students were to work in groups of three and discuss how they would say in their own culture. The learners were to compare the expressions from the different cultures to the French expressions. They would then put the given French expressions of politeness in order and make a list of other expressions that express the polite form. These expressions would include *Bonjour* – Hello, *Excusez-moi* – Excuse me, *combien coûte un billet s'il vous plait?* – How much is a ticket please? *Merci* – thank you, *Au revoir* – Bye bye.

At the planning stage, the students would prepare an oral report about the mini-tasks and activities they had done and present it at the report stage in an oral form. At the language focus, the teacher would raise awareness about the target language which was French by choosing two or three sentences and writing them on the board. The teacher would then explain the rule, that is; conditional of the auxiliary verbs '*avoir*' or '*être*' + the infinitive.

The conditional would have the imperfect endings (-ais, -ais, -ait, ions, -eiz, -aient). For most verbs, the stem consists of the infinitive less any final ‘e’.

At the language practice stage, the teacher would ask the students to write down two things they would have liked to do. In this case they would write: *Je voudrais acheter un billet* (I would like to buy a ticket). *J'aimerais voyager demain matin* (I would love to travel tomorrow morning). For optional follow up the students would be given a chance to repeat the process so that they could improve on the task. The teacher would ask a couple of students to report back to the class. This is the time to focus on accuracy i.e. the teacher corrects what the students said. In this research, grammar was evaluated under the linguistic competence as an evaluation indicator. Table 2.2 shows a model lesson plan for a task-based approach adapted by Willis (2011).

**Table 2:2 Task-Based lesson plan.**

|  |
|--|
| <b>Pre-task level</b>                                |
| Introduction to topic and task                       |
| Engagement, input language, preparation/groups       |
| <b>Task level</b>                                    |
| Task planning (working on report), presenting report |
| <b>Post-task level (Language focus)</b>              |
| Reflect and analyze language produced, do practice   |

**Source: A Framework for Task-Based Learning, Willis (2011)**

In a feasibility study of Task-Based Approach in college English composition writing in a Chinese EFL context in China, Jane Willis Framework of Task-based teaching was used to examine the effects on the improvement of English composition writing on learners

(Linying, 2012). The qualitative and quantitative data yielded from a quasi-experimental design revealed that the application of the framework had a positive influence upon college EFL learners. The learners' understanding of a good piece of English writing helped them solve problems related to composing which consequently improved their competence in composition writing. Contrary to Linying, 2012, which was based on English composition writing, the current study was based on French composition writing among secondary school students.

#### **2.4.2: Instructional Resources in TBA**

The study was interested in finding out the instructional resources used in teaching and learning composition writing in order to show the extent to which TBA is used. Hughes (2014) states that instructional materials development in any teaching/learning environment is based on the students' needs analysis, learners' proficiency levels and the course curriculum. Setyowati & Sukmawan (2018), conducted a qualitative study through content analysis design investigating the use of authentic materials for essay writing. The students were asked to write a four paragraph essay to analyze the intrinsic elements of the short stories they read. The results showed that the students agree that prose analysis in the form of essay helped them to understand the story well and helped them to write better. Although the above study used content analysis design, the present study used a quasi-experimental design.

According to Hughes (2014), there are two types of curriculum; the Topic-based and the Task-based curriculum. A topic-based curriculum focuses on what the learner needs to know and produces learners who know about tasks they need to perform after training.

On the other hand, a Task-based curriculum produces learners who can perform the tasks needed to succeed at their job, provides learners with content and shortens the time to proficiency. Contrary to the above study, in this study, the sampled teachers responded to a questionnaire in which they highlighted the type, availability and use of learning resources and how well they responded to teaching composition writing using TBA.

According to Ortiz (2006), the TBA curriculum has a particular scenario which will make sense to the tasks and has both communicative and linguistic objectives which are selected specifically to respond to the needs of the learner. In addition, a curriculum on TBA, involves putting in mind the knowledge of how to perform on the international market. The global coherence of the curriculum rests on the actionable perspective and considers the learner as the social actor to execute tasks in the immediate environment. Although the above study looked at the advantages of a TBA curriculum, in the present study on the effectiveness of TBA on quality writing, a real-life scenario was created through the test question where the learner was at a railway station in a francophone country and desired to purchase a ticket to travel to his own country.

Ortiz (2006) notes that a TBA curriculum has to be multidimensional. That is, it has to be presented in the form of a table and has to have the following categories; linguistic skills, communicative objectives which are both cultural and intercultural, activities and modalities of executing them, support materials and topics. In the present research, the researcher did not look at the dimensions of a TBA curriculum but used the lesson observation form which to observe these dimensions in class.

A study on 'Availability and use of teaching and learning resources in Public Diploma Teachers' Training colleges by Wanjiru (2009) recommended that the administration in-services teachers and ensures that they always make the best use of the teaching and learning resources during their lessons. A similar concept was introduced by the Embassy of France in the training of teachers of French in secondary schools in Kenya on the use of the resource materials. Although Wanjiru (2009) looked at availability and use of resources in Diploma teacher colleges, the current study focused on availability, use and type of resources in secondary schools in Nairobi City County.

The tasks on the internet cannot be ignored in a world inhabited by technology and the social reports transformed by its use. Penilla (2009) posits that on the internet, learners may find an author who has created his own blog, a character in a play on the net or a client of a commercial platform. The role given to the actors of these scenarios gives them the possibility to become authors considering what they have observed on the internet. On entry on Facebook for example, the learner is given the chance to perform a social act accepted just like a writing stimulated task. Contrary to Penilla (2009), in the Task-Based Approach and composition writing, which was the focus of this study, learners may be asked to create their own blogs, make comments on already existing blogs or send an e-mail which would help them improve their composition writing skills.

In January 2012, the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, the Prime Minister's office and the Embassy of France under the coordination of the Tanzania Institute of

Education (TIE) held a five-day special seminar in a secondary school in Tanga Region for French language teachers on how best to employ the internet in language training and learning. The main objective was how to use TV 5 Monde, a French program TV channel from which French programs are derived. This was presided over by Frederique Gellam, an expert in French Language teaching from CAVILLAM, *Centre d'Approches Vivantes de Langues et Media* (Center of Modern Approaches for Languages and Media) in Vichy, France. In the present study, the teachers of French in secondary school were taught how to get teaching resources on TV 5 Monde during the TBA training.

### **2.4.3: Assessment in TBA**

The study looked at how assessment is done to show the extent to which TBA is used.

Assessment plays a very essential role in the learning and teaching process. According to the Common European Framework for References for languages (CECRL), (2001), there are three concepts to be considered in assessment, thus validity, reliability and practicability. According to Brindley (2012), the Task-Based Approach uses four types of assessments: Formative, Performance referenced, Direct and Authentic assessments. Goullier (2006) posits that auto-evaluation, which is part of formative assessment is a motivating factor which helps learners to identify their strong and weak areas. It encourages autonomous learning which reinforces mastery and consciousness in learning. In addition, it assists in organized and planned learning where the learners focus on their capacity to communicate in languages they have not learnt formally but which contribute to their multilingual developments. In this research on effectiveness of TBA in quality composition writing, where the learner was required to write a dialogue between a buyer of a ticket and the seller, only formative evaluation was used. In this study, the lesson

observation was used to find out whether teachers used auto evaluation or teacher evaluation.

#### **2.4.4: Errors in composition writing**

Errors committed by students in composition writing were analyzed to show how learners can learn from their errors in order to make TBA effective. Error involves issues of rhetorical effectiveness rather than right or wrong. Connors (1988) in a study on Frequency of formal errors in current college writing composition and communication compared the type and frequency of error. Results showed that the rate of error remained consistent over time. He concluded that a consistent error throughout a piece of writing requires that attention is drawn to it and the student helped to understand why what he has written is not correct. In the present research on TBA, the errors committed by students were categorized into linguistic, communicative, textual and adherence to instructions in order to help the teacher identify which areas to focus more when teaching.

#### **2.4.5: Evaluation indicators in TBA**

Lavabre (2002) on Adherence to instructions as an evaluation indicator argues that instructions should be written in such a way that learners will be autonomous outside the lesson in their practical work. An instruction has to be clear, brief and precise without using complicated words. In his study, he found out that 60% of the students did not have a problem with following instructions during a composition writing test. Although the above study used Adherence to instructions as an evaluation indicator, it did not look at French composition writing which is the focus of the present study.

As concerns the communicative competence, Raluca (2014) argues that the assessment of intercultural communicative competence is challenging because culture is perceived in a subjective manner. Teaching of foreign language should prepare learners to use a language with fluency and accuracy and also to speak with people who have different cultural identities, social values and behaviors. According to Weyers (1999), exposure to video programming increases students' communicative competence. Results of Raluca, 2014 showed that students who were exposed to Spanish *telenovela* demonstrated a significant increase in communicative competence over their counterparts who were not exposed to the Spanish videos not only in listening but also the number of words they used in discourse. Although the above study looked at communicative competence as an evaluation indicator and the researcher looked at Spanish language. The present study looked at communicative competence as an evaluation indicator in French as a foreign language.

Linguistic competence has to do with grammatical properties associated with verbal inflection that is agreement, tenses, prepositions, adverbs and pronouns. Ammon (1980) argues that there are variations in sentence difficulty as a function of the syntactic character of the verb. In the study on assessing linguistic competence he found out that at the age of 5 years, considerable knowledge of the target structure was evident. Unlike the above study which analyzed linguistic competence in children, the present study on effectiveness of TBA in French composition writing looked at linguistic competence among secondary school learners.

Textual competence has been neglected in the Ukraine context (Kavytska & Kvasova, 2018). In a research on Assessing Textual competence into a second language, Kvasova, 2018 posits that the tools for this assessment are; language proficiency test and a pre- and post-training tests. Contrary to the above research which looked at textual competence on translation into second language in a Ukraine context, the present study on Effectiveness of TBA looked at textual competence as an evaluation indicator in French composition writing in a Kenyan context.

### **2.5 Teachers' and learners' perceptions towards TBA.**

In an article in the TESOL Quarterly, Richards (2012) observes that understanding the teacher's role in methodology in language teaching plays a major role in facilitating successful learning. In this study on effectiveness of Task Based approach in quality writing, teachers and learners' perceptions on understanding of TBA were sought.

Chokah (2013), writing on 'Teachers of French in Kenya perceptions' notes that there has to be a balance between academic and professional training because a 'half-baked' teacher will lead to the beginning of a vicious circle; poorly taught learners who themselves later become teachers. Poor mastery of content, lack of confidence and bad communication skills may lead to a negative attitude in both the teacher and learner during French acquisition. Unlike the above research where an interview was used to collect data, in the present research on effectiveness of TBA on quality French composition writing, questionnaires were used to collect data.

An investigation into instructor perceptions and practice was conducted in Canada. In that context, participants completed a questionnaire on their perceptions of Task-Based Approach for English for Academic Purposes (EAP). The results of the investigation showed that 69% used TBA in all of their lessons. The qualitative data analysis further revealed that the top three tasks utilized by EAP teachers were; essays, interviews and presentations. Contrary to the above study which examined English, the present study looked at French composition writing.

Keya (2009) studying on '*Etudes des pratiques langagieres des enseignants Kenyans du Français langue étrangère*' thus; A study of the language practices of French language teachers in Kenya' posits that Kenyan teachers practice good French. Exceptions are made in errors of syntax, spelling and English influence. He observed that linguistic mastery causes teachers a big problem and that pronunciation was worst memorized and had 58 out of 65 errors. He concluded that lack of training for teachers may influence their perceptions in the teaching method. In the present study, the teachers were trained in TBA in order to improve the general content delivery as shown in the topics covered during the training (Appendix E). Contrary to the study by Keya (2009) which looked at language practices of teachers of French, this present study on effectiveness of TBA in quality composition writing assessed learners' and teachers' perceptions towards TBA.

In a research on 'Teacher perceptions of TBA in the English classroom' Pohan (2016) used a descriptive qualitative approach with 55 teachers of 23 schools. The Survey method and a 4 section questionnaire were used to collect data. The results showed that most teachers had good understanding and positive attitudes about TBA. Classroom

observation and interview were suggested for future research. Contrarily, this research on quality writing in French language used a quasi-experimental design with questionnaires, lesson observation form and student test were used as data collection instruments. Eight (8) teachers of French and 124 form 3 students studying French in eight (8) schools were used as the sample population for the present study.

In a case study on Korean secondary school classroom practice ‘Exploring EFL teachers’ perceptions of TBA’, (Hahn and Jeon, 2016) 228 teachers at 38 Middle and High schools in Korea were used as the sample population. Findings of the survey showed that majority of respondents had a high level of understanding about TBA concepts but there were negative views on implementing TBA. While the above study was a survey with 228 teachers and 38 schools in Korea, the present study was a quasi-experimental with eight teachers and one hundred and twenty-four students in secondary schools in Kenya.

Ran (2013) in a report on ‘Responses from Chinese Teachers of English on TBA’ recruited 30 public school English teachers in Beijing. Interviews and class observations were used to collect data and teachers were used as examiners, technicians and explorers. The research suggested that the teacher supports students with meaningful tasks through modeling, experiencing, practicing, participating and communicating. Results showed that teachers’ responses ranged from negative denial to passive acceptance to active application of Task-based approach. Although the respondents in the above research were Chinese teachers of English, the respondents in the present study were eight teachers who teach French as a foreign language (FFL) in Nairobi City County in Kenya.

Adendorff (2014) of Stellenbosch University carried out a research in South Africa to determine the perceptions of students and lectures in the acquisition of communication skills in Afrikaans using Task-Based Approach. The study was explorative and questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data. The results showed that students enjoyed the task-based activities and that the gap between the student's knowledge and the new knowledge was mainly the vocabulary for communicating in Afrikaans. Although the above study looked at teachers' and learners' perceptions towards TBA, it did not focus on effectiveness of quality composition writing in French language. Therefore, this is the gap the present study intended to fill.

Kimosop(2015) in a thesis on teacher perception for classroom instruction wanted to find out whether teachers set objectives and structured the contents to be delivered in TBA. Descriptive survey was used with 45 teachers and 45 public schools. The results showed that 48.6% never accomplished learning objectives while 66.6 % wrote schemes of work but majority never referred to them. It was recommended that there was need for in-service and refresher courses to equip teachers with knowledge and skills to adopt modern ways of teaching. Unlike in Kimosop's study, which was focused towards setting objectives in TBA, this study on quality writing sought to find out the perceptions of teachers and students towards Task-Based Approach in both public and private schools in relation to their understanding and how often they use TBA in teaching.

In a study on teacher perceptions on use of co-teaching in inclusive classrooms, the researcher examined the extent to which 77 teachers preferred to use co-teaching. Results

showed that majority were underprepared to use it. This was because the responses of most schools' systems had restructured instructional service delivery models so that special education teachers moved into regular education settings and established partnerships with general education teachers to support the needs of students with disabilities. Contrary to the above study whose focus was teacher perceptions toward co-teaching, the present study sought to find out perceptions of teachers and learners towards TBA in secondary school in French composition writing.

In South Africa, a study was carried out to examine teachers' perceptions for inclusive education and Task-Based Approach. A comprehensive questionnaire was used to ascertain the knowledge, skills and attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education and to determine their level of readiness for inclusion. The results showed that a huge effort would have to be made by policy makers and provincial education departments to effect a paradigm shift towards inclusion of TBA. In the present study, the teachers' perceptions towards TBA was examined using a questionnaire where their understanding of TBA concepts, views on advantages of TBA and reasons for using TBA were sought.

Rankin (2011) used a questionnaire to ascertain teachers' perceptions for MCT II. The questionnaire contained questions relative to a teacher's university preparation for education on the job, professional development and teaching strategies and techniques. The results indicated that teachers perceived that their own preparation and knowledge of critical thinking had no relationship to their ability to transfer that knowledge to students. Although Rankin (2011) looked at teachers' perceptions towards MCT II, the present

study investigated teachers' and learners' perceptions towards TBA in composition writing in French language.

An investigation into teacher perceptions and practice in the Canadian context in which participants completed a questionnaire on their perceptions towards Task-Based Approach for English for Academic Purposes (EAP) showed that 69% used TBA in all of their lessons. Although the above study investigated teacher perceptions towards TBA, it focused on English unlike the present study whose focus is French as a foreign language.

In Reunion Island, Olivier (2018) study on the role of the teacher in TBA differentiates between two types of tasks, thus tasks that reflect real-life use and pedagogical tasks. The research presented the core results of analysis of interactions between Irish students and their French partners on a dedicated forum. The results showed the role of the teacher in TBA, which were; the teacher as the initiator of the task, owner of the forum and evaluator of the students who contributed a lot in modifying how students interact with partners and the teacher as one who can inhibit communication. Although this study looked at the role of the teacher in TBA, the present research focused on the perceptions of the teacher towards TBA.

Larson (2001), perceives that TBA is advantageous to the student because it is more student-centered, allows for more meaningful communication and often provides for practical extra-linguistic skill building. Long (2004), states that TBA encourages authenticity, teamwork and gives provision for feedback and evaluation. In TBA, the

learner acquires opportunities for meaningful language utilization in real-life (Angriani, 2014). Therefore, Task-Based Approach can be used inside and outside the classroom. Contrary to the above study which focused on advantages of TBA, in this research, the sampled teachers identified not only the advantages of TBA but also the challenges of TBA and gave suggestions on how it can be improved in the teaching of French composition writing.

### **2.6: Effects of TBA on performance.**

Writing on the effects of a task-based approach on authentic audience in English as a Second Language (ESL), Julian & Kimberly (2016) wanted to find out the impact that targeting an authentic audience within a task-based, computer mediated environment may have on L2 learner motivation towards ESL writing. The qualitative results showed that the participants awareness of audience and sense of ownership were raised through engagement in the task-based activities. Contrary to the above study which focused on a computer mediated environment in ESL, the present research laid emphasis on performance in French composition writing using TBA.

Rolina (2017) used a quantitative approach with the non-equivalent control group design and carried out a study on Effectiveness of Task Based Language Teaching in English language learning for 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of Accounting students'. In the study, speaking skills were assessed by the topic "Describing a City". According to the study, the experimental group which used TBA was more creative in speaking skills compared to the control group which used the conventional approach. Although the above study researched on TBA using a non-equivalent control design in English, the present study used a quasi-

experimental design in French where Form 3 students studying French wrote a dialogue on purchasing a ticket between a seller and buyer at the railway station.

Ismail (2009) of Hacettepe University in a research to explore the effects of task-based group activities on students' collaborative behaviors in EFL speaking classes recorded the participants carrying out both a task-based and a topic-based speaking activity. A quasi-experimental study was conducted in a classroom. After a qualitative analysis of the two activities, it was evident that the task-based activity led to real-life language use and more collaborative behaviors shown by the large number of short turns compared to the long turns shown during the topic-based activity. Although the above study also used a quasi-experimental design like the present one, it tested speaking skills of the learner unlike the present study which tested writing skills.

Hojjat (2017) carried out a study on 'the effect of task-based speaking activities of Iranian EFL learners'. Quasi-experimental design was used in this research where 60 male and female students applied the Nelson proficiency test (including 30 grammar, 10 vocabulary and 10 reading comprehension items). Although the present study on quality writing in TBA also used a Quasi-experimental design, it focused on writing skills of 124 students and instead of the Nelson proficiency test, the Kenya National Examination council question of the year 2003 was used in the present study. Furthermore, in the study by Hojjat (2017), the total score was 40 marks while in the present study, the test was marked out of 10 marks.

In a study on 'Using task-based activities to improve listening and speaking skills in EFL context in Turkey, Arif & Karakurt (2016) involved 56 participants and the instruments

used were 16 lesson plans and speaking and listening quiz results as post-tests. The conclusion was that the results of B1+ group through TBA were highly significant showing that their participation in task-based activities in the classroom reflected the results positively. Although the above study was on TBA, its focus was on listening and speaking of 56 participants unlike the present research which focused on 124 participants and looked at writing skills. Additionally, while the above study used lesson plans and quiz results as instruments for data collection, the present study used a lesson observation schedule, questionnaires and student test as data collection instruments.

Farahani (2009) investigated the effects of Task-Based Approach, Gender and different levels of language Proficiency on speaking Development. The research attempted to find out the speaking proficiency differences between male and female students after a TBA course. In order to comment on the gender and language proficiency, a two-way ANOVA (MANOVA) was conducted. Results showed that the experimental group performed better on speaking skills. The study concluded that gender was not a determining factor in speaking skills under task-based approach. While the above studies focused on speaking skills using TBA, the current study on effectiveness of TBA on French composition focused on writing skills.

Murad's (2009) research on the effect of TBA on learners' oral interaction was to investigate the statistical significant differences between the mean scores of both pre-test and post-test on English speaking test due to interaction between TBA teaching procedure versus conventional procedure in Israel. The results showed that there was a statistically significant difference ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the two adjusted means of the students' scores on the post-test attributed to the teaching procedure in favor of the

members of the experimental group. In the study, 91 participants; 37 boys and 54 girls were used. Although the current study also employed pre-test and post-test on the experimental and control groups, the number of participants was 124. Contrary to the above study which tested English speaking skills, the present study focused on writing skills in French as a foreign language in Kenya.

Zhang (2013) of Taiyuan University, China carried out a research on understanding and implementation of TBA. Written and oral tests and interviews were used to collect data. The results revealed that TBA was strongly associated with communicative activities and that the experimental group posted better performance in oral English than the control group. Contrary to Zhang's research, the present study, used a written test, questionnaires and a lesson observation form as instruments for data collection and tested quality writing in French language using TBA.

A task-based approach was used to assess academic literacy of new entrants into the higher education sector in South Africa. Weideman (2006) used the Test of Academic Literacy Levels (TALL) to examine the construct of the test as well as its type of tasks. The study results showed that there are a number of possible alternative tasks: writing, combination of listening and writing and real-time and real-life tasks. Contrary to the above study, the present study assessed writing tasks among form 3 students and the KNEC examination composition writing question was used to test the communicative, textual and linguistic competences of the learner.

Obi & Ene (2019) writing on the Effect of Task-Based Approach on Achievement of Senior Secondary School students in English Reading Comprehension in Nigeria used a

Quasi-Experimental research design and purposive sampling technique. Data analyzed showed that students taught with TBA achieved better than those taught with expository approach and that the approach was gender balanced. Contrary to the above study which tested reading comprehension, the present study on TBA in quality writing tested writing skills among form 3 students in secondary schools in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

A research on ‘Cognitive Task Analysis in Task-Based Syllabus Design for the teaching of Kiswahili as a Second Language’ in Uganda was carried out by Caesar (2018). From the research, there was need to explore both available and suitable conventional teaching and learning practices that are globally accepted with the aim of utilizing them in Kiswahili L2 teacher training at the school of Education at Makerere University. To design a task-based Kiswahili syllabus, task themes, task description, simulated task dialogues were used as a primary input. Findings indicated that while designing task-based syllabuses, all the task features such as cognitive, interactional and syntactic properties need to be taken into account. The study recommended similar studies for primary schools with the goal of replacing the traditional instructional resources and their pedagogical practices with task-based resources. The current study on the effectiveness of TBA on French composition writing focused on the type, availability and use of instructional resources suitable for teaching and learning using TBA.

### **2.7: Challenges of TBA**

It is observed worldwide that teachers believe that it is not possible to use TBA with beginners because students may be unwilling to risk communicating freely, students

resort to communication in their first language (L1) and teachers may not fully understand the principles of TBA.

Littlewood (2017), in East Asia (South Korea & Hong Kong), observed that TBA creates problems of classroom management, learners avoid using English as they use other languages, there is minimal demand on language competences, incompatibility with educational assessment demands and conflict with educational values and traditions. In addition, students had difficulties in mother tongue interference, inconsistent use of tenses and methods used by teachers. As a result, East Asia adapted and integrated the new ideas of TBA to suit their own situation as there was need for a context approach. Unlike the above study whose focus was challenges of TBA in East Asia, the present study on the effectiveness of TBA in quality writing skills in French as a Foreign language (FFL) did not only focus on challenges but each individual teacher suggested ways on how TBA can be improved in order to suit the Kenya context.

Iveson (2015) in a research on challenges of task-based approach in China on online and blended learning contexts identified the following challenges of TBA as (a) participation whereby a small number of students dominated tasks and poor rapport establishment among students. (b) Maintaining learner engagement and meaningful contributions to complete tasks was a challenge. (c) Focus was mainly on form. The TBA criteria of working in pairs to produce a final product which involves form and content is a grammar task which lacks authenticity in relation to relevance to real world tasks. Contrary to the above study which focused on online and blended learning contexts in China, the present study focused on physical learning in Kenya.

Altamirano (2018) in a study on challenges for implementation of TBA in state secondary schools identified challenges in the context of Argentina. These were; definition of tasks in policy guidelines, teacher and learner roles and practical issues. It was observed that learners may not have been accustomed to some demands like use of certain linguistic forms they may not be proficient in them. Additionally, it was clear that some contextual factors made application of TBA difficult in a classroom context. Unlike the study by Altamirano (2018), on challenges of implementation of TBA in Argentina, the present study investigated the challenges of using TBA in teaching and learning French composition writing in Kenya.

### **2.8: Research gap**

This study reviewed literature on the effectiveness of the task-based approach on learners' composition writing in French language in secondary schools in Nairobi City County. This topic was discussed in line with the research objectives which were: Methods of teaching French composition writing, nature and extent use of Task-Based Approach, effect of TBA on learner performance in French composition writing, teachers and learners perceptions towards TBA and challenges of TBA. It was evident that there was concerted effort by various scholars in quest to address the use of the Task Based Approach but there was little research on Task-Based method on learners' quality French composition writing in Kenya. The effectiveness of TBA under the reviewed literature was not exhaustive like the present study where students did tests which were used to collect data. These tests results were analyzed in order to arrive at concrete conclusions.

The investigation done by this research on both teachers' and learners' perceptions, nature and extent of TBA use and resources in TBA gives it more focus than in the

previous studies carried out by other researchers. Instructional resources had three areas to be analyzed, which were; availability, type and use.

Perceptions towards TBA were analyzed not only for teachers but for the learners too. Therefore, this study not only fill in the missing links in the area of type of resources in TBA but also their availability and use. None of the reviewed literature involved secondary students and their writing skills hence lack of information on students at this level. The present study had the intention of filling this gap.

Most of the studies had been carried out in other countries and had focused on other skills of speaking, reading, listening and grammar but not writing. Moreover, the number of participants, methods and sampling techniques of the research were different from those of the present research.

From the literature reviewed, it was clear that methods of teaching and learning writing skills, teachers' and learners' perceptions, learners' performance and challenges influence effective teaching and learning of composition writing in French as a foreign language. The use of Teachers' Service Commission (TSC) lesson observation form and the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) composition writing question that had been used to test students earlier gave the present study more focus. Besides the general challenges discussed by other scholars, the current study sought to find out whether there are other challenges encountered by individual teachers and learners in using TBA in teaching writing skills and specifically composition writing in French language among the secondary school students in the Kenyan context.

## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, the following sub-topics are discussed: the research design, variables of the study, locale of the study, target population, sample and sampling procedures, data collection instruments, pilot study, validity and reliability of research instruments, data collection procedures & analysis techniques and ethical considerations.

### **3.2 Research Design**

A Quasi-experimental design was used for the present study. Quasi experiments are studies that aim to evaluate interventions but do not use randomization. This design was appropriate for the research because the aim was to demonstrate causality between an intervention and an outcome. In this study, there were two groups: Experimental and Control. The experimental group was exposed to the treatment which was teaching for 6 weeks using TBA. The treatment was not administered to control group.

The Quasi-experimental design was chosen because it was more generalized and had a better external validity than randomized controlled trials or cluster randomized trials. In this research, it was not possible or practical to control all the key factors like learner and teacher perceptions, nature and extent of TBA use and other methods used in teaching composition writing in French language.

The independent variables were manipulated without random assignment of participants. Both qualitative and quantitative data was obtained and analyzed. Creswel (2009) posits that more insight is gained when both qualitative and quantitative data is analyzed in order to address complex problems.

### **3.3 Variables of the Study**

The independent variables in this study were: Methods used to teach composition writing, Nature and extent of Task-Based Approach use, teachers' and learners' perceptions towards Task-Based Approach (type, availability use of the instructional resources) and evaluation in Task-Based Approach (learner, teacher & teacher/learner)

The following is a description of the independent variables.

Methods used in teaching composition writing involved a short description of the type of instructional method, identifying the curricular and co-curricular activities used to enhance tasks in teaching composition writing in French language.

The nature and extent of TBA entailed looking at the type of tasks used in TBA, use of the Task-based lesson structure by Willis (2011), Forms of writing, instructional resources and websites suitable for teaching writing using TBA and assessment in TBA. This variable was also used to consider how often TBA was used in teaching composition writing and whether the objectives of the lesson were attained in the stipulated time.

Teachers' perceptions towards TBA was a variable that focused on perceptions on characteristics of TBA, views on advantages of TBA and opinions on the importance of co-curricular activities that enhance tasks. Under learner perceptions, the study considered the learners' general perception towards TBA.

Secondly, the intervening variables were; learner's entry behavior, learning environment and institutional policies. The learner's entry behavior entailed the time the learner started interacting with french(primary, secondary or francophone). Learning environment was considered to be the school, class or other places outside the school where the learner acquired skills that would help him improve on his writing.

The extraneous variable was the challenges of using Task-Based Approach in quality writing of French composition. Elements considered under this variable were time, assessment, class size, content, training and language proficiency.

Finally, the dependent variable was quality French composition writing. The study considered the following under the dependent variable: student scores, errors, evaluation indicators (adherence to instructions, communicative, linguistic and textual competences.

### **3.4 Locale of the Study**

The study was carried out in Nairobi City County which is the capital city of Kenya. Nairobi City County borders Kiambu, Machakos and Kajiado counties. It was chosen as the study locale because being the capital city of the country, it is assumed to have well trained teachers and adequate instructional resources to teach quality writing. However, according to the KNEC reports of the last five years, the performance of Nairobi city county in composition writing is slightly low compared to the neighboring counties of Kiambu and Machakos. Moreover, Nairobi City County being a capital city in Kenya had all types of schools and institutions that learn foreign languages, French inclusive and getting data related to French was easier as compared to other counties. Nairobi City

County was chosen purposively because of poor performance in composition despite having many schools offering French subject and being surrounded by many tertiary colleges offering French, e.g Alliance Française, Kenyatta and Nairobi Universities. A comparison in composition writing between Nairobi and the surrounding counties of Kiambu and Machakos showed that Nairobi performs poorly and yet it has well trained teachers and appropriate learning resources. Nairobi City County has all the categories of schools which include; Girls, Boys, Mixed, Boarding, Day, low and high achieving schools in national examinations.

### **3.5 Target Population**

According to Amedahe (2002), the target population is the aggregate of cases about which the researcher would like to make generalizations and the units from which the information is required and actually studied. Nairobi City County had 58 schools in total offering French among which 33 were Girls' schools, 20 were Boys' schools and 5 were mixed schools. This therefore meant that the population of girls was more than boys.

The study targeted 20 schools teaching French among which 12 were Girls', 5 were Boys' and 3 were Mixed schools. The target population for the teachers was 70 teachers teaching French in Form 3 where 20 were male and 50 were female. As for the students, 180 Form 3 students taking French were targeted where 80 were boys and 100 were girls.

### **3.6 Sample size and sampling techniques.**

Sampling is the statistical process of selecting a subset of a population of interest for purposes of making observations and statistical inferences about that population (Anol, 2012). Zikmund (2003) argues that sampling enables a researcher to estimate some unknown characteristics of the population and make generalizations. Purposive sampling was used to select Nairobi City County as it was unique in that it had many categories of schools offering French as well as the Alliance Française.

Purposive sampling was used to choose the eight schools to include all the categories of schools, that was; Public, Private, Girls, Boys and Mixed school. For schools that had more than one teacher of French, the form three teacher was used for the study. Form three was chosen purposively because at this level, they have selected French as one of their examinable subjects and it was assumed that they had mastered sufficient vocabulary to write a composition.

Stratified sampling was used to select the schools in order to cater for each school type that is; Boys/Girls/Mixed/Private/Public/National/Extra-County/County/Sub-County. After stratifying schools according to strata and gender, random sampling was used to select eight (8) schools from the sub-counties, 8 teachers of French and 124 form three students taking French in Nairobi City County from both public and private schools. Among the schools, four (4) were girls, two (2) were boys and two (2) were mixed. Form three students were sampled purposively because at form three, students had already selected French as an examinable subject in the national examination, KCSE. Additionally, the students are assumed to be almost fluent and accurate in writing a

dialogue between a ticket seller and a buyer because according to the syllabus, this content was supposed to be taught in form 2. The total number of students studying French in the Form three class being 124, 60 were boys and 64 were girls. All the students formed the study sample because in some schools we had as few as three students in the French class. None of the sampled schools had more than 1 teacher teaching the form 3 class. Therefore, the teachers teaching French in form 3 classes of the sampled schools automatically formed the sample size and therefore 8 teachers were used in the study. Table 3.1 shows the sampling grid for the study.

**Table 3.1: Sampling grid for schools, teachers and students.**

| <b>School type</b> | <b>Target</b> | <b>%</b>    | <b>Control</b> | <b>%</b>       | <b>Experimental</b> | <b>%</b>       | <b>Sample</b> |
|--------------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------|----------------|---------------|
|                    | <b>20</b>     | <b>100%</b> | <b>4</b>       | <b>6.8965%</b> | <b>4</b>            | <b>6.8965%</b> | <b>8</b>      |
| Boys'              | <b>5</b>      |             | 1              | 1.7241%        | 1                   | 1.7241%        | 2             |
| Girls'             | <b>12</b>     |             | 2              | 3.4482%        | 2                   | 3.4482%        | 4             |
| Mixed              | <b>03</b>     |             | 1              | 1.7241%        | 1                   | 1.7241%        | 2             |
| <b>Teachers</b>    | <b>70</b>     | <b>100%</b> | <b>4</b>       | <b>5.7152%</b> | <b>4</b>            | <b>5.7152%</b> | <b>8</b>      |
| Male               | 20            |             | 2              | 2.8571%        | 1                   | 1.4286%        | 3             |
| Female             | 50            |             | 2              | 2.8571%        | 3                   | 4.2857%        | 5             |
| <b>Students</b>    | <b>180</b>    | <b>100%</b> | <b>64</b>      | <b>51.612%</b> | <b>60</b>           | <b>48.387%</b> | <b>124</b>    |
| Boys               | 80            |             | 34             | 42.5%          | 26                  | 32.5%          | 60            |
| Girls              | 100           |             | 36             | 36.0%          | 28                  | 28.0%          | 64            |

### **3.7: Data Collection Instruments**

Four main instruments were used to collect data in the present study. These were: teachers' questionnaire, students' questionnaire, lesson observation form and the students' test. The following is a description of these instruments.

#### **3.7.1: Questionnaire for Teachers**

The questionnaire for the teachers (Appendix A) was administered by the researcher to the teachers of French after lesson observation. The questionnaire contained two

sections. The first section contained descriptive information which required the teacher to fill in with the appropriate information. The second section contained open-ended and close-ended questions which helped to answer the research questions. It contained three items on a likert scale of 3; Agree, Not sure and Disagree. It sought information that would help to respond to all the research objectives (i), (ii),(iii), (iv) and (v) of the study which were; to establish the methods being used in teaching composition writing, to establish the nature and extent to which TBA is being used, investigate the effect of TBA on learners, to determine the teachers' and learners' perceptions towards use of TBA and to explore the challenges of Task-Based Approach in French composition writing in Secondary schools in Nairobi City County.

The questionnaire provided both qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data provided by the questionnaire was descriptive and conceptual findings which included perceptions towards TBA. While quantitative data was data expressing a certain quantity, amount or range. In this research numbers were used.

In Section II of the questionnaire, in order to answer objective (i); Establish the methods used in teaching and learning French composition writing in secondary school in Nairobi city County, the teachers were required to choose which methods they used from the eight methods provided which were; process-product, audio-visual, group-work, demonstration, grammar-translation, problem based, communicative and task-based. They were also required to tick on the ten techniques used to enhance writing, which were; filling in blank spaces, using photos, use of templates, collaborative writing, re-

writing jumbled up words/phrases, filling in cards, topical writing, internet blogs, writing games and copying the teacher's composition.

Lastly, to answer to objective 1, the teachers were to tick on the co-curricular activities that enhance tasks. These activities included; French club, French days, music, drama, visits to French cultural center, DELF examinations, School exchange programs, trips to francophone countries and essay writing competitions.

In the second objective on the nature and extent of TBA use, teachers were to provide information on how often they used TBA by ticking on the suitable option from the five options; Always, Most of the time, A few times, Not sure and Never. In addition, they were to tick on the type of compositions they taught using TBA. The types of compositions were; letter writing, dialogues, recipes, short stories, Curriculum vitae, essays, reports and posters as provided on the questionnaire.

As for the type of resources, teachers were expected to choose from the ten resources; Text books, photographs, drawings, photocopies authentic texts, radio, television, DVDs, CDs, computer and internet. As concerns the availability of resources, they were supposed to tick whether the resources were available all the time, sometimes or not available at all.

Finally, on the use of instructional materials, teachers were expected to say whether they used them during all their lessons, some lessons, very few lessons or do not use resources at all when teaching composition writing. They were supposed to indicate the websites that they used to teach writing and the methods they used for evaluation.

In order to investigate the effect of TBA on learners' performance which was the third objective, teachers were to tick on the evaluation indicators they used when marking learners' compositions. These indicators were given as; adherence to instructions, communicative, linguistic and textual competences.

To answer to objective (iv) of the study on teachers' and learners' perceptions towards TBA, there were 2 tables presented in a likert scale of 3; Agree, Not sure and Disagree. In the first table, information was sought on teachers' understanding of TBA characteristics. This table had seven (7) factors to which the teacher was required to respond. (a) A task is communicative and goal directed (b) involves primary focus on meaning (c) has a clearly defined outcome (d) the learner uses the target language (e) TBA is consistent with the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) (f) TBA is based on student centered instructional approach (g) TBA includes 3 stages: Pre-task, Task and Post-task.

The second table which contained ten (10) factors was on the views of the teacher on the use of TBA where the teacher was required to tick in the Agree, Not sure or Disagree column. These factors were; (a) TBA provides a relaxed atmosphere to promote target language use (b) Activates learners' needs and interests (c) TBA materials in textbooks are meaningful & purposeful based on the real-world context (d)TBA pursues the development of integrated skills in the classroom (e) TBA is proper for controlling classroom arrangement (f)It is appropriate for small group work (g) Improves learner interaction skills (h) Encourages learners' intrinsic motivation (i) Creates a collaborative learning environment (j)Promotes learners' academic progress.

The questionnaire for the teachers was also used to address the fifth objective which was to explore the challenges of TBA. They were required to tick on the ten (10) challenges of TBA. These challenges were given as follows: lack of proper training, lack of French language proficiency, difficulty in assessing learners task-based performance, learners are not used to TBA, content in text books not in line with TBA, limited time, lack of appropriate resources, laziness during group-work and learners who tend to speak their native language. In addition, teachers were asked to tick on the possible solutions to these challenges as provided on the questionnaire. The solutions were given as; review of textbooks, in-service training, TBA to be included in the syllabus, learners to be sensitized on TBA and schools to purchase TBA instructional resources.

### **3.7.2: Questionnaire for the students**

The questionnaire to students sought information on the general description of the learner and the research objectives. In the first section, learners were required to provide information on their gender, age and their entry behavior to the school. This would give background information to the researcher about the learner. In the second section, information was sought to help answer to the five research questions. The learners were to give information on the methods used to learn composition writing, extent to which TBA was used, their performance in composition writing and the challenges they encounter during learning through carrying out various tasks.

To answer to the first objective on methods used in composition writing, learners were expected to tick on which methods their teachers used among the eight suggested

methods. They were also required to tick on the tasks they use when practicing to write. Learners were required to tick on which co-curricular activities enhanced tasks eg. French club, music, drama exchange programs etc.

As concerns the nature and extent of TBA use, learners were supposed to how often the teacher uses TBA and the type of composition they write using TBA. The types of compositions were: letters, dialogues, recipes, short stories, curriculum vitae, essays, reports and posters.

The learner was expected to tick on which method he performs best when used by the teacher in teaching composition writing in order to answer to the third objective on learner performance. On evaluation indicators, they were supposed to tick which indicators they use when marking their own or their classmates' composition in French language.

To respond to the question on learners' perceptions towards TBA, a table containing three items on a Likert scale of 3; Agree, Not sure and Disagree was provided. The learner was expected to tick on the five dimensions of TBA showing whether it was easy to learn, TBA could improve writing skills, enjoyed using TBA in learning, learnt a lot from TBA or whether learning with TBA was pleasant.

The learners were asked to tick on the challenges they faced when their teachers used TBA. The challenges were given as (a) Lack of vocabulary (b) Noise-making (c) Use of mother tongue and (d) Lack of instructional resources.

A Cronbach Alpha analysis was undertaken to test the internal reliability of the questionnaire. The result of the Cronbach Alpha was 0.8 which meant that there was high reliability in the questionnaire.

### **3.7.3: Lesson Observation Form**

The researcher used the lesson observation form (Appendix B) by the Teachers Service Commission (TSC). It was modified to include the structure of a TBA lesson plan on the framework by Willis (2011). The lesson observation was necessary because it was important to see the methods and techniques teachers used in teaching composition writing, the lesson plan according to TBA structure, learners' involvement in tasks and activities and classroom management. Secondly, the purpose of using the lesson observation form was for further improvement and professional development on the part of the teacher.

A total of sixteen (16) lessons were observed using the lesson observation form which was used to answer to the research objective (i) on the methods used in teaching quality composition writing. The student participation was observed in learner activities like answering questions and discussion. The resources used by the teachers in the teaching composition writing were also noted.

The lesson observation form had a preliminary part where the name of the institution, teachers name and TSC number, class, learners present, time, date, subject and topic were indicated. It contained four columns which indicated observation areas, what was observed and marks awarded. Under the observation areas, five items were observed which were; Introduction and lesson organization, content delivery, Teaching methods

and techniques, learner involvement and communication, types of evaluation and classroom management. Under content delivery, the teacher was expected to use a lesson plan that had pre-task, task, post task and language focus structure by Willis (2011). In the third column, what was observed by the researcher was indicated and finally, in the fourth column, the researcher awarded marks to the observed teacher. At the end of the lesson, the teacher would not only be advised on areas of strength, but also on the areas that needed improvement for professional growth and improvement.

Effectiveness of TBA entails choosing and meeting objectives that are appropriate at the time and are in tune with learners' needs and requirements. The lesson observation guide was used to write down the topics and objectives handled during the lesson which were then compared with the Form Three French topics, objectives, activities and resources as stated by the Ministry of Education in the syllabus prepared by Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD).

The lesson observation form gave both quantitative and qualitative data. Qualitative data was analyzed basing on the guidelines on teaching and learning activities and types of evaluation in the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) syllabus and the Common European Cadre for Reference in Languages (CECRL).

#### **3.7.4: Student's Test**

The student test (Appendix C) was a KCSE composition question of 2013 set by the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC). This test was used for Form 3 students because they had already covered the content and therefore were expected to have the requisite proficiency. In addition, the test content was drawn from the secondary school

Form 2 syllabus. The French experts who are lecturers of French language read it and supervisors in the department gave their views which were used to refine the test. The test sought to answer objective (iv) to investigate the effect of TBA on learners' performance in quality French composition writing in secondary schools in Nairobi city County.

The task in the composition writing test was; *“Vous êtes dans un pays francophone. Vous allez à la gare pour acheter un billet. Ecrivez un dialogue entre vous et le/la vendeur/vendeuse”* The learners were supposed to write a dialogue of between 80 – 120 words between a ticket seller and buyer at the railway station in a francophone country. The marking scheme prepared by KNEC was used to mark the composition. The four items tested were; Adherence to instructions, Communicative competence, Textual competence and Linguistic competence.

Under the test item of adherence to the instructions, the learner was expected to write a dialogue and not a letter or other forms of compositions and respect the limit given in the number of words (80 – 120 words). Secondly, under communicative competence the learner's composition was supposed to pass a clear message in order for the seller to understand that he desired to purchase a ticket. In this case, it was expected that the learner had appropriate and sufficient vocabulary relevant for buying and selling.

Under the textual competence item, the learner was expected to greet, use appropriate speech acts, ask if the ticket was available and the cost, state the date, time and destination of travel, pay and bid farewell to the seller. The seller on the other hand was

expected to respond to the questions of the buyer appropriately and ask any other questions that were relevant.

Finally, the test item on linguistic competence tested proper use of verbs, tenses and sentence structures. The duration of the test being one hour, a double lesson of 80 minutes (1 h 20) was sufficient to complete writing it. This was the same time allocated to composition writing by the Kenya National Examination Council during the national examination (KCSE). The test was invigilated by both the teacher and researcher in order to curb discussions and exchanging of work on the part of the learner.

The researcher marked the compositions out of ten (10) marks using the marking scheme from Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC). The items on the marking scheme included;

- a) Adherence to instructions – 2 marks,
- b) Textual competence (greetings introducing the subject and bidding farewell) – 3 marks,
- c) Communicative competence (relevant vocabulary to suit the scenario, express ideas, opinions, feelings and experiences) – 3 marks.
- d) Linguistic competence (good use of verbs and sentence structures) – 2 marks.

The student test sought to collect quantitative data where a comparison was drawn using the results of the pre-test and post-test for the control and experimental groups. In addition, a comparison of scores for pre and post-test was made to find out if students

improved in composition writing after TBA instruction. Finally, performance scores in the four evaluation indicators were compared to find out which performance indicator registered the best performance.

### **3.8 Pilot Study**

According to Polit & Hungler (2001), pilot study refers to feasibility studies that are small scale versions or trials done in preparation for the major study. Piloting helps to find out if the research instruments are appropriate to answer the research questions and therefore rendering the research relevant. Prior to the main study, a pilot study was carried out in one school in Nairobi City County. Therefore this school was not used in the actual study. One teacher of French in the pilot school filled the questionnaire to find out if the items were relevant to the research topic and if they answered the research questions. From the pilot study, the abbreviations of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task-Based Approach (TBA) were not clear to the teacher. These abbreviations CLT and TBA were therefore corrected and written in full to avoid misinterpretation. The researcher explained the meaning of the word ‘perceptions’ ‘extent’ and ‘nature’ in order to avoid misunderstanding of these terms.

The lesson observation guide was not piloted because it was a standard document by the Teachers’ Service Commission (TSC). The student test was also not piloted as it was a standard test prepared by the national examination body; Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC).

#### **3.8.1 Validity of Research Instruments**

Anol (2012) defines validity as the extent to which a measure adequately represents the underlying construct that it is supposed to measure. In order to validate the instruments,

item inconsistencies realized during piloting were rectified. The supervisors and experts in the French language department were involved in the choice of the question in order to validate the test so that it tests the intended items of adherence to instructions, communicative, linguistic and textual competences. The content validity of test items was determined by the supervisors and examiners of French through interrogating the marking scheme which contained the four evaluation indicators and the marks to be awarded to each evaluation indicator. This being a Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) marking scheme, it was found to be valid. Moreover, the test was taken from the KCSE examination paper of 2013 (Appendix M) which made it standard.

Patton (2002) indicates that triangulation strengthens a study by combining methods. In order to measure face validity, national examiners of French KCSE from KNEC were given the test to look at and give their comments. Their comments included that the words "*pour voyager*" (to travel) be removed to make the instructions clearer and precise. To measure the face validity of the questionnaires, experts and supervisors looked at the items on it and agreed that it was a valid measure of the concept which was being measured on the face of it. That meant that they were evaluating whether each of the measuring items matched any given conceptual domain of the item.

To validate the learners' and teachers' questionnaire, pilot study was used to correct any anomalies or misinterpretation.

### 3.8.2 Reliability of Research Instruments

Reliability is the measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trials (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). A reliable instrument is one that has a small error or standard deviation.

Cronbach's Alpha Formula was used to calculate reliability. The re-test generated a reliability co-efficient of 0.8 which was used to measure the test reliability.

The formula for Cronbach's alpha is:

$$\alpha = \frac{N \cdot \bar{c}}{\bar{v} + (N - 1) \cdot \bar{c}}$$

Where:

- (a) N = the number of items.
- (b)  $\bar{c}$  = average covariance between item-pairs.
- (c)  $\bar{v}$  = average variance.

The researcher marked the test to make the results were more reliable. This was done to curb the inequalities that come if each teacher would have marked for his own students.

### 3.9 Data collection procedures

The institutional policies of various schools will automatically have an influence on the teaching and learning of French. The researcher did an introduction to the students through the school principals and the teacher of French. The students were made aware of the research during their normal French lessons in the classroom. They were informed that they would do two tests; one at the beginning of the research and the second one after six weeks of learning French. A pre-test was administered to all the 124 students by

the teacher and the researcher during the normal French lesson time to avoid extraneous variables.

Before the post-test, the researcher co-taught with the teachers in the experimental group using TBA for a duration of six weeks. Co-teaching was used to avoid biases in the study. During this time, the researcher observed and filled in the lesson observation form. In order to curb differences in the teaching approaches for the experimental group of teachers, a standard training manual (Appendix E) had been developed during the TBA teacher training which each of the four teachers used in classroom teaching. After six weeks, students in both experimental and control groups did the post-test which was the same question as the one given in the pre-test. The researcher marked the students' scripts and awarded marks using the items on the marking scheme (Appendix D).

Visits to the participating schools by the researcher were made for general introduction and explanation to the administrators the need to do research in their institutions. During these visits, learners and teachers were given an opportunity to ask any question and voluntarily agree to take part in the study by signing the consent form.

After successfully piloting the questionnaires, eight (8) teachers of French in Nairobi City County were invited for orientation training in TBA through a telephone call by the researcher. Four teachers were on standby in case some decided to pull out of the study. The teachers were informed of the purpose of the training and were provided with guidelines of participating in a research. The four teachers in the control group were informed that they would take part in the study. However, because they were in the

control group, they would be trained in TBA after the research. An expert in French methodology, from Alliance Française teamed up with the researcher in training the teachers.

The topics covered (Appendix E) during the training were: Definition, nature and use of Task-Based Approach, Comparison between TBA and other teaching approaches, Methods used in teaching composition writing, teaching resources relevant to composition writing in TBA, assessment of learners in composition writing and student entry behavior and how to write a quality composition. In addition, the challenges of TBA and possible solutions to these challenges formed part of the training topics. During the training, the eight teachers were involved in various tasks using group-work and individually. These tasks included discussions, filling in gaps, matching exercises, exchanging of work among the groups, writing reports, letters, essays, songs, poems, short stories and pictorial compositions.

The training time was sufficient to cover the themes necessary for this research. However, two (2) weeks would be required to sufficiently carry out a comprehensive teacher training in TBA. In the two weeks, each teacher would have a chance to prepare a TBA lesson, source for learning resources, practice teaching using TBA and do an evaluation of both self and the students. At the end of the training, there was a short questionnaire to evaluate the training where teachers stated whether their objectives for training had been met and gave suggestions for further improvement. The researcher

kept notes of the comments made by the teachers which would help to improve on the next training exercise.

From the eight sampled schools, four schools were selected as the experimental while four (4) were used as the control group. The four (4) teachers who had been trained by the researcher in Task-Based Approach for three days are the ones who later taught the experimental group of students. On the other hand, the control group of students was taught by the four teachers who had not been trained in TBA. At the beginning of the study, students in both the control and experimental groups were subjected to a pre-test to measure the proficiency level of all the students at the beginning and thereafter determine if there would be changes after learning using the TBA approach. The pre-test was also used to show what students already know and to measure the students' growth at the end of teaching. The students were then taught for six weeks by their respective teachers for a minimum of 16 hours, after which, a post-test was administered to the students. The reason for the two tests (pre and posttests) was in order to investigate the impact of TBA on learners' performance in French composition writing in secondary schools in Nairobi City County.

The names of the eight schools were given as A to H for purposes of confidentiality. The 8 schools were divided into 2 groups; control (4 schools) and experimental (4 schools). The Control schools were; A, B, C and D, while the Experimental schools were: E, F, G & H. There was representation of all the types of schools in the Control & Experimental groups; Gender (Boys, Girls and Mixed) and Type (Public and Private). Therefore, there

were four (4) Girls' schools (A, D, E, and H), two Boys' (B & G) and two Mixed schools (C & F). That was because majority of the schools teaching French in Nairobi County were Girls' (36 out of 58). As for the number of students who participated in the study, School D had the highest number of students; 30 compared to school B & G which had the least number (3 students). That might have been because school D which had the highest candidature was a Girl's National school. According to the Ministry of Education, National Schools attract students who score above 400 marks out of the possible 500 in the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE). School G was a Boy's sub-county school which received students with marks as low as 100 out of 500 in KCPE.

There were two (2) Boys schools (B & G) with a total of twelve students and two mixed schools (C & F) which had a total of twenty- six students. The Public schools were five (B, C, D, G & H) with a total of sixty-five students while the Private schools were three (A, E & F) with fifty-nine students. This may be attributed to free secondary education in public schools compared to private schools where parents had to pay a lot of money for school fees.

The sub-counties were given names as; 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8 for purposes of confidentiality. In sub-county 1, only one school (F) which had a total of sixteen students was picked for the sample. In sub-county 2, one school (A) presented fourteen (14) students while sub-county 3, had one school (H) with thirteen students. In sub-county 4, one school (C) with a total of ten students was used. In Sub-county 5, school E had 29 students. Finally, the schools sampled in Sub-counties 6, 7 and 8 the schools were; B, D & G and had a total of forty-two students. Sub-county 6 was near the French cultural center compared to Sub-

county 1 and therefore, it was assumed that teachers in Sub-county 6 organized visits for their students to Alliance Française where extra services like films, plays or video games were available for use by the students to improve writing skills.

### **3.9.1 Data Collection**

The four instruments used for data collection included; questionnaires for the teachers and students, a student test and a lesson observation form incorporating a task-based lesson plan. The questionnaire was administered by the researcher to the sampled teachers after observing them in class for the second time. The researcher then guided the respondents for clarity and waited for around 10 minutes as the teachers completed filling in the questionnaire with the relevant information. The questionnaires were picked immediately after completion to ensure all questionnaires were returned for analysis hence avoiding low returns. There was 100% return rate of the questionnaires.

The tests were administered by the teachers and the researcher in order to control the extraneous variables. The scripts were collected by the teachers and given to the researcher who counted them to ensure that each student handed in for marking. The results of the pre-test and post-test were compared to provide robust assessment of a pedagogical intervention by detecting possible changes after treatment.

Finally, the lesson observation form was filled by the researcher during the regular school learning time of 40 minutes to avoid interrupting the normal learning program in the schools. The lesson observation form was used by the researcher to fill in what was observed in the classroom as teaching was going on. Students would be informed of the

observation exercise early enough and were advised to be at ease even with the presence of the visitor (researcher) in class. The researcher would arrive on time and sit behind in order to avoid interrupting the learning atmosphere and process in the class. Each of the eight sampled teachers was observed twice while teaching in the French classroom. This therefore added up to a total of sixteen (16) duly filled lesson observations forms.

### **3.10 Data Analysis Procedures**

The Cronbach Alpha reliability values of the variables were found to be satisfactory. The test re-test generated a reliability co-efficient of 0.8. Apart from the data collection instruments, the topics in the KICD syllabus and content in the text books helped in the analysis of qualitative data. Data collected from the respondents was coded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Data analysis involved descriptive statistics, where means, percentages, ranks and standard deviations were obtained from the data.

Qualitative data which focuses on words, ideas, descriptions or concepts was analyzed according to the objectives of the research using percentages and narration. In objective 1, which was; to establish the methods used in teaching and learning French composition writing among secondary school learners in Nairobi city County, data was analyzed using percentage and frequencies. In objective 2; to establish the nature and extent of TBA use, percentage and narration was used. In objective 3 where the study sought to investigate the effect of TBA on learners' performance in French composition writing in secondary schools in Nairobi City County, the scores of the test for both the control and

experimental groups were calculated. A paired t-test was used to gauge the relationships in performance. An ANOVA was used to establish the significance in performance based on gender. In objective (iv) to determine (i) teachers' and (ii) learners' perceptions towards TBA and in the last objective; to explore the challenges of TBA in French composition writing, data was analyzed using simple percentage and narration. Data was then presented in frequency tables, bar graphs and pie charts.

### **3.11 Ethical and Legal Considerations**

In order to protect the participants' confidentiality, codes, numbers and letters of the alphabet were used instead of real names. After the research, the participating schools would each receive a copy of the study findings of the research. Each participant was provided with a copy of the consent form (Appendix G) that indicated that participation was voluntary and that they were free to withdraw from the study. This was in accordance with Ethical Research Principles of 2009 which denotes that participants should be informed on the purpose, expected duration, procedures and rights to decline to participate or to withdraw from the research once it had started.

The researcher sought authorization from Graduate school (Appendix I) and research permit from Kenyatta University Ethical Review Committee (ERC) (Appendix J) and the National Commission of Science Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) (Appendix H) before the commencement of the research. In addition, the researcher made a personal introduction to the participants and explained the purpose of the study. Thereafter, they

were provided with an informed consent form (Appendix G). The researcher explained the contents in the form, that is;

- a) Procedure; the researcher told the participants that they would be trained and thereafter teach the students using TBA. The learners would then do a test while the teacher would be observed in class using a lesson observation form and finally, both the teacher and learner would be required to respond to questions on the questionnaires.
- b) Discomforts and risks; the students were informed that during classroom observations, the researcher would arrive early and sit at the back of the class. This would reduce the discomfort that comes with a visitor who arrives during the lesson and sits at the front of the class. Additionally, the venue of training was communicated to the teachers early in advance to avoid getting lost and reporting late for the training.
- c) Benefits; it was made clear to the participants that the study would help improve the teaching and learning of French writing leading to excellent performance and increased enrollment and teacher professional development.
- d) Rewards; participants were assured of lunch, bus fare and revision materials which would be provided free of charge. Moreover, each of the participating teachers would be issued with a certificate in TBA training by the Linguistique Attachée from the Embassy of France. Confidentiality and anonymity to protect the participants' identities and respect would be ensured through use of codes, numbers and letters of the alphabet instead of real names. Contact information,

that is; telephone numbers and e-mail addresses of persons to be reached in case of any questions or complaints were availed to the participants.

- e) Participant's statement: Each participant was then required to append his signature on the form stating that the information was clear to them and that they understood that the same care and treatment would be given to them whether they decided to leave the study or not. They would then proceed to state that they had been given a chance to ask questions and the questions had been answered to their satisfaction, that their participation was voluntary, they understood that their records would be kept private and they were free to leave the study at any time.

The researcher wrote a letter to the French Embassy and French Cultural Center (Alliance Française) to inform them of the intended training and research in composition writing in French language using TBA. On receiving the letter, the Embassy of France assisted in the study by sponsoring the participants' certificates. The researcher sought advice on training of teachers from expert trainers and requested for a co-trainer from Alliance Française. Permission to train teachers was sought from the TSC offices. The researcher made a phone call to the resource person in charge of French at the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) requesting her availability and input during the training. The representative of French at KICD was present and talked to the teachers on new trends in teaching methods.

Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) was consulted for advice on preparation and assessment of the French examination in KCSE. The personnel in charge of French assessment at KNEC gave some input on evaluation of French examinations. The

researcher requested for permission of absence on behalf of the teachers from their various principals through an invitation letter to attend the three-day training workshop. These teachers were asked to confirm their availability for training through the telephone number of the researcher indicated on the invitation letter. Confirmation of participation on the part of the teachers was necessary for appropriate planning and logistics.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE STUDY FINDINGS**

### **4.1: Introduction**

This chapter presents information on reporting, interpretation and discussion of findings on the Effectiveness of the task-based approach on learners' composition writing in French language in secondary schools in Nairobi City County. The objectives of the research were; to establish the methods used in teaching and learning French composition writing, to establish the nature and extent to which Task-Based Approach (TBA) was, to investigate the effect of TBA on learners' performance in French composition writing, to determine (i) teachers' and (ii) learners' perceptions towards use of TBA and to explore the challenges of Task-Based Approach in French composition writing.

#### **4.1.1: Demographic Information**

Demographic information was considered in terms of teachers'/students' age, gender, teacher qualifications, experience, training in TBA and subjects studied at the university. A total of eight (8) teachers and one hundred and twenty-four (124) Form Three French students were involved in the study. They were sampled from the 58 secondary schools offering French as an examinable subject within Nairobi City County (Appendix F). Data were obtained using teacher and learner questionnaires, student tests and a lesson observation form. The entire questionnaires (100%) presented were duly filled and returned to the researcher. The statistical measures used to analyse the data were Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Statistics 17.0 and Microsoft Office Excel

2007. The findings were presented in frequency distribution tables, percentages, bar & pie graphs.

#### **4.1.2. Age and gender of teachers**

The results showed that five (5) out of the eight sampled teachers were female while three teachers, were male. The total number of sampled students was 124 among which were girls 64 and 60 boys. This meant that the female gender dominated the teaching and learning of French in secondary schools in Nairobi City County. This finding corroborates with the research by Dornyei & Clement (2001) which indicated that girls are more motivated to learn foreign languages than boys. The differences in motivation creates the impression that French as a foreign language is a female subject while the male gender, according to Carr & Pauwels (2006) prefer mathematics and Science subjects.

The teachers' distribution in age brackets in the sampled schools was established whereby four (4) out of eight teachers were between 31- 40 years, 2 were in the age bracket of 21-30 years, while another 2 teachers were in the age bracket of 41-50 years. There was no teacher aged between 51 and 60 years. These figures showed that there were teachers of French in almost all the categories which bridges the teacher gap in teaching and so achievement in quality writing in French. According to the UNESCO – Teacher Task Force for Education 2030, young teachers who were categorized by age (21 – 30 years) are the future of the profession. This was an indication that a majority of teachers were fairly young and new in the teaching profession with less experience and so they could be molded to use TBA.

#### **4.1.3: Teachers Professional Training and Qualifications.**

Most of the universities in Kenya have introduced courses for subjects offered at the secondary school in order to give teachers relevant methodology. As concerns professional training, results showed that the majority of the teachers were trained at Kenyatta University (50%). Other institutions where teachers attended professional training in teaching French included Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, Maseno University and a few other public universities. Keya (2008) established that Kenyatta, Maseno and Moi are the three universities leading in French Teacher Training. Contrary to Keya (2008), the present study established that Masinde Muliro had overtaken Moi University in massive training of teachers of French. There were two teachers who had obtained professional training from the University of Nairobi and Egerton respectively.

The study further revealed that four teachers out of eight had a Bachelor's degree while the other four had a Master degree obtained from universities in Kenya and France. Chalmers & Gardiner (2015) researching on impact of academic teacher development argues that university teacher development programs have a positive impact on teachers and students. This study revealed that the minimum qualification of teachers of French within Nairobi City County secondary schools was a Bachelor's degree. According to the Ministry of Education, the minimum qualification for a teacher in Kenyan Secondary schools was a diploma. With this kind of qualification, a teacher of French's perceptions towards TBA would be positive and therefore would effectively use TBA in teaching writing skills because of the knowledge gained at this level. Findings in this study

revealed that teachers of French understood the meaning of TBA and would use TBA without major challenges maybe because of their academic qualifications.

#### **4.1.4: Teachers' experience and in-service training**

The research showed that 3 out of the eight of the teachers had taught for between 0 – 5 years, 3 had taught for between 6-10 years and 2 had taught for between 11 to over 15 years. These results indicated that the majority of teachers were still young in the teaching profession and so they could be molded to effectively use TBA in teaching quality writing in French language.

The study showed the number of times the sampled teachers had been in-service trained in TBA. This was done to find out whether there was any link between in- service training and effectiveness of TBA in quality composition writing in French. This correlates with Chokah (2013) that there has to be a balance between academic and professional training because a half-baked teacher will lead to the beginning of poorly taught learners who themselves later become poor teachers. The findings showed that 4 out of 8 (50%) of the teachers had been in-service trained in TBA once, 2 out of 8 (25%) had been in-serviced in TBA more than two times and 2 out of 8(25%) had not been in-serviced in TBA. It was therefore clear that 6 out of 8 (75%) of the teachers had been in-service- trained in TBA. This implied that some of the teachers in the control group may have used TBA in their lessons even though they had not been trained by the researcher.

All teachers employed by the Teachers Service Commission are required to have two teaching subjects in order to be able to handle the required number of 27 lessons, ans

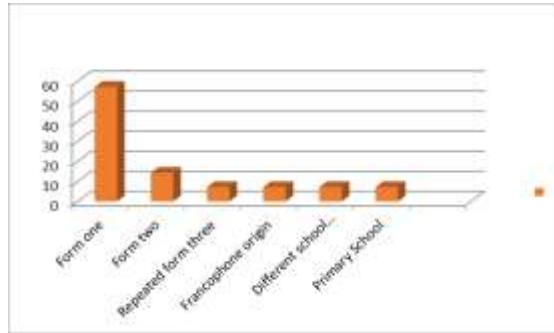
equivalent of 90 hours per week. The research showed that 2 out of 8 (25%) of the teachers combined French with English literature, 3 (38%) of the teachers combined French with CRE, History and secretarial studies, while 2 teachers combined French with Kiswahili. This showed that teachers of French are more inclined towards other languages and humanities. Richards (2012) argues that teacher subject content mastery plays a major role in facilitating successful learning. This was a clear indication that the teachers could effectively use TBA not only in French language quality writing but also in the second subject they had studied at the university.

Pursuant to section 11(f) and 35 (i) of TSC Act (2012), the Teachers' Service Commission (TSC) is mandated to monitor the conduct and performance of teachers in the teaching service. In this regard, the performance competence area number 6 of the Teacher Performance Appraisal and Development (TPAD) stipulates that teachers should enroll in recognized professional courses which will enable them to realize growth in their career. The training in teaching using TBA that was done during this research was important as it realized one of the goals of TSC TPAD policy which is teacher development.

#### **4.1.5: Entry behavior of students.**

Information on the categories of students in the Form three classes studying French was sought in order to establish their entry behavior and experience with the French language. Knowing their experience with French was essential as it would help in evaluating the value added progress (VAP) of the learner as this was a requirement the teacher was

supposed to provide at the end of the term according to the TSC policy. Figure 4.1 shows the entry behavior of students in form 3 taking French in the sampled schools in Nairobi City County.



**Figure 4.1 Entry behavior of students taking French.**

It was established that most of the students, 71 (57%) started learning French in form one, while 18 (15%) started learning French in Form Two. The remaining, 9 (7%) joined the French class under various circumstances in equal capacity, including repeated in form three, had a francophone origin, came from different secondary schools offering French or were introduced to French in primary. This revealed that because a big number of students had joined the French class in form one, TBA would be effectively used to teach quality composition writing in French language at Form 1.

#### **4.2: Objective 1. Establish the methods used in teaching and learning composition writing.**

The research sought to find out methods used in teaching and learning composition writing in order to find out the effectiveness of Task-Based approach. The eight methods used were; Product-process, Audio-visual, group-work, demonstration, grammar-translation, problem-based, communicative and task-based approach. Each of the eight teachers ticked on the methods they used to teach quality writing. Table 4.1 shows the results of the findings in frequencies and percentages.

**Table 4.1: Methods used to teach quality writing.**

| <b>METHOD</b>       | <b>EXPERIMENTAL</b> |                  |                | <b>CONTROL</b> |                  |                |
|---------------------|---------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|
|                     | <b>N</b>            | <b>FREQUENCY</b> | <b>PERCENT</b> | <b>N</b>       | <b>FREQUENCY</b> | <b>PERCENT</b> |
| Process-product     | 4                   | 1                | 25             | 4              | 2                | 50             |
| Audio-visual        | 4                   | 3                | 75             | 4              | 4                | 100            |
| Group-work          | 4                   | 4                | 100            | 4              | 3                | 75             |
| Demonstration       | 4                   | 2                | 50             | 4              | 1                | 25             |
| Grammar-translation | 4                   | 3                | 75             | 4              | 3                | 75             |
| Problem-based       | 4                   | 2                | 50             | 4              | 3                | 75             |
| Communicative       | 4                   | 3                | 75             | 4              | 2                | 50             |
| Task-based          | 4                   | 3                | 75             | 4              | 0                | 0              |

From table 4.1, the study established that all the 4 teachers in the experimental group used group-work in teaching writing. This may be attributed to the fact that through group-work, learners learn from one another as they share experiences and so they are motivated, learning becomes active, communication is enhanced and learners are

involved in critical thinking and decision making. This finding was in agreement with Abdulbaki (2018) study on group-work where results showed that students agreed that they never felt bored during group-work and they believed that discussion was a time saver. In the control group, all the teachers (100%) used the audio-visual method. Additionally, findings from the lesson observation showed that all teachers (8) used video clips as instructional resources in the classroom. This might be attributed to the fact that in TBA, watching a video clip is used as an awakening activity which precedes the real writing exercise. According to Sevik (2012), using a video clip enhances learners' listening skills by offering opportunities for purposeful listening and seeing which later on develops into quality writing.

Process – Product (PP) method was the least used by the experimental group where only one teacher out of four used it. This might be attributed to the fact that this was a traditional approach of teaching where teachers and learners were more concerned about the end product neglecting the content and ideas of writing because it was based on input-output hypothesis. According to Clearinghouse (1984), with PP approach, exercises in the class were usually dull and students could not decide the topics they wanted to write on. In the control group, none of the teachers used task-based method. This might be attributed to the fact that all the teachers in the control group had not been trained at the beginning of the research.

According to Starkey (2017), in a research on using TBA in class, there was lack of collaborative language techniques among students in France. The threats were socio-cultural and contextual in nature where students in this country did not generally appreciate teamwork and preferred to work individually.

The students also responded to the question on methods used in composition writing by ticking on the methods they used to learn composition writing skills. According to the students, group-work recorded the highest number of students at 123 out of 124 (99%) which was in agreement with the results from the teachers. This implied that use of group-work made learning easier for students enabling them to write a quality composition. Students from both the experimental and control group also reported use of discussions as a method of learning quality writing. These results were in agreement with Abdulbaki (2018) which showed that students agreed that they never felt bored during discussion and they believed that discussion was a time saver. Most of the learners did not use demonstration to learn writing skills, that is only 10 out of 124 (8%). This might be attributed to the fact that demonstration requires a lot of preparation time. According to Tersoo (2018), demonstration needs a large amount of time to prepare in order to make a better explanation because it uses technique and equipment.

#### **4.2.1: Tasks used to enhance quality writing**

Teaching methods in TBA cannot work alone without teaching and learning tasks. The following tasks were used by students to enhance composition writing in French language: filling in blank spaces, writing based on a picture/photo, writing using a template, writing in a group, writing based on jumbled words. writing cards, dictation, topical writing, copying teachers' composition, writing on blogs and writing using language games. Table 4.2 shows the tasks used in teaching and learning quality writing in frequencies and percentage.

**Table 4.2: Tasks used to enhance writing for control and experimental groups.**

| TASKS                               | EXPERIMENTAL |      |         | CONTROL |      |         |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|------|---------|---------|------|---------|
|                                     | N            | Freq | percent | N       | Freq | Percent |
| Filling in blank spaces             | 60           | 54   | 90      | 64      | 56   | 87.5    |
| Writing using pictures/photos       | 60           | 32   | 53      | 64      | 40   | 62.5    |
| Writing based on a template         | 60           | 12   | 20      | 64      | 10   | 16      |
| Collaborative writing               | 60           | 46   | 77      | 64      | 51   | 80      |
| Writing out jumbled words/sentences | 60           | 57   | 95      | 64      | 59   | 92      |
| Writing cards                       | 60           | 39   | 65      | 64      | 47   | 73      |
| Writing down dictation              | 60           | 58   | 97      | 64      | 62   | 97      |
| Writing based on a topic            | 60           | 60   | 100     | 64      | 63   | 98      |
| Writing on internet blogs           | 60           | 6    | 10      | 64      | 8    | 13      |
| Language writing games              | 60           | 18   | 30      | 64      | 23   | 36      |
| Copying teachers' composition       | 60           | 25   | 42      | 64      | 32   | 50      |

Table 4.2 shows that the most frequently used task was writing based on a topic which was used by all the students 124 (100%) in the experimental group while in the control group, 98% of the students used it compared to writing on blogs on the internet which was used by only 6 students, (10%) in the experimental and 8 students (13%) used it in the control group. This might be attributed to the fact that it was easier to come up with a topic to write on basing on the topics given in the KICD syllabus and what the teachers had taught them in class. However, this technique limits the creativity and imagination of the learner. The least used technique was writing on blogs on the internet where only 14 students (11%) used it. This might be attributed to most of the schools lacking internet connectivity. This finding was in opposition to the study by Mangenot, (1998) who argued that writing on blogs on the internet brought a sense of creativity on the part of the

learner because tasks on the internet cannot be ignored in a world inhabited by technology. Teachers and learners are advised to use technology and the internet in order to improve composition writing skills.

Only 42% of learners in the experimental and 50% in the control group reported copying the teachers' composition as a technique of improving their writing. In this technique, teachers write sample compositions then give learners to copy. This may be attributed to the fact that most teachers may not be writing compositions and giving students to copy as they may consider it time consuming. Teachers are supposed to write compositions and give to students so that students can be mentored well. Cabral (2009) observed that in order for students to write a letter, they have to be exposed to similar letters that are examples of that same genre. On the contrary, this finding did not support Cabral (2009) findings as majority of students did not copy teachers' compositions. Additionally, students need to feel constantly supported and encouraged by older people in their environments to feel self-confident in trying out certain challenging tasks (Nunan, 2013).

Writing down dictation was used by 58 and 62 (97%) of students in both the experimental and control groups. This might have been because teachers used it as one way of preparing learners for dictation in the French national examination KCSE in paper 501/1. This finding was in agreement with Graham (1997) which stated that dictation enables learners to model the speech, write it down and read it.

#### 4.2.2: Co-curricular activities that enhance tasks

Apart from methods and techniques used in teaching writing skills, co-curricular activities play an important role in enhancing writing tasks. Engestrom Activity theory (1987) which formed the theoretical framework of this study gives activity as the main element in language acquisition. Co-curricular activities are important in TBA because they provide an environment in which the learners practice speaking the language in real life contexts. In addition, the learners get exposure to the Francophone world preparing them for the wider global job market.

The activities in this research were divided into two groups: (a) School Based; French clubs, French days and French week. (b) Non-school Based; Alliance Française visits, visit to French multimedia library, watching French films at the French cultural centre Auditorium, participation in Drama and Music festivals, East African Essay French writing competition, French symposiums and trips to France and francophone countries. Figure 4.2 shows the frequency of co-curricular activities used by the eight teachers in all the eight schools.

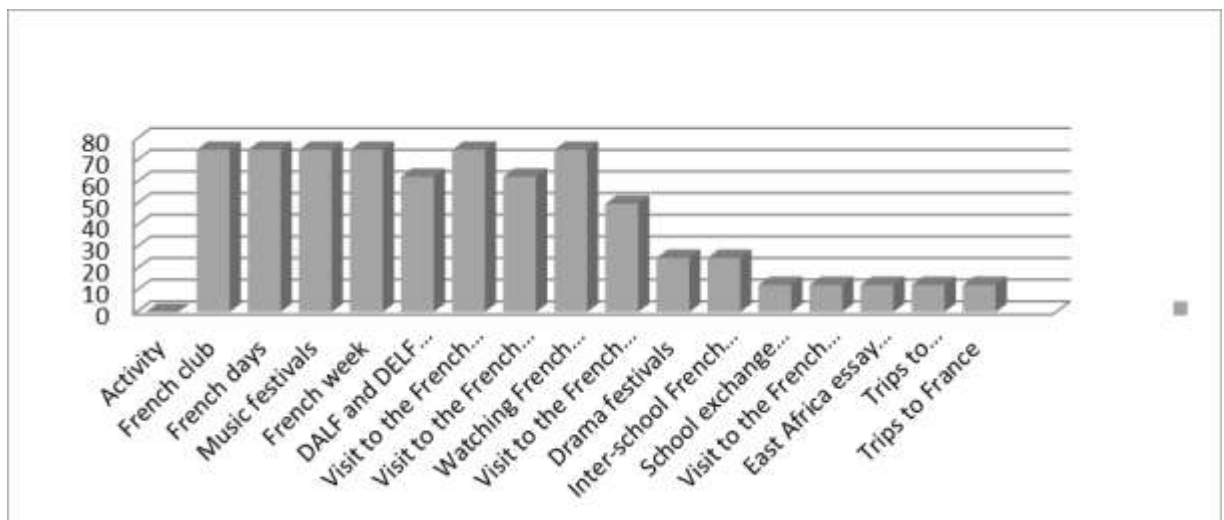


Figure 4.2: Co-curricular activities used to enhance TBA

According to Figure 4.2., 7 out of 8 teachers used the following co-curricular activities to enhance tasks: French club, French days, Music festivals, French week (*La Semaine de la Francophonie*), Visit to the French cultural centre and watching of French films at the auditorium of the Alliance Française. This may be attributed to the fact that these activities are sponsored by either the school or the Ministry of Education and not the parents. In addition, certificates of participation are given to learners who participate. Watching of French films at Alliance Française every Monday from 6:00 pm is free of charge. These activities do not have any financial implication on the parents in public schools and yet they are very important in TBA rendering the approach very effective. DALF and DELF examinations and visit to the French multimedia library are the second most activities used by schools with 5 out of 8 teachers. Although these two activities require payment by the parents, it was widely used by schools because it is an international diploma certificate where evaluation involves the four evaluation indicators of communicative, linguistic, adherence to instructions and textual competencies which are also used in TBA. Teachers are advised to involve parents to enroll students for these examinations which form a good foundation in preparing for KCSE French national examination and other international examinations.

The study established that only 12% (one out of eight) of the teachers used school exchange programs, visit to the French school, East African essay writing competitions, trips to francophone countries and trips to France. This might be because these activities are not only very expensive for most of the parents but also some of them lack knowledge about the existence of these opportunities. Learners are advised to be on the watch out for chances where they can acquire French outside the classroom environment.

As evident from the methods of teaching quality writing above, most of the time, the learning and teaching process in secondary schools does not involve research as a method. Therefore, learners might lack the skills to write essays for competition in French. For TBA to be effectively taught, parents have to be made aware of these activities on Prize giving or Parents/Academic Days so that they can plan in advance on how to sponsor their children. Training programs for teachers at university or college level have to include a unit in research so that the teachers are able to teach students on how to write an essay for the East African Competitions. This finding agreed with Reginier (2019) research which stated that school trips have budgetary constraints.

Students were also required to tick which co-curricular activities they engaged in in order to find out the activities that enhance TBA. Table 4.3 shows the responses from the students in frequencies and percentage

**Table 4.3: Co-curricular activities used to enhance tasks in the schools.**

| <b>Activity</b>                     | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| French club                         | 124              | 100               |
| French days                         | 113              | 91.1              |
| Music Festivals                     | 106              | 85.5              |
| French week                         | 89               | 71,8              |
| Drama festivals                     | 67               | 54.0              |
| Visit to the French Cultural centre | 52               | 41.9              |
| DELF examinations                   | 45               | 36.2              |
| School exchange programs            | 35               | 28.2              |
| Trips to Francophone countries      | 25               | 20.2              |
| Essay competitions                  | 90               | 72.6              |

From table 4.3, the research showed that majority of the students participated in the French club (100%). This might be attributed to the fact that according to the Ministry of Education policies, each learner is required to participate in a club at school. During clubs', learners get to share their experiences and engage in both spoken and written activities like debates, games, songs and poems which help them to improve their writing skills (Reginier, 2019). Clubs motivate students when they are given an opportunity to go out and meet students from other schools. From the findings it was noted that very few students (20%) participated in trips to Francophone countries. This might be attributed to the fact that Kenya being a country that is still developing, most of the parents may not be in a position to pay for travel, subsistence and maintenance of the children who may have opportunities to travel outside the country. This finding agreed with Reginier (2019), who found out that school trips have budgetary constraints because they may require travel from one region to another which means schools or parents have to take care of transportation and meal costs which amounts to much expenses.

### 4.3: Objective 2: To establish the extent and nature of TBA use

The study sought to find out the extent and nature to which TBA was being used in order to establish the effectiveness of TBA in composition writing in French language. The teachers were to tick on how often they used TBA. The options were: Always, Most of the time, A few times, Not sure and never. Table 4.4 shows how often teachers use TBA in teaching composition writing.

**Table 4:4: How often TBA is used in teaching composition writing.**

|                  | NO. OF TEACHERS |         |
|------------------|-----------------|---------|
|                  | Experimental    | Control |
| Always           | 4               | 0       |
| Most of the time | 0               | 0       |
| A few times      | 0               | 0       |
| Not sure         | 0               | 2       |
| Never            | 0               | 2       |

The finding showed that all the teachers (4) in the experimental group used TBA always. This may be attributed to the fact that they had all been trained in TBA. Two teachers in the control group were not sure whether they used TBA and the other 2 teachers never used TBA in teaching. This may be attributed to lack of training of teachers in the control group in TBA. This implied that training teachers in TBA would enable them to use the approach in teaching writing.

Teachers were to tick on which type of tasks they used in class. Among the options given were; information gap tasks, reasoning gap tasks and opinion gap tasks. Findings showed that teachers (4) in the experimental group used all the three type of tasks while in the control group, only two teachers used information, reasoning and opinion gap tasks. One teacher in the control group used information gap tasks and one used opinion gap tasks.

Teachers in the control group may not have been taught the types of tasks and may have found it hard to differentiate between the three types because they had not been subjected to the treatment. Therefore, training of teachers in TBA should put emphasis on the three types of tasks.

The classroom observation was also used to find out the extent to which TBA was used by looking at the lesson plans of the teachers. Willis (2011) sample of the Task Based Lesson plan proposes three cycles; pre-task, task and language focus. At the pre-task level, the teachers introduced the topic, stated the task and gave the lesson objectives. Matching phrases to pictures and choosing the odd one out were used. At this stage, the teacher divided the learners into small groups. The learners engaged in activities that would help them to recall words and phrases that would be useful during the performance of the main task. At the task cycle, the teacher walked around the groups to listen to what the students were discussing without correcting them. At this level, the learners performed the task using the language they already know and they were given an opportunity to improve on that language. The tasks included reading, listening, writing or speaking or a problem-solving exercise. The students then prepared a report for the whole class on how they performed the task and what conclusions they reached.

At the language focus emphasis was laid on learning language form. The teacher examined and discussed specific structures that were used during the task and corrected students' mistakes. The teacher gave feedback on the learners' performance and corrected them at this level.

The findings showed that all the teachers (4) in the experimental group used the lesson plan structure by Willis (2011) during lesson planning. One of the teachers in the control group also used the structure by Willis. However, 3 teachers in the control group did not use the structure by Willis to plan their lessons. This therefore meant that TBA was effective where the Willis structure of planning lessons was used.

In the control group, only one teacher used the lesson structure by Willis. This might be because the teachers in the experimental group had been taught how to use this lesson structure during the TBA training while the 1 teacher (25%) in the control group might have used the previous knowledge gained during in-service training in TBA. Some of the activities used at the pre-task level were brainstorming, listing, free writing, structured, clustering, outlining and unstructured writing. At the post-task level, teachers used revision and editing as post writing activities. Teachers were therefore advised to use the TBA lesson structure to teach writing of composition in French language. According to Linying (2011), the application of the task-based framework had positive influence upon college ESL learners. Their understanding of a good piece of English writing helped them solve problems related to composition which helped to improve composition writing.

The study sought to find out if the learners attained the three objectives at the end of the lesson. Findings revealed that all the learners (100%) were able to attain the communicative objective by the end of the lesson. This was done when the teachers asked learners to write out speech acts tasks like '*Bonjour*' '*je voudrais...*' while in the linguistic objective, the learners conjugated verbs in the present tense in their written

work and for the inter(cultural) objective, learners compared means of transport in Kenya and in France and used the polite form; *'s'il vous plaît, merci, au revoir'*. This was in line with CECRL (2001) which states that objectives need to measure all the three elements of communication, language and culture in teaching and learning.

All the teachers (8) reviewed their previous lessons before introducing the new task/topic. This was a requirement according to the TSC lesson observation form which was used in this research. Teachers in both public and private schools had been using these forms every time they were observed in class and so they did not have a problem in reviewing and linking the previous lesson to the new topic. From the findings, the topics were in line with the form 3 KICD syllabus, that is *'Les moyens de transport'* (means of transport) *'Les voyages'* (Travels), *'Demander et dire le prix'* (Ask and say the price), *'Le conditionnel'* (the conditional tense), *'Dire où l'on va'* (say where one is going to).

It was necessary to find out if the teachers were able to finish the lesson in the stipulated time of 40 minutes using the observation schedule. The findings showed that 3 teachers from the control group finished the lesson in the stipulated time of 40 minutes. This may be attributed to the fact that these teachers were time conscious in preparation and content delivery. One teacher in the control group exceeded the lesson by 5 minutes which may be attributed to giving special attention to the less active learners to ensure that they participated in the classroom activities. In the experimental group, all the 4 teachers (100%) finished their lessons in the stipulated time of 40 minutes. This might have been because of the training they had received in TBA where they had been taught how to effectively teach a lesson in 40 minutes using TBA. Teachers are advised not to prepare

too much content and also to do a rehearsal of the lesson so as not to exceed or underutilize the time given by the Ministry of Education.

#### **4.3.1: Forms of writing**

The study sought to find out the forms of writing in order to establish the extent to which TBA was being used. Using the learner's questionnaire, learners were asked to tick on the forms of writing they learnt in class. The forms of writing were; letters, dialogues, recipes, short stories, curriculum vitae, essays, reports and posters. The results were as shown in table 4.5.

**Table 4.5: Forms of writing**

| Forms of writing | EXPERIMENTAL |      |         | CONTROL |      |         |
|------------------|--------------|------|---------|---------|------|---------|
|                  | N            | Freq | Percent | N       | Freq | Percent |
| Letters          | 60           | 58   | 97      | 64      | 62   | 97      |
| Dialogues        | 60           | 55   | 92      | 64      | 59   | 92      |
| Recipes          | 60           | 54   | 90      | 64      | 54   | 94      |
| Short stories    | 60           | 24   | 40      | 64      | 16   | 25      |
| Curriculum Vitae | 60           | 53   | 93      | 64      | 62   | 97      |
| Essays           | 60           | 45   | 75      | 64      | 38   | 59      |
| Reports          | 60           | 2    | 3       | 64      | 6    | 9.3     |
| Posters          | 60           | 48   | 80      | 64      | 40   | 62.5    |

From table 4.5, the study found out that 97% (58 out of 60) of the learners in the experimental group and 97% (62 out of 64) in the control group used TBA to write letters. This might be because letter writing is a type of functional writing that is mainly tested in KCSE French paper 1 (501/1). Letter writing tasks might have motivated the

learners bearing in mind that they would be expected to write letters even after school to ask for employment or to correspond with others. As for dialogues, 92% of the learners responded to using TBA in learning in both the experimental and control groups. This might have been because the learners had been asked to write a dialogue in the pre-test and also in the post-test and so this knowledge helped majority of the students in answering the test on writing a dialogue between him and the seller of tickets at the railway station. Only 25% of the learners used Essay writing as a form of writing using TBA. This lower number might be attributed to the fact that in secondary school, the national examination council (KNEC) does not test essay writing skills. However, according to the Ministry of Education policies, secondary school students are expected to take part in essay writing competitions (E-Kitabu & East African Community Essay writing).

As for the writing of recipes, 90% in the experimental and 94% of students in the control group reported that they enjoyed using TBA in writing recipes. This corroborates well with the teachers' feedback on recipe writing which also reported a higher percentage of use. Students reported that writing of recipes rendered them more active and especially when it came to the practical part of cooking using the recipe they had written. Both teachers and learners are encouraged to use TBA when teaching and learning how to write recipes as this gives the learner a chance to apply the practical knowledge during cooking and it makes the learners to remember the concepts with ease.

However, the findings revealed that very few students 3% (2 out of 60), in the experimental and 9% (6 out of 64) in the control group enjoyed learning writing skills

through writing reports. They reported that they lacked the relevant vocabulary to write reports on how they had performed various tasks. This might be because report writing requires that the learner acquires a more profound level of vocabulary that may not have been taught as they performed the tasks. However, according to Willis (2011) TBA lesson structure, report writing is an important stage where focus is on accuracy and fluency of the language as the teacher corrects the learners' written work.

Findings from the lesson observation form showed that all learners were involved in tasks and they communicated in class. The tasks and activities observed were information tasks, classroom presentations, dramatization, role playing, jig saw tasks, scaffolding, brainstorming and storytelling. These tasks although oral helped to prepare students for the main task of writing a composition.

As concerns classroom management, findings from the lesson observation form showed all the eight teachers did not allow students to speak in mother tongue, make noise or give chorus answers. In order to implement this, it was observed that all the teachers knew the students in their classes by name, moved around the class to check on students' work, allowed all students to participate by asking and answering questions. It was also observed that all the teachers catered for the individual needs of students by giving each a task to carry out in the groups. This is an important element in TBA teaching composition writing so that all students are motivated to learn.

#### **4.3.2: Instructional /resource Materials used in TBA.**

Use of instructional materials in writing helps the teacher to reach the learning outcomes. Using the questionnaire for teachers, the teachers were asked to tick on the use, type and

availability of instructional materials. The findings showed that six (75%) of the teachers out of eight used resource materials in all lessons, while 2 teachers used resource materials sometimes. This revealed the fact that there was no teacher who did not use resources. The findings revealed that six teachers used audio-visual materials (audio tapes, DVDs, projectors, television, radio cassettes, CD's) when teaching how to write a composition. This might have been because the use of audio-visual aids made teaching and learning easier as students were able to associate sounds and images. In addition, students may want to imitate the person talking which leads to faster writing of the language. According to Divya (2019) audio-visual method provides a variety of visual aids to both the teacher and learner which provides an opportunity to see, handle and manipulate.

As for the availability of resources, 5 out of 8 (63%) of the teachers reported that the physical facilities such white interactive board, projectors, computers with internet connection and French room in teaching/learning French were available for teaching writing all the time. Two teachers (25 %) reported that the materials were available sometimes while one out of eight (13%) teachers said that the resources were not available. Availability of these resources motivated both the teachers and students to be creative and innovative which helped in quality writing according to the sampled teachers. It was noted that some heads of schools were reluctant to purchase resource materials arguing that the number of students doing French was low compared to other subjects. Moreover, some principals for example preferred purchasing science equipment to French materials because sciences were compulsory in most of the schools.

One out of eight of the teachers reported lack of knowledge on how to use the white board and how to download instructional materials from the internet.

There was a possibility that although some schools might have purchased some resource materials, they may not have in-serviced teachers on the use of these resources. Other may not have not purchased them at all because of financial constraints. Teachers are therefore encouraged to learn how to use the available resources or improvise their own resources in order to make TBA more effective. Wanjiru (2009) in a study on instructional resources recommended that the administration should in-service teachers and ensure that they use teaching resources during their lessons.

Teachers went further to confirm that most of the topics in the KICD syllabus could be well taught using TBA for example: buying and selling, asking and showing direction, writing of friendly and official letters and requiring filling in the gaps exercises. Table 4.6 shows the ranking of resources relevant for TBA from number 1 to 6.

**Table 4.6 Resources in teaching quality writing**

| <b>Resource</b>                   | <b>Rank</b> |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Textbooks</b>                  |             |
| Entre Copains                     | 1           |
| Au Sommet                         | 3           |
| Parlons Français                  | 2           |
| Tour de Force                     | 6           |
| Top Mark                          | 4           |
| Access revision                   | 5           |
| Passeport Français                | 6           |
| Grammaire progressive connections | 6           |
| <b>Other resource materials</b>   |             |
| Magazines                         | 3           |
| Visual materials                  | 1           |
| Audio materials                   | 1           |
| Physical facilities               | 3           |

All the teachers (8), 100% involved in the study revealed that they used all these resources and that they were relevant in TBA. According to table 4.6, all the teachers reported that the main textbook with many topics that could be taught using TBA was Entre Copains 3. This resource was ranked number one among all the other resources. These results also correlated with the lesson observation guide which indicated that most of the teachers were using Entre Copains 3 as the main text book in their French lessons. This might have been because, on a general reading through this text book, one would notice many writing tasks which enabled easier learning and teaching of quality writing.

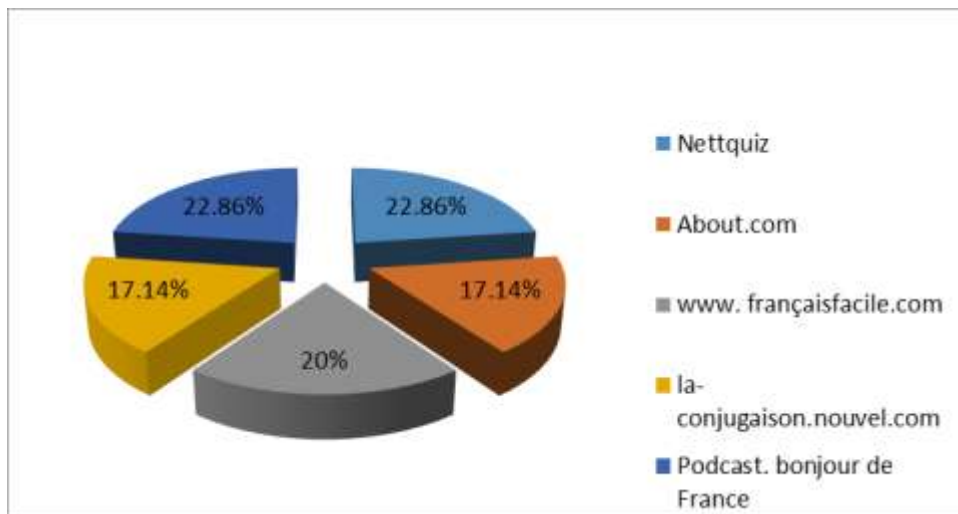
From the study, 75% of the teachers reported that they used Parlons Français 3 which was ranked number 2. This was a text book published by KICD, a factor that might have made it popular in teaching writing skills, having been authored by the support of the French Embassy in Kenya. The whole of Chapter 4 (page 100 -126) in this book is on “*Le transport en France*” (Transport in France). Learners were able to observe the map of France with its cities and means of transport eg. Tramway, metro, Vélo Tout Terrain (VTT). They then listened to the audio tape which had a dialogue between a seller and buyer of a travel ticket (page 101) After this, they read on means of transport and identified the relevant speech acts to ask and give information. The ‘*conditionnel*’, a tense used to ask for something politely was taught and learners completed an exercise on use of ‘*conditionnel*.’ The learners were asked to carry out a role play at the bus station which they presented before the class. The last stage was to write the dialogue between a buyer and seller of tickets at the railway station.

The results showed that 63% of the teachers reported that Au Sommet 3 was suitable for teaching writing as it contained many types of composition. Tour de France 3 was the least relevant in teaching composition writing using TBA. This might have been because according to the teachers, this text book did not contain many tasks that were relevant in task-based teaching as reported by the teachers. Teachers and learners need to use textbooks that have a wide variety of writing tasks in order to make TBA effective in French composition writing. The text books that teachers used are the ones recommended by the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) in the Orange book for teaching French in secondary school in Kenya. Textbooks are important because they are

efficient, provide instructional standard, offer structure and syllabus for a program, have a variety of learning resources and quality maintenance.

All the teachers reported that visual aids helped in the following ways: promoted motivation, learners understood better, there was variety in the teaching methods and so boredom was not realized and they also activated students to communicate with friends in the target language which was French. It was noted that visual aids in the classroom helped in teaching in the following areas; vocabulary lessons, identifying key concepts, stimulating inquiry, understanding the complex content and scaffolding. It was noted that talking walls teach the students in the absence of the teacher.

In this 21st century, the use of technology in the classroom is inevitable. Teachers were asked to name some of the sites on the internet that can be used to teach writing. Figure 4.3 shows the sites used in teaching French writing in percentages.



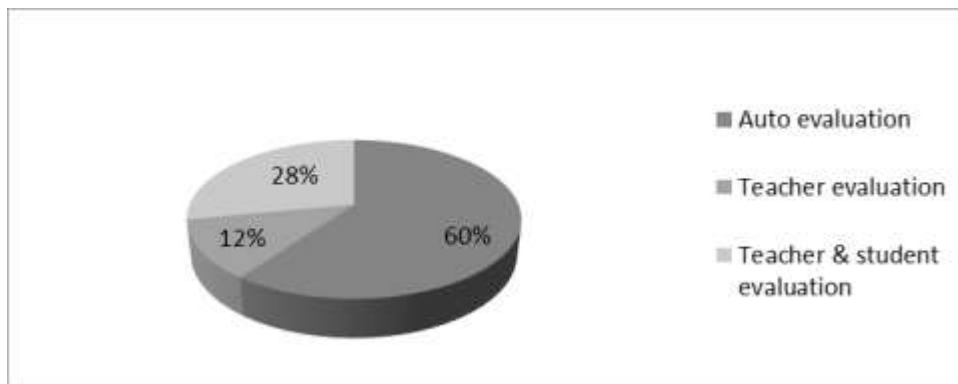
**Figure 4.3 Websites used in teaching composition writing**

Figure 4.3 shows that the most used sites were *Netquiz* and *Podcast.bonjour de France* with 22.86%. These sites were commonly used may be because both the teacher and learner were able to access interesting writing tasks/activities. In fact, most of the students reported that the websites made it easier for them to do writing exercises and auto-correct as most of the activities had answers. This agreed with the finding by Mangenot (1987) who stated that learners do exercises on the internet and mark their work which enables them to see clearly where they went wrong and thus auto-correct their work. Therefore, this puts the learner at the center of the learning process, which is a major component in use of TBA. Moreover, Gardner (1996) posits that Information Communication Technology (ICT) enhances the possibilities of autonomous learning and differentiation of tasks in the cadre of institutional and guided learning. In addition, Penilla (2009), posits that learners can be asked to create their own blogs or make comments on created blogs as a form of writing tasks

According to the sampled population *about.com* and *la conjugaison.nouvel.com* were rarely (17%) used to teach writing. This might be attributed to the fact that these sites have writing tasks that do not have answers and so learners found it had to auto-correct their work. When an exercise on the internet does not have answers, it makes it difficult for the learner to continue attempting the questions. The teacher on the other hand may take a longer time coming up with answers. This activity may be time consuming bearing in mind that French in form 3 has been allocated only 2 hours per week by the Ministry of Education.

### 4.3.3: Use of TBA in Assessment.

The researcher used the lesson observation guide to tick on what type of evaluation the teachers were using. These were; Teacher evaluating students, both teacher and students doing evaluation and student self-evaluation (auto-evaluation) and students evaluating other students (Inter-evaluation). The evaluation methods were divided into two for ease of analysis, thus; Teacher-centered (teacher marks students work) and Student Centered evaluation (student marks his/her own work) and a combination of the two. Figure 4.4 shows the method of evaluations that teachers used in quality writing.



**Figure 4.4: Types of evaluation used in class**

According to the findings in Figure 4.4, a majority, (75%) of teachers in the experimental group used auto evaluation after TBA compared to 25% of teachers who had used it before TBA. In the control group 63% of the teachers used auto-evaluation before and after the 6 weeks of teaching. This implied that in TBA, the students were given an opportunity to correct their own work while the teacher guided them. All the teachers in the control group used both teacher and student evaluation compared to only 2 who had used it earlier while 3 teachers used it in the control group after the 6 weeks of teaching compared to the 1 teacher who had used it earlier. All the 4 teachers in the experimental

group had used teacher evaluation before but after, only two were still using teacher evaluation while the rest employed other evaluation methods. TBA recommends use of both methods of evaluation for it to be effective. Goullier (2006) argues that auto-evaluation helps students to identify their strong and weak areas.

Inter-evaluation was observed in one of the lessons although it was not one of the methods on the observation schedule. It was noted that this was equally an important assessment approach of TBA as it encouraged peer to peer evaluation where students learnt from each other. These findings corroborate with the finding by Youssef (2010) stating that in TBA, the teacher is no longer a dominator but a facilitator when it comes to evaluation of learners.

#### **4.4: Objective 3: To investigate the effect of TBA on learners' performance in composition writing.**

The research was interested in finding out how students performed using the evaluation indicators in marking of compositions. The marking scheme considered all indicators of adherence to instructions, linguistic, textual and communicative competences to be important in coming up with a comprehensive evaluation. In this section, teachers were required to tick among the four indicators what they used when marking learners' compositions. These were: adherence to instructions, communicative competence, linguistic competence and textual competence. All the teachers (100%) were found to adhere to the evaluation indicators when marking the students' composition. This might be because the teachers used KNEC marking scheme which uses these indicators when evaluating students in class as they prepared them for the KCSE examination.

#### 4.4.1: Types of errors committed by students.

The type of errors committed by students were identified in order to determine if they can be used to teach writing in TBA. Teachers were required to state the type of errors learners committed in composition writing. The errors were; wrong spelling, lack of vocabulary, wrong interpretation, less words, poor grammar, wrong register, use of English, wrong conjugation of verbs and presentation of the composition. After marking the compositions, the number of errors committed by students were classified according to the four evaluation indicators. These were; Adherence to Instructions (AI), Textual Competence (TC), Communicative Competence (CC) and Linguistic Competence (LC). The results of both the experimental and control group for pre and post tests are presented in table 4.7 in frequencies.

**Table 4.7: Type of errors made by students in composition control and experimental in pre-test and post-test.**

(N = 124)

| Type of Error            | Frequency    |           |          |           |
|--------------------------|--------------|-----------|----------|-----------|
|                          | Experimental |           | Control  |           |
|                          | Pre-test     | Post-test | Pre-test | Post-test |
| Spelling (LC)            | 18           | 2         | 7        | 13        |
| Vocabulary(LC)           | 3            | 0         | 3        | 1         |
| Wrong interpretation(AI) | 1            | 0         | 1        | 0         |
| Less words(AI)           | 2            | 1         | 2        | 3         |
| Grammar(LC)              | 7            | 2         | 5        | 6         |
| Register(CC)             | 9            | 1         | 2        | 8         |
| Use of English(CC)       | 1            | 0         | 1        | 3         |
| Conjugation(LC)          | 2            | 0         | 2        | 3         |
| Presentation(TC)         | 3            | 2         | 2        | 5         |

Table 4.7 shows that most of the spelling errors (18) which were categorized under Linguistic competence were made by the experimental group in the pre-test. However, after TBA instruction, the errors reduced to only 2. This implied that TBA helped the students to perfect their spellings leading to improved performance. In the control group, 13 errors were made in the pre-test and in the post-test they reduced to 7. This may have been attributed to the fact that most of the French words are written with accents. E.g *intéresse/intéressé*. In this case, the first word was in the present tense while the accent on the last 'e' in the second word changed it to past tense. It was therefore evident that students became keener with accents after TBA.

In the control group, 9 errors out of 124 were committed under register which falls under the communicative competence in the pre-test. In the post-test, the errors reduced to only 1 for the experimental group. Before TBA, students were unable to use words like; *Bonjour* (Hello), *Excusez-moi* (excuse me), *Je voudrais* (I would like), *S'il vous plait* (please), *Merci* (thank you) and *Au revoir* (bye bye) which play an important part in the French culture and composition writing: (*Formule de politesse* – polite form). There was also confusion in *tutoiement* (*tu*) and *vuvoisement* (*vous*) e.g *Quelle est ta nationalité?* Instead of '*Quelle est votre nationalité?*' The first question was directed to a person they were familiar with while the second one, which was the correct form was directed to a stranger or someone you are meeting for the first time because the buyer of tickets was a stranger to the seller. This was a cultural error which may have come up because most Kenyans are not socialized to use these words. Ten (8.0645%) errors were committed

because the students lacked the relevant vocabulary when it came to asking for the price (*le billet coûte combien?*- *How much is a ticket*) and asking what kind of help they needed at the railway station (*Puis-je vous aider? – Can I help you?*) This error was categorized under Linguistic competence.

In the experimental group, most errors that were made in the pre-test were eliminated in the post test. E.g., the 9 errors on register in pre-test reduced to only 1 in the post-test. On the contrary, in the control group, during the pre-test, there were fewer errors compared to the post-test where the errors increased. E.g., the 2 errors made in register in pre-test increased to 8 errors in the post-test. This implied that TBA as an approach played an important role in the correction of errors. This may be attributed to the fact that teachers may have used the errors committed by students during the pre-test to explain to them why they were wrong which meant that the errors would reduce in the post-test.

These findings are in line with Connors (1988) in a study on Frequency of Formal errors in current college writing composition and communication where results showed that the rate of error remained consistent over time. He concluded that a consistent error throughout a piece of writing requires that attention is drawn to it and the student helped to understand why what he has written is not correct.

#### **4.4.2: Students' scores before and after TBA.**

In both the pre and post-test, the learner was supposed to imagine that he was in a Francophone country at the railway station and wanted to purchase a ticket. In 80 - 120

words, he was required to write the dialogue that ensued between him and the ticket seller. The total marks awarded for the whole composition was ten (10). From the findings, 104 students out of 124 (84%) agreed to the fact that they used the four evaluation indicators when marking their own or their classmates' compositions.

The frequencies, means and standard deviation in both the pre-test and post test scores for all the 124 students (Control & Experimental groups) were analysed to find out the effect of TBA and the results presented in table 4.8 in frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviation.

**Table 4.8 Students' performance on pre-test and post-test for control and experimental groups in frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviation. (N = 124)**

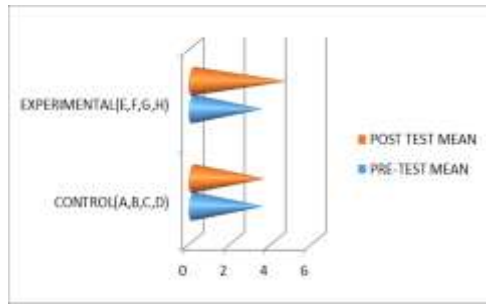
| Test Value (x/10) | PRE-TEST       |      | Experimental    |      | POST TEST      |      | Experimental   |       |
|-------------------|----------------|------|-----------------|------|----------------|------|----------------|-------|
|                   | Control        |      | l               |      | Control        |      |                |       |
|                   | Freq           | %    | . Freq          | %    | Freq.          | %    | Freq.          | %     |
| 0                 | -              | -    | -               | -    | -              | -    | -              | -     |
| 0.5               | -              | -    | -               | -    | -              | -    | -              | -     |
| 1                 | 1              | 1.7  | -               | -    | -              | -    | -              | -     |
| 1.5               | 1              | 1.7  | -               | -    | 1              | 1.7  | -              | -     |
| 2.0               | 7              | 11.7 | 2               | 3.1  | 1              | 1.7  | -              | -     |
| 2.5               | 8              | 13.3 | 11              | 17.2 | 5              | 8.3  | 2              | 3.125 |
| 3.0               | 8              | 13.3 | 9               | 14.1 | 5              | 8.3  | 3              | 4.688 |
| 3.5               | 10             | 16.7 | 20              | 31.3 | 5              | 8.3  | 2              | 3.125 |
| 4.0               | 7              | 11.7 | 7               | 10.9 | 6              | 10   | 6              | 9.375 |
| 4.5               | 6              | 10   | 9               | 14.1 | 9              | 15   | 15             | 23.44 |
| 5.                | 5              | 8.3  | 2               | 3.1  | 9              | 15   | 18             | 28.13 |
| 5.5               | 4              | 6.7  | 3               | 4.7  | 7              | 11.7 | 6              | 9.375 |
| 6.0               | 1              | 1.7  | 1               | 1.6  | 6              | 10   | 8              | 12.5  |
| 6.5               | 2              | 3.3  | -               | -    | 1              | 1.7  | 1              | 1.563 |
| 7.0               | -              | -    | -               | -    | 3              | 5    | 2              | 3.125 |
| 7.5               | -              | -    | -               | -    | 2              | 3.3  | 1              | 1.563 |
| 8.0               | -              | -    | -               | -    | -              | -    | -              | -     |
| 8.5               | -              | -    | -               | -    | -              | -    | -              | -     |
| 9.0               | -              | -    | -               | -    | -              | -    | -              | -     |
| 9.5               | -              | -    | -               | -    | -              | -    | -              | -     |
| 10.0              | -              | -    | -               | -    | -              | -    | -              | -     |
| <b>MEAN</b>       | <b>3.47915</b> |      | <b>3.43383</b>  |      | <b>4.36243</b> |      | <b>4.64928</b> |       |
| <b>STD. DEV.</b>  | <b>1.14306</b> |      | <b>0.781965</b> |      | <b>1.14059</b> |      | <b>0.91098</b> |       |

The results in table 4.8 showed that no student scored a 0 mark in both the pre and posttest which implied that learners at form three had some level of proficiency in composition writing. The minimum mark scored by the students was 1 while the highest was 7.5 giving a wide range of 6.5. Results indicated that 2% (1 out of 124) of the students scored 1 mark in the pretest while in the post test, the least mark scored was 1.5 for the control group and 2 for the experimental group. This implied that the minimum

mark improved for both control and experimental groups after teaching for six weeks. A majority of the students (48%) in both the control and experimental groups scored 3.5 marks out of a possible 10 in the pre-test. This implied that performance in French composition writing was very poor because 3.5 was not even a half of the 10 marks. This finding agreed with Bwire (2007) on Learner competencies and proficiency in English Listening Comprehension where the study found out that the mean scores suggested that the test was poorly done (11.32 out of 30) suggesting that the proficiency level of the students was limited or very poor.

In the post test, the majority, 43% of students in the experimental group, got an average mark of 5 out of 10 after TBA. This showed that TBA had a positive effect on learners' composition writing. Two students (3%) got 6.5 which was the highest mark out of 10 in the pre-test, while 3 students (5%) managed 7.5, the highest mark in the post test. This implied that as much as the number of students who scored the highest mark improved from 2 to 3, there was also an improvement in the highest score from 6.5 to 7.5 after TBA instruction.

The results were also analyzed according to the schools to find out how the experimental and control groups performed. Figure 4.5 shows schools' performance on total test for control and Experimental groups in means.



**Figure 4.5 Performance in composition for Control and Experimental schools.**

According to Figure 4.5, the students performed better in the post test with a mean of 4.362 (out of 10) for the control and 4.649 for the experimental group compared to 3.479 for the control and 3.434 for the experimental in the pre-test. This implied that the students' performance was very poor with a low proficiency level in composition writing before being taught using TBA. This finding corroborates with findings of Murad (2009) on the effect of TBA on learners' oral interaction which investigated the statistical significance differences between the mean scores of both pre-test and post-test. The results showed that there was a statistically significant difference ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) between the two adjusted means of the students' scores on the post-test attributed to the teaching procedure in favor of the members of the experimental group. This was attributed to the fact that the students in the experimental group performed much better after being taught using TBA.

From these figures, it was evident that the control group was a little bit stronger than the experimental group before intervention, thus, 3.47925 mean (control) and 3.43383 mean

(experimental). This slight difference of 0.04532 meant that both groups had almost the same proficiency levels at the beginning before the treatment. In the post test, the experimental group registered a higher mean of 4.64928 compared to 4.36243 registered by the control group. There was a significant difference of 0.28685 meaning that the scores improved slightly after Task Based Teaching. This implied that TBA was effective in teaching and learning French in Kenya Secondary schools in Nairobi City County.

#### **4.4.3: Comparison of students' scores on the four evaluation indicators.**

The questionnaire was used to find out in which evaluation indicators students performed best. The four evaluation indicators were: Adherence to instructions (AI), Communicative competence (CC), Linguistic competence (LC) and textual competence (TC). 115 students out of 124 (93%) of the students said that they performed best in communicative competence. This answer corroborates well with all the teachers' (100%) answer which showed that learners performed best in communicative competence.

Adherence to instructions (AI) was marked out of 2 marks. Under this indicator, the learner was supposed to produce a written dialogue of between 80-120 words following the set out rules and regulations. It was noted that some of the students were writing in prose instead of a conversation where there were two characters; a buyer and seller of tickets.

For textual competence (TC), three (3) marks were awarded. Under this section the student was expected to introduce the dialogue by greetings, followed by a body where he/she asked for and gave the prices, times of arrival and departure, duration of the

journey and write a conclusion. Although some students had the introduction, body and conclusion, most of the students failed to introduce and conclude their dialogues.

Three (3) marks were allocated for communicative competence (CC) where learners were expected to have appropriate vocabulary to greet, ask and give the price of a ticket, ask and give the times of departure and arrival, ask and give the duration of a journey, express gratitude, describe experiences, feelings and opinions with ease. According to Dewey (2009), TBA takes into account the need for authentic communication.

The last evaluation indicator used in the awarding of marks was linguistic competence (LC) which was marked out of two (2) marks. The student was expected to use correct grammar, appropriate tenses, adjectives, pronouns, vocabulary and idiomatic expressions. The scores in each category for both the pre-test and posttest were analyzed to find out which evaluation indicator was best performed. The findings are presented in table 4.9.

**Table 4.9 Scores of students in the Four evaluation indicators in frequencies, means and standard deviation posttest and pre-test for control and experimental groups. (n = 124)**

| TEST VALUE | CONTROL SCHOOLS (FREQUENCIES) |     |      |     |           |      |      |      | EXPERIMENTAL SCHOOLS (FREQUENCIES) |     |      |     |           |      |      |      |
|------------|-------------------------------|-----|------|-----|-----------|------|------|------|------------------------------------|-----|------|-----|-----------|------|------|------|
|            | PRE-TEST                      |     |      |     | POST TEST |      |      |      | PRE-TEST                           |     |      |     | POST TEST |      |      |      |
|            | Frequency                     |     |      |     | Frequency |      |      |      | Frequency                          |     |      |     | Frequency |      |      |      |
|            | AI                            | TC  | CC   | LC  | AI        | TC   | CC   | LC   | AI                                 | TC  | CC   | LC  | AI        | TC   | CC   | LC   |
| 0          | 15                            | 4   | 4    | 10  | 7         | 2    | 3    | 5    | 10                                 | 4   | 1    | 12  | 2         | 0    | 2    | 1    |
| .5         | 16                            | 19  | 15   | 23  | 16        | 7    | 6    | 16   | 24                                 | 19  | 15   | 14  | 12        | 4    | 3    | 13   |
| 1          | 17                            | 20  | 19   | 16  | 21        | 19   | 18   | 17   | 22                                 | 22  | 25   | 23  | 35        | 16   | 22   | 24   |
| 1.5        | 12                            | 17  | 14   | 11  | 15        | 20   | 13   | 17   | 8                                  | 14  | 19   | 12  | 15        | 30   | 23   | 25   |
| 2          |                               | 4   | 6    | 2   | 1         | 10   | 16   | 5    |                                    | 4   | 3    | 1   |           | 12   | 11   | 1    |
| 2.5        |                               |     | 1    |     |           | 2    | 3    |      |                                    | 1   | 2    |     |           | 1    | 3    |      |
| 3          |                               |     | 1    |     |           |      |      |      |                                    |     | 1    |     |           | 1    | *    |      |
| MEAN       | .66                           | .98 | 1.11 | .77 | .87       | 1.22 | 1.30 | 1.03 | .66                                | .99 | 1.02 | .84 | .88       | 1.41 | 1.28 | 1.07 |
| STD.DEV    | .51                           | .52 | .60  | .50 | .44       | .42  | .59  | .53  | .44                                | .46 | .44  | .74 | .36       | .50  | .53  | .42  |

According to Table 4.9, 20% of the students scored 0 out of the possible 2 marks in Adherence to instructions in the pretest while in the post test, only 7% of the students (9 out of 124) scored zero. There was improvement on adherence to instructions scores in the post test for both the experimental and control groups. This implied that the learners' writing skills improved with TBA instruction. The findings showed that 31% of the students scored 1 out of 2 which was the average mark in Adherence to Instructions in the pretest. Therefore, this implied that majority of the students were average in this evaluation indicator before TBA.

In the post test, 45% (56 out of 124 students) got the average mark of 1 out of 2. The improvement in number of students scoring the average mark indicated that TBA had a positive impact on composition writing. In the post test, none of the students got the

maximum score of 2 marks in adherence to instructions. This showed that generally, the form three students were below average in adhering to instructions. In addition, the drop in student numbers from 1 in pre-test to 0 in post test showed that this competence may be improved using other methods and not necessarily TBA.

The best performed evaluation indicator in pre-test was Communicative competence with a mean of 1.11 for the experimental and 1.02 for the control group. This implied that learners were able to communicate effectively even before intervention. This might be attributed to the use of videos as a resource material because majority of the teachers reported that they used videos in teaching communication. Teachers are encouraged to use videos in teaching French because learners can easily imitate the characters in the videos and so they end up speaking and writing in the French language like them. This finding corroborates with Weyers (1999), which concluded that exposure to video programming increases students' communicative competence. Moreover, results of Zhang (2013) of Taiyuan University on understanding and implementation of TBA revealed that TBA was strongly associated with communicative competence and that the experimental group posted better performance in oral English than the control group.

The area with the lowest mean for both pre-test and post test was adherence to instructions. This poor performance by students might be attributed to most of them writing in prose instead of writing a dialogue. Moreover, the number of words was less than the expected 80 to 120. Therefore, it was observed that taking instructions was a challenge to the students in both pre and post tests. However, improvement was noted in the post test meaning that use of TBA led to improved performance in Adherence to

instructions which might be attributed to repeated reading of instructions. Consequently, it was clear that use of TBA improved this skill tremendously in the post test for the experimental group. This pointed to the fact that use of TBA in teaching quality writing in French in Kenya Secondary schools improved the students' skills in adhering to instructions.

Additionally, in Adherence to instructions, whose mean was 0.66 for both control and experimental groups in the pre-test, showed that there was an improvement to 0.88 in post test meaning that TBA played a major role to better the performance in this indicator. This might have been as a result of students reading the instruction more than once. Repeated reading lead to better understanding of the instruction leading to improved performance. Learners are encouraged to read and re read instructions in order to understand fully what exactly they are supposed to do before they start writing the composition. Lavabre (2002) on Adherence to instructions argues that instructions should be written in such a way that learners will be autonomous outside the lesson in their practical work. In the study, 60% of the students did not have a problem with following instructions during a composition writing test after re reading the instructions more than once.

In the post-test, the best performed evaluation indicator was textual competence with 1.41 mean for the experimental group and 1.30 for the control group. There was an improvement index of 0.24 for the control group in pre and posttests in the control group and an improvement index of 0.42 for pre test and post test scores in the experimental

group. This implied that TBA had a positive effect on quality writing using textual competence as an evaluation indicator.

Under linguistic competence, the means were 0.77 in pretest and 1.33 in posttest for the control group. There was therefore an improvement in performance on linguistic competence after six weeks of teaching. In the experimental group, the means were 0.84 and 1.07 for pre and posttest respectively. These results showed that there was improvement in the performance on this evaluation indicator which might have resulted from the students improving on tenses, grammar and sentence structure. Ammon (1980) in a research on linguistic competence argues that there are variations in sentence difficulty as a function of the syntactic character of the verb. However, at the age of 5 years, considerable knowledge of the target structure by the learner was evident.

#### **4.4.4: Paired sample t - test on evaluation indicators.**

The study was interested in finding out the correlation between the pre and posttest on the four evaluation indicators which were; adherence to instructions, communicative competence, linguistic competence and textual competence. Table 4.10 shows the correlation of means between the pre and post test on the 4 evaluation indicators.

**Table 4.10 Paired Samples Correlations on pre and post test on the 4 indicators. (N = 124)**

|                | Mean    | Std. Dev. | Correlation | Sig. (2 tailed) |
|----------------|---------|-----------|-------------|-----------------|
| <b>Pair 1</b>  |         |           |             |                 |
| Pre-test (AI)  |         |           |             |                 |
| Post test (AI) | -.23387 | .46607    | .505        | 0.000*          |
| <b>Pair 2</b>  |         |           |             |                 |
| Pre-test (TC)  |         |           |             |                 |
| Post test (TC) | -.39516 | .56408    | .409        | 0.000*          |
| <b>Pair 3</b>  |         |           |             |                 |
| Pre-test (CC)  |         |           |             |                 |
| Post test (CC) | -.27016 | .63885    | .388        | 0.000*          |
| <b>Pair 4</b>  |         |           |             |                 |
| Pre-test (LC)  |         |           |             | 0.001*          |
| Post test (LC) | -.20565 | .66263    | .088        |                 |

N = 124, df = 123,  $p < 0.05$ , \* - Significant

Table 4.10 shows that there was a significant correlation in both pre and post test on the four evaluation indicators of Adherence to Instructions, Textual Competence, Communicative competence and Linguistic competence in both the pre and post test. However, the correlation in linguistic competence was not as good as the other three indicators that is Adherence to instructions, textual competence and communicative

competence. This implied that the items in the three evaluation indicators correlated better than the items in the linguistic competence which correlated at .001. This therefore meant that task-based teaching and learning lays emphasis on performance of tasks rather than the linguistic aspect of the French language. For TBA to be effective therefore, most of the tasks have to be more of communicative or textual rather than linguistic.

#### **4.4.5: One-way ANOVA on evaluation indicators**

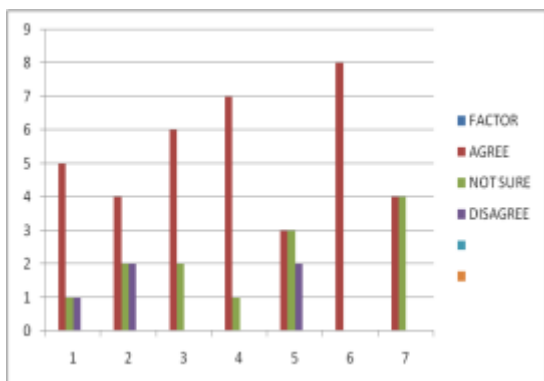
The ANOVA on gender (Boys' Girls' and mixed schools) showed no significance difference on all the four evaluation indicators. This implied that Boys' and Girls' and Mixed schools performed equally on the four evaluation indicators. This finding corroborated well with Farahani (2009) who investigated 'the effects of Task-Based Approach, Gender and different levels of language Proficiency on speaking Development'. The research attempted to find out the speaking proficiency differences between male and female students after a TBA course. Results showed that the experimental group performed better on speaking skills. The study concluded that gender was not a determining factor in speaking skills under task-based approach.

### **4.5: Objective 4: Determine (i) Teachers' and (ii) learners' perceptions towards TBA.**

#### **4.5.1: Teachers' perceptions**

This study investigated the teachers' and learners' perceptions towards TBA in order to determine its effectiveness in quality French composition writing in Nairobi City County. The study sought to establish the perceptions of the teachers in terms of

understanding the seven (7) characteristics of TBA, their views on the advantages of TBA and their opinion on co-curricular activities that enhance tasks. The characteristics of TBA were given as; (1) TBA is communicative and task-directed (2) TBA focuses on meaning (3) TBA has a clearly defined outcome (4) In TBA the learner uses the target language (5) TBA is consistent with principles of CLT (6) TBA is a student-centered approach (7) TBA lesson involves 3 stages; Pre-task, task and post-task. According to Otiende (2012), the attitude of a qualified teacher should be geared towards improving their delivery of instruction. Data on this information was collected using the questionnaire. The findings on teachers understanding of TBA characteristics are shown in Figure 4:6.



**Figure 4.6: Teachers' perceptions on characteristics of TBA.**

Findings showed that 100% (eight) teachers understood the 6<sup>th</sup> characteristic of TBA which stated that TBA is a learner-centered approach. This might be attributed to the fact

that most of the teachers had stated that they had previously been trained in TBA and therefore TBA was not new to them. However, the research found out two teachers were not sure of characteristic 1(TBA is communicative and task-directed) and characteristic 4 (in TBA, the learner uses the target language). Other two (2) teachers disagreed to characteristic 2 (TBA focusses on meaning) and characteristic 5(TBA is consistent with principles of CLT). This might be attributed to the fact that these teachers had been trained a few times in TBA and so they were not sure of the characteristics of TBA.

The study sort to find out the teachers' views on advantages of TBA in order to establish its effectiveness in composition writing. The characteristics were ten (10) as shown in table 4:11.

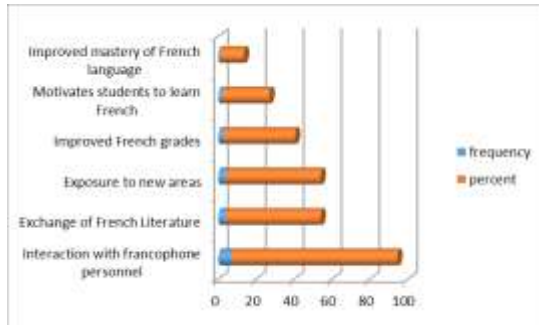
**Table 4:11: Teachers' views on advantages of TBA**

|     | <b>FACTOR</b>                                | <b>AGREE</b> | <b>NOT SURE</b> | <b>DISAGREE</b> |
|-----|--|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1.  | Provides a relaxed atmosphere                | 5            | 3               | 0               |
| 2.  | Activates learner's needs and interests      | 6            | 1               | 1               |
| 3.  | Content is based on real-world context       | 7            | 0               | 1               |
| 4.  | Pursues development of integrated skills     | 5            | 3               | 0               |
| 5.  | Proper for classroom management              | 4            | 3               | 1               |
| 6.  | Appropriate for group-work                   | 5            | 3               | 0               |
| 7.  | Improves learner interactional skills        | 6            | 0               | 2               |
| 8.  | Encourages learner intrinsic motivation      | 5            | 2               | 1               |
| 9.  | Creates a collaborative learning environment | 7            | 1               | 0               |
| 10. | Promotes learner's academic progress         | 8            | 0               | 0               |

From the findings, all the eight teachers (100%) were of the opinion that TBA promotes learners' academic progress. Three (3) teachers were not sure about four advantages of TBA which were; provides a relaxed atmosphere, pursues development of integrated skills, proper for class management and appropriate for group-work. Two (25%) of the teachers disagreed to the fact that TBA improves learners' interactional skills.

The study sought to find out the teachers' opinion on co-curricular activities that enhance tasks. Teachers' stated their opinion on importance of co-curricular activities in TBA instruction to determine whether according to them the activities enhanced TBA in teaching French composition writing.

From the findings, majority of the teachers, 75% felt that co-curricular activities were important in learning of French. They argued that co-curricular activities facilitated learning of French not only in the classroom but also outside the classroom. While a minority 25 % (2 out of 8) of the teachers were for the opinion that co-curricular activities are not important in the learning of French. This may be attributed to the fact that some of the teachers lacked time to engage students in co-curricular activities. Secondly, some schools may have felt that engaging students in co-curricular activities was expensive and a waste of time as they were required to cover the syllabus. Teachers are therefore advised to use co-curricular activities when using TBA because it makes learning easier and faster. Co-curricular activities also act as a motivating factor in the learning and teaching of French. According to Richards (2012) an outstanding teacher uses reinforcement, has excellent command of the language and employs both verbal and non-verbal communication. Figure 4.7 shows reasons why teachers felt that co-curricular activities are important in teaching quality writing in frequencies and percentages.



**Figure 4.7: Teachers' perceptions on importance of co-curricular activities.**

From Figure 4.7, the study found out that the most important reason as to why co-curricular activities were used was to help students to interact with francophone personnel. This was because most of these activities were held outside the school where the students met not only other students studying French from other schools but also other people using French as a mode of communication. This was important in TBA because students encountered native speakers of the language who acted as role models teaching quality writing in frequencies and percentages.

The teachers gave comments on the effectiveness of the content in the text books in teaching using TBA. Among the topics found in the KICD syllabus and are relevant in the text books as pointed out by the sampled teachers that can be taught effectively using task based approach were; '*La recette*' (recipe), '*L'itineraire*'- (itinerary), '*Les sports*'(sports), '*l'imparfait* (imperfect) *proposer quelque chose a quelqu'un* (propose something to someone). These are some of the topics used to set KCSE composition questions for the national examination. All the teachers were for the opinion that these topics can be understood better when taught using TBA.

The teachers felt that when TBA is used to teach composition writing; students are kept alert because they are fully involved in tasks either as groups or as individuals. Secondly,

TBA motivated students to learn as learning was centered on them and not on the teacher. The third reason was that it gave room for flexibility making learning and teaching very easy. These findings are similar with Adendorff (2009) where it was established that students enjoyed the task-based activities and the gap between the student's knowledge and new knowledge was mainly vocabulary.

Using the questionnaire, teachers were asked to write down their perceptions towards TBA. All the teachers felt that TBA provided a relaxed atmosphere, activated learners needs and interests, pursued the development of integrated skills, was appropriate for small groups, encouraged learners' intrinsic motivation, created a collaborative environment and promoted learners' academic progress. Teachers were therefore encouraged to use TBA to teach all the language skills. This results were similar to Widdowson (1983) that TBA is favored by many because it focuses on writing skills of the language and has its foundation on the other language skills of reading, listening, speaking and interaction. Teachers felt that TBA was an effective method in composition writing in French because grammar and language structures which posed a big problem to learners were taught in context by using the language itself and not memorization.

#### **4.5.2: Learners' perceptions towards TBA**

The research was interested in finding out the perceptions of learners towards TBA in order to find out how effective it was in teaching composition writing in French. Under learners' perceptions, the following dimensions were considered: ease of use, usefulness,

perceived satisfaction, perceived learning and enjoyment. The results were analyzed and presented in frequencies and percentages. Table 4.12 shows the results of learners' perceptions in frequencies and percentages.

**Table 4.12: Learners' perceptions towards TBA**

| <b>Dimension</b>     | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|----------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Ease of use          | 88               | 70.9              |
| Satisfaction         | 113              | 91.1              |
| Perceived learning   | 120              | 96.8              |
| Perceived usefulness | 119              | 95.9              |
| Enjoyment            | 123              | 99.2              |

From table 4.12, the study found out that a majority of the learners (99%) agreed that TBA was a pleasant method to learn quality writing. This might be attributed to the fact that when students are involved in tasks, they enjoy learning. A minority of the students (29%) did not see TBA as an easy method to use. This might be attributed to the fact that the learners might have found it hard to determine which tasks they were supposed to do at the pre-task, task and language level when learning quality writing. In addition, they might have lacked the necessary vocabulary to express themselves at the final stage which was report writing. Learners are advised to progress slowly and carry out all the activities suggested by the teachers before they write the report. This will ensure that in the process of carrying out the suggested activities, they will acquire the appropriate vocabulary which will make it easy for them to write the composition.

#### **4.6: Objective 5: Explore the Challenges of Task-Based Approach.**

This study was interested in finding out the challenges of the Task- Based approach of teaching and learning in French. This was important to know how these challenges could be addressed and therefore render TBA effective in teaching and learning of composition writing in French language. According to the findings, the sampled teachers identified six major challenges of TBA and these challenges were ranked from number 1 to 6 with number one showing the most popular challenge encountered by all the teachers. Data were collected, analyzed and presented in Table 4.13 which shows the challenges of TBA in ranks.

**Table 4.13: Challenges of using TBA in ranks**

| <b>Challenges</b>                            | <b>Rank</b> |
|--|-------------|
| Lack of training in TBA                      | 8           |
| Limited language proficiency                 | 2           |
| Unavailability of resources                  | 4           |
| Difficulty in assessing learners             | 7           |
| Large class size                             | 9           |
| Lazy students during group-work              | 6           |
| Learners tend to speak their native language | 5           |
| Limited time                                 | 1           |
| Content not in line with TBA                 | 3           |

Table 4.13 shows that the challenge number one to the effective use of TBA was limited time. Teachers felt that the 40-minute lesson was not enough to effectively teach composition writing using the steps provided. This might be attributed to the fact that each student had to carry out a task at each level. Task based learning being a learner

centered approach where each student had to be involved in activities that would motivate him to learn the French language in order to improve on his composition writing skills. Some of the teachers reported that they allowed the students to choose the resource materials as recommended in TBA. This in itself consumed a lot of time even before the teacher would embark on real teaching. Teachers were advised to prepare just enough content for the 40 minutes and not to hurry over the content in order to achieve the objective of teaching. This finding corroborates with the study by Boakye (2017) on challenges of newly qualified teachers.

According to the findings, the least challenge faced by teachers when using TBA in teaching writing was large classes which was ranked number 9. Most of the French classes recorded very few students which was a disadvantage because they could not engage in effective group-work. Teachers reported that most students preferred to go for other subjects which are blocked with French like Business studies, computer, Art, Agriculture or Arabic. It was reported that students felt that these other subjects were much easier than French and they could easily score grade 'A'. In addition, teachers reported that students preferred studying French at Alliance Française after sitting for their KCSE because the language needed a lot of time and concentration to grasp. Teachers were advised to use more motivating methods like songs, poems, projects and games in order to make learning of French easier so that the number of students opting for the subject could increase. This finding agreed with the KNEC report of 2013 which established that out of the 446,696 candidates who sat KCSE in 2015, only 2,827 (0.63 %) were French students.

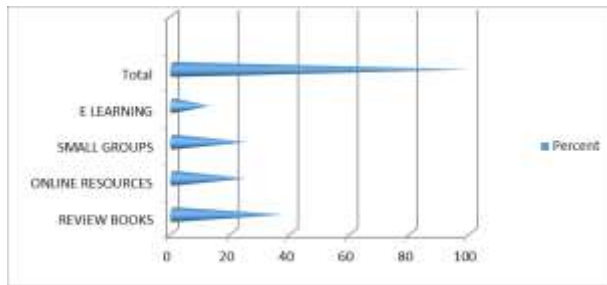
Although Angriani (2014) states that the main challenge of using TBA is that students resort to communicating in the first language, this finding was contrary to those of this research because none of the sampled teachers identified this as a challenge in this study. Teachers were advised to encourage students to aim at using the target language in the classroom during composition writing as this would make French language acquisition faster.

The students were also required to identify the challenges of TBA. They were supposed to tick on the four challenges provided as; lack of relevant vocabulary, noise-making in the classroom, use of mother tongue and lack of instructional resources. From the findings, a total of 90 out of 124 (73%) students identified lack of relevant vocabulary as a major challenge. This was because, at the last stage of language focus in TBA, they are expected to write an accurate and fluent report on how they have carried out tasks. As stated earlier, report writing as a method of teaching was least used in the teaching and learning of composition writing. Teachers are encouraged to teach students how to write reports with proficiency in order to combat this challenge when using TBA. The least challenge according to the students was use of mother tongue. This might be because in Kenya, there are 43 dialects and Nairobi being the capital city may not have only one ethnic group. Student may use the national language, Kiswahili or English, which is the language of instruction but not mother tongue. Teachers were encouraged to embrace other languages as this is a major component of TBA.

#### **4.6.1: Teachers' Suggestions on improvement of TBA.**

The sampled teachers were asked to suggest solutions to the challenges of using TBA in teaching French quality composition writing. This information was important because

finding solutions to the challenges would mean that TBA would be improved to make it an effective method of teaching and learning quality writing in Kenya secondary schools. The findings are shown in Figure 4.8 which shows the suggestions given by teachers on how TBA can be improved.



**Figure 4.8 Suggestions on how TBA can be improved.**

Figure 4.8 shows that majority of the teachers suggested review of books to suit TBA. This may be attributed to most of the books being structured using the communicative approach as recommended by the KICD syllabus (2002). Three (3) teachers (38%) suggested that the existing resources be reviewed to suit TBA teaching and learning. Teachers were advised to use on-line resources as most of them have been updated to incorporate Task-Based teaching and learning. According to Ortiz (2006), TBA resources have to be multidimensional, that is, be presented in the form of a table with the following categories: linguistic skills, communicative objectives which are both cultural and intercultural, activities and modalities of executing them, support materials and topics. A minority (1 out of 8 teachers (13%) suggested introduction of e-learning while another 25% of the teachers suggested the use of small groups and on-line resources.

Teachers were also asked to give advantages of using TBA in teaching French. The first advantage according to the findings was its ability to allow teachers and students discover new knowledge (38%), ability to allow application of learnt knowledge (25%) and

allowing students to express themselves in French (25%). Teachers also reported that TBA was more student-centered (13%) method in teaching & learning of French. Therefore, to improve on TBA, more teacher in-service trainings to be organized so that teachers are trained on how to teach the linguistic content in the syllabus.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1: Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to establish the effectiveness of Task based approach (TBA) on learners' writing of composition in French in secondary schools in Nairobi City County, Kenya. Effectiveness of quality writing included methods used in teaching quality composition writing, nature & use of TBA, learner performance, perceptions towards TBA and challenges of TBA. This chapter presents a summary of the research findings, conclusion, recommendations and suggestions for further study.

The study was guided by the following five (5) research objectives; to establish the methods used in teaching and learning of French composition writing, to establish the

nature and extent to which task-based approach was being used to teach French composition writing, to investigate the effect of task-based approach on learners' performance in composition writing, to determine (i) teachers' and (ii) learners' perceptions towards task-based approach in composition writing and to explore the challenges of task-based approach in French composition writing.

The reviewed literature found evidence that there was concerted effort by various scholars in a quest to address the use of Task-Based learning but there was little research on TBA method in teaching and learning writing skills in French in secondary schools in Kenya. Moreover, most of the reviewed literature did not use tests to measure the effectiveness of TBA in writing.

The present study used a Quasi-experimental research design to obtain both qualitative and quantitative data. Secondary school teachers of French and Form Three French students in Nairobi City County were sampled for the study. In the study, 132 respondents who consisted of 8 teachers of French and 124 Form three students studying French language were used to collect data. Probability sampling techniques like stratified sampling, simple random were used to select the schools, teachers and students. It was combined with non-probability sampling technique like purposive sampling to select the form three teachers of French.

Data were collected by use of teacher and learner questionnaire, lesson observation form and student test. Raw data was analyzed by use of descriptive statistics using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Qualitative data from the lesson observation guide were organized into themes guided by the objectives of the study.

Following the results from the analysis of data in chapter four, this chapter presented a summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations that can be used to improve the use of Task-Based Teaching and Learning of French composition writing.

## **5.2: Summary of the findings**

The analysis of data made it possible to come up with the findings based on the objectives. The findings on the demographic information of the respondents indicated that there were more female teachers (5) teaching French compared to male teachers (3). It was further established that 4 teachers out of 8 (50%) were between 31- 40 years old. This therefore meant that they could easily be molded to use TBA. All the sampled teachers had at least a basic degree from the university meaning that they met the regulations of TSC. The study also found 5 out of 8 teachers combined French with other languages like English and Kiswahili while a few (3) combined it with humanities like History and Christian Religious Education. The teachers would therefore use TBA in teaching other subjects apart from French. It was also established that most teachers (4) were trained at Kenyatta University. Additionally, most of the teachers (75%) had already been in serviced trained in TBA. This implied that TBA was an effective method of teaching French in Kenya.

Most students, 109 out of 124 (88%), were between 15-17 years and they started French in Form one. This was in line with the Ministry of Education policy where pupils were expected to start school at 7 years so that by form three, they are 16 or 17 years. Moreover, at the moment, the government has allowed 100% transition from primary to secondary school and therefore, students are not allowed to repeat any class. With the introduction of the National Education Management Information for Students (NEMIS)

policy by the Ministry of Education in 2017, it may not be very easy for students to transfer from one school to another. Therefore, students may stay in one school from form 1 to form 4. As concerns the gender of students, analysis showed that there were more girls (64) than boys (60) doing French in Form three in Nairobi City County.

### **5.3: Summary of findings by research objectives**

#### **Objective 1: To establish the methods used composition writing.**

Findings from the study showed that 8 methods were used in teaching and learning composition writing. These methods were: process-product approach, audio-visual, group-work, demonstration, grammar-translation, problem-based approach, communicative approach and task-based approach. Group-work was used by all teachers to teach quality writing where learners shared experiences making it easy for them to write down what they had shared. This finding pointed to the fact that Task-based approach was used alongside other methods to teach and learn writing skills in French language.

#### **Objective 2: To establish the nature and extent of TBA use.**

According to the findings, there was evidence of task-based approach use by both teachers and learners in lesson preparation, co-curricular activities, resource materials, content delivery and assessment in teaching and learning quality composition writing. The three steps of Pre-task, task and language focus lesson plan structure was used by majority of the teachers. In addition, 63% of the teachers reported that they used tasks in all their lessons while 25% reported that they used TBA most of the time. In assessment,

the study found out that auto-evaluation, inter-evaluation and teacher-learner evaluation were used to assess learners.

TBA was also used in the selection of teaching and learning resources which included textbooks and sites on the internet. Entre Copains was the most preferred text book in TBA use because according to the teachers, the content in the book was oriented towards TBA. Moreover, it contained tasks in the five skills of listening, reading, speaking, writing and interaction which was an important component of Task-Based Approach. Apart from the text books, the study identified sites on the internet for TBA instruction, thus; [www.nettquiz.com](http://www.nettquiz.com), [www.francaisfacile.com](http://www.francaisfacile.com) which, according to the teachers contained a variety of French writing activities generated for students' use. Additionally, answers were provided and therefore students could correct their own work without the help of the teacher (Auto-evaluation), an essential aspect of TBA.

The analysis of the responses given by the sampled teachers showed that all the teachers indicated that the resources were effective in teaching quality composition writing using TBA. It was also reported by the teachers that almost all the topics in the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) form three French syllabus could be effectively taught using TBA because they required real-life tasks.

**Objective 3: To investigate the effect of TBA on learners' performance in French composition writing in French language.**

The study compared students' performance in composition writing before and after TBA for both control and experimental groups. The mean for the experimental group before

TBA intervention was 3.434 while that of the control group was 3.479. After teaching for six weeks using TBA approach, the mean of the experimental group improved to 4.65 which was an improvement index of +1.22. As for the control group, the mean improved from 3.479 to 4.362 which was an improvement index of +1.083.

The performance scores of students were also compared on 4 evaluation indicators of adherence to instructions, textual competence, communicative competence and linguistic competence for pre and posttest on both control and experimental groups. Results showed that students performed better in the communicative competence than the other competences. These findings therefore showed that TBA was effective in teaching and learning quality writing because performance in the experimental group of schools improved after teaching using TBA. This finding corroborated well with the findings by Xianyang, (2013) that the experimental group presented significantly better learning attainments compared to the control group.

According to the sampled teachers' responses, the advantages of TBA were that it allowed needs of individual students to be effectively catered for, the teacher was able to identify the learners' ability, made the student responsible, motivated the learner and created room for flexibility. Moreover, the study found out that TBA provided opportunity for use of new knowledge, rendered learning flexible, initiated critical thinking, enhanced creativity and improved social interaction. The sampled teachers also reported that TBA made acquisition of the language skills easier as compared to the conventional approaches.

**Objective 4: To determine (i) teachers' and (ii) learners' perceptions towards TBA use**

The study sought to establish the perceptions of the teachers in terms of; understanding the characteristics of Task Based Approach, TBA concepts, effectiveness of TBA and relevance of resources in TBA. Findings showed that 100% (eight) of the teachers understood all the characteristics of TBA. The teachers felt that with TBA; students are kept alert because they are fully involved in tasks either as groups or as individuals. Secondly, TBA motivated students to learn as learning was centered on them and not the teacher. The third reason was that it gave room for flexibility making learning and teaching very easy.

The research was further interested in finding out the perceptions of learners towards TBA in the following dimensions: ease of use, usefulness, perceived satisfaction, perceived learning and enjoyment. The study found out that a majority of the learners (99%) agreed that TBA was a pleasant method to learn quality writing with. This might be attributed to the fact that when students were involved in tasks, they enjoyed learning.

**Objective 5: To explore the challenges of using Task-based approach.**

The research found out that limited time was a major challenge in using TBA as reported by the sampled teachers. They also stated that lack of sufficient training, limited language proficiency and difficulty in assessment were major challenges of TBA in teaching composition writing skills.

As concerns suggestions on how to improve Task-Based Learning and Teaching, the teachers reported that there was need to review text books. This was true because although some of the text books had content which could be taught using TBA, most of the text book content was oriented towards Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).

#### **5.4: Conclusions**

Basing on the first objective which was ‘to establish the methods used in composition writing’, the study concluded that 8 methods were being used to teach quality writing which included Task-based approach. According to the findings, visits to the French cultural center, music festivals, French days and participating in the French club activities were identified as the main activities that could be used to sustain tasks. Most of the schools were already participating in these activities therefore making TBA effective in teaching and learning quality writing in French in secondary schools in Kenya.

As much as the instructional resources were available, the digital learning platform seems not to be well developed and used in Kenya (video-clips, audio tapes, internet, google maps and charts) and yet, most learners preferred learning by seeing and doing. Use of on-line resources was essential in TBA because the resources on the internet allowed students to learn without necessarily the assistance of the teacher all the time.

In order to establish the effectiveness of TBA, the scores of the pre and post in composition writing were analyzed. These results revealed that there was a significant difference between the pre test and post test. There was a higher improvement index in the mean of the posttest in the experimental group compared to that of the control group meaning that TBA was effective in teaching and learning composition writing.

Finally, in order to investigate the challenges of TBA, the teachers identified lack of sufficient time, lazy students who participate less in group-work and students fearing to make mistakes. Teachers gave suggestions on how TBA could be improved. These included using of online resources, group-work and reviewing of the already existing text books.

## **5.5 Recommendations**

Based on the conclusions of this study, the following recommendations were suggested;

### **5.5.1 Recommendations for Implementation**

1. The Ministry of Education needs to organize seminars and workshops annually for training teachers in teaching methods and approaches in order to improve writing skills.
2. Parents and teachers need to encourage learners to participate in co-curricular activities which would change the learners' attitude towards teaching approaches. Through student participation in co-curricular activities, talent spotting should be encouraged so that French is not only used to pass KCSE but for careers in music, poetry, theatre or script writing which would help in improving quality writing skills in French.
3. French learning and teaching be allocated five hours per week instead of three to ensure that all the steps of a TBA lesson structure are followed when preparing and in the delivery of lessons. The study found out that one of the challenges of TBA was time constraint.

4. The syllabus of teachers of French at the university/college be structured towards the principles and procedures of TBA so that when they come to the field, they can effectively use TBA in teaching quality writing in French language.

### **5.5.2: Recommendations for Policy Formulation**

1. Curriculum developers need to include TBA among the approaches used to teach writing skills. The study found out that TBA was an effective approach in teaching writing skills.

2. Mentorship programs for experienced teachers to mentor younger teachers to use TBA in lesson preparation, content delivery and assessment. This research found out that some teachers were not sure about their use of TBA in teaching writing skills.

3. Publishers need to review existing text books basing on the TBA content. It was evident from the study that some of the text books do not have tasks that can improve learners' writing skills.

4. Teachers to mentor learners in TBA by teaching using this approach and encouraging peer-teaching and assessment among students using TBA.

5. Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development to encourage use of on-line resource materials which have been structured towards TBA.

6. Training programs for teachers at the university/college to include a unit on research so that teachers can guide students on how to write for East Africa and E-Kitabu easy writing competitions. The study found out that very few teachers use research as a method of teaching writing skills where they said they had also not been taught.

### **5.5.3: Recommendations for further study**

The following issues emerged from the research and were suggested for further investigation.

1. The learning environment in relation to effectiveness of Task-Based Approach.
2. The content analysis in the text books and its effects on using TBA.
3. Effectiveness of TBA in primary school, teacher training colleges and other institutions of higher learning.

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**APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRES****QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS**

Dear teacher,

I am a PhD student from Kenyatta University. I am doing a research on the Effectiveness of Task-Based Approach in teaching and learning French composition writing in secondary schools in Nairobi City County. This questionnaire is meant for teachers of French in secondary schools to gather data on the use of the Task-Based approach of teaching. I request you to fill it carefully and seriously. The information will be confidential as codes will be used instead of real names.

Thank you.

Leonorah Lutiali.

**SECTION I: General Information**

Name of school ..... Sub-County.....

1. How old are you? (Tick as appropriate)
  - (a) 20 – 30 years      (b) 31– 40 years      (c) 41 -50 years      (d) 51 -60 years
  
2. For how long have you been teaching French at secondary school? (Tick one)
  - (a) less than one (1) year
  - (b) 1 – 5 years
  - (c) 6- 10 years
  - (d) 11 – 15 years
  - (e) Over 15 years
  
3. What are your academic qualifications? (Put a tick)
  - (a) DALF C1, C2      (b) Diploma in Education      (c) Bachelors in Education
  - (d) Masters in Education      (e) Master of Arts      (f) PhD
  
4. Which subjects did you study at college? E.g French/English/Education,  
French/Geography  
.....
  
5. Where did you train as a teacher of French?.....

**SECTION II:****1: METHODS OF TEACHING COMPOSITION WRITING**

(i) Which methods do you use to teach composition? (Put a tick)

- (a) Process-product approach.
- (b) Audio-visual.
- (c) Discussion.
- (d) Demonstration.
- (e) Grammar-translation.
- (f) Problem-based approach.
- (g) Communicative approach.
- (h) Task-based approach.

(ii) Tick on the strategies you use in class to teach writing

| <b>No.</b> | <b>STRATEGIES/TECHNIQUES</b>             |
|------------|--|
| 1.         | Filling in gaps                          |
| 2.         | Writing based on a picture/photograph    |
| 3.         | Writing based on a template              |
| 4.         | Collaborative writing                    |
| 5.         | Writing based on jumbled words/sentences |
| 6.         | Writing on a card                        |
| 7.         | Writing down dictation                   |
| 8.         | Writing based on a topic                 |
| 9.         | Copying teachers' composition            |
| 10.        | Writing on blogs                         |

## **2: EXTENT AND NATURE OF TASK-BASED APPROACH USE**

### **(i). How often do you use Task-Based Approach?**

- (a) Always
- (b) Most of the time
- (c) A few times
- (d) Not sure
- (e) Never

### **(ii) Which type of tasks do you use in class? Tick as appropriate.**

- (a) Information gap tasks
- (b) Reasoning gap tasks
- (c) Opinion gap tasks.

### **(iii). Which forms of composition writing do you teach?**

- (a) Letters
- (b) Dialogues
- (c) Recipes
- (d) Short stories
- (e) Curriculum Vitae
- (f) Essays
- (g) Reports
- (h) Posters

### **(iii) Types of resources. (use a Tick)**

- (i) I use the following resources when teaching composition writing.
  - (a) Text books ; (i) Entre Copains (ii) Au Sommet (iii) Parlons Français
  - (b) Photographs
  - (c) Drawings
  - (d) Authentic texts: poems, dialogues
  - (e) DVDs and CDs

- (f) Radio
- (g) Television
- (h) Computer
- (i) On-line resources

**(ii) Use of resources (Tick one)**

- I use TBA resources during all my lessons
- I use TBA resources during some lessons
- I use TBA resources during very few lessons
- I do not use TBA resource

**(iii) Availability of resources (Tick one)**

- Learning resources are available all the time
- Learning resources are available sometimes
- Learning resources are not available at all

**3. LEARNERS' PERFORMANCE USING TBA**

(i) I use the following evaluation indicators when marking composition.

- (a) Adherence to instructions
- (b) Communicative competence
- (c) Linguistic competence
- (d) Textual competence

(ii) What type of errors do students commit (Tick on what is appropriate for you)

- Spelling (LC)
- Vocabulary (LC)
- Wrong interpretation (AI)
- Less words (AI)
- Grammar (LC)
- Register (CC)
- Use of English (CC)
- Conjugation (LC)
- Presentation (TC)

(iii) Students perform best in; (Tick one)

- Adherence to instructions
- Communicative competence
- Linguistic competence
- Textual competence.

**4: TEACHER PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS TASK –BASED APPROACH (TBA)**

This section contains several statements. Study each of them and indicate with a cross [x] whether you; Agree (A), Not Sure (NS) or Disagree (D)

**(j) Teachers' understanding of TBA characteristics**

|    | <b>FACTOR</b>   | <b>A</b> | <b>NS</b> | <b>D</b> |
|----|---|----------|-----------|----------|
| 1. | A task is communicative and goal directed                                       |          |           |          |
| 2. | A task involves primary focus on meaning  |          |           |          |
| 3. | A task has a clearly defined outcome  |          |           |          |
| 4. | In a task, the learner uses the target language.                                |          |           |          |
| 5. | TBA is consistent with the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). |          |           |          |
| 6. | TBA is based on student centered instructional approach                         |          |           |          |
| 7. | TBA includes 3 stages: Pre-task, Task and Post-task                             |          |           |          |

**(ii) Teachers' view on advantages of TBA**

|     | <b>FACTOR</b>  | <b>A</b> | <b>NS</b> | <b>D</b> |
|-----|--|----------|-----------|----------|
| 1.  | TBA provides a relaxed atmosphere to promote target language use                       |          |           |          |
| 2.  | Activates learners' needs and interests  |          |           |          |
| 3.  | TBA materials in textbooks are meaningful & purposeful based on the real-world context |          |           |          |
| 4.  | TBA pursues the development of integrated skills in the classroom                      |          |           |          |
| 5.  | TBA is proper for controlling classroom arrangement                                    |          |           |          |
| 6.  | It is appropriate for small group work   |          |           |          |
| 7.  | Improves learner interaction skills  |          |           |          |
| 8.  | Encourages learners' intrinsic motivation  |          |           |          |
| 9.  | Creates a collaborative learning environment   |          |           |          |
| 10. | Promotes learners' academic progress   |          |           |          |

## 5. CHALLENGES OF TBA

(i) Put a tick on A (Agree) NS (Not Sure) and D(Disagree) on the challenges of TBA

|     | FACTOR  | A | NS | D |
|-----|---|---|----|---|
| 1.  | Lack sufficient training in TBA.                        |   |    |   |
| 2.  | Limited language proficiency                            |   |    |   |
| 3.  | Assessing learners' task-based performance is difficult |   |    |   |
| 4.  | Learners are not used to task-based learning            |   |    |   |
| 5.  | Content in textbooks is not in-line with TBA            |   |    |   |
| 6.  | Large class size is an obstacle to use TBA methods      |   |    |   |
| 7.  | Limited time  |   |    |   |
| 8.  | Lack of appropriate resources                           |   |    |   |
| 9.  | Laziness among some students during group-work          |   |    |   |
| 10. | Learners tend to speak their native language            |   |    |   |

(ii). In your opinion, what are the possible solutions to these challenges?

Review of text books in line with TBA.

Regular in-service training of teachers of French.

French teaching syllabus to include TBA.

Learner to be sensitised on TBA.

Schools to support TBA by purchasing instructional resources.

|

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS**

Dear learner,

I am a PhD student from Kenyatta University. I am doing a research on the Effectiveness of Task-Based Approach in teaching and learning French composition writing in secondary schools in Nairobi City County. This questionnaire is meant for learners of French in secondary schools to gather data on the use of the Task-Based approach of teaching and learning. I request you to fill it carefully and seriously. The information will be confidential as codes will be used instead of real names.

Thank you.

Leonorah Lutiali.

|



(ii) Tick on the strategies/techniques you use to practice writing.

| <b>No.</b> | <b>TECHNIQUES</b>                        |
|------------|--|
| 1.         | Filling in gaps                          |
| 2.         | Writing based on a picture/photograph    |
| 3.         | Writing based on a template              |
| 4.         | Collaborative writing                    |
| 5.         | Writing based on jumbled words/sentences |
| 6.         | Writing on a card                        |
| 7.         | Writing down dictation                   |
| 8.         | Writing based on a topic                 |
| 9.         | Copying teachers' composition            |
| 10.        | Writing on blogs                         |

(iii) I take part in the following co-curricular activities which enhance quality writing.

| <b>No.</b> | <b>Activity</b>                     |
|------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1.         | French club                         |
| 2.         | French days                         |
| 3.         | Music Festivals                     |
| 4.         | French week                         |
| 5.         | Drama festivals                     |
| 6.         | Visit to the French Cultural center |
| 7.         | DELFF examinations                  |
| 8.         | School exchange programs            |
| 9.         | Trips to Francophone countries      |

10. Essay competitions

## 2. NATURE AND EXTENT OF TBA USE

(i) The teacher uses TBA; (Tick one)

- (a) Always
- (b) Once in a week
- (c) Twice in a week
- (d) Never

(ii) I write the following composition types using TBA.

### **Type of writing**

1. Letters
2. Dialogues
3. Recipes
4. Short stories
5. Curriculum Vitae
6. Essays
7. Reports
8. Posters

### 3. PERFORMANCE IN TBA

Tick which one is appropriate.

(i) I perform better when the teacher uses the following methods in teaching composition writing.

- (a) Product-process approach
- (b) Audio-visual method
- (c) Group-work
- (d) Demonstration
- (e) Grammar-translation
- (f) Problem-based approach
- (g) Communicative approach
- (h) Task-based approach

#### (ii) Evaluation indicators

I use the following indicators when marking my own or my classmates' French composition.

- Adherence to instructions
- Communicative competence
- Linguistic competence
- Textual competence

#### 4: LEARNERS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS TBA

In this section, you are expected to tick whether you Agree (A), Not sure (NS) or Disagree (D) with the statements given.

| <b>Dimension</b>       | <b>Task-Based Approach (TBA)</b>     | <b>A</b> | <b>NS</b> | <b>D</b> |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|
| Ease of use            | It is easy for me to learn using TBA |          |           |          |
| Usefulness             | TBA can improve my writing skills    |          |           |          |
| Perceived satisfaction | I enjoy using TBA in learning        |          |           |          |
| Perceived learning     | I learn a lot from TBA               |          |           |          |
| Enjoyment              | Learning with TBA is pleasant        |          |           |          |

#### 5. CHALLENGES OF TBA

Tick on the challenges you face when the teacher uses TBA in teaching writing.

Lack of relevant vocabulary

Noise-making in the class

Use of mother tongue

Lack of instructional resources

**APPENDIX B: LESSON OBSERVATION FORM**

Name of the Institution:

|                                   |   |                                     |                    |
|-----------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Teacher's Name:</b><br>TSC.NO. |   | <b>Observer's Name:</b><br>TSC. NO. |                    |
| Class:                            | Learners Present:<br>Male:                  Female: | Time:<br>Date :                     | Subject:<br>Topic: |

Lesson Objectives:

| Observation Areas                              | Performance indicators  | What was Observed | Marks |
|--|---|-------------------|-------|
| <b>1. Introduction and Lesson Organization</b> | (i) Review of the previous lesson.<br><br>(ii) Objectives written and stated in line with TBA.<br><br>(iii) Lesson plan has<br>- pre-task,<br>- task,<br>- post task and<br>- language focus levels |                   |       |
| <b>2. Content Delivery</b>                     | (i) Mastery of content in line with the Task-based approach<br><br>(ii) Covering the lesson within the stipulated time (Started on time and ended on time).   |                   |       |
| <b>3. Teaching Methods/</b>                    | <b>(i) Methods</b><br>- Audio-visual<br>- Discussion<br>- Demonstration<br>- Grammar-translation<br>- Problem-Based<br>- Communicative<br>- Task-based<br><br><b>(ii) Techniques</b>                |                   |       |

- Filling in blanks
- Use of photos/pictures
- Use of templates
- Collaborative writing
- Cards
- Copying teachers' composition
- Creating blogs
- Dictation

**(iii)Resources**

- Text books
- Radio,
- TV,
- CDs
- DVDs,
- Computers,
- Internet
- French websites

|   |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| <p><b>4. Learner Involvement in tasks &amp; classroom Communication</b></p> | <p><b>Type of tasks and activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Information tasks</li> <li>ii. classroom presentations<br/>Dramatization and role playing.</li> <li>iii. Reasoning gaps.</li> <li>vi. Opinion gaps.</li> </ul> <p><b>Types of evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Auto</li> <li>- Teacher</li> <li>- Teacher/learner</li> </ul> |  |  |
| <p><b>5. Classroom Management</b></p>                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. No speaking of mother tongue</li> <li>ii. All students participate in asking/answering questions</li> <li>iii. Use of auto and inter-evaluation.</li> <li>iv. No chorus answers/knowing learners by name</li> <li>v. Individual needs of each student are catered for</li> </ul>   |  |  |
|   |  |  |  |

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**Observer's Recommendation:**

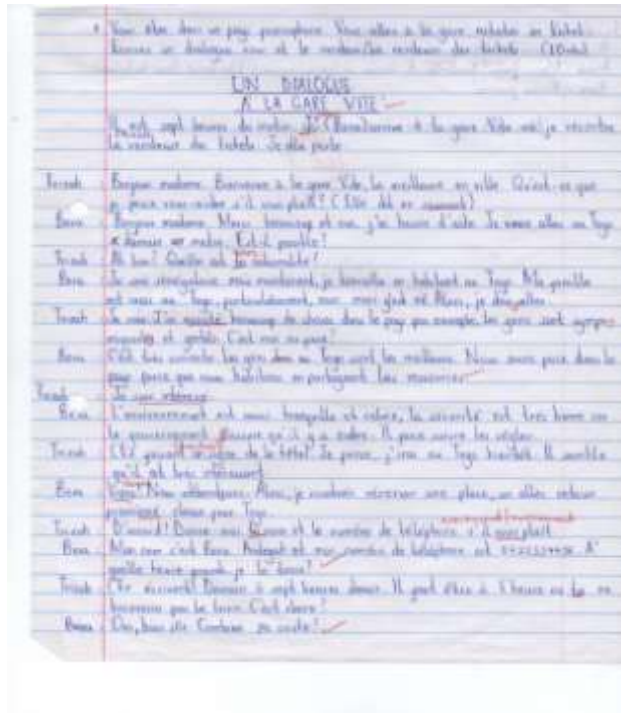
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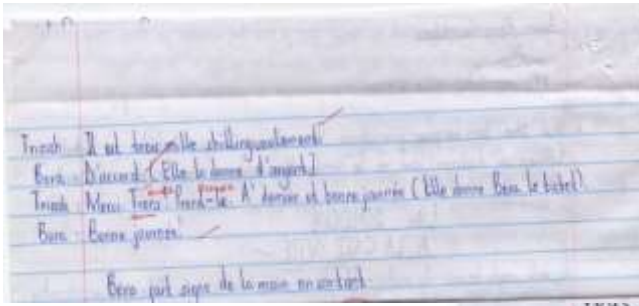
|                             |                              |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Teacher's Signature:</b> | <b>Observer's Signature:</b> |
| <b>Date:</b>                | <b>Date:</b>                 |

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Adapted from TSC lesson observation form and Willis structure of a lesson plan.

**APPENDIX C: STUDENTS' COMPOSITIONS**





**APPENDIX D:**  
**STUDENT TEST AND**  
**MARKING SCHEME**

**FRENCH**  
**COMPOSITION**  
**WRITING.**  
**TIME: 1 HOUR**

**Instructions to students.**

**Write the composition**  
**below in the space**  
**provided on the question**  
**paper.**

**In 80 – 120 words, write**  
**in French on;**

*Vous êtes dans un pays francophone. Vous allez à la gare pour acheter un billet. Ecrivez un dialogue entre vous et le/la vendeur/vendeuse. (10 points)*

(You are in a francophone country. You are at the railway station ready to purchase your ticket. Write the dialogue that ensues between you and the ticket seller. (10 marks))

... vous êtes dans un pays francophone. Vous allez à la gare acheter un ticket. Ecrivez un dialogue vous et le vendeur/la vendeuse des tickets.

UN DIALOGUE

CHEZ LE VENDEUR

Il est 14h00 du midi. Josephine (moi-même) voudrais acheter un ticket pour le bus. Je suis très nouvelle dans le pays francophone - Mali. Je parle avec le vendeur.

Josephine: Bonjour monsieur, ça va?  
Vendeur: Oui ça va, et vous?  
Josephine: Je vais bien. Je suis une touriste dans notre pays. Je suis ici pour le concert de la musicienne Chimpoko. Je voudrais acheter un ticket pour le bus de la ville.  
Vendeur: Bienvenue à mon pays madame. Mon pays est très superbe et très beau.  
Josephine: Merci beaucoup. Pour le ticket, il coûte combien?  
Vendeur: Il coûte deux cents chillings seulement.  
Josephine: Oh la la! le ticket est très cher alors je spira acheter le ticket d'autre vendeur. Bonne journée monsieur.  
Vendeur: (en courant après Josephine) Non, madame... vous ne parlez pas. Je réduirai le prix du ticket.  
Josephine: Merci monsieur.  
Vendeur: Je vous vendrai le ticket pour cent chilling seulement.  
Josephine: (elle achète le ticket) Après j'arrive dans la ville, où est la salle de la récréation?  
Vendeur: Après vous arrivez, Premièrement, tournez à gauche, ensuite vous allez tout droit et tournez à droite. Traversez la rue Kombo et au bout de cette rue, vous trouverez la salle de récréation.  
Josephine: C'est très facile! Merci monsieur et bonne journée! (elle part)

**MARKING SCHEME: COMPOSITION WRITING**

**Evaluation Indicator**

**Evaluation Aspects**

**Marks**

|                           |  |           |
|---------------------------|--|-----------|
| Adherence to instructions | Format and length of a dialogue  | 2         |
| Textual Competence        | Greetings, introduction and conclusion   | 3         |
| Communicative Competence  | Sufficient vocabulary to express gratitude, describe experiences, feelings, ideas and opinions with ease         | 3         |
| Linguistic Competence     | Good control of linguistic structures; tenses, spellings, adjectives, prepositions, pronouns and verbal aspects. | 2         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>              |  | <b>10</b> |

Adapted from KNEC marking Scheme (2013)

### **APPENDIX E: 3-DAY TBA TRAINING GUIDE**

**General goals:** To train teachers in Task-Based Approach (Actionable Perspective)

To assess teachers using TBA in lessons delivery.

**Specific Objectives;**

By the end of the training, the teacher should be able to;

- a. Define the Task-Based Approach(TBA).
- b. Give the six levels of student and their description in TBA.
- c. Identify the five language activities and the three components of TBA.
- d. Identify the types of tasks to be used in teaching using TBA.
- e. Differentiate between Communicative language teaching and TBA.
- f. Make a lesson plan for TBA class.
- g. Teach the five language skills using TBA.
- h. Use resources/internet in teaching using TBA.

- i. Set tests using TBA.
- j. Assess learners using TBA.
- k. State his/her role in TBA class.

### **DAY 1**

What is Task-Based Learning and Teaching (TBA)?

Language activities and components of TBA

Types of tasks/activities in TBA

### **DAY 2**

Differences between Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and TBA

Task-Based lesson plan

Five language skills – Listening, speaking, reading, writing and Interaction

Instructional resources in TBA

### **DAY 3**

Information on the learner’s background

Assessment in TBA

Teacher’s role in TBA class

Setting of the student test and preparation of marking scheme

Evaluation of the training

## **APPENDIX F: SCHOOLS OFFERING FRENCH IN NAIROBI CITY COUNTY**

| <b>No.</b> | <b>School</b>        | <b>No.</b> | <b>School</b>       |
|------------|----------------------|------------|---------------------|
| <b>1.</b>  | Akiba school         | <b>30.</b> | Nile Road secondary |
| <b>2.</b>  | Anointed high school | <b>31.</b> | Ofafa Jericho       |
| <b>3.</b>  | Aquinas high         | <b>32.</b> | Our Lady of Fatima  |
| <b>4.</b>  | Arya boys            | <b>33.</b> | Our Lady of Mercy   |
| <b>5.</b>  | Arya girls           | <b>34.</b> | Pangani girls       |
| <b>6.</b>  | Brookshine school    | <b>35.</b> | Parklands Arya      |
| <b>7.</b>  | Buruburu girls       | <b>36.</b> | Parklands secondary |

|            |                         |            |                             |
|------------|-------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>8.</b>  | C.G.H.U.secondary       | <b>37.</b> | Pumwani girls               |
| <b>9.</b>  | Dagoretti high          | <b>38.</b> | Pumwani secondary           |
| <b>10.</b> | Goodwill secondary      | <b>39.</b> | Riara Springs               |
| <b>11.</b> | Highway secondary       | <b>40.</b> | Robin secondary             |
| <b>12.</b> | Hospital hill           | <b>41.</b> | Temple Road high            |
| <b>13.</b> | Huruma girls            | <b>42.</b> | The Kenya High              |
| <b>14.</b> | Jamhuri high            | <b>43.</b> | Upper hill school           |
| <b>15.</b> | Karen south C           | <b>44.</b> | Saint Mary's school         |
| <b>16.</b> | Karura SDA              | <b>45.</b> | St. Aloysius                |
| <b>17.</b> | Kianda school           | <b>46.</b> | St. Catherine Mountain View |
| <b>18.</b> | Le Pic school           | <b>47.</b> | St. Georges sec             |
| <b>19.</b> | Lenana school           | <b>48.</b> | St. Hannah Boys             |
| <b>20.</b> | Loreto convent Msongari | <b>49.</b> | St. Hannah preparatory      |
| <b>21.</b> | Loreto Valley road      | <b>50.</b> | St. Martins secondary       |
| <b>22.</b> | Makini Academy          | <b>51.</b> | St. Nicolas senior          |
| <b>23.</b> | Meridian school         | <b>52.</b> | St. Teresas girls           |
| <b>24.</b> | Moi Forces Academy      | <b>53.</b> | Starehe boys                |
|            | Moi Girls Nairobi       | <b>54.</b> | Starehe girls               |

|     |                   |     |                    |
|-----|-------------------|-----|--------------------|
| 25. |                   |     |                    |
| 26. | Mt. Laverna girls | 55. | State house girls  |
| 27. | Muhuri Muchiri    | 56. | Step Joy high      |
| 28. | Nairobi school    | 57. | Strathmore school  |
| 29. | Ngara girls       | 58. | Sunshine secondary |

**APPENDIX G: INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

I \_\_\_\_\_ accept to participate in the research on the Effectiveness of Task-Based Approach on learners' achievement in quality composition writing in French in secondary schools in Nairobi City County. I have been taken through the process by the researcher and so I voluntarily give myself to participate in the study.

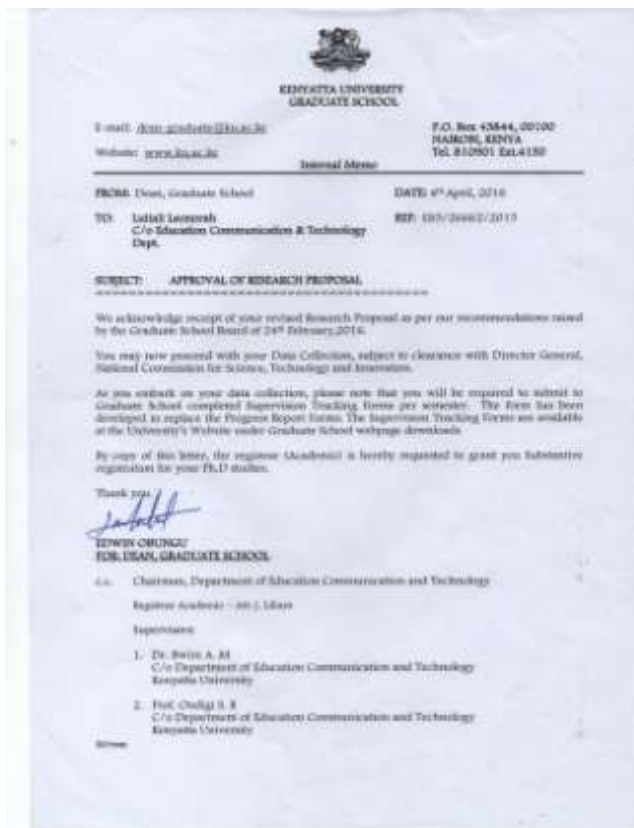
Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

|

**APPENDIX H: RESEARCH PERMIT**





**APPENDIX I: APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL**

**APPENDIX J: ERC – KU – REPORT**

KENYATTA UNIVERSITY  
ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Fax: 8711242/8711078  
Email: [kuerc.chairman@ku.ac.ke](mailto:kuerc.chairman@ku.ac.ke)  
[kuerc.secretary@ku.ac.ke](mailto:kuerc.secretary@ku.ac.ke)  
Website: [www.ku.ac.ke](http://www.ku.ac.ke)

P. O. Box 43844,  
Nairobi, 00100  
Tel: 8710901/12

Our Ref: KU/E/COMM/51/738

Date: 9<sup>th</sup> November, 2016

**Leonorah Lutiali**  
Kenyatta University  
P.O. Box 43844 -00100  
NAIROBI

Dear Leonorah,

APPLICATION NUMBER **PKU/503/1599** – "EFFECTIVENESS OF THE TASK-BASED METHOD OF TEACHING AND LEARNING OF FRENCH IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NAIROBI CITY COUNTY, KENYA" VERSION 5

**1. IDENTIFICATION OF PROTOCOL**

The application before the committee is with a research topic: "Effectiveness of the Task-Based Method of Teaching and Learning of French in Secondary Schools in Nairobi City County, Kenya" – Version 5 received on 17<sup>th</sup> October, 2016 and discussed on 8<sup>th</sup> November, 2016.

**2. APPLICANT**

Leonorah Lutiali

**3. SITE**

Nairobi County, Kenya

**4. DECISION**

The committee has considered the research protocol in accordance with the Kenyatta University Research Policy (section 7.2.1.3) and the Kenyatta University Ethics Review Committee Guidelines AND APPROVED that the research may proceed for a period of ONE year from 9<sup>th</sup> November, 2016.

**5. ADVICE/CONDITIONS**

- i. Progress reports are submitted to the KU-ERC every six months and a full report is submitted at the end of the study.
- ii. Serious and unexpected adverse events related to the conduct of the study are reported to this board immediately they occur.
- iii. Notify the Kenyatta University Ethics Committee of any amendments to the protocol.
- iv. Submit an electronic copy of the protocol to KUERC.

When replying, kindly quote the application number above.

If you accept the decision reached and advice and conditions given please sign in the space provided below and return to KU-ERC a copy of the letter.

**DR. TITUS KAHIGA**

CHAIRMAN ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

I, **LEONORAH LUTIALI**, accept the advice given and will fulfill the conditions therein.

Signature: *[Signature]* Dated this day of **15<sup>th</sup> November**, 2016.

cc. Vice-Chancellor  
DVC-Research Innovation and Outreach

