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Influence of Dramatic Techniques in Teaching of Kiswahili Language in Primary Schools in Kakamega County, Kenya

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pupils' participation in Kiswahili language lessons when drama techniques are used and to find out the effectiveness of teaching of Kiswahili when drama techniques are used. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics while qualitative data was analyzed using thematic content analysis. The study revealed that use of drama techniques was low because teachers selected approaches that would enable them to complete the syllabus fast. That pupils' participation was high (83.3%) when drama techniques were used during the lesson and teaching using drama was effective since (66.7%) of teachers reported it enhanced the teaching of the subject. The recommendation of the study was that the Kiswahili curriculum should be carefully designed to enhance the quality of teaching through learners' involvement. The curriculum and the content should be learner oriented rather than examination oriented. This will eliminate the idea of the teachers concentrating on covering the syllabus at the expense of learners. The study findings would improve the quality of teaching and learning of Kiswahili language in primary schools.

1.0 Introduction

Language generally is considered an important aspect in the life of humanity because it is a system of communication consisting of sounds, words and grammar, or the system of communication used by people in a particular country or type of work, (Chauhan, 2004; Sirisrimangkorn & Suwanthep, 2013). Language is defined as a shared set of verbal codes, such as English, Spanish, French, Swahili and others. People express their feelings through language (Beena, Nyagah, Kibui & Odundo, 2015). Language can also be described as a generic,

communicative phenomenon especially in descriptions of instruction, (Odera, 2007). Teachers and students use spoken and written language to communicate with each other-to present tasks, engage in learning processes, present academic content, and assess learning, display knowledge and skill and build classroom life (Mbiti, 2013). Teaching methods primarily fall into two categories; teacher centered and student centered, (Oseno, 2015). Teacher centered approach include lecture and direct instruction methods and student learning is measured through objectively scored

Abstract

Teaching relies on approaches in instruction. The way teachers deliver content has a definite impact on retention by the learners. To make its teaching receptive various techniques are required and they include drama. The aim of the study was to establish influence of dramatic techniques in teaching of Kiswahili language in primary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya. The objectives of the study were; to establish the frequency of drama techniques in teaching Kiswahili in primary schools; to assess the levels of

tests and assessments. Duruji, Azuh, Segun, Olanrewaju and Okorie (2014) state that student-centered approach to learning is when teachers and students play an equally active role in the learning process. According to, Ozbek (2014) while quoting Bolton (1980) states that teacher centered approach is one which teaching and learning is centered outside the learner. Drama technique falls under student-centered category because it can intensify learning at interactive level between students and teachers (Chepkoech, 2012).

The new approach in education has introduced the concept of learner centered education with students' involvement (Peregoy & Boyle, 2008). It is a fact that the meaning of learner centered education is deemed to learner's roles rather than subject centered (Park, 2015). According to Onyango (2009) some of the methods used to teach Kiswahili by most teachers are lecture method and question and answer. This is done with the intention of quick coverage and revision of the planned syllabus. This approach cannot be ignored but it is not sufficient for practical language use.

Although Kiswahili is a compulsory subject in primary and secondary school curriculum, the language policy of a given school affects the attitude of learners. Many schools give prominence to English at the expense of Kiswahili (Mbiti, 2013). In this case, the learners tend to give more attention to English while Kiswahili takes a back seat. English language has been dominating communication in schools and this has negative attitude and impact on the overall performance of learners in Kiswahili (Kimaro, 2013). As a national language and official language in Kenya, the Government acknowledges the importance of Kiswahili as a national language. According to Kenya gazette supplement no.63, 2005, 80% of the total population of Kenya speaks Kiswahili language. Mbaabu (1978) observes that this language is widely used by large section of Kenyans in urban and rural areas. Sessional paper no 6 proposed that Kiswahili should be respected as a national language and be taught in schools. Mackay Report (1981) indicated that Kiswahili is compulsory subject and examined both at primary and secondary school levels of education. Chimera (2011) clearly outlines the importance of Kiswahili as symbol of national unity. Mazrui et-al (1995) argues that due to its enhanced status and expanded functions, which includes its role as a unifying

factor for diverse people, it is imperative that emphasis is put on its teaching.

In spite of this fundamental function, Kenya has recently experienced falling standards of Kiswahili language. For example, the performance in 2011 and 2013 had a mean of 49.01 and a mean of 35 respectively, (Kimaro, 2013). Kiswahili had a mean of 47.88 in 2015, (MOE, 2016). This is an indication that the performance of the subject is below average compared to other subjects which record above average scores. The KCPE performance of Kiswahili subject in Kakamega South Sub-County has also declined in recent years' 2011-2016 are shown below.

1.1 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate dramatic techniques in teaching Kiswahili language in primary schools in Kakamega sub-county-Kenya. In order to achieve this purpose, the following objectives were established:

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The research objectives of this study were to;

1. Establish the frequency of dramatic techniques in teaching Kiswahili in primary schools; in Kakamega Sub-County-Kenya.
2. Determine the level of pupils' participation in the Kiswahili lessons when drama techniques are used in teaching Kiswahili language in primary in Kakamega Sub-County.
3. Find out the effectiveness of teaching of Kiswahili when drama techniques are utilized in primary schools in Kakamega Sub-County.

2.0 Learning Kiswahili language in Kenya

Language is part of human life as it is the most effective means of human communication. Language also necessitates national and international interaction between people. It is common for people to identify with those who speak the same language as themselves, (Gathumbi & Masembe, 2005). Apart from being a means of communication, it is also a means of getting education, a career and participating in national building. From the proliferation of new technology worldwide, the world seems to be getting smaller and smaller (what is popularly known as the global village). This technological knowledge is passed on through language.

Kiswahili is a mandatory subject at primary and secondary school levels of education in Kenya. It is

a tool to promote and enhance unity and patriotism among learners. As a cultural heritage, learners feel proud and cultivate not only national but also international relations as well, (KIE, 2002). A lot of transactions take place between business, friends and other people outside school. Hence, this becomes a means of economic and individual development. As children join primary school, they are expected to acquire pre-requisite language skills by the end of eight years. They should be able to listen, speak read, write in Kiswahili, and develop interest in this subject beyond primary school level. For realization of this goal, the home environment needs to cultivate interest in the child by encouraging interaction in Kiswahili. Upon formal enrolment in school, the teachers develop the interest so cultivated at all grades. They teach as per the curriculum requirement and evaluate the learners' performance accordingly. The performing and creative arts are important in the advancement of society. Since time immemorial, humanity has benefited immensely from strong messages transmitted through oral culture. In 2000 Kiswahili gained the enviable position of being the first official African language of the African Union. Kiswahili boasts a vibrant body of literature and continues to be studied in schools and universities in some parts of Europe, North America and the Far East. Kiswahili continues to wrestle gallantly with European and other African languages for space and time on TV and radio across the East and Central African region where it enjoys pride of place as lingua franca (Waliula, 2005).

Kiswahili is a national language as well as the official language (the constitution 2010) while English is the official language in Kenya Kiswahili is an indigenous language of Bantu origin spoken by over 65% of Kenya's population (Heinman, quoted in Mazrui & Mazrui, 1995). It's the language of inter- ethnic communication in Kenya. It is also the language of wider communication in East and Central Africa, (Iribemwangi, 2012). Kiswahili is the declared national language in Kenya. It is also one of the two official languages. Since 1984, Kiswahili has been compulsory and examinable subject from the first year of primary school, through secondary school up to the highest levels. The main advantage of Kiswahili is that it is considered ethnical neutral and is not associated with any ethnic community although it originated from the East Coast of Africa.

2.1 Drama Techniques in Teaching Kiswahili Language Classes

For effective Kiswahili learning and good performance, teacher's methodology is central. It is the responsibility of the teacher to facilitate learning and foster the achievement of lesson objective and the general educational goals stated. The teacher is required to have adequate knowledge of the content and employ relevant teaching techniques to deliver the content. During teacher preparation process, the teachers are equipped in their subject areas to enable them to deliver the content effectively (KIE, 2002). Wessels (1987) observes that the teachers of language are reluctant to use drama even when chances to employ the technique are available.

Mondoh (2001) stated that teaching methods affect the effectiveness of a teacher because some concepts are understood better by the learner when delivered through a given method. Teaching methods when used appropriately become a significant variable of student achievement. Mondoh further notes that the teacher is the key determinant to the method to be used in the implementation of any aspect in curriculum. The teaching methodology facilitates achievement of the objectives. Methods applied by the teacher in class act as a framework for the presentation of instruction activities. The use of drama technique is therefore one of the methodologies to be used by the teachers of Kiswahili.

Eshiwani (1993) indicates that teachers have the initiative to use their own instructional materials of teaching but they have not been varying the methods of teaching. Eshiwani meant that teachers have a variety of methods at their exposure but most of them stick to same methods. This is significant to the study because the teachers are encouraged to vary their methods. Drama is one of the methods the teachers are equipped with plus other methods used by the teachers include lecture, discussion question and answer. These other methods can be more effective if drama aspect is added to improve on performance.

It is not easy to catch the learners' interest and motivation in class. Various means are used by teachers in order to involve the learners to participate actively in the learning process. Within such techniques employed in language classes, there are 'dramatic activities whose terminology can generate some ambiguity. Yildiz and Evsen (2013) distinguished between traditional types of drama, specifically the performance of a play. They called it theatre and other activities such as role

plays, simulations and others which he calls informal drama. Both the play and the informal drama are useful resources to be used in a language class. Drama does not refer only to the product, the performance, but also to the entire process of language teaching, (Phillips, 2003).

Drama refers to the process and the production respectively. In classroom application, the focus should be shifted from learning drama to emphasizing the process of leaning through drama, (Gorjian Rahim & Jabripour, 2010; Magoma, 2011). In this study, activities that incorporate drama methods will be referred to as drama techniques or drama activities. Teresa (2007) argued that one of the reasons why teachers hesitate to embrace the ideas of utilizing drama and theatre in classroom activities is in the search for drama resources to develop curricular. Teachers are easily overwhelmed by various terms used in drama such as creative drama, educational drama, improvisation or improvisational drama, informal drama, classroom drama among others.

This study sought to explain the effect of drama on Kiswahili skills development. Language teachers use a wide range of drama activities for engaging students' participation and promoting active learning in the classroom. These include language games, storytelling, role-play, simulations, scenarios, prepared and spontaneous improvisation and process oriented drama activities, (Mgullu, 2002). The study discussed drama techniques as reviewed below:

2.2 Students Participation in Drama Technique

According to Suter and Busienei (2013), there is need for Kiswahili teachers in Kenya to be aware of the two approaches to any second language teaching. Any SLT can be fluency-based teaching which lays instructional emphasis that takes place in real life situations. This approach is likely to promote Kiswahili language learning. They further emphasize that dramatization as a method of teaching Kiswahili can easily enhance oral interaction. Dramatization is viewed as one of the best methods of teaching spoken skills and it allows the learners to participate in the lesson. The study sought to establish the use of drama as a tool of teaching Kiswahili with the objective of enhancing learner participation plus motivation.

Fleming (2006) stated that drama is inevitably learner-centered because it operates through active cooperation. It is therefore a social activity and thus embodies much of the theory that has emphasized

the social and communal as opposed to the purely individual aspects of learning. The use of drama techniques and activities in the classroom provides exciting opportunities for learners to use the language in concrete situations. Besides, some research studies, (Maley & Duff, 2001; Phillips, 2003) suggest that drama activities can promote interesting ways of motivating language acquisition to teachers. Clark (2013) concurs by saying that drama games allow for a large range of participation, from minimal to highly expressive and creative. Gifted students are given a chance to synthesize learning from various subjects. They can take the same idea several layers deeper than an average student and still demonstrate it in the same time frame as others.

Desialova (2009) said that using drama and drama activities has clear advantages for language learning. It encourages students to speak; it gives them the chance to communicate, even with limited language, using nonverbal communication such as body movements and facial expressions. Desialova outlined some of the areas where drama is very useful to language learners and teachers. It encourages participation as he states that; drama gives learners an experience of using the language for communication and real life purposes by generating a need to speak (Mansour et al., 2013). It is an ideal way to encourage learners to guess the meaning of unknown language in a context and need to use a mixture of language structures and functions if they want to communicate successfully. More so, it makes language learning an active, motivating experience.

Drama helps learners gain the confidence and self-esteem needed to use the language spontaneously and by taking a role in role-play and language games. Students can escape from their everyday identity and "hide behind" another character abandoning shyness, (Chepkoech, 2012). The use of drama is useful in language learning. The study therefore sought to establish the participation of learners. Desialova further notes that; drama brings the real world into the classroom and its aim can be more than linguistics because teachers can use topics from other subjects thus encouraging the students to act out scenes from history or they can work on ideas and issues that run through the curriculum. When students dramatise, they use all the channels (sight, hearing, and physical bodies) and each student will draw to the one that suits them best. This means that all parts of the learner will all be actively involved in the activity and the language will enter through the channel most

appropriate for them. It stimulates learners' intellect and imagination (McCaslin, 1998).

Peregoy and Boyle (2008) state that drama activities provide students with a variety of contextualized and scaffold activities that gradually involve more participation and more oral language proficiency, they are also non-threatening and a lot of fun. Drama has been credited with the ability to empower students and allow them some ownership and control over their own learning, (Wilburn, 1992). Working in drama allows students to test out various situations, registers and vocabulary in a real way without having to suffer any real consequences. Kao and O'Neill (1998) proposed that confidence levels increase when students have something to talk about and, most importantly, when they know how to express their ideas through language.

Barbu (2007) drama use in English language resulted in real communication, involving ideas, emotions, feelings, appropriateness and adaptability. Such activities give the teachers a wider option of learner-centred activities to choose for classroom teaching, being extremely efficient in teaching a language. Even after years of teaching English grammar, the students do not gain the confidence of using the language in and outside the class. The conventional language class hardly gives the students an opportunity to use language in this manner and develop fluency in it. This is because students lack the adequate exposure to fluent language outside the class as well as the lack of exposure to fluent speakers who can communicate with the students on authentic matters. So an alternative to this is teaching language through drama. Drama technique gives context for listening to meaningful language production, leading the students or forcing them to use their own language resources thus enhancing their linguistic abilities (Mbito, 2013). The above applies to all languages teaching therefore making it relevant to Kiswahili. From the use of drama, students become more confident in their use of Kiswahili by experiencing the language in operation, (Sirengo, 2013). Drama in a Kiswahili grammar classroom is ultimately indispensable because it gives learners the chance to use their own personalities. It draws upon students' natural abilities to imitate and express themselves, and if well-handled should arouse interest and imagination (Kang'ahi et al, 2012).

Drama encourages adaptability, fluency, and communicative competence. It puts language into

context, and by giving learners experience of success in real-life situations it should arm them with confidence for tackling the world outside the classroom. Since the current study's ultimate goal is to find out the levels of student participation in a Kiswahili lesson, the contribution of these scholars is necessary for the study (Mbito, 2013). This empowers this study to find out the role of students in language teaching lessons. Student's participation takes the centre of the current study as it is believed that learners initiated activities are more memorable and have meaningful pedagogical condition.

3.0 Research Methodology and Methods

The study utilized mixed methodology research approach. It included survey questionnaire, interviews and class observation. The study targeted primary schools in Kakamega South Sub-County in Kakamega County. Purposive and simple random sampling was used to identify respondents who included teachers of Kiswahili and pupils in class seven. Schools were stratified into boys, girls and mixed categories. Stratified random sampling was used to select eighteen schools in which six schools were randomly selected from each of the three strata. From the schools sampled, one teacher of Kiswahili was randomly selected for the study. Six teachers were randomly selected from those who responded to the questionnaire for observation. Each of the six teachers was observed twice. The six teachers were interviewed after observing their second lesson. Primary data was collected through interviews, questionnaires and observation. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics while qualitative data was analyzed using thematic content analysis.

4.0 Findings and Discussion

The aim of the study was to establish influence of dramatic techniques in teaching of Kiswahili language in primary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya. The objectives of the study were; to establish the frequency of drama techniques in teaching Kiswahili in primary schools; to assess the levels of pupils' participation in Kiswahili language lessons when drama techniques are used and find out the effectiveness of teaching of Kiswahili when drama techniques are used.

4.1 Frequency of Teachers Organizing Drama Activities

The study sought to establish the frequency of use of drama Techniques, table 4.1 below show the frequency of the dramatic techniques.

Table 4.1 The Frequency of Dramatic Techniques

	Mime f(%)	Improvissatio n f(%)	Simulation f(%)	Drama f(%)	Play game f(%)	Role play f(%)	Dialogue f(%)
Every							
lesson	1 (5.6)	0 (0)	1 (5.6)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4 (22.2)	0 (0)
Weekly	4 (22.2)	0 (0)	10 (55.6)	4 (22.2)	6 (33.3)	7 (38.9)	5 (27.8)
Monthly	7 (38.9)	0 (0)	3 (16.7)	4 (22.2)	4 (22.2)	3 (16.7)	6 (33.3)
Termly	4 (22.2)	0 (0)	2 (11.1)	5 (27.8)	5 (27.8)	2 (11.1)	2 (11.1)
Not							
organized	2 (11.1)	0 (0)	2 (11.1)	5 (27.8)	5 (27.8)	2 (11.1)	5 (27.8)
Total	18 (100)	0 (0)	18 (100)	18 (100)	18 (100)	18 (100)	18 (100)

From table 4.1, no respondent said that they used drama in every lesson. Four (22.2%) said they used it weekly and monthly. Five (27.8%) said they used drama termly basis while five (27.8%) respondents indicated that they do not use drama at all. On the use of debate, there was no respondent who said they organized it during every lesson. Five (27.8%) respondents said they organized it on weekly basis and on monthly basis. Three (16.7%) said they organized it once in a term. Five (27.8%) said they do not organize debates at all.

One (5.6%) respondent said they organized simulations during every lesson. Ten (55.6%) respondents said they organized simulations on weekly basis. Three (16.7%) respondents said they organized it once in a month. Two (11.1%) said they organized it once in a term. Two (11.1%) said they did not organize simulations at all. No respondent said they organized language games in every lesson. Six (33.3%) said they organized language games weekly. Seven (38.9%) respondents said they organized it once in a term. One (5.6%) respondents said they do not organize language games. Four (22.4%) respondents said they organized language games monthly. One (5.6%) respondent said they organized Mimes in every lesson as an activity to enhance learning. Four (22.2%) respondents organized the activity weekly while seven (38.9%) respondents said they used mimes once in a month. Four (22.2%) respondents said they used it once in a term. Two (11.1%) respondents said they do not use the technique at all. On role play four (22.2%) respondents used it for each lesson. This was perhaps thought to be important in making students

practically use the language. Seven (38.9%) said they organized role play on weekly basis while three (6.7%) respondents said they organized it once in a month. Two (11.1%) said they organized it once a term. 2(11.1%) respondent said they did not organize it at all.

On dialogue no respondent said used it every lesson. Five (27.8%) said used dialogue weekly. Six (33.3%) respondents said they used it monthly. Two (11.1%) said used dialogue termly. Five (27.8%) said did not organize dialogue. All the techniques investigated that is; drama and dialogue, simulations, language games, Mimes and role play were thought to be important for authentic language use. Many teachers prompted consented that these activities facilitate language practical use. However, it is apparent from the data that many respondents comprised of those who do not use them.

4.2 Pupils Participation in Drama Activities

The research sought to establish the level of the learners' participation in drama activities. According to the findings, 13 (72 %) respondents were of the opinion that students were always willing to take up roles assigned to them when drama techniques are used, 10 (56 %), respondents said that students pay attention during lesson 12 (67%) respondents asserted that learners become creative and make the lesson interesting when dramatization techniques are employed. This is in line with earlier studies by (Gorjian Rahim & Jabripour, 2010; Park, 2015) who established that drama activities give students an opportunity to use their own personalities in creating the material in

which part of the language class are to be used, 7 (39 %) respondents indicated that the learners do not take up any roles assigned to them and 6 (33 %)

respondents were of the opinion that students are just fascinated about the events when drama is used.

Table 4.2: Levels of Pupils Participation in Lessons with Drama Technique

Activity		Yes	No	Missing	Total
Always willing to take up role assigned to them	F	13	5	0	18
	%	72	28	0	100
Pay attention during lesson	F	10	8	0	18
	%	56	44	0	100
Do not take up any roles assigned to them	F	7	11	0	18
	%	39	61	0	100
Just fascinated about the events but do not get any about the language.	F	6	11	1	18
	%	33	61	5.5	100
They become so creative and make the lesson interesting	F	12	4	2	18
	%	67	22	1.1	100

This can be interpreted to mean that the level of pupils' participation increases in Kiswahili language lessons when the drama techniques are used in the classroom. The findings coincide with Matsuzaki-Carreira (2005) who argues that by playing roles in a dramatic performance, the pupils may experience a deeper sense of sympathy toward each other that rarely develops from mere passive viewing and surveying the text.

4.6 Effectiveness of Drama Technique in Kiswahili Language Teaching

The study sought to know whether teaching of Kiswahili became effective table 4.3 below presents the effectiveness when drama techniques are utilized.

Table 4.3: The use of Drama Technique

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	5	27.8
Agree	12	66.7
No idea	1	5.6
Strongly disagree	0	0

From table 4.3, the findings indicate five (27.8 %) respondents said they strongly agreed that the use of drama enhances teaching of language. Twelve (66.7%) agreed on the same sentiments. However, one (5.6%) respondents said they had no idea. No respondents said that they did not agree. The findings are supported by Demircioglu (2012) who found out that Drama as a teaching technique promotes retention of vocabulary. Pupils learn a new language to attain communication skills and express themselves well. The usefulness of a technique in this case was to be established by the extent at which the lesson objectives were achieved and how it enabled students to participate to enhance understanding of the language.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

The study concluded that use of drama techniques in Kiswahili language teaching is advantageous because it makes learning a learner-centered

activity. The study found out that learners' involvement in drama activities increased their competencies in Kiswahili. Further, their interest in learning was also boosted as a result of being involved in drama activities by their teachers. The study concludes that drama techniques are effective, motivating and they enhance retention of what is taught and learnt. If the teachers embrace the techniques in Kiswahili language lessons, improved performance will be realized. The use of drama techniques in Kiswahili lessons enhances learner participation because it makes learning a learner-centered activity and they own the lesson. Considering the impact of drama techniques on pupils' mastery of the content and its effectiveness in teaching, there is need to increase time for Kiswahili teaching from the current 5 to 7 lessons per week so as to enable adequate time to use drama method. Dismal performance in the subject can be eliminated if the technique will be

impressed. The introduction of drama method in the classroom should be managed with great care so that the potential benefits can be realized as if not planned carefully it may impact on learning negatively.

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