

**STRATEGIES USED IN TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE ORAL SKILLS AND  
THEIR EFFECTS ON LEARNER CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC  
COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOLS IN EMBU COUNTY, KENYA**

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OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION (LANGUAGE EDUCATION) IN THE  
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**OCTOBER, 2024**

## DECLARATION

This thesis is my genuine production not presented in any academic institution as a requirement for any certification. It has been enriched with other scholars' ideas duly acknowledged through citations, quotations, referencing and paraphrasing.

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## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is specially dedicated to my love, Gitonga for holistic support and huge financial sacrifice. To my sons Alpha and Ethan and my late father, Mugo, for being the force behind my working hard. Also dedicated to my uncles Simon and Francis for the person I am today.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

BECF.	Basic Education Curriculum Framework
CBC.	Competency Based Curriculum
ESL.	English as a Second Language
EFL.	English as a Foreign Language
ELE.	English Language Education
KICD.	Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development
KNEC.	Kenya National Examination Council
NARC.	National Rainbow Coalition
SPSS.	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UNESCO.	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization

## ABSTRACT

English language is very critical for global communication and in the key sectors of economy like education therefore shaping an individual's life. However, dismal performance by learners has been recorded in English learning area. The study therefore; investigated the strategies that are used to instruct oral skills in English language, established the role of innovative strategies in English language learning and established the problems that impede development of learners' oral skills in public comprehensive schools. The social interactionist theory by Lev Vygotsky fortified this study and it conformed to descriptive survey with mixed methods. The population targeted was 37 schools, 1200 learners, 100 teachers and 37 language panel chairpersons (LPCs). Sampled were 10 schools, 120 learners, 10 LPCs and 10 teachers of English. For data collection, questionnaires, interviews, observations and focus groups were employed. The instruments were piloted in two schools which resembled the sampled within Embu County. The piloting yielded results that enhanced relevance of study items thus guaranteed validity. Reliability was guaranteed by using test-retest method with a correlation co-efficient of 0.80. Thematic analysis and descriptive statistics aided by statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 25 were deployed to analyze data. The study findings are presented in form of narration based on themes, frequency distribution tables, means, percentages and standard deviation. The study revealed that the commonly used strategies to teach English in Embu County are songs, pair work roleplay and storytelling. The study also revealed that use of innovative strategies draws the learners' attention, enhances learners' memory and understanding, develops learners' linguistic abilities, enhances classroom interactions and academic achievement, enlivens the learning environment and offers varied learning experiences for practical use of language. Further, the study revealed that large classes, lack of appropriate teaching and learning materials, wrong interpretation of concepts by learners, mismatch between the language of the teacher and that of the learner and lack of interest in learning. The study concluded that the most common methods of teaching English language oral skills are pair work, role play, storytelling and songs. It also concluded that use of innovative strategies draws learners' attention, enlivens the learning environment, offers varied learning experiences for usability of language in real life contexts and improves classroom interactions and performance. Finally, the study concluded that development of oral skills faces both teacher and learner- related challenges like congested classes, lack of adequate resources, wrong interpretation of concepts by learners, mismatch between the teacher's language and that of the learner and lack of interest in learning. The study recommended reinforcement of school language policies and practices to enhance development of linguistic abilities like oral skills, teachers to simplify vocabulary and repeat abstract concepts, the Ministry of Education to provide necessary information communication and technology tools like audio-visuals and connect comprehensive schools to power and internet. Finally, the study suggested carrying out of a similar study using quasi-experimental research design for more verifiable findings.

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 Introduction**

The background of the study, the problem statement, the study's purpose, objectives, research questions, and significance are all covered in this chapter. Additionally, the study covers the study's boundaries, assumptions and limitations as well as the theoretical and conceptual frameworks and operational definitions of terms.

### **1.1 Background to the study**

Language is indispensable for human communication. The English language is among the commonly spoken languages globally. It is well-known because it is a global language and a means of communication for people in developing countries. The main factors that make English a global phenomenon are its widespread use and exponential rise in status from its Anglo-Saxon roots to that of a native, foreign, and global language (Tom-Lawyer & Thomas, 2020).

As a global language, English plays a special role that every country recognizes and has met the prerequisites to obtain a global status: that firstly, the language in question is adopted as the official language and is consumed for communication in education, media, law and government. To cope in countries that use English as an official language, it is paramount to learn the official language earliest possible in life. Notably English is an official language in over seventy countries in the world such as India and Singapore among others. Secondly, a language also obtains global recognition if it is considered a foreign language even without official status. Currently, English

is the language largely taught as a foreign language in more than 100 countries globally such as China and Germany (Crystal 2003).

In Africa, English is mostly used by countries that were colonized by Britain. These countries are Nigeria, Ethiopia, South Africa, Tanzania and Kenya. Uganda is ranked by World Linguistic Society as the lead English speaking country in Africa. It is followed by Zambia, South Africa and Kenya respectively (Kiprop 2018). Moreover, English is also used in research and for instruction in African institutions of higher studies as a measure to internationalize education (Adissallem, 2021).

In Kenya, English is very important and is classified as a second language. According to Tom-Lawyer and Thomas (2020), English as a Second Language (ESL) is connected to nations where it is used for official purpose. In education, English is used in Kenyan universities to disseminate all the services in administration, communal engagements and academics (Mambo, 2018). education, English as a subject is compulsory in Kenyan schools and is regarded as the lone language of instruction from grade four (Kurgatt & Syomwene, 2020). Therefore, there is need for acquisition of excellent verbal skills in English language due to its global demands (Richards, 2008).

Language comprises four fundamental skills categorized into two: receptive (listening and reading) and productive (speaking and writing). Consequently, with English being an international language there is need to restructure the teaching of these skills (Marlina, 2018). In the United Kingdom, oral language skills are very essential and have been integrated as a main area in the English

curriculum (Department for Education 2021). However, there have been inconsistencies in the teaching of oral language skills (Jones 2017). In America, a report by the National Early Literacy Panel of 2009 indicates that children with good oral skills learn how to read with ease while those with challenges with oral skills find it difficult to learn how to read and write. Oxley and de Cat (2021) notes that development of oral skills is a pre-requisite for excellence in development other language skills.

Oral language skills are instrumental in most dimensions of a child's life as they are used for socialising with peers, understanding instructions from the instructors, engaging in classroom activities and improving the sense of self. Furthermore, every interaction revolves around oral skills and greatly determines success in academics. In addition, these skills are labelled icons of students' success in language learning since they lay a solid foundation for learning other language skills and other learning areas (Grapeseed blog, 2020). Ibna et al. (2019) cautions that developing conversational skills is an effort-demanding task. This indicates need for careful selection and use of ways of teaching that give desired results in reference to communicative needs of learners.

Basically, teaching is the relaying of message from the instructor to the learner. Therefore, effective teaching depends on the ability of the instructor to deliver content that the learner finds easy and understandable. The instructional process is complex and requires the instructor to be conversant with a wide range of techniques of teaching that help meet different learner demands. In addition, successful teaching requires a change from traditional instruction to a

scenario where the teacher role is facilitation in the learning environment (Killen and O'Toole, 2023). The impetus for the study is that teachers should enhance the quality of learning by creating a supportive learning environment for acquisition of oral skills through use of strategies that ignite learner participation for excellent academic outcomes and oral competence.

Learner participation means activeness and involvement of learners in the classroom (Bergmark & Westman, 2018). In India Anil (2017), notes that it is very difficult to cut aspects of traditional instruction fully thus teachers should strive to enrich such techniques with learner-oriented techniques like playing games, acting out scenarios and watching television in order to arrest the learners' attention because a modern language teacher does not adhere to a single rigid method but rather employs the principle of eclecticism which entails fitting the method to the learner needs (Alemi & Tavokali, 2016). Still each English instructional technique has a shortcoming mostly associated with either being one-sided or extreme, that is, addresses one aspect of English instruction but ignores the other (Li, 2020).

Innovation in the teaching of second languages refers to a shift from traditional approaches of teaching or restructuring traditional methods to accommodate change. Additionally, Bleisten, Smith and Lewis (2020) explain that restructuring traditional methods is all about interchanging roles where the teacher facilitates learning as the learner takes the center stage. Kalyani & Rajasekaran, (2018) define innovative teaching as a way of creating unique ways of teaching creatively which cause a shift in the teaching methods and style.

Some interactive ways in the teaching of oral skills today include pair work, role play, pictures, storytelling, technology and peer conversation. Pair work is an activity in learning that requires learners to cooperate. It aids to develop oral skills as it involves collaboration and communication. It also reduces anxiety in speaking (Riswanto et al, 2022). A Picture is a visual image painted on paper. Use of pictures held reduce nervousness in learners, reduce learning monotony from routine methods and improve performance (Hafidz, 2020). Role play is an instructional strategy that brings live to teaching and learning. It helps develop competence of learners in speech (Liu & Yun, 2009; Abdessallem et al, 2023).

Additionally, storytelling is an instructional technique that challenge learners to think critically. It improves learning, communicative competence and classroom participation (Nozima, 2021; Siavichay et al, 2022; Maharaj-Sharma, 2024). Technology is any tool utilized digitally to enhance and facilitate learning. In developing oral skills, it facilitates talk, enhances fluency and accuracy in language use and improves self-confidence in learners (Sosas, 2021). Lastly, peer conversation involves participation of learners through collaborative argument and switching of ideas and opinions thus very effective technique in teaching and learning (Ahmed, 2017).

Integrating innovative strategies in the teaching of oral skills has major benefits like improving learner concentration, breaking boredom and improving understanding (Asmari,2021; Damaris et al. 2021; Gill, 2018; Namaziondost et al.,2020). Murray et al. (2020) records some possible hindrances to innovation in development of oral skills such as inadequate resources and use of inappropriate technology, inadequate time to reach the school target as well

as innovate and learners' lack of proficiency in English language especially on the part of oral skills. Of concern, traditional methods of language teaching- through recitation and memorization- are inadequate in teaching oral skills. The inadequacy emanates from their failure to address the communicative needs of individual learners (Li, 2022).

The Kenya Basic Education Curriculum Framework (BECF) now adopts a Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). The seven core competencies to be developed across all subject areas, including English Language Activities are: self-efficacy, digital literacy, civic engagement, critical thinking and problem-solving, creativity and imagination, communication and collaboration, and learning to learn. In all the four language skills ought to be used regularly. This implies that students ought to be able to apply what they discover to actual circumstances in life. Important to note Early English language learning activities are expected to lay a foundation for students' use of the language as a medium of instruction starting in fourth grade. Additionally, intensifying learning of English language at early stages of formal learning prepares learners for its utility at both the national and global level (KICD, 2017). However, In Kenya, Nabwire et al (2021) revealed that limited speaking activities in public primary schools in Transzoia County compared to private institutions cause poor academic results in public schools.

The KNEC Report (2019), which sought to track students' development in grade three, states that teachers are required to evaluate students' proficiency in all four language skills using the following four levels of performance: Level 4 refers to exceeding expectations, Level 3 to meeting them, Level 2 to

approaching them, and Level 1 to falling short of them. According to the report, Oral skill performance was 38.85%. This performance demonstrates that there is room for improvement to reflect progress toward Level 4 (Exceeding Expectation).

In Trans-Nzoia County, Nabwire et al (2021) revealed that there are limited speaking activities in public primary schools compared to private institutions which cause differences in performance between the two where public schools performing poorly. In a related study in Nandi County, Chepsiror, (2020) reports that learners, in English language, performed below the average mark. Similarly, Nabwire et al (2021) revealed that there are limited speaking activities in public primary schools in Tran-Nzoia County compared to private institutions causing poor academic results in public schools in the county.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Utility of English language transverses the local boundaries, to the regional and global boundaries. Its utility for communication in major areas of economy such as education is inevitable. Teaching and learning of English language oral skills play a preparatory role to the learning of other major language skills. It also provides a basis for the complete learning process. Literature shows that this area is very important and attracts attention due to requirement for English as a social need thus a major focus in research. Similarly, teaching of English language faces many impediments which interfere with development of oral skills. Previous studies have indicated the shortcomings of conventional methods of instructing English as they ignore the communication needs of learners. Therefore, there is need to find more recent and innovative ways that

enhance acquisition of oral skills. Learners have also recorded unsatisfactory results in performance of English during national examinations. Although there have been numerous related studies in this area, there is no study that sufficiently addresses the issues affecting teaching of English. Therefore, the current study investigated the strategies that are used to teach oral skills in English language and their effects on learner classroom participation in public comprehensive schools in Embu County and learners are likely to benefit and improve their performance.

### **1.3 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of the study was to investigate the strategies that are used in teaching of English language oral skills and their contribution to learners' classroom participation in public comprehensive schools in Embu County, Kenya.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The specific study objectives were to:

1. Investigate the strategies that teachers use to teach oral skills among learners in English language in public comprehensive schools in Embu County, Kenya
2. Explore the role of innovative strategies in teaching English Language oral skills among learners in public comprehensive schools in Embu County, Kenya
3. Establish the problems that hinder development of English language oral skills among learners in public comprehensive primary schools in Embu County, Kenya.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

The questions that the study answered were:

1. Which teaching strategies are used by teachers to teach oral Skills in English language among learners in public comprehensive schools in Embu County, Kenya?
2. Why are innovative strategies important in the teaching oral English language skills among learners in public comprehensive schools in Embu County, Kenya?
3. What are the problems that hinder development of oral English language skills in among learners in public comprehensive schools in Embu County, Kenya?

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

The revelations of this study have benefits to various entities in the education sector, academic fraternity and policy formulators. The learner primarily gains from this study as the results guide the practice of English language learning particularly on development oral skills thus improving their oral proficiency and general academic performance. Teachers of English also are provided with reliable feedback on strategies of teaching that enhance effective instruction of oral skills. To the curriculum developers, the study offers necessary results that guide production of necessary content and materials that enhance oral skills development. Additionally, the Ministry of Education gains useful information on creation of a learning- friendly arena in terms of the school structures and facilities. Lastly, the study findings add worth to the already existing body of knowledge regarding the strategies that are employed in teaching of English language which can act as a point of reference for future related researches.

## **1.7 Limitations and delimitations of the study**

### **1.7.1 Limitations of the study**

Theofandis & Fountouki (2019) contend that limitations pertain to potential flaws that are typically beyond the control of the researcher. It is an imposed limitation over which the researcher has no control. Some limitations were inevitable during this study; some school heads were resistant to welcome a stranger in their institutions having been subjects to the cons. To eliminate the doubts, convincing and supported introduction was done. The study was limited also in terms of conflict of interest in terms of time. This arose because teachers in some schools were preparing professional documents while others were busy administering opener examinations. This was counteracted by giving them more time to interact with the questionnaires and rescheduling lesson observation.

### **1.7.2 Delimitations of the study**

Delimitations denote the boundaries of the research with regards to the researcher's decision of what to include and what to exclude in a study. Delimitations help narrow down the study in terms of relevance and manageability. The present study involved only public comprehensive schools in Embu West Sub-County thus the results may be quite applicable in the region of study. It also used descriptive survey research design with mixed method approach. Data collected from teacher questionnaires, language panel interview guide schedule, lesson observation guide sheet and focus group discussion schedule for learners entailed the design. Additionally, the study confined itself to a limited participants comprising of selected schools, grade six learners, teachers of English and language panel chairpersons as the

resources available were limited hence the narrow coverage. Lastly, for specificity, the study took interest in strategies used in teaching English language oral skills and no other language skills to address the problem of poor results.

### **1.8 Assumptions of the Study**

The Cambridge English Dictionary defines assumptions as something you accept as true without question or proof. The study assumed that:

- i. Both teachers and learners were fully prepared to teach and learn respectively.
- ii. A good teacher- pupil relationship existed.

### **1.9 Theoretical Framework**

Theoretical framework refers to the foundation or blueprint within which research is constructed. This study was pegged on the Social Interactionist theory of language acquisition by Lev Vygotsky. The theory assumes that the environment within which children grow and social interactions result to acquisition of language. It also proposes that a supportive interactive environment improves the child's language potentials and knowledge. It further proposes that a child's level of cognition is low but through social exchanges with more experienced adults their problem -solving skills are developed (Ghani, Jamian and Abdul, 2022). The theory focuses on learner-centered approach which if appropriately used in teaching a second language improves the quality of education (Alharbi, 2023).

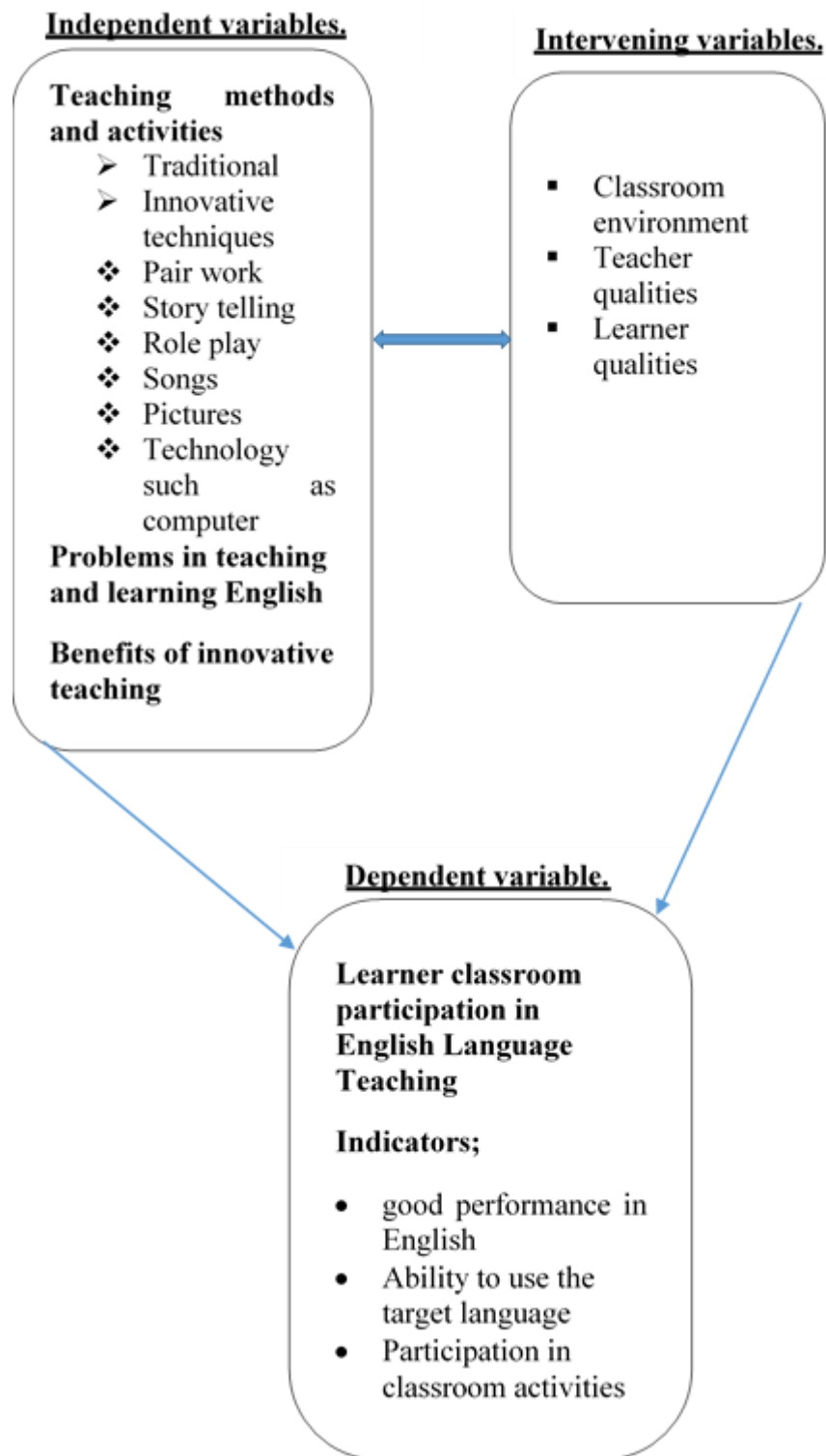
The theory explains language development as a result of interacting socially with adults who are more knowledgeable linguistically. It suggests an area of

developing proximally, that is, the range between what a learner can do alone and what they cannot achieve even with support. It is within this zone of proximal development that acquisition of language can be optimized through social engagement with peers or teachers. It also proposes that linguistic abilities of child develop as they attempt to fashion their world socially. The theory also considers environment as very critical in language acquisition. It posits that children are dependent on their parents in enhancement of their language development through appropriateness of language experiences they provide (“Social Interactions Theory,” 2022).

Building on interactionist’s view that social interactions and environment within which learning occurs are very critical in language acquisition, it is clear that the teacher has a role as a language acquisition enhancer to create a rich learning environment that enhance social interactions by use of strategies that are appropriate in development of linguistic abilities of learners especially on the part of oral skills. Consequently, both the teacher and the learner enjoy the benefits of a social interactionist classroom which registers improved academic performance and oral competence in English language thus helping address the study problem.

### **1.10 Conceptual Framework**

Conceptual framework is an expression showing interconnectedness of variables in a given study (Orodho, 2004). Figure 1.1 shows the conceptual framework portraying interconnectedness of the variables of this study.



**Figure 1.1: Conceptual framework**

Dependent variable; is a variable that can change or be influenced by other variables, independent variables; are predictor variables because they can estimate how much variation will occur in another variable and an intervening variable; is a variable that can alter the link between the independent and dependent variables (Mugenda, 2008). The independent variables of this study

were teaching strategies - methods and activities (both conventional and modern) used to instruct oral skills, problems in teaching and learning of English language and role of innovative strategies in teaching English Language. The intervening variables were classroom environment, learner characteristics and teacher qualities. The dependent variable was learners' classroom participation in teaching English indicated by good performance in English, ability to use the target language and participation in classroom activities.

The arrows show the direction of change among the variables of study.

### **1.11 Operational definition of terms**

The technical terminologies and measurements utilized during data collection are fully explained in the operational definition of terms. In order to eliminate varying viewpoints and interpretations of the same subject, data is standardized in this manner.

**Classroom instruction or teaching:** Describes the method by which students acquire proficiency in the four most important facets of the language learning process.

**Innovative teaching:** Refers to teaching that excites and pleases learners by giving them room to participate in the learning process.

**Innovative strategies:** Are methods and activities used in instructing that get students involved in the learning process.

**Learner Classroom participation:** Active learner involvement in classroom activities, improved performance and ability to use the target language.

**Learner:** Refers to pupils in learning institutions.

**Oral Fluency:** Refers to the flow and efficiency with which learners express their ideas, especially when talking without undue hesitation.

**Oral language skills:** Refer to one's receptive comprehension of spoken language as well as one's expressive articulation of thought through the use of appropriate grammatical structures and vocabulary in a variety of social settings.

**Oral Proficiency/competency:** The learner's ability to speak and use English for interaction with others.

**Teaching Strategies:** Refer to the methods and activities that teachers use to teach oral skills.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This is the chapter two of this research. In this chapter, studies that are relevant to the topic of study based on its objectives are discussed. This chapter discusses the idea of oral skills, how oral language skills develop, how important oral skills are in English language classrooms, and the goals of teaching English in Kenyan primary schools. Additionally, the advantages of having English classes in primary schools are discussed. The article goes on to discuss teaching methods for the English language, the definition of teaching strategies/methods, and the application of creative teaching strategies for oral skills. The impact of creative teaching methods on students' participation in class is also covered. A summary of the review of related literature outlining the gaps is given at the end.

#### **2.1.0. The role of English language**

English language has won global recognition. It is used in communication with over 1.5 billion users globally. It is also useful in education, travel, internet and business transactions. Therefore, proficiency in English language is a necessity for one's relevance and competition in the contemporary world as it gives chances for career and self-growth. (Abduganieva, A., Hasanov, F., & Abduraxmanova, Z. 2023). English language has contributed to the world being a village globally by widening opportunities for people to communicate and collaborate with global community. Knowledge of English Language has enhanced access to wide range of information and has enabled growth in prospects of career and education. Its knowledge also makes easy travel around

the world as it is commonly spoken in the world (International Language Centre, 2024). In Indonesia, lack of competence in English language affects tourism sector because to secure a job in the industry you need to be a fluent user of English language (Widiastuti et al, 2023).

Jairam, (2023) notes that English language has been embodied in key sectors of the world of today. It used as a standard language for business transactions, information technology among others. In addition, knowledge of English is a measure of literacy today because one is termed as literate due to the ability to read and write in English. Furthermore, in education, proficiency in English language is prestigious and a symbol of excellent education. Therefore, its users have many opportunities for work around the world. Shrishthy, (2023) notes that English is synonymous to success today due to its high demand in all areas. English language is the most preferred language by many international journals that publish scholarly work but mostly research papers are usually rejected due to poor writing skills in English language (Sandeep, 2021).

Development of oral skills is a fundamental in primary schools as they not only form a basis for communicating effectively but also influence academic success and cognitive development. Oral skills are the first step to acquisition of language. Oral skills enable learners in expression and comprehension of ideas and also grow their knowledge in vocabulary and grammar. Oral skills are utilized for social exchanges and prepares learners for acquiring written language (Reed & Lee, 2020). In addition, Alaudinova (2022) explains that these skills entail verbal expression of self and capability to comprehend others

verbal speech as well as ability to engage in different social contexts appropriately.

Learner's knowledge of spoken language mechanisms is a pathway to literacy and success (Turner, 2019). Speaking skills are useful to the learner for purposes such as communication- help cultivate self-confidence in learners, in entrepreneurship it enhances promotion and earn income through motivational speeches while in classroom it enhances effective communication (Rao, 2019).

## **2.2. Language Teaching Methods**

### **2.2.1. Definition**

A method in teaching is a set of teaching procedures that are theoretically consistent that determine the practice of language instruction (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Similarly, Mustafizur, (2022) defines methods of teaching as general rules that guide classroom instruction. Richards & Rodgers, (2014) state that review of teaching strategies is necessary due to widespread use of English, globalization and rise of internet. In addition, there is a rise in users of English as a foreign or second language which calls for instructional shift.

### **2.2.2. English Language Teaching Methods**

Krashen (1982:125), cited in Ugwu (2015) and Jebahi (2022) discuss the most popular techniques for teaching languages. The Grammar Translation Method. It is a means of learning the target language through in-depth study of its grammar. It stresses grammatical knowledge, error correction, memorization, and literary text translation. Some of its major features include; it minimized the value of speaking. There is too much use of mother tongue in class leaving

little space for the target language; new words are taught as a list of separate words; pronunciation is hardly ever addressed; long, detailed explanations of grammar's intricacies are given; joining of words is based on grammatical rules and drills in the form of exercises where disconnected sentences are translated from the target language into mother tongue. Some limitations related to it are: it pays less attention to the foreign language learner's communication skills and shifts the emphasis from the actual language to linguistic categories like nouns and prepositions.

Direct Method came up toward the end of the 18th century. Using the target language as a teaching tool is its main concern. It is against use of mother tongue in the classroom. It foregrounds linking meaning to the target language. Some of its key features are inductive teaching of grammar; the teacher is an enhancer in the learning process, advocates immediate correction of errors in the classroom, emphasis is on correct pronunciation and grammar and teaches concrete vocabulary through demonstration. Some merits of this method are: it leads to a better understanding as content is taught from concrete to abstract, it helps learners acquire command over the English language, and it enhances fluency of speech and good pronunciation. Some of its negatives are: paying little attention to reading and writing, which may lead to misuse of mother tongue when explaining, and no teacher including natives who doesn't have flaws in content delivery.

Audio-Lingual method emerged in the 1950s and 1960s. It draws a lot from behaviorist theories, especially from conditioning and habit formation as learning models. Correct behavior receives positive reinforcement, while errors receive negative reinforcement. Some of its significant characteristics are;

vocabulary taught in context, audio-visual use, and dependence on mimicry and memorization. Some merits of this method include emphasizing correct pronunciation and sentence structure and listening and speaking skills. Some of its demerits are: It assumes learners' communicative competence, focuses more on language form, not meaning, the passivity of learners, and it ignores the role of context and world knowledge in language learning.

Krashen and Terelle developed the Natural Approach in 1983 (Shi & Ariza, 2018). It stresses the silent phase, where learners are given enough time until they feel comfortable using the target language, a notion echoed by the Total Physical Response method. It is designed to develop basic communication skills. Principles of the natural method are; teaching is carried out in the target language, but students have the freedom to use either their first or second language, no correction of students' errors unless the communication is affected, and class time to be used to provide learning input, it involves activities such as role play, discussion, dialogue and group work. This method is criticized for its idea of a silent period until the learner feels ready to use the target language because students emerge at different times. Learners may not be ready to use the target language, which means no learning. The idea of comprehensible input may become a headache to the teachers because it is hard to determine which input is helpful to the learner. These criticisms paved the way for the rise of Communicative Language Teaching (Diane, 2019).

The approach, known as "communicative language teaching", takes into account a variety of teaching styles, classroom requirements, learner motivations and teacher types. It is a methodology for teaching languages that

strongly emphasizes interaction, authenticity, heuristic learning, activities based on tasks and communication for relevant, real-world purposes. The focus is on all aspects of communicative competence rather than just grammatical or linguistic competence, and it sees accuracy and fluency as complementary principles that underpin communicative techniques. It also engages learners in meaningful and functional use of the target language. Some advantages are that it increases fluency in the target language, boosts learners' confidence during interactions, and considers learners' interests. It motivates and arouses learners' interest due to the use of authentic resources. Its shortcomings include the possibility that low-level speakers of the intended language will find it challenging to engage activities involving oral communication and the possibility that communicative fluency may not be appropriate if assessments based on grammar place more emphasis on fluency than accuracy.

Krashen (1982) records the emergence of Total Physical Response (TPR) associated with James Asher in 1979. Its primary characteristics are; the creation of humor to make the lesson lively, heavy use of interrogatives and imperative mood, the teacher assumes the role of a director while students are actors in response, and it emphasizes listening. Physical skills over oral production take more interest in grammar and vocabulary over other areas. TPR is favored because it creates a learning environment full of fun, helps learners understand the target language, and is less demanding in terms of preparation. This method is limited because it exaggerates the use of imperatives, over-emphasizes the use of grammar, and its usage is meaningful in the classroom and useless beyond the four corners of a physical classroom.

Community Language Learning method was developed by Charles Current (1976). In his Educational model, "affective factors", learners are viewed as a group, not a class and as clients, while the teacher is seen as a counsellor. It emphasizes the importance of interactions between learners as they help reduce anxiety and lower instinctive defenses among adult learners. Its significant features include; considering students as clients and the teacher as a counsellor, allowing the use of a variety of activities such as creating new sentences, pronunciation practice among others, and introducing new material in the form of dialogue based on situations that students are used to, inductive teaching of grammar and vocabulary, learners are allowed to use their native language where the teacher acts as a translating agent then learners may apply the translation. Learners are also expected to use the target language when they feel ready. Some of its advantages are the autonomy of learners, and it is learner-centered. It also has some disadvantages, like the diminished role of the teacher and reliance on inductive teaching.

In the late 1970s, the Bulgarian psychologist Georgi Lozanov created the Suggestopedia method. He believes that most learners have innately erected psychological barriers out of concern that they have a finite learning capacity in which they can fully utilize their mental capacity under optimal conditions. This is the root cause of Lozanov's idea of "de suggestion" of limitations that learners have a mentality and provide them with the condition that might keep their brains relaxed for optimal use. The key features of suggestopedia include; the integration of music, drama and the arts as much as possible, and the learning environment should be as conducive, characterized by cushioned seats and dim lights. Error tolerance as the emphasis is on content, not structure,

peripheral encouragement of learning with a beautified learning environment seasoned with decorations and posters in the target language, the teacher symbolizes authority and control in class, and the use of background music to promote relaxation.

Suggestopedia is limited because it cannot be used in classrooms without amenities such as comfortable seats, music, and dim lights, which contribute to classroom comfort. In addition, learning requires at least some degree of challenges to attach value to it. As the learner endeavors to counter the challenges experienced in the learning process, (s)he has time to reflect on the importance and worth of learning due to the effort and sacrifice involved. Extreme comfort in the classroom may also be detrimental to the learning process as it may trigger harmful classroom practices, such as inducing sleep while the lesson is in progress.

The impetus for shift in teaching methods is undeniable due to bulging demands of English as a foreign language and second language users. The change in instruction of language is also pushed by the rise of internet and widespread utility of English. Currently, the changes reflect a shift in language teaching goals to address the oral competence needs for language consumers (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

This study therefore sought to investigate more modern strategies in development of oral skills in English language. These methods include:

In Indonesia, Riswanto et al. (2022) investigated use pair work and you tube channels and their effect on performance on students in speaking using quasi-experimental design. The target Population was all students in grade 10 at a public vocational high school. The study sample was 64 learners and data were collected using a speaking test (pre and post). A t- test was used to determine the difference in scores between the control and the experimental group. The results obtained showed positive impact on use of pair work and you-tube to the development of speaking skills with the control group scoring (m=78.90, SD=42.65) and experimental group (m=86.16, and SD=4.444). The study recommended use of pair work and you tube due to their ability to promote communication and collaboration as a demanded 21<sup>st</sup> century skill. However, this study was carried out in a foreign context thus results not applicable in local context.

Picture, as an aid to teaching, refers to a visual image painted on a flat surface (Hafidz, 2020). In the study, Hafidz (2020) sought to study effectiveness of pictures in teaching non-native Arabic speakers. The study used descriptive-qualitative method and collected data using a questionnaire and observation. The sample for the study was 20 Arabic non-native speakers. The sample was chosen purposively. Data was analysed descriptively using Microsoft office excel. The study examined two groups taught at different times for two months. The control group was taught using traditional strategies while the experimental group was taught using pictures. The results indicated that students taught using pictures recorded improved performance compared to the control group. It was observed that use of pictures reduced learner nervousness, increased learners' self - confidence and reduced monotony of routine

teaching. The study recommended that for more generalizable findings to other contexts, a more in-depth study was required. Still, there is a methodological gap that this study seeks to fill.

Pair work is a task in learning which demands learners to cooperate in pairs (Richards & Schmidt, 2002). In Indonesia, Rianti, Syahid and Qamariah, (2022) studied use of pair activities and their effects on students' speaking potential and anxiety in Palangka Raya junior schools. The study adopted quasi-experimental research design and data was collected using questionnaires and speaking tests. The target Population was one public junior school grade 8 learners. The study sample was 2 classes. One class was used as control group with the other used as the experimental – each group had 60 learners. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics and multivariate analysis with help of SPSS.23. From the results, use of pair work registered decreased nervousness in speaking and improved the ability of the learner to speak. The control group pretest average mark was 60.00 while post-test was 64.43 and the experimental group pre-test was 52.77 while the post test score was 76.63. It was concluded that to reduce anxiety in speaking and enhance speaking skill, pair work was appropriate. In contrast, the study was conducted in a foreign context and results may not be applicable in a Kenyan context thus need for study.

A similar study was conducted in Iran by Siahpoosh &Mahdavi (2024) to investigate use of group and pair work to develop ability of EFL learners. The study utilized quasi- experimental design with quantitative methods. The study sampled 45 learners. The learners were organized into 2 groups (control and experimental). Using group and pair activities, the experimental group was

taught while learners in the control group were taught as an individual. Skype was used to teach took for 5 weeks. During the lesson, 45 minutes were dedicated to practice use of English in pairs while 20 minutes were reserved for group activities. To compare means of the two group in both pre- and post-test, Kruskal Wallis test applied and for multiple comparison and differences in mean, post hoc test was applied. From the study findings, learners taught using group/pair work performed better in speaking than learners taught individually. Conversely, there is a discernable gap in methodology in terms of research design, methods and tools of data collection that this study seeks to fill.

Roleplay is a technique used to bring to live teaching and learning environment, provoke learners' interest and make acquisition of language splendid. Embodying roleplay in teaching language adds diversity and gives adequate chances for verbal practice (Liu & Yun, 2009). In Morocco, Abdessallam, Mohamed and Ghouati, (2023) investigated the importance of role play to develop competence of learners in speaking. The study was qualitative in nature and used semi-structured interviews to collect data from learners and teachers. The study sampled 30 learners in grade 9 in one middle level school at Sidi Slimane. Learners were organized into 6 small groups and each group was given a play to engage in for a duration of one week. On completion of the task, one member from each group was chosen for interview and 5 teachers of English. The study found out that, N= 5,100%, teachers approved use of roleplay to teach speaking on the other hand, N=6,100%, learners enjoyed engaging in role play exercise. It was noted that use of role play gave room for oral practice in English, entertained and created learning fun and helped deal with shyness. The study recommended focus on use of

play in learning. However, the study context and methodology projects a gap that the current study seeks to fill.

Storytelling is a teaching technique that enables learners to reason logically in a playful and fun way. In addition, ability of learners to think critically and their communicative competence is enhanced through storytelling (Nozima, 2021). Siavichay, Marquez and Chuaman-Luna, (2022) investigated storytelling and its effectiveness to teach ability to speak to adolescents in high school in Spain. The study used both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. To collect data, survey was used. The study sampled students in grade 10 Cuenca Remigio Romero Y unit of education. Data was analysed both quantitatively with help of SPSS.25 and qualitatively where averages and standard deviation were used to present data. The study used ANOVA parametric test where the significance level obtained was 0.05. The results showed that use of stories motivated learners and enhanced their memory retention. The study recommended use of stories to enhance speaking abilities of learners in high school.

The findings are similar to Maharaj-Sharma, (2024) in Trinidad and Tobago, West Indies, in teaching of Physics. It was observed that use of stories improved learning and classroom participation. The study recommended research on use of stories in other contexts. In contrast, the current study will be carried out in a local context far from Spain and West Indies to make the findings more generalizable.

Technology can be defined as any tool digitally utilized to enhance and facilitate learning (Sosas, 2021). The study involved effect of technology to English language learners in speaking. Phenomenology was used to gather data and 3 focus group discussion schedules were used as tools. The study sampled 21 learners in language classrooms in University of Southern Mindanao, Kidapawan City Campus in Philippines using stratified random sampling. The study found out technology like video- conferences, interaction through social media and performing on stage was used to develop speaking ability in students. Use of technology was found to facilitate talk, improve self-confidence and enhance accuracy and fluency in use of English language. Conversely, this study focused on language learners in Philippines while the current study focuses on learners in public comprehensive schools.

Peer conversation is an effective technique that involves learner participation through collaborative argument and exchange of point of views (Ahmed, 2017). In Bangladesh, Ahmed (2017) sought to find out effects of peer conversation on students' speaking skills. Through convenience sampling, 50 students from second year of learning at master's level were sampled at Mujibur Rahman Maritime University. The study used correlational design with quantitative method and collected data using close-ended questionnaire. Data was analysed through simple percentages. The study results indicated a positive relationship between peer conversation and speaking skills and recommended use of conversation with peers to enhance peer engagement and oral practice of English outside classroom. The study was limited in that it: only concentrated on opinion from students, did not assess learner orally, took short period for observation and that no observation was carried out in class.

Still there is a gap of context that the current study addresses for more applicable results.

Wabwoba (2019) used a cross-sectional survey research design to examine how teaching strategies affected students' performance in the English language course for the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education in non-formal schools in Korogocho, Nairobi City, Kenya. The study revealed a positive relationship between teaching methods and pupils' performance. The study investigated instructional methods like discussion, demonstration, lecture and note-taking. It revealed that teacher-centered methods dominated English language teaching where the lecture method is in the lead (55%) though not suitable for young learners. The study recommended using learner-centred methods to improve teachers' and directors' performance and training on modern strategies in non-formal schools. However, the study took place in Nairobi thus results may not reflect the actual findings in other counties like Embu County.

According to a study by Nabwire, Orago, and Nthiga (2021), in a study aimed to examine the measures used promote development of speaking skills in English language in both self and public institutions in Trans Nzoia County, Kenya, revealed that there are more speaking activities (debates, speaking competitions, and class presentations) in private institutions than in government schools, which results in more speaking skill mastery in private schools.

The review of above related literature reveals existence gaps on strategies used in instruction of English language, in particular oral skills especially in terms

of study context as most of the studies are carried out in developed countries thus the results are not applicable in Kenya thus need for replication in a local context.

### **2.3. Benefits of innovative teaching of English language Oral Skills**

Innovative teaching means a shift in the teaching methods and styles in order to improve lesson delivery and arrest attention of learners triggered by teacher creativity and novelty (Kalyani & Rajasekaran, 2018).

According to Zainal & Matore (2019), innovative teaching is crucial for ensuring that the educational system remains relevant to the most recent trends and advancements. Catio (2019) adds that innovative behaviour helps teachers keep up with a rapidly changing society due to its demands and requirements. In addition, use of innovative methods of teaching and learning is essential to arouse learning interest in learners, motivate as well as instill a culture of learning to them (Subramani & Iyappan, 2018). Furthermore, teaching innovatively is necessary as it makes educators aware of the possibilities in their classrooms, promotes independent learning, helps teachers own teaching and motivates and improves learning enthusiasm (Bleisten, Smith & Lewis 2020)

Eli (2021) argues that use of innovative strategies of teaching should be emphasized since it is a way of creating a conducive and enjoyable environment for learning. Paragae (2023) notes that innovative teaching is learner- oriented. In addition, the techniques used thus focus on the learner as the center of interest prepare the learner to compete in today's world by equipping the learner with essential skills such as communication,

collaboration, critical thinking and creativity. Kurshid & Ansari (2012) note that some learners at primary level get bored in the classroom while others have a tendency of truancy due to boredom and monotony caused by rigid teaching. The study recommends use of innovative strategies to pique interest of learners in the learning process and also to ensure effectiveness of the instruction process.

In Pakistan, Naz & Murad (2017) investigated the role of innovative teaching at Lahore University using quantitative survey research. The study targeted teachers in both public and private universities. The study sampled 4 universities (2 private and 2 public). Using stratified random sampling technique, 50 teachers from each university were sampled. Data was collected using close-ended questionnaire. Reliability was tested by use of Cronbach where an alpha value of 0.7 was obtained. The results revealed that use of innovative strategies was high in private institutions compared to public universities. The study further established that use of these strategies helped address the different needs of learners and helped improve their academic achievement. Still, there is a gap of context as the study was carried out in a foreign context in Lahore and focused on institutions of higher learning but the current study takes place in Kenya and at public comprehensive schools. The participants of the study are also different.

In a related study in Indonesia, Paragae (2023) studied use of innovative strategies (problem-based learning and cooperative learning) to teach English as a Foreign Language. Through library search, information was obtained from certified national and international journals. For data analysis, qualitative

analysis was used. The findings showed that innovative strategies are learner centred. In addition, when used, focus shifts to the learners thereby equipping them with the most sought for 21<sup>st</sup> century skills- communication, collaboration, creativity and thinking critically. Therefore, there is need to conduct the study in a local context to compare the results.

Similarly, Berdiyeva (2024) studied innovative use of flipped classroom, projects, realia and technology in language learning. The study records that use of such strategies in teaching makes language learning interesting. Additionally, such strategies lead to improved learner engagement, improved proficiency in language and support learning that is personalized. The study recommends use of innovative strategies as way of rendering language learning environment diverse and more interactive and also to improve proficiency and competency in language use. In addition, Rao (2019) records that use of innovative strategies gives ample opportunities, to English as a second language learners, to use language practically during classroom engagements. Therefore, related studies indicate the potential benefits of innovative strategies in teaching and learning of English language

#### **2.4 Impediment to development of oral skills.**

The role of language in communication and social interactions cannot be assumed thus a central facet of humans. However, in a country like Indonesia, use of English in daily engagements puzzles students. The use of English language faces interference from mother-tongue and also learners have a negative attitude toward English terming it a hard subject (Riadil, 2020). In addition, language skill like speaking is a necessity for effective

communication. However, it is quite challenging to attain proficiency in speaking in ESL context. For instance, in Pakistan, although English is used for official purposes, only a few people can use it effectively in communication (Ali, 2020).

In Bangladesh, although English is taught as a compulsory subject from the primary up to the tertiary level of education, use of English in communication is still frustrating students in both private and public universities. Teachers of English are limited because they lack adequate information on the use of inductive teaching making learners over-emphasize correctness of grammar thus causing language anxiety on the part of the learner. On the part of students, they face challenges like failure to practice use of English in communication, lack of self-drive to learn English and little emphasis given to assessment of speaking and listening skills (Islam, Ahmad and Islam, 2022).

The spheres of economy and politics are greatly influenced by use of English language in China. In addition, English language is highly prestigious in terms of increased career chances and general achievement in life. Therefore, more effort is geared toward advocacy of innovative instruction of English to meet the growing need of the community. Despite the energy to improve language instruction, assimilation of change faces resistance. For instance, attempts by lecturers in universities to teach English innovatively face impediments like; limited time to strike a balance between effective teaching and unhealthy competition with colleagues scholarly research is valued more than teaching for academic qualification, teaching of English is also prescribed making use of authentic activities that improve oral competence seem a waste of time,

inadequate proficiency in English language, lack of appropriate resources like ICT and lack of reliable professional development for teachers of language (Murray et al., 2023)

In a similar study in Bangladesh, Ibna et al. (2023) studied problems that teachers of oral English communication skills face at the tertiary level in an EFL context. The study utilized sequential-explanatory research design with mixed methods. Data was collected using a semi-structured questionnaire and semi-structured interview guide. The study sample was drawn from 15 public and self-universities. The sample for the study constituted 45 lecturers of English. The study generated both qualitative and quantitative data. The findings showed that EFL teachers faced difficulties like; interference from native language, use of ineffective teaching methods, passivity of learners, lack of enough oral practice and lack of self-drive to learn English. The study recommended carrying out of empirical research to provide language instructors with effective methods of teaching oral communication skills. However, there is need to contextualize the study locally for more applicable findings.

In a related study in Pakistan, Ali (2020) investigated problems facing English as Second Language learners. The study employed quantitative research design. The study targeted students in institutions of higher learning. The study sampled 100 students from one state federal and 4 provincial capitals. The sample was selected using simple random sampling where 20 learners from each institution were involved. Through the use of questionnaires, data was collected using convenience sampling. Data was analysed quantitatively using

SPSS 23 and presented in form of frequency tests. The findings indicated that in Pakistan, ESL learners face psychological difficulties like language learning anxiety and nervousness, linguistic problems like lack of enough room for oral practice and social challenges like lack of supportive environment for practical language use due to mother-tongue use. Still, there is a methodological gap that the current study seeks to fill.

Wahyuningsih & Afandi (2020) in a similar study explored problems faced by learners of English Language at Kudus, State Islamic Institute and its implication to development of speaking curriculum. A descriptive qualitative design was used. Data was collected using focus group discussion made up of 50 students from the department of English, 3 experts of language from other Indonesian universities and 5 speaking class lecturers in the department of English, observation schedule and semi-structured interview. The sample was made up of 30 students (15 at semester 5 and 15 at semester 3). The study found out that students faced difficulties like lack of utility for English language beyond the classroom, inadequate mastery of grammar and vocabulary, lack of confidence in use of English and inappropriate curriculum. The study recommended motivation of students to use English in speaking and use of technology and innovative strategies to develop teaching skills. The study was limited as it studied problems facing learners in Islam State University at the Department of English and recommends further research at different contexts for deeper understanding on teaching of speaking and English curriculum development.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This is the third chapter of this research thesis. The chapter gives focus to the research methodology. This chapter provides information on the research design, the study locale, the study variables, the target population, the sampling techniques and the sample size. In addition, it covers the research instruments and piloting: (reliability and validity), the data collection procedures, the data analysis and the legal and ethical considerations.

#### **3.1 Research design**

A research design is a blueprint that guides the researcher. Leedy & Ormrod (2010) affirm that methodology shows the general guideline and the approach undertaken during the research process. It also outlines the procedures used in data collection, analysis and interpretation of findings. This study utilised a descriptive survey research design with both qualitative and quantitative methods. Sirisilla (2023) explains that this type of research design allows for observation and gathering information on a given phenomenon of study without interfering with the study subjects and gives deeper insight of the study phenomena.

In addition, since it is impossible to study the whole population, the design allows for study of a sample to describe characteristics of the study population using both qualitative and quantitative methods for intensive insights (Mc Combes, 2023). This design was used as it gives room for intensive investigation of study variables and describes their correlations. According to

Orodho et al. (2016), a descriptive survey examines the occurrences and relationships of educational variables.

### **3.1.1 Study Variables**

A variable is a construct or a property that a researcher is interested in. This study examined strategies that are used to teach oral skills in English language and their benefits to learner classroom participation in public comprehensive schools in Embu County, Kenya. The independent variables were: Teaching strategies (methods and activities). The intervening variables were classroom environment, learner characteristics and teacher characteristics while dependent variable was learner classroom participation -indicated by good performance, ability to use English in communication and participation in classroom activities.

### **3.2 Study locale**

An ideal setting in a study permits good rapport with participants, is easy to reach and also relates directly to the area the researcher is interested in thus eases data collection (Singleton, 1993). The study was carried out in Embu County, Embu West sub- County selected on purpose. The area was selected because available data from KNEC report of 2019 indicated that learners' performance in English language was poor. However, based on the review of related literature, there was no study that adequately addressed this problem. Secondly, from the evidence accumulated from previous related studies, no similar study has been conducted in the area in an attempt to improve the poor results of learners in English language since inception of CBC.

### **3.3 Target population**

Target population refers to any gathering of people who share at least one quality and that a researcher regards important (Orodho, 2012). The study targeted all the 37 public comprehensive schools in Embu West sub-county, 100 teachers, 37 language panel chairpersons and 1200 learners. The study targeted, public comprehensive schools, teachers, learners and language panel chairpersons. Public comprehensive schools were targeted due to registering poor performance in national examinations while Grade 6 was targeted because it is at the highest level of primary education and learners in this class were believed to be literate enough to understand and respond to issues under investigation. Teachers were targeted for this study as they are the curriculum implementors who are always in touch with learners and that they play a key role in the teaching and learning process thus can influence learner results.

The study also targeted language panel chairpersons as they play an oversight role in their respective departments by closely monitoring the teaching and learning progress particularly in English language department as they could provide the required information. In addition, involving learners in the study was noble because the intention of the study is to help improve their performance in English language through use of effective strategies.

### **3.4 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size**

#### **3.4.1 Sampling techniques**

Sampling technique is a technique involving the selection of groups in a populace to obtain a representative sample (Alvi, 2016). Using simple random sampling, a sample of 10 comprehensive schools in Embu-West Sub-County was chosen. Pieces of paper bearing the names of the 37 schools were used.

The pieces of paper were folded and mixed thoroughly. Then, 10 pieces from the mix were hand-picked randomly and the schools whose names appeared were sampled.

The study sampled 120 learners. In total, there were 12 mixed focus groups of 10 learners sampled. O. Nyumba et al. (2018) recommends that mini focus groups can be used where it is impossible to bring participants together.

Then, from the 10 sampled schools, grade 6 classrooms (120learners) and teachers who handled English lessons in upper primary (4-6) were purposively selected for the study. Therefore, 10 teachers were sampled since each sample school had only one teacher who handled English from grade 4-6. Simple random sampling technique was used because it gives equal chance to all the participants thus eliminating bias while purposive sampling technique was used as the researcher was out on purpose and the selected sample met the criteria. Furthermore, 10 language panel chairpersons were also selected using convenient sampling as they were easily reachable for the study.

According to Alvi (2016), simple random sampling offers same chances to all respondents who bear similar qualities. It is thus bias free and represents the population under study well. Similarly, sampling on conveniency is easy and cost effective as focuses on readily available respondents who are requested to take part in the study. On the other hand, purposive sampling is applicable where the purpose of the study is preconceived thus available respondents who meet the criteria for the study are involved. The sample for the study met

Mugenda (2003) threshold that 10 % is considerable for descriptive survey research.

### 3.4.2 Sample Size

A summary of the target population and sample size is provided in the table 3.1 below.

**Table 3.1: A summary of target population and sample size for the study**

Type of population	Population size	Sample size
Schools	37	10
Teachers of English	100	10
Grade 6 learners	1200	120
Language panel chairpersons	37	10

Source: Embu County Education Office (2022)

### 3.5 Research instruments

The study used four tools of data collection; questionnaires for teachers, focus group discussion for learners, lesson observation schedules for grade six classrooms and interview schedule for language panel chairpersons. The multiple instruments helped reduce bias which mostly arise due to over-dependence on one instrument.

#### 3.5.1 Questionnaire

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) posit that questionnaires are used to get significant data about the population. This instrument was used because the participants were literates who could read and write. The data collection tool is also easy to administer. The questionnaire for teachers was developed such that it was sub-divided into three different but related sections. Each section

contained related items that helped the researcher probe the issues at hand based on the main research objectives.

The study utilised semi- structured questionnaires for teachers to help collect both qualitative and quantitative data. This instrument collected data on teaching strategies and their influence on learners' classroom participation. It collected data that cut across objective 1, 2 and 3 of this research. The questionnaire was designed into 3 sections. Section one gathered data related to the teaching strategies that teachers use to teach English language oral skills. Section two collected data on the use of innovative teaching strategies in developing oral skills while the third section contained items that dealt with effect of teaching strategies on learners' classroom participation.

### **3.5.2 Focus Group Discussion Schedule for Learners**

A Focus Group Discussion is a tool used to collect qualitative data and helps get deeper insight of the issues under investigation from a purposively selected sample where the researcher plays the role of a moderator (O. Nyumba et al., 2018). According to Cronin (2008), a focus group constitutes of a small group of participants (6-10) who discuss a given topic as outlined by the researcher. In addition, the duration is 1-2 hours but with young participants the situation is different (Gibson,2012; Heary & Hennesy, 2002 cited in O. Nyumba et al, 2018). Similarly, seeking consent when dealing with the minors is critical (Sim & Water field, 2019). Breen (2006) adds that 10-12 discussion are enough to collect adequate data.

The Focus Group Discussion schedule for learners was developed into 3 sections. Section A comprised of items related teaching methods (objective

one). Section B contained questions which helped the researcher get more information about strategies that teachers use to teach oral skills (objective two). Finally, section C comprised of items that probed and elicited responses about the relationship between teaching strategies and learners' classroom participation (objective three)

### **3.5.3 Lesson Observation Schedule**

Kombo et al. (2006) defines observation schedule as a tool that provides information about actual behaviour leading to better understanding.

To collect more data on methods that teachers use to develop oral skills in English language, lesson observation schedule in grade three sample classrooms randomly selected was used. Its use presented a chance to observe the nature and quality of oral language classroom interactions between teachers and learners, learners and learners as well as interaction between learners and learning materials. This tool further helped reveal whether teachers used innovative strategies when developing oral skills. This instrument was also very instrumental in helping verify the information contained in the questionnaires concerning the key issues of this research.

### **3.5.4 Interview Guide**

An interview guide is a research tool that structures an interview and is more individualized yielding qualitative data (Jamshed, 2014). The interview schedule was aimed to sample language panel chairpersons. It was developed based on the study objectives. Section A. had items that helped collect data on strategies used in teaching English language oral skills. Section B. comprised of items that helped probe the importance of innovative strategies in language

teaching and section C had items that helped gather data about the challenges facing teaching and learning of English language.

### **3.6 Piloting**

Hazzi and Maldaon (2015) explain that pilot study is the initial stage of a research. It is a small- scale research aimed at assisting the researcher enhance the effectiveness and quality of the primary study. The piloting of teacher questionnaires, learners' focus group discussion schedule, interview guide and lesson observation was carried out in two, randomly selected, schools in the neighbouring Embu-East Sub- County. The pilot study involved four teachers of English, 20 learners and 2 language panel chairpersons. Piloting helped determine the suitability of the research tools. After the pilot study, the research tools were reviewed accordingly so as to ensure their relevance to the study phenomenon.

The pilot study was necessary because it helps assess the suitability of the research instruments in terms of validity and reliability. It also helps determine whether there is need to adjust or improve the research instruments. The mini study also helps the researcher design a clear study plan (Hazzi & Maldaon, 2015).

#### **3.6.1 Validity**

Validity refers to the precision, dependability, and significance of inferences based on information gathered from a tool or scale for each variable or constructs in the data Mugenda (2008). To ensure the content validity of the research tools, the expert advice and direction from the supervisors was sought. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) note that expert advice is appropriate for

content validity. The supervisors were requested to review the appropriateness of the test items in the questionnaires. The questionnaires were constantly modified based on the suggestions offered to maintain relevance. The data obtained from questionnaires was also collated with information from other research instruments to ensure validity.

The lesson observation guide items, the focus discussion questions and the interview guide items were also subjected to review by the supervisors. Necessary adjustments were later made to incorporate the supervisors' suggestions. The research tools were also structured into three sections. Each section contained different but related items depending on the research objectives.

### **3.6.2 Reliability**

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a research instrument's reliability is determined by how consistently it produces results. The validity of the questionnaires given to teachers was evaluated using the test-retest method. In each pilot school, the researcher distributed questionnaires to two randomly chosen English teachers of third grade. After a week, the same subjects received a second administration of the questionnaires from the researcher. For each item, the results of the test and retest were compared. Later, the correlation coefficient for the test-retest was computed to ascertain how consistent the questionnaire content elicited similar responses for each administration using the Pearson Product-Moment formula

$$r = \frac{n(\sum xy) - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{[n \sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2][n \sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2]}}$$

The degree of dependability was high since the reliability coefficient obtained was 0.80. Kothari (2004) states that a research

tool is regarded as reliable if its reliability coefficient is at least 0.70 and that reliability increases as the correlation coefficient approaches 1.

### **3.7 Data collection procedures**

The researcher sought authorization from the academic institution, Kenyatta University, and obtained an introduction letter. The researcher then applied for a research permit through the graduate school of Kenyatta University from the National Council for Science and Technology Innovation (NACOSTI). The research permit obtained from NACOSTI and the introductory letter were submitted to the county director of education for approval. In addition, the researcher requested a letter of authorization from the director of education for the sub-county to ensure a smooth data collection procedure.

After the authorization, the researcher conducted a reconnaissance of the sample schools to familiarize with the study environment and for necessary introduction to the school administration. This helped create rapport with the study participants.

The study's respondents were enlightened on how to provide data for each of the four data collection tools. The raw data collection exercise for each tool was as follows; the researcher administered and collected teacher questionnaires after the filling exercise as agreed in each sample school. Some were filled and collected on the same day. The filled questionnaires were then filed and stored safely for data analysis.

For the classroom observation schedule, the researcher attended a regular oral language lesson in every classroom sampled for the study. This observation

occurred twice in each sample school. The observation took place for thirty-five minutes during a regular oral language classroom as per the classroom time - table. A pre-prepared observation schedule (Appendix C) guided this process. The role of the researcher was that of a silent observer. The observation records were filed and stored for data analysis.

As for the interview schedule, the researcher had a one-on-one interview with one language panel chairperson in each of the ten sample schools. The time for the interview was scheduled depending on the availability and convenience of the language panel chairperson. A pre-prepared interview guide was used to direct the exercise. The interview recordings were stored safely for data analysis.

On the part of the Focus Group Discussions for learners, the FGDs were made up of 120 learners. There were 12 mixed groups of 10 learners each sampled. Since learners from the sampled schools could not be merged at a central place, there was a small focus group in each school to facilitate data collection. The FGD questions were used to initiate group responses. The group responses were recorded after the group agreement and the discussion sheets were filed and stored safely for data analysis.

### **3.8 Data analysis**

Data analysis is a very important component of research for more effective research findings. It involves gathering, transforming, tidying and modelling data in order to realize the information needed (Alem, 2020). Table 3.2 details how data was analyzed.

**Table 3.1: A Summary of Data Analysis**

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Type of data</b>	<b>Data collection tool</b>	<b>Method of Analysis</b>	<b>Method of presentation</b>
1.To investigate strategies that teachers use to teach oral skills	Qualitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questionnaires</li> <li>• Focus Group Discussion</li> <li>• Lesson observation schedule</li> <li>• Interview schedule</li> </ul>	Thematic analysis	Tables
	Quantitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questionnaires</li> </ul>	Descriptive statistics (SPSS version 25)	Percentages Frequency tables Mean
2. To establish the importance of innovative strategies in teaching oral skills in English language	Qualitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questionnaires</li> <li>• Focus group discussion</li> <li>• Lesson observation schedule</li> <li>• Interview guide</li> </ul>	Thematic analysis	Tables
	Quantitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questionnaires</li> </ul>	Descriptive statistics (SPSS version 25)	Percentages Frequency tables Mean
4. To establish the problems faced in development of oral skills	Qualitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questionnaires</li> <li>• Focus group discussion</li> <li>• Lesson observation schedule</li> <li>• Interview guide</li> </ul>	Thematic analysis	Tables
	Quantitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questionnaire</li> </ul>	Descriptive statistics (SPSS version 25)	Percentages

The data subjected to analysis formed a basis for drawing research findings and making reasonable conclusions. The analysed data report also grounded suggestion for further study and recommendations.

### **3.9 Logistical and ethical considerations**

#### **3.9.1 Logistical Considerations**

The research was conducted in Embu- West sub-county due to the need to address the problem of poor performance in English Language. The researcher sought necessary authorization from Kenyatta University- institution of study, National Council of Science and Technology Innovation, the Embu County Director of Education and the Embu-West Sub-County director of Education so as to smoothen research process. Necessary authorization before data collection is a requirement that all researchers should adhere to. In addition, a pre-visit was conducted so as to familiarize with environment of study and for necessary introduction.

#### **3.9.2 Ethical Considerations**

For any research to be counted worth, it should have the ability to offer quality and ethical standards (Okoth, 2012). This study therefore considered and prioritized ethical standards in the entire research process. The study put in practice research ethics such as anonymity and privacy of the participants. The respondents were informed of the study's value and were allowed to participate at their own free will. Consent from the parents/ guardians of the minor-participants was also sought and a consent form signed. The data obtained was treated with utmost confidentiality and solely used for the study. In addition, the ideas borrowed from other researchers/sources to enrich the study were acknowledged through references, paraphrasing, quotations and citations.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSIONS**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

The study sought to establish the strategies that are used in teaching of English language oral skills and their role in learners' classroom participation. The findings of the study from the questionnaires, Focus Group Discussions, interviews and observation checklist are presented in this chapter. The chapter first presents the response rate realized in the study and the demographic findings of the respondents. The chapter further presents the findings in regard to strategies teachers use to teach oral skills in English language, benefits of innovative strategies in teaching oral skills in English language and the impediments to developments of oral skills. The chapter also presents the discussions in line to the objectives, literature reviewed and in regard to researcher's observation.

#### **4.1 Response Rate**

The study sought to collect data from 10 public primary schools in Embu West sub-county whereby sample size included 10 teachers to fill questionnaires, 10 language panel chairpersons for interview and 120 learners for Focus Group Discussions. The respondent's rate of response was presented in table 4.1. The study achieved 100% response rate.

**Table 4.1: Response Rate**

Tool	Respondents	Sample	Response	Response Rate
Questionnaire	Teachers	10	10	100.0%
Interviews	Language Panel Chairpersons	10	10	100.0%
Focus Group Discussions	Learners 12 Mixed Groups of 10 Learners each	120	120	100.0%
Total		140	140	100.0%

The 100% response rate implies that the sampled respondents (140) were available and gave their feedback to the study. According to Almalki and Arabia (2016), a response rate of more than 80% is desired and implies that the results of the study could be generalizable to the target population. This implies that the findings obtained in the current study can be generalizable to all public primary schools in Embu West sub-county. The high response rate was attributed to proper planning and considerations of all ethical issues of research.

#### **4.2 Demographic Information**

The study collected the demographic details of the teachers like gender, professional qualifications, experience in teaching and the number of learners in their classes shown in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2: Demographic Information**

Demographic Information	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender of teachers	Male	0	0%
	Female	10	100%
	Total	10	100.0%
Teaching experience	Below 5 Years	1	10%
	Between 5-10 years	1	10%
	Between 10-20 years	3	30%
	Above 20 Years	5	50%
	Total	10	100.0%
Professional Qualifications	P1 Certificate	5	50%
	Diploma	4	40%
	Degree	1	10%
	Total	10	100.0%
Number of learners in class	Below 30 Learners	0	0.0%
	Between 30-40 Learners	3	30%
	Between 40-50 Learners	2	20%
	Between 50-60 Learners	2	20%
	Above 60 learners	3	30%
	Total	10	100.0%

The study revealed that all of the 10 (100%) sampled teachers in Embu-West sub-county were female. This implies that majority of the teachers of English in Embu-West sub-county are predominantly female. It can be concluded that there is gender imbalance in Embu West Sub-County's teaching fraternity. The revelation is in congruence with a study by Faustino and Muneja (2020) that also found that English language and literature at elementary levels had more female teachers compared to male teachers.

The study further revealed that 5/10 teachers (50%) had a teaching experience of above 20 years while 3/10, (30%), had a teaching experience of between 10 to 20 years. The study also found that only 1/10, (10%), teachers had a teaching experience of below five years and the same percentage with a teaching experience of between 5 and 10 years. This implies that half of the

teachers have a teaching experience of more than 20 years and more than half with a teaching experience of more than 10 years. This further indicates that the teachers in public primary schools in Embu West sub-county have a long teaching experience and therefore able to give valid feedback on English language oral skills. These findings agree with the results of Maria (2020) who noted that most primary school teachers had a more teaching experience with the majority having more than 10 years in the teaching profession.

With regard to professional qualifications of respondents, the study revealed that 5/10, (50%), of the teachers had a P1 certificate while 4 /10, (40%) had a diploma qualification. It was further found out that only 1/10 (10%) teachers had a degree. This therefore implies that the majority of teachers in public primary schools in Embu West sub-county have certificate and diploma qualification. According to the Ministry of Education (2019), the minimum requirement for the primary school teacher in Kenya is a certificate in education thus all the sampled teachers were qualified. This implies that the majority of teachers understand the various aspects of oral skills that the study sought to find out. Tapper (2019) found that qualified teachers produced better educational outcomes of students. In line to this, Gerald and Allan (2018) also found out that majority of the teachers were qualified to teach English and complied to all educational regulations in schools.

Focusing on the class size, 3/10 (30%) teachers indicated that they taught in a class of more than 60 learners and the same proportion indicated that they taught in a class of between 30-40 learners. The study further noted that 2/10 (20%) teachers taught in a class of between 40-50 learners and between 50-60

learners. It was further found out that 2/10 (20%) schools sampled had less than 30 learners in a class. The study also revealed that the challenge of congested classrooms mainly affected schools around the urban periphery while those with less than 40 pupils were in rural settings. This implies that more than half of the classes have student-teacher ratio of more than the recommended 40:1 and thus implying congested classes (Ministry of Education, 2019). In agreement to this, Muthoni (2017) found that most school had shortage of teachers with most classes have an average of 56 learners which is above the recommended ratio. This implies that teacher shortage and classroom congestion is a prevalent problem in public comprehensive schools in Embu especially in urban centres.

#### **4.3 Strategies Teachers Use to Teach Oral Skills in English Language**

The first objective of the study sought to establish various strategies used by the teachers to teach oral skills in English Language.

The study further sought to establish whether the schools had language culture facilitated development of oral skills in English language. In response to this, all the 10 (100%) language panel chairpersons indicated that the schools had language culture that facilitated acquisition of oral skills in English language. The study established that schools facilitated the development of oral skills in English language by having debate clubs, student-teacher interactions, having a day for the different languages, that is, English and Kiswahili, helping children to communicate effectively, and requiring learners communicate and write in English. The study further established that the school provided learning materials and gave learners room to practice what they learn in class as they

interacted with others within the school premises. This implies that schools in Embu County provided opportunities for learners to practice use of English language through various activities such as, requiring learners to communicate in English and having distinct days for use of English and Kiswahili language that enhance development of oral skills and also establishment of debate clubs. However, it was observed that learners mostly for communication within the school compound used Kiswahili. The findings contrast with those by Gracia et al. (2021) that learners are provided with inadequate room for acquisition of oral language skills.

The researcher observed various methods used by the teachers to introduce the lesson and whose results are presented in Table 4.3.

**Table 4.3 Observed Strategy Used by Teachers to Introduce the Lesson**

Method	Teachers	
	Frequency	Percentage
Use of prior knowledge	8	80.0%
Explanation of concepts	6	60.0%
Asking relevant questions	6	60.0%
Review of previous lesson	4	40.0%
Recitation	2	20.0%

It was observed that 8 (10) 80.0% of the teachers introduced their lesson by using prior knowledge while 6 out of 10 (60.0%) of the teachers introduced their lesson by providing an explanation of concepts and asking relevant questions. Review of the previous lesson as a way of introducing a lesson was cited by 4 out of 10 (40.0%) of the teachers while recitation was cited by 2/10 (20.0%) teachers. This implies that majority of teachers introduce their lesson by using prior knowledge, offering an explanation of concepts and asking relevant questions. An observation of the techniques used to end the lesson was conducted whereby most of the teachers ended their lesson by asking questions

on what the learners had learnt as they responded, learners stating what they had learnt and were given extended oral work, offering a brief summary by asking oral questions or giving an oral summary of the lesson. A study by Kim (2018) noted that most of teachers introduced their lessons by revisiting previous lesson and asking questions from previously learnt concepts.

The study evaluated the strategies teachers used to teach oral skills in English language where a five-point Likert scale was used such that; 1=Always, 2=Frequently, 3=Occasionally, 4=Rarely, 5=Never. Table 4.4 shows the teachers' feedback on the extent of use of the various strategies in teaching oral skills in English language.

**Table 4.4 Strategies Teachers Use to Teach Oral Skills in English Language**

Strategy	Always	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Never	Total	
	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
Communication games	3(30.0%)	2(20.0%)	5(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	2.20	0.919
Group work or Discussion	3(30.0%)	4(40.0%)	3(30.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	2.00	0.816
Role play	0(0.0%)	7(70.0%)	3(30.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	2.30	0.483
Songs	5(55.6%)	3(33.3%)	1(11.1%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1.56	0.726
Debate	1(10.0%)	1(10.0%)	1(10.0%)	6(60.0%)	1(10.0%)	3.50	1.179
Pair work	4(40.0%)	5(50.0%)	1(10.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1.70	0.675
Storytelling	2(22.2%)	4(44.4%)	3(33.3%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	2.11	0.782
Audio-visuals	0(0.0%)	1(11.1%)	3(33.3%)	4(44.4%)	1(11.1%)	3.56	0.882
Drama	0(0.0%)	1(12.5%)	5(62.5%)	2(25.0%)	0(0.0%)	3.13	0.641

With respect to the scale used in table 4.4, a mean of more than 3.00 would imply that the corresponding strategy is used less often while a mean score of less than 3.00 would imply a tendency to use the corresponding strategy in teaching English oral skills more often (Latunde, 2017). On the other hand, a standard deviation of more than 1.000 would imply lack of consensus among the respondents in the use of the corresponding strategy while a standard deviation of less than 1.000 imply a consensus among the respondents in the use of the corresponding strategy in teaching English oral skills (Morgan, 2017). The results revealed that songs and pair work were the most used strategies of teaching oral skills as evidenced by a mean score of 1.56 and 1.70. Other teaching strategies used by the teachers to teach oral skills are communication games, group work or discussion, role play and story-telling

with a mean score of less than 3.00. It was however noted that debate, audio-visuals, and drama were on average rarely used in teaching oral skills as revealed by the mean score of more than 3.00. The study however revealed that there was lack of consensus among the teachers in their responses on the use of debate with a standard deviation of 1.179. It can be concluded that songs, pair work, group work, roleplay, communication games and storytelling are widely utilized in teaching oral skills. With respect to this, Gill (2018) in Australia found that most of the strategies used by the teachers to teach English oral skills were mostly songs, pair work and role play.

For data triangulation, the study sought to find out both the language panel chairperson's and the learners' response about the strategies used by their teachers to teach oral skills. The Table 4.5. below shows the learners' response rate while table 4.6 shows responses from language panel chairpersons.

**Table 4.4: Learners' Responses on the Strategies that Teachers Use to Develop Oral Skills**

Strategy	Used		Not Used	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Role play	19	100.0%	0	0.0%
Question and answer	19	100.0%	0	0.0%
Dialogue	19	100.0%	0	0.0%
Language games	19	100.0%	0	0.0%
Songs/oral poems	17	89.5%	2	10.5%
Group / pair work	17	89.5%	2	10.5%
Storytelling	16	84.2%	3	15.8%
Debate	11	57.9%	8	42.1%
Audio-visuals	3	15.8%	16	84.2%
Drama	3		16	84.2%

**Table 4.5: Methods Commonly Used While Teaching English Language Oral Skills-language panel chairpersons**

Strategy/Method	Language Panel Chairpersons	
	Frequency	Percentage
Story Telling	9	90.0%
Songs	8	80.0%

Role play	4	40.0%
Discussions	4	40.0%
Group Work	4	40.0%
Pair work	4	20.0%
Communication Games	1	10.0%
Drama	1	10.0%
Audio-visual	1	10.0%

The results in table 4.5 reveal that 19 learners (100%) indicated that their teachers used question and answer strategy, role play, dialogue, language games, songs/oral poems, group/pair work and storytelling strategies. It was also noted that debate, audio-visuals and drama were used in a decreasing measure ranging from 57.9% to 15.8%. There was therefore both convergence and divergence of opinions between the teachers and learners. From the learners' dimensions, it can be concluded that teachers use strategies such as question and answer, roleplay, dialogue, songs, language games, pair/group work and storytelling to develop oral skills.

However, it was noted that 8 (80%) of the learners in classes observed did not ask questions in class relating to content, and available learning materials and technologies. This implies that learners at primary schools mostly rely on their teachers when learning as their brains have not developed fully to critique their own learning. The revelation also implies that teachers at this level need to diversify their teaching strategies in order to develop high order skills such as critical thinking in learners especially when learning oral skills to enable them question their own learning as they strive to achieve more hence improved oral competence. Teach Thought Staff (2023) noted that young learners are born yearning to understand their surrounding and interact with it but with time they detach from passions that pushed them and questioning in class decreases. This situation worsens with subsequent grades. Therefore, to revive their interest,

educators ask questions to discover the learner’s weaknesses and strengths, enhance memory, improve learning and to enhance active learning.

As portrayed in table 4.6, 9/10 (90%) and 8/10 (80%) language panel chairpersons noted that storytelling and songs were the most commonly used strategies to teach oral skills by teachers. Role play, discussions, group work and pair work on the other hand were moderately used at a frequency of 4/ 10 (40.0%). The results shown also revealed that, communication games, drama and audio-visuals were rarely used. Across all the study respondents (teachers, learners and language chairpersons), it was concluded that songs, pair work, role play, and storytelling were commonly used strategies in teaching English oral skills in public comprehensive schools in Embu West Sub-county. Namaziandost *et al.*, (2020) revealed that the use of songs, storytelling and pair work are crucial in the teaching and development of oral skills in English language.

Table 4.7 shows some of the innovative strategies used to develop learner's oral skills.

**Table 4.7 Innovative Strategies Used to Develop Learner's Oral Skills**

Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Pair work	5	50.0%
Role play	5	50.0%
Pictures	5	50.0%
Storytelling	2	20.0%
Technology e.g. audio-visuals, computerization	2	20.0%
Peer conversation	1	10.0%

The study observed that at least 5 (10), 50.0% schools used pair work, role play and pictures innovative strategies to develop oral skills. Richards & Schmidt (2002) revealed that pair work enhances learning of oral skills by increasing opportunities for language practice and giving platform for self-

expression. Rianti, Syahid and Qamariah (2022) similarly noted that pair work increases speaking skills of learners.

Roleplay brings livens the teaching and learning environment, provoke learners' interest and make acquisition of language splendid. It also adds diversity and provides a supportive environment for oral practice (Liu & Yu, 2009). Abdessallam et al., (2023) add that activities used in role play are effective in developing oral skills.

Use of pictures is an integral ingredient in improving the learners' verbal skills as they create an accommodative learning environment by eliminating boredom and relieving learner's tension in language learning. Also, they arrest the learners' keenness and improve self-confidence and motivation in speaking (Hafidz, 2020). Storytelling enables learners to reason logically and enhances their communicative competence (Nozima, 2021). Similarly, Siavichay & Guaman (2022), and Maharaj-Sharma (2024) note that story-telling improves acquisition of oral skills as it involves one-on-one interaction between the narrator and the audience reinforced with non-verbal cues and improves learner engagement and comprehension.

Use of technology make learning more fun and enjoyable, increases learner motivation, bolsters autonomy in learning and enhances success in language learning (Rahmatillo & Shohida, 2022) while practicing peer conversation improves speaking skills of learners by giving adequate room for practice of verbal skills outside the confines of a classroom and increasing fluency and confidence of learners in speech (Ahmed, 2017).

The study further sought to establish the strategies considered effective by teachers in the teaching of oral skills. The findings are presented in Table 4.9

**Table 4.8: Strategies Considered Effective in the Teaching of Oral Skills**

Strategy/Method	Teachers	
	Frequency	Percentage
Role play	8	80.0%
Story Telling	8	80.0%
Discussions	8	80.0%
Pair work	7	70.0%
Songs	6	60.0%
Question and Answer	3	30.0%
Games	2	20.0%
Debate	1	10.0%
Tongue Twister	1	10.0%
Naming pictures	1	10.0%
Jokes	1	10.0%

The study revealed that role play (80.0%), storytelling (80.0%), discussions (80.0%), pair work (70.0%) and songs (60.0%) were considered effective teaching strategies by majority of the teachers. This implies that teachers consider roleplay, storytelling, discussion, pair work and songs effective in the teaching of oral skills. The findings tally with Namaziandost *et al.*, (2020), that songs, pair work, storytelling and role play are important strategies of teaching oral skills in English language leading to effective learning among learners in primary level of education. The study however noted that methods such as question and answer, games, debate, tongue twisters, poems, spelling words, naming pictures, demonstration, fieldwork, nature walk and jokes are not considered effective by majority of the teachers. Possible reasons would be due to large class sizes, difficult for the learners to understand and also not part of the curriculum.

The various activities in an oral language classroom were evaluated and the results presented in Table 4.9

**Table 4.9: Observed Activities Used in Oral Language Classroom**

Activity	Frequency	Percentage
Oral Questioning	6	60.0%
Working in Pairs	5	50.0%
Dramatizing	4	40.0%
Role Playing	4	40.0%
Singing	3	30.0%
Story Telling	2	20.0%
Working in groups	1	10.0%
Debating	1	10.0%
Playing games	1	10.0%
Reading words	1	10.0%

Of the 10 observations made, oral questioning (60%) and working in pairs (50%) were the major activities used for active participation in an oral language classroom. From the observations made, it was noted that asking and answering questions, pair work, group discussions and group activities, oral presentation, and interaction with learning resources and aids such as wall charts enhance active participation in an oral language classroom. The findings imply that oral questioning and working in pairs are the major activities used to teach oral skills. Other activities used moderately are dramatizing (40%) and role playing (40%) while singing (30%), storytelling (20%), group work, (10%) debate (10%), use of games (10%) and reading words (10%) on the other hand were used by the minority as indicated by the percentages. The results imply that the activities used give learner limited exposure to learn oral skills. A related study by Puspitasari et al (2023) revealed that activities used to develop oral skills were role playing and simulation, discussion, oral presentation and information gap.

The study further sought to establish the methods teachers used in assessing learner's oral skills. The findings are shown in Table 4.10

**Table 4.10 Methods used in Assessment of Learners' Oral Skills Development**

Assessment Method	Language Panel Chairpersons	
	Frequency	Percentage
Using oral questions	7	70.0
Story telling	2	20.0
Reading for them a story	1	10.0
Reading paragraphs	1	10.0
Retell what the teacher said	1	10.0
Involving them in discussion	1	10.0

The results revealed that 7/10 teachers (70%) assessed the development of oral skills among the learning through oral question. Storytelling, reading a story to the learners, reading paragraphs and retelling what the teacher said were also used by to a small extent ranging between 2/10 (20%) to 1/10 (10%) teachers. With respect to this, through the observation checklist, it was observed that (5 out of 10) 50% of the teachers evaluated learners' progress during the lesson through oral questions, both reading aloud and retelling stories were used by 10% (1/10). These results imply that use of oral questions is the most popular technique used in assessment of development oral skills in Embu West Sub-County. These finding concur with those by Alam and Uddin (2018) which noted that most teachers gauge the level of learning among the students through asking oral questions during classroom learning.

The study further sought to establish strategies that were rarely used in the teaching of orals skills in English language. The results are presented in Table 4.11.

**Table 4.11 Strategies Rarely Used to Teach Oral Skills in English Language**

Method	Teachers	
	Frequency	Percentage
Riddles	3	30.0
Debate	2	20.0
Tongue Twisters	1	10.0
ICT Integration	1	10.0
Jokes	1	10.0
Audio Visuals	1	10.0
Drama	1	10.0
Total	10	100.0

Table 4.11 indicated that teachers rarely use riddles, debate, tongue twisters, ICT Integration, jokes, audio visuals and drama although a study by Durdon (2024) revealed that riddles are essential learning tools for learners as they are enjoyable and help improve various language skills like communication. The reasons given to the rare use of riddles is that riddles are not in the CBC design in grade three level and that it is hard for the learners at that grade to understand. One of the language panel chairpersons said the following regarding the low cases of use of riddles:

Excerpt 02: *“With the CBC curriculum design, there is a lot of emphasis on the other methods ignoring riddles. They are not in the CBC design in the level I teach and hard for the learners”*

With regard to debate, the language panel chairpersons indicated that learners could express themselves well and that the classes are too large to organize for debate and thus the rare use in teaching of oral skills in English language. In addition, the language panel chairpersons noted that tongue twisters were used long time ago and they are not in the current curriculum design. Asyifa, (2022) noted that use of debates creates a supportive classroom environment for oral language practice while Sugiharto et al. (2022) noted that use of tongue

twisters while teaching English creates room for learner involvement and also enhances their pronunciation in communication.

The study further requested language panel chairpersons to enumerate considerations that govern the choice of teaching strategies. The results are shown in Table 4.8

**Table 4.12: Considerations that Govern the Choice of Teaching Strategies**

Strategy/Method	Language Panel Chairpersons	
	Frequency	Percentage
Age of the learners	6	60.0%
Number of learners	6	60.0%
Ability of the learners	4	40.0%
Time	2	20.0%
Learning area	2	20.0%
Concentration of the learners	1	10.0%
Content I need to deliver	1	10.0%
Resources available	1	10.0%
Learning resources	1	10.0%

The results revealed that the age of the learners, class size and learner's ability are the major considerations made while choosing the teaching method. Simple and easy to understand methods are used for young learners since they have low ability to understand abstract concepts. In teaching big classes, strategies that are able to accommodate many learners and still be effective such as storytelling and jokes are used (Damaris et al., 2019; Gill, 2018). The study further revealed that time, learning area, concentration of the learners, content to be delivered, resources available and learning resources were not the major considerations governing the choice of teaching strategy. This revelation contrasts Kim (2018) that a good teaching strategy should be accommodative to time duration of lesson, subject matter of the lesson and be able to be applied within the available resources.

#### **4.4 Benefits of Teaching Oral Skills in English Language Innovatively**

The second objective of the study sought to establish the benefits of using innovative strategies to teach oral skills in English language.

First, the study sought learners' opinion on various aspects that inspire them to learn oral skills. The learners indicated that learning oral skills was part of classroom learning and they had to embrace it. The learners further indicated that they loved English language as it helps in building their career. Others indicated that oral skills helped them to learn how to learn, pass exams and answer questions as well as perfect on their pronunciation. Some learners were inspired to learn oral skills since they help them in understanding, listen keenly to the teacher, improve their reading skills, give them interest in learning and also help them to speak in English.

Other aspects cited by the students included English being enjoyable, being an official language and thus requiring them to use it in communication and also inspiration by their teachers as their role models. This implies that learners have both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to the learning of oral skills. These findings are in line to those by Gudu (2020) who found that learners were inspired to learn English oral skills since all other subjects except Kiswahili language were instructed in English, both written and oral. Seven (2020) asserts that benefits of learning English like need to use it for socialization, travel overseas and desire for academic success with regard to good outcomes in language make learners learn language. The study further states that learning can take place if the learner is not willing to learn.

The study probed teachers as to why they actively engage their learners in the classroom. Various reasons were given included drawing their attention, for memory retention, to motivate learners, to enhance their understanding, to stimulate their concentration, to benefit time-takers and to enable proper use of the time allocated for a given lesson. The implication is that learning is eased when learners are actively engaged due to benefits attached such as benefitting time - takers and enhance meaningful use of the limited lesson time. Similarly, to the findings, Ngwenya & Zulu (2023) found out that involving learners created a receptive environment for study that provides opportunities to enhance learning and also create a relaxed teaching and learning environment which results to beneficial relationship between the teacher and the learner.

All the 10 teachers sampled (100%) reported that teaching oral skills using innovative methods enhanced the learner's classroom participation. With respect to this, a teacher indicated that;

Excerpt 06: *“Once innovative strategies are used, learners are very keen, attentive, interested and curious, resulting to maximum understanding. Again, since learners are actively involved, they become active and are able to answer questions without fear.”*

Another one said that;

Excerpt 07: *“The teacher knows the learner better. For he or she chooses the best method for them. When the teachers involve the learner, that is, the lesson is learner centered, the learners participate fully. Because a good choice enables the learner to create interactive learning.”*

The findings imply that use of innovative teaching strategies lead to improved classroom engagements, and consequently enhanced development of oral skills and academic achievement.

The study further evaluated different types of classroom interactions and results are shown in Table 4.13

**Table 4.13: Type of Classroom Interaction**

Type of Classroom Interaction	Yes		No	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Teacher- Learner</b>				
Is the teacher friendly to learners and approachable?	10	100.0%	0	0.0%
Does the teacher provide feedback and guide learners?	10	100.0%	0	0.0%
<b>Engagement of learners</b>				
Does the teacher encourage/ initiate classroom discussion?	10	100.0%	0	0.0%
<b>Learner- content</b>				
Awareness of expected lesson outcome	10	100.0%	0	0.0%
Activeness in class	10	100.0%	0	0.0%
Exhibiting fun during the lesson	10	100.0%	0	0.0%
Asking questions	2	20.0%	8	80.0%
Interaction with learning materials/ technologies	10	100.0%	0	0.0%
<b>Learner – learner</b>				
Participation in group/ pair work	10	100.0%	0	0.0%
Any movement during the lesson?	10	100.0%	0	0.0%
<b>Method of assessment of oral skills</b>				
Oral questioning	10	100%	0	0.0%

In examining teacher - learner interaction, the study first established that all the 10 teachers (100%) actively engaged learners in the classroom. With respect to

this, it was observed that there were direct interactions between the teacher and the learner as initiated by teachers. From both FGDs and observation checklist, the study revealed that teachers are friendly, approachable and provided feedback and guidance as learning progressed. The implication is that teachers in Embu-West Sub-County initiate classroom interactions thus play their roles as facilitators in the learning process. It also implies that teacher qualities such as friendliness and approachability enhance classroom interactions. In line to this, Sun and Zhang (2021) assert that teacher-student interaction is very important and teachers should initiate the interaction.

On the interaction between the learner and the content, it was observed that all the 10 (100%) teachers observed communicated the expected lesson outcome to the learners hence learners were aware of the lesson expectation. It was also observed that learners looked enthusiastic and participated actively during the lesson. The study also revealed that learners interacted with learning materials and aids available. The results imply that use of innovative strategies in teaching improves achievement of lesson outcomes, brings life to the classroom and motivates and arrests learners' attention indicated by their zeal to learn. The results also indicate that availability and use of learning aids and resources enhance acquisition of English language oral skills due to increased interactions.

The study further sought to establish whether the innovative strategies are important in the teaching of oral skills. With respect to this, all the teachers sampled (10) that is, 100% unanimously agreed that indeed innovative strategies are very instrumental in the teaching of oral skills. Some ways in

which these strategies contribute to the development of oral skills include when utilized they enhance fluency of speech in learners, create and arouse desire to learn, increase classroom interaction, develop self-worth and confidence in learners and enable learners to expound in their learning. Equally, learners reported that use of innovative strategies in learning increased practicability of language in their future lives, curb unnecessary noise making and create a home away from home where learning thrills. These findings imply that both teachers and learners know the nobility of engaging strategies in the learning process particularly in development of oral skills. Several authors underscore the importance of integrating innovative strategies in teaching oral skills in order to improve the concentration of learners, making learning fun and enjoyable as well as improving understanding through breaking boredom and enhancing memory retention (Asmari, 2021; Damaris *et al.*, 2019; Gill, 2018; Namaziandost *et al.*, 2020).

#### **4.5 Challenges faced in teaching and learning of oral skills**

The third objective sought to establish the challenges that affected teaching and learning of oral skills in public comprehensive schools in Embu West Sub-County, Kenya.

The study also sought to establish how the number of learners affect the teachers' classroom teaching of oral skills. The findings indicated that large classes make it impossible to attend every learner according to their ability, take more time to explain a concept or use a certain method, affect the teacher's ability to exercise class control and weaken classroom interaction. In addition, it was noted that a large class gives the teacher a good exposure to improve his/her teaching skills. This implies that demerits such as failure to attend every individual learner's need, difficulty in class control and weakened class interaction are associated with large classes. One of the language panel chairpersons argued that;

Excerpt 03: *“If the number is large it takes time to explain or use a certain method. When the number is large, it becomes hard to control the class for the teacher. I am not able to listen to each individual learner as they participate.”*

The results are similar to Ulfah et al. (2020) that found out that large classes subject teachers to difficulties in class control, classifying learners, exercising use of English in instruction and learner engagement.

On the other hand, the language panel chairpersons indicated that few learners are: easy to control and manage, easy to engage in more activities and give

teacher ample time to take care of the time-takers and enhance teacher - pupil contact where the teacher is able to diagnose each learner academically for effective teaching. This implies that small classes are preferred for effective teaching and learning. A study by Asmari (2021) had similar results noting that smaller classes improve learning whereby the teacher is able to attend to the needs of every learner in class within the class duration and also increase educational participation of the students in various subjects. One of the language panel chairpersons said that;

Excerpt 04: *“Few learners are easy to control hence engage them in more activities. The class is manageable hence there is good class control and the teacher is able to take care of the slow learners.”*

Additionally, during interactions with one of the sampled teachers, it was noted that teachers handling classes with small number of learners face challenges such as reluctance of learners to participate during the learning process especially when all the learners are weak and lack of learning morale that emanates from competition associated with large classes which psyches both the teacher and the learner. These findings imply that just like large classes, small classes have their fair share of challenges like reluctance of learners to participate when learning and reduced teaching and learning morale for both teachers and learners due to lack of in-class competition. Zayed, 2016 found that the cons of teaching a small class include the class is affected by absence of members which impedes normal learning, it lacks diversity as learners lack exposure to a setting that is diverse, it limits learning, it fails to give room for

varied learning experiences and it increases anxiety of learners resulting to passiveness.

The study also sought to establish the challenges that discourage learners from learning in English. With respect to this, it was noted that difficulties in reading among the learners, difficulties in pronouncing and spelling some words, and some hard concepts to understand, mismatch between the teacher's and the learner's language and high pace of teacher in speaking inhibit majority of learners from speaking in English. It was also noted that noise disturbance, lack of practice and generally lack of interest among the learners to gain knowledge in listening and speaking, evident in failure to do English assignments, are some of the challenges learners faced. The results on learner related challenges to the learning of oral skills indicate that there is need to address the challenges faced by learners in order to make learning of oral skills successful.

One of the learners indicated that;

Excerpt 08: *“Some learners laugh when you make a mistake thus becoming shy. Some learners may be shy hence might find a challenge in speaking English”*

Another one indicated that;

Excerpt 09: *“When angry with teacher you develop a negative attitude towards English. Some words are difficult to understand. Again, challenging dictation demoralizes learners. Some learners may be boring”*

The study further sought to establish challenges that affects teaching of oral skills in public comprehensive schools in Embu West Sub-County, Kenya. The teachers indicated that some learners have not yet grown to express themselves fully and cannot comprehend what the teacher is talking about. One of the teachers said that;

Excerpt 10: *“Some learners have not yet grown to express themselves fully and cannot comprehend what you are talking about. Vocabularies are above their understanding.”*

The study further established that lack of practice by learners, interference of mother-tongue and immediate environment affected development of oral skills in English language. One of the teachers indicated that;

Excerpt 11: *“Lack of suitable environment for practice, tribes, this is where by learners come from different counties so they have different accent in their language hence making pronunciation of /r/ and /l/ a problem.”*

The study further found that teaching of English face challenges related to unresponsive learners, wrong interpretation of English concepts by some learners, shyness to participate in class activities such as dramatizing, large classes and lack of adequate teaching/ learning materials. For instance, lack of internet was cited as a barrier to ICT integration in teaching of orals skills in English language. Similarly, Audio Visuals were rarely used since there was lack of appropriate devices and internet in some of the government comprehensive schools in Embu West Sub-County. The results indicate that teachers fail to use some strategies as they are either deemed outdated in the teaching of oral skills or are not included in the curriculum designs. They also indicate that unavailability of ICT devices and internet connectivity limits

exploitation of some strategies like ICT integration and audio visuals by teachers when developing oral skills. Soodmand and Doosti (2016) asserts that teachers use readily available resources in teaching oral skills as they align with the teaching and learning objectives as well as curriculum design.

These findings imply that teaching of oral skills is faced with challenges like limited self- expression ability of learners due to their tender age, failure of learners to practice spoken English, wrong interpretation of concepts and mother tongue interference among others in Embu West Sub-County. In line to this, Damaris et al. (2019) established that major challenges in teaching English language included lack of enough teaching materials, negative attitudes among learners, lack of enough practice, and influence from the immediate environment.

In summary, this chapter has presented detailed analysis of the study's response rate and demographic information of the respondents. It has also presented detailed findings of the study from the four data collection tools based on the three objectives of the study, the literature reviewed and the researcher's observation. The following chapter presents summary of the major findings, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further study.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

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

#### **5.0 Introduction**

The chapter gives a summary of the major findings in the study, makes conclusions based on the study objectives and makes recommendations for both policy and practice based on the conclusions reached. The chapter also gives suggestions for further studies.

#### **5.1 Summary of Findings**

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the strategies that are used in teaching of English language oral skills and their contribution on learners' classroom participation in public comprehensive schools in Embu County, Kenya. Specifically, the study sought to investigate the strategies teachers use to teach oral skills in English language, the benefits of innovative strategies in teaching oral skills in English language and the challenges faced in teaching and learning of oral skills. The theoretical framework that forms basis for this study was discussed. The research design used was descriptive survey and data was gathered using questionnaires, focus groups, observation and interview.

##### **5.1.1 Summary on Strategies Teachers Used to Teach Oral Skills in English Language**

The study established that all the schools sampled (100%) had language practices and culture that enhanced acquisition of oral skills like use of English for instruction and interaction, having established school language policy that spelt specific days for use of English in communication, debate clubs and

provision of teaching and learning aids. The results also showed that majority of teachers introduced their lesson by using prior knowledge (80%), explanation of concepts (60%) and asking relevant introductory questions (60%). In addition, most teachers ended their lesson by asking questions on what the learners had learnt, asking learners to state what they had learnt, giving extended oral work, offering a brief summary by asking oral questions or giving brief oral summary of the lesson.

The research also established that the most common strategies used to teach oral skill were use of pair work, roleplay, storytelling and songs. It was further noted that debate, audio-visuals and riddles were rarely used. The findings also showed that the most common innovative strategies in teaching oral skills are use of pictures, pair work and role play used by half of the teachers (50%). The study findings also showed that the most effective strategies in development of oral skills were role play (80%), storytelling (80%), discussions (80%), pair work (70%) and songs (60%). Also, the major activities in development of oral skills were oral questioning (60%) and working in pairs (50%). The results also showed that most teachers (70%) use oral questions to assess development of oral skills. The study further indicated that more than half of the teachers (60%) considered age of the learners and class size when selecting learning strategies.

### **5.1.2 Summary on Benefits of Innovative Strategies in Teaching Oral Skills in English Language**

The study results indicated that learners are inspired to learn English because it is a key component of classroom learning, due to personal interests like need to

use it for communication and to excel academically, due to need for career growth, due to its role as an official language and inspiration by teachers. The results also indicated that teachers engaged learners actively to draw their attention, to enhance learners' memory and understanding, to motivate and stimulate learners' concentration and to maximize use of allocated time. The study further revealed 100 % of the teachers used innovative strategies to enhance classroom interactions and academic achievement as well as to enhance development of learners' oral skills.

The major ways in which these strategies contributed to English language learning include to enhance the learner's fluency in speech, to create and arouse desire to learn, to increase classroom interaction, to raise the learner's self - esteem, to enable learners expound on their own learning, to create a thrilling learning environment and to increase learning experiences and practicability of language.

### **5.1.3 Summary on challenges faced in teaching and learning of oral skills**

The findings showed that some challenges affecting teaching of oral skills were large classes affecting classroom control and interaction, shyness of learners, lack of appropriate teaching and learning materials, wrong interpretation of some concepts by learners and entry behaviour of learners in terms of age. The study findings further showed that on the part of the learner, the challenges experienced were difficulty to pronounce some words, lack of comprehension of some hard concepts, teacher's use of language that learners find hard to understand, high pace of teacher when speaking, lack of practice, noise distraction and lack of interest in learning.

## 5.2 Conclusions

Based on the first objective, the study concluded that public comprehensive schools in Embu West sub- county had school language practices and culture that enhanced acquisition of oral skills such as use of English for instruction and interaction within the school premises and having school language policy that specified distinct days for use of English by learners. The study also concluded that English language lessons are introduced by use of prior knowledge, explanation of concepts and asking relevant introductory questions. On the other hand, the study concluded that the most common techniques of ending a lesson are by asking questions on the content learnt, asking learners what they had learnt, giving extended oral work or by offering a summary of what was taught.

The study also concluded that teachers in Embu West mainly use pair work role- play, storytelling and songs to develop learner's oral skills while the strategies rarely used were debates, audio-visuals and riddles. The study also concluded that the commonly used innovative strategies are role play, pair work and use of pictures. The study concluded too that use of role-play, pair work, storytelling, discussions and songs are effective in teaching of oral skills. The study also concluded that the major activities used to develop oral skills are oral questioning and working in pairs. Further, the study concluded that assessment of oral skills was mostly through use of oral questions and that in selecting the teaching method, teachers mainly considered age of learners and size of the class.

Secondly, based on objective two, the study concluded that learners have various inspiration to learning of English such as being a key area of classroom teaching, its role as a second language and for career growth, inspiration by teachers as models and for personal interest and gains such as to enhance communication and academic excellence. The study also concluded that engaging learners in the teaching and learning process draws their attention to learning, enhances learners' memory and understanding, boosts learner motivation and improves their concentration. The study also concluded that use of innovative techniques of teaching improves the quality of classroom interactions, improves academic achievement, enhances learners' fluency in speech, arouses learners' desire to learn creates a thrilling learning environment and offers varied learning experiences and situations for usability of English language for in real life context.

Finally based on the third objective, the study concluded that instructing oral skills is impeded by mother-tongue interference, diversity of learners and their needs, large classrooms, shyness of learners, lack of appropriate teaching resources and wrong interpretation of concepts by learners. The study further concluded that learning of oral skills is affected by difficulties in pronunciation, lack of comprehension of some hard concepts, mismatch between the language of the teacher and that of the learner in terms of pace and vocabulary, lack of practice, noise distraction and lack of interest in learning.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

The study established that most schools in Embu County had established school language practices and culture such as school language policy that

specified days for use of English within the school premises and debate clubs. The study therefore recommends reinforcement of these noble ideas in English language learning by ensuring that learners strictly adhere to the school language policy and practices with an aim of improving their oral language skills. This can be done through daily follow up to get the violators and meting a punishment that is beneficial like telling a story or giving an oral speech in English and also ensuring that debate clubs are functional and winners are awarded. This will help solve some challenges like mother-tongue use and lack of practice.

The study also established considerable contribution of innovative strategies (role-play, storytelling, pair work, songs and pictures) in English language learning. The study therefore recommends use of these strategies during instruction to increase learning opportunities to enhance development of linguistic abilities like oral skills in learners consequently boosting learner's performance.

The study further revealed that instruction and learning of oral skills face various challenges among them mismatch between teacher's language and that of learners and also some concepts being too hard for learners to comprehend. The study therefore recommends teachers to use simple vocabularies and repeating some abstract concepts quite often for memory retention using innovative strategies like songs. The study further recommends the Ministry of Education to review English Language Curriculum to include simplified and age- appropriate content to ease understanding and improve teacher-learner interaction.

Since the study also revealed that learners did not ask questions relating to the content taught and available learning materials and technologies, the study recommends that teachers employ active learning strategies such as Inquiry Based Learning through use of pictures where key guiding questions activate the learner's logical reasoning which helps them ask questions when learning oral skills.

In addition, it was revealed that only 20% of the 10 sampled teachers used technology such as audio-visuals and computers. The reasons cited for minimal usage was lack of internet connectivity and devices. The study therefore recommends that the Ministry of Education provides adequate necessary ICT devices and connect all public comprehensive schools to power and internet. This will help teachers integrate ICT in teaching for quality teaching and improved academic success of learners.

#### **5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies**

A replica of the study is recommended in other counties to expand generalization of results. A similar study is recommended using quasi-experimental research design for better verifiable findings. The study also recommends a further study to establish the impact of parental involvement in improving English language competence among learners in public comprehensive schools in Kenya.

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**APPENDICES**

**Appendix A: Questionnaire for teachers**

Dear respondent

I am Tabitha Murugi Mugo, a Master of Education (Language Education) student at Kenyatta University. I am conducting research titled ‘Strategies used in teaching English language oral skills and their effects on learner classroom participation in public comprehensive schools in Embu County, Kenya.’

You have been selected to take part in this study by chance. Out of your consent, kindly provide the information needed to facilitate the completion of my study. The information you provide will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and strictly used for academic purposes.

Thank you in advance

**Instructions:**

1. Kindly provide accurate, correct and honest answers because every answer in research is correct
2. Kindly attempt to answer every question if possible

**Section A: Strategies used to teach English Language oral skills**

1. From the list provided, kindly indicate the frequency with which you use these methods.

	<b>Always</b>	<b>Frequently</b>	<b>Occasionally</b>	<b>Rarely</b>	<b>Never</b>
Communication games					
Role play					
Songs					
Debate					
Pair work					
Storytelling					
Audio-visuals					
Drama					

2. List at least 3 strategies that you consider effective in the teaching of oral skills.

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3.(i) State at least one method that you rarely/ never use to teach English

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(ii) Give reason(s)

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4. What do you consider when selecting a teaching method?

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**Section B: Benefits of innovative teaching to English language teaching**

5. Do you actively engage learners in the classroom?

[Yes]

[No]

6. Give at least 2 reasons why you use strategies(innovative) that ensure learners are active in class.

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**Section C: Challenges experienced in teaching oral skills in English language**

7. Mention at least 2 challenges that you experience while teaching oral skills.

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Thank you for your participation!

**Appendix B: Focus Group Discussion Schedule for learners**  
**Introduction**

Dear respondent

I am Tabitha Murugi Mugo, a Master of Education (Language Education) student at Kenyatta University. I am conducting research titled ‘Strategies used in teaching English language oral skills and their effects on learner classroom participation in public comprehensive schools in Embu County, Kenya.’

You have been selected to take part in this study by chance. Out of your own consent, kindly provide the information needed to facilitate completion of my study. The information you provide will be treated with utmost confidentiality and strictly used for academic purposes.

Thank you in advance

**Instructions:**

Kindly provide accurate, correct and honest answers as every answer is accepted.

**Section A: Methods used in teaching English language oral skills.**

1. Initiate a discussion to elicit responses on the teacher's use of the following methods.

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Used</b>	<b>Not used</b>
Storytelling		
Question and answer		
Songs/oral poems		
Drama		
Group / pair work		
Role play		
Debate		
Dialogue		
Audio - visuals		
Language games		

**Section B: Benefits of Innovative teaching of oral skills.**

2. Guide learners to discuss what inspires them to learn English.

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**Section C: Challenges experienced when learning oral skills**

5. Initiate a discussion to elicit responses on at least two challenges that discourage learners from learning English.

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Thank you so much for your participation!

## Appendix C: Lesson observation guide

**Gender of the teacher:** [Male] [Female]

**Teaching Experience:**

**Grade:**

**No. of pupils**

**Strand:**

**Sub-strand:**

Activity	Remarks
<p><b>Teaching Strategies</b></p> <p>a) <b>Introduction</b></p> <p>Which method does the teacher use to introduce the lesson?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explanation of concepts</li> <li>• Singing songs</li> <li>• Recitation</li> <li>• Asking relevant questions</li> <li>• Use of tongue twisters</li> <li>• Review of previous lesson</li> <li>• Use of prior knowledge</li> <li>• Any other:</li> </ul>	
<p>b) <b>Lesson Development</b></p> <p>Activities used to develop learner's oral skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oral questioning</li> <li>• Working in groups</li> <li>• Working in pairs</li> <li>• Role playing</li> <li>• Dramatizing</li> <li>• Storytelling</li> <li>• Singing</li> <li>• debating</li> <li>• Playing games</li> <li>• Reading words</li> <li>• Any other</li> </ul>	
<p>c) <b>Assessment of oral skills</b></p> <p>Observe and record the method(s) used to assess oral skills</p>	
<p>d) <b>Conclusion</b></p> <p>Observe and record the techniques used to end the lesson</p>	
<p><b>Learning resources/ materials</b></p> <p>Record the materials and resources available that enhance classroom interactions.</p>	
<p>Observe and record how the teacher evaluates learners</p>	
<p><b>Type of classroom interaction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Teacher- Learner.</b></li> </ul> <p>Is the teacher friendly to learners and approachable?            Does the teacher provide feedback and guide learners?            Engagement of learners            Does the teacher encourage/ initiate classroom discussion?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Learner- content</b></li> </ul>	

<p>Awareness of expected lesson outcome  Activeness in class  Exhibiting fun during the lesson  Asking questions  Interaction with learning materials/ technologies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Learner - learner</b></li> </ul> <p>Participation in group/ pair work  Any movement during the lesson?</p>	
<p><b>Classroom size and organization</b>  How is the sitting arrangement?  Does the classroom structure accommodate learners comfortably?</p>	

## Appendix D: Language Panel Chairpersons' Interview Schedule

Dear respondent

I am Tabitha Murugi Mugo, a Master of Education (Language Education) student at Kenyatta University. I am conducting research titled 'Strategies used in teaching English language oral skills and their effects on learner classroom participation in public comprehensive schools in Embu County, Kenya.'

You have been selected to take part in this study by chance. Out of your own consent, kindly provide the information needed to facilitate completion of my study. The information you provide will be treated with utmost confidentiality and strictly used for academic purposes.

I am glad to host you.

**Teacher's Gender:** [Male][Female]

**Teaching experience:**

**Professional Qualifications:**

**Class:**                      **Number of learners:**

**Subject:**

### **Section A: Items relating to strategies used to instruct oral skills in English Language**

1. State 4 methods you commonly use while teaching English language oral skills

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2. Does your school have any language culture and policy that facilitate development of oral skills in English language? If yes, how

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### **Section B: Items relating to impediments to teaching of oral skills**

3. Briefly comment on availability of teaching/ learning resources and materials and how it affects your teaching of oral skills

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4. Comment on how class size affects your teaching of English language mainly in the area of oral skills.
  - a. Large class
  - b. Small class

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Thank you so much for your time

## **Appendix E: Letter of Information**

Dear parent/ Guardian

My name is Tabitha Murugi Mugo a master of education student at Kenyatta University. I'm conducting research titled "Strategies used in teaching English language oral skills and their effects on learner classroom participation in public comprehensive schools in Embu County, Kenya." This study is required for me to successfully complete my studies. The study revelations will aid in enhancing the quality of English language teaching and learning.

The participants in this study will be language panel chairpersons, teachers of English and learners in grade 6..

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary, and there are no associated benefits or rewards. Participants' privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality are assured. This study's results will be used exclusively for academic purposes.

I am pleased to inform you that your child has been randomly selected to take part in this study. Please sign the attached consent form to confirm your child's participation in the activity.

Thank you.

Tabitha Murugi Mugo  
Researcher

## Appendix F: Consent Form

I have read and I understand that this study is a requirement for completion of your studies. I understand that findings of this study will help improve English language teaching. I am aware that my child has been selected by chance to participate in this study. I am also informed that participation is voluntary and participants should expect no benefits/ rewards for participating. I am also informed that participation in this study will cause no harm to my child due to anonymity, and privacy of the participants. I am also aware that the data obtained from this study will be treated with confidentiality and used strictly for academic purposes.

I (your name) ..... therefore, permit my child  
(child's name) .....to participate in this study.

Parent's / Guardian's signature.....

Date.....

## Appendix G: Graduate school Research Authorization Letter



**KENYATTA UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL**

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

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

P.O. Box 43844, 00100  
NAIROBI, KENYA  
Tel. 020-8704150

Our Ref: E55/CE/28004/2019

DATE: 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2022

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

Dear Sir/Madam,

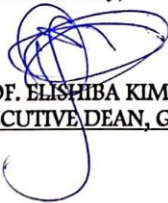
**RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION FOR MS. MUGO TABITHA MURUGI –  
REG. NO. E55/CE/28004/2019**

I write to introduce Ms. Mugo Tabitha Murugi who is a Postgraduate Student of this University. She is registered for M.Ed. degree programme in the Department of Educational Communication & Technology.






Ms. Mugo intends to conduct research for a M.Ed. thesis Proposal entitled, "Strategies Used in Teaching English Language Oral Skills and their Effects on Learner Participation in Public Primary Schools in Embu County, Kenya."

Any assistance given will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

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

**Appendix H: Research Permit**

 REPUBLIC OF KENYA	 NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
RefNo: 112184	Date of Issue: 21/December/2022
<b>RESEARCH LICENSE</b>	
	
<p>This is to Certify that Ms. Tabitha Muriungi Mugo of Kenyatta University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Embu on the topic: STRATEGIES USED IN TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE ORAL SKILLS AND THEIR EFFECTS ON LEARNER PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN EMBU COUNTY, KENYA. for the period ending : 21/December/2023.</p>	
License No: NACOSTI/P/22/22731	
112184	
Applicant Identification Number	Director General NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
	Verification QR Code
	
<p>NOTE: This is a computer generated License. To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.</p>	
See overleaf for conditions	

## Appendix I: Embu County Research Authorization Letter



### MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

State Department of Early Learning and Basic Education

Telegrams: "Provedu". Embu  
Telephone: Embu 31711  
Fax: 30956  
E-mail: cde.embu@yahoo.com  
When replying please quote:

OFFICE OF THE  
COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION  
EMBU COUNTY  
P o Box 123-60100  
**EMBU**

Ref: EBC/GA/32/1/Vol. V/92

Date: 25<sup>th</sup> January, 2023

Tabitha Murugi Mugo  
**KENYATTA UNIVERSITY**

#### **RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION**

Reference is made to your letter dated 21<sup>st</sup> December, 2022

This office acknowledges receipt of your research authorization to carry out research on "**Strategies used in Teaching English language Oral Skills and their Effects on Learner Participation in Public Primary Schools in Embu, Kenya**" for a period ending 21<sup>st</sup> December, 2023

This office has no objection and therefore wishes you success in this undertaking and requests prospective participants/respondents to accord you cooperation or support you may require.

**GRACE MUGU**  
For: County Director of Education  
**EMBU COUNTY**

#### **Copy to:**

The Principal Secretary, MOE-NAIROBI  
The Secretary/CEO, NACOSTI – NAIROBI  
The County Commissioner – **EMBU COUNTY**  
The Sub-county Directors of Education – **EMBU COUNTY**



**Appendix J: Map of Embu County**

