

The Utilization of Instructional Resources in Teaching Kiswahili Poetry in Secondary Schools in Kenya

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the utilization of instructional resources by Kiswahili teachers in the teaching of poetry in secondary schools in Nandi North Sub - County. The objectives of the study were: to investigate the training of Kiswahili teachers and their ability to use instructional resources, to establish the types of instructional resources commonly used by Kiswahili teachers and to identify the challenges Kiswahili teachers encounter while using instructional resources in teaching. The study was guided by the operant conditioning theory which explains how language teaching and learning takes place in a classroom. Systematic sampling was used to select 20 secondary schools in Nandi North Sub - County of the Rift Valley region from which form three Kiswahili teachers were chosen to participate in the research. The research instruments that were used to collect data were questionnaire, observation and interview schedule. All these were administered by the researcher in person. The research instruments were pre tested to establish their validity and reliability. For the purpose of validation, experts were sought from the department of Curriculum Instruction and Educational Media and test re test method was used for reliability. Piloting was done in two secondary schools in Vihiga District. Data from the field was analyzed using descriptive statistics, involving percentages, frequencies, mean and mode. In view of these findings it was recommended that there is need for teachers to utilize instructional resources in teaching Kiswahili poetry to enhance the amount of information a student can learn and retain. The researcher therefore recommends that whenever the matter at hand involves learning, schools should strive to have enough Kiswahili poetry text books for both the teacher and the student and also use other instructional resources in teaching Kiswahili poetry.

These findings will help curriculum planners, teachers and students of Kiswahili. Curriculum planners will find the findings beneficial in organizing Kiswahili syllabus. Kiswahili teachers will use these findings to improve performance in Kiswahili poetry.

INTRODUCTION

The ministry of Education has recognized the importance of poetry as a compulsory part of Kiswahili subject in the secondary school curriculum. Currently poetry is taught as part of literature in Kiswahili and examined as part of Kiswahili paper 102/3. Despite this, poor performance in poetry in Kiswahili is an issue that has perennially pre-occupied Language teachers. There has been poor performance in Kiswahili as a language because of the students' inability to tackle issues pertaining to poetry in Kiswahili. The Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC), a body that is charged with the responsibility of setting and marking examinations in Kenya, prepares reports on how each examined subject was performed.

The Kenya National Examination Council report of 1981, 1985, 1987, 1990, 1992 and 2001 show the apparent poor performance in the Literature in Kiswahili Paper. The (KNEC) report of 2001:29 attests to low achievement in this section and thus recommended the following. The poetry section should be handled befittingly through practice exercises.

The 2003 KCSE Candidates' examination report has it that the poetry section was one of the areas of the syllabus that candidates had problems with. This report gives teachers useful advice on what ought to be done in the following words. Teachers should emphasize the importance of poetry in Kiswahili because it is an important aspect of the language, so that students like it (KNEC) report 2003:24

A close scrutiny of the (KNEC) reports of 2003, 2004, and 2005 shows poor performance in Kiswahili poetry paper three 102/3 in Nandi North Sub - County. This paper also deals with Kiswahili poetry which was poorly performed in the Kenya Certificate of secondary Education KCSE. THIS Research set out to investigate the utilization of instructional resources in the teaching of Kiswahili poetry. Particular emphasis was placed on teachers' attitude towards the use of instructional resources, instructional resources commonly used by Kiswahili teachers, teacher's training and ability to use instructional resources, and the obstacles that Kiswahili teachers face while using instructional resources. The research was necessitated by persistent poor performance in Kiswahili poetry as shown by various national examination reports.

These reports indicate that between the years 2003-2005 there seems to have been no improvement in performance in Kiswahili in secondary schools in Nandi North. In 2003 the mean score was 5.32, 2004 was 5.25 and 2005 was 4.9; this is very low because Nandi North Sub - County is supposed to get a mean score of 9 and above because of the good learning facilities in these schools. The Kenya National Examination Council report of 2005 indicates that only a few students attempted to answer poetry questions and those who attempted posted poor performance with most of them scoring below 5 out of 20 marks. This is a serious situation because this section is compulsory and if a student does not answer poetry questions he or she will loose 20 marks, this will affect that students' performance.

The Kenya National Examination Council report of 2005 indicated that Kiswahili teachers are supposed to prepare students well in Kiswahili poetry before they do their Kenya National

Certificate of Secondary Education. This report shows that Kiswahili teachers do not prepare their students well when it comes to answering poetry questions and that is why most students do not perform well in Kiswahili poetry in Nandi North Sub - County.

Nandi North Sub - County getting a mean score of 4.9 in 2005 in Kiswahili is not encouraging at all. This is a serious issue which needs to be addressed immediately. The Sub - County is supposed to get a mean score of 9 in Kiswahili. This is because secondary schools in this Sub - County have good facilities and resources, if well utilized, will lead to good performance in Kiswahili. The researcher has visited very many schools in the district and has seen the facilities.

The researcher established the causes of this poor performance in Kiswahili poetry and pointed out that the utilization of instructional resources contributed. The researcher found out that principally resources were inadequately utilized. The 2007 KCSE examination report has it that the poetry section was performed poorly by candidates. The report gives useful advice on what should be done. Kiswahili poetry teachers should encourage students to see that poetry is not difficulty. Teachers should also teach students different types of poems.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

From the annual Kenya National Examination Council report of 1994 and subsequent years, lamentations have come up about performance of Kiswahili as a subject. However, this poor performance was because, the third section of the literature in Kiswahili paper presently coded 102/3, which contains poetry in Kiswahili was poorly performed. Mbuthia, K.F (1996) revealed that the tendency of teachers of poetry in Kiswahili to stick to the traditional modes of instruction is one of the factors responsible for poor performance in poetry in Kiswahili. This is one factor in poor performance, it was of interest to the researcher to find out about the utilization of instructional resources in the teaching of Kiswahili poetry.

In the last thirteen years, the researchers taught literature in Kiswahili in secondary schools. They observed that students are less interested in poetry in Kiswahili. The students avoid answering questions from this section. Those who attempt answering them, perform poorly. This is a point of concern to the researchers because this is a compulsory component of the literature in Kiswahili paper 102/3 in the KCSE examination. Such omissions affect the overall students' performance in Kiswahili as a subject and subsequently the students' mean grade. Therefore this study was prompted by the realization that the students avoid answering questions on poetry in Kiswahili and those who attempt such questions post a dismal outcome as compared to the other genres of literature in Kiswahili.

This problem merited investigation in view of the fact that the performance in Kiswahili subject affects the students' overall mean grade. Students cannot also score highly in Kiswahili as a subject with low grades in poetry in Kiswahili. Although there are several ways in which the teaching of various aspects of Kiswahili language could be promoted, teaching in this country's

school system is certainly one of the best ways. But our question was: How effectively are these aspects of language taught and learnt?

This study was conducted to investigate whether teachers use instructional resources in the teaching of poetry in Kiswahili in Nandi County. Since poetry in Kiswahili is a compulsory aspect of Kiswahili paper 102/3 examined nationally, the poor performance in poetry in Kiswahili in the county could be the same reason that affects students' performance in this genre nationally.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study was to establish the attitude of Kiswahili teachers towards the use of instructional resources in teaching Kiswahili poetry.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The findings of this study will be of use to the curriculum planners, teachers and students of Kiswahili. The curriculum planners will find the findings beneficial especially when it comes to organizing the Kiswahili syllabus.

Through the findings of this study, secondary school Kiswahili poetry teachers will identify the shortcomings in their instructional methods. Specific instructional resources appropriate for teaching certain areas of difficulty in Kiswahili poetry will be made available. This will be useful to students of Kiswahili in secondary schools as the teachers engage them in an effort to make use of their community.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The use of Instructional Resources by Teachers in class

Standa (1980) says that when a teacher goes to class, there are various things that one has to bear in mind: the goals that the instruction aims at accomplishing and the relevant stimuli to expose the learner to in order to achieve these goals.

Eash (1972) says that teachers have to be well prepared in order to avoid frustrations in their day to day use of instructional materials. The instructional materials should be implemented according to classroom requirements and not in accordance with the producers' design. If this is not done, they will be a source of learner problems just as ill designed materials are. This refers to the initiative of teachers to use instructional resources during their teaching. Some Kiswahili poetry teachers avoid using certain gadgets. However, the main problem with instructional resources is the cost, lack of electricity, poorly designed resources, not knowing how to operate the equipment and poor maintenance.

Kafu (1976) maintains that the kind of innovation needed in the teaching profession is to ensure improved in-service and pre-service education. This will ensure that teachers are

capable of using profitably materials that are already available and the opportunities offered to them by Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD).

Kochar (1991) expounded that media is valuable in instruction because they present clearly to the senses sensible objects so that they can be appreciated easily. In this study, the researchers sought to establish whether teachers of Kiswahili poetry use instructional resources in teaching.

Munyilu (1995) carried out a survey on instructional resources for teaching mathematics. He concluded that instructional resources for teaching and learning mathematics were insufficient and accused the teacher of poor attitude towards the preparation and use of instructional media resources for teaching mathematics. This is because Kiswahili poetry teachers have a negative attitude towards the use of instructional resources as established by this study.

Ogoma (1987) conducted a survey on instructional resources for the teaching of social studies in primary schools. He confirmed that teachers were not eager to use resources or even produce them. Among the reasons given for not using resources are lack of preparation, time, and funds for purchasing the relevant materials. Though this study was in relation to social studies, the case is true with poetry in Kiswahili as this study found out.

Okwako (1994) investigated language and media use and established that the availability of reading materials was a crucial aspect in language learning. He established that reading widely requires a student who has the ability to read materials willingly without any difficulty. A student will acquire different types of materials that are not just concerned with vocabulary but also interesting according to his / her age, environment, experience and views concerning various issues. In short there must be different types of books, magazines and journals at the students' disposal. The views reflected in the above argument have implications for this study. This implication follows; without proper selection of most desired and needed instructional resources for teaching Kiswahili poetry, the learners will find the content meaningless leading to disinterest in the subject.

Luvisia (2003) carried out a study on the availability and utilization of instructional resources for teaching Kiswahili grammar in secondary school. The study revealed that the available instructional resources were insufficient and teachers rely on the chalk and talk method to teach Kiswahili grammar. He came to the basic conclusion that students do not perform well in Kiswahili grammar because of insufficient resources. Though Luvisia's study was concerned with Kiswahili grammar, the findings arrived at formed a good basis for this study since grammar, like poetry, is a sub-section of Kiswahili as a subject.

Too (1996) carried out a study on the availability and use of media in the teaching of mathematics. The study revealed that teaching materials are important in learning because they are based on psychological principles of learning and can produce significant results provided they are properly used, as they enable the student to take active involvement in the

learning activity and offer a great dissemination of ideas and knowledge. The teaching materials form a concrete basis for conceptual thinking and thereby reduce the meaninglessness of the word-response of students. This then implies that to ensure good performance in poetry in Kiswahili, there should be relevant instructional resources.

Isutsa (1996) carried out a survey on instructional resources for social education and Ethics in secondary schools. The study revealed that a teacher's experience, qualification and the type of school do not influence the availability and use of instructional resources. The study further revealed that KICD textbooks do not provide teachers with all the relevant information required for effective instruction.

Mugei (2001) carried out a study on the availability and use of non projected media resources in the teaching of Geography. He established that most non projected media resources suitable for teaching Physical Geography are inadequately supplied in most of the sampled schools. The few media resources were poorly maintained and the schools did not have adequate storage facilities. Kiswahili poetry teachers have inadequate instructional resources, thus contributing to poor performance in Kiswahili as a subject. Some schools did not have storage facilities for instructional resources.

Birenge (2006) carried out a study on availability and use of instructional non projected media resources in the teaching of English composition. She established that most of non –projected media resources suitable for teaching and learning of English composition were not available while few available ones were not used at all except the chalkboard and the English class text. The study also revealed that English teachers were faced with significant problems in acquiring and use of media resources. This applies to Kiswahili poetry teachers too. This study revealed that Kiswahili teachers had inadequate instructional resources for teaching Kiswahili poetry. The chalkboard was the most commonly used by teachers.

Rutumoi (2006) carried out a study on the availability and use of instructional media resources in the teaching of novels in secondary schools. His study revealed that most schools in Baringo District had basic instructional media resources which were inadequately used. Majority of the schools had some of the recommended novels but very few of the non-book instructional materials were available for teaching the subject. This observation is valuable in the present study. His findings are similar to the findings of this study. Kiswahili poetry teachers also had inadequate instructional resources for teaching poetry; this forced the student to perform poorly in national examination.

Murunga (2006) identifies two major factors as the main causes of inherent difficulties in the teaching and learning of Kiswahili poetry. The method used for teaching Kiswahili poetry is the traditional method of teaching. Kiswahili poetry teachers teach without any instructional resources. This causes their students to have negative attitude towards Kiswahili poetry. This

research found that this is prevalent in secondary schools and leads to poor performance in examinations.

Cheruto (2009) undertook more or less a similar study to our study but in the teaching of Geography in Kericho secondary schools. Her findings revealed that most of the instructional materials needed in the teaching of Geography were either inadequate or not available. The materials which were inadequate or unavailable include globes, pictures and maps. This observation is valuable to the present study. Though some of the instructional resources like pictures were not used in the teaching of Kiswahili poetry. This is because in both Geography and Kiswahili, the resources were not availed or inadequate.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The district had 70 registered secondary schools and out of them, twenty secondary schools were used in this research. The researchers chose two teachers from each school. Fourty Kiswahili teachers participated in this reasearch. They filled a questionnaire and returned it. The findings of the research were6 analyzed and presented in tables together with the interpretation.

Questionnaire was used to provide the data needed and the sample that participated is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Population and sample size

Respondents	Population	Sample size
Kiswahili teachers	134	40

Table 2 shows the gender of .Kiswahili teachers in the sample that filled the questionnaire. It shows that the number of female Kiswahili teachers is quite big compared to that of the male Kiswahili teachers. There is a big disparity in gender. The universities and colleges should encourage male students to do Kiswahili.

There were 16 male teachers (40%) and twenty four female teachers (60%). They came from both public and private schools.

Table 2 Gender

Gender of teachers	Frequency	Percentage
Male	16	40%
Female	24	60%
Total	40	100%

Table 3 Academic qualification

Professional Qualifications	Frequency	Percentage
Bachelor of Education degree	20	50%
Master of Education	0	0%
B.A Kiswahili	0	0%
Diploma in Education	20	50%
Total	40	100%

The data in table 3 shows that all the teachers in the study had attained at least college education or training. Out of the forty teachers interviewed twenty, (50%) were holders of Bachelors' degree in Education. Twenty teachers (50%) were holders of diploma in Education. There was no teacher who holds Bachelors of Arts in Kiswahili or Masters degreed. The researcher came to the conclusion that all teachers were professionally qualified and had the ability to use instructional resources in teaching Kiswahili poetry.

Table 4 Teachers' experience in the field

Teachers' Experience	No. of Teachers	Percentage
0 – 6 years	15	37.5%
7 – 12 years	20	50%
13 – 18 years	5	12.5%
Over 19 years	0	0%
Total	40	100%

The teachers in this study had different experiences. Fifteen teachers (37.5%) had taught for less than six years. Twenty teachers (50%) had taught up to twelve years and five teachers (12.5%) There was no teacher who had taught over nineteen years. From this data it is established that the majority of the teachers have a teaching experience of between seven and twelve years and none has taught for over nineteen years.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are necessary in light of the findings.

The commercial production of instructional resources should be developed to make appropriate instructional resources for teaching Kiswahili poetry.

In-service courses and seminars should be organized for all Kiswahili teachers.

The ministry of education should be encouraged to produce and acquire some textbooks for Kiswahili poetry.

Head teachers need to be sensitized on the importance of purchasing textbooks for their schools.

Secondary schools should construct or set aside school stores for keeping instructional resources for Kiswahili poetry.

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