Use of Instructional Materials in Teaching and Learning Kiswahili in Selected Public Secondary Schools in Laikipia County, Kenya

Samson Komu Ngugi

Abstract
The purpose of this study was to investigate the use of instructional materials in teaching and learning of Kiswahili subject in public secondary schools in Laikipia County in Kenya. The research objectives were to establish the instructional materials used in teaching and learning of Kiswahili subject; and to assess the attitude of Kiswahili teachers towards the use of instructional materials in teaching and learning of Kiswahili. This research was based on Mayer’s Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (CTML). The theory is significant in the selection and use of instructional materials in education. The research adopted a mixed methods research approach and a descriptive survey design. A sample size of 100 teachers of Kiswahili was selected using simple random sampling method out of the total population of 142 teachers. The data collection instruments were questionnaires for teachers of Kiswahili and the lesson observation schedule. Descriptive statistical methods were used to analyze data. The findings indicated that Kiswahili textbooks were the most commonly used materials. The teachers had a positive attitude towards the use of instructional materials. The study recommended that efforts should be made to produce, purchase, and avail a variety of instructional materials for teaching Kiswahili.

Keywords: Use of instructional materials; Kiswahili subject; teaching; learning

Introduction
The promulgation of the new constitution in Kenya in 2010 came with an elevated status of Kiswahili language as an official language besides being a national language. This implied that hence forth Kiswahili was to be used as a language of communication in official duties. It was a wakeup call to the language experts to ensure among other things that there was good awareness and mastery of the language by the envisaged users- the Kenyan people. The most effective way of accomplishing this awareness and mastery of the Kiswahili language is through entrenching proper strategies of teaching and learning Kiswahili in all learning institutions as well as formulating elaborate language policies in other sectors. This research sought to establish the use of instructional materials in teaching and learning of Kiswahili subject in secondary schools in Laikipia County in Kenya. (Lefrancois, 1991 cited in Nasibi 2003,p 9) defines teaching as the process that facilities changes in learners and entails telling and persuading, showing and demonstrating, guiding and directing, the learners’ efforts or a combination of these efforts. Learning on the other hand is the process by which we acquire and retain attitudes, understanding, skills, and capabilities that cannot be attributed to the inherited behavior patterns or physical growth (Farrant, 1980 cited in Nasibi 2003, p 18). Learning is a relatively permanent change in behavior potentiality that occurs as a result of
reinforced practice. For the teaching and learning activity to be successful, the process requires facilitation through the use of instructional materials.

Nwike and Onyegbui (2013) defined instructional materials as the different teaching aids or apparatus which a classroom teacher employs to facilitate his or her teaching for the achievement of the stated objective. They are actually the materials or tools locally made or imported that could make a tremendous improvement of a lesson if intelligently used. The power of media in promoting learning has been recognized over the ages. This is best expressed by the saying, “When I hear I forget; what I see I remember and when I do, I know” (in Ellis, 1991). The study has targeted the teaching and learning of Kiswahili because of its status and role in Kenya and the East African region as a whole. Kiswahili is used widely by a large section of Kenya in the urban and rural areas [Republic of Kenya (ROK), 1988]. This lingua franca enjoys goodwill not just as a communication tool but also as a symbol of regional identity and integration of the East African peoples and cultures. The language is used in official circles like in parliamentary deliberations and in law courts at the district level. Presidential speeches on public days are written in Kiswahili and English. The primary school teachers use Kiswahili in teaching the learners and also when interacting with other citizens. Kiswahili is a compulsory and examinable subject in Kenya’s primary and secondary school levels of education. The language is ethnically neutral and is not associated with any community thus official language in Kenya (alongside English) as well as the national language of Kenya.

At the international level, Kiswahili language is the lingua franca of East African countries and is used in commercial and general communication. Ipaara & Maina (2008) asserts that Kiswahili is taught as a subject in many universities the world over. Given that Kiswahili is taught in many other countries, then it is an important language and its poor performance can lower its status. Poor performance therefore means one is not competent in the language and may not easily secure jobs that call for expertise in the language. Mazrui & Mazrui (1998) argue that Kiswahili and English are the most influential trans-ethnic languages in East Africa. They proceed to argue that the two languages are used in many activities ranging from sacred to secular. Kiswahili is a symbol of identity and heritage to most East Africans. To a large extent, it symbolizes cultural liberation from the Western World (Ngugi, 1993) and a means through which they can engage themselves in the processes of globalization with the outside world. From the foregoing discussion on the importance of Kiswahili language, it’s paramount that the instructional process be well managed for proper mastery of the language by the learners.

In Kenya, the Ominde Commission (ROK, 1964) placed emphasis on the preparation and use of instructional resources for the teaching of various subjects. The commission called upon the Ministry of Education to produce and avail to schools the relevant instructional resources. Experience has shown that spoken words alone in the communication of ideas are grossly ineffective and inefficient in producing desired learning outcomes. The use of instructional materials in teaching and learning Kiswahili offer real experiences in giving the teacher a basis for thinking and understanding. They supply concrete basis for conceptual thinking and therefore reduce meaningless responses of students. At the same time, they overcome the limitations of time, space and size by helping the students to understand things that are too small or too big, or too slow or too fast (Peacocks, 2011). Use of instructional materials also saves time and thus enables students grasp ideas more effectively and faster. Likewise, they help to simplify and emphasize facts and clarify difficulties. To the students, the effective use
of instructional materials would enable them to effectively learn and retain what they have learnt and thereby advancing their performance in the subject in question.

Education is the catalyst towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MGDs) as envisaged in the UNESCO initiative of 2002. It is with this recognition that the researcher believes that Kiswahili being an integral part of the school curriculum will have an immense contribution towards the achievement of the MDGs. This study was conducted on the basis that performance in Kiswahili subject in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) in Laikipia County had persistently been poor as observed in Table 1. The researcher was interested in investigating the kind of instructional materials used in secondary schools in Laikipia County to enhance instruction in Kiswahili subject.

Table 1: KCSE Kiswahili Subject Mean Scores in Laikipia County in the years 2010 to 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kiswahili Mean Scores (x/12)</td>
<td>6.6301</td>
<td>4.4654</td>
<td>4.7385</td>
<td>5.2483</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Ministry of Education (Laikipia, CDE, 2013)*

Statement of the problem

There has been discontent over the unsatisfactory performance in Kiswahili at KCSE examinations in secondary schools in Kenya. The Kenya National Examination Council Report (2013) indicated that the performance of Kiswahili between the years 2009 and 2012 had been wanting. In Laikipia County, the trend in the poor performance in Kiswahili Subject had been persistently poor by the time of this study. This can be attributed to a number of factors. The Kenyan society generally shies away from using Kiswahili language preferring to use English in many circumstances. Also, most school policies emphasize the use of English at the expense of Kiswahili (only the 40 minutes lesson in class in a day). Such language policies in schools can demotivate Kiswahili teachers besides inculcating students’ negative attitude towards the language. Sheng’ is rapidly spreading in schools and complicating the code-shifting situation already exiting in Kenya (Abdulaziz and Osinde (1997). Sheng’s influence has even permeated parliament, hospitals, churches, banking systems, among others. With more and more institutions that used to oppose Sheng’ beginning to be gullible, the threat of Sheng’ in Kenya is now real. All these have worked against the promotion of the language and contributed to the poor performance. To acquire and learn Kiswahili, like any other second language, a learner needs to listen, read, speak and write constantly in this target language. In many areas where majority of learners come from one ethnic group, they often use their vernacular as their medium of communication. They also have an affinity to listening to the vernacular radio stations. This further complicates the learner’s development and competence in Kiswahili language.

To change the above trend and raise the performance of Kiswahili subject in the national examinations, it requires the cultivation of a positive attitude towards the language. Learning institutions should lead in sensitizing their learners on the importance of acquiring competence in the language. This can be achieved to a larger extent through the integration of instructional materials in Kiswahili lessons. Tincton (2006) found that instructional materials are successful in raising examination scores, improving students’ attitudes and lower the amount of time required in mastering certain materials. The purpose of this study was to investigate the use of instructional materials in Kiswahili subject in public secondary schools in Laikipia County in Kenya.
Research questions
This study addressed two research questions: (i) Which instructional materials are used in the teaching and learning of Kiswahili subject in public secondary schools in Laikipia County? And (ii) what are the attitudes of Kiswahili teachers on the use of instructional materials in the teaching and learning of Kiswahili subject.

Significance of the study
The research findings will be beneficial to the learners because the use of instructional materials will be emphasized in the instructional process in Kiswahili subject thereby enhancing their competence in Kiswahili language. It will rekindle the learners’ interest and joy in Kiswahili lessons. Teachers will use the findings to enhance teaching and learning in order to improve the students’ academic achievement in Kiswahili subject. The school administrators will use the findings when planning and strategizing for better academic performance in Kiswahili in national examinations. Curriculum planners will find the research essential in organizing the Kiswahili subject syllabus for secondary schools and other educational levels.

Theoretical Framework
The study on the use of instructional materials in teaching and learning Kiswahili is rooted on Richard Mayer’s Cognitive theory of multimedia learning of 2010. The theory informs the selection and use of instructional materials in education. In education, multimedia takes different forms, including words and pictures, and can be presented as printed or spoken text. The pictures can be presented in static form, such as illustrations, photos, diagrams, charts, or maps. They may also be presented in a dynamic form, such as animation or video (Mayer, 2010). Media facilitates the comprehension of the difficult concepts and ideas and makes learning interesting and a fulfilling experience.

Multimedia researchers generally define multimedia as the combination of text and pictures; and suggest that multimedia learning occurs when we build mental representations from these words and pictures (Mayer, 2005). The words can be spoken or written, and the pictures can be any form of graphical imagery including illustrations, photos, animation, or video. The use of instructional multimedia can also take such formats as, students watching and listening to a narrated animation, reading a Kiswahili textbook, playing an educational video game, attending a Power-Point presentation, or watching and listening to an educational video.

Watching the changes of visual information, rather than mentally inferring this information, helps learners to free up cognitive resources to organize and integrate information more effectively and efficiently (Schnottz & Rasch, 2005). Dynamic visualizations are also perceived by students as useful due to their ability to present content that is difficult to verbalize but easy to demonstrate. Although humans can construct a mental representation of the semantic meaning from auditory or visual information alone, instruction that is presented in both formats, provides complementary information that is relevant to learning (Baggett, 1984). Instructional materials such as taped cassettes, school radio Kiswahili programs, newspapers and magazines in Kiswahili language avail an opportunity for the learner to listen and read interesting information in the target language.

The teacher should create more opportunities for language acquisition by availing adequate instructional materials for teaching and learning Kiswahili. Instructional materials will come in handy to ensure that apart from their teacher, students have an opportunity to see and listen...
to other audio-visual resources such as pictures, radio programs, TV, and engage in their own play and comedy. Learners also need to read widely and write in the target language.

The researcher was of the opinion that instructional materials were vital in the teaching and learning of Kiswahili and therefore sought to establish the extent to which they were being integrated in the teaching and learning of the subject.

**Literature Review**

Republic of Kenya (1964) indicates that Kiswahili is supposed to achieve the goal of unifying all Kenyans. For Kiswahili to achieve this goal, the use of instructional materials in the instructional process is significant as resources enhance instruction. Schools should have a variety of materials such as books from different writers to enable students cover the syllabus adequately. Bila (2008) suggested that teachers are free to use a variety of relevant materials while teaching. Such materials range from pictures, charts, diagrams and models, televisions, videos, projectors and computers. Such materials provide students with opportunities to use their senses, so that at the end of instruction, students can perform teachers’ stated objectives.

Textbooks are the main teaching and learning resources of any subject. They help in setting out the general guideline of the syllabus. Other instructional materials include pictures, flash cards, composite pictures, sequences of pictures and figures. A picture pulls the learners’ attention and helps them understand the concept that is being taught. Pictures may be provided through various means among them the text books, wall sheets, and film projectors. TV is an excellent medium for illustrating applications, describing context, and generating interest (Skolnik & Smith, 1993).

In Kenya, the systematic development and use of radio broadcasts for schools began in 1960 as a national strategy for improving the standard of education and could also be valuable for the teaching of Kiswahili and other languages to overcome teachers’ own limitations in teaching their subjects; and to help students in pronunciation and understanding of difficult words and with sentence construction. A study conducted by Sharp (1995) found out that schools in Britain use radios to teach school subjects such as Music and dance to help improve students social skills; foreign languages such as French, Germany, English, History, Mathematics, Technology and Science in secondary schools. There are special radio programs for different levels of students or classes. The Ministry of Education has a department for preparing such programs and the timetables showing the date and time when they go on air. The timetables for such programs are later distributed to all schools in the country. Radio teaching may be presented in various forms. It may be in form of a play or a discussion. The students enjoy listening to the radio as well as the new sound. The music interval helps the learners to relax and be more receptive. It also helps learners to compare themselves with the rest country wide. Odera (2007) indicated that the majority of teachers regarded radio lessons to be very valuable and helped to improve methods of teaching Kiswahili Language.

Flashcards are also good instructional materials. These are small cards with a picture or a symbol on them used to teach reading. A picture of an elephant for instance may be drawn or stuck on a card and the word ‘elephant’ written underneath or on a different card. The students are encouraged to associate the pictures and the words through various ‘look and say’ activities and games such as kim’s game pairs and others. After presenting a number of words with pictures that the students already know, the teacher asks for volunteers to come
out and match the pictures and words. When the students have learnt to read the words, they can be divided into teams and be assigned to play reading games using the flashcards. A poster is another effective instructional material. It is a pictorial device designed to attract attention and communicate a story, a fact, an idea or an image rapidly and clearly. It is a graphic representation of some strong emotional appeal that is carried through a combination of graphic aids such as pictures, cartoons lettering and other visual arts on a placard. Posters exert a great influence on the observer. They can be displayed around the class.

Television sets are also used as instructional resources. There are various TV programs prepared to aid class instruction. Different TV channels have their own instructional programs which the teacher can make use of to enhance his work. With the use of a television the learner is able to hear and see the TV teacher in progress. The relationship between the learners and the TV teacher is very close compared to using the radio lessons. Learners can also see the teaching aids that are being manipulated by the teacher. A single teacher can teach learners in large groups located in different rooms in a school at once. The Kenya Secondary School syllabus (Kenya Institute of Education (K.I.E), 2002) recommends the use of instructional materials such as charts, flash cards, realia, resource persons and genres of oral literature such as narratives, riddles and proverbs to enhance listening skills. Teachers are encouraged also to assign television viewing as homework, which has the added advantage of promoting home-school connections, as well as bringing parents into their children’s learning activities. Dhingra (2003) observes that in-class discussions of home viewing brings the students’ home life to the school environment, and reciprocally what is learned at school throws light on what they see on television at home.

Computers are widely used for a variety of operations, such as writing through word processing, class presentations, data analysis, retrieving of information and communications (Heinich, Molenda, Russell & Smaldino, 2002). Accessibility to this technology allows the tutors to type tests, record grades, create handouts and transparencies and printed materials. In the field of education, IT is commonly described as how computers and the internet can best be harnessed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the process of teaching and learning (Guha, 2003). The current study aimed at investigating the use of instructional materials in the teaching and learning of Kiswahili Subject in secondary schools in Laikipia County.

Methodology
This research adopted a mixed methods approach and a descriptive survey research design. The target population of the study was teachers of Kiswahili in public secondary schools (a total of 142 in the county). Laikipia County has a total of 84 public secondary schools. Stratified sampling was used to categorize schools into their status as national schools, county schools and sub-county schools. The single national school was selected automatically for the study. Simple random sampling was used to select two county schools out of the four for the study. Sub-county schools were selected through simple random sampling proportionally from each sub-county. A sample size of 57 secondary schools was selected for the study out of the total of 84 schools in the county. Also, a sample size of 100 teachers of Kiswahili was selected using simple random sampling method out of the total population of 142 teachers. The data collection instruments included questionnaires for teachers of Kiswahili and the lesson observation schedule which was used to record the instructional materials used by the teacher in a classroom lesson.
Findings
This section is a report of the findings obtained on the use of instructional materials in the teaching and learning of Kiswahili Subject.

From Table 2, it was found out that the most frequently used instructional material was the textbook at a frequency of 77.3%. The finding concur with the observation done in the classroom on the use of instructional materials which revealed that the textbooks were the most frequently used instructional material in the instructional process in Kiswahili. Otieno, & Florence,(2012) observed that text books and other resources in teaching enhance retention of 80% of what is learned. It also implies that teachers had a positive attitude towards the integration of instructional materials in their lessons.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use of instructional materials</th>
<th>Textbooks</th>
<th>Newspapers</th>
<th>Pictures</th>
<th>Charts</th>
<th>Library</th>
<th>TV</th>
<th>Audio Cassettes</th>
<th>School Radio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Frequently</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>77.3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>29.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The lesson observation schedules were used to record the instructional materials used by the teachers in a classroom lesson. It mainly considered the instructional materials used and how effectively they were used for teaching. Out of the 57 lessons observed, 15.8 % were lessons without instructional materials. Text books were the most common instructional materials in most lessons. Visual materials such as pictures/photographs, audio visual cassettes, charts, and newspapers and magazines were used in a few schools. Other kinds of instructional materials such as radios, Televisions and computers were not used in any of the observed Kiswahili lessons in the schools. Some teachers may not have been exposed to the use of electrical appliances such as the television, films/slides or radio during the training. Some teachers may also be unwilling to use instructional materials because they find it time consuming and yet they would like to cover the syllabus in a specified time frame. Kimani (1997) advocated for teaching approach where the learners would participate in the instructional process so that the learner would not depend entirely on the teacher for effective learning. Instructional materials make a lesson interactive thereby effective. There were deliberate efforts by majority of teachers to integrate the instructional materials in teaching and learning Kiswahili in their schools. Most of the teachers had a positive attitude in the use of instructional materials in the teaching and learning of Kiswahili Subject.

Conclusion
It was concluded that that Kiswahili textbooks were the most commonly used materials. Visual materials such as pictures/photographs, audio-visual cassettes, charts, newspapers and magazines were used in a few schools. Other materials such as radios, Televisions and
computers were unavailable in most schools and not used in the teaching and learning of Kiswahili Subject. There was a deliberate attempt by the majority of teachers to use the instructional materials that were available in teaching and learning Kiswahili in their schools. The teachers had a positive attitude towards the use of instructional materials in teaching and learning of Kiswahili.

Recommendations
The study recommended that efforts should be made to produce, purchase, and avail a variety of instructional materials for teaching Kiswahili. Another recommendation was that teachers should be encouraged to use all the available materials in the teaching and learning of Kiswahili so that they don’t rely on the Kiswahili text books only. The Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) should hold frequent seminars and workshops with the teachers to sensitize them on a variety of instructional materials for Kiswahili and the importance of integrating them in the instructional process in Kiswahili.

References


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