

**CHALLENGES STUDENTS FACE IN LEARNING ESSAY WRITING SKILLS
IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MANGA DISTRICT,
NYAMIRA COUNTY, KENYA**

BY

NYANG'AU BENARD NYASIMI

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DECLARATION

I confirm that this thesis is my original work and it has not been presented in any other university for certification. The thesis has been complemented by referenced works duly acknowledged. Where text, data (including spoken words) graphics or tables have been borrowed from other sources, including the internet, these are specifically accredited and references cited using current APA system and in accordance with anti-plagiarism regulations.

Signature:Date:

Nyang'au Benard Nyasimi

E55/CE/14078/2009

Supervisors:

We/I confirm that the work reported in this thesis was carried out by the candidate under my/our supervision as University supervisor(s).

Signature: Date:

Prof. John Kimemia

Senior lecturer

Department of Educational Communication and Technology,
Kenyatta University.

Signature: Date:

Dr Sophia Ndethiu

Senior lecturer

Department of Educational Communication and Technology,
Kenyatta University.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my loving wife Zipporah Nyasimi and our sons Philemon Siko and Enock Ongeru.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DEO	-	District Education Officer
EAS	-	Essay Analysis Schedule
ESL	-	English as a Second Language
ICT	-	Information Communication Technology
KNEC	-	Kenya National Examination Council
KCSE	-	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
KICD	-	Kenya Institute Curriculum Development
KIE	-	Kenya Institute of Education
LLS	-	Language Learning Strategies
LOI	-	Language of Instruction
L1	-	First Language
L2	-	Second Language
MoE	-	Ministry of Education
MoEST	-	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
NACOSTI	-	National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation
NCST	-	National Council for Science and Technology
SPSS	-	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
SQ	-	Students' Questionnaire
TIS	-	Teachers' Interview Schedule

ABSTRACT

The ability to achieve communicative competence in writing is a major facet of language development and academic success among students at all levels of the education system. However, learning to master essay writing skills is a problem students face in secondary schools. This has been consistently shown by the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examination results in English, as noted by the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) reports. The purpose of this study was to investigate challenges students face in learning essay writing skills in English language in secondary schools in Manga district, Nyamira County, Kenya. The specific objectives of the study were to: determine methods teachers use in teaching essay writing skills, investigate challenges students face in learning essay writing skills, establish strategies students employ in learning essay writing skills. The study was based on the process genre approach theoretical model for teaching writing skills as advanced by Badger and White (2000). A descriptive survey research design was adopted in this study. The target population was English language teachers and form three students in Manga district. Stratified random sampling and purposive sampling techniques were used in selecting the sample for the study. Thus, a sample of 180 students and 10 teachers of English language were used as the respondents of the study. Data was collected by the use of a questionnaire for students, interview schedule for teachers and an essay writing test for students. The validity and reliability of the instruments were established through a pilot study and the input of experts in the area under study. Quantitative data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques, which involved percentages, frequencies, and the mean while qualitative data was thematically analyzed. The research findings indicated that common methods teachers use in teaching essay writing skills are: lecture, question and answer and teacher demonstration. However, group work, peer teaching and role play which have been proven to enhance learning of writing skills among other methods were the least used. The results further revealed that major challenges students face in learning essay writing skills include: inadequate content mastery, incorrect use of grammar, first language (L1) interference, limited vocabulary and inadequate teaching and learning resources. The results also showed that most of the students do not frequently use interactive learning strategies. In view of these findings, it was established that teaching methods and learning strategies used by both teachers and students influence the learning of L2 writing skills. Recommendations based on the study were made to enable curriculum developers, policy makers and teachers to come up with strategies to address the challenges students face in the learning of L2 writing skills.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, scope and limitations, assumptions, theoretical and conceptual framework based on the study.

1.1 Background to the study

The ability to achieve communicative competence in writing is a major facet of language development and academic success among students at all levels of the education system. Writing is considered the most important skill that students require in order to enhance their personal development and academic success (Mukulu et al. 2006). In addition, Adams and Keene (2000) note that learning to master writing skills can help students to deal successfully with their academic demands and to perform effectively in their disciplines and professional contexts. In the academic context, students are required to produce specific writing genres such as essays, summaries and reports (Dudley-Evans, 2001).

However, learning to write in a first (L1), second (L2) or foreign language (FL) seems to be the most difficult skill for language learners to acquire in academic contexts (Negari, 2012). Similarly, Richards (2008) notes that learning to write in either first or second language is one of the most difficult tasks students encounter and one that few people can be said to fully master. Kroll (2003) also observes that writing is a complex process that involves the mastery of multiple skills that contribute to the overall difficulty of writing

for any language user. Thus, it is a challenging and difficult skill for both native and non-native speakers to acquire. According to Hyland (2003), writing requires composing, which implies the ability either to tell pieces of information in the form of narratives or description, or transform information into new texts, as in expository or argumentative writing. Therefore, it is viewed as a continuum of activities that range from the more mechanical or formal aspects of writing to the more complex act of composing.

Tangpermpoon (2008) points out that when compared with other language skills of listening, speaking and reading, writing is the most difficult skill to learn because it requires writers to have a great deal of lexical and syntactic knowledge as well as principles of organization in L2 to produce a good written text. On the other hand, Myles (2002) observes that the ability to write well is not naturally acquired from the environment through exposure to the language. He argues that writing is learned or culturally transmitted as a set of practices in formal instructional setting. Similarly, Byrne (2000) notes that writing is learned through a process of instruction in which the student is expected to master the written form of the language and to learn certain structures that are not common in speech but which are vital for effective written communication. He further observes that conscious effort must be made to equip language learners with writing skills which will enable them to organize their ideas so that a reader who is not present and even known to them can understand. In addition, Hyland (2002) asserts that writing is an activity which must be mastered in order for students to express their ideas effectively in writing. Therefore, it is imperative for teachers to help students to learn writing skills that will enable them express themselves appropriately and effectively in L2 writing.

According to Ong'ondo (2001) there are two broad categories of writing namely functional and creative. Functional writing involves writing of letters, minutes, reports, notices, speeches, book reviews, and memorandum among others. On the other hand, creative writing is concerned with the ability either to tell or retell pieces of information in the form of narration, description and can also be used to transform information into new texts such as in exposition and argumentative writing. The study focused on creative writing with the specific aim of investigating challenges that students face in learning essay writing skills. Writing skills that are necessary for the two categories of writing have been grouped by Gathumbi and Masembe (2005) into two classes: basic and advanced. Basic skills involve good handwriting, proper spelling and correct punctuation. Advanced skills are those related to proper organization of ideas, correct use of grammar and originality of expression. They further observe that in a second language learning situation, writing skills are the most difficult to master. In addition, Graham and Perin (2007) claim that a well written essay focuses on the topic and has an organizational pattern that enables a reader to follow the flow of ideas. It also contains supporting ideas that are developed through the use of examples, appropriate vocabulary and follows the conventions of standard written English language such as correct spelling, capitalization and sentence structure.

In Kenya, English language is learnt and taught as a second language and it is also the country's official language, as well as the Language of Instruction (LOI) in schools, colleges and universities. Assessment of students' achievement in English language and other subjects in the curriculum is done through writing. Writing is also a skill that draws

from other language skills of listening, speaking and reading. Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), formerly known as Kenya Institute of Education (KIE), English language syllabus (2002), writing is recognized as an advanced language skill that has wide ranging implications for the way we think and learn. Writing also encourages learners to be organized, logical and creative in their thinking. Society demands that learners should be helped to acquire skills that will enable them to express their ideas clearly and effectively. It is because of this that the syllabus singles out the ability to write well as essential in influencing students' chances of success, personal development and relations with other people. It is further emphasized in the syllabus that there is need to encourage learners to achieve competence in writing using language structures they have learnt. The learning objectives pertaining to writing as spelt out in the syllabus include the ability to: write clearly and correctly for a wide variety of purposes and functions, use effectively the main structures of English language by writing logically and coherently on a given topic, demonstrate acceptable habits both in spoken and written communication among others.

The Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) (2006) spells out that learners are required to write essays based on the set books. However, essay writing is an area that has received frequent criticism. One particular concern has been with persistent students' errors in the KCSE English essay writing examination. The KNEC report for the year 2008 results noted that most students wrote essays that were irrelevant, sketchy and gave dismal accounts. Candidates also made frequent construction errors, hence making their essays minimally intelligible. This is an observation that has persisted to the present day. In

addition, the KNEC report for the year 2010 results noted that many candidates showed low level of content mastery since a number of them wrote irrelevant essays, demonstrated poor word choice, wrong grammar and spelling and lacked logical argument and coherence. This is depicted by the KCSE performance in essay writing (English Paper 3) at the National level as shown in Table 1.1

Table 1.1: Candidates’ performance at National level in KCSE English paper 3 for 5 Years

Year	Candidature	Maximum Score	Mean Score and percentage
2006	241,983	60	18.73 (31.55%)
2007	273,066	60	18.34 (30.57%)
2008	300,794	60	20.25 (33.75%)
2009	335,415	60	20.81 (34.68%)
2010	354,935	60	18.64 (30.54%)

Source: KNEC report, 2011

Data in Table 1.1 reveal that performance in essay writing in the National KCSE examination has been below average for five consecutive years. Difficulties students face in L2 essay writing have been partly attributed to inadequate practice and teaching of essay writing skills (KNEC, 2011). This implies that teachers do not adequately teach all aspects of essay writing and give students adequate practice in answering all types of essay questions. Reporting on students’ low achievement in essay writing, the KNEC report for the

year 2011 noted that most students failed to read and understand the set texts and literally concepts hence they wrote irrelevant essays and gave dismal accounts.

In an attempt to assist students acquire skills that will enable them to express their ideas clearly and effectively in writing, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) revised the English language syllabus for secondary schools (KIE, 2002). The aim was to have the appropriate syllabus, approaches and methodologies that could enhance learning and teaching within a second language learning situation (Omulando, 2009). It is noted that the syllabus adopts an integrated approach in the teaching of the four basic language skills. It is further noted that the concept of teaching English using the integrated approach focuses on the development of learners' communicative competence. The four basic language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing are integrated in such a way that they complement each other. For instance, in the English language syllabus, it is recommended that class readers and literature set books should be used as sources of writing tasks. This means that through reading of such literary set books, the learner is exposed to new vocabulary, new sentence structures, different registers and good models of language use. Thus, what learners read could form the basis of their oral presentations or essay writing. In the same vein, Shen (2003) notes that in integrated skills instruction, learners are exposed to authentic language and are involved in activities and tasks that are meaningful and interesting.

Despite the current concern for adopting an integrated approach to the teaching of language skills, the KNEC reports have over the years consistently shown that students face challenges in essay writing in English language at KCSE level. In Manga district, performance in English language at KCSE level has been below average. Table 1.2 shows students' performance in English language in Manga district at KCSE level for a period of four years.

Table 1.2 Students' performance in English at KCSE level in Manga district from 2008 to 2012

Year	Candidature	Mean score	Mean Grade
2008	1679	4.315	D+ (Plus)
2009	1704	4.087	D+ (Plus)
2010	1693	4.961	C- (Minus)
2011	1857	5.406	C- (Minus)
2012	1671	5.273	C- (Minus)

Source: DEO's office Manga district, 2012

From table 1.2, it is evident that performance in English language at KCSE level in Manga district has been generally below average. It is against this background that the study investigated challenges students face in learning essay writing skills in English language in secondary schools in Manga district, Nyamira County, Kenya.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The ability to write appropriately and effectively is considered a major part of written communicative competence among students at all levels of the education system. However, learning to master essay writing skills is a problem that students face in secondary schools. The KNEC reports on candidates' achievement in English at KCSE level have over the years consistently shown that students face various challenges in essay writing which lower the overall performance in English as a subject. The KNEC report for the year 2010 results noted that many candidates wrote irrelevant essays, demonstrated poor word choice, wrong grammar and spelling and lacked logical argument and coherence. This problem has been partly attributed to inadequate practice and teaching of essay writing skills and failure to read and understand the set texts and literary concepts on the part of most students (KNEC, 2011). In order to help students achieve communicative competence in L2 writing, the MoEST recommends the adoption of the integrated approach to the teaching of the four language skills. Despite this intervention, the KNEC reports have over the years persistently shown that students face challenges in essay writing in English language at KCSE level. In Manga district, performance in English language at KCSE level has remained below average over the years. Therefore, this study investigated challenges students face in learning essay writing skills in English language in secondary schools in Manga district, Nyamira County, Kenya.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study were to:

- a. Determine methods teachers use in teaching essay writing skills.
- b. Investigate challenges students face in learning essay writing skills.
- c. Establish strategies students employ in learning essay writing skills.

1.4 Research questions

The following research questions were addressed in this study.

- a. Which methods do teachers use in teaching essay writing skills?
- b. What challenges do students face in learning essay writing skills?
- c. Which strategies do students employ in learning essay writing skills?

1.5 Significance of the study

It is hoped that the findings of this study would serve as a basis for assisting English language teachers adopt teaching strategies that will enhance learning of essay writing skills among students. Secondly, the study would enable curriculum developers and textbook writers to come up with materials that will address the challenges students face in L2 essay writing. The researcher also hoped that the findings of the study would be relevant in teacher education as a whole, especially regarding language education which may enable teacher trainers to come up with better methods of training language teachers with specific reference to essay writing skills. Finally, the study could contribute to knowledge of classroom research in second language writing and form a basis for further research

which could prompt other researchers to do similar studies in other regions or levels of learning.

1.6 Scope and limitations of the study

This section provided information on the scope and limitations of the study. The scope puts forward information concerning the extent and range that was dealt with in this study with regard to the variables under investigation. The limitations provide information on the boundaries of the data, findings and conclusions of the study. Further, it provides information concerning the challenges and restrictions that the researcher faced during the entire research period.

1.6.1 Scope

The study focused on challenges students face in learning essay writing skills in English language in secondary schools in Manga district, Nyamira County Kenya. The study further sought to establish the most commonly used teaching methods and learning strategies used by both teachers and students and how these influence the learning of essay writing skills among students. Respondents for the study were 180 form three students and 10 teachers of English language who were drawn from a sample of 10 schools out of 26 public secondary schools in Manga district.

1.6.2 Limitations

The findings obtained were limited to the responses which were obtained from teachers' interview schedule, students' questionnaire and an essay writing test. The study was lim-

ited to 10 public secondary schools since it did not target private schools. The sample size of 10 secondary schools in the area under study, however, this reduces the generalizability of the findings to all secondary schools in Kenya. The study also investigated only one area of language learning. Lack of adequate published works for review of related literature in the context of Manga district with regard to challenges in learning L2 writing skills was also limited. For this reason most of the search was done over the internet. Despite all these limitations, it is hoped that the results of this study would significantly contribute to the study of pedagogy of second language writing.

1.7 Assumptions of the study

The following assumptions were made:

- a. Teachers' professional qualifications and teaching experience can effectively enable them give information on challenges students face in learning essay writing skills in English as a second language (ESL).
- b. Teaching methods and learning strategies used by both teachers and students influence the learning of essay writing skills among students.
- c. Students always appropriately put language learning strategies into use in order to enhance the learning of essay writing skills.

1.8 Theoretical framework

This study was based on the Process Genre Approach theoretical model for teaching writing skills (Badger and White, 2000), which recognizes that effective teaching methodology for writing needs to integrate the insights from product, process and genre approaches. Tangpermpoon (2008) claims that by integrating the three approaches, the strengths of each approach can successfully complement each other and help teachers to develop students' written competence by providing appropriate input of knowledge and skills in the writing process. It is further highlighted by Gathumbi and Masembe (2005) that the integrated approach to language teaching aims at maximizing meaningful communication and classroom interactions in meaningful situations. It fosters holistic learning such as sharing of information, experiences and development of values. It gives language skills their most meaningful, practical and relevant application, while at the same time giving the student the necessary tools for full learning.

According to Badger and White (2000), the development of writing in a process genre (integrated) approach, classroom learning takes place when teachers draw out the potential of students as well as provide appropriate input to them. It also noted that the development varies between different groups of students because they are at different stages of their writing development. For example, students who have knowledge on the production of the particular genre, and are skilled in it, may require little or no input. Some may be aware of how the potential audience recognize what is written, while another group may lack knowledge of what language is appropriate to a particular audience. Thus, these two

groups will require different input. The teacher is, therefore, required to assess the needs of the particular group to determine the kind of input needed.

Badger and White (2000) further identify three possible sources of input in a process genre approach to teaching writing skills: teachers, learners and samples of the target genre. Teachers provide input in terms of instruction on language use and content, for instance, by asking learners to think about why they are writing a particular essay or story. An alternative to this can be a demonstration by the teacher. On the other hand, students can do the same in group discussion or observing other students' written texts. Samples from the targeted genres can also be an important source of input about contextual and linguistic knowledge. Dudley-Evans (1997) also suggests that teaching and learning resources such as flow charts can also be used to illustrate the organization of particular genres. Tangermpon (2008) points out that, by learning through the integrated approach, students will have less difficulties in L2 writing since they have enough input to create their writing tasks. This, therefore, implies that there is need for teachers to adopt the integrated approach to teaching writing skills in order to enable students achieve communicative competence in L2 writing.

Drawn from this theoretical model are various variables of the integrated approach that influence the learning of L2 writing skills. Integrated approach allows for collaborative learning among students as well as effective interaction between teachers and students in L2 writing classrooms. For instance, by working in groups, learners interact freely and also develop their critical thinking. It also enables teachers to monitor students' progress

at every writing stage to determine the kind of input needed, as well as using teaching and learning resources to illustrate the organization of a particular genre. Thus, adopting the integrated approach to the teaching of essay writing skills will enhance effective learning leading to students' mastery of writing skills and achievement in essay writing. Therefore, based on the ideas and concepts of this theoretical model, the study investigated challenges students face in learning essay writing skills in English language in secondary schools in Manga district, Nyamira County, Kenya.

1.9 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework of this study was adapted from the Process Genre Approach theoretical model for teaching writing skills (Badger and White, 2000). The model holds the view that effective teaching methodology for writing should integrate the insights from product, process and genre approaches in order to develop students' writing communicative competence. Similarly, Tangpermpoon (2008) claims that by integrating the three approaches, the strengths of each approach can successfully complement each other and help teachers to develop students' writing competence by providing appropriate input of knowledge and skills in the writing process.

Drawn from this theoretical model are various aspects of the integrated approach that influence learning of L2 writing skills. Badger and White (2000) point out that adopting the integrated approach to the teaching of writing skills allows for collaborative learning and effective interaction between teachers and students in L2 writing classrooms. For instance, by working in groups or pairs, learners interact freely and also develop their criti-

cal thinking. It also enables teachers to monitor students' progress at every writing stage, to determine the kind of input needed, as well as using teaching and learning resources to illustrate the organization of a particular genre. Thus, adopting the integrated approach to the teaching of L2 essay writing skills, the possible desired outcomes will be mastery of writing skills and achievement in essay writing among students. Based on this study, the independent variable is the challenges which influence the learning of essay writing skills which is the dependent variable while the intervening variable is the integrated approach. This conceptual framework is shown in Figure 1.1.

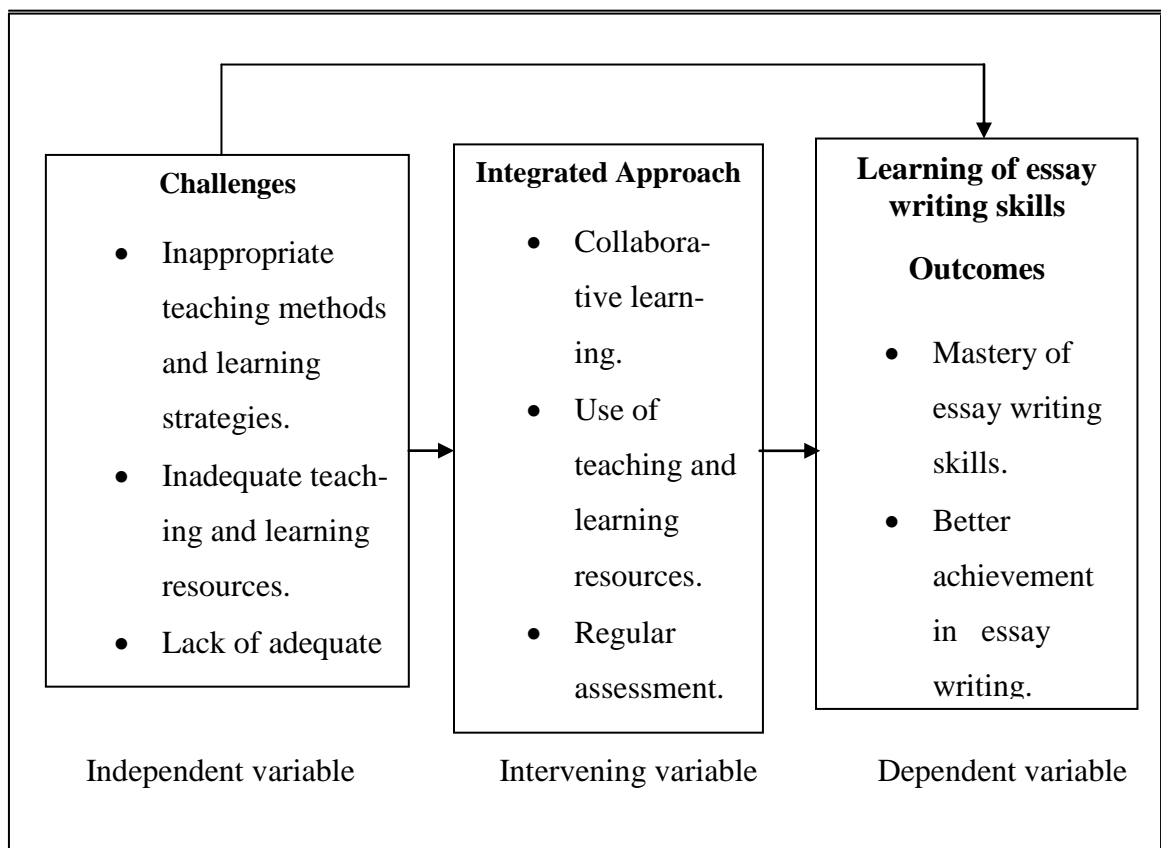


Figure. 1.1 Conceptual framework of students' challenges in learning essay writing skills. (Adapted from Badger and White, 2000)

From Figure 1.1, the independent variables are likely to influence the learning of essay writing skills and the quality of the outcomes (dependent variable). Therefore, if English language teachers adopt the integrated approach to the teaching writing skills, it will enhance mastery of essay writing skills and also lead to better achievement in essay writing among students.

1.10. Operational definition of terms

Achievement:	Successful accomplishment of a task in essay writing usually by reasons of skill, hard work and interest.
Challenges:	Difficulties students face in the process of learning essay writing skills.
Communicative competence:	The ability that students need to develop in order to express themselves appropriately and effectively in various situations like in essay writing.
Effective interaction:	Refers to a process of actively involving students in essay writing lessons that incorporate learning activities such as questioning, explaining and discussion.
Effective learning	A process that produces a desired outcome in essay writing among students.
Effective teaching:	A process that produces the desired result in the teaching and learning of essay writing skills.
English as a second language:	The English language learned by students to whom the language is a second language in their country.
Essay:	A text or a piece of writing that students creatively compose, either independently, in a group or with the help of a teacher, in response to a writing exercise or task.

Improvement:	The process of making the learning of essay writing skills better.
Learning:	A process of gaining knowledge or skills on English language essay writing .
Learning strategies:	Techniques that students employ to improve their own progress in learning essay writing skills in English as a second language.
Performance:	Refers to the ability or level of competence of a student in essay writing, measured by means of an achievement test.
Second language:	Acquisition and learning of an additional language after the first language(L1).
Strategy:	Refers to a technique employed by students to facilitate the process of learning essay writing skills.
Teaching:	Refers to a process of helping students learn essay writing skills.
Teaching methods:	Activities, tasks and learning experience used by teachers during the process of teaching essay writing skills.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

The chapter covers a review of literature related to the study. It was based on the following subheadings: the role of writing in academics, writing integrated with other language skills, methods of teaching writing skills, challenges in second language writing, improving students' writing skills, second language learning strategies, research in second language writing and summary of the reviewed related literature.

2.2 The role of writing in academics

Writing is considered the most important language skill that students require for their personal development and academic success (Mukulu et al. 2006). Similarly, Rao (2007) points out that writing strengthens students' learning, thinking and reflecting on the English language in their academics. In addition, Ahmed (2010) notes that competence in writing helps students perform well in their academic programmes. Moreover, being proficient in writing in English will enable students to be professionals and action researchers in the future. However, it has been noted that learning to master writing skills is a problem students face at all levels of the education system. Ong'ondo (2001) notes that writing skills are of major importance to students at all levels of the education system. This is because most examinations and assignments learners do at schools are mainly assessed through writing. It is probably because of this crucial role in assessment that writing has been considered the most important skill that students require for their academic

advancement. This implies that learners should be helped to acquire skills that will enable them to express their ideas clearly and effectively in writing. Kroll (2003) notes that improving the writing abilities of students has both academic and social implications. He observes that helping students to write clearly, logically and coherently about ideas, knowledge and views will expand their access to higher education and give them an opportunity for advancement in the work force. He further observes that the current trends of globalization and internet revolution have come to require proficiency in English language that goes beyond the spoken language embracing a variety of uses of the written language. Among such uses include; writing of business letters, memos and telephone messages. This further underscores the importance of learning writing skills. However, there has been a considerable concern that majority of the students do not develop the competence in writing they need to be successful in school, workplace, or their personal lives (Graham and Perin, 2007). It is against this observation that the study investigated challenges students face in learning L2 essay writing skills at secondary school level and it is hoped that the recommendations from the study will serve as a basis of improving the learning of writing skills among students.

2.3 Writing integrated with other language skills

There are four basic language skills namely: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Ouma (2005) observes that the development of the four language skills is very important in every language classroom and that any inquiry into writing endeavours among students presupposes effective understanding of the other three skills. Similarly, Cope and Kalantzis (2000) point out that for learners to become proficient L2 writers they require

explicit mastery of the other language skills of listening, speaking and reading. Ikeguchi (1997) presented a lesson plan combining the teaching of writing with reading, speaking and listening. The lesson was presented in three phases. In the first phase students were allowed to choose any one topic that they were most interested in, and something that they wanted to know more about. Then, they were asked to look for a short passage from a magazine or a newspaper article, and read thoroughly until they understood the content, and make a copy to bring to class. The second phase was the interactive phase in which students who had chosen the same topic were called to sit together and form a group. They were then asked to take turns in reading each of their articles to the group members, while everybody else listened and then asked questions to clarify points that were unclear. The third phase was the writing stage. Students were asked to get back to their seats and write about the topic they had chosen to read. The findings indicated that students were able to write freely and expressed themselves meaningfully in L2 writing.

In Kenya, the MoEST English language syllabus by KIE (2002) adopts an integrated approach to the teaching of English language. The four language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing are integrated in such a way that they complement each other. For instance, the English language syllabus recommends the use of class readers and literature set books as sources of writing tasks. Through reading, the learner is exposed to new vocabulary, new sentence structures, different registers and good models of language use. Thus, what learners read could form the basis of their oral presentations or essay writing. It is further noted in the syllabus that the concept of teaching English using the integrated approach focuses on the development of learners' communicative competence.

A study by Ogalo (2011) examined teaching techniques that enhance integration in the development of English language skills in secondary schools in Gatundu district, Kenya. The findings of the study showed that teachers did not integrate the four language skills. Respondents attributed the absence of integration of the four language skills to the large class size and time. Listening and speaking were rarely given attention. English language teachers used very few activities in their teaching and lecture technique was the most commonly used in teaching. It was recommended that for the integration in the development of English language skills to be realized, teachers should use techniques such as: group work, discussion, dialogue, debate, questions and answer techniques. Teachers need also to use a variety of activities which involve the students to participate such as games, role-play, debate, and discussions. It is with this perspective that the study sought to find out whether teachers adopted the integrated approach to the teaching and learning of essay writing skills.

2.4 Methods of teaching writing skills

Sengupta (2000) notes that methods teachers used in writing instruction have measurable effects on the quality of the students' written products. Archibald (2001) also observes that teaching has an effect on the students' ability to reflect on their writing and to produce more effective and appropriate texts in L2 language. In addition, Tangpermpoon (2008) asserts that teaching writing skills to L2 students is a challenging task for teachers because developing this skill takes a long time to realize the improvement.

2.4.1 Product approach

According to Silva (1990), the product approach to teaching writing skills highlights form and syntax and it emphasizes rhetorical drills. The product approach mainly focuses on the written product rather than the process the learner should undergo to produce a good written text. In this approach, writing concerns the knowledge about the structure of a language, and writing development is a result of the imitation of input, in the form of texts provided by the teacher (Badger and White, 2000). Similarly, Myles (2002) confirms that if students are not exposed to written model texts, their errors in writing are more likely to persist. In addition, Jordan (1997) indicates that the students are required to focus on a model, form, and duplication. In other words, the students study model texts and attempt various exercises that enable them to draw attention to relevant features of a text, and then rewrite them in their own writing.

However, there are also weaknesses associated with the use of the product-based writing. Badger and White (2000) point out that this approach gives little attention to audience and the writing purpose since learners and instructors tend to overemphasize on the importance of grammar, syntax, and mechanics. Process skills such as pre-writing, drafting, evaluating and revising are given relatively minimal role, and the knowledge and skills that learners bring to the classroom are undervalued. Thus, students may lack motivation in learning and have high pressure in creating their writing tasks, as their instructors mostly focus on the accuracy of the language structures. It is against this background that the study sought to investigate challenges students face in learning essay writing skills.

2.4.2 Process approach

Hyland (2002) indicates that the process approach focuses on how a text is written instead of the final outcome. He adds that the process approach has a major influence on understanding the nature of writing and the way writing is taught. Therefore, the process approach emphasizes on the importance of certain procedures such as pre-writing, drafting, evaluating and revising. He points out that the process approach involves introducing techniques that help the students identify and engage in a topic. Students are required to produce multiple drafts of a work. After discussion and feedback from evaluators, the students would revise the drafts. Rewriting, revision and editing are essential parts to writing in this approach. In a similar vein, Jordan (1997) states that process writing enables the students to make clear decisions about the direction of their writing by certain procedures such as discussion, drafting, feedback and revision choices.

Tribble (1996) explains that when using the process-based approach to teaching academic writing, students should first brainstorm in small groups the topic to be discussed in writing; this helps them to generate ideas before starting to write. This is followed by making an outline of the essay. At this stage students also revise their first drafts and give them to other students for pre-reviewing and commenting on. The final stage is editing the essay by the writer himself or herself to eliminate any language errors. Thus, this approach focuses on process rather than product. Boughey (1997) points out that process approach is one of the best methods for teachers to use in teaching L2 writing skills. He notes that students are able to improve their writing abilities step by step since teachers will guide them through the whole process of their writing tasks by giving them feedback and

enough time and opportunity through peer and teacher review. Similarly, Myles (2002) observe that process approach enables the students to understand the steps involved in writing and recognizes learners' efforts toward the development of their writing abilities and input brought to the writing classroom contributes to the development of their writing abilities. It also helps students develop their critical thinking and learn not to depend only on teacher's feedback.

Although, there are many benefits of using this method in teaching writing skills, the process-based approach has been criticized on various grounds. Badger and White (2000) argue that learners have to spend quite a long time to complete one particular piece of writing in the classroom. They also point out that this may decrease students' learning motivation and impede them from learning other types of writing. In critiquing the process approach to teaching writing, Freeman and Freeman (2004) argue that it is time consuming when dealing with large classes. This is so because teachers may not have enough time to schedule individual writing conferences in large classes.

In order to alleviate the weaknesses associated with this approach, Badger and White (2000) suggest that teachers should provide learners with some examples of the text type that they have to write so as to allow them have a clear understanding about the aim and framework of a particular writing type. In addition, teachers should not spend too much time on one piece of writing in the class and should train students to develop a concept of audience by taking turns giving comments on their classmates' writing. Therefore, it is

important that language teachers should adopt this method to improve students' writing abilities.

A research carried out by Owuondo (2011) to survey the instructional methods used by teachers in secondary schools in Kenya to teach composition writing in French. The findings revealed that teachers lacked appropriate instructional methods for composition writing. The study also revealed that there was a vicious cycle of students' dismal performance and lack of interest in composition writing in relation to teachers' lack of interest and confidence in the same. The study recommended in-service training for teachers, publication and design of appropriate materials as well as necessary changes in curriculum development all geared towards motivating and adoption of appropriate strategies of instruction in composition writing in French.

From the foregoing, it is evident that the teaching methods adopted by teachers influence students' learning and achievement in L2 writing. This study sought to find out methods teachers use in teaching L2 essay writing skills and their implications on the learning of essay writing skills among students.

2.4.3 The genre approach

According to Badger and White (2000), the genre or eclectic approach is considered as the most effective and successive in the teaching of writing skills. The genre approach combines process theories with genre knowledge and also emphasizes on the social context in which writing is produced. In other words, this approach provides the learner with

opportunities for developing their individual creativity as well as helping them fully understand the features of the target genres. Giving the knowledge of form and language at the same time, helps the student to understand how a particular form functions in a specific context; in this way, learners' writing proficiency can be enhanced (Kim and Kim2005).In addition, Tangpermpoon (2008) explains that the focus of writing in this approach aims to integrate the knowledge of a particular genre and its communicative purpose. Thus, helping learners to produce their written products to communicate to others in the same discourse community successfully.

Nunan (1999) notes that the genre approach to writing emphasizes the need for studying different types of texts. This is so as he explains that different genres of writing are typified by a particular structure and by grammatical forms that reflect the communicative purpose of the genre. Similarly, by studying different genres, students can perceive the differences in structure and form and apply what they learn to their own writing (Cope and Kalantzis, 2000).They further suggest that, for instance, in the academic writing context, writing tasks can be introduced that are based on different genres such as genres of essays, editorials and business letters for students to achieve similar communicative purposes.

Matsuda (2003) views the learning of specific genre construction as a way of helping learners to come up with appropriate actual writing in their real life outside the classroom. It also increases students' awareness of such writing conventions as organization, arrangement, form, and genre. Thus, the aim of the genre approach in writing is to help students master the convention of a particular form of genre that is relevant to their spe-

cific situation (Flowerdew, 2000). However, the genre approach has also been criticized for some reasons. Badger and White (2000) point out that, the genre approach undervalues the writing skills which learners need, to produce a written product and ignores the writing abilities learners have in other areas. Another reason is that learners may not have enough knowledge of appropriate language or vocabulary to express what they intend to communicate to a specific audience.

From the foregoing, it is realized that teaching writing skills to L2 students is a challenging task. In addition, using a single teaching approach may not achieve the desired learning outcome since the weaknesses of each approach tend to impede students' writing development. Thus, teachers need to incorporate the insights of the three approaches; product, process, and genre approaches into the teaching of writing skills in order to develop students' writing competence. Therefore, this study sought to establish teaching methods teachers use in L2 writing lessons and their implications for effective learning of essay writing skills among students.

2.5 Challenges in second language writing

Writing in a second language seems to be the most difficult skill for language learners to acquire in the academic context (Negari, 2012). Myles (2002) argues that various social and cognitive factors help in assessing the underlying reasons why L2 learners exhibit particular writing errors. According to Myles (2002), social factors that influence second language writing include motivation and attitudes. Similarly, Ellis (2003) argues that social factors explain why learners differ in the rate of L2 learning and in proficiency type, for instance, conversational versus writing ability. Research based on motivation and atti-

tudes shows that, learners with positive attitudes and motivation towards writing for academic purposes experience success unlike those with negative attitudes (McGroarty 1996).

Myles (2002) suggests that for teachers to motivate students in writing for academic purposes, they should encourage students to read academic texts and work with other students who are more acquainted with the discourse. However, if they do not engage in the text or actively contribute during the study sessions, these activities will have little effect on students' progress. Thus, if students are motivated to write in L2, they will develop a higher level of proficiency and positive attitudes, which can have a positive effect on their writing. In addition, Jarvis (2005) argues that in order to motivate students in L2 writing, teachers should write positive comments on learners' exercise books and verbally reinforce good language responses as part of their instructions. Sometimes, they can display exemplary students' work on school notice boards. The aim is to help build learners' self-esteem and morale towards L2 writing. Further, to improve motivation teachers can provide rewards for achievement to learners.

According to Myles (2002), cognitive processes involved in second language writing are learning strategies and language transfer. Due to the complex process of writing in a second language, learners often find it difficult to develop all aspects of the writing stages simultaneously. As a result, they select to use only those aspects that are automatic or have already been put in place (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990). Therefore students need to develop particular learning strategies that isolate component mental processes. O'Malley

and Chamot (1990) have further differentiated the strategies into three categories: meta cognitive, such as planning the organization of the written discourse or monitoring, that is, being aware of what one is doing and responding appropriately to the demands of the writing task; cognitive such as transferring or using known linguistic information to facilitate the new learning task or using imagery for recalling, and using social strategies, for instance, group discussions. Thus, learner strategies can be effective, but they need to be internalized so that they may be utilized in advance writing situation.

Language transfer is another cognitive factor that influences L2 writing. Ellis (2003) notes that when writing or speaking in a second language situation, L2 learners tend to rely on their (L1) structures to provide responses. If the structures of the two languages are distinctly different, then one could expect a relatively high frequency of errors to occur in L2, thus, indicating an interference of L1 on L2 writing. Similarly, Cook (2001) points out that L1 interference has important implications in the learning of a second language expression. This is because L1 learning is different from that of L2. First language (L1) helps learners when it has common elements with L2, but hinders the learning process when both language systems differ. In addition, Nunan (1999) considers it an enormous challenge to produce a coherent, fluent, extended piece of writing in one's L2. He points out that this is magnified by the fact that rhetorical conventions of English language, that is, structure, style and organization often differ from those in other languages.

For students to write appropriately in L2, Darus and Subramaniam (2009), suggest that the students need to understand the differences between L1 and L2, if the structures of the

two languages are distinctly different. They note that it is important for teachers to make the students aware of the differences in the structure of these languages. They further suggest that teachers should highlight certain rules in L1 that are not appropriate to be used when students write in L2. They argue that this is to ensure that the students apply correct strategies while writing in L2 and hence, decrease the occurrence of errors. Davidson (2005) points out that student face difficulties in L2 writing due to a number of factors involved in the learning process. The English language itself has a lot of irregularities and idiosyncrasies which create a myriad of difficulties in writing especially for second language learners. An example is the English spellings in which a word that is incorrectly spelled is not only a deviation from the standard but adversely affects the intended meaning. Spelling and the decoding skills are closely linked and students who commit spelling errors need to memorize the spellings of commonly used irregular words such as “right” and “government.” In addition, students usually commit mistakes in using comas, full stops, semi colons and colons which affect their written competence. Capitalization problems are part of the punctuation difficulties which may be the result of inadequate learning or inefficient teaching.

Farooq (2012) notes that grammar is the most difficult area for L2 writers. Students face challenges in the use of correct sentence structure and paragraph development, and in creating coherent text. Grammar skills include run-on sentences, use of different types of sentences, subject verb agreement, placement of modifiers, tense agreement and parallel construction. Grammar is more than just a set of rules; it is an ever evolving structure of language. For instance, the students may know how to build sentences, but when apply-

ing them in written expression they face difficulties. The basis of these problems is the traditional style of teaching grammar on the part of teachers and lack of practice on the part of learners (Kleisar, 2005).

Another problem students face in L2 writing is that of organization of ideas. The information which is well organized is easier to remember and understand (Grab and Kaplan, 1996). Coherence is an implicit feature of a text which describes the logical relationship between the ideas and information embodied in discourse and that coherence is helped by cohesion which is the process of connecting one sentence to the next (Bex, 1996). In addition, producing a coherent and well organized piece of writing is a challenging task. This is magnified by the fact that the rhetorical conventions of English texts such as the structure, organization, lexis and grammar differ from those of other languages (Ahmed, 2010). Lack of adequate vocabulary which leads to strained expression in L2 writing is also a challenge that students face in learning L2 writing skills (Ouma, 2005). In addition, Rabab'ah (2003), points out that students often lack adequate vocabulary when engaged in L2 writing. As a result, they find it a challenging task to express their ideas freely and accurately in L2 writing. These difficulties can be solved by encouraging wide reading among students in order to improve their vocabulary level.

In investigating the low achievement in creative composition writing, Abaya (2006) carried out a study on the analysis of lexical errors in the written English compositions of standard eight pupils in Rigoma division, Nyamira district, Kenya. The findings revealed that the lexical errors learners made in their written compositions included: confusion of

synonyms, inappropriate collocation, incomplete sentence structures, first language interference and coinage. From the findings of the study, it was recommended that teachers need to expose learners to a variety of reading texts as sources of exposing them to new vocabulary items and sentence structures.

From the forgoing, it is evident that second language learners often face various difficulties in learning L2 writing skills. The difficulties are partly attributed to teaching methods used, learning strategies, L1 interference, limited vocabulary and inadequate mastery of grammatical structures of L2. It is on the light of this observation that this study investigated whether the same challenges face students in learning essay writing skills in secondary schools in Manga district and suggest intervention measures to mitigate the problem.

2.6 Improving students' writing skills

According to Kroll (2003) two major components that are most essential for improving students' writing skills in any writing task include: provision of feedback on students' written assignments and assessment. In addition, Omulando (2009) asserts that teaching and learning resources enhance teaching and learning process in English language classrooms.

2.6.1 Provision of feedback on students' written essays

Kroll (2003) points out that feedback on ESL students' written assignments is an essential aspect of improving learner's ability in any L2 writing course. Thus, the goal of feedback is to teach skills that will help students to improve their writing proficiency to the

point where they recognize what is expected of them as writers. He further observes that learners should be encouraged to analyze and evaluate feedback themselves in order for it to be more effective. Similarly, Myles (2002) notes that feedback is of utmost importance to the writing process without which individual attention and sufficient feedback on errors, improvement will not take place. In addition, it is the teacher's responsibility to help students to develop strategies for self-correction and regulation.

Williams (2005) identifies two common categories of feedback that teachers give on students' written essays namely: feedback on form and content. He observes that the most common methods of feedback on form include outright teacher correction of surface errors, teacher markings that indicates the place and type of error but without correction, and underlining to indicate the presence of errors. On the other hand, feedback on content consists mainly of comments written by teachers on drafts that usually point out problems and offer suggestions for correction. Therefore, students are expected to incorporate information from the comments when doing their corrections.

Gathumbi and Masembe (2005) point out that it is important for teachers to provide regular and quick feedback to the learners. The feedback which may be either formative or summative is very important for further learning as well as contributing to written fluency. They further suggest that in order to pre-occupy the learner in doing self-correction, teachers can use a certain correction code with symbols for the different types of mistakes such as poor sentence and paragraph organization, omitting needed information, misuse of sentence linkers and idea connectors, tense and ambiguity. However, teachers need to

train the students on how to effectively use the feedback in order to make gains in their proficiency and competence as L2 writers. Some of commonly used corrections code to which students include:

sp.....spelling

gm.....grammar

hw.....handwriting

p.....punctuation

rp.....repetition

?m.....meaning

wv.....wrong vocabulary

wo.....wrong word order

wm..... word missing

ww.....wrong words

ill.....illogical ideas

t.....wrong tense

pr.....wrong preposition

cn.....wrong conjunction

^.....minor omission

^^.....major omissions

Nthiga (2010) carried out research on second language writing pedagogy: teachers' feedback practices in Kenya secondary school classrooms. The findings indicated that error feedback plus teacher written comments were the most commonly used feedback provision methods. In addition, the teachers' feedback was largely in form of directives generally highlighting weaknesses in the students' written compositions which is likely to affect students' confidence in L2 writing. It was recommended that there is need for better preparation of teachers with regard to provision of feedback on students' written compositions.

From the foregoing, it is noted that feedback on students' written essays plays a key role in energizing the learning process among students. It is also evident that methods of teacher feedback on students' written assignments influence the developing of their writing skills. In view of this, it was imperative to establish whether teachers provide feedback on students' written essays and its influence on effective learning of L2 essay writing skills among students.

2.6.2 Assessing students' writing skills

Assessment is a crucial part of the instructional process in determining student's progress. It provides guidance for revision, feedback to both the students and teachers that they can use to improve teaching and learning of writing skills (Kroll, 2003). According to Isaacson (1996), assessment of students' writing abilities is an integral part of effective teaching and learning. He argues that a teacher cannot ensure students' success and make necessary adjustments in instruction without engaging in frequent assessment. He further

asserts that self-assessment helps students take ownership for their own writing and enables them internalize the skills they are learning. In addition, effective assessment of a student's writing requires the teacher to have a conceptual model of written expression taking into account purpose, process and product.

Taking into account the purpose of assessing students' writing abilities, Airasian (1996) identifies three types of classroom assessments. The first is the sizing up assessment, commonly known as diagnostic test which is done to provide the teacher with quick information about the students' entry behaviours before planning for their instruction. The second is the formative, used for the daily tasks of planning instruction, giving feedback and monitoring students' progress. The third is the summative, which is the periodic formal functions of assessment for grouping, grading and reporting.

Isaacson (1996) identifies five aspects of students' writing that a balanced assessment should consider. First is fluency which involves the ability to translate ones' thoughts into written expression by using a variety of sentence structures and appropriate vocabulary. Second concerns content which relates to the ability to organize ideas and write coherently. It is also the ability to write creatively through logical argument. Third involve conventions which concern the ability to use the standard conventions of written English language such as correct spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar and readable handwriting. Fourth entails vocabulary which involves the ability to express precise meaning in a variety of writing context. This is achieved by use of wide range of use of appropriate vocabulary relevant to the idea expressed in writing. Fifth contains syntax

which concerns the ability to use a variety of sentence patterns and constructions. A study carried out by Okwara (2012) on factors related to achievement in written English composition among secondary school students, the findings showed that lack of adequate assessment can easily affect students' writing competence. It was recommended that teachers should provide adequate practice to students on essay writing.

From this literature review, it is evident that assessment of students' written work provides more instructional information to both teachers and students. It is also shown that assessment should be holistic, that is, taking into account a variety of aspects considered vital for effective written expression such as purpose, process and product. Therefore, it was of enormous educational interest to establish whether teachers assess students in the process of learning essay writing skills.

2.6.3 Use of teaching and learning resources

According to Omulando (2009) resources are valuable tools of enhancing teaching and learning in language learning situation. Lack of sufficient instructional resources limit teachers from adequately facilitating instructional process with particular reference to their use of appropriate language teaching methods and enhancing learners' use of language learning strategies. Similarly, Minae (2004) notes that teaching and learning resources facilitate and motivate students to learning. Therefore, teachers should make teaching and learning resources an integral part of their instructional practices. According to the secondary school English language syllabus 2002, teaching and learning resources for writing skills include: audio-visual resources such as video tapes, printed materials

which include class readers and literature set books and other resources such as pictures which can be used to generate ideas for writing.

In addition, Gathumbi and Masembe (2005) point out that audio-visual materials such as tapes, pictures and diagrams should be used to make students aware of the content of writing. They further note that good writing materials should be learner-centered rather than teacher-centered. They should also focus on helping students to develop their own strategies for learning. Resources should allow students to be creative and provide stimulating activities that focus students' attention on the writing skill to be learnt. They should be task-based, that is, they should use purposeful tasks to motivate students' learning and make them see the usefulness of writing.

A study by Ouma (2005) on achievement motivation in English composition writing among secondary school students, showed that students from schools with adequate teaching and learning resources were motivated to achieve in composition writing, unlike those from schools which were not adequately equipped with teaching and learning resources. This, therefore, shows that teaching and learning resources have a bearing on students' motivation and achievement in L2 composition writing. It is in light of this, that the study established whether teaching and learning resources influence students' learning of L2 essay writing skills.

2.7 Second language learning strategies

Language Learning Strategies (LLS) are specific actions, behaviours or steps that students use to improve their progress in developing L2 skills. They are procedures that facilitate the learning task and they vary considerably within each individual learner (Chamot, 2005). According to Rubin (1997) LLS are processes which contribute to development of the language system which the learner constructs and affects learning directly. Richards and Lockhart (2006) affirm that LLS determine, to great extent, the success level of learners in L2, arguing that absence of appropriate strategies results in low achievement in language. Interactive learning strategies which include: working in groups, peer teaching and role play provide constructive knowledge that promotes use of target language efficiently and clearly. Brown (2007) observes that learning strategies are classified into three categories: metacognitive, cognitive and social affective. Metacognitive strategies are those that involve planning for learning, thinking about the learning process as it is taking place, monitoring of one's production or comprehension, and evaluating learning after an activity is completed. Cognitive strategies are more limited to specific learning tasks and involve more direct manipulation of the learning material itself. They involve strategies such as: translation, grouping, note-taking, auditory representation, deduction, imagery elaboration, transfer and inference, that is, using available information to guess meaning of new items, predict outcomes or fill in missing information. Social affective strategies have to do with working with one or more peers to obtain feedback and asking questions for clarification.

Language learning strategies (LLS) are taught and the learners can benefit from being coached in their use (Griffiths, 2004). This practice is what is commonly referred to as “strategy training”. This approach according to Cohen (2003), is based on the belief that learning will be facilitated through making learners aware of the range of strategies from which they can choose during language learning and use. Thus, second language learners are encouraged to learn and use a wide range of LLS through the learning process. Les-sard-clouston (1997) suggests that focusing on the language learning process itself is important because it helps learners understand the process, the nature of the language communication, and the language learning resources that are available to them. In addition, they will know the specific LLS they might use in order to improve their own vocabulary use, grammar knowledge, and L2 skills in reading, writing, listening and speaking. Chamot (2005) also attest to the concept of strategy training for enhancement of language learning and achievement of communicative competence particularly for second language learners.

A study by Omulando (2009) investigated the teaching and learning strategies used by teachers and learners respectively; and how they influence the manner in which language teachers conduct instruction in English language in secondary schools in Kenya. The results indicated that learners did not appropriately use the LLS. English language teachers were aware of LLS and their usefulness but they did not appropriately apply this knowledge in training learners on the use of appropriate LLS during instruction. It was recommended that teachers should train learners on the use of LLS as a means of motivating learners into language learning process.

From the foregoing it is evident that teacher's role in strategy training is very crucial for successful language learning. This implies that lack of adequate training of students on the use of learning strategies is likely to bring about challenges in learning L2 essay writing skills. It is on this perspective that the study sought to establish strategies students employ in the process of learning L2 essay writing skills.

2.8 Research in second language writing

A number of studies in ESL writing have been carried out by different researchers. Research into the teaching of writing skills has revealed that there are certain teaching approaches that enhance students' proficiency in L2 writing. Eyinda and Shariff (2010) carried out a study to investigate the teaching of writing in an ESL classroom in secondary schools in Kenya. The findings of the study indicated that most teachers dominated in the classroom interaction. It was also reported that teaching methods used were mainly teacher centered such as lecturing and question and answer. The study's findings further indicated that although teachers use a variety of teaching and learning activities in their writing lessons, most of the activities used give teachers overwhelming control of the class proceedings. Teachers also face challenges such as lack of knowledge, skills and interest to teach writing, inadequate teaching and learning resources, large classes and lack of learners' interest in writing. From the findings of the study, it was recommended that teachers need to explore the use of learner centered activities such as peer editing, role play and group discussion to enhance development of students' writing skills. Curriculum developers also need to produce more curriculum support materials for teaching writing and sensitize teachers the best way to implement the integrated English syllabus.

Ouma (2005) did a research on relationship between achievement, motivation and performance in English composition writing among secondary school students. He observed that students with integrative motivational orientation in language learning, also known as intrinsic motivation, perform better than those with instrumental orientation (extrinsic motivation). He also observed that use of process approaches to composition writing led to better results than product oriented approaches. To establish the existence of any relationship, students' performance in the achievement test in composition was correlated with their motivation level as obtained from both the questionnaire and Thematic Appreciation Test. Results from the study indicated that though students were highly motivated in composition writing, there was no significant correlation between motivation as obtained through self-attributed motives and performance. Secondly, self-report questionnaire required self-reflection and students tended to overrate the effort they invest in writing practices, which might not be commensurate with their actual performance in writing task. He also attributed it to other intervening personality, school and instructional variables that account for performance in composition writing. It was recommended that teachers should explore and use a variety of techniques in motivating students in writing.

Provision of feedback on students' written essays has also been a subject of considerable amount in second language writing research. Findings from a study by Ferris (1997) on the effects of feedback on students' writing indicated that changes made by students in responses to the teacher comments did not have a positive effect on the overall quality of students' written essays. Nthiga (2010) carried out a research on second language pedagogy: teachers' feedback practices in Kenya secondary school classroom. The findings

showed that error feedback plus teacher written comments were the most commonly used feedback provision methods. In addition, the teacher feedback was largely in form of directives generally highlighting weaknesses in the learners' compositions and that it laid more emphasis on aspects of grammar and spelling compared to other features such as content and coherence. The findings also revealed that workload, teachers' attitudes, examination culture and lack of training knowledge in responding to learner writing as factors that influenced teachers' feedback practices. It was recommended that there is need for better preparation of teachers with regard to provision of feedback on students' written compositions.

Students' errors in L2 writing is another area that has been of interest among teachers, linguists and researchers in ESL writing. Darus and Subramanian (2009) investigated the types of errors made by form four Malay students in their L2 written work. The results of the study showed that the errors committed were basically grammatical. The students also had relatively weak vocabulary and they committed errors in applying sentence structure rules in English language. They concluded that the students had problems in acquiring grammatical rules in English language. From the findings of the study, it was recommended that teachers ought to teach their students on the mastery of various grammatical rules of L2.

Another similar study was conducted by Farooq (2012) on opinions of second language learners about writing difficulties in English language. Results of the study indicated that students faced a lot of difficulties in L2 writing due to lack of vocabulary, poor spelling,

L1 interference and poor understanding of grammatical structures. On declining achievement in essay writing, KNEC commenting on the performance in 2010 KCSE examination noted that students lacked creativity, wrote essays that were irrelevant and failed to sustain the interest of the reader. Candidates also made frequent construction errors, demonstrated poor spelling and punctuation. It was recommended that teachers should adequately teach students all aspects of essay writing, as well as provide adequate practice in essay writing for students.

Researchers have also been pre-occupied in finding reasonable explanation for occurrence of errors in L2 writing. Ahmed (2010) carried out research on students' problems with cohesion and coherence in essay writing. The findings of the study revealed that problems students face with regard to cohesion and coherence were due to: lack of motivation among students, teachers' use of traditional teaching techniques such as lecturing, reading aloud and teacher demonstrations which were frequently indifferent to students' needs.

Okwara (2010) investigated factors related to achievement in written English composition among secondary school students. The study revealed that certain factors affected achievement in written English composition. Some of these factors were the linguistic environment of students, lack of adequate preparation of students for examinations, lack of adequate reading materials, the poor quality of students, lack of a proper foundation in primary schools, lack of concerted efforts by teachers, limited time for learning English, poor interpretation of questions and shortage of trained English teachers. It was also

found out that certain selected factors had strong relationship with achievement in written English composition while others did not because performance was relatively high or low depending on these factors. Some of the factors which indicated strong relationship with achievement were the professional training of English teachers, availability of learning resources such as class textbooks, class readers and school libraries, school type, education of older siblings and the performance of students in the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education Examination. The academic qualification of English teachers, teaching experience, teaching load, availability of English textbooks and student sex did not appear to have any particular relationship with achievement of students in written composition. The findings made important implications for the teaching of written composition which should be taken seriously by English teachers, curriculum developers and policy makers if achievement has to be improved.

Another important insight in L2 writing research is the influence of L1 on L2 writing. Manian (2010) investigated the influence of L1 grammar on L2 writing of Tamil secondary school students from Malalaysia. The findings indicated that students constructed sentences with errors because of the differences of grammatical rules between their Malay (L1) and English. It was recommended that students need to understand the differences between the two languages. Teachers also need to make students appropriate to be used while writing in L2. Such measure would decrease the occurrence of errors. This is because students tended to refer to their L1 whenever they faced difficulties in L2 writing. In addition, Muriungi (2013) carried out a study on the influence of L1 on the acquisition of English language skills among secondary school students in Imenti South District,

Kenya. The study established that L1 influenced the acquisition of English language skills among secondary school students. Since L1 is a challenge to the acquisition of English language skills among students, it was recommended that teachers should develop a school language policy to limit the use of L1 among students.

Research has also been carried out on strategies of enhancing the development of students' writing skills. Koross (2012) researched on the use of oral language approaches in developing writing skills in English language among students in Rift Valley secondary schools in Kenya. The findings of the study revealed that problems found in schools were associated with students' attitudes, teachers' methodology of teaching, inadequate instructional materials and inability of learners to express themselves orally. This, hindered development of competence in writing among students. From the findings of the study, recommended that teachers should be innovative in teaching oral skills by using classroom interactive activities such as; debate, discussions, storytelling, dialogues, role plays and speech (Oral presentation) in order to develop students' writing competence.

2.9 Summary of the related literature review

From the reviewed literature, it is evident that writing is an important skill that students require for their academic advancement. However, it has been noted that learning to master writing skills is a problem most students face at all levels of the education system. Research in L2 writing has revealed various methodologies for effective teaching of writing skills, whereby process oriented approaches to teaching writing skills have been revealed to be more successful than product oriented approaches. In addition, researchers have al-

so established various errors students make on their L2 written compositions and they have also identified diversified sources of the errors such as lack of motivation, mother tongue influence, negative attitudes toward L2 writing, inadequate teaching of L2 writing skills among others. It has also been established that students' learning strategies influence their learning of writing skills in L2. Researchers in L2 writing have also made various considerations on the role of feedback on students' written essays, assessment practices in essay writing and availability and use of teaching and learning resources as means of improving students' writing skills.

Despite these efforts, students persistently face various challenges in L2 writing. Further, from the reviewed literature, it is evident that no other similar study has been done in Manga district, despite the consistent low performance in essay writing paper at KCSE examination. The study, therefore, investigated challenges students face in learning essay writing skills in English language in secondary schools in Manga district, Nyamira County, Kenya.

CHAPTER THREE

REASERCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the procedures and methods that were used to collect and analyze data. It describes the research design, location of the study, target population, sampling techniques and sample size, research instruments, pilot study, validity and reliability of the research instruments as well as data collection procedures, data analysis and finally logistical and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research design

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. According to Orodho (2004) a descriptive survey research design enables the researcher to collect information about people's opinions, attitude or any of the variety of education or social issues that affect them. This research design was considered appropriate because it enabled the researcher to gather information from the respondents on challenges students face in learning L2 essay writing skills in secondary schools. Kothari (2004) states that survey design allows for the use of multiple sources of data collection (triangulation). The design was, therefore, deemed suitable for the study because of its strengths as it enabled the researcher to gather information from the sampled respondents by use of questionnaire, interview schedule and an essay writing test. This design was also chosen because it allowed the researcher obtain both quantitative and qualitative data with regard to challenges students face in learning essay writing skills in English language.

3.2.1 Research variables

The three main variables for the study were:

Independent variable: Challenges in learning essay writing skills.

Intervening variable: Adoption of the integrated approach to the teaching and learning of writing skills

Dependent variable: Learning of essay writing skills.

3.3 Location of the study

This study was carried out in Manga district, Nyamira County, Kenya. Manga district was carved out of Masaba district in 2008. Before then it was a division. The district covers an approximate area of 115.5 square kilometers with a population of 105,850. This indicates high population density. The district borders the following districts; Nyamira to the East, Masaba North to the North, Kisii Central to the North-West and Marani to the West. It has its headquarters at the divisional headquarters of Manga. It has three divisions namely Magombo, Kemera and Manga with four Zones namely; Tombe, Kemera, Magombo and Manga. There are 26 public and 2 private secondary schools in the district, 254 teachers and 8,727 students (MoE, 2012). This region was selected for study because schools are located closely which provided easy accessibility to the researcher and development of immediate rapport with the respondents. This in turn would increase efficiency in the administration of the research instruments. According to Singleton (1993), an ideal setting for any study is one that is related to the researcher's interest, easily accessible and that which allows the development of immediate rapport with the informants. The district was also considered suitable for the study because of its consistent low perfor-

mance in KCSE English examination (DEO's office Manga district, 2011). Despite the low performance, no other similar study has been done in Manga district to address the challenges students face in learning essay writing skills.

3.4 Target population

The target population consisted of 52 teachers of English language and 8,727 students in the public secondary schools in Manga district. The district has 26 public secondary schools comprising 23 mixed, 2 boys' and 1 girls' school. (DEO's office Manga district, 2012). The target respondents included form three students and their English language teachers. Form three students were considered appropriate for this study because they had more exposure to essay writing at secondary school level unlike their form one and two counterparts. Form four students were not selected although they equally had more exposure to essay writing because they were preparing for their National examinations. By the time of the study, there were 1,800 form three students in the three categories of public secondary schools in Manga district.

3.5 Sampling techniques and sample size

This section deals with procedures which were used to sample schools and respondents for the study.

3.5.1 Schools' sample

Stratified random sampling technique was used to select schools to be included in the study from the public secondary schools in the district. Schools were stratified into three main categories: boys', girls' and mixed. Stratification was deemed important in order to

cater for various types of schools in the district. According to Kombo and Tromp (2006) stratification ensures that certain sub-groups in the population are represented in the sample in proportion to their numbers in the population itself. After the stratification of schools, simple random sampling was used to select one boys' school and 8 mixed schools. The only girls' school in the district was purposively included in the study. This formed a sample of 10 schools out of 26 public secondary schools which constituted 38.5% of the schools sample. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a suitable sample size for a descriptive study should at least be 10% of the total population.

3.5.2 Students' sample

Stratified random sampling technique was used to select students as respondents in the study. The students were stratified into three categories: above average, average and below average and it was done to ensure a wide variance with respect to challenges students face in learning essay writing skills. The classification was based on students' achievement in essay writing (English paper 101/3) for the end term English examination. A total number of 180 students out of 1800 from three students in public secondary schools in the district were selected which constituted 10% of the students' sample.

3.5.3 Teachers' sample

Purposive and simple random sampling procedures were used to sample out English language teachers from the study area as the respondents in the study. Purposive sampling involves a deliberate selection of sampling units which conform to the determined criteria (Frankfort-Nachmians and Nachmians, 2005). In this particular study, the English lan-

guage teachers were selected on the basis that they teach form three students. On the other hand, random sampling was used to select teachers in schools where there was more than one teacher teaching the form three class. A total of 10 teachers out of 52 teachers of English in the district were selected as the respondents in the study. This represented 19.2% of the teachers' sample. The number of sampled schools, teachers and students is shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Sampling grid for schools, teachers and students

	Target Population	Sample (n)	Percentage (%)
Schools	26	10	38.5%
Teachers	52	10	19.2%
Students	1800	180	10%
Total	1878	200	

3.6 Research instruments

The research instruments which were used to collect data included: an interview schedule for teachers, a questionnaire and an essay writing test for students.

3.6.1 Teachers' interview schedule

An interview schedule was preferred because it helps the interviewer to cover all the dimensions of an investigation through probing of the respondents and hence it provides in-depth information about particular cases of interest to the researcher (Kombo and Tromp,

2006). It was also considered appropriate for the study because many respondents are more willing to communicate orally than in writing and thus provide data more readily in an interview (Best and Khan, 1993). In this study a semi-structured interview schedule was used to gather data on demographic characteristics of teachers, teaching methods, challenges students face in learning essay writing skills and measures put in place to improve students' writing abilities. (Appendix A).

3.6.2 Students' questionnaire

A questionnaire is a research instrument that gathers data over a large sample (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). A questionnaire containing both open and closed ended questions was used to collect data from students. A questionnaire was preferred because it enables the researcher to preserve respondents' anonymity hence making it possible to elicit their responses. It also saves time and allows greater uniformity in the way questions are asked and thus greater compatibility in the responses. Similarly, Gay (1992) maintains that a questionnaire gives respondents freedom to express their views or opinions and also to make suggestions. It was used to collect data on demographic characteristics, challenges faced in learning essay writing skills, strategies employed in learning essay writing skills and suggestions on how to improve the learning of essay writing skills (Appendix B).

3.6.3 Essay writing test

An essay writing test (Appendix C) was used to determine the challenges students face in essay writing. The test was adopted from KCSE revision series on English paper 101/3

(Shabaya, et al. 2013). The test was appropriate because KCSE examinations are standardized. An Essay Analysis Schedule (EAS) adapted from KNEC (2006) was used to analyze students' written essays. The schedule contained four areas of communicative ability assessed in essay writing, ranging from introduction, content, grammar (language use) and conclusion (Appendix D).

3.7 Pilot study

Orodho (2004) observes that piloting helps to detect deficiencies in the research instruments such as insufficient space and ambiguous questions. It also helps to reveal if the anticipated analytical techniques are appropriate. For this study, the pilot study was carried out in two public mixed secondary schools in the district which were randomly selected and which were not included in the main study. It was carried out by administering an interview schedule to 2 teachers, questionnaire and essay writing test to 28 students. Thus, a total of 30 subjects were involved in a pilot study. This is the minimum number of subjects required for conducting statistical analysis as recommended by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003). The purpose of the pilot study was to test the validity and reliability of the research instruments. It provided some insights that made the researcher modify and make necessary amendments to the instruments.

3.7.1 Validity

Validity establishes whether the research instrument measures what it is intended to measure (Kothari, 2004). According to Saunders (2009) validity of an instrument is improved through expert judgment. To establish the validity of the research instrument:

questionnaire, interview schedule and an essay writing test were piloted so as ascertain their validity. Opinions of experts in the area under study and researcher's supervisors were also sought where the objectives were discussed in line with objectives of the study. Their recommendations were incorporated in the final questionnaire and interview schedules. The findings from the pilot study became the basis for revising the research instruments. The results obtained enabled the researcher to modify and improve questions that were ambiguous and discarded all the irrelevant items. This helped to ascertain the content validity of the instruments. Thus, information obtained from the pilot study and input of experts helped in validation, which also helped to confirm that the methodology and instruments used provided the required data.

3.7.2 Reliability

Reliability is concerned with the extent to which a research instrument yields the same results or data on repeated trials (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). The test-retest technique of reliability test was used whereby students' questionnaire was administered twice to the respondents, with a one week interval, to allow for reliability testing. A Pearson's Product Moment formula for test-retest was employed to compute the correlation coefficient in order to establish whether the content of the questionnaire are consistent in eliciting the same responses every time the instrument is administered. A correlation coefficient of 0.78 was obtained and considered adequate for the study which was in accordance with Orodho (2004) who notes that a correlation coefficient of about 0.8 should be considered high enough to judge the instrument as reliable for the study.

3.8 Data collection procedures

This refers to the gathering of information to serve or prove some facts (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). It involves the real process of going to the field to get the required information from the selected population. First, the researcher obtained an introduction letter from Graduate school, Kenyatta University. This enabled him obtain a research permit from the National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) formerly known as National Council for Science and Technology (NCST) to carry out research. Thereafter, the researcher sought permission from the Manga district education office to carry out research in the district. Upon being granted permission, the researcher visited the selected schools to seek permission from schools' administrators and made appointments for data collection with the respondents. The researcher explained to the respondents the purpose for the research emphasizing that the information they gave would be used for research purpose only and treated confidentially as their identity would not be revealed.

On the agreed dates, students were then given an essay writing test at different times in all the 10 schools. The researcher administered the test and collected the written essays. Marking was done by the researcher using an essay analysis schedule adapted from KNEC 2006 (Appendix D). The questionnaires were then administered to the students by the researcher with the help of the teacher from the school. The completed questionnaires were collected on the spot. Thereafter, the researcher conducted face-face interviews with the selected teachers as the researcher noted down the responses given. During the interview, the researcher clarified and probed for more information where necessary and as-

sured the respondents that the data gathered would be used for the purpose of the study and therefore need to respond honestly as possible.

3.9 Data analysis

Data analysis deals with the process of data classification, data coding, data entry and analysis in order to make interpretation possible. It is also concerned with the statistics that are used to analyze data, that is, the organization, interpretation and presentation of collected data (Oso and Onen, 2005). In this study, both qualitative and quantitative data were collected by use of both closed-ended and open-ended questionnaire and interview items including an essay writing test. Qualitative data was analyzed using thematic analysis and quotes (participants' voices) by grouping the responses provided by respondents into various themes according to the objectives of the study. Quantitative data was tabulated, coded and processed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS Version 17.0). Then, descriptive statistical techniques such as frequencies, percentages and the mean were used to analyze the quantitative data. Finally, data was presented by use of tables and graphs.

3.10 Logistical ethical considerations

Ethical considerations have to do with the researcher ensuring ethical checks. That is, a series of questions that a researcher must ask about the research and the specific procedures included safeguarding subjects (Graziano and Raulin, 1997). In order to attain this, the researcher ensured the respect, rights to privacy and to protection from physical and psychological harm of the respondents involved in the study. The researcher ensured that

each respondent understood what the study was all about. The respondents were given clear and sufficient background information on which to base their own decisions as to whether they would take part in the study or not. It was only after their consent was obtained that the copies of questionnaires, essay writing test and interview schedules were administered to the respondents from each school. In each case a precise brief was given on the nature of information required from them by the researcher; confidentiality of the information provided was assured and they were asked to neither mention their personal names nor those of their specific schools anywhere on the research instruments.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings, interpretation and discussion according to the objectives of the study. The aim of the study was to investigate challenges students face in learning essay writing skills in English language in secondary schools in Manga district, Nyamira County, Kenya. The chapter is organized into four sections. The first section of the chapter presents demographic information of the respondents. Section two contains data on objective one of the study which was to determine methods teachers use in teaching essay writing skills. Section three covers data on objective two of the study which investigated challenges students face in learning essay writing skills. Finally, section four presents data on the last objective of the study which was to establish strategies students employ in learning essay writing skills. Data is presented using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, tables and graphs.

4.2 General and demographic information

The sub-section provides data on the return rate of research instruments and demographic characteristics of respondents.

4.2.1 Return rate of research instruments

After the collection of the research instruments, the results were as shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Return rate of research instruments

Instrument	Administered	Collected	Percentage (%)
Questionnaires	180	180	100%
Interview schedules	10	10	100%
Essay writing test items	180	180	100%

The questionnaires, interview schedules and essay writing test items which were administered to the sampled students and teachers in 10 public secondary schools in Manga district were all collected thus attaining 100% return rate. According to Saunders (2009), a return rate of 50% is adequate, 60% good and 70% and above very good. Therefore, the return rate was considered very good to produce the required information for analysis purposes. All the returned questionnaires and written essays were sorted by the researcher and grouped according to school type before being analysed.

4.2.2 Demographic data

This section presents the general characteristics of the respondents in terms of type of school, teaching experience and professional qualifications.

To begin with, the study sought to determine the type of school from which the respondents were drawn. This was done in order to cater for various types of schools in the district and also to ensure a wide variance with respect to challenges students face in learning L2 essay writing skills in secondary schools. The responses are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Type of school

Type of School	Students		Teachers	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Boys' schools	40	22.2	1	10
Girls' schools	40	22.2	1	10
Mixed schools	100	55.6	8	80
Total	180	100	10	100

Table 4.1 shows that an equal proportion 40 (22.2%) of students as well as 1 (10%) of the teachers were from boys' and girls' schools whereas 100 (55.6%) of the students and 8 (80%) of the teachers were from mixed schools. This implies that there are more mixed schools than single sex schools in Manga district.

In addition, the researcher sought to establish the professional qualification of the English language teachers. Professional qualification is an important factor in determining content mastery and delivery of the subject matter to students. The information obtained is as presented in Figure 4.1.

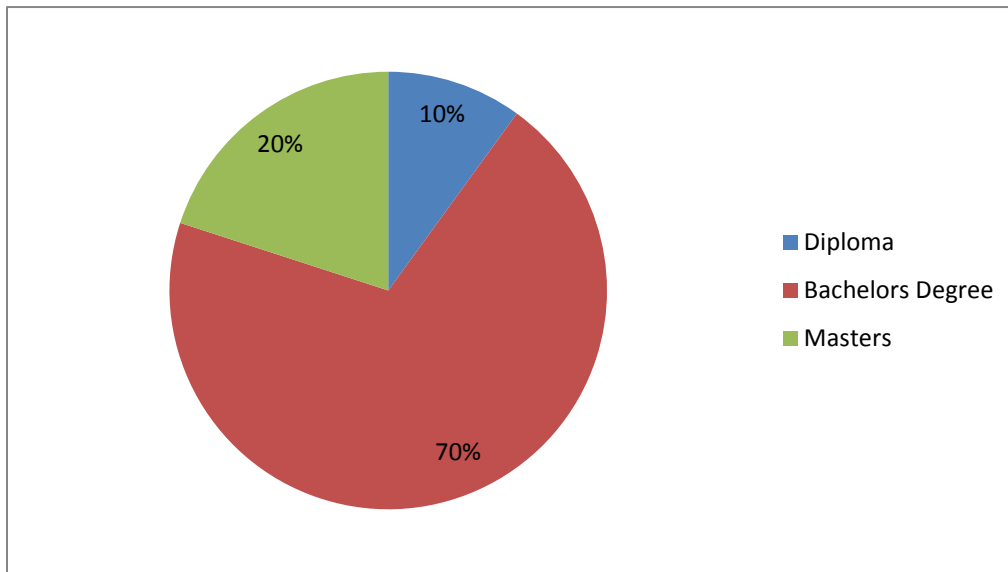


Figure 4.1: Professional qualifications of teachers

Figure 4.1 indicates that the majority of teachers (70%) who participated in the study had bachelors degree in education (BEd) while another 20% had masters degree whereas 10% had diploma in education. This implies that all the teachers who participated in the study were professionally qualified to handle the subject and could therefore provide important insights into challenges students face in learning L2 essay writing skills. According to Richards (2008) professional training and qualification of teachers are essential aspects in enabling them to have a good mastery of the content and acquisition of skills appropriate for language teaching.

The study also sought to find out teachers' experience in teaching English. It was considered an important variable for this study due to the assumption that experienced teachers have a clear understanding of their students which enable them to select appropriate teaching methods to meet their learning needs. The findings areas displayed in Figure 4.2.

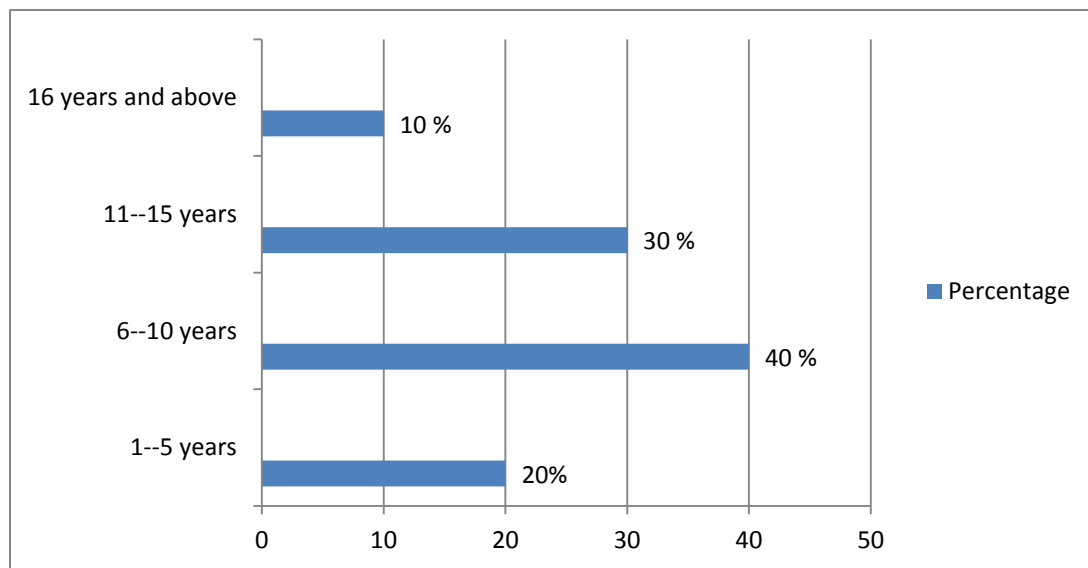


Figure 4.2: Teachers' experience in teaching English

Figure 4.2 reveals that 4 (40%) of the teachers had a teaching experience of 6- 10 years while another 3 (30%) had a teaching experience of 11-15 years. It is also revealed that 2 (20%) of the teachers had a teaching experience of 1- 5 years whereas 1 (10%) had a teaching experience of 16 years and above. This implies that the majority of the teachers had teaching experience of more than 5 years, therefore, they were in a position to give information on challenges students face in learning essay writing skills in secondary schools. This period is considered sufficient for one to gain experience in adequately handling the subject matter since long period of teaching a particular subject enables one

to have a good mastery of the content. This is in line with Richards (2008) who notes that teachers' teaching experience, in terms of how long they have been in the teaching profession, determines how well they are able to combine their knowledge with practical teaching experience to produce suitable teaching methodology that will bring desired results in language learning among students.

4.3 Methods used in teaching essay writing skills

The first objective of the study was to determine methods teachers use in teaching essay writing skills. The findings are presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Methods used in teaching essay writing skills

Method	Frequently		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Lecture	8	80	2	20	0	0	0	0
Question and answer	6	60	2	20	2	20	0	0
Group discussion	2	20	3	30	5	50	0	0
Role play	0	0	1	10	2	20	7	70
Brainstorming	2	20	2	20	4	40	2	20
Debating	0	0	2	20	6	60	2	20
Demonstration	7	70	3	30	0	0	0	0
Peer teaching	0	0	2	20	1	10	7	70
Oral presentation	2	20	3	30	4	40	1	10

Results from Table 4.3 reveal that English language teachers use some teaching methods more frequently than others. Majority of the teachers 8 (80%) indicated that they use lecture method frequently, 7 (70%) demonstration while 6 (60%) frequently use question and answer. Reinforcing this observation, in face to face interview a teacher commented that:

“Lecture method is preferred because most of the students remain passive during the lesson and can only contribute when asked questions to respond to in class and this makes us to resort to lecturing.”

A considerable number of teachers 7 (70%) indicated that they never use role play and peer teaching as methods of teaching essay writing skills. Another 5 (50%) said that they rarely use group discussion. In addition, 4 (40%) of the teachers rarely use brain storming while 2 (20%) never use it, 6 (60%) rarely use debating whereas 2 (20%) never use it at all. Further, majority of the teachers 7 (70%) never use peer teaching as a method of teaching essay writing skills while 4 (40%) cited that they use oral presentation rarely and 1 (10%) never use it. Other methods teachers suggested they use in teaching essay writing skills include: drilling, assignments and dictation of notes. During an interview session one the teachers had the following to say:

“Students show unwillingness to contribute in a debate, share ideas in a group discussion and participate in an oral presentation in a class since some of them their spoken English is even worse.”

Based on these results, it shows that most frequently used methods in teaching essay writing skills include: lecture, demonstration and question and answer. However, process based methods which are considered effective to teaching L2 writing skills such as group work, role play, debate, peer teaching and oral presentations are not frequently used by

teachers and this may pose challenges to students in learning essay writing skills. The findings of this study concur with those of Ahmed (2010) which shows that challenges students face in L2 writing are partly attributed to teachers' use of traditional teaching techniques such as lecturing, reading aloud and teacher demonstrations which are frequently indifferent to students' needs. Similarly, Badger and White (2000) point out that product based approaches such as lecturing give little attention to students and teachers tend to over emphasize on the correctness, that is, use of correct grammar, syntax and mechanics rather than developing learners' communicative competence. In addition, Sengupta (2000) notes that teaching methods teachers use have measurable effects on the quality of the students' written products. Therefore, there is need for teachers to make a careful selection on methods to use in essay writing lessons in order to help the students to acquire skills that will enable them achieve written communicative competence.

4.4 Challenges students face in learning essay writing skills

The second objective of the study was to investigate challenges students face in learning essay writing skills. The information on this variable was obtained from both teachers and students. The findings are presented in Tables 4.4 and 4.5 respectively.

Table 4.4: Teachers' responses on challenges students face in learning essay writing skills

Challenge	Frequency	Percentage
Inadequate teaching and learning resources (set text books)	5	50
Limited vocabulary	6	60
Problems in use of grammar (tenses, sentence structures)	7	70
First language (L1) interference	7	70
Challenges in the use of correct spelling	6	60
Misinterpretation of set questions	4	40
Difficulties in content mastery of the essay writing set texts	8	80
Problems in cohesion and coherence in L2 essay writing	6	60
Lack of adequate revision on the learnt content	3	30
Negative attitude towards learning essay writing skills	2	20

Based on the results from Table 4.4, majority of the teachers 8 (80%) stated that content mastery is the greatest challenge students face in learning essay writing skills. Another 7 (70%) of the respondents indicated use of grammar and the first language (L1) interference respectively, 6 (60%) stated limited vocabulary and problems in cohesion and coherence. In addition, 5 (50%) of the teachers cited inadequate teaching and learning resources. Further, 4 (40%) of the respondents stated that misinterpretation of set questions as a challenge in learning essay writing skills whereas 3 (30%) cited lack of adequate revision and 2 (20%) indicated negative attitudes towards learning essay writing skills.

Based on these findings, in an interview session one of the teachers remarked the following:

“Most students do not devote themselves to reading literary set texts hence they demonstrate a low level of content mastery whenever given an assignment in essay writing. They also commonly use mother tongue in school hence they always resort to L1 when they fall short of appropriate words in attempting to express their ideas in L2 writing. As a result, they demonstrate poor word choice and wrong sentence construction.”

These findings support the KNEC report for year 2010 results which indicated that many students showed low level of content mastery, demonstrated poor word choice, use of wrong grammar and lacked logical argument and coherence. A study by Eyinda and Shariff (2009) also showed that inadequate teaching and learning resources and lack of learners' interest are some of the challenges experienced in the acquisition of writing skills in an ESL context.

On the same variable, students were also asked to state challenges they face in the process of learning essay writing skills. The responses are as shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Students' responses on challenges faced in learning essay writing skills

Challenge	Frequency	Percentage
Inadequate learning resources	105	58.3
Lack of frequent written feedback from teachers	65	36.1
Lack of adequate practice in L2 writing	93	51.7
Limited attention to individual learner differences	39	21.7
First language (L1) interference	101	56.1
Limited vocabulary	99	55
Problems in use of correct spelling	97	53.9
Difficulties in content mastery of the essay writing set texts	115	63.9
Negative attitudes towards learning essay writing skills	24	13.4
Problems in use of grammar (tenses, sentence structure)	111	61.7
Inadequate interpretation of set questions	85	47.2
Lack of adequate explanation of points by teachers during essay writing lessons	49	27.2
Inadequate revision in essay writing by teachers	46	25.6

Findings from Table 4.5 reveal that most of the students 115 (63.9%) indicated that they face challenges in content mastery, 111(61.7%) use of grammar, 105 (58.39%) inadequate learning resources, 101(56.1%) first language (L1) interference, 99 (55%) limited vocabulary, 97 (53.9%) use of correct spelling and 93 (51.7%) lack of adequate practice in L2 writing.

Students further indicated that other challenges they face in learning essay writing skills include: inadequate interpretation of set questions 85 (47.2%), lack of frequent written feedback from teachers 65 (36.1%), lack of adequate explanation of points by teachers 49

(27.2%), inadequate revision in essay writing by teachers 46 (25.6%), limited attention to individual learner differences 39 (21.7%) and negative attitudes towards learning essay writing skills 24 (13.3%). This implies that students face various challenges that affect their learning of L2 essay writing skills. This partially concurs with a study by Farood (2012) on students' difficulties in L2 writing which established that students face difficulties in L2 writing due to a number of factors involved in the learning process such as lack of vocabulary, L1 interference, poor grasp of grammatical structures, incorrect spelling and illogical sequence of ideas.

In addition, on the same variable teachers were asked to give information concerning the areas in essay writing students find most challenging. The responses were as in Figure 4.3

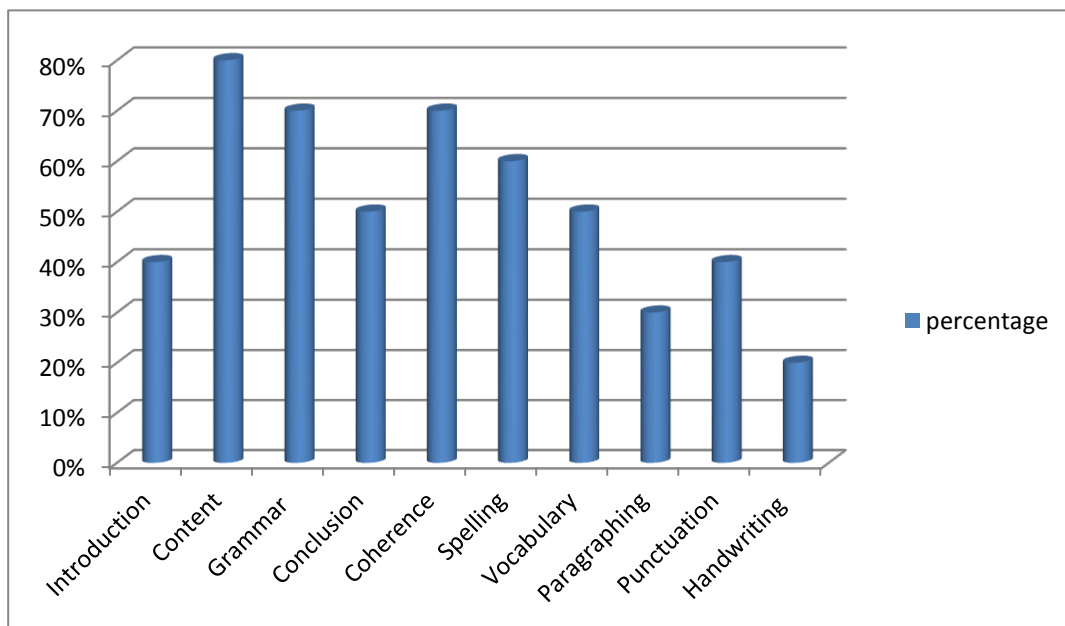


Figure 4.3: Areas in essay writing students find most challenging

Figure 4.3 shows that the majority of the teachers 80% indicated that content mastery is the most challenging area in essay writing, 70% stated use of grammar and coherence, 60% spelling while 50% cited conclusion and vocabulary as challenging areas. The least challenging areas stated include paragraphing 30% and handwriting 20% respectively. In an interview, one of teachers remarked, “Students find it hard to express their ideas coherently in essay writing due to limited vocabulary”. Another said, “Students have problems with use of capital letters, quotation marks and full stops and some of these problems are due to students’ negligence.” These findings partly concur with those of KNEC (2010) report which notes that content mastery, use of grammar are the most difficult areas in which students face challenges in essay writing in the KCSE English paper 3.

Further, students were given an essay writing test to determine their performance. The results are presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Students’ performance in essay writing by school type

School type	Number of students	Mean score	Percentage (%) Mean score
Boys	40	6.352	31.76%
Girls	40	5.910	29.50%
Mixed	100	5.556	27.78%
Total	180	5.939	29.69%

The findings from Table 4.6 indicate that performance in easy writing test in the three categories of schools was below average. This is reflected by their percentage mean scores in the three types of schools: 31.76%, 29.55% and 27.78% respectively. Findings also reveal that although the overall performance in the essay writing test was below average, boys' performance was slightly higher than that of girls and students from mixed schools. The average mean of the three strata in percentage is 29.69% which is almost similar to that of KNEC 2010 in English paper 3 which was 30.54%. From these results, it implies that there are no significant differences with regard to challenges students face in learning L2 writing skills in the three types of schools. This would be attributed to similar weaknesses as witnessed in their below average mean scores. This concurs with the KNEC report 2010 which notes that students face challenges in the acquisition of L2 writing skills hence leading to low performance in English paper 3 in KCSE examination. The study sought to find out measures teachers put in place in order to help students improve on their learning of essay writing skills. Table 4.7 shows the results.

Table 4.7: Measures teachers put in place to help students improve in learning essay writing skills

Measure	Frequency	Percentage
Organizing internal symposiums	3	30
Group discussions	10	100
Encouraging reading widely among students	7	70
Remedial teaching	4	40
Organizing for resource persons (Examiners)	3	30
Encouraging peer editing in essay writing	2	20
Rewarding students' best written essays	2	20
Displaying well written students' essays on class notice boards	2	20
Use of audio visual teaching resources such as video tapes	1	10
Issuing handouts	4	40
Encouraging students to make corrections on their written essays	6	60
Organizing essay writing competitions	3	30
Attending seminars and workshops	3	30
Frequent provision of feedback on students' written essays	8	80

According to the findings of the study as shown in Table 4.7, common measures that teachers put in place to help improve students in learning essay writing skills include: group discussion among students 10 (100%), provision of feedback on students' written essays 8 (80%), encouraging reading widely other written materials in English 7 (70%) and encouraging students to rectify mistakes on their written essays 6 (60%). For example, during an interview session a teacher asserted that:

“I motivate students by giving them encouraging remarks, reading the best written essay to the rest of the class and displaying students' essays on notice board. I do

also engage students in a competition where they are motivated to give their best in order to beat their opponents and this is more so in group discussions.”

Further, the findings indicate that relatively small number of respondents 2 (20%) encourage peer editing, display well written students’ essays on class notice boards as well rewarding best essays. On the other hand, it is only 1 (10%) of the teachers who make use of audio-visual teaching resources such as video tapes.

Based on these results, it is evident that teachers employ different intervening measures to promote learning of essay writing skills among students. This is in line with Boughey (1997) who supports that teachers should guide the students through all the stages of the writing process to achieve desired results by giving them feedback and enough time and opportunity through peer and teacher review. Similarly, Jarvis (2005) notes that employing effective measures to improve motivation to learn involves providing rewards for achievement for learners, displaying exemplary learner’s work on school interactive boards and making positive comments on learners’ written work and verbally reinforcing good language responses as part of instruction.

4.5 Strategies employed by students in learning essay writing skills.

The third objective of the study was to establish strategies students employ in learning essay writing skills. The findings are presented in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Strategies employed by students in learning essay writing skills

Strategy	Frequently		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Taking notes	65	36.1	78	43.3	22	12.2	15	8.3
Seeking for clarification from teachers on concepts not understood	63	35	74	41.1	36	20	07	3.9
Peer teaching	17	9.4	23	12.7	31	17.2	109	60.5
Group discussion	53	29.4	64	35.6	38	21.1	25	13.9
Role play	14	7.7	19	10.5	28	15.5	119	66.1
Making corrections to rectify mistakes on written essays	66	36.7	83	46.1	17	9.4	14	7.7
Revising work learnt in class	46	25.6	84	46.7	39	21.7	11	6.1
Writing extra essays and giving them out for marking	42	23.3	51	28.3	45	25	42	23.3
Reading widely other materials in English e.g Newspapers, story books	29	16	36	32.8	83	46.1	32	17.8
Making summary notes on the set texts for essay writing	74	41.1	32	17.8	36	20	28	15.6
Proof reading written essays	57	31.7	68	37.8	24	13.3	31	17.2
Planning or organizing ideas before writing	66	36.7	59	32.8	31	17.2	24	13.3

The results displayed in Table 4.8 reveals that making notes is the most frequently used learning strategy by students 74 (41.1%) with only 28 (15.6%) never using it. Other learning strategies frequently used include: planning or organizing ideas before writing and making corrections to rectify mistakes 66 (36.7%) respectively whereas 65 (36.1%) indicated taking notes. Relatively small number of students 17 (9.4%) indicated that they frequently use peer teaching and only 14 (7.7%) of the respondents frequently employ role play as a strategy for learning essay writing skills.

These results indicate that students employ a variety of strategies in learning essay writing skills. However, it is evident that students have a limited knowledge about range of LLS available to them and thus depend on individualized learning strategies such as making notes. The responses reveal that interactive learning strategies such as group work, peer teaching and role play are not frequently used by majority of the students. This creates a situation where learners do not share knowledge and experiences. Richards and Lockhart (2006) argue that interactive LLS provide constructive knowledge that promotes use the target language efficiently and clearly and on the other hand, absence of appropriate strategies results in low achievement in language. Thus, there is need for teachers to train students on the use of LLS during essay writing lessons as noted by Cohen, (2003), who observes that learning is facilitated through making learners aware of the range of strategies for which they can choose during language learning and use. Chamot (2005) also emphasizes the importance of providing multiple practice opportunities with the use of LLS so that the students can use them autonomously.

Similarly, teachers who participated in the study were asked to indicate how often they train their students on the use of LLS. The responses are shown in Figure 4.4

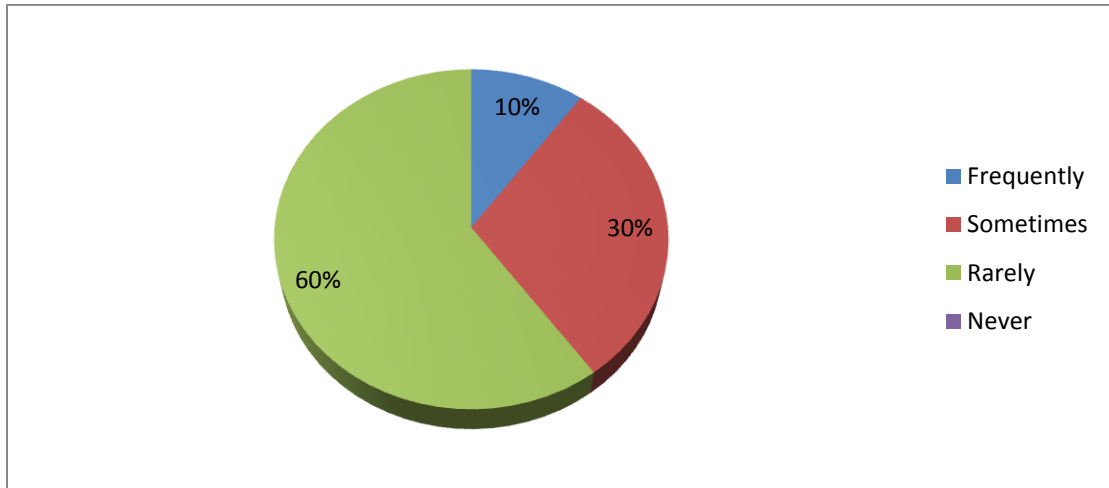


Figure 4.4: Frequency of training students on use of LLS

The results from Figure 4.4 clearly show that, only 10% of the teachers indicated that they train their students on the use of LLS frequently while 30% indicated the sometimes train whereas majority 60% do it rarely. In an interview, one of the respondents wondered aloud;” You mean students can be taught on how to use LLS!” She felt that LLS are so subjective and individualized to be taught in class of many students with different learning styles. This implies that a considerable proportion of teachers do not frequently train students on the use of LLS and this could likely bring about challenges in learning L2 essay writing skills. According to Lessard- Clouston (1997) training students to use LLS can help them become better language users and this is only possible in situations where the teacher trains and facilitates students on the use of a variety of LLS for greater success in L2 learning.

In addition, students were asked to give suggestions on what they think should be done by teachers in order to help them improve in learning essay writing skills. Table 4.9 shows the response.

Table 4.9: Students’ suggestions on how teachers can help them improve in learning essay writing skills

Suggestion	Frequency	%
Adequate practice in essay writing	99	55
Teachers to organize for symposiums	137	76.1
Organizing for resource persons (KNEC Examiners)	69	38.3
Provision of feedback on every written assignment	74	41.1
Attention to individual learner differences	36	20
Implementation of language policy	102	56.7
Rewarding students	33	18.3
Provisions of adequate learning resources (revision materials)	117	65
Adequate guidelines and explanations in essay writing	88	48.9
Organizing for essay writing competitions (joint exams)	61	33.9
Revising with students every essay writing assignment	47	26.1
Reading widely	28	15.6
Team teaching	17	9.4
Organizing for group discussions among students	128	71.1
Use of power point(ICT)	13	7.2

The findings shown in Table 4.9 indicate that most of these suggestions had a bearing on the teachers' involvement. Majority 137 (76.1%) were of the opinion that teachers should organize for symposiums, followed by 128 (71.1%) who suggested use group discussions. This concurs with Koross (2012) who recommends that classroom interactive activities such as group discussions should be put into place to help students improve on their writing skills. Further, a substantial number of students 117 (65%) suggested provision of adequate learning resources and another 102 (56.7%) implementation of language policy. This is in line with Ouma (2005) who notes that students from schools which are adequately equipped with teaching and learning resources are motivated to achieve in composition writing unlike those from schools not equipped with adequate teaching and learning. On the other hand, Muriungi (2013) maintains that teachers should develop a school language policy in order to limit students from the use of L1.

Moreover, slightly more than half, 99 (55%) of the students proposed that teachers should provide adequate practice in essay writing. This coincides with KNEC report (2010) which indicates that in order to improve students' writing skills; teachers should provide students with ample practice in essay writing in order to strengthen their learning abilities in essay writing. The students also suggested that teachers should give adequate guidelines and explanations in essay writing 88 (48.9%) while 74 (41.1%) proposed that teachers ought to provide feedback on every written assignment. This is in line with Boughey (1997) who suggests that students are able to improve their writing abilities when teachers guide them through the entire process of their writing tasks and giving them feedback on their written essay. Other suggestions students gave include: organizing for resource

persons (KNEC Examiners) 69 (38.3%), revising with students every essay writing assignment 47(26.1), paying attention to individual learner differences 36 (20%), rewarding students 33 (18.3%) team teaching 17 (9.4%) and use of power point (ICT) 13 (7.2%).

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the findings, conclusions, recommendations of the study and suggestions for further research.

5.2 Summary of the findings

This sub-section gives a summary of the study findings in relation to the objectives of the study. It addresses teaching methods, challenges in learning essay writing skills and learning strategies.

5.1.1 Methods used in teaching essay writing skills

The first objective of the study was to determine methods teachers use in teaching essay writing skills. It was established that that most frequently used methods in teaching essay writing skills include lecture, demonstration and question and answer. Use of these methods encourages rote learning which does not develop students' creativity. They also limit students' participation in the learning process. Thus, process based methods which are considered effective to teaching L2 writing skills such as group work, role play, debate, peer, teaching and oral presentations are not frequently used by teachers and this may pose challenges to students in learning essay writing skills. The findings of this study concur with those of Ahmed (2010) which shows that challenges students face in L2 essay writing are partly attributed to teachers' use of traditional teaching techniques such as

lecturing, reading aloud and teacher demonstrations which are frequently indifferent to students' needs.

5.1.2 Challenges students face in learning essay writing skills

The second objective of the study was to investigate challenges students face in learning essay writing skills. The study results show that content mastery, use of correct grammar and L1 interference are the greatest challenges students' face in learning essay writing skills. Other common challenges revealed include: limited vocabulary which leads to strained expression in L2 writing, in adequate teaching and learning resources and lack of adequate practice in essay writing. These findings partially concur with those of a study by Farood (2012) on students' difficulties in L2 writing which established that students face difficulties in L2 writing due to a number of factors involved in the learning process such as lack of vocabulary, L1 interference, poor grasp of grammatical structures, incorrect spelling and illogical sequence of ideas.

5.1.3 Strategies employed by students in learning essay writing skills

The third objective of the study was to establish strategies students employ in learning essay writing skills. The study findings reveal that students employ a variety of LLS. However, they have a limited knowledge about the use of the range of LLS available to them and thus they tend to depend on individualized LLS such as making and taking notes. They also depend on their teachers a great deal for guidance. Interactive LLS such as group discussions are given a low deal. This creates a situation where learners do not share knowledge and experiences as noted by Richards and Lockhart (2006) who argues

that interactive LLS provide constructive knowledge that promotes use the target language efficiently and clearly and on the other hand, absence of appropriate strategies results in low achievement in language.

5.2 Conclusions

This study has resulted into three main conclusions as follows:

Firstly, based on the findings of this study, it is established that lecture, teacher demonstration and question and answer are the common methods used in teaching L2 essay writing skills. According to Badger and White (2000) these methods lead to rote learning since teachers tend to stress on the importance of correct use of grammar, syntax and mechanics rather than developing students' writing competence. Process based approaches such as: group discussion, role play and debate are given relatively little attention in as much as they are effective approaches to teaching L2 writing skills. Therefore, it is logical to conclude that teaching methods teachers use influence the learning of essay writing skills among students.

Secondly, the study results shows that content mastery, use of correct grammar and L1 interference are the greatest challenges students' face in learning essay writing skills. These challenges among others lead to students' low achievement in essay writing. This would be partly attributed to expository teaching methods employed by teachers which limit students' participation in the learning process as noted by Ahmed (2010).

Finally, the study findings reveal that students employ a variety of LLS. However, they do not fully exploit these strategies when learning L2 essay writing skills. They tend to depend on individualized LLS rather than interactive LLS which promote the sharing of knowledge and experiences as noted by Richards and Lockhart (2006). On the other hand, the study established that a considerable proportion of teachers do not frequently train students on the use of LLS and this could likely bring about challenges in learning L2 essay writing skills. It is, therefore, imperative to note that LLS have a bearing on students' learning of essay writing skills.

5.4 Recommendations

The researcher found it necessary to make some recommendations following the summary, findings of the present research and the conclusions reached. These recommendations could be used to enhance the teaching and learning of L2 essay writing skills in secondary schools. Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- i. Teachers of English should lay emphasis on enhancing communicative competence in essay writing among students. This could be done through exposing students to good samples of writing using process based approaches such as group discussion, role play, brainstorming, peer editing and debates in the teaching of writing skills. These have been proven to enhance writing among other methods. Teachers should also be acquainted with the use of ICT in es-

say writing lessons in order to help students with different learning abilities learn L2 essay writing skills efficiently and rapidly.

- ii. Workshops should be regularly organized by the Ministry of Science and Technology (MoEST) and Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) to equip English Language teachers with skills of coping with students' challenges in second language writing.
- iii. Teachers of English should train students on the use of classroom interactive learning strategies such as group work, peer review and peer teaching and any other related strategies. Consequently, students will learn more about the range of LLS available to them and put them into use in order to make the learning of essay writing skills effective. Similarly, assessment in essay writing should be regular, insightful and guiding in order to help students improve on their learning of L2 essay writing skills.
- iv. School management committees should strive to purchase adequate learning resources. Teachers should also make efforts of encouraging students to read widely on a variety of written materials such as newspapers, story books and among others. This will enhance reading which will serve as a basis of promoting the development of writing skills among students.

5.4 Suggestions for further study

- i. The study focused on challenges students face in learning essay writing skills in English as a second language in secondary schools. It is also important to focus on challenges in learning essay writing skills in primary and tertiary college levels.
- ii. A study on challenges students face in learning other types of writing skills should also be carried out in Manga district.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

TEACHERS' INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (TIS)

This interview schedule is meant to solicit information on challenges students face in learning essay writing skills in English language in secondary schools in Manga district, Nyamira County, Kenya. The responses obtained from this study will be useful in improving and enhancing the teaching and learning of essay writing skills in secondary schools. The information you give will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will be used strictly for the purpose of this study.

1. Type of school:

Boys ()

Girls ()

Mixed ()

2. Professional qualifications:

Diploma ()

Bachelor's degree ()

Masters' degree ()

3. Your experience as a teacher of English language:

1-5 years ()

6-10 years ()

11-15 years ()

16 -20 years ()

Above 20 years ()

4. Which of the following methods do you use in teaching essay writing skills to your students? How often do you use them?

Method	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Lecture				
Question and answer				
Group Discussion				
Role play				
Brainstorming				
Debate				
Demonstration				
Structured Peer teaching				
Oral presentation				

5. Which other methods do you use in teaching essay writing skills?

.....

6. Which areas of essay writing do your students find most challenging?

.....

7. What challenges do your students face in the process of learning essay writing skills?

.....
.....

8. What measures do you put in place to promote students' learning of essay writing skills?

.....
.....

9. How often do you teach (train) your students on the use of language learning strategies to enable them enhance their learning of essay writing skills?

Frequently ()

Sometimes ()

Rarely ()

Never ()

Thank you for your cooperation.

APPENDIX B

STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE (SQ)

This questionnaire is meant to find out information on challenges students face in learning essay writing skills in English language in secondary schools in Manga district, Nyamira County, Kenya. The responses obtained from this study will be useful in improving and enhancing the teaching and learning of essay writing skills in secondary schools. Please answer the following questions as best as you can, by placing a tick (✓) on the statement that is applicable to you or filling in the spaces provided. The information you give will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will be used only for the purpose of this study.

1. Type of your school:

Girls ()

Boys ()

Mixed ()

2. What challenges do you commonly face in the process of learning essay writing skills?

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

3. Which of the following strategies do you commonly employ in learning essay writing skills? How often do you use them?

Strategy	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Taking notes				
Ask teachers for clarification of concepts not understood				
Group discussions				
Peer teaching				
Making corrections to rectify mistakes on written essays.				
Revising work learnt in class.				
Role play				
Writing extra essays and giving them out for marking.				
Reading widely other written materials in English e.g. Newspapers, storybooks etc.				
Making summary notes on the set textbooks for essay writing				
Proof reading written essays				
Planning or organizing ideas before writing				

4 .What other strategies do you employ in the process of learning essay writing skills?

.....
.....

5 .Suggest what your teacher should do to help you improve on the learning of essay writing skills.

.....
.....

Thank you for your cooperation

APPENDIX C

ESSAY WRITING TEST (EWT)

Time: 40 Minutes

Instructions: Write an essay on the topic below.

Question: Write an essay on the theme of injustice as explored in Francis Imbuga's play *Betrayal in the City*.(20 marks).

Source :KCSE revision series on English paper 3 (Shabaya, et al.2013).

APPENDIX D

ESSAY ANALYSIS SCHEDULE (EAS)

Level	Quality of Essay
Introduction	
(2marks)	
Full:	Substantive. Relevant and attention catching first sentence, clear plan organization given, strong and adequate and definitions provided.
Fair:	Somewhat substantive, topic relevant, some plan of organization given and definitions given almost adequate.
Thin:	Topic somewhat irrelevant. Directions of essay not clearly given and contains little substance.
Content (12 marks)	
Full:	Thorough knowledge of subject, thorough development of essay, relevant to the topic with adequate supporting details.
Fair:	Some knowledge of subject, relevant to the topic, adequate range of supporting details and limited development of essay
Thin:	Limited knowledge of subject. Inadequate range of supporting details. Repetition of key ideas and details and inadequate development.

Grammar (4 marks)

- Excellent: Excellent command of the language. Use of variety of sentences, appropriate choice vocabulary and tense use.
- Good: Good command of the language. Use of variety of sentences, appropriate choice of vocabulary and tense use. Few gross errors noticeable.
- Fair: Fair command of the language. Little variety in sentence structure and limited vocabulary. A number of gross errors.
- Poor: Very little command of the language, broken English and essay full of all sorts of errors and almost impossible to follow.

Conclusion (2marks)

- Full: Clearly reflects content of essay. Gives strong sense of completeness and final judgment or solution.
- Fair: Somewhat related to content of essay. Gives a rather limited sense of completeness and solution not strongly expressed.
- Thin: Unrelated to content of essay. Marked by a concluding signal but not adequate.

Source: Adapted from KNEC (2006)

APPENDIX E

TIMETABLE

The following is the plan of activities by the researcher:

DATE	ACTIVITY
August–December 2011	Proposal writing
January –February 2012	Corrections to the proposal
March-April 2012	Submission of the proposal to the Department
October 2012	Defence of the proposal at the Department
November – December 2012	Submission of proposal to Graduate School
March– April 2013	Seeking for research permit
May 2013	Pilot study
June – August 2013	Data collection and analysis
September 2013	Notice to submit thesis
December 2013	Submission of thesis to Graduate School
July 2014	Defence of thesis
August –September 2014	Corrections to the thesis
October 2014	Binding of thesis
December 2014	Graduation

APPENDIX F
RESEARCH BUDGET ESTIMATES

ACTIVITY	AMOUNT
Literature Review (traveling, photocopies e.t.c)	10,000.00
Preliminary visits to the target population	5,000.00
Stationary	15,000.00
Proposal writing	10,000.00
Piloting	5,000.00
Data collection	25,000.00
Thesis writing and binding	30,000.00
Contingencies	10,000.00
Grand total	110,000.00

APPENDIX H

PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MANGA DISTRICT

SCHOOL	CATEGORY
1. Nyambaria High School	Boys
2. Geke Secondary	Mixed
3. Nyaguku Secondary	Mixed
4. St Paul's Gekano Secondary	Boys
5. Mokomoni S.D.A Secondary	Mixed
6. St Thomas Gekano Secondary	Mixed
7. Miriri Secondary	Mixed
8. Bogwendo Secondary	Mixed
9. St. Andrew's Nyamwanga	Mixed
10. Nyaikuro Secondary	Mixed
11. Tombe Girls' High	Girls
12. Gesure ELCK Secondary	Mixed
13. Irianyi Secondary	Mixed
14. Ikonge S.D.A Secondary	Mixed
15. Morako Secondary	Mixed
16. Tombe Secondary	Mixed
17. St Mary's Ekerubo Secondary	Mixed
18. Mokwerero Secondary	Mixed
19. Kiendege Secondary	Mixed
20. Ogango S.D.A Secondary	Mixed
21. Nyaisa Manga Secondary	Mixed
22. Sengera Manga Secondary	Mixed
23. Ikobe Secondary	Mixed
24. Manga Orotuba Secondary	Mixed
25. St Paul's Nyachichi Secondary	Mixed
26. Kiabiraa Secondary	Mixed

APPENDIX I

SAMPLES OF STUDENTS' WRITTEN ESSAYS

25
23

Essay on the theme of injustice as explored in Francis Inyang's play.

Injustice is unwanted things which are given or are done by many people and have forced many people in Kaffra states we find that Jere, Boss Ashani, Nicodemo and Tumbo are being injustice because they under Mulili's ideas. This is because Mulili instruct the Boss whatever is supposed to do and the Boss agree with Mulili.

In the text we find at first that Jere is complaining about what is taking place in prison we find that Jere is saying that when it comes to the caring he couldn't stand it, there walked like a woman in a death home this is when Jere tried to explain to Ashani and Mosese that he was faithful but the Ashani did not believe him. In the prison we find Ashani treating Mosese some unfair this, when we find that Ashani brings tea with milk to Mosese and start saying to Jere that you need a bail relative to get anything these days. And you because you think I am a junior officer you can hold on your selfish.

When Jere wanted to complain Ashani abused him nonsense. Unless Jere is careful Ashani will recommend that he be shifted to that other cell.

In Regina's house we find Tumbo choosing Jusper to be the winner of play because Jusper he is a cousin to Regina as the chairman he did not allow the plays to take place, he only decided to choose Jusper and also Jusper instead of ignoring the play to go on because he was the leader of others.

Then we find that Nicodemo is seriously saying that prisoners are supposed not to allow to sharing the da's with the rest of them. We

also find the Boss is taking the opportunity of
to give Mulili the tender of milk supply which was
supposed to be given to Kabito and also he is
saying that Kabito must be killed. And he will
serve as an example to others that may have
hot mouths like him.

In Kibera state to stay in peace we are
supposed to draw away with Mulili who is a
cousin to Boss the principles so we are supposed
to draw away with Mulili to live with justice, love
peace and even we work and sharing things
and ideas together as brothers and sisters.

09
20

Write an essay on the theme of injustice as explored in Ibsen's play Retribution in the City.

Injustice is the act of not administering or judging those with claims in a correct and fair way it may also be referred to as making the minority suffer at an expense of the majority to benefit.

For instance in this play we see the the Boss looking down upon Karin at an expense of securing a supply from supply tender to the Kaffra university to his cousin Mulli simply because Mulli gives him information and advises him on what to do to those who go against him.

Exp
Cup
400
Cor
09

It is also seen when Adika the son to Daga and Nina and brother to Jasper were rioting for the freedom and justice to be administered in Kaffra. Unfortunately Adika is gunned down in the process of rioting, four bullets in his chest.

When Nina and Daga Jasper and Adika's parents went at Adika's grave to carry out the shaming ceremony of their departed son. Mulli and Joe are sent to stop the harmless ceremony not to go on. This may be the same reason as to why ~~Mulli~~ Joe is in prison because he wanted the ceremony just to go on.

Injustice is also witnessed when Tumba the government official was given a chance to be in charge of the play writing competition he simply announces Jasper the winner of the play without following any channel or order in which events need to be done.

It is evident that injustice can cause harm

in the society. It can also lead to
Corruption, betrayal, suffering and even death, and
Other related vices. ~~Therefore~~ necessary steps ~~are~~ need
to be put forward to curb the vice so
as to provide a justice society

12
20

Write an essay on the theme of injustice as explored in Francis Imbuga's play *Betrayal* in the city.

fair Injustice is the ^{act} fact of a situation being unfair. There is both economic and political injustice as ^{seen} in Imbuga's play.

fair The employment of so many foreign lecturers deprives the citizens of Kafirya of job opportunities. The ordinary people do not get a fair share of national wealth. "The fruits of independence. We get them second hand," as Jisper says. Government funds, which should be spent on development and improving the welfare of the common people, are misappropriated to enrich a few powerful individuals.

fair Regino exemplifies injustice in Kafirya. Her brother Masusu had false evidence planted against him and can only secure his release by compromising his principles. Her boyfriend Jisper has lost his brother and parents, has twice been imprisoned, and is frustrated to the point of near-madness. She was beaten up by soldiers, forced to give false evidence against her brother and is nearly raped in an attempt to secure his release.

fair Jisper is a victim of injustice in Kafirya. Even the ordinary people can act unjustly. Jisper suffers from mob justice after confessing to the killing of Chugaga. Kabito is unjustly killed so as Mutili can secure the milk tender because Mutili is boss's cousin. Adika and Doga are also murdered unjustly for the release of Jisper. Jere is also ^{imprisoned} imprisoned for having allowed the harness sharing ceremony of Adika to go on after being reported by Mutili to the higher authorities. — ^{should be aim of the community}

fair A few people in Kafirya, however, stick to their principles and keep their hope and courage like Masuse who stood to his principles till the last minute. By killing Mutili while sparing Buss and Tumbo, they restore justice in Kafirya.

fair It has been ^{clearly} shown that injustice in Kafirya state is highly accomplished. Appropriate mechanisms should be put in place to do away with the injustice leaders to ^{consequently} remain with a fair and justice society.