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## Effects of Forms of Evaluation Techniques Used by Teachers in Integrated English Approach on Learners' Achievement of Linguistic Skills

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### **Abstract:**

*In spite of the efforts to enhance the performance of English in Kenyan secondary schools, there have been persistent challenges in using the integrated English approach on learning achievement of linguistic skills. The aim of this paper was to assess effects of forms of evaluation techniques used by teachers in integrated English approach on learners' achievement of linguistic skills in public secondary schools in Bungoma County. The study utilized descriptive survey research design using mixed methods approach. A sample size of 251 teachers, 371 students and 134 heads of languages department was used. Purposive, proportionate and simple random sampling techniques was used to obtain the respondents. Data was collected using questionnaires, interview schedules, observation and document analysis. The validity of the instrument was tested through expert judgment while reliability was achieved using Cronbach Alpha. Quantitative data was analysed by use of frequencies, percentages means and standard deviation. Qualitative data was analysed thematically and presented in narrations and quotations. The study found that learner centered methods enabled learners to develop conceptualization, speaking and reading skills. In addition, the study found that the instruction of speaking English by use of drama enhanced the achievement of linguistic skills. The study recommended that teachers of English need to embrace the use of journal writing demonstrate use of English grammar thus enabling students' acquisition of linguistic skills. The findings of this study will be significant to teachers of English to re-evaluate their styles of teaching and improve on them. It may also assist curriculum planners and developers at Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) on need to organize in-service course for teachers of English in line with the revised curriculum.*

**Keywords:** Evaluation techniques, integrated English approach, linguistic skills

### **1. Introduction**

For the past two centuries, the integration of English language studies with subject material content in recognized education has been given a significant attention in Europe, Asia, the Americas and Africa (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010; Banegas, 2011; Lyster & Ballinger, 2011; Navés, 2009; Moate, 2011). This integration according to Dalton-Puffer & Smit, (2007) has led to rebirth of two extensive teaching approaches; Content Based Instruction (CBI) and content and language integrated learning approach (CLIL). The thinking of the integrated skills approach (ISA) originated from the idea that in normal, daily practice, oral and written languages were not separated and isolated from one another (Su, 2007). The Integrated Strategy Approach (ISA) has been incorporated into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) lessons in Asian nations. Kam and Wong (2004) pointed that the old skills of instruction which stressed on structural and analytical instructions, has succeeded for a while. The integration of skills has also become a wide spread idea in South East Asian EFL English curricula. Educators argue that reading, speaking, listening and writing should be treated in the language learning process as combined, interdependent and intimate foundations of language and that no language development should be detached from the whole teaching chore. When a learner writes, reads, speaks, or listens, this language encounter feeds into a mutual information pond, and that in successive encounters with English language, this learner can draw on this pond (Su, 2007). Use of drama instructions has been pragmatic to the instruction of other languages which could either be first or second languages. The practice by teachers in instruction during the integrated English and literature curriculum in Kenya has also been assessed by Manyasi (2014). Her study specifically concentrates on how cultural values in the set book; *The River and the Source* are taught via the integrated approach. Manyasi identifies lack of integration of linguistic skills of speaking, listening, writing and reading in the teaching process.

Lumala (2007) argues that although the integrated English and literature curriculum was introduced in Kenya over two decades, there is little that has been done that brings about the foreseen integration of literature and English grammar. In his findings, he shows that there was a continuous use of what he calls Traditional Approach (TA) as opposed to instructing inspired texts, notwithstanding the integrated English approach. This state of affairs was attributed to loss of applicable education and the overpowering focus which has been placed on examinations in education systems.

The classroom instructions adopted by teachers is consistently seen as the crucial variable for enhancing learning results and is important in any reform to enhance quality (UNESCO, 2005). Secondary school teachers of English need to have high prospects for ELLs (Coady, Hamann, Harrington, Pho, & Yedlin, 2008) and challenge learners with responsibilities requiring high-level discerning and language dispensation (Hakuta, 2011). They should plan comprehensible resources (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005) and adopt the use of meta-cognitive approaches in their instructions (Cohen, 2011). It is important that the teaching strategy employed by teachers enhances quality of learning and the related outcomes therefore the present paper assessed the effects of forms of evaluation techniques used by teachers in integrated English approach on learners' achievement of linguistic skills in public secondary schools, Bungoma County, Kenya.

## 2. Literature Review

The integrated curriculum body is rooted in the progressive education program of 1930s. It is extolled as a move-away from the memorization and presentation of isolated facts to a more constructivist understands of learning which values in-depth knowledge of topics. This is seen as a curriculum organization geared towards teaching for transmission and considerate learning (Mbithe, 2014). The introduction of the integrated English curriculum in Kenya was done alongside the 8-4-4 education system introduction in 1985. The Kenya Institute of Education (KIE, 2002) sees integration as amalgamation of two independent but related entities allowing for enrichment of each other. KIE further notes that through acquaintance to literature, students have an opportunity of improving their linguistic skills. Furthermore, an enhanced knowledge of the language improves the student's obligation of literally materials (KIE, 2002).

Moreover, it has been argued that the integrated form of content and language instruction originated and advanced in Europe, (Dafouz & Guerrini, 2009; Lorenzo, Casal, & Moore, 2010) and can be traced to the German-Franco programmes' attention in bilingualism and international education (Lorenzo, Casal, & Moore, 2010).

Teaching methods that enable learners to actively participate in their learning should be adopted instead of those that reduce them to passive recipients of knowledge (Okwara, Indoshi & Shiundu, 2009). In cases where the teaching methods adopted are not consistent with learners preferred learning styles, discomfort sets in and interferes with the learning process hence acquisition of the desired English knowledge is impaired. Use of teaching strategies need to take cognizance of the learner's preferred learning styles and balance them with the less effective but popular methods of teaching (Okwara et al, 2009).

There are four elementary language skills which include listening, speaking, writing and reading. A learner in any language setting acquires his/her first language in this normal order and it is a fact that writing is considered the most intricate skill to achieve (Ellis, 2003). Linguistic skills are considered as another section of productive skills which include; speaking and writing and receptive skills such as listening and reading.

Instruction approaches are basically considered to be multi-sided with systematic against unsystematic, reflective against impulsive and inductive against deductive subjects. Dörnyei, (2005) pointed out that every individual student has certain approach with certain priorities marking their advantages and disadvantages. Learning approaches can maneuver at any time since they are not inert or static for a long period of time as they are reliant on relative circumstances and tasks undertaken by the students (Griffiths, 2008). Almost similar is the instance with linguistic teaching approaches as Kumaravadivelu, (2008) has distinguished language instruction approaches in to three key classes: Learner centered approaches, Language centered approaches and Learning centered approaches. Each linguistic instruction approach is based on definite curriculum which depended on the focus on the basic expectations as shown in the curriculum. In fact, curriculum is at the center of any teaching-learning process and it plays an important role in ELT. For effective and result oriented ELT situation a number of curricula have been developed based on specific assumptions and needs of the targeted learners (Thakur, 2013).

In their research, Ahmad and Aziz (2009) pointed out that in some instances instructors were of the view that classes need to be teacher-centered. In his part Ndirangu (2004) noted that unsuitable classroom skills including the adoption of teacher-centered approaches could sabotage the achievements and aims of the course. Eken (2000) as cited in Towett, Indoshi and Okwach (2013) pointed that in learner centered classes, learners were seen as being able to undertake a more active and participatory role as compared to traditional strategies. This instruction method enhanced active involvement of learners in classroom activities. However, in a classroom environment a teacher should be well equipped with various approaches of instruction in Integrated English.

Instruction of language by use of drama activities offers a context for listening and significant language production, in which students need to use their linguistics resources (Donnery 2009). Drama instruction gives a dependable communicative background for the students leading to improved speaking capabilities among learners (Ulas 2008; Janudom & Wasanasomsithi, 2009). Moreover, the execution of drama pedagogy has a benefit on students' enthusiasm and self-esteem through its non-threatening classroom settings (Pacyga 2009; Read 2009). Moreover, drama events inspire students to learn

and gives them a relaxing but challenging learning situation. Role play as used during drama is an activity whereby learners are given a chance of developing a story together. In doing this, it is obligatory for them to be involved in the preparation of a role play and act it out (Cockett, 2000). Role play in drama has positive influence on learners' communicative and affective capabilities as it arouses the students' authentic conversation and allows them to act in a framework, so they can overcome their fear of certain emotional, linguistic or social constraints (Brash & Warnecke, 2009).

According to Janudom & Wasanasomsithi (2009) a larger number of learners have very low English speaking skills. Moreover, Sukanake, Heaton, Chantrupanth & Rorex, (2003) pointed out that in some instances students in universities are not confident in either speaking or listening to the target language even though the implementation of communicative language instruction has been affected. Swenddal (2011) claims that students will derive benefits from drama involvement as their language achievement processes are inspired and supported despite the criticism associated with the adoption of drama in a language classroom teaching. The current study investigated the effectiveness of use of various teaching approaches including drama on the achievement of linguistic skills among secondary school students in Bungoma County.

However, Owiti, Onchera, and Kulo (2014) in a study on use of oral literature in the teaching of English grammar in secondary schools in Bondo district, Kenya it emerged that instructors had not realized the reward of using oral literature during grammar instruction. Brenes (2005) recommends that the use of texts such as oral literature is more vital and interesting to learners so as to understand the effect of spoken mode on real contexts. He further recommends that language instructors need to use real life texts in their classroom lessons since they include treasured samples of natural and spontaneous speech form native of the target language.

In spite of the demanding situations to enforcing drama pedagogies in an Asian context, there is additionally the silver lining to bear in mind, for each trainer and learner. Stinson (2009) looked at a common re-curing theme that for the lecturers concerned in the have a look at, drama made classes exciting and greater motivating to their college students. The scholars were described as being 'engaged', 'attentive', 'involved and worried', and 'collaborating actively' of their lessons (p.230). Drama increases motivation while decreasing anxiety (Stanley & Baldwin, 2012), lowering the 'affective clear out' that is vital for a scholar if he or she is to acquire and keep talents and expertise this is taught (Krashen, 2003). Different aspects of motivation can also be located via the sharing of studying via acting out tales (Peregoy & Boyle, 2008), and additionally through the development on sophistication of idea in the college students (Rieg & Paquette, 2009).

### 3. Methodology

This study used descriptive survey design using mixed approach methods. Mixed methodology is the blending of two or more approaches in a research study resulting in both quantitative and qualitative data (Greene, 2007; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009; Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2007). The study was mixed methods in a single research which permits for pragmatism. The study targeted all the 724 teachers of English teaching Form three students in 206 secondary schools in Bungoma County. In addition, the study targeted all heads of languages department in all the 206 secondary schools. Form three teachers of English were specifically targeted for the purpose of this research because, it is at this level that set books are fully introduced according to the syllabus and thus the teacher is tasked with the responsibility of teaching the skills appropriately using integrated approach. The sample size formula for this study is Krejcie and Morgan (1970) as quoted by Kasomo (2001) where a sample size of 251 teachers and 134 heads of languages department was obtained.

The researcher stratified the respondents into the six administrative units; Bungoma Central sub-county, Bungoma East Sub-county, Bungoma West sub-county, Bungoma North sub-county, Bungoma south Sub-county and Mount Elgon Sub-county making Bungoma County. The researcher further employed stratified sampling technique to select the respondents from each of the administrative unit. Thereafter, simple random sampling was used to choose Form Three teachers of English involved in the study from each of the six administrative units. In addition, HODs in every selected school were selected purposively to take part in the study.

Questionnaires, interview schedules, observation and document analysis were the main data collection instruments used in this study. A pilot study was carried out in a neighbouring Kakamega County to establish the reliability of the research instrument. The content and structural validity of the instrument was tested by consulting research experts of Kisii University and thereafter incorporating their positive inputs in the refining the final data collection instruments (Foxcroft, wood, Kew, Herrington & Segal, 2004).

The quantitative data from the questionnaire was first subjected to preliminary processing through validation, coding and tabulation in readiness for analysis with the help of the statistical package for social science (SPSS) computer package. Frequencies, percentages, means and Standard deviation was used to analyze quantitative data. Data analysed was presented by use of tables and figures. Qualitative data from interview schedules, observation and document analysis was thematically classified and arranged before they were reported in narrations and quotations as per the research objectives.

### 4. Results and Discussions

The participants were requested to rate the effect of forms of evaluation techniques used in integrated English approach on achievement of linguistic skills. The outcome of the analyzed information is shown in Table 1.

Statement	Not at All		Not Much		Much		Very Much	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Standardized performance examination results are used for high-stakes decisions in assessment for learners' acquisition of linguistic skills	8	3.4	60	25.3	72	30.4	97	40.9
Competitions in composition writing has enabled Teachers of English in our school to assess the level of acquisition of writing skills among learners	126	53.2	36	15.2	64	27.0	11	4.6
Engaging learners in debating enhances the acquisition of speaking and critical thinking skills	42	17.7	122	51.5	20	8.4	53	22.4
Drama based approaches in teaching enhances acquisition of speaking skills	11	4.6	14	5.9	139	58.6	73	30.8
Use of peer support enhances weak English learners to cope with the rest of the learners in class	21	8.9	52	21.9	55	23.2	109	46.0
Teachers of English meet to map out a plan and direction for the teachers' continued development within the profession	108	45.6	50	21.1	43	18.1	36	15.2

*Table 1: Teachers' Responses on Forms of Evaluation Techniques and Achievement of Linguistic Skills*

Table 1 shows that 97(40.9%) teachers noted that standardized performance examinations results were very much used for high-stakes decisions in assessment for learners' acquisition of linguistic skills, 72(30.4%) teachers pointed out that standardized performance examinations results were much used for high-stakes decisions in assessment for learners' acquisition of linguistic skills 60(25.3%) teachers cited that standardized performance examinations results were not much used for high-stakes decisions in assessment for learners' acquisition of linguistic skills while 8(3.4%) teachers noted that standardized performance examinations results were not at all used for high-stakes decisions in assessment for learners' acquisition of linguistic skills. The study findings showed majority (71.3%) of the teachers of English in secondary schools in Bungoma County believed that standardized performance examinations results were used for high-stake decisions in assessment for learners' acquisition of linguistic skills. This implied that standardized tests can have an influence on the acquisition of linguistic skills. For instance, permitting a reading examination to be read loudly to a learner would be an adjustment if the construct that is being examined is decrypting of text. However, Kopriva (2008) pointed out that it should not be presumed that learners who easily communicate in English have the literacy skills essential to comprehend the written instructions for standardized tests.

Further, 126(53.2%) teachers noted that competitions in composition writing did not at all enabled teachers of English in their schools to assess the level of acquisition of writing skills among learners, 36(15.2%) teachers reported that competitions in composition writing did not much enabled teachers of English in their schools to assess the level of acquisition of writing skills among learners while 64(27.0%) teachers reported that competitions in composition writing had much enabled teachers of English in their schools to assess the level of acquisition of writing skills among learners. From the responses, it emerged that majority (68.4%) of the teachers noted that competitions in composition writing did not at all enabled teachers of English in their schools to assess the level of acquisition of writing skills among learners. This implied that most of the schools did not have any competitions in composition writing and therefore learner's acquisition of linguistic skills was inhibited. It emerged therefore that little is done to motivate students to excel in English which impacts negatively on the attainment of what is instructed by the instructors of English to learners during English instructions therefore hampering the comprehension of the anticipated communication capabilities. Some researchers have argued that writing is essential to the learning, social and linguistic settings as it improves critical and creative thinking, allow learners to use their own judgment, writing styles, and terminologies (Lane, Graham, Harris& Malloy, 2007). These researchers further argued that writing is essential in gathering memorizing and sharing content information. They further, noted that it is an effective instrument for exploring and thinking about new concepts. This shows that composition writing enhances students' development of linguistic skills and therefore schools need to stress the need for competitions in composition writing

In addition, 122(51.5%) teachers pointed out that engaging learners in debating did not much enhanced the acquisition of speaking and critical thinking skills, 53(22.4%) teachers noted that engaging learners in debating very much enhanced the acquisition of speaking and critical thinking skills and 42(17.7%) teachers agreed that engaging learners in

debating did not at all enhance the acquisition of speaking and critical thinking skills while 20(8.4%) teachers noted that engaging learners in debating enhanced much the acquisition of speaking and critical thinking skills. From the responses, it can be shown that majority (69.2%) of the teachers of English were of the opinion that debating did not much enhanced learners' acquisition of speaking and critical thinking skills. This therefore showed that most schools did not practice debating amongst their students and this hindered the acquisition of linguistic skills. However, Satit and Anchalee (2015) noted that as a communicative and an interactive technique, debate can be integrated into the classroom context. Just by partaking, listening and watching a debate in the classroom, students can improve their speaking skill automatically. This shows that debating enhances students' speaking skills and therefore schools need to embrace debating as a way of teaching integrated English.

Further, 139(58.6%) teachers agreed that drama-based approaches in teaching much enhanced acquisition of speaking skills and 73(30.8%) teachers reported that drama-based approaches in teaching very much enhanced acquisition of speaking skills while 14(5.9%) teachers believed that drama-based approaches in teaching did not much enhanced acquisition of speaking skills. The study findings showed that majority (58.6%) of the teachers of English in secondary schools in Bungoma County believed that drama-based approaches in teaching much enhanced acquisition of speaking skills. The study found that the instruction of speaking English by use of drama enhanced the achievement of linguistic skills. Language instructors who have used drama during their instruction have found that the activities could be efficient in teaching English specifically listening capabilities instruction as pointed by Khaemane (2011) who noted that drama creates a lively learning environment which is meaningful to learners and on one hand learners will have more fun while participating in the drama activities. Furthermore, Thongnuan (2011) disclosed that the benefit of the drama instruction is the effective improvement of learners' listening and speaking skills.

It further emerged that 109(46.0%) teachers reported that use of peer support enhanced very much weak English learners to cope with the rest of the learners in class, 55(23.2%) teachers noted that use of peer support enhanced much weak English learners to cope with the rest of the learners in class while 52(21.9%) teachers reported that use of peer support enhanced not much weak English learners to cope with the rest of the learners in class. From the results, it emerged that majority (69.2%) of the teachers of English in the County believed that use of peer support enhanced very much weak English learners to cope with the rest of the learners in class. This is consistent with Flashman (2012) who noted that students with similar educational achievement are more likely to become friends and the tie between friends will be altered with the changing of academic achievement. Therefore, peer support should facilitate aspirations of students in the acquisition of language skills.

In addition, 108(45.6%) respondents noted that teachers of English did not at all meet to map out a plan and direction for the teachers' continued development within the profession, 50(21.1%) teachers reported that teachers of English did not much meet to map out a plan and direction for the teachers' continued development within the profession while 36(15.2%) teachers noted that teachers of English very much met to map out a plan and direction for the teachers' continued development within the profession. From the responses, it emerged that most (45.6%) of the teachers never met to map out a plan and direction for the teachers continued development within the profession. This implied that the various forms of evaluation used by teachers could be differing and therefore affecting the learners' acquisition of linguistic skills. Collaboration among teachers could therefore enhance learners' acquisition of linguistic skills. Hoewisch (2001) and Chien, Lee, & Kao (2008) noted that team work teaching is essential in sustaining integrated curricula and improving the development of English learners in the tutorial room, encouraging both academic performance and linguistic achievement for learners. In addition, partnership between content area teachers and teachers of English grammar is important if the instantaneous and long-term goals of students are to be achieved (Pawan & Jeremy, 2011).

On interviewing HODs it emerged that most of the teachers of English were relied on examinations that had already been set instead of designing their own examinations. Further, the HODs further noted that debates on topical issues were rarely arranged by teachers. The only group which benefited from debating was members of the debate club. In addition, the HODs confirmed that teachers of English rarely gave to students' composition writing. This was attributed to the fact that composition marking consumed a lot of time as compared to grammar. Zampardo, (2008) pointed out that the most used teaching approach that supports in the development of writing capabilities in the stable literacy strategy is the approach of writing procedure (composition writing). In this study therefore, the low adoption of composition writing in secondary schools contributed to students' low acquisition of writing skills. The more the secondary school learners acquire the writing process, the more they are likely to be able to express themselves effectively as indicated by Ozbell, (2006). Therefore, students need to be given weekly assignments on composition writing so as to improve on their writing skills.

On observation, it was found out that the teachers rarely used peer support during the teaching process. Peer support is associated to improved education outcomes among students as shown by Flashman (2012). In this study therefore, there is need for teachers of English to adopt the use of peer support during the teaching process and this will in turn enhance students' acquisition of linguistic skills. Today one outcome of the students' learning process is the ability to engage in active learning as a member of a group (Gielen & De Wever, 2015). Peer-support gives students opportunities to develop their own thinking. This helps with knowledge structuring (Johnson & Johnson 2009).and with sharing key ideas and findings (Baker, Cluett & Ireland, 2014).

From the document, the researcher found out that the teachers had clearly stated different forms of evaluation. However, most of the evaluation strategies were not used in classroom. For instance, use of competition in composition

writing. According to European Commission (2016) the evaluation process usually results in teachers issuing a set of judgments and recommendations which may trigger the implementation of a variety of remedial and support actions to help schools address any shortcomings or weaknesses (European Commission, 2016). From this, it can teachers need to use various evaluation techniques in order to enhance students' acquisition of linguistic skills.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendation

The study concluded most schools did not practice debating amongst their students and this hindered the acquisition of linguistic skills. However, drama-based approaches in teaching enhanced acquisition of speaking skills. Similarly, use of peer support enhanced very much weak English learners to cope with the rest of the learners in class. The study concluded that secondary schools need to use motivational strategies such as standardized achievement test, competitions in composition writing, debating and drama-based approaches of teaching. These motivational strategies are associated with students' effectiveness in the acquisition of linguistic skills.

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