

**THE INFLUENCE OF ORAL COMMUNICATION STYLES IN THE  
INSTRUCTION OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN SECONDARY  
SCHOOLS IN ELGEYO MARAKWET COUNTY, KENYA**

**BY**

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EDUCATIONAL MEDIA,**

**MOI UNIVERSITY**

**2020**

**DECLARATION**

**DECLARATION BY THE CANDIDATE**

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## ABSTRACT

Oral language is the most frequently used medium of communication. It is the primary medium through which classroom discourse takes place. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of oral communication styles in the instruction of English language in secondary schools in Elgeyo Marakwet County. The study was carried out to: examine the teachers' oral communication strategies in English language classes and how they influence instruction, assess the learners' oral communication strategies and their influence on the learning of English language, evaluate the different interaction patterns in English language classes and how they influence instruction, establish the language registers used in English language classes and how they influence instruction and finally find out the oral communication challenges experienced during the instruction of English language. The study was based on the interaction hypothesis by Michael Long which offers an explanation how ESL learners can best succeed at learning a target language. Embedded within pragmatism as the research philosophy and the descriptive survey design, the study utilized mixed methods approach to collect and analyze qualitative and quantitative data. It was carried out in secondary schools among form three learners, on the assumption that they are aware of the oral communication strategies and classroom interaction patterns used in their English language classrooms. Simple random sampling was used to select a total of 13 out of 112 schools engaged in the study. Thirteen form three classes randomly selected were observed, thirteen teachers of English language purposefully selected were interviewed and finally 195 students randomly selected from the observed classes filled the student questionnaire. Both qualitative and quantitative data were obtained. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences and presented in form of frequencies and percentages in tables, figures and brief descriptions. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically and presented in form of narrations derived from the study objectives and variables. It was established that teachers employed: repetition, rephrasing, paraphrasing, checking of understanding; use of simple sentences and corrective feedback. Learners employed: attempting to think in English, fluency oriented, negotiation for meaning, circumlocution and social affective strategies. They did not employ: message reduction, alteration, abandonment and getting the gist strategies; that three interaction patterns occurred in English language classes- teacher-learners, learners-teachers and learner-learners; that the teachers and the learners used non- official forms of English language during classroom interaction; finally, that majority of the learners experienced challenges in understanding certain English words and phrases that their teachers used and difficulty in pronouncing certain English words. The study recommends that teachers should expose learners to a lot of authentic reading materials. This should expose them to the use of the English language in different contexts and also aid in increasing their repertoire of English vocabulary and sentence structures. Finally, teachers should use varied authentic communicative contexts during classroom instruction to provide near native speaker competence. The findings are useful to: teachers of English language, ministry of education officials, publishers and authors of English language text books.

**DEDICATION**

To my parents, my late father Gabriel Cheboi and my mother Flomena Cheboi for sowing the seeds of hard work and discipline.

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>CBE</b>	Competency Based Education
<b>CLT</b>	Communicative Language Teaching
<b>EFA</b>	Education for All
<b>ELT</b>	English Language Teaching
<b>ESL</b>	English as a Second Language
<b>G.O.K</b>	Government of Kenya
<b>L1</b>	First Language
<b>L2</b>	Second Language
<b>LAD</b>	Language Acquisition Device
<b>LLS</b>	Language Learning Strategies
<b>MOE</b>	Ministry of Education
<b>NNS</b>	Non Native Speaker
<b>NS</b>	Native Speaker
<b>SL</b>	Second Language
<b>SLA</b>	Second Language Acquisition
<b>SPSS</b>	Statistical Package of Social Sciences
<b>TESOL</b>	Teaching Of English to Speakers of Other Languages
<b>TL</b>	Target Language
<b>TLS</b>	Teaching Learning Strategies
<b>Tr</b>	Teacher
<b>UG</b>	Universal Grammar
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational Social and Cultural Organization
<b>USA</b>	United States of America
<b>ZPD</b>	Zone of Proximal Development

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

#### 1.1 Introduction

Oral language is the most important and also the most frequently used medium of communication. It is the primary medium through which classroom discourse takes place. At class level communication styles by both teachers and learners depend much on it. It involves a process of utilizing thinking, knowledge and skills in order to speak and listen effectively. As such it is central to the lives of students and their teachers. Consequently, this study, ‘the influence of oral communication styles on the instruction of English language in secondary schools’ was necessitated by the centrality of oral language in classroom discourse and how it is utilized by teachers and learners to acquire language skills and knowledge in English language. Therefore, this chapter presents background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives, research questions, scope and limitations of the study, significance, justification and assumptions of the study. It also presents theoretical and conceptual frameworks and finally operational definition of terms.

#### 1.2 Background to the Study

Oral communication strategies and classroom interaction play a significant role in classroom discourse. A number of researchers for example, (Wang & Castro, 2010; Li, 2014) have found that language learning outcome is affected by the manner in which teachers and learners interact and communicate orally. Communication has been an object of research interest over a long period of time. Researchers have attempted to identify typical speech events and participation structures, examined the

character of the teacher talk, indicated the effects of different types of communication patterns used in the language classroom on learning and investigated the influence of cultural factors on the nature of classroom interaction, (Aleksandrak, 2013).

Classrooms are considered important sites of intellectual and individual development because many classroom activities created through oral interaction that occur between teachers and students and among students will ultimately shape individual learners' development. This is best achieved when learners are properly motivated by adopting interactive activities that promote language acquisition and development. Learners whose classes are not interactive enough do not achieve basic literacy and numeracy skills as the EFA Global Monitoring Report (GMR) estimated that out of a total of world population of 650 million primary age children, 250 million are not achieving basic literacy and numeracy skills even though 130 million of them have spent at least four years in school, (UNESCO, 2014). The bulk of these children who are not achieving basic literacy and numeracy skills come from developing countries, Kenya included. These children who do not achieve basic literacy and numeracy proceed to secondary school and they will definitely have difficulty in learning. Teachers should therefore use interactive communication strategies as an intervention so that they are not left behind in education.

Interaction is an elicitation of willing student participation and initiative which requires a high degree of interpersonal communication skills, (Rivers, 1987). It also refers to the exchange of information between the teachers and the students or among the students themselves. Interaction has long been considered important in language learning. "It may be quiet, it may be noisy, it may be alert and dynamic; it may take place in large groups, small groups or in pairs", (Kramsch, 1987, p. 18). Interaction allows the students to get engaged deeply in activities that draw on their creativity.

Therefore, teachers should demonstrate interaction qualities to overcome students' inhibitions and fear of embarrassment. According to Swain (1985) interaction allows the learner to practice the target language thus enhancing fluency; to notice to trigger a particular structural form that needs modification to test hypotheses about structural points and reflect them metalinguistically. In the same vein, Brown (1991) and Mclaughin (1987) argue that interaction provides an opportunity for the non-native speaker (NNS) to practice structural components and to increase the likelihood of the automaticity of such components. This study set out to investigate the influence of oral communication styles in the instruction of English language in secondary schools in Elgeyo Marakwet County.

Brown (1994) observes that through interaction students can increase their language repertoire as they listen to or read authentic linguistic material or listen to the output of their fellow students in discussions, skits, problem solving tasks or conversations. During interactions, students can use all they have learnt of the target language or have casually absorbed in real life exchanges where people use the target language to express meaning. Rivers (1981) says that learners will therefore have experience in creating messages from what they hear or read, since comprehension is a process of creation. Additionally, Richards (1991) points out that second language learning is facilitated when learners are engaged in interaction and meaningful communication. It can thus be argued that teachers who use appropriate oral communication styles during classroom interaction facilitate language learning among the learners. This study set out to investigate the influence of oral communication styles on the instruction of English language in secondary school in Elgeyo Marakwet County.

Classroom interaction has therefore become an important feature of second language pedagogy. It can occur between the teacher and learners and/or between learners



themselves either individually or collectively. The most frequent way of organizing classroom interaction, depends on who communicates with whom. For example:

- a) Teacher – learners
- b) Teacher – learner/a group of learners
- c) Learner – learner
- d) Learners – learners

The first form of interaction (teacher – learners) is established when a teacher talks to the whole class at the same time. He takes the role of a leader or controller and decides on the type and process of the activity. The primary function of such interaction is controlled practice of certain language structures or vocabulary. Mostly, they are in the form of repeating structures after the teacher (the model). This type of practice is also referred to as ‘a choral drill’.

The second arrangement is conducted when the teacher refers to the whole class, but expects only one student or a group of students to answer. It is often used for evaluation of individual students; often referred to as individual drill. This arrangement can also be used for an informal conversation at the beginning of the lesson or for leading students into a less guided activity.

The third type of interaction is called ‘pair work’. Students get an assignment, which they have to finish in pairs. The teacher holds the role of a consultant or adviser, helping when necessary. After the activity, he puts the pairs into a whole group and each pair reports on their work. The last type of classroom interaction is called ‘group work’. As with pair work, the teacher’s role here is that of a consultant and individual groups report on their work as a follow-up activity.

The last two ways of organization are particularly useful for encouraging interaction among students. In large classes, they present the only possibility for as many students as possible to use the target language. Research by Long et al. (1976) in Nunan 1991 has shown that students use more language functions in pair- and group-work than in other forms of interaction. It has also been proven that students perceive them as the most pleasant ways of learning, because they feel relaxed and subsequently communicate better, (Phillips, 1983 cited in Hatch, 1992). Such work encourages independent learning and gives some responsibility for learning to students. It approaches real-life communication where students talk to their peers in small groups or pairs. Nevertheless, whole-class organization should not be completely neglected since it is still more appropriate for guided and controlled activities.

In a traditional classroom the teacher had the dominant role of an all-knowing leader who 'filled' students' empty heads with knowledge. This role has changed and the teacher has now got many roles depending on different classroom situations. Most students will not engage in an interaction by themselves unless the teacher initiates. Obviously, the role of the teacher is very crucial in motivating and creating interest in the topics.

The basis of the communicative approach is this capacity of the teacher to adopt himself or herself to the changing roles. According to Brown (2007) a teacher can take up different roles that might facilitate learning. Tricia (2000) identifies important roles the teachers can play, as controller in eliciting words; as assessor of accuracy as students try to pronounce the words; as corrector of pronunciation; as organizer in giving instructions of the pair work, initiating it, monitoring it, and organizing feedback; as promoter while students are working together and as resource if students

need help with words and structures during the pair work. These roles are discussed in the following section.

The teacher as a Controller; within the classroom interaction and especially learner-teacher interaction, the teacher is responsible for the teaching and learning processes. Harmer (2010) asserts that the teacher's job here is to transmit knowledge from himself to his students. In this role, the teacher's characteristics include playing the role of the assessor, the most expected act from the teacher is to show the learners that they are developing accuracy. He says that this is done through giving correction or by praising the students. The students have to know how they are being assessed; the teacher should tell them their strengths and weaknesses, the students, then can have a clear idea about their levels and what they need to concentrate on. Another important point is that the teacher should be careful when correcting pronunciation mistakes or errors the learners commit during classroom interaction, that is the teacher should strive to give the correct pronunciation, form or meaning because the learners very often acquire these issues from their teachers.

In the same breadth, the teacher acts as an organizer, this is the most important role of a teacher. According to Harmer (2010) the teacher acts in a classroom where many things must be set up such as organizing pair/ group work, giving learners instructions on how they should interact, and finally stopping everything when the time is over. The teacher in such a situation spends much time in engaging all the class in the interaction and ensures their participation. Once the students are involved in the interaction, the teacher can stop interacting and let the learners speak and listen to each other, exchange views and correct each other too.

In addition to the above roles a teacher plays the role of a prompter, this role is amplified most in those situations where the learners do not find the correct words when they talk to each other or with the teacher, the role of the teacher then is to encourage the learners to think creatively so that they can be independent from the teacher. In such a role, the teacher must prevent himself to help the students even if he wants, so that they will be creative in their learning.

Finally, another role the teacher needs to adopt in a classroom interaction is the observer. Harmer (2010) points out that the teacher should not distract the students' attention so that they can interact naturally and spontaneously. Moreover, he has to take notes about his learners in their use of actual language. Teachers do not use observation only to give feedback, but also to evaluate the success of the classroom interaction in developing the speaking skill of the learners. If there is failure in achieving fluency, then the teacher tries to bring changes in the classroom in the future.

When a teacher assumes the role of a controller, the learner is expected to be passive and receptive. The other roles provide a more learner centred approach to teaching and learning. This approach allows the learner to take responsibility of his/her learning by taking part in designing classroom activities. According to Karavas-Doukas (1995) it is important to note that the teacher's and learners' roles are determined by the teaching methodology adopted, the lesson's aims as well as being influenced by culture and society. Dörnyei and Murphey (2003) say that successful learning will depend on how learners relate to each other, the classroom environment and the roles the teacher and learners play. According to KIE (2006) the main objective of teaching English oral skills is to enable the learner to communicate using

the language competently in a variety of situations. This study therefore sought to investigate the influence of oral communication styles in the instruction of English language in secondary schools.

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

The Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) reports on the performance of English language from 2014- 2017 decry the poor performance in the subject in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examination (KCSE). KNEC (2018) on its report on KCSE 2017 analysis report points out that performance in English language nationally still falls below the ideal (50%) calling for innovation in curriculum implementation (APPENDIX 5). It is the argument in this study that, one major cause for this could be inadequate use of oral communication strategies and classroom interaction in the teaching and learning of English. This situation if un-reversed will continue to the near future and it will thus compromise the students' academic achievement, language performance, education standards and future work force hence difficulty for Kenya to attain vision 2030. In addition, Kenyans will also be disadvantaged in their access to opportunities internationally because English is an international lingua franca and the language of business transactions.

Oral language is primary in the learning process and comes before reading and writing. Ur (1996) points out that speaking is the most important skill among the four language skills. Similarly, Shteiwi and Hamuda (2016), contend that speaking is considered an important factor in language learning. The focus of this study was on oral communication styles as a language teaching and learning strategy because classroom interaction is dependent on oral communication. It is one of the primary

means by which learning is accomplished. In language classrooms it takes on a significant role in that it is both the medium through which learning is realized and an object of pedagogical attention, (Hall & Walsh 2002).

Previous research in the learning of English focused on teaching English for communication, (Seidlhofer, 2005; Lyster, 2007). Others like Oponong-Sekyere et al. (2013) focused on factors influencing academic performance in English language. Athiemoolan and Kibui (2012) studied challenges faced by learners on the interpretation and application of reading comprehension and vocabulary skills. Omulando (2009) studied language learning strategies in the instruction of English in secondary schools in Kenya. In addition, Muriungi and Kibui (2015) in their study argue that poor methods of motivating students impact on the acquisition of English language skills among students in Kenya. An analysis of these studies indicate a scenario where few studies have dealt with the influence of oral communication styles in the instruction of English in secondary schools in Kenya hence the need for this study. This investigation provided an insight into how learners acquire, learn and use oral communication skills hence improving their performance and communicative competence in the language.

#### **1.4 The Purpose of the Study**

This study sought to investigate the influence of oral communication styles in the instruction of English language in secondary schools.

### **1.5 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of this study were to:

1. Examine the teachers' oral communication strategies in English language classes and how they influence instruction.
2. Assess the learners' oral communication strategies in English language classes and how they influence learning of English language.
3. Evaluate the different oral interaction patterns in English language classes and how they influence instruction.
4. Establish the language registers used by teachers and learners in English language classes and how they influence instruction of English language.
5. Find out the oral communication challenges experienced during the instruction of English language.

### **1.6 Research Questions**

1. What are the teachers' oral communication strategies in English language classes and how do they influence the instruction of English language?
2. What are the learners' oral communication strategies in English language classes and how do they influence the learning of English language?
3. What are the different oral interaction patterns in English language classes and how do they influence the instruction of English language?
4. What are the language registers used by teachers and learners in English language classes and how do they influence the instruction of English language?
5. What are the oral communication challenges experienced during the instruction of English language?

### **1.7 Significance of the Study**

The findings of this study are useful to teachers in the field of ELT in designing appropriate strategies and methodologies that improve oral communication styles and classroom interaction and hence improve English language learning, communicative competence and performance. It will also help teachers of English to adopt better methods of oral communication and interaction strategies in order to improve language learning and teaching. In addition, the study will also benefit publishers and authors of English language text books so that they design English language text books with activities that promote oral communication and interaction among the learners and the teachers, thus improving language learning. Finally, the study will inform the Ministry of Education the need to provide enough facilities in schools to aid the improvement oral communication in English language classrooms. Such facilities include provision of spacious classrooms, modern libraries and enough text books.

### **1.8 Justification for the Study**

With the emergence of English as a global lingua franca Seidlhofer, (2005) cited in Xiao (2014), the growing need for good oral communication has put more emphasis in teaching English for communication than ever before and at the same time increased the teacher's responsibility in helping students to use the language with proficiency required to enhance their prospects in accessing better opportunities in education and employment within their own contexts and so on (TESOL White Paper, 2012). Based on this context, the teaching of English language in the world today as well as in Kenya has been taken very seriously because of the economic and social benefits of the English language.



Therefore a good language classroom should create optimal conditions for developing learners' sociocultural knowledge, that is the culturally embedded rules of social behavior, and their linguistic knowledge, which includes discourse and speech act knowledge, and knowledge of the grammar, vocabulary and phonology of the target language, (Thornbury, 2007). These knowledge areas must then be appropriately activated in order to be made available for use in the classroom and beyond, (Alexsandrzak, 2011). Language learning requires a favourable language classroom that will activate the learners' sociocultural knowledge as well as the linguistic knowledge of the target language. In this type of classroom learners communicate freely using oral communication styles and classroom interaction patterns. This scenario will in turn improve the learners' communicative competence, thus the need to focus on oral communication styles as the focus in this study.

In Kenya, a lot of emphasis has been put in the learning of English in school and it has taken center stage in the Kenyan education curriculum. It is the medium of instruction from primary 4, up to tertiary level of education, (Webb & Kembo- Sure 2000 cited in Kabellow, Barasa & Omulando, 2013). Similarly, the Kenya Certificate of Secondary School curriculum by the Kenya Institute of Education (2006) emphasizes the importance of English as both compulsory and examinable subject, (Onchera, 2013). The mastery of English language by students will enable them do well in other subjects as well. The Kenya Secondary School English Syllabus echoes this fact, that fluency in all aspects of the English language will enable students to perform better in all other subjects whose medium of instruction is English, (KIE, 2006).

It can also be noted that English language is the most widely used language in our schools today. It is the medium of instruction and assessment in all subjects except Kiswahili, yet the performance in the subject is still far below the expected standard, (KNEC, 2011; 2018). A good command and proficiency in English language is fundamental for any student in Kenya. This is because a student whose standard of English language is very low cannot excel in school because he can neither understand the teacher's instructions nor respond to examination questions efficiently, (Onchera, 2013). Based on the aforesaid factors, the performance of English language in Elgeyo Marakwet County at Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KSCE) has been low for many years and hence the need for this study.

## **1.9 Scope and Limitations of the Study**

The following section presents the scope and limitations of the study. Scope of the study refers to the parameters under which the study operated on, while limitations are matters and happenings that arose in the study which were beyond the control of the researcher.

### **1.9.1 Scope of the Study**

The study focused on the influence of oral communication styles in the instruction of English language in secondary schools. It was also confined to 13 secondary schools in Elgeyo Marakwet County, 13 forms three classes, 13 teachers of English language and 195 form three learners.

### **1.9.2 Limitations of the Study**

In the study the following were anticipated as the limitations of the study: first the teachers would not cooperate during the interview as some may view the study as an intrusion into their professional work by the researcher. The researcher took care of this by assuring them that the study was voluntary and their informed consent was sought before they participated in the study. In addition, the researcher informed the respondents that the study was for academic purposes and a high level of confidentiality for them (respondents) and the data was assured.

Secondly, results from the classroom observation guide would not be a true representation of the actual results. This is because human beings tend to modify their behaviours when being watched. However, these results were validated by comparing with those of the teachers' interview with the aim of noting a point of convergence or divergence.

Third, Elgeyo Marakwet County has many secondary schools which the researcher was not able to visit all of them because of time and cost factors. However, this was resolved by taking a representative sample of the schools in the county. The results from this sample were then generalized.

### **1.10 Assumptions of the Study**

This study was based on the following assumptions: first, the English lessons are interactive in nature whereby both the teachers and the learners of English language use oral communication strategies during classroom interaction. Second, the form three students could read, understand and interpret the questionnaire they were given to fill on the influence of oral communication styles in the instruction of English

language in secondary schools. Third, during the classroom observation visits both the teachers and the learners of English language would behave in natural and authentic ways to facilitate the observation of the oral communication strategies and classroom interaction patterns taking place in English language classes when normal learning of English takes place. Finally, form three teachers of English would agree to be interviewed and subsequently cooperate during the oral interview in order to elicit enough and appropriate responses to be analyzed for the study ‘the influence of oral communication styles in the instruction of English language in secondary schools.’

### **1.11 Theoretical Framework**

The study was based on the interaction hypothesis by Long (1983) which offers an explanation how ESL learners can best succeed at learning a target language. SL development can be facilitated through interaction between non-native speakers and native speakers or non-native speakers of a higher level by creating a naturalistic SL acquisition environment, therefore providing awareness of L2 gaps through negotiation of meaning.

He argues that conversational interaction is essential if not sufficient condition for second language acquisition. He studied the ways in which speakers modify their speech and their interaction patterns in order to help learners participate in a conversation or understand meaning in a new language. He agreed with Krashen that comprehensible input is necessary for language acquisition. He argued that modified interaction is the necessary mechanism for making language comprehensible. That is, what learners need are opportunities to interact with other speakers, working together to reach mutual comprehension through negotiation for meaning. Through these

interactions, interlocutors figure out what they need to do to keep the conversation going and make the input comprehensible to the proficient speaker.

According to him there are no cases of beginner-level learners acquiring a second language from native- speaker that has not been modified in some way. Modified interaction does not always involve linguistic simplification. It may also include elaboration, slower speech rate, gestures or the provision of additional contextual clues. The following are examples of conversational modifications according to Long (1983):

- a) Comprehension checks- efforts by the native speaker to ensure that the learner has understood (for example, ‘The bus leaves at 6:30. Do you understand?’)
- b) Clarification requests- efforts by the learner to get the native speaker to clarify something that has not been understood (for example, ‘Could you repeat please?’). These requests from the learner lead to further modifications by the speaker.
- c) Self-repetition or paraphrase – the more proficient speaker repeats his or her sentence either partially or in its entirety (for example, ‘She got lost on her way home from school. She was walking home from school. She got lost.’)

Long (1996) revised this hypothesis placing more emphasis on cognitive factors such as ‘noticing’ and corrective feedback during interaction. When communication is difficult, ‘interlocutors must negotiate for meaning,’ and this negotiation is seen as the opportunity for language development. He further points out that when learners must produce language that their interlocutors can understand, they are most likely to see the limits of their second language ability and the need to find better ways to express their meaning. The demands of producing comprehensible output, he hypothesized

'push' learners ahead in their language development. During interaction, learners also need to produce output that is comprehensible to others. Through processes such as obtaining comprehensible input and producing modified output, interaction is believed to help draw learner's attention to problematic differences between their interlanguage that is their current knowledge of the target language and the native form of the target language. When learners receive feedback on their L2 production, for example, through clarification requests, their attention can be drawn to "gaps" – that is, to areas in their linguistic knowledge which are in need of improvement.

This hypothesis is ideal for this study because oral communication in English language classes promotes the acquisition of the target language; English. This takes place in interactive classrooms. The hypothesis also places a lot of premium in conversational interactions as an essential and sufficient condition for second language acquisition in English language classes. Further, this hypothesis stresses the need for speakers (teachers) to modify their speech and interaction patterns in order to help learners participate in classroom interaction. This will make them understand meaning in the new language. Modified interaction is therefore a necessary mechanism for making language comprehensible.

Similarly, the hypothesis underscores the need for the learners to be given opportunities to interact among themselves as well as with their teachers in order to increase comprehension through negotiation for meaning. In addition this theory puts a lot of emphasis on modified speech as a precursor for language acquisition. Modified speech includes elaboration, slower speech rate, gestures and provision of additional cues. Others are comprehension checks, clarification requests, self-repetition and paraphrase among others. The hypothesis stresses the need for

corrective feedback as an important practice for language learning and acquisition among learners of English as a second language.

In the English language classrooms, the teacher of English takes the role of a native speaker and provides comprehension checks to ensure that the learner has understood what he/she teaches. The students on the other hand, will seek clarification requests from the teacher. The purpose for this is for the teacher to clarify what the learners have not understood. The students can also seek for further clarification from each other. In the same vein the more proficient learners (speakers) will repeat their sentences either partially or in its entirety. Therefore, it was possible for the researcher to establish the teachers' oral communication strategies, the learners oral communication strategies, the different oral interaction patterns in English language classes, the language registers used by teachers and learners in English language classes and finally the oral communication challenges encountered in English language classes from the data obtained.

### **1.12 Conceptual Framework**

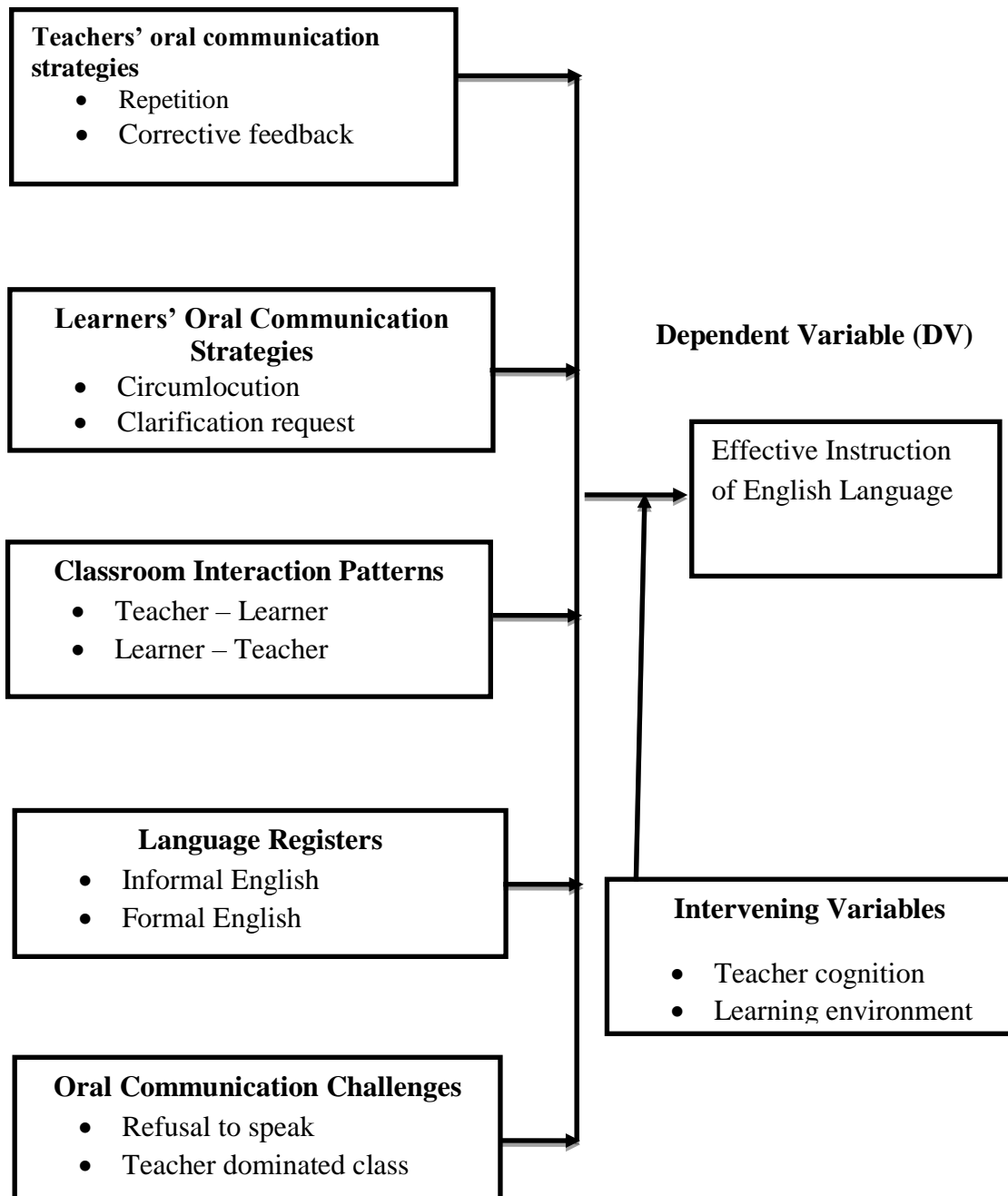
The conceptual framework for this study is presented in Figure 1.1. It is a visual model of how the independent variables: teachers' oral communication strategies, learners' oral communication strategies, classroom interaction patterns, language registers and oral communication challenges influence the dependent variable; effective instruction of English language. There are three intervening variables: teacher cognition and learning environmental. In the study, each independent variable has constituent elements. The teachers and the learners manipulate these elements so that learners can acquire oral skills which are fundamental in the learning of English language and hence effective instruction.

The constituent elements for teachers' oral communication strategies are: repetition, corrective feedback, paraphrasing, and use of oral questions to elicit responses from the learners among others. While examples of constituent elements for learners' oral communication strategies are circumlocution, code-switching, and use of fillers, repetition, clarification requests and many others. Examples of classroom interaction patterns are teacher- learner interaction pattern, learner- teacher interaction pattern and learner- learner interaction pattern. Similarly, examples of constituent elements for language registers are: formal English, non-formal English and Sheng. In addition to these constituent elements there are challenges which could undermine the effective instruction of English language. These oral communication challenges include inhibition, hesitation, refusal to speak, uneven participation by the learners and teachers dominating English language classes. This therefore, limits learner participation during the instruction English language. This scenario influences the effective instruction of English language.



## Independent Variables (IVs)

### Oral Communication Styles



**Figure1.1: Conceptual Framework**

### 1.13 1.13 Operational Definition of Terms

Different terms that have been used in this study are operationalized below:

**English as a Second Language:** situation where English is not the L1 of the speakers, however, it is the medium of instruction in the education system. In this study English is used as the medium of instruction.

**Influence:** The power to affect, change or control something; in this study the effect which oral communication styles have on the teaching and learning of English language.

**Instruction of English:** Giving pupils knowledge or skills about a subject as part of a programme of study. In this study, it is giving students knowledge or skills in English language.

**Language Register:** A variety of language used for a particular purpose or in a particular social setting. In this study, it is the variety of English used by the teachers and learners during classroom interaction. They include formal English, informal English.

**Learners' Oral Communication Strategies:** These are the verbal and non-verbal communication techniques employed by learners to compensate for communication breakdowns. In this study, it refers to the oral communication strategies employed by learner during classroom interaction. They include circumlocution, code-switching, clarification requests, use of fillers and repetition among others.

**Learning English:** This is the process of acquiring knowledge and skills in English language. In this study it refers to the process in which learners acquire knowledge and skills in English language.

**Non- Official English:** This is the type of English whose expressions, vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation incorporates features from other local languages. In this study, it is the non-standard English whose expressions, vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation incorporate features from Kiswahili and local Kenyan languages.

**Official English:** This is Standard English as spoken in England; it is the kind of English which is spoken following (RP- Received Pronunciation). In this study, it is the kind of English taught in school and also used as the medium of instruction.

**Oral Communication Challenges:** These are the limitations or difficulties that one encounters during the process of interacting with others verbally. In this study it refers to the limitations/difficulties that both teachers and learners encounter when communication orally in English language classes. They include inhibition, hesitation, refusal to speak, uneven participation, difficulty in pronouncing certain English words and challenges in understanding certain English words and phrases.

**Oral Communication Styles:** These are the different oral communication strategies, patterns and language registers that individuals adopt during oral interaction. In this study it refers to the different oral communication strategies, classroom interaction patterns and language registers adopted by teachers and learners during the instruction of English language.

**Oral Interaction Patterns:** These are the different ways in which teachers and learners engage with each other in the classroom. In this study, it refers to the different ways teachers and learners engage with each other in the English language classes. They include teacher-learner, learner-teacher and learner – learner interaction patterns.

**Oral Interaction:** This is a two way verbal communication among two or more people. In this study, it is the verbal communication that takes place in the English language classroom between the teachers and learners and among the learners themselves.

**Teachers' Oral Communication Strategies:** These are the verbal and non-verbal communication techniques employed by teachers during classroom instruction. In this study, it refers to the oral communication strategies employed by teachers during classroom instruction. They include repetition, paraphrasing, corrective feedback and use of simple sentences among others.

#### **1.14 Chapter Summary**

In this chapter, the researcher has discussed various aspects of the study. These include introduction to the study, background to the study, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, and significance of the study, justification of the study, scope and limitations of the study, theoretical framework, conceptual framework and finally operational definition of terms. The next chapter discusses literature review of this study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter reviewed studies related to the influence of oral communication styles in the instruction of English language in secondary schools, in particular those related to oral communication in classroom contexts and the opportunities offered for second language development in such contexts. The purpose of the review was to create a link that helped establish the gap that exist in the influence of oral communication styles in the instruction of English language in secondary schools. The first section places the study in context. This is followed by a review of studies related to the nature of oral communication in classrooms, section three, focuses on communication within a second language acquisition framework; section four, addresses the relationship between classroom language use and second language development. The final section, discusses related literature and chapter summary.

#### **2.2 The Role of Oral Skills in Developing Communicative Competence**

Oral skills are an important feature in the interactive language classrooms. They involve listening and speaking. However, non-verbal language for example, eye contact, nodding of the head facial expression and many others are also considered to be part of oral skills. Teachers of any language should strive to develop their learners' oral skills as this will go a long way in developing the learners' communicative competence.

Morreale, Osborn and Pearson (2000) point out that competence in oral communication- in speaking and listening- is a prerequisite to student's academic, personal, and professional success in life. It can be observed that teachers deliver most instructions for classroom procedures orally to students. Students with ineffective listening skills fail to absorb much of the material which they are exposed to. Aleksandrak (2011) points out that speaking is generally perceived as the most fundamental skill to acquire. She further observes that since the onset of the communicative era it has been treated as the ultimate goal of language training and its proper development has become the focus of attention of both teachers and learners.

According to Shteiwi and Hamuda (2016) speaking is considered to be an important factor in language learning. It is one of the four language skills: speaking, listening reading and writing. Speaking skills are important because they represent someone's knowledge about the languages they know. Citing Davies and Pearse (2000), Shteiwi and Hamuda (2016) point out that the major goal of all English language teaching process should give the learners the ability to use English effectively and accurately in communication. This can only be achieved through the use of appropriate learning techniques and oral skills.

When a learner masters oral skills appropriately in the target language he/she will develop communicative competence. According to Yule (2010) communicative competence can be defined as the general ability to use language accurately, appropriately and flexibly. He further points out the components of communicative competence. The first component is grammatical competence, which involves the accurate use of words and structures. Grammatical competence provides the learner with the ability to interpret or produce L2 expressions appropriately. The second

component is social linguistic competence, which is the ability to use language appropriately in different contexts. The learner has to become familiar in the cultural context of the L2 if she/he is to develop sociolinguistic competence.

The third component is called strategic competence. This is the ability to organize a message effectively and compensate via strategies for any difficulties. In L2 use, learners inevitably experience moments when there is a gap between communicative intent and their ability to express their intent. Some learners may just stop talking (bad idea), whereas others will try to express themselves using communicative strategy (good idea). This study investigated the influence of oral communication styles in the instruction of English language in secondary schools in Elgeyo Marakwet County.

### **2.2.1 The Link between Oral skills and Language Development**

Oral skills are important in the overall learning of language skills; learners who develop oral skills well will as well develop reading and writing skills with much ease later in life. Lawrence and Snow (2011) identified a number of different relationships between oral language and reading, each with a theoretical orientation and with instructional implications. These they divided into two broad categories: a literacy skills perspective, where oral language is viewed as a skill or set of skills to be acquired, and a Vygotsian or scaffolding perspective, where oral language discourse is viewed as an essential way of moving from modeling to application in the ‘gradual release of responsibility’ model of reading comprehension instruction, (Pearson & Fielding, 1991). Comprehension skills are therefore acquired by using oral language. Snow, Burns and Griffins (1998) reviewed factors associated with the importance of oral work as a predictor of reading. According to them, spoken language and reading have much in common. They point out that “ if the printed words can be efficiently

recognized, comprehension of connected text depends heavily on the reader's oral language abilities, particularly with regard to understanding the meaning of words that have been identified and the syntactic and semantic relationship among them," (p.108).

Similarly, Lonigan and Whitehurst (1998) identified skills in the domains of oral language, print and letter knowledge and pedagogical processing as encompassing aspects of emergent literacy that are related to later conventional forms of reading and writing. Dickenson and Tabors (2002) found the scores that Kindergarteners achieved on language measures (receptive vocabulary, narrative production and emergent literacy) were highly predictive of their scores on reading comprehension and receptive vocabulary in fourth and seventh grades.

According to Muter, Hulme, Snowling and Stevenson (2004) word recognition senses critically depend on phonological processes (particularly phonemic sensitivity, and letter knowledge) while reading comprehension is dependent on higher-level language skills (vocabulary knowledge and grammatical skills). Oral communication therefore plays a significant role in classroom interaction as it is the vehicle through which language acquisition takes place. These oral communication strategies in turn affect language learning and teaching among the learners. This study was therefore set out to investigate the influence of oral communication styles in the instruction of English language in secondary schools.

### **2.3 Components of Classroom Interaction**

Classroom interaction has many components, Yu (2008) points out three components: collaborative dialogue, negotiation and co-construction. These components and how they are achieved are discussed here after.



### **2.3.1 Collaborative Dialogue**

Collaborative dialogue happens effectively between learner and learner or learner and the teacher who acts as an assistant during the interaction process. Vygotsky was more interested in the individual's potential level of development than his /her current level of development. Two individuals may be at the same level of actual development as determined by their test scores, for example, but may exhibit different levels of potential development as determined by their differing abilities to solve the same problem with a different degree of assistance from an adult, (Johnson, 2004). This situation will lead to dialogic interaction in the English language classes. Dialogic interaction results from the interaction between learners and other members of their sociocultural world such as parents, teachers, coaches, and friends.

According to Vygotsky's theory, learning is an integral activity of learner's self and adult guidance or collaboration with more capable peers. Therefore, collaborative dialogue is knowledge of building dialogue, in which language use and learning can co-occur. It is a cognitive as well as a social activity, (Swain, 2000). Or it may be realized in the format of an everyday conversation. Classroom interaction should take the role as collaborative dialogues do for its significance in communicative language teaching. Furthermore, it also accelerates the development of SLA if the classroom settings play an effective role as social settings.

### **2.3.2 Negotiation of Meaning**

Ellis (1990) claims in Interaction Hypothesis that when L2 learners face communicative problems they have the opportunity to negotiate solutions to them, they are able to acquire new language. Negotiated interaction is essential for input to become comprehensible. This counters Krashen's (1985) Input Hypothesis, which

stresses that simplified input along with contextual support is the key for comprehensible input. The notion of negotiation is generally defined as ‘discussion to reach agreement’. Allwright (1984) argues that interactive negotiation should be person-to-person communication since the conditions would be satisfactory. Whenever a reader reads a text, which is analyzed silently, it involves three fundamental processes: interpretation, expression and negotiation or their various combinations. Negotiation is seen as a type of real-life language use that is relevant to the learning purposes of the learners. It is likely to be the case in the context of a course of ‘business English’ or ‘English for diplomats’, where ‘negotiation’ can be expected to be identified as a relevant target language skill for the learners to develop in the classroom through simulated negotiations. The L2 learners exchange their own real-life experiences through the mediation of a second language that helps them acquire the language itself in the meantime.

Negotiation plays a significant role in classroom interaction. While the L2 learners are given more chances to negotiate their problems in comprehension, more success will be gained. Through peer negotiation the learners in interactive situations would learn and retain more L2 words. As Allwright (1984) reports, that learners who negotiated the input achieved higher vocabulary acquisition scores in the immediate post-test, and what is more important, they maintain this advantage over time. Therefore, negotiation should be seen as an aid to L2 comprehension and SLA. In classroom settings, the students’ input is modified through negotiation, which does not always lead to their immediate comprehension of meaning but it makes them manipulate the form of the meaning.

There are mainly two forms of negotiation in classroom interaction: face-to-face peer negotiation and corrective feedback negotiation provided by the instructor. Some researchers may present three forms of negotiation, which includes self-negotiation. Self-negotiation is considered a type of self-regulation or construction since it requires the close cooperation between learners and learners, learners and teachers.

### **2.3.3 Co-construction of Interaction**

Jacoby and Ochs (1995) define co-construction as “the joint creation of a form, interpretation, stance, action, activity, identity, institution, skill, ideology, emotion or other culturally-related meaning reality,” (p. 171). According to He and Young (1998) interactional competence involves the knowledge of language that is jointly co-created by all participants in an interaction. All the participants have the responsibility to construct a successful and appropriate interaction for a given social context. Meaning is negotiated through face-to-face interaction and is jointly co-constructed in a locally bound social context.

In classroom interaction, the L2 learners construct the awareness of self-regulation gradually from dialogic interaction when they negotiate with peers and tutors.

Aljaafren and Lantolf (1994) observe:

*The learner becomes more consistent in using the target structure correctly in all contexts. In most cases, the individual's use of the correct target form is automatized. Correction of errors does not require intervention from someone else thus; the individual is fully self-regulated (p. 470).*

The ability of constructing second language acquisition develops through classroom interaction.

## **2.4 The Classroom as a Context of Oral Interaction**

The term classroom interaction refers to the interaction between the teacher and learners, and amongst the learners in the classroom, (Tsui, 2001). A major implication in the communicative approach to the teaching of foreign languages concerns classroom interaction in which students should participate as Brown (2001) argues, at the heart of current theories of communicative competence is the essentially interactive nature of communication. Thus, the communicative purpose of language compels us to create opportunities for enough interaction in the classroom. He further says that as learners interact with each other through oral and written discourse, their communicative abilities are enhanced.

Similarly, Pica (1994) and Hall (1993) point out that interaction creates the opportunity for learners to negotiate and have increased chances for comprehension of the target language and to acquire target discourse conventions and practice higher level academic communicative skills. In the words of Leo van Lier (1996) in the classroom, interaction is the most visible manifestation of learning process at work. Learning arises not through interaction, but in interaction, (Ellis, 2000). To sum up, classroom interaction is in the heart of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and is considered to be the matrix for communicative competence to develop as well as the sine qua non of classroom pedagogy, (Allwright, 1984).

Lee (2006) points out that “classroom interaction itself is an occasion of language use that relies on the competence of the parties to the interaction,” (p. 349). He argues that L2 classroom interaction itself relies on competent language use for its accomplishment and the competence that is already in the room is a constitutive feature of the work-parties of teaching and learning and that L2 classroom interaction

is not just an instrument to accomplish communicative competence as an instructional goal, but is also a practical occasion that exhibits competent language use, (Lee, 2006). Wash and Li's view of classroom interaction coincides with Lee's to some extent. They argue that appropriate language use (way of interacting) of the teacher will increase students' learning opportunities. For example, when the language used by the teacher is aligned with their pedagogical goals, more learning space will be created for students. Hence, teachers' competent language use as well as their sound knowledge of classroom interaction and CLT will contribute to an ideal environment for developing student's communicative competence.

With the emergence of English functioning as a global lingua franca, (Seidlhofer, 2005), the growing need for good communication skills in English has put more emphasis in teaching English for communication than ever before and at the same time increased teachers' responsibility in helping students to use the language with the proficiency required to enhance their prospects in accessing better opportunities in education and employment within their own contexts and/or globally and so on, (TESOL 2012). In China for example, in order to make university students more equipped to face the challenges brought about by fast economic expansion and social development, English educational reform in Chinese universities has a special focus on improving students' ability to use English communicatively and also requires EFL teachers to create more opportunities for students to practice using the target language and foster such ability.

The economic benefits of English language in Kenya mirrors those in China and the rest of the world. Thus, with the emergence of globalization the teaching of English in Kenyan schools has received a lot of attention. Based on this importance of the

English language, emphasis has shifted from teacher centered methodologies into student centred ones. Learner centered methodologies focus on oral classroom interaction which facilitates the acquisition of the target language English within the context of the classroom. This scenario has been demonstrated through the adoption of Tusome programme by the ministry of education in conjunction with USAID a US funded Non-Governmental Organization. The programme was rolled out in 2015 in government sponsored schools.

The aim of the programme was to develop a holistic model of education whereby learners develop communicative competence early in their lives, therefore growing up with sufficient oral communication skills. Therefore, the main aim of this study was to examine the influence of oral communication styles in the instruction of English language in secondary schools. When teachers and learners employ appropriate oral communication strategies during classroom interaction it will go a long way in influencing learning outcomes. In this era of globalization the need for learners to develop communicative competence in English language cannot be overemphasized. When learners learn English well they thus develop competency in their lives.

## **2.5 Towards a Competency Based Education**

The concept of competency has been developed over a long period of time. It plays an important role in the success of any organization. In Latin one can find '*competens*', as being able and allowed by law/regulation, and '*competentia*', as (cap)ability and permission, (Mulder, 2007). Mrowiaki (1986) defines competencies as description of the essential skill, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours required for effective performance of real world task or activity. These activities may be related to any

domain of life, though been typically linked to the field of work and to survival in a new environment.

Similarly, Richards and Rodgers (2001) citing Docking (1994) define competency as any attribute of an individual that contributes to the successful performance of a task, a job, function, or activity in an academic setting and/or work setting. These include specific knowledge, thinking processes, attitudes, perceptual and physical skills. From these definitions it can be observed that competency might be a task, a role, a function which changes over time and will vary from context to context. The use of the western European words 'competence' and 'competency' date back to the early 16th century, (Mulder, 2007).

The concept of competency was developed as early as 1957 by Selznick (as cited by Shaikhah et al., 2009). It was been originally used in the field of education to describe trainee teacher behaviours, (Bowdenard Masters, 1993; Hoffmann, 1999). It became widely known in the management field through the work of Boyetzis in 1982, (Hoffmann, 1999). According to Deist and Winterton (2005) the concept of competence or competency dominated the management strategy literature of the 1990s, which emphasized 'core competence' as a key organizational resource that could be exploited to gain competitive advantage.

The term competence and competency are confused in the literature, (Shaikhah et al., 2009). It has been defined from several points of view and much ink has been spilt on finding accurate definition between competence/competences and competency/competencies, (Hoffman, 1999). As Shaikhah et al. (2009) has pointed out, many authors, including Winterton (2009), McClelland (1973), Thornston (1992), Athey and Orth (1999), Kurz and Bartram (2002), Schippmann (2000), Lustri (2007),

Le Boterf (2000) wrote about competence and/or competency using one of these terms, and sometimes both of them in the same article, believing that both terms hold the same meaning. The number of definitions of competency continues to grow along with different viewpoints from different researchers. Those researching the field, as well as practitioners, have evolved several meanings that serve as a focus for their efforts to implement the competency approach to their work, (Hoffmann, 1999). A primary point of contrast is between individual competencies – those knowledge, skills, and abilities that individuals in the organization possess – and organizational competencies – those things that characterize collective action at the organizational level, (Olson & Bolton, 2002). However, Whiddett and Hollyforde (2003) have mentioned that most definitions are variations on two well-established themes from different origins as follows: Descriptions of work tasks, that is, what a person has to do in a job. These have their origin in national training schemes such as the National/Scottish Vocational Qualifications and the Management Charter Institute (MCI).

A general convention has developed although it is not always followed, which use ‘ability based on work task’ as “competence” (plural competences) and ‘ability based on behaviour’ as “competency” (plural competencies), (Whiddett & Hollyforde, 2003). According to Armstrong (2005) whilst competency is a person-related concept, competence is a work related concept. Kouwenhoven (2003) presents a comprehensive definition of competency, according to which, ‘Competency’ is the capability to choose and use (apply) an integrated combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes with the intention to realize a task in a certain context, while personal characteristics such as motivation, self-confidence, and willpower are part of that context; and ‘Competence’ is the capacity to accomplish ‘up to standard’ the key occupational tasks that characterize a profession. Therefore, competency may be



defined as the necessary knowledge, skills, experience and attributes to carry out defined function effectively, whilst competence means those things the whole organization must be good at to outperform its competitors, (Mackay, 2003).

At individuals' level, competencies mean skills, traits, characteristics and behaviours that distinguish an individual, whereas at the organizational level, competences are those activities that an organization has the capability to effectively perform given the required skills and knowledge, (Hafiz, Siddiqi & Essmail, 2006). Competences are usually job or role-specific while competencies can cover a wide range of different jobs and often cover different levels of jobs as well, (Whiddett & Hollyforde, 2003).

The effectiveness and efficiency of any educational programme is largely dependent on the philosophy of the curriculum design followed, (Sudsomboon, 2007). According to Fincher (1986) cited by Choudaha (2008) the most significant influence on college curriculum since the 1960s has been the demand for measured or assessed outcomes that would ensure the competency and proficiency of graduates. A way to conceptualize the relation between education and the world of work is through competence-based education, (Kouwenhoven, 2003). If specific competencies are not focused in the curriculum design philosophy, the graduates of the education system may not be "work-ready" and therefore not readily accepted by the industry. Therefore, to reduce the unemployment and 'under employment' levels, it becomes necessary to consider 'occupation-specific competencies' in the curriculum designs, (Sudsomboon, 2007).

### **2.5.1 Competency Based Education and Development of communicative Competence**

According to a report by U.S. Department of Education (2002) the importance of implementing competency-based initiatives in colleges and universities lies in two major reasons. One main reason is that specific articulations of competencies inform and guide the basis of subsequent assessments at the course, program, and institutional levels. Secondly, specific competencies help faculty and students across campus as well as other stakeholders such as employers and policymakers to have a common understanding about the specific skills and knowledge those undergraduates should master as a result of their learning experiences. Therefore demand from the stakeholders is also leading to the emphasis on Competency Based Education, (Choudaha, 2008). Competency based curriculum summarizes academic and professional profiles, defines new objectives in the learning process, enhances learning environments and shifts the concept of learning as accumulation of knowledge to learning as a permanent attitude towards knowledge acquisition, (Edwards et. al., 2009).

The main ideas of competency-based curriculum according to (Sudsomboon, 2007) are:

- a) Instead of objectives, think “competencies
- b) Instead of content, think outcomes
- c) Learner activities will be based on performance of learner and accomplishment of criteria;
- d) Teaching activities are learner centered;
- e) Formative evaluation is necessary.

The aim of Competence based education (CBE) is to make students more competent through the acquisition of competencies and further development of the newly acquired or already held competencies. Grant et al. (1979) as cited by Edwards et. al,

(2009) defines competence-based education as “a form of education that derives a curriculum from an analysis of a prospective or actual role in modern society and that attempts to certify student progress on the basis of demonstrated performance in some or all aspects of that role”, concluding that competence is a broad term, and that the programmes based on competences can be very diverse with respect to their theoretical orientation, their scope, their intentions and their scientific focus.

Competencies can be domain-specific, relating to clusters of knowledge, skills and attitudes within one specific content domain related to the profession. Another group of competencies is called ‘generic’, because they are needed in all content domains and can be utilized (transferred) to new professional situations, (Kouwenhoven, 2003). The specification of competencies is an important process for any discipline, as competencies define the expected capacities of individuals, (Gebbie et al., 2002). The characteristics of competency-based education (CBE) are given by Kouwenhoven (2003) as:

- a) It is oriented to the professional practice.
- b) It is learner-centred and the learning process is central.
- c) It has a constructivist approach.
- d) In CBE the role of the teacher is that of a ‘cognitive guide’.
- e) It has learning environments focused on the development of competencies.
- f) It includes the development of generic competencies.
- g) Assessment is focused on competencies.
- h) In CBE curriculum development is based on the elaboration of profiles and identification of competencies.

Competence-based education is considered the leading paradigm for innovation since it emphasizes the integrated nature of what students need to learn to face not only labour market but also life in general, (Edwards et. al., 2009).

Brownell and Chung (2001) identified five major benefits of competency based education—a change in the student-teacher relationship, an increase in emphasis on

internal information sharing, improvement in clarity of desired student outcomes and program effectiveness, better articulation of the competencies of program graduates, and an increase in student satisfaction and learning.

The implementation of an educational training curriculum should be based on social demands, and the competency analysis process identifies whether students have attained the competency standards proficiently, (Sudsomboon, 2007). According to U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (2002), Competency-based initiatives seek to ensure that students attain specific skills, knowledge, and abilities considered important with respect to whatever they are studying or the transitions for which they are preparing. Utilizing competencies requires the development of three distinct, but interactive components: – A description of the competency; – A means of measuring or assessing the competency; and – A standard by which someone is judged to be competent. In order to develop competency based curriculum in education, determination of competencies for each discipline and subsequent development of means of measurement and performance assessment is a must.

Based on the above discussion on competency – based education it can therefore be argued that learners who are instructed through appropriate oral communication styles develop competencies in language learning and have better learning outcomes, they will also get involved in learner activities. In addition they will accomplish tasks in time and engage in learner centred activities which promote language acquisition and communicative competencies in English. Therefore the oral communication styles adopted by the teachers and the learners at all levels of education determine learning outcomes. This study was set out to investigate the influence of oral communication

styles in the instruction of English language in secondary schools in Elgeyo Marakwet County.

## **2.6 Oral Communication Strategies in English Language Classrooms**

Communication strategies have been described by various scholars differently; Cervantes and Rodrigues (2012) say communication strategies refer to a mutual attempt of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations in which they do not share the requisite meaning structures. They further point out that communication strategies are attempts to bridge the gap between the linguistic knowledge of the second- language learner and the linguistic knowledge of his or her interlocutor in real communication situations. While Nakatani (2006) observes oral communication strategies specifically focus on strategic behaviors that learners use when facing communication problems during interactional tasks.

In the English language classrooms both the teachers and learners contribute towards construction of knowledge through oral interaction. During the instruction of English language the use of oral communication strategies employed by both teachers and learners shape classroom discourse and in turn influence negotiation of meaning and the construction of knowledge. Gass and Selinker (2008) in their input- interaction- output model explain that once input is given, processing and interaction will take place and the learner will move towards the production of output. The teachers in English language classrooms employ certain oral communication strategies during classroom discourse in order to create an input which the learners will receive and in turn produce an output.

In the modern times the teaching of English as a second language (ESL) has shifted from method to post method pedagogy where teachers need to use macrostrategies in

their English language classes. According to Kumaradilevu (2006) these macrostrategies are general plans derived from currently available theoretical, empirical and pedagogical knowledge related to L2 learning and teaching. He further says ‘a macrostrategy is a broad guideline on which teachers can generate their own location- specific, need-based, macrostrategies or classroom procedures’. In other words, macrostrategies are made operational in the classroom through microstrategies. The use of macrostrategies in the classroom setting is advocated because they are considered theory- neutral, because they are not confined to underlying assumptions of any one specific theory of language learning and teaching. They are also considered method neutral because they are not conditioned by a single set of principles or procedures associated with language methods. Kumaradivelevu (2006) proposes 10 macrostrategies, these are:

*Maximize learning opportunities, facilitate negotiated interaction, minimize perceptual mismatches, activate intuitive heuristics, foster language awareness, contextualize linguistic input, integrate language skills, promote learner autonomy, ensure social relevance, and raise cultural consciousness.*  
(p. 201)

He advocates that language learning and teaching should be based on these microstrategies for meaningful learning to take place in the English language classes. Using these microstrategies as guidelines, practicing teachers can design their own microstrategies or classroom activities. In other words, macrostrategies are made operational in the classroom through microstrategies. It is claimed that by exploring and extending macrostrategies to meet the challenges of changing contexts of teaching by designing appropriate microstrategies to maximize learning potential in the classroom and by monitoring their teaching acts teachers will eventually be able to devise for themselves a systematic, coherent and relevant theory of practice, (Kumaravadilevu, 2003).

During the learning of English as a second language interaction plays a central role. The interaction approach accounts for learning, through input (exposure to language), production of language (output) and feedback that comes as a result of interaction. Gass (2003) puts it 'interactional research takes as its starting point the assumption that language learning is stimulated by communicative pressure and examines the relationship between communication and acquisition and the mechanisms (for example, noticing, attention) that mediate between them' (p. 224). Interaction involves a number of components including negotiation, recasts and feedback, (Gass & Selinker, 2008).

Negotiation in language classes serves as a catalyst for change because of its focus on incorrect forms. Gass and Selinker (2008) point out that by providing learners with information about incorrect forms, negotiation enables learners to search for additional confirmatory or non-confirmatory evidence. They say that if negotiation is a form of negative evidence and as a way of providing feedback serves the function of initiating change, there is need to ask "What factors determine whether the initiated change results in permanent restructuring of linguistic knowledge?" As with any type of learning, there needs to be reinforcement of what is being learned. If additional input is not available, learners do not have the opportunity to obtain confirmatory evidence.

Commenting on interactional feedback Gass and Selinker (2008) say that "interactional feedback is an important source of information for learners. Generally, it provides them with information about the success (or, more likely, lack of success) of their utterances and gives additional opportunities to focus on production or comprehension," (p. 329). There are numerous ways of providing feedback to learners

from the explicit (stating that there is a problem) to the implicit (feedback during the course of an interaction). Explicit instruction may be more direct than and effective than implicit instruction. However, teachers may prefer implicit to explicit feedback. Seedhouse (2001) argues that teachers would do better to choose the explicit feedback. Teachers avoid direct and overt negative evaluation of learners' linguistic errors in order to avoid embarrassing and demotivating them. Similarly, Schmidt (1994) supports corrective feedback and ensures the importance of noticing and noticing the gaps. Corrective feedback could play an important role in developing accuracy in L2. Ellis (2005) says "learners need to be shown what is not correct as well as provided with examples of what is correct" (p.19). In the same vein negative feedback should always be changed into positive feedback and teachers are advised to apply it in a way that learners are aware of their mistakes, but that they should learn from it and serve as motivation to correct their mistakes. Through interaction, learners' attention is drawn to some elements of language with the possible consequence that those elements will be incorporated into the learner's developing linguistic system.

Related to interaction is negotiation for meaning. Negotiation has a direct connection with learning of L2 and it takes place during interaction. Gass and Selinker (2006) further argue that when non- native speaker negotiates meaning, interaction takes place and results in development of L2. Similarly, Bitchener (2004) points out that through negotiation students modify close to two thirds of their (problematic) utterances and successful modifications are an indication that learning has occurred. During learner interaction, these examples of modifications are direct result of students output. The retention of these modifications over time indicates that the process of negotiation may contribute to language learning.



Gass and Selinker (2008) while explaining the importance of negotiation say negotiation serves as a catalyst for change because of its focus on incorrect forms. By providing learners with information about incorrect forms of negotiation, learners are able to search for additional confirmatory or non-confirmatory evidence. If negotiation is a form of negative evidence and has a way of providing feedback; serves the function of initiating change, we need to ask ‘what factors determine whether the initiated change result in permanent restructuring of linguistic knowledge?’ Other studies on feedback suggest that feedback obtained through negotiation serves a corrective function, (Gass & Varonis, 1989; Pica, Halliday, Lewis & Morgenthaler, 1989).

Another form of feedback is recasts; they are less direct and more subtle than other forms of feedback. Gass and Selinker (2008) says recast is a reformulation of an incorrect utterance that maintains the original meaning of the utterance as in 10-29, where the NS reformulates the NNS’s incorrect question.

(10- 29) NNS: why he wants this house?  
 NS: why does he want this house?  
 (Gass & Selinker 2008, p.335)

The element of recast or corrective feedback is related to negotiation. Acquisition is facilitated not only when students obtain comprehensible interaction but also when in response to incorrect language production the learner obtains feedback data and also has the chance to modify output, Long (1996). Similarly, Krashen (1985) explains that the process of comprehension interaction is what the learner can intake because it is beyond his/her level of comprehension. The provision of feedback (including more implicit recasts) is very important because it helps learners to assess their output of the language.

Recasts are useful in language acquisition because they supply learners with a model of the correct linguistic structure and they do not interfere with the communication streams of the talk. Mackey and Philip (1998) point out that interaction that includes recasts is more effective than interaction without recasts. During the process of negotiation the learner should be aware of the feedback given and its relevance to the target language.

Another notable communication strategy employed during classroom interaction is corrective feedback. It is an oral communication strategy employed by teachers in order to correct learners' errors in English language classes. Corrective feedback also plays a critical role in shaping learners fluency and accuracy in the target language as it helps to correct errors. Mendez and Cruz (2012) point out that most teachers agree on the need to correct learners' errors so that they gain fluency and accuracy.

Gitsaki and Althobaiti (2010) observe that in second language acquisition (SLA) errors are considered a natural part of the learning process and a sign of student's effort to produce the target language. In their study they found that teachers mostly employed explicit correction followed by metalinguistic clues, clarification requests and recasts. They also observed that elicitation and repetition were the least frequently used types of feedback. Elicitation and repetition are implicit forms of feedback and they require a considerable amount of time as students are strategically guided towards the identification of their errors and they need to come up with the correct forms themselves.

Similarly, Abaya (2014) in her study in public secondary schools in western Kenya observes that the most common type of correction is 'recast' followed by elicitation, while clarification requests and metalinguistic clues were used to an equal extent. She

also points out that there was no evidence of explicit correction, but repetition was produced with other forms of feedback. She also reported that learners preferred the explicit correction of their errors. She says that the explanation given by the learners as to why they prefer direct correction is that this form of error correction makes them notice the errors and they can easily take up correction. The learner's preference of explicit correction she says is probably due to their low linguistic ability that is evident in the kind of errors they make such as basic agreement, preposition and pronoun errors.

Lugendo (2014) citing Lyster and Ranta (1997) proposed six kinds of error correction strategies, these are: explicit correction, recasts, clarification requests, metalinguistic feedback, elicitation and error repetition. Explicit feedback correction is conducted when teachers clearly show that an error has occurred and provide the correct form. Recasts as mentioned earlier are usually implicit and occur when the teachers reformulate the students' utterance in a corrective way instead of pointing the errors. Clarification requests happen when the students' speech is unclear or hard to understand; teachers use phrases such as 'pardon me' to get the point of the utterance. Metalinguistic function refers to comments on students' language production, information of grammatical metalanguage and word definition and questions that will lead to students' awareness and errors. Elicitation is a kind of technique employed by teachers to evoke the correct forms from the students. Lastly, repetition of the student's erroneous utterance by the teachers can help stress the error, often conducted by adjusting intonation.

Lugendo (2014) in her study scaffolding assistance in secondary school found out that student teachers provided individual learners with the support needed to perform at a

higher level than their actual level of competence during whole class activity. Effective scaffolding assistance is therefore deemed possible in teacher fronted whole class in Kenyan context. In her study she found out that student teacher played a guiding role in interaction by developing discourse moves contiguously and responsively thereby creating dialogic spaces in which learners could participate in collaborative and productive problem solving in support of their L2 development. These dialogic spaces she says were facilitated by: repetition, and assisting questions, extended wait time, offering model answers and calling on other students to answer, reformulation, comprehension checks, and explicit feedback. She found out that probing questions resulted in longer turns in co-construction of meaning, which in turn appeared to be received as an open opportunity for the wider participation of other learners.

The use of extended wait time, clarification, reformulation, repetition, feedback, recasts and modeling, meant that student teachers could shape learner responses in a process of co-construction so that appropriate L2 knowledge was available for appropriation by the wider class including the many whose voices were not heard, who may have had similar linguistic misconceptions. It can thus be argued that the teachers' oral communication strategies facilitate language acquisition among learners.

Tchudi and Michell (2005) on their study the role of the teacher, say that the teacher should be able to engage students in the learning process, to provide opportunities for feedback and to use group and individual activities so as to bring students' initiatives into full play. On the contrary, Biswas (2015) on the teaching of English revealed that the teacher did most of the talk in the classroom. He noted that the teachers were

interested in speaking other languages with their students. He also noted that 70% of the teachers provided constructive feedback in the classroom due to error treatments. He observed that whenever students were given chance to do the activities several times and made mistakes, teachers told them to do again rather than scolding them.

In addition to the above roles of the teacher in English language classroom, the teacher plays an important role in initiating classroom talk. This is done through the teacher's questions as Choudhury (2005) points out that in second language classrooms, where learners often do not have a great number of tools for initiating and maintaining language, the teacher's questions provide necessary stepping stones to communication. He further points out that other strategies, besides questioning, that promote communication in a language class are pair work and group work that obviously give rise to interaction. Encouraging students to develop their own strategies is an excellent means of stimulating the learner to develop tools of interaction. Even lecturing and other forms of oral communication and also involving students to read from texts contribute toward the process of creating and maintaining an interactive classroom.

Morreale et al. (2000) observe that in the learning of English as a second language, oral communication strategies employed by the learners during classroom interaction play a critical role in the development of learners' communicative competence in the target language. Students who cannot clearly articulate what they know may be wrongly judged as uneducated or poorly informed. In addition, they also point out that some speech styles of students can trigger stereotyped expectations of poor ability; expectations that may become self-fulfilling. Of equal concern students who are unable to effectively ask for help from a teacher will not receive it and typically

reticent students' progress more slowly despite what may be a normal level of aptitude.

Sener and Balkir (2013) in their study of the relationship between the use of communication strategies and oral performance of ELT students in Turkey found out the three most frequently used sub-categories of communication were: approximation, followed by circumlocution and modification devices in that order, while the least frequently used sub-categories were overgeneralization and finally code-switching. When they examined the relationship between the strategy use and success they found out that those students who employed the modification strategies were successful followed by those who used code-switching, overgeneralization, non-linguistic devices and foreignising in that order. Apart from the above strategies they observed that the students also used repair strategies; self-repair, comprehension check questions and became very successful.

In their analysis of qualitative data they established that the learners employed other strategies in order to be more successful while speaking. The most commonly used strategies are lowering anxiety, followed by use of gesture and finally approximation. They also reported that the students openly stated that when they are relaxed and have self-confidence and trust the people they address, they become more successful when speaking.

Yaman, Irvin and Kavasoglu (2013) while investigating communication strategies use by Turkish students found out university students mostly prefer negotiation for meaning while listening strategies, then followed by compensatory strategies and finally getting the gist strategies was the least used communication strategies. Negotiation for meaning while using listening and speaking strategies is characterized

by negotiation behavior in listening and speaking when students have problems during interaction. According to Nakatani (2006) negotiation strategies are used to maintain the conversation goal with speakers. Yaman, et al. (2013) further observed that while Turkish students listen they ask for repetition when they do not understand what the speaker has said. They use gestures when they have difficulty understanding. The listener clarifies what they could not understand. They also found out that Turkish students pay attention to their rhythm and intonation during communication. The students also know that they use an expression that fit a rule they have learned and they give examples if the listener does not understand what they are saying.

Abdulrahmahn and Ismael (2015) in their study looking at communication strategies used by Yemeni EFL students established that the students frequently used achievement strategies especially approximation and circumlocution strategies. Apart from that they also established that the students used reduction strategy and strategy for reducing the intended message. For repairing strategies they found out that the students used the strategy of correcting the incorrect phrasing and they also used fillers. In terms of negotiation strategies they established that the students mostly used the strategy for repeating what they say until the listener understands what they want to say. They also found out that majority of the students used the strategy of expressing non- understanding to get more clarification, and then they used a strategy for confirmation of meaning. Lastly, for non-verbal strategies they established that majority of the students used gestures, followed by body movement and lastly eye contact while talking.

Similarly, Yaman and Ozcan (2015) in their studies on oral communication strategies used by Turkish students learning English as a foreign language established that the

students mostly employed negotiation for meaning and compensatory strategies frequently during the classroom interaction, this was followed by affective strategies, planning/ organization strategies whereas message abandonment strategies were the least used strategies.

In addition to the above findings Cervantes and Rodrigues (2012) did a study in Mexico on the use of communication strategies in the beginner EFL classroom. They established that learners in the English language classes mostly employed language switch from English to Spanish, followed by confirmation request, comprehension check, asking for confirmation, translation, repetition, paraphrase, code- based confirmation check, sentence reformation, meaning replacement, and finally mime. They also established that restructuring, generalization and approximation were the communication strategies that were never used by the participants.

## **2.7 Oral Interaction Patterns in English Language Classrooms**

Classroom interaction plays a critical role in the learning of English as a second language. Learning of any language is facilitated through classroom interaction. It involves far more than the students' ability to speak and express themselves. It encompasses any type of classroom participation occurring in the classroom such as teacher- student, student – student, group discussions and any other type of classroom participation. Walsh (2013) describes interaction as a kind of communication that requires collective competence by all parties. During classroom interaction teachers allow learners to interact and express themselves. The teacher's role therefore is to enhance classroom interaction and guide students to become more reciprocal in their interaction, (Nunan, 1991). Classroom interaction enhances language acquisition among the learners. Language teachers should engage their students with language



and develop their language proficiency through classroom interaction, (Van Lier, 1988). Through interaction students develop the ability to engage socially outside the classroom. Successful classroom interaction requires considerable efforts and management of numerous class elements.

Classroom interaction encompasses the actions of both teachers and students inside the classroom. It is organized in different ways according to the teacher's objectives and students' needs. Its organization depends on the participants who engage each other. Walsh (2013) identifies the following interaction patterns:

- a) Teacher- learner
- b) Teacher- learners
- c) Learner- learner
- d) Learner - learners
- e) Learners- learners

Van Lier (2014) states that each of the classroom interaction presents different opportunities for interaction according to the participants ability to interact and negotiate meaning. Al- Zahrani and Al- Bargi (2017) classifies the above interaction patterns into two main types:

- 1) Teacher- learner interaction
- 2) Learner- learner interaction

Teacher- Learner interaction takes the place in the classroom between the teacher and the students. It can be learner –learner or teacher- learner interaction. This form of interaction usually occurs when the teacher asks questions and one student answers the questions. It also occurs when the teacher asks questions to small groups of students or the whole class and they respond to the question or questions. This type of interaction is usually controlled by the teacher who is the dominant figure in the classroom. The learners' role is limited to providing answers and receiving commands. In this case, the class teacher is the sender and the learners are receivers.

The primary function of this type of interaction is to practice language in a controlled pattern.

Dagarin (2004) observes that in most cases, the teacher's role in this type of interaction pattern is transmitting knowledge to learners, because most of the patterns are in form of modeling and drilling. The teacher initiates and ends the interaction and also chooses the topic. In this interaction type, teacher talk time is a high proportion of available class time and studies show that it may last as (75%) of the total class time. Teacher- learner interaction usually follows the sequence of Initiation-Response- Feedback (IRF), where the teacher initiates the interaction by asking a question and then closes with the exchange by giving a direct feedback. The learners output is limited to the response in the second turn only. Walsh (2013) points out that although that turn may involve extended language use, depending on the teacher's question, it is still controlled and lacks the pattern of the continuous conversation.

The second structure of interaction is learner –learner interaction. Van Lier (2014) observes that this structure can be learner- learner, learner- learners, or learners - learners. This type of interaction occurs among learners in various ways. Learner-learner interaction is called 'pair work' and the other two types of interactions are called 'group work'. Learners interact together and the teacher's role is to monitor and guide the learners towards more organized progress in interaction. This structure is learner centered because the teacher acts as a facilitator; giving learners increased responsibility and leading them to become increasingly independent. It also encourages the development of a more social class atmosphere. This learner- centered structure also allows learners to feel more comfortable and increase their willingness to talk more with their peers. Hammer (2007) says that learner- centred structure

increases learners 'talk time and all members of the class add to the interaction according to the limits of their language proficiencies.

According to Scrivener (2005) the language classroom is rich in language for learners, quite apart from the language that the learners and the teachers may suppose they are focusing on in the subject matter of the lesson. The learners learn a lot of their language from what they hear the teacher say: the instructions, the discussions, the asides, the jokes, the chit- chat, the comments etc. He also reports that the teacher's talk should not dominate the lesson to the exclusion of participation from as many learners as possible.

When working in a whole- class a large number of interactions tend to go from teacher to student and students to teacher. However, student- student interaction maximizes language leaning and acquisition. Scrivener (2005, p. 86) suggests the following ideas that teachers can adopt in order to maximize student interaction in class:

- a) Encourage a friendly relaxed learning environment. If there is a trusting, positive, supportive rapport amongst the learners and between the learners and the teacher, then there is a much better chance of useful interaction happening.
- b) Ask questions rather than giving explanations. Allow time to students to listen think, process their answers and speak.
- c) Really listen to what they say. Let what they say really affect what you do next. Work to listening to the person and the meaning as well as to the language and the mistakes.
- d) Allow thinking time without talking over it. Allow silence.
- e) Increase opportunities for STT (Student Talking Time).
- f) Use gestures to replace unnecessary talk.
- g) Allow students to finish their own sentences.

- h) Make use of pairs and small groups to maximize opportunities for students to speak. Do this even in the middle of longer whole- whole class stages e.g ask students to break off for 30 seconds and talk in pairs about their reactions to what have just been discussing.
- i) If possible arrange seating so that students can all see each other and talk to each other (i.e circles, squares, and horseshoes rather than parallel rows.
- j) Remember that you don't always need to be at the front of the class. Try out seating arrangements that allow the whole class to be the focus (e.g you take one seat in a circle).
- k) If a student is speaking too quietly for you to hear, walk further away, rather than closer to them. (Encourage the quiet speaker to speak louder so that the others can hear).
- l) Encourage interaction between students rather than only between students and you, and you and student. Get students to ask questions, give explanations, etc to each other rather than. Use gestures and facial expression to encourage them to speak and listen to each other.

In the same vein Biswas (2015) observes that during classroom interaction a variety of interaction patterns take place. These are (Teacher – Student) T-S/S-T, (Teacher-Students T-Ss/Ss-T) and (Student-Students) S-S/Ss - Ss interaction patterns happen in classroom. The dominant interaction pattern in Biswati's study is Teacher- student T-Ss and Student- Teacher (Ss- T, while T-S/S-T was the least oral interaction pattern.

The language classroom is rich in language for learners, quite apart from the language that the learners and the teachers may suppose they are focusing on in the subject matter of the lesson. The students learn a lot of their language from what they hear the teacher say: the instructions, the discussions, the asides, the jokes, the chit- chat, the comments and many others. The teacher talk should not dominate the lesson to the exclusion of participation from as many as learners as possible, (Scrivener, 2005).

## **2.8 Language Registers in English Language Classes**

According to Yule (2010) a register is a conventional way of using language that is appropriate in a specific context, which may be identified as situational (For example,

in church), occupational (For example, among lawyers) or topical (For example, talking about language). We can recognize specific features that occur in the religious register (Ye shall be blessed by Him in times of tribulation), the legal register (The plaintiff is ready to take the witness stand) and even the linguistics register (In the morphology of this dialect there are fewer inflectional suffixes).

Registers are synonymous with styles as Brown (2000) observes that a style is a social or regional dialect, but a variety of language used for a specific purpose. Styles vary considerably within a single language user's idiolect. It can thus be argued that registers are sometimes incorrectly used as a synonym for style. He further observes that registers are commonly identified by phonological variants, vocabulary, idioms and other expressions that are associated with different occupational groups. Registers sometimes enable people to identify with a particular group and to maintain group solidarity. Colleagues in the same occupation or profession will use certain jargon to communicate with each other, to the exclusion of eavesdropper. Truckers, airline pilots, salespersons, and farmers, for example use words and phrases, unique to their own group.

In the classroom context the learners may use certain registers which are unique to them in order to exclude their teachers from hearing and understanding what they are saying. On the other hand teachers mostly use formal English that can be understood by all the learners in the class; however teachers at times may use informal English when explaining certain concepts to the learners in the English language classroom the use of formal and informal English therefore comes into play. In the English language classrooms both the teachers and learners are involved in the construction of

knowledge. In doing this, they both use formal and informal registers in classroom discourse.

Educational settings in Kenya and many parts of Africa are characterized by multilingualism. Students come to school with varied language resources and this multilingual environment affects the classroom contexts in which they will further develop these resources and develop new ways of using language. In addition to multilingualism the media, social context group identity and culture play a significant role in shaping language use among learners in secondary schools in Kenya. In addition to these factors the learning of English in Kenya has faced competition from Kiswahili language. After independence in 1963, the Ominde commission of 1964 advocated for the learning of Kiswahili as a compulsory subject in primary schools however, it was not examinable. In 1974 Kiswahili was made a national language, Crystal (2006). This was on the premise that the language could be used as a lingua franca by the various communities.

In 1984 the Mackay commission which recommended the introduction of 8-4-4 system of education reinforced the status of Kiswahili as a compulsory and examinable subject in primary and secondary schools in Kenya. The competition between the two languages; English and Kiswahili has risen even higher since the latter was given a new impetus as it was reaffirmed as the national language of the Republic of Kenya, apart from the being declared the official language of the republic alongside English GOK, (2010). These factors combined have given rise to two forms of English language in Kenya; formal and informal English. These forms of English are spoken in Kenya and the same forms of English have found their way into

the English language classrooms, hence both the teachers and the learners in secondary schools in Kenya use these forms of English interchangeably.

Apart from these forms of English the teachers as well as the learners may employ the use of either mother tongue or Kiswahili during classroom interaction. The use of these forms of English together with mother and Kiswahili has given rise to nativized form of Kenyan English. Molina (2015) observes this nativized English spoken in Kenya may include some language mixing, code switching, and use of emerging vernaculars, which adds to the diversity of Kenyan English.

In doing this, they both use formal and informal registers in classroom discourse. According to Ouma (2014) learners in primary school code- mixed English and mother tongue words. She observed that the learners did this because of various reasons that include the need to fill a lexical gap; she found out that whenever the learners were involved in an informal engagement whereby the teachers were not with them to instill the use of the target language (TL) almost every learner inserted a Dholuo word whenever they missed an English equivalent. this she reports was seen as a way of keeping expression flowing and making communication easy to avoid breakdown due to lack of a word that they are not able to comprehend quickly.

Second, excluding or including a participant from a conversation; learners were found to code mix in order to exclude their teachers from a conversation. She also observed that pupils code- mixed when they could all understand the native language. They inserted mother tongue especially when they wanted the whole group to understand the message hence including all participants in the conversation. Third, to break monotony of using one language in speech, she reported that pupils alleged that speaking in one language for a while day and especially a language they are not

familiar with is impossible and also boring. They also reported that it is not easy to joke, say proverbs and riddles in English as it is boring to the learners.

Fourth, code –mixing occurs when pupils are quoting fellow pupils teachers and previous speakers. She also reported that unavoided code-mixing was experienced among pupils when dealing with reported speech. Fifth, code- mixing was motivated by the need to capture attention of listeners. This is done when a speaker realizes that the listeners are not following what he/she is saying they could code mix to capture their attention.

Jagero and Odongo (2012) in their study manifestation of formal and informal code-switching in Nairobi established that whenever people interact they judge consciously what mode of behavior best suits the interaction. For example, conversations concerning ethnic status relationships are frequently jocular. They observed that those who choose English tend to have high status connotation while Kiswahili is used by all groups to connote “brotherhood” or neutrality because it helps to bridge between the English and ethnic language differences. In their study they reported that the languages used were perceived as having different levels of formality; English as the most formal followed by Kiswahili while Sheng which is a fusion of Kiswahili and mother tongue is less found. Mother tongue is perceived in this study as least formal

Momanyi (2009) observes that Kiswahili as well as English have been hit by a wave of “Sheng” speakers who are mostly pre-adolescents and young adults. She says that the youths developed this kind of secret code which they wanted to identify themselves with, and a variety of the subculture. She further observes that the term “sheng” was originally coined as a result of emerging mixture of Swahili and English words but as time went by the code no longer was situated in these two languages. It



is now a blend of these two languages and other ethnic Kenyan languages. Commenting on the use of Sheng, Mukhwana (2015) observes youthful respondents aged 35 years and below argue that as Sheng is used by everyone in the Kenyan society; the stigma once attached to the language has long since been removed. To the respondents, what is called Engsh is a social dialect of Sheng used by the children of the educated elite. Sheng is used in Kenya's rap music such that whoever is uninitiated into speaking Sheng will be at a loss to understand present day Kenyan popular music.

Several scholars have advanced the origin of the code for example, (Githiora 2002; Ogechi 2005; Abdulaziz & Osinde 1997). However, they all agree that the code started in the less affluent and slum areas of East lands of Nairobi. Githiora (2002) cited in Momanyi (2009) observes that most urban families are bilingual where Kiswahili is one of the languages spoken. 'Sheng' has moved far beyond the urban centres and is spoken by youths in the rural areas of Kenya. In Nairobi alone, increasing number of city residents are speaking 'sheng' and this includes some parents in the home environment, even politicians addressing people in public gatherings. This culture as found its way into schools in Kenya thus affecting English language as Barasa (2005) points out:

What vernacular does to English in the rural schools, Sheng does to urban schools. It is significant because it reflects changing values in society. Furthermore, it does not just seem to affect English alone; it has affected Kiswahili too. Whereas in the past school effectively denoted disassociation from street culture, Sheng has brought the culture right into the classroom. The fact that teachers too are affected by it shows the level of acceptance it has gained in urban areas. It has subsequently affected the learning environment. This language has to be resisted through an approach that will insist that within school Sheng just like vernacular should not be used. (pp. 57-58)

Momanyi (2009) also observes that local TV and Radio stations have also given space to Sheng where specific programmes use this code (Vioja Mahakamani, Vitimbi

among others). These broadcasts have a lasting linguistic effect on school children and the youth since some of them tend to identify with certain characters in these programmes through the use of this code.

## **2.9 Oral Communication Challenges in English Language Classes**

Thornbury (2007) points out that an English course should create optimal conditions for developing learners' sociocultural knowledge, that is "the culturally embedded rules of behaviour" and their linguistic knowledge, which includes discourse and speech act knowledge and knowledge of the grammar, vocabulary, and phonology of the target language. These knowledge ideas must then be appropriately activated in order to be made available for using regular speaking practice in the classroom and beyond.

She further asserts that as far as the stages of mental processing involved in speaking are concerned, there is not much difference between native and target languages. Both combine the processes of conceptualization, articulating self-monitoring and negotiation. Yet, the skill of speaking is not automatically transferable from the speaker's first language into the second language. While commenting on Thornbury's assertion, Aleksandrak (2011) says even extensive knowledge of the target language's grammar and vocabulary often presented by advanced students of foreign language departments does not guarantee success in oral communication when this knowledge is not properly integrated or accessed.

Gathumbi, Bwire and Roy-Campell (2014) in their study, instructional practices and challenges in secondary English language teaching implication for development of benchmarks in Kenya reported that English language teachers revealed that learners experienced the following problems:

- a) Inability to read fluently and comprehend passages.
- b) Spelling mistakes in the written work.
- c) Influence of mother tongues which affects all other skills.
- d) Lack of exposure to rich environments.
- e) Overloaded curriculum that does not give enough time to do in-depth study.
- f) Inability to relate language and literature as one entity.
- g) Pronunciation and speaking challenges that affect the quality of their reading.
- h) Problems of understanding poetry.
- i) Difficulty in inferring meaning without the use of dictionary.

In the same study the teachers gave the following reasons for the learners' inability to learn English: First, learners' poor reading background. This was said to emanate from the primary school preparation and learner's home background. Many learners leave school not having acquired the expected proficiency in English as a subject and language of instruction. Yet reading is critical to general development of language proficiency.

Second, learners' attitude to learning English; they found out that many learners have negative attitude towards learning English as they believe it is difficult to master. This they reported may have affected their ability to listen, speak read or write. They said that it is incumbent upon the teachers to use interesting teaching techniques that would help learners to develop the requisite skills that would help learners to develop the requisite skills to function effectively in English.

Third, the introduction of vernacular radio stations in various local languages was reported to have reduced even further, learners' exposure to English. They reported that learners seemed to prefer listening to such radio stations and not to those that broadcast in English. They said that when the learners were asked why they prefer these stations, they said they understood better and enjoyed listening to the local programmes than when they listen to broadcast in English. They said that the learners could also associate with what they discussed.

Similarly, Aleksandrak (2011) citing Ur (1995, p. 121) points out problems that are commonly observed in the language classroom are related to individual learners' personalities and attitudes to the learning process and learning speaking in particular.

These are:

- a) Inhibition- fear of making mistakes, losing face, criticism; shyness;
- b) Nothing to say – learners have problems with finding motives to speak, formulating opinions or relevant comments;
- c) Low or uneven participation-often caused by the tendency of some learners to dominate in the group;
- d) Mother tongue use- particularly common in less disciplined or less motivated classes, learners find it easy or more natural to express themselves in their native language.

She further asserts that the above situations occur in language classrooms regardless of the level of proficiency or the number of students in the group. Moreover, every learner enters any learning and communicative environments with his/her entire personality additionally shaped by their prior learning and communicative experiences, both positive and negative. This individual dimension is particularly noticeable among older and more advanced learners who often have good insight into the nature of their individual difficulties, an accurate assessment of the skills they have already developed and consequently, clearly defined needs.

Discussing the factors inhibiting the teaching of oral skills Onchera (2013) observes that teachers reported that several factors hindered the teaching of oral communication skills and learner participation during lessons. He said that majority of learners cited learners' shy disposition as a major hindrance in the teaching of oral skills. Teachers said that most of the learners preferred to remain quiet allowing only the articulate ones to dominate. This they reported happened to most learners who

when selected by the teacher knew the correct answer to the question asked, but chose to keep quiet pretending not to know. Teachers also reported that mother tongue interference was another crucial factor hindering the teaching of oral skills alongside the learner's shyness. Most of the learners spoke mother tongue and this highly impacted on their performance in spoken English. Every time they attempted to answer a teacher's question, their accent was heavily loaded with the local languages so that in certain cases they were laughed at. This, the teacher said hindered learning, since those with this problem lacked confidence and refused to participate further. This showed that these learners lacked practice in English language and hence its expressive qualities.

He further pointed out that almost all teachers observed that away from class time, the learners' medium of communication was their first language. This attitude was seen to affect the learners' oral fluency when it came to communicating in English during their lessons. This, the teachers said contributed to their shyness which was observed to be the major hindrance to their oral participation in class. When the learners were given chances by the teachers to ask questions, none raised any questions due to shyness.

Similarly, Kisaka (2015) in the study of cultural factors hindering mastery of English language in primary and secondary schools in Kenya found out that the major cultural practice that influences mastery of English language was frequent use of Kiswahili and mother tongue for communicating at home. Other cultural factors mentioned were; people declaring that English is a foreign language and community belief that communicating in English at home is a sign of pride and disrespect. These findings show that parents do not use English at home when communicating with their children and this would make children to underrate the importance of English as an

official language in school. Findings during interviews and focus group discussions showed that cultural practices like weddings, funerals and circumcisions affect students mastery of English since the language of communication in these ceremonies is purely mother tongue.

In the same vein Adaba (2017) in exploring the practice of Teacher – Student classroom interaction to develop the learners’ speaking skills said that teachers reported that students experienced the following problems during oral expression: shyness, anxiety, and stress, low proficiency of the learners in the English language, teaching methodology; majority of the teachers had limited experience about CLT and they had used traditional type or teacher – centered English methodology, fear of making mistakes, nothing to say about the topic, limited vocabulary knowledge, low participation, mother tongue use, lack of background knowledge lack of or low confidence, lack of enough time, lack of appropriate activities in the students’ text book, failures of the learners to use the language outside the class, different learners’ learning styles and finally text lack of basis of certain communication functions.

Adaba further observes it is the teachers’ responsibilities to create a supportive environment in class and encourage respect among students and to strengthen the students’ confidants when speaking or doing oral presentations in front of others where their attention is more focused on communicating content than in accuracy of their speech.

As mentioned earlier Scrivener (2005) while commenting on classroom interaction says the language classroom is rich in language for learners, quite apart from the language that learners and teacher may suppose they are focusing on in the subject matter of the lesson. He notes that students learn a lot of their language from what

they hear their teacher says: the instruction, the aside jokes, the chit chat, and the comments among others. He says that it would be unsatisfactory if the teacher's talk dominated the lesson to the exclusion of participation from as many learners as possible.

## **2.10 The Role of Oral Interaction in Second Language Acquisition**

Research on classroom interaction conducted within the framework of the Interactive Hypothesis, states that conversational interaction "facilitates language acquisition because it connects input (what learners hear and read); internal learner capacities, particularly selective attention; and output (what learners produce) in productive ways", (Long, 1996, pp. 451-452). Interaction provides learners with opportunities to receive comprehensible input and feedback (Gass, 1997; Long, 1996; Pica, 1994) as well as to make changes in their own linguistic output, (Swain, 1995). Interaction has attracted more interest in the second language acquisition (SLA) research in the last decade. Attention to pedagogical processes is responsible in part for that growing interest in studying the influence of interaction on second language acquisition.

### **2.10.1 The Role of Second Language Theories on Classroom Interaction**

The focus of language acquisition theories have traditionally been on 'nurture' and 'nature' distinctions, advanced by the social-interactionists and nativist camps respectively. Social-interactionists see language as a rule-governed cultural activity learned in interaction with others, while nativists perceive language ability as an innate capacity to generate syntactically correct sentences. In other words, interactionists believe environmental factors are more dominant in language acquisition, while nativists believe inborn factors are more dominant. Vygotsky laid the foundation for the interactionists view of language acquisition. According to

Vygotsky, social interaction plays an important role in the learning process and proposed the zone of proximal development (ZPD), where learners construct the new language through socially mediated interaction, (Brown, 2007).

On the other hand, nativists' such as Krashen (1985) assume that natural internal mechanisms operate upon comprehensible input which leads to language competence. This is evident in Krashen's input hypothesis of SLA. Krashen's input hypothesis was first proposed over 30 years ago, expanding from Chomsky's Language Acquisition Device. Since that time, there have been many theories put forward influenced by Krashen's input hypothesis. Although Vygotsky and Krashen can be categorized into distinct positions, the application of their theories to second language teaching shares a number of similarities.

According to Krashen's input hypothesis, language acquisition takes place during human interaction in the target language environment. The learner is then exposed to rich comprehensible input in the target language. However, in order for acquisition to occur, the input would need to be slightly beyond the learner's current level of linguistic competence. Both Vygotsky and Krashen put great emphasis on the role of interaction in SLA. Long among other interactionists, also believe in the importance of comprehensive input. His interaction hypothesis also stresses the importance of comprehensible input as a major factor in second language acquisition; however, he also believes that interactive input is more important than non-interactive input. In addition, Long (1986) stresses the significance of interactional modifications which occur in the negotiating meaning when communication problems arise, (Ellis, 1994).

The major distinction between interactionist and nativist theories of SLA is that scholars such as Krashen emphasize comprehensible target language input which is



one-way input and on the contrary, interactionists acknowledge the importance of two-way communication in the target language, (Ariza & Hancock, 2003). Interactionists agree that Krashen's comprehensible input is a crucial element in the language acquisition process, but their emphasis is on how input is made comprehensible, (Lightbown & Spada, 1998). Moreover, Krashen distinguishes between language acquisition and language learning.

In the interactional approach to L2 input proposed by Long (1981), input is defined as “the linguistic forms (morphemes, words, utterances)—the streams of speech in the air—directed at the non-native speaker,” whereas the “analysis of interaction means describing the functions of those forms in (conversational) discourse”, (Long, 1983, p.127). Long justified the distinction on the basis that in L2 input one may find modification in the linguistic forms (For example, deletion of morphemes marking tense), in the interaction (For example, confirmation checks or self-repetitions), in both, or in either. His work (1981, 1983) revealed that in NS-NNS interactions, NSs modified their interactions more often and more consistently than they did the input. The input and interaction hypothesis combines an argument regarding the importance of input comprehension to SLA (Krashen's input hypothesis) and an argument for the value of modifications to discourse structure for learner comprehension (Long's interaction hypothesis). Long deductively argues that modifications to discourse structure (For example, negotiated interaction and modified input) indirectly facilitate SLA.

### **2.10.2 Socio-cultural Theory**

Piaget was concerned with how young children function in their environment and with how this functioning influences their mental development. His theories propose

that it is through taking action that learning occurs, (Elkind, 1976). The knowledge that occurs from the action is actively constructed by the child. Action is fundamental to cognitive development. Assimilation and accommodation are the two ways in which development can take place as a result of activity, (Cameron, 2001). They are initially “adaptive processes of behaviour, but they become processes of thinking”(p. 3).

Accommodation is an idea that has been adopted by second language learning in terms of re-organizing mental representations of a language restructuring, (McLaughlin, 1992). Similarly, Donaldson (1978) showed that Piaget underestimated children’s cognitive ability and yet children are capable of more advanced cognitive achievement when appropriate language, objects and tasks are used. The classroom and classroom activities provide the environment which provides opportunities for language development. If the children are to be successful in a language task, there needs to be a balance between demands and support. Cameron (2001) applies what cognitive scientists call the ‘Goldilocks principle’, a task that is going to help the learner learn more language, one that is demanding but not too demanding, that provides support but not too much support. The difference between demands and support creates the space for growth and provides opportunities for learning. Norris and Ortega (2003) state that sociocultural theories “...maintain that learning of any kind (including language learning) is an essentially social process rather than one generated within the individual”, (p. 724).

Sociocultural theory offers an alternative view of the role of interaction in SLA. Vygotsky’s approach asserts that interaction is a causative force in language acquisition. Learner activity and involvement are emphasized over innate and

universal mechanisms, while focusing on factors outside the learner, rather than factors which are in the learner's brain, (Berk & Winsler, 1995). It also gives little attention to the structural patterns of L2 which are learned, (Saville-Troike, 2006). According to Norton and Toohey (2002, p. 115) "language learners are not only learning a linguistic system; they are learning a diverse set of sociocultural practices, often best understood in the context of wider relations of power". They also state that there has been "... a shift from seeing learners as individual language producers to seeing them as members of social and historical collectives" (p. 119). This means that researchers have become more interested in observing the communities of learning, such as schools.

For Vygotsky, the child is an active learner in a world full of people, (Cameron, 2001). Vygotsky focused mainly on the social aspect of life in providing opportunities for cognitive development. When a child starts to speak in their L1 in their second year of life, a whole new world opens up to them as they begin to use language as a tool for doing things and organising information. Vygotsky opined that intelligence could be better measured by what the child can do with skilled help, than by what the child can do alone. The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is what the child can do with the help of an adult (Berk and Winsler, 1995; Cameron, 2001), or "where new understandings are possible through collaborative interaction and inquiry" (Baker, 2006, p. 303). According to Saville-Troike (2006) "learning occurs when simple innate mental activities are transformed into 'higher-order', more complex mental functions" (p. 111). This transformation involves symbolic mediation. One important context for symbolic mediation is interpersonal interaction between learners and experts. Mediated learning in the ZPD is where future development is negotiated by

the expert and the novice through various types of assistance, (Vygotsky, 1978; Lantolf, 2002).

According to Lantolf (2002) L2 development moves through a number of stages, starting at the point where mediation needs to be quite explicit, until the point is reached where implicit assistance is sufficient for the learner to perform appropriately. Swain (2000) uses the term 'collaborative dialogue' to describe a similar phenomenon, although this would imply peers working together rather than a teacher and child, both of which are important points of interaction for a child's language development. Crucially for applying a sociocultural perspective to this piece of research, collaborative dialogue is language learning mediated by language, or linguistic problem-solving through social interaction.

Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) hold the view that language is the most important tool for cognitive growth. They investigated how adults use language to mediate the world for children and labelled this 'scaffolding'. The metaphor of scaffolding, according to Saville-Troike (2006) refers to verbal guidance provided by an expert to a learner to help him/her perform a specific task, or the verbal collaboration of peers to perform a task which would be too difficult for any one of them to perform independently. Donato and Adair-Hauck (1992) cited in Lantolf (2002) compared the monologic instructional talk of one language teacher with the dialogic moves of another. They established that monologic instructional talk fails to encourage verbal interaction between teacher and students and fails to push their development forward. Dialogic teaching involves frequent use of interactional strategies which enable novices to undertake activities they are unable to perform unaided, (Lantolf, 2002).

Language learning may be seen as a process of repeatedly stretching resources beyond the current ZPD or space for growth, consolidation and moving onto the next challenge, (Cameron, 2001). Cummins (2000) says that “language and content will be acquired most successfully when students are challenged cognitively but provided with the contextual and linguistic supports or scaffolds required for successful task completion” (p. 71). This means that it is highly important for teachers to be aware of effective methods for scaffolding children’s learning.

Wood (1999) has identified three main principles of effective scaffolding which include teacher exploitation of the recognition-production gap, regulation of intervention contingent on the child’s activity, which is based on the adult’s effective analysis of the task, and the progressive relaxation of adult control as the child’s competence level grows. This is an extension of his suggested strategies for scaffolding children’s learning, which include suggesting, praising the significant, providing focusing activities, encouraging rehearsal, being explicit about organization, reminding, modelling and providing part-whole activities, (Wood, 1998). Further recommendations in relation to scaffolding will be discussed in the next section on input and interaction. Bruner (1983) also put forward the notion of formats and routines as a useful idea in language teaching. The adjustment of routines provides opportunities for language and therefore cognitive development. Similarly to Vygotsky’s ZPD, classroom routines provide a space for growth (Cameron, 2001), by gradually increasing complexity of language and allowing the child to make sense of it and internalising it within their ZPD.

According to Ohta, (2001) interactional routines serve important functions because their repetitive nature structures the interactive environment in predictable ways and

therefore facilitates language acquisition by highlighting the relationship between language use and social meaning. An example of a formulaic routine is a greeting routine. Learners initially have only a superficial level of participation but as they participate repeatedly they become more able to anticipate and participate appropriately.

When language teachers frequently exploit interactional routines in their teaching this provides a clear model for how new structures and vocabulary can be used in new contexts, (Ohta, 2001). Mhic Mhathúna (1995) found in a study of Naíonraí (Irish-medium playgroups) with children of three or four years of age learning Irish as L2 that when one Naíonra used the Lunch Ritual to teach a wide range of formulaic utterances, the children's familiarity with these formulas allowed them to start breaking down and analyzing the construction of utterances. Although children work out very quickly what is expected of them and how to fit in with the schema of school, even the most motivated child may have problems in making sense of some of the activities in which they participate in class. Children are often very anxious to please and sometimes act as if they understand what is expected of them by employing these formulaic routines, therefore leading to a teacher not noticing their confusion, (Cameron, 2001). Although formulaic routines can help the children to act as part of the group, this limitation must be borne in mind by practitioners.

Intrapersonal interaction is also viewed by Vygotsky (1987) as a sociocultural phenomenon, (Saville-Troike, 2006). This is communication which occurs within an individual's mind although it may take the form of mumbling to oneself or repeating words or phrases quietly. One type of intrapersonal interaction is private speech. According to Ohta, (2001) private speech shows that the learner who appears to be

silent is “neither passive nor disengaged” and is involved in an “intrapersonal interactive process” (p. 12).

Vygotsky believed that it is through the process of privatising speech that we gain control over our ability to remember, think, attend, plan, evaluate, inhibit and learn, (Lantolf, 2000). In addition Lantolf (2006) points out that “words are first experienced by children through the mouths of others” (p.720) which means that the language we use to mediate our mental activity always originates in interactions with others. On the other hand Ohta (2001) points out that private speech can be seen as a precursor of inner speech, which ranges on a spiral continuum including external speech, fragmented speech, whispered speech and abbreviated speech for oneself.

Private speech or inner speech can take the form of language play, particularly among young children. Ohta (2001) identifies three types of language play; solitary play, social context play and social play, the first two of which are self-directed. With regard to language play as a form of self-mediated speech, Saville-Troike’s (1998) research with L1 Chinese, Japanese and Korean children in a North American classroom shows that when the children were reluctant to engage in social speech in their L2, they privately continued to experiment with the language by playing with it. It is noteworthy that when the children later did begin to engage in social speech, many of the forms they had played with in their private speech reappeared. Similarly, Broner and Tarone’s (2000) study of L1 English immersion learners of Spanish also showed language play which consisted of lexical items introduced during discrete lessons being whispered and eventually forming part of social play.

Vygotsky (1978) argues that play opens a ZPD in which children engage in activities beyond their daily behaviour. Furthermore, Lantolf (2002) notes that “learners at

higher proficiency levels are less likely to play with the language than learners at lower levels” (p.109). It is acknowledged by the ESL guidelines (2006) that many children go through a silent phase for a few months, but that they usually understand a lot more than they can verbalize. Understanding of the language always comes before the spoken language, and it is important that children do not feel under pressure from adults to speak before they are ready. Burling (2002) notes that adults, teachers included may not even notice “the great amount of learning that takes place silently before active production of language even begins” (p. 298). This is evidenced by learners’ comprehension of instructions and participation in routines. This means that when undertaking research in a classroom with young children learning ESL it would be essential to look for non-verbal signs of comprehension among children and their ability to become a part of the group while not speaking the TL.

The characteristics of SLA explored above are of particular importance when analyzing the types of scaffolding engaged in by teachers and children in ESL classrooms. The ‘Goldilocks principle’ forms a basis for understanding the processes involved and this, along with an understanding of the social nature of language learning, is essential for teachers to bear in mind in practice. Formulaic language and routines have been highlighted as providing a clear model to young children for the use of new structures and vocabulary in a variety of contexts. The following section will introduce the reader to the importance of the language that the learner is exposed to and opportunities to engage in conversations and it will also expand on the practical application of aspects of the theories outlined above.



### 2.10.3 Input and Interaction Hypothesis

Krashen (1985) put forward the idea that we acquire language by receiving comprehensible input; by understanding messages. Lightbown and Spada (1993) point out that “if the input contains forms and structures just beyond the learner’s current level of competence in the language, then comprehension and acquisition will occur” (p. 28). In the same vein Gass (2002) emphasizes the importance of interaction in language learning, rather than the behaviourist view of input as central to an understanding of how either L1 or L2 is acquire language. Gass also states that the interactionist hypothesis “... has as its main claim that one route to second language learning is through conversational interaction” (p. 173). Chomsky’s (1981) Universal Grammar (UG), which “is taken to be a characterization of the child’s prelinguistic state” (p. 7) is also taken into consideration by Gass (2003) within the interactionist perspective. Within the framework, “the input provides language-specific information which interacts with whatever innate structure an individual brings to the language learning situation” (p. 225).

According to Mhic Mhathúna (2008) “The interaction process is regarded as two way where adults adjust their input in line with the learners’ understanding and learners influencing the competent speakers’ input through the negotiation of meaning” (p.300). Cameron, (2001) advises that learners need to use their language production resources and skills in addition to being exposed to comprehensible input if they are to develop linguistic knowledge and skills. Saville-Troike (2006) notes that social approaches to language learning consider the nature and role of interaction in acquisition, and states that “interaction is generally seen as essential in providing learners with the quantity and quality of external linguistic input which is required for

internal processing” (p.106). Pica, Young and Doughty (1987) found that modifications in interaction lead to higher levels of comprehension than modifications in input. The results of that study showed that the learners who had the opportunity to check comprehension while listening to instructions by asking clarification questions comprehended more than those learners who simply received a simplified set of instructions. Lightbown and Spada (2006) summaries the relationship between modified interaction and language acquisition as follows: Interactional modification makes input comprehensible;

- a) Comprehensible input promotes acquisition.
- b) Therefore, interactional modification promotes acquisition.

One of the main components of the interactionist perspective is that of modified speech as a form of scaffolding. One purpose of modified speech may be to aid comprehension. Another purpose thereof is to help the learner to participate in a conversation as fully as possible. Gass (2002) recognizes the importance of comprehensible input, by stating that when a learner is able to participate in a conversation “... she or he is ensured of receiving a greater quantity of input” (p. 173). Language that is addressed by L1 speakers to L2 learners frequently differs in ways from language addressed to native or fluent speakers, (Saville-Troike, 2006; Baker, 2006). This is known as ‘foreigner talk’ and is similar in some ways to ‘baby talk’, (Saville-Troike, 2006; Mitchell & Myles, 2004). In the same vein, Saville-Troike (2006) outlines some of the linguistic modifications which do seem to aid comprehension at very early stages of language learning: high frequency phrases, which may be memorized as chunks of speech to be processed automatically; pauses at appropriate grammatical junctures which can help listeners recognize relevant

structures; a slower rate of speech, which allows more time for internalization and processing and topicalization, which helps in identifying the theme of the sentence.

The commonly used practice of speaking louder to an L2 learner and of oversimplifying sentence structure may in fact impair comprehension. Examples of conversational modifications to scaffold children's learning between native speakers (NS) and non-native speakers (NNS) when engaged in sustained conversation are as follows: comprehension checks, clarification requests and self-repetition or paraphrasing, (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). Saville-Troike (2006) adds to this repetition by the native speaker expansion and elaboration by the NS, sentence completion by the NS, provision of a frame for substitution by the NS and vertical constructions, which allow the non-native speaker to construct discourse sentences beyond their current independent means. Mhic Mhathúna (1995) in her study of Naíonraí children notes that teachers use a lot of repetition with children. For example, when asking questions they would restate the question with minor changes to help negotiate meaning as an aid to acquisition.

Tabors (2008), offers a range of ideas for communicating with second-language-learning children in the classroom. Her ideas regarding interactional scaffolding include starting with what the children know, starting slowly, buttressing communication, repetition, talking about the here and now, expanding and extending, upping the ante, fine-tuning and combining techniques. Suggestions regarding environmental scaffolding include providing safe havens, classroom routines, small-group activities to ensure inclusion and social support that is getting help from the English-speaking children.

Walsh's (2006) categories of interactional features are based on teacher talk and include scaffolding, direct repair, content feedback, extended wait-time, referential questions, seeking clarification, extended learner turn, teacher echo, teacher interruptions, extended teacher turn, turn completion, display questions and form-focused feedback. Walsh's category of extended wait time can be classified as part of Tabors's "starting slowly" while his categories of teacher echo and form-focused feedback fall under Tabors's umbrella of repetition. Aspects such as extended learner turn and turn completion, along with extended teacher turn come together to explain Tabors's categories of expanding and extending.

On the other hand, Lightbown and Spada (2006) recognize that while these conversational adjustments can aid comprehension, it may not mean that comprehensible input causes acquisition. On the same vein Saville-Troike (2006) adds that while some oral modifications may make language acquisition easier, many L2 learners can succeed without them. Cross-cultural studies of interaction with young children have shown that a style of child-directed speech vary within societies. It is noted by Mitchell and Myles (2004) that the cross-cultural research which has been undertaken weakens the notion that finely tuned child-directed speech is actually necessary. Bialystok (2001) also comments on modified speech when she says, "the way in which adults respond to children's utterances, according to such measures as the frequency with which they repeat or elaborate on the child's words, corresponds to the grammaticality of the child's utterance", (p. 39).

According to (Pica 2002; Swain, 1985 and Schmidt 2005) observations, along with findings on communicative, content-based classroom contexts considered rich in L2 input have revealed that comprehensible input, however modified might not be

efficient, or even sufficient, for SLA. Therefore, learners of ESL also need time to generate comprehensible output and negotiate meaning. According to Lightbown and Spada (2006) the demands of producing comprehensible output push learners ahead in their linguistic development hence enabling learners to acquire linguistic competence much earlier than expected. Swain (2000) maintains that output pushes learners to stretch their interlanguage to meet communicative goals because they are processing language more deeply. This has implications for the present study that is the influence of oral communication styles in the instruction of English language in secondary schools in Elgeyo Marakwet County.

### **2.11 Related Studies**

Since the emergency of communicative language teaching in the 1980s a lot of studies on classroom interaction have been carried out. One such study is by Shteiwi and Hamuda (2016) on oral communication problems encountering English major students. This study was carried out in Misrata University in Libya. The findings of this study revealed that majority of the students experience pronunciation problems during oral lessons. They also reported that most of the learners agreed that they are aware that pronunciation features such as word stress and sentence stress affect their ability in speaking skills. In addition to that they also found that most of the students agreed that the time allocated for teaching the speaking skill is inadequate to carry out many activities concerning the speaking skill. They also noted that students need to be given enough time to express themselves, discuss, debate, or argue with others in the classroom; this increases their ability of speaking skills. They also established that most of the time in the lectures, learners keep silent and just listen to lectures and take down notes.

In their study they also found out that most students lack essential vocabulary and this situation leads to their inability to express themselves in English language. Similarly, they noted that most students cannot retrieve suitable vocabulary rapidly; when they speak they cannot use some grammatical categories such as complex sentences and tense. Finally, it was observed that they cannot speak because they fear making mistakes; this in turn inhibits their speaking in English language.

Shteivi's and Hamuda's study relates to the present study in that both studies investigate oral use of language by students in classroom situations. However Shteivi's and Hamuda's study differs from the present study, in that, it was carried out in a university set up among English major students in a country where English is learnt as foreign language. The present study was carried out in secondary school classes in Kenya where English is learnt as a second language and it is also the medium of instruction in the school curriculum as well as the language of examination in all subjects except Kiswahili.

Ounis (2016) while exploring the use of oral communication strategies by high and low proficiency learners of English in Tunisia observed that majority of the participants consider achievement strategies such as 'negotiation for meaning,' 'non-verbal strategies' and 'message reduction and alteration' as the most practical and effective strategies used to cope with communication problems and to transmit the intended message.

In the study he also noted that 'achievement strategies' were the most frequently reported listening strategies. Majority of the students believe that achievement strategies are deemed necessary to audience success in listening. He also found out that students made use of non-verbal information such as eye contact, facial

expression, and body gestures in order to boost their understanding. They reveal their difficulties in comprehension through their gestures. Moreover he also noted that whenever the students faced listening problems in interaction they tend to resort to modified interaction in order to maintain the conversational goal with their partners. They repeat what the speaker has said or make clarification requests in order to understand the speaker's intentions.

On comparison of the listening strategies use between high proficiency and low proficiency students use he found that high proficiency students use 'achievement strategies' and in particular 'negotiation for meaning strategies' to endeavor to negotiate their communicative difficulties and know how to supply information and knowledge from their interlocutors whereas low proficient learners use 'avoidance strategies' that is they try to evade the communicative problems and mostly bring an up-rapt unhappy close to the conversation. He noted that high proficiency learners' frequency use of achievement strategies can be explained by their equipment with the necessary linguistic tools hence they feel very comfortable and confident in using the language for communicative purposes and sustaining the negotiation especially through meaning negotiation.

Ounis' study relates to the present study, in that, both studies are concerned with oral communication strategies in English language. However, Ounis' study differs from the present in that it was carried out to explore the use of oral communication strategies by high and low proficiency learners of EFL enrolled in a university, while the present study was carried out to establish the oral communication styles used in English language classrooms in secondary schools where English is learnt as a second language. Another difference is on methodology, Ounis' study employed a

quantitative technique to collect analyze and interpret data where only one tool, which is students' questionnaire, was used to collect data. On the other hand the present study used a mixed methods approach which employed both quantitative and qualitative techniques to collect, analyze and interpret data. Data was collected using three instruments student questionnaire, teachers' interview guide and classroom observation schedule.

Onchera (2013) on the pedagogical hindrances to oral communication skills in English in secondary schools in Kenya established that the key factors that affect the teaching of oral communication in the integrated English curriculum in secondary schools is that teachers of English language mainly rely on the schemes of work and the syllabus book but not lesson plans in teaching of oral communication skills. Most teachers were also found to view lesson plans as duplicates of schemes of work.

Most teachers also reported that lack of assessment of oral skills at the national level affects the teaching of oral communication. The study also revealed that heads of departments concur with the teachers that the lack of assessment of oral skills at national level affects the teaching of oral communication skills. He also noted that the lack of assessment tests affects both the teaching and formative evaluation of oral skills. This is because teachers develop the tendency of disregarding continuous evaluation of the curriculum objectives and concentrate on terminal evaluation of oral skills. Other factors that were observed to hinder the teaching of oral communication include lack of variety of instructional resources, disparities in the levels of training of teachers in speech work and finally teachers' individual speech problems.

This study relates to the present study in that both studies deal with oral communication skills in secondary schools in Kenya. In addition the two studies



employed mixed methods approaches to collect, analyze and present data. They used a questionnaire, observation schedule and interview guide to collect data. Onchera's study differs from the present study in that it focuses on the pedagogical hindrances to oral communication skills in secondary schools, more specifically the nature of instructional planning, for oral skills in terms of assessment, instructional resources and lesson planning among others factors. The present study deals with influence of oral communication styles in the instruction of English language in secondary schools more specifically oral communication strategies used by both teachers and learners, the effects of these communication strategies on the instruction of English language, teachers and learners choice of registers, communication patterns and finally the challenges of oral communication in English language classes.

Muriungi and Kibui (2015) studied the influence of motivation on acquisition of English language skills among day secondary school students in Kenya. In their study they established that most of the teachers rewarded performers only as opposed to getting a way of motivating the whole class. Other teachers argued that they encourage students to speak in English while a few reported that they take their students who perform on academic tours. In the study they also noted that students in secondary school are not fully motivated to excel in the English language.

In their study they also observed that teachers reported that majority of their students make pronunciation errors while reading aloud or when participating in class discussions. It is only a minority of the learners about (12.5 %) who do not often make these errors. They also established that while the teachers endeavored to correct the mistakes instantly and use them as an opportunity to teach oral skills most of the

students (75%) treat it as indifference as well as making fun of it. This can result in serious setbacks like anxiety to the affected learner.

They also found out that majority of the learners transferred the phonological errors into their writing. Most of the students tend to write words the way they pronounce them. For example, the students wrote leave [li:v] as [liv]. These errors they reported could be attributed to failure by the students to regularly practice speaking in English. This they point out explains why motivation is the key to embrace the culture of intensive reading in secondary schools to expose students to correct spelling of English words.

They also found out the students experienced both morphological and syntactic errors. This, they point out that it is evident in the use of English plurals. Learners failed to learn that not all English nouns attain their plural forms by adding the morphemes at the end of a word so that like ‘advices’ and ‘furnitures’. These suggest that students suffer fault over- generalization and incomplete application of rules and also failed to learn conditions under which rules are applied. On syntactic errors, the sample of the learner language revealed students’ wrong use of lexical/ syntactic rules. These they say could be probably attributed to inadequate exposure to the English language. For instance, a construction like ‘those are good news?’ possesses the errors of agreement which translates to syntactic errors due to wrong use of demonstrative ‘those’ instead of that and the auxiliary ‘are’ instead of ‘is’. This they attribute to inter-lingual and intra lingual problems stemming from mother tongue (Ki-Imenti) a language spoken in the region where the study was conducted.

Muriungi’s and Kibui’s study relates to the present study, in that, both studies deal with the acquisition of English language by students in secondary school in Kenya.

However, it differs from the present study in that it was carried out to find out the influence of motivation on the acquisition of English skills among day school students while the present study was carried out to investigate the influence of oral communication styles in the instruction of English language in secondary schools. Therefore, the present study does not limit itself to day secondary schools only but to both day and boarding secondary schools.

Another study on classroom interaction is by Suryati (2015) on classroom interaction strategies employed by English teachers at lower secondary schools in Malang region, East Java, Indonesia. The researcher used video recording and audio recording as well as observation protocols to capture classroom interaction. The researcher observed two types of classroom structures that is teacher fronted interaction and student-student interaction. The teacher fronted interaction is an interaction where the teacher worked with the whole class and typically interacted with succession of individuals while expecting the attention of the rest of the class. This interaction initiated and controlled by the teacher is referred to as teacher – student interaction (T-S). The second form involved interaction among students when working within pairs or in a group. This type of interaction is labeled as student – student interaction (S-S).

The researcher also found out that managerial mode, extended teacher turns in which teachers provided explanations and/or instructions in the beginning of the lessons constituted a less percentage of about (7.3%) of teachers' talk. All teachers were reported to be comfortable talking about aspects of management in their classrooms evidenced by the amount of teacher talk that occurred. The researcher found out that teachers were transmitting information, introducing activities, organizing the

environment and referring the students to materials, however, clarification requests and confirmation checks in management were not found.

The researcher also established that material mode appeared to be popular as the majority of teachers' talk revolved around materials the students were using. Majority of students' material were reading texts. Much of the classroom interaction demonstrated the IRF (Initiation, Response, and Feedback) pattern. The total IRF pattern identified was 308. In the study, there was also an extensive use of display questions. Display questions are questions to which the teacher knows the answer. Compared to display questions, referential questions were less popular. Referential questions are questions in which the teacher does not know the answer.

Suryati's study relates to the present study in that both studies focus on oral interaction in the English language classrooms. In the two studies also oral language plays a significant role during the teaching and learning of English language. Suryati's study differs from the present study in that it was carried out to establish the classroom interaction strategies employed by teachers of English while the present study was carried out to establish the influence of oral communication styles in the instruction of English language in secondary schools. The present study therefore deals with oral communication styles of both the teachers and learners in English language classrooms.

Omulando (2009) observes that most of the learners in secondary school stated that most of their teachers allowed them an opportunity to talk in class; they also reported that their teachers give them an opportunity to express their views concerning teaching of English language. She also noted that a large proportion of the teachers of English are open with their learners and as such they provide them with the

opportunity and avenues to express themselves during the learning process. However, many of the English language teachers are to a considerable degree denying their learners an opportunity to adequately learn English. Many teachers did not exploit all the possible avenues which could be accomplished through the use of LTS. She also observed that most of the learners are freer and seem to learn better when prompted by fellow learners than by the teachers. She found out that learners do not prompt themselves frequently; they sometimes require external activation in order to get immersed in the language process.

She also established that some teachers do not make any effort to know and understand how and what their learners go through under different circumstances in the process of language learning. In addition, she found out that learners shy off from challenging content and do not consciously and naturally use LLS. This she points out could imply that the learners are not aware of the LLS to use in these situations. The learners do not easily fall back to the use of LLS when faced with new tasks, particularly the challenging ones. They require plenty of external activation and teacher prompting if at all beneficial language learning sessions have to take place. She also established that low achievers and learners who probably have low motivation in language learning require a lot of motivation and prompting from the teacher, if the learning session is to be useful.

During the classroom observation she noted that learners sought clarification of the lesson content in only 6 (18.2%) of the total 33 lessons observed. While the teachers sought for clarification from the learners over the correct response, but the learners seemed to be in doubt about the correct response. She also observed that in virtually all the lessons observed, learners paid attention and were able to express keen

listening skills as they noted in their exercise books notes that were being dictated. She also noted that most of the lessons observed were teacher- centered rather than learner- centered. She says, this implied that the teachers did not use the strategy instruction approach to language learning as teacher talk dominated most of the lessons.

Both of these studies focus on classroom instruction in secondary schools in Kenya. Omulando's study focuses on both the teachers' and learners' awareness of English and use of LLS and how these consequently influence the language teaching process for the teachers and language learning process for the learners. However, the present study focused on both the teachers and learners oral communication strategies, oral interaction patterns, language registers and how these factors influence the instruction of English language in secondary schools in Elgeyo Marakwet County.

From the above exposition it can be noted that what is common across these studies is that they are studies on the pedagogical hindrances to oral communication skills in English and the influence of motivation on the acquisition of English language skills among learners. None of these studies concentrates on the influence of oral communication styles in the instruction of English language in secondary schools. Building on these studies, this study sought to fill in the gap in knowledge on the influence of oral communication styles in the instruction of English language in secondary schools in Kenya.

## **2.12 Chapter Summary**

In this chapter, available literature related to the influence of oral communication styles in the instruction of English language in secondary schools has been reviewed;

various issues related to the study in question have been discussed. These issues ranged from the components of classroom interaction, the classroom as a context of oral interaction, the importance of oral skills in language learning, competency based education and the role of interaction in second language acquisition. The chapter also discussed the role of second language theories on classroom interaction; that is sociocultural theory, input and interaction and finally related studies. The purpose of the literature review was to establish a basis upon to anchor the study variables and determine the gap in knowledge where the study, the influence of oral communication styles on the instruction of English language in secondary schools would be situated. Based on the reviewed literature no similar study has been done in Kenya. The next chapter discusses research design and methodology that was adopted in carrying out the study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses research philosophical paradigm, research methodology and design that were used in the study. The chapter also describes the study locale, the study population, the sampling procedures and study sample, research variables and the instruments that were used to collect data. The chapter also discusses the validity and reliability of the research instruments, the pilot study, ethical considerations; concerning values of honesty, frankness, personal integrity, responsibility towards respondents such as consent, confidentiality and courtesy, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures and finally chapter summary.

#### **3.2 Research Philosophical Paradigm**

This study was grounded on the pragmatist philosophical paradigm. This was on the premise that the oral communication styles employed by the teachers and learners in English language classes improve classroom interaction and effective instruction of English language. Improved classroom instruction influences the overall learning and acquisition of English language among the learners leading to improved learner's communicative competence. Bhattachajee (2012) observes that paradigms are mental models or frames (belief systems). They are often hard to recognize because they are implicitly assumed and taken for granted. However recognizing these paradigms is central to making sense of and reconciling differences in people's perceptions of the same social phenomenon. Burrell and Morgan (1979) suggested that the way social



science researchers' view and study social phenomenon is shaped by two fundamental sets of philosophical assumptions: ontology and epistemology.

Grix, (2004) defines ontology as the study of “claims and assumptions that are made about the nature of social reality, claims about what exists, what it looks like, what units make it up and how these units interact with each other,” (p. 59). On the other hand, Crotty (1998) defines epistemology, as “the theory of knowledge embedded in the theoretical perspective and thereby in the methodology, (p. 3). Together, ontological and epistemological assumptions make up a paradigm.

According to Creswell (2009) pragmatic knowledge claims arise out of actions, situations and consequences rather than antecedent conditions as in postpositivist. They are concerned with applications- ‘what works’ – and solutions to problems, (Patton, 1990). Pragmatists are concerned with the problem instead of the methods and researchers use all approaches to understand the problem, (Rossman & Wilson, 1985). Pragmatism as a philosophical underpinning for mixed methods studies, Tashokkori and Teddlie (1998) and Patton (1999) as cited by Creswell (2009) convey the importance of focusing attention on the research problem in social science research and then using pluralistic approaches to derive knowledge about the problem. He further points out that for the mixed methods researcher; pragmatism opens the door to multiple methods, different world views and different assumptions, as well as different forms of data collection and analysis.

### **3.3 Research Approach**

The study adopted a mixed methods research approach, thus utilizing quantitative and qualitative methods in the collection and analysis of data. Fraenkel and Wallen (2010) observe that mixed methods research involves the use of both quantitative and

qualitative methods in a single study. They point out that, the benefit of using mixed research approach are: mixed methods research approach can help clarify and explain relationships found to exist between variables. It allows researchers to explore relationships between variables in depth and it can also help to confirm or cross-validate relationships discovered between variables, as when quantitative and qualitative methods are compared to see if they converge on a single interpretation of a phenomenon.

According to Creswell and Clark (2011, 2018) mixed methods research approach provides trends that offset the weakness of both qualitative and quantitative research. It also provides more evidence for studying a research problem than either quantitative or qualitative research alone. Finally, it helps answer questions that cannot be answered by quantitative and qualitative approaches alone.

In this study data was collected using three instruments: classroom observation schedule, teachers' interview guide and student questionnaire. Classroom observation schedule, teacher interview guide and open ended items from the student questionnaire were used to collect qualitative data while closed ended items from the student questionnaire were used to collect quantitative data, thus making the study a concurrent mixed methods study.

### **3.4 Research Design**

According to Kothari (2004) a research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure. This study adopted descriptive survey design. Bhattarjee (2012) defines survey research as a method involving the use of

standardized questionnaires or interviews to collect data about people and their preferences, thoughts, and behaviours in a systematic manner. He further points out that survey method can be used for descriptive, exploratory, or explanatory research. He argues that this method is best suited for studies that have individual people as the unit of analysis.

In addition, Kothari (2004) observes that surveys are concerned with conditions that exist, opinions that are held, processes that are ongoing, effects that are evident or trends that are developing. Cohen and Manion (1992) point out that in a descriptive survey, the collection of information typically involves structured or semi-structured interviews and self-completion questionnaire among other instruments. The survey method has been used to carry out studies in sociolinguistics, (Johnstone, 2000).

In this study descriptive survey was adopted to establish the influence of oral communication styles in the instruction of English language in secondary schools in Elgeyo Marakwet County. The unit of analysis was form three teachers of English and their students from whom data was collected. The researcher collected data using teachers' interview guide, Student questionnaire and classroom observation schedule to establish the influence of oral communication styles in the instruction of English language in secondary schools in secondary schools in Elgeyo Marakwet County.

### **3.5 The Study Locale**

The study was carried out in secondary schools in Elgeyo Marakwet County. It is one of the countries in the former Rift Valley province. It is bordered by Baringo County to the East, West Pokot County to the North, Trans-Nzoia County to the West and finally Uasin Gishu County to the South West. The performance of English language

in KCSE in this county has not been impressive for successive years. Table 3.1 presents this information. This information was inquired from the office of County Director of Education at Iten, in the year 2018.

**Table 3. 1: KCSE English Mean Scores in Elgeyo Marakwet County from 2016- 2018**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Mean Scores</b>
2016	3.38
2017	3.75
2018	3.62

**Source: MOE Office, Iten, 2018**

It can be noted that performance in English language in Elgeyo Marakwet County covering the period 2016- 2018 is below the national mean (National performance, APPENDIX 5). This could be attributed to various factors among them oral communication styles employed by both the teachers and learners during classroom interaction which this study focused on. KNEC (2018) in its report noted that candidates perform poorly in English because of poor mastery of the language leading to failure to adequately interpret given tasks and compose credible and interesting accounts; as such it calls for innovation in curriculum implementation. Therefore, this investigation provided an insight into how learners acquire, learn and use oral communication skills hence improve their performance and competence in the English language.

### **3.6 The Study Population**

The study population or the target population according to Onen and Yuko (2009) refers to the total number of respondents or the total environment of interest to the researcher. The study targeted secondary schools in Elgeyo Marakwet County. The target population consisted of form three students and their teachers of English. Elgeyo Marakwet County has a total of 112 secondary schools. The researcher chose form three students on the premise that their language ability is sufficiently developed, they can also interact using English language in class. Finally, they can use oral communication strategies when interacting in class in order to negotiate meaning during English lessons.

### **3.7 Sampling Procedures and Study Sample**

Bhattacharjee (2012) observes that sampling is a statistical process of selecting a subset (called a “sample”) of a population of interest for purposes of making observations and statistical inferences about that population. Sampling in research is necessary because it is not possible for one to study a whole population as Sighn (2006) argues that the study of a total population is not possible and it is also impractical. The practical limitation: cost, time, and other factors which are usually operative in the situation stand in the way of studying the total population. Therefore, in this study the researcher selected a sample for the study from among learners and teachers of English in secondary schools in Elgeyo Marakwet County. The researcher randomly selected 13 schools for the study. This is 10% of the total number of secondary schools in the county, which are 112 in number. Kerlinger and Lee (2000) and also Cohen et al. (2007) observe that ten to thirty percent of the total population is ideal for a study.

The actual number of schools that took part in the study was arrived at through simple random sampling. This was on the premise that the teachers of English language in all the schools have undergone the same training in similar universities, however, the only difference is the years of experience, but this was not withstanding as the oral communication styles employed by the teachers is not influenced by the number of years of experience. The advantage of simple random sampling according to Cozby (2010) and Bhattacharjee (2012) is that all possible subsets of a population are given an equal opportunity of being selected.

Purposive sampling was used to select form three classes from the selected schools. In the case of a school with more than one stream of form three classes the researcher randomly selected the stream that participated in the study. Similarly, for a school with only one form three class that class automatically took part in the study.

The researcher carried observation in the 13 form three classes that were randomly selected for the study. Two observations were carried out in each of the selected classes translating to 26 observations in total. In each of the 13 form three classes that were observed 15 students from each of the classes were randomly selected to fill the student questionnaire. this was because in every form three class observed there were an average of 50 students as such 15 students per class translated to 30% of the students, as mentioned earlier 30% of a population is ideal for a study. In total 195 students filled the student questionnaire. Thirteen teachers of English language from the classes that were observed automatically participated in the teachers' interview. The teachers like the classes that were observed were selected through simple random sampling in the instances where a school had two or more form three classes. For a

school with one form three class the teacher of English teaching in that class was automatically interviewed.

The sampling unit in this study was the school from which the researcher obtained the learners and teachers who took part in the study. On the other hand the units of analysis in this study were the teachers and learners who took part in the study. According to Bhattacharjee (2012) the unit of analysis may be a person, group, organization, country, object or any other entity that one wishes to draw scientific inferences.

### **3.8 Research Instruments**

In the study a combination of three instruments were used to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. These instruments were: the interview guide for teachers of English, classroom observation schedule and a questionnaire for the learners. The main purpose for using the three instruments was to validate the findings of the study. This was achieved through ‘triangulation’ that is collecting and analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data in a single study. Yeasmin and Rahman (2012) point out that, ‘triangulation techniques are helpful for cross-checking and they are used to provide confirmation and completeness, which brings ‘balance’ between the two or more types of research. The purpose is to increase the credibility and validity of results’ (p. 157). Here after is a description of each of these instruments.

#### **3.8.1 Classroom Observation Schedule**

According to Kumar (2011) observation is a purposeful, systematic and selective way of watching and listening to an interaction or phenomenon as it takes place. There are many situations in which observation is the most appropriate method of data

collection. For example, when you want to learn about the interaction in a group, study the dietary patterns of a population; ascertain the functions performed by a worker, or study the behavior or personality traits of an individual. It is also appropriate in situations where full and/or accurate information cannot be elicited by questioning, because respondents either are not co-operative or are unaware of the answers because it is difficult for them to detach themselves from the interaction.

Cohen et al. (2007) point out that the distinctive feature of observation as a research process is that it offers an investigator the opportunity to gather 'live' data from naturally occurring social situations. In this way, the researcher can look directly at what is taking place *in situ* rather than relying on second-hand accounts. The use of immediate awareness, or direct cognition, as a principal mode of research thus has the potential to yield more valid or authentic data than would otherwise be the case with mediated or inferential methods.

In this study the researcher carried out classroom observation during English language lessons. To guide the researcher in the observation, an observation schedule presented as appendix (1), guided the researcher. The classroom observation schedule items included: teachers' oral communication strategies, learners' oral communication strategies, classroom interaction patterns, language registers used in English language classes and oral communication challenges encountered during English language classes. The classroom observation assisted the researcher to cross check and confirm the findings collected through teachers' interview guide and students' questionnaire.



### **3.8.2 Teachers' Interview Guide**

There are many definitions of interviews (Kumar 2011), citing Monette et al. (1986) says; 'an interview involves an interviewer reading questions to respondents and recording their answers' (p. 156). In the same vein Burns (1997) states that an interview is a verbal interchange, often face to face, though the telephone may be used, in which an interviewer tries to elicit information, beliefs or opinions from another person. Similarly, Kumar (2011) points out that any person – person interaction, either face to face or otherwise, between two or more individuals with a specific purpose in mind is called an interview.

According to Kothari (2004) an interview method of collecting data involves presentation of oral verbal stimuli and reply in terms of oral verbal responses. This method of data collection can be used through personal interviews and if possible through telephone interviews. Cohen et al. (2012) observe that 'interviews enable participants – be they interviewer or interviewee- to discuss their interpretations of the world in the world in which they live and so express how they regard situations from their own point of view' (p. 340). They further point out that the interview is a flexible tool for data collection that enables multi-sensory channels to be used.

The collection of information through personal interviews is usually carried out in a structured way. Thus the interviews are referred to as structured interviews. Kothari (2004) points out that, such interviews involve the use of a set of predetermined questions and highly standardized techniques of recording. Thus, the interviewer in a structured interview follows a rigid procedure laid down, asking questions in a form and order prescribed. One of the main advantages of the structured interviews is that it

provides uniform information, which assures the comparability of data. It also requires fewer interviewing skills than does unstructured interview.

The researcher collected data from the teachers using teachers' structured interview guide. The interview guide consisted of five parts: (a) teachers' oral communication strategies, (b) learners' oral communication strategies, (c) oral communication patterns in English language classes, (d) language registers used in English language classes and (e) oral communication challenges encountered in English language classes. A copy is provided in Appendix 2.

### **3.8.3 Learner Questionnaire**

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) observe that a questionnaire is a research instrument used to obtain important information about the population, while Singh (2006) points out that a questionnaire is a form which is prepared and distributed for the purpose of securing responses. He further observes that these questions are factual and designed for securing information about certain conditions or practices, of which recipient is presumed to have knowledge. Each item in the questionnaire is developed to address a specific objective or a research question. Kothari (2004) states that some of the advantages of using a questionnaire are: 'there is low cost even when the universe is large and widely spread geographically. It is free from the bias of the interviewer; answers are in respondents own words, large samples can be made use of and the results can thus be more dependable and reliable,' (p. 100).

In this study the researcher collected data from the learners using a questionnaire. The questionnaire used was divided into five parts. Part one, covered teachers' oral communication strategies, part two, learners' oral communication strategies, part

three, oral interaction patterns in English language classes, part four, language registers in English language classes and part five, oral communication challenges encountered during the instruction of English language.

The researcher prepared all the items in the questionnaire except the items in part two that is the learners' oral communication strategies which were adopted from Nakatani (2006). These learners' oral communication strategies have been referred by the author (Nakatani) as 'The Oral Communication Strategy Inventory' (OCSI) presented in Appendix 4. This instrument was originally developed by Nakatani in 2006 and it was first delivered in Japanese, (Ounis 2016). The English version was later published by the author. It is a 5-point Likert type scale ranging from 1 (never or almost never true of me) to 5 (always or almost always true of me). It consists of two parts: part one is made up of 32 strategies for coping with speaking problems and part two 26 strategies for coping with listening problems.

The researcher adopted this self –reporting questionnaire and the students were asked to answer the questions considering the oral communication strategies they use when communicating in class. The researcher however modified from the original instruments the 5 point Likert type scale into 1-strongly agree, 2- Agree, 3- Undecided, 4- Disagree and 5-Strongly Disagree. This instrument is presented under Appendix 3.

### **3.9 Validity and Reliability of the Research Instruments**

This section discusses the validity and reliability of the research instruments that were used in the study. It was important to ascertain the validity and reliability of these data collection tools in order to standardize them before the actual collection of data in

order to arrive at valid and reliable results. To facilitate this, a pilot study was conducted.

### **3.9.1 Pilot Study**

A pilot study was carried out before the main study. A pilot study is a small scale preliminary study carried out prior to the main study. Johnstone (2000) observes that a pilot study is a way of determining whether a procedure is reliable or not. The pilot study was carried out to pretest the research instruments. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) point out that the purpose of pre-testing the instruments is to ensure that the items in the instruments are stated clearly and have the same meaning to all respondents. They further observe that the respondents on which the instrument is pre- tested should not be part of the selected sample.

Therefore, the pilot study was conducted in Uasin Gishu County. Uasin Gishu County has the same linguistic characteristics as Elgeyo Marakwet County; they are occupied by members of the same linguistic group. Two schools were randomly selected for the pilot study. In each of the two schools a form three class was randomly picked. The researcher observed a lesson in each of the classes that was randomly picked. Fifteen (15) students from each of the classes observed were randomly picked and the questionnaires administered to them. A total 30 students participated in the pilot study. The two teachers of English language of the classes that were observed automatically participated in the interview. After two weeks, the researcher went back to carry out one more lesson observation in each of the classes that was previously observed. In total 4 lessons were observed during the pilot study. The researcher also administered the questionnaires to the same learners who had previously filled the

questionnaires and finally interviewed the teachers of English language who had been previously interviewed.

The results of the pilot study were analyzed by the researcher by first grouping the data into quantitative and qualitative data. Discrete data obtained from closed ended items in the learners' questionnaire were treated as quantitative data, while open ended items from the learners' questionnaire, teachers' interview guide and classroom observation notes were treated as qualitative data. The researcher then used Statistical Package for Social Sciences to analyze the quantitative data. Qualitative data were grouped into themes based on study objectives and research variables. They were analyzed using content analysis procedures. This was done in order to verify the validity and reliability of the research instruments.

The pilot study revealed that the research tools could measure what they were intended to measure. However, a few changes were needed to be made. For example, in the learners' questionnaire some items which were repeated in different words were corrected for consistency. In addition, ambiguous items in the teachers' interview guide and learners' questionnaire were restructured to enhance clarity in meaning.

### **3.9.2 Validity of the Research Instruments**

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) observe that validity is the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences based on the research results. In other words, validity is the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of the data actually represent the phenomenon under study. It therefore has to do with how accurate the data obtained in the study represents the variables of the study. If such data is a true reflection of the variables then inferences based on such data is accurate and meaningful.

There are many types of validity, however, in this study three types are explained: construct, content and internal validity. According to Cohen et al. (2007) construct validity is an abstract. They point out that in this type of validity agreement is sought on the operationalized forms of a construct, clarifying what it means. In this study the researcher established construct validity by operationalizing the variables of the study after a wide literature search which teased out the meanings of particular constructs and their constituent elements.

On the other hand Bhattacharjee (2012) points out that content validity is the extent to which each variable in the study should have similar and adequate representation in the questions and items. He further points out that content validity is judged on the extent to which statements or questions represent the issues they are supposed to measure, as judged by the researcher, readership and experts in the field. In this study, the researcher after constructing the research instruments, then together with the course experts in the Department of Curriculum Instruction and Educational Media of Moi University discussed how the variables were balanced in the learner questionnaire, teachers' interview guide and classroom observation schedule.

While commenting on internal validity Cohen et al. (2007) observe that internal validity seeks to demonstrate that the explanation of a particular event, issue or set of data which a piece of research provides can actually be sustained by the data. In some degree this concerns accuracy, which can be applied to qualitative and quantitative research. The findings must describe accurately the phenomenon being researched. To ascertain the internal validity of the instruments the researcher consulted supervisors and course experts in the Department of Curriculum Instruction and Educational Media at Moi University to verify the research instruments, that is, the teachers'

interview guide, classroom observation schedule and the learner questionnaire. The researcher also ensured that the sampling process was free from bias, as Cohen et al. (2007) point out that careful sampling of items is required to ensure their representativeness.

### **3.9.3 Reliability of the Research Instruments**

According to Cohen et al. (2007) reliability in quantitative research is essentially a synonym for dependability, consistency and explicability over time, over instruments and over groups of respondents. It is concerned with precision and accuracy; some features such as height, can be measured precisely, while others like musical ability cannot. For research to be reliable it must demonstrate that if it were to be carried out on a similar group of respondents in a similar context (however defined), then similar results would be found. Johnstone (2000) observes that a research procedure is “reliable” if it produces the same results each time it is employed. Similarly, Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) observe that reliability is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trial. Reliability in research is influenced by random error.

In order to ascertain the reliability of the instruments, that is, the classroom observation schedule, student questionnaire, and teachers’ interview guide the researcher carried out a test-retest of the instruments by administering the instruments in two secondary schools in Uasin Gishu County in a pilot study. Fraenkel and Wallen (2010) observe that test-retest is a method of checking reliability of instruments. They further point out that test-retest involves administering the same test twice to the same group after a certain time interval has elapsed. Statistical results obtained from closed ended items in the student questionnaire of these two data collection sessions were

then analyzed and measured using Cronbach's alpha with the help of SPSS. The results were .83 which indicates a highly acceptable internal consistency. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (1996) the reliability of items is accepted if the alpha is between 0.70 and 0.90.

Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen and Razavier (2006) observe that researchers use Cronbach's alpha when measures have items that are not scored simply as right or wrong, such as attitude scales or essay tests, but it is used when the item score may take on a range of values; for example, on a Likert attitude scale where the individual receives a score from 1 to 5 depending on which option was chosen. In the present study, closed ended items in the student questionnaire were scored in a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 [Strongly Agree(1), Agree (2), Undecided (3), Disagree (3) and Strongly Agree (5)], thus necessitating the use of Cronbach's alpha. However, with the non- statistical data using the results obtained, the researcher together with the supervisors determined the required alteration of the data collection instruments that is the open ended items in the learner questionnaire, teachers' interview guide and classroom observation schedule.

### **3.10 Data Collection Procedures**

The researcher upon receiving clearance to collect data from the National Council for Science and Technology, reported to the County Commissioner's Office and the office of County Director of Education at Iten, the county headquarters of Elgeyo Marakwet County. The researcher was then issued with an introductory letter by each of this office to present to the principals of the schools where the study was conducted. The researcher then reported to the schools where the study took place and then presented the introductory letters from the offices of the County Commissioner



and County Director of Education to the principals of the respective schools. The principals of each of the concerned schools in turn introduced the researcher to the respective heads of the language department, who in turn introduced the researcher to the form three class teachers and subsequently the form three class teachers introduced the researcher to the form three teachers of English language in the respective schools.

The researcher briefed the form three teachers of English on the purpose of the research. The researcher together with the teacher of English arranged the time when the classroom observation took place. After the lesson observation had taken place the researcher with the assistance of the teacher of English language randomly selected fifteen (15) learners who filled the questionnaire. The students were briefed that their participation in the study was voluntary and they were not coerced to participate. The researcher then proceeded to interview the teacher whose class was observed. Finally, the researcher with the help of the form three teachers of English proceeded to collect the questionnaires from the students.

In this study, the researcher first carried out the classroom observations, followed by administration of the student questionnaire and finally teacher's interview. The purpose of doing this was to make sure that the learners and the teachers did not get time to discuss the research questions in the student questionnaire and the interview guide respectively, therefore influencing the outcome of the findings.

The researcher after a period of two weeks from the first observation carried out a second classroom observation in the same classes where the first observation had been carried out. In total, the researcher carried out 26 classroom observations. The purpose of carrying out these observations twice in every class was to increase the

reliability of the findings of the study as Cohen et al. (2007) point out that the greater the number of observations, the greater the reliability of the data, enabling emergent categories to be verified.

### **3.11 Data Analysis Procedures**

According to Singh (2006) analysis of data means studying the tabulated material in order to determine the inherent facts or meanings. It involves breaking down existing complex factors into simpler parts and putting the parts together for the purpose of interpretation. Before a researcher starts to analyze data, he/she needs to visualize how to present the findings to the readership in light of the background of the study and the purpose, (Kumar, 2011). A researcher therefore needs to decide what type of analysis would be appropriate for the readers of the research report.

The researcher in the present study first grouped the data into quantitative and qualitative data. Discrete data obtained from closed ended items in the students' questionnaire was treated as quantitative data, while open ended items from the students' questionnaire, interview schedule and classroom observation notes was treated as qualitative data. Kumar (2011) further points out that in analyzing quantitative data, the researcher first needs to edit the raw data, that is to 'clean' or to free the data from inconsistencies and incompleteness. In this study the researcher scrutinized the completed research instruments to identify and minimize as possible errors, incompleteness, misclassification and gaps in the information obtained from the respondents. After editing the data, the next step was to code. Coding of data is dependent upon the measurement of scale used in the measurement of a variable and whether a question is open ended or closed ended. After coding the data, the

researcher developed a codebook; this is a book which provided a set of rules for assigning numerical values to answers obtained from respondents.

The researcher then verified the coded data by selecting a few questionnaires at random and then recorded the responses to identify any discrepancies in coding. This was done continuously until the researcher was sure that there were no discrepancies. In case where there were discrepancies, the researcher re-examined the coding. Finally the researcher selected a statistical procedure to subject the data. In this study the researcher used SPSS- Statistical Package for Social Sciences to organize and manage the quantitative data, using descriptive statistics. After analyzing the data, the researcher presented the data in the form of frequency and percentage tables, graphs, charts and descriptions.

In analyzing qualitative data the researcher employed content analysis procedures. Content analysis is a strict and systematic set of procedures for the rigorous analysis, examination and verification of the contents of written data, (Flick, 1998; Maryring, 2004). Cohen et al. (2007) point out that qualitative data analysis involves organizing, accounting for and explaining the data; that is making sense of data in terms of the participants' definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes , categories, and regularities. In this study, in analyzing qualitative data the researcher studied the contents of the student questionnaire open ended items, written records of teachers' interviews guide and classroom observation notes in order to identify the main themes that emerged from the responses given by the students, the teachers and elicited from the classroom observation notes made by the researcher based on the study objectives and research variables.

According to (Kumar 2011; Creswell and Clark 2011, 2018) this process involves a number of steps. First, identifying the main themes, the researcher in this study went through the descriptive responses given by the teachers and students to each question in order to find out the meanings they communicated. From these responses the researcher developed broad themes that reflected these meanings. These themes thus became the basis of analyzing the teachers' in depth interview, open ended questions from the learners' questionnaire and classroom observation notes. The researcher continued to identify these themes from the same question until saturation point.

The researcher then wrote these themes; assigned a code to each of them using numbers and key words. Third, the researcher classified the responses under the main themes. After identifying the themes, the researcher went through the transcripts of all the student questionnaire open ended responses, teachers' interview guide and the classroom observation notes, classified the responses or the contents of the notes under the different themes.

The final step was to integrate the themes and the responses into the text of the report. The researcher after identifying responses that fell within different themes integrated these responses into the text of the report by discussing the main themes and sub-themes in some cases that emerged from the data collected. This was guided by the research objectives as Creswell and Clark (2018) point out that in qualitative research representing the results may involve a discussion of evidence for the themes or categories; or diagrams presenting frameworks, models or theories.

### **3.12 Ethical Considerations**

Cohen et al. (2007) point out that ethical issue may stem from the kinds of problems investigated by social scientists and the methods they use to obtain vital and reliable

data. It can thus be argued that each stage in research sequence raises ethical issues. They also observe that ethical issues arise from the nature of the research project, the context of the research, in this case the English language classes, the procedure that was adopted, methods of data collection, the nature of the participants; that is the students and teachers of English language, the type of data collected and what to be done with the data collected. In the case of the present study, the data collected was purely for educational purposes.

According to Kumar (2011) ethical issues to consider concern research participants; these include: informed consent, maintaining confidentiality, avoiding bias, provision or deprivation of treatment, using inappropriate research methodology, incorrect reporting and inappropriate use of data. Walliman, (2005) on the other hand, points out that ethical issues in research can be viewed from two perspectives; the ethical responsibility of the researcher and the ethical responsibilities of the respondents in the study. On the ethical issues concerning the researcher, one is concerned with values of honest, frankness and personal integrity. On the other hand, ethical responsibilities of the respondents include: informed consent, confidentiality and courtesy.

In order for the researcher to comply with the above ethical considerations the researcher made an application for a research permit to carry out the study from the National Council for Science and Technology (Appendix 7). The application of the research permit was done upon the recommendation from the School of Education, Moi University. On the receipt of the research permit to carry out the study, the researcher presented the research permit to the County Director of Education and the County Commissioner, Elgeyo Marakwet County where the study was carried out.

The County Director of Education then issued the researcher with a letter of introduction that was presented to the principals of the secondary schools where the study was conducted.

In seeking informed consent the researcher wrote a cover letter that accompanied the tools that were used to collect data. The cover letter clearly indicated the purpose of the study, the information to be sought from the participants that is the influence of oral communication styles on the instruction of English language in secondary schools. The participants in the study; the teachers of English language and the learners were informed that participation in the study was voluntarily and they were not coerced to participate as Kumar (2011) observes:

*Under standards set by the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects, all informed- consent procedures must meet three criteria: participants must be competent to give consent; sufficient information must be provided to allow for a reasoned decision and consent must be voluntary (p. 83).*

In maintaining confidentiality of the respondents the researcher coded the tools of data collection that is the teachers' interview guide, students questionnaire and classroom observation schedule. This way the researcher ensured that the information collected and its sources could not be identified.

In order to get rid of bias, the researcher was as objective as possible based on his training, competence in research, philosophical perspective, theoretical position as outlined and finally use of appropriate research methodology. In addition to this, the researcher carried out the sampling of the respondents appropriately so that the respondents in the study were a true representation of the target population.

### **3.13 Chapter Summary**

This chapter discussed the research philosophical paradigm that guided the study, research approach that was employed in the study, research design that guided the study, the study locale, the study population, sampling procedures and study sample. In addition, the chapter discussed the research instruments that were used to collect data; that is classroom observation schedule, teachers' interview guide and student questionnaire. Finally, this chapter discussed the validity and reliability of the research instruments, pilot study, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures and ethical consideration. The next chapter presents data analysis, interpretation and discussion of the findings.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND

#### DISCUSSION

##### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data collected from the field. The data is presented thematically and descriptively according to the methods of data collection and the type of questions presented to the respondents. The data analyzed was obtained through teachers' interview guide, classroom observation schedule and learner questionnaire. The presentation is done by first giving an overview of the results obtained through each instrument. The discussion is topically presented according to the study objectives which were to:

1. Examine the teachers' oral communication strategies in English language classes and how they influence the instruction of English language.
2. Assess the learners' oral communication strategies in English language classes and how they influence the learning of English language.
3. Evaluate the different oral interaction patterns in English language classes and how they influence instruction.
4. Establish the language registers used by teachers and learners in English language classes and how they influence instruction of English language.
5. Find out the oral communication challenges experienced during the instruction of English language.

The qualitative data obtained from the learner questionnaire open ended items, teacher interview guide and classroom observation schedule were analyzed using



content analysis procedures and presented thematically in narration form, while quantitative data obtained from learner questionnaire closed ended items were analyzed using descriptive statistics and presented using percentages and frequencies which were summarized in form of brief descriptions, tables, pie-charts and line graphs. Systematically, the data is presented under the following headings:

- (a) Findings from the teachers' interview guide
- (b) Findings from the classroom observation schedule
- (c) Findings from the learner questionnaire

#### **4.2 Findings from the Teachers' Interview Guide**

All the 13 targeted teachers of English language were interviewed. The interview guide contained questions which were intended to obtain information on the teachers' and learners' oral communication strategies during the instruction of English language. It also had items on: different oral interaction patterns in English language classes, language registers used by teachers and learners in English language classes and finally oral communication challenges encountered during the instruction of English language. The following sub-headings are used in the presentation:

- a) Teachers' oral communication strategies.
- b) Teaching areas/topics for using particular oral communication strategies.
- c) Teachers' preference for certain oral communication strategies
- d) Importance of oral communication strategies during the instruction of English language.
- e) Learners' oral communication strategies.
- f) Oral interaction patterns in English language classrooms.

- g) Language registers in English language classrooms.
- h) Oral communication challenges encountered during the instruction of English language.

#### 4.2.1 Teachers' Oral Communication Strategies

Item 1 (a), was intended to find out the oral communication strategies employed by teachers in English language classes. Most of the teachers interviewed reported that the oral communication strategies that they employed in their English language classes included: *repetition, rephrasing of sentences, paraphrasing, checking of understanding corrective feedback, use of synonyms, explanation, use of contexts and use of examples to present concepts which the learners find difficult to understand.* On the other hand, a few of the teachers reported that they used *code-switching* as an oral communication strategy during English language lessons. During the interview there was no teacher who reported *message abandonment* as a strategy that they employed during instruction. Teachers said some of their learners requested them to use *synonyms* of the words in question. Similarly, the teachers reported that their learners also requested them to *paraphrase* the sentences which they did not understand. Other teachers reported that their learners used *facial expressions* or *non-linguistic means*. For example, the use of words like: *hmm! Mm! Okay!* While many others appealed for help from their teachers.

In the order of frequency of use of these oral communication strategies, majority of the teachers interviewed stated *they often preferred using repetition most of the time during classroom interaction, rephrasing, checking of understanding, use of simple sentences, corrective feedback, paraphrasing and code –switching* in that order.

However, a few of the teachers said that *they preferred using rephrasing and simple sentences most of the time during classroom interaction.*

#### **4.2.2 Teaching Areas/Topics for using Particular Oral Communication Strategies**

On the statement, ‘state some of the teaching areas/topics you prefer using particular communication strategies,’ the teachers interviewed reported that in the teaching of grammar they used *simple sentences, paraphrasing, checking of understanding, corrective feedback* and *use of synonyms* especially where the learners encountered words they are not familiar with. It was also established that in the teaching of oral work the teachers mostly used *repetition, checking of understanding, and corrective feedback*. This was mostly evident in the teaching of pronunciation. For example, teacher 3 reported:

*I prefer using corrective feedback when I am teaching pronunciation; this is to make sure that the learners pronounce the words they are learning correctly (Tr 3).*

In the teaching of vocabulary, the teachers reported that they used *synonyms, rephrasing* and *code-switching*. In the teaching of literature topics that is narratives, novels, plays and poetry the teachers reported that most of the time they used *paraphrasing, checking of understanding and rephrasing*. Teacher 5 reported:

*I use rephrasing to break down the concept I am teaching into simple parts hence making my learners understand these concepts with much ease (Tr 5).*

Other teachers reported that they used *repetition* especially when teaching oral literature and poetry. They reported that *they used synonyms especially when explaining the meanings of terms used in a poem which the learners do not understand*. One teacher reported: ‘*I usually give my students a synonymy if most of them do not understand the meaning of a word I have used*’ (Tr 1). A few of the

teachers reported that they *code-switch* during the teaching of oral literature, novels and plays. In the teaching of comprehension most of the teachers interviewed reported that they used *paraphrasing*, *synonyms* and *checking of understanding*. Finally, all the teachers interviewed said that they used checking of understanding in teaching almost all the topics that they taught in English language classes.

#### **4.2.3 Teachers' Preference for Certain Oral Communication Strategies**

When the teachers were asked why they preferred using certain oral communication strategies in their English classes. They reported that these strategies assisted them to *transmit the message well*, *assist the learners to develop their oral language* and *encouraged the learners to participate in class*. This is mostly done through the use of *corrective feedback* and *repetition*. It also simplified concepts for the learners to understand; especially during the teaching of literature. Teacher 13 stated:

*When I teach for example a play that the learners cannot relate to the concepts, they find it alien to them; I use the various communication strategies to break it down so that the learners can understand the concepts better (Tr 13).*

Other reasons they gave are to *enhance mastery of content*. They said that these strategies *make learning interesting*, *motivate the learners to participate in class*. It also *encourages the learners to develop confidence in answering questions*. Finally, the teachers used these oral communication strategies to emphasis points especially the use of repetition.

#### **4.2.4 Importance of Oral Communication Strategies during the Instruction of English Language**

On the question, 'do you think the use of oral communication strategies aid language instruction?' Most of the teachers interviewed agreed that the use of oral

communication strategies aid language instruction. For example, teacher 7 reported ‘oral communication strategies aid language instruction in that they make the students participate freely; as they reduce tension among the learners.’ Similarly, teacher 10 stated ‘they assist the learners to build confidence in communication.’ Most of the teachers interviewed reported that oral communication strategies make learning interesting; aid understanding of content learnt and make the content learned memorable. They also simplify the content; arouse learner interest during the lesson, (Tr 9). They also allow the learners to engage with the teachers; as such they assist the teacher to gauge learner’s understanding of concepts, (Tr 4). In addition, teacher 13 reported that they make learners alert and active during the lesson. Similarly, teacher 12 reported that oral communication strategies make the learners curious during the lesson. Finally, teacher 6 reported that oral communication involves non-verbal cues which aid in the passing of information therefore enhancing understanding of concepts.

On the item, ‘during classroom instruction do you find out that sometimes your learners do not understand what you are trying to pass across?’ All the teachers interviewed responded on the affirmative that during classroom instruction they sometimes find out that their learners do not understand what they are trying to put across in class. The reasons the teachers gave for their learners’ lack of understanding of what they are trying to pass across were varied; most of the teachers cited that the language that they use is complex for the learners. This inhibits the learners understanding of concepts they are teaching. Other teachers cited that some learners have difficulties on certain areas of language. One such area pointed out by teacher 3 was *poetry*. She said that learners cannot easily understand poetry. She reported that learners say that poetry uses a lot of vocabulary which are not familiar. Apart from

that some teachers pointed out that some learners' attitude towards poetry is that poetry is difficult. Teacher 1 reported:

*Some learners believe that poetry is hard to be learned and understood. Others have formed an opinion that poetry is not easy this can be attributed to the fact that most of the learners have poor reading culture and this fact limits their vocabulary, this hinders their love and understanding of poetic language (Tr 1).*

A few of the teachers reported that when the topic being handled is difficult /complex *the learners just keep quiet*; this means they did not understand the topic taught. Apart from that some teachers reported that the language that they used may not be familiar to the learners. Teacher 2 said:

*When I teach for example a play the learners cannot relate the concepts as they find them alien to them; I therefore, use oral communication strategies to foreground these concepts so that they can be understood better by my learners (Tr 2).*

Some teachers also reported that when the students do not understand what they are trying to pass across. For example, teacher 11 reported:

*The students just look at you, they don't respond to questions asked. Some ask questions with the aim of trying to tell you to repeat, others murmur in trying to say that they have not understood; this happens mostly among the shy learners in class (Tr 11).*

During the interview very few teachers reported that the reason for the student not understanding what they are passing across is that the learners are not attentive during lessons.

#### **4.2.5 Learners' Oral Communication Strategies**

On the item "state some of the oral communication strategies used by your learners during classroom interaction?" Most of the teachers stated that their learners used non-linguistic forms of oral communication. For example, use of *facial expressions*; *use of gestures and nodding of their heads* to confirm their understanding of concepts.

The teachers reported that some of them used fillers such as *hmm! hee! and yah!* to confirm that they have understood what their teachers or other learners are communicating.

Teachers reported that their learners used these fillers to gain time when they are communicating and they lack the correct words to use in class. Other communication strategies the teachers reported that their learners used in class when communicating included *word-coinage, code switching appeal for help from their interlocutors that is their fellow students or their teacher.* The teachers also reported that some of their learners *sought for clarification from either them (teachers) or their colleagues.* They sought for clarification especially when they did not understand what they were being taught or what their colleagues were passing across. Other oral communication strategies employed by the learners were *direct translation from L1 to L2, use of circumlocution and repetition.*

On the item ‘during classroom interaction do your students pay attention to grammar and word order during oral interaction?’ Majority of the teachers agreed that their learners pay attention to grammar and word order during oral interaction, while a few of the teachers said that their learners do not pay attention to grammar and word order during oral interaction. Those who agreed that their students pay attention to grammar and word order reported that most of their learners when speaking make sure that they are understood by using correct grammar and word order.

On the other hand, those teachers who reported that their learners do not pay attention to grammar and word order during oral interaction said that their learners have challenges when communicating orally in class; they are engaged in direct translation from Kiswahili to English. This situation messes up the word order of English

sentences. For example, teacher 7 reported that some of his learners make sentences like: “*You are going where?*” He attributed this to the fact that such learners translate English directly from Kiswahili. He said this could be because learners use Kiswahili in and outside school most of the time. Teacher 8 reported that some of their learners just speak without a care of word order, some of them mix singular and plural verbs in one sentence, while others make sentences such as “*me, I am going to the toilet*”. He said this can happen if the learner does not understand the difference between ‘*me*’, and ‘*I*’. The two pronouns cannot be used at the same time in the initial position of a sentence as the subject. Teacher 12 reported that her learners mix tenses while constructing oral sentences. Finally, teacher 5 reported that his learners do not pay attention to subject verb agreement while constructing sentences.

Most of the teachers interviewed attributed the reason for their learners not paying attention to grammar and word order during oral interaction to the fact that the students do not read widely and as such their exposure to English language is only limited to what their teachers teach in class. Others said that most of the time the learners interact in and outside school using mother tongue, Kiswahili or Sheng. This greatly limits their use of English language and hence their communicative competence in the target language.

On the item, ‘when your learners encounter communication breakdowns during classroom interaction what communication strategies do they adopt in order to continue communicating?’ Teacher 3 pointed out that *learners code switch to Kiswahili*, while teacher 5 said that *learners use gestures and facial expression* in order to continue communicating. Teacher 13 said learners *use Sheng*, while teacher 4



reported that other students *just refuse to speak* while others *can coin new words* in order to continue speaking.

When the teachers were asked “what communication strategies do you suggest the learners to adopt in order to improve oral interaction in English language classes?” Teacher 4 reported that *learners need to seek for clarification from their colleagues or their teachers, use of context in order to explain certain concepts, or they use synonyms and also paraphrase what they are saying. Finally, they can use simple sentences provided they are understood.* Most of the teachers said that *this can only be enhanced if the learners read widely in order to have a mastery of English vocabulary and structure.* They also suggested that *the learners should also practice speaking English in and outside the class to enhance their proficiency in language.*

On the item, “when your learners encounter a word they are not familiar with what do they always do in order to continue communicating in class?” Most of the teachers reported that their learners sought for clarification from either the teachers or from their colleagues in class. For example, teacher 6 said:

*Most of the time when my learners encounter a word they do not understand or that they cannot pronounce well , I always see them hesitate, turn to their desk mates and in low tones ask them how certain words are pronounced. At times they ask them the meanings of such words. After that they continue for example reading an excerpt in a text, this happens mostly during literature lessons, however, in some occasions they stop reading and ask me how a particular word is pronounced and later they would ask for its meaning after reading (Tr 6).*

Similarly, some of the teachers reported that some of the learners would be seen consulting their dictionaries, however, this would disrupt the lesson; a small group of the learners would avoid/ignore the word completely and move on with either reading or speaking.

On the item, “do your students code-switch during classroom interaction?” Almost all the teachers interviewed said that their students often code switch during classroom interaction. While very few of them reported that their learners do not code switch. Those who reported that their learners code switch during classroom interaction said that their learners code switch mostly from English to Kiswahili and sometimes from English to Sheng.

When the teachers were asked what they thought were the reasons why their learners code switched? The teachers cited various reasons teacher 10 said that when their learners encounter words that they are not familiar with in English they switch to Kiswahili, while teacher 12 said learners code- switch to Kiswahili or Sheng when it is difficult for them to express themselves in English language they resort to Kiswahili so that they continue communicating. Similarly, teacher 11 said the learners code switch to Kiswahili when they are describing a concept they perceive to be difficult. This situation thus comprises their competence in English language and hence the need for them to code-switch to either Kiswahili or Sheng. Finally, teacher 6 reported that learners are not comfortable speaking in English as compared to Kiswahili as the latter is often used outside class.

On the item, “do your learners code-mix English words with words from other languages?” In the study all the teachers interviewed reported that their learners mostly code mix English words with Kiswahili words and on rare occasions English and mother tongue. On the item “why do your learners use language in such a manner?” The teachers gave varied reasons, however, one reason that featured prominently was that the learners are used to speaking in Sheng most of the time in their daily interaction in and outside school. Others cited that their learners have

limited English vocabulary because of poor reading culture and lack of practice in speaking the target language.

In addition, other teachers reported that the learners code mix English and Kiswahili words because they are exposed to social media for example Facebook and WhatsApp. Most of the participants in these forms of media mostly communicate using Sheng and Kiswahili. Other teachers reported that some of their learners are influenced by the main stream media especially radio and television comedies where most of the presenters mix both English and Kiswahili. Most learners tend to copy these ways of speaking and hence code mixing of English and Kiswahili words during classroom interaction. Other teachers reported that code mixing is a culture among the learners. When one uses language in such a manner it is considered ‘cool’ or rather fashionable.

#### **4.3. Oral Communication Patterns in English Language Classes**

On the item ‘which interaction patterns occurs in your English language classes?’ All the teachers interviewed reported that three interaction patterns occurred in their English language classes. They said these are: teacher-learners, learners- teachers and learner- learners. When the teachers were asked “which of these interaction patterns promote oral classroom interaction and why?” Most of the teachers interviewed reported that learners- learners interaction pattern promote oral classroom interaction. They said that this is because learners are more comfortable asking their peers questions rather than the teachers. Other teachers reported that the learners are free when communicating among themselves as there is no authority (teacher) to bother them. Teacher 8 said *“learner –learner interaction pattern promotes oral interaction because the learners engage themselves as they are free to talk to each other than*

*when a teacher is present*” (Tr 8). Other teachers reported that learners are more familiar with each other as such they have confidence when talking to each other.

On the contrary, the study revealed that a few teachers reported that teacher –learner interaction patterns promote oral classroom interaction. They said this is because through this form of interaction the teacher comes up with a topic and the learners are instructed to contribute through discussion, question and answer. Others said that the teacher directs the learners on what to do and the learners will thus participate effectively in class. The study also revealed that some of the teachers are of the view that learner – teacher interaction promotes the teaching of English language as this form of interaction enables the teachers to get feedback from the learners. This is therefore a good way of evaluating the learners’ uptake of content taught in class.

#### **4.3.1 Interaction Patterns Preferred by Teachers**

In the study it was revealed that most of the teachers interviewed preferred teacher learner interaction pattern. They said this is because this form of classroom interaction pattern saves time as the teacher dictates the pace of the lesson. The teacher can also focus on a particular language aspect and improve on it. Other teachers reported that this form of interaction provide them with the opportunity to offer in depth teaching of English language. They reported that it saves much time as interruptions from the learners are minimized. This occurs because the teacher carefully selects the major points to be taught during the lesson.

A few of the teachers reported that they preferred learner- learner interaction as this form of interaction promotes/ facilitates classroom discussion among the learners and hence promote the learning of English language. Others said that through this form of

interaction the learners are free with each other as it builds the learners confidence and it also encourages the shy students to speak. Others said that through this form of interaction the learners understand each other as opposed to traditional classroom interaction of teacher- learner.

#### **4.3.2 Interaction Patterns Preferred by Students**

Most of the teachers interviewed reported that their learners preferred learner- learner interaction. When they were asked why they thought their learners preferred this form of classroom interaction? They responded that through this form of interaction the learners are free with each other as such they have the opportunity to ask each other questions without the fear of making mistakes. Other teachers reported that this form of interaction makes the learners feel that the learning is about them and not the teacher. Other teachers reported that this form of classroom interaction enables the weak learners to improve as this form of interaction motivates them to speak out in class.

#### **4.3.3 Oral Activities that Promote Classroom Interaction**

In the study the teachers interviewed reported that they used various activities to promote classroom interaction at different levels in English language classrooms. These activities included: *group discussion, drama, debates, question and answer, news reading, role play, reading aloud and class presentations*. When the teachers were asked what they should do in order to improve classroom interaction and hence English language acquisition/ learning? Most of the teachers reported that *they should put a lot of emphasis on oral activities*. Others teachers said *the teachers should motivate their learners through rewarding them orally in class*. Other teachers said

*they should promote subject support clubs. For example, drama and debating clubs, they should also equip the library with readers and encourage the learners to read. The teachers should also promote learner-learner interaction to allow them to interact and learn by themselves. For example, group discussion, class presentations, role play and many others.*

Similarly, other teachers said they should involve the learners by asking oral questions. Others reported that they should create a conducive learning environment where the learners are free to talk in class. They also reported that they should arouse learners' interest to motivate the learners to speak in class. The teachers should also use relevant examples during their teaching. Other teachers said the teachers should use interactive media like videos and projectors during their teaching as this encourage participation among the learners. Finally, the teachers should involve the learners in the learning process by using learner centered methodologies in their teaching.

#### **4.4 Language Registers used by Teachers and Learners in English Language**

##### **Classes**

The fourth objective of the study was to establish the language registers used by teachers and learners in English language classrooms. In the study all the teachers interviewed agreed that they sometimes used non-official forms of English language during classroom instruction. The teachers explained that they used these non-official forms of English when they find out their learners have not understood what they are teaching them in class, when explaining concepts the learners are not familiar with especially when teaching poetry and drama. Other reasons cited by the teachers were: in order to break monotony in class and to draw the learners' attention.

Other teachers said they used non-official English to crack jokes with their learners hence making their lessons lively and enjoyable. Others said they did this in order to bring themselves to the level of learners. This situation motivates the learners to use non-official forms of English. Other teachers reported that they used non-official forms of English because some of the literary texts they taught in class use some of these forms of English; this they need to explain to the learners as style that writers adopt in their work. Examples of such texts include *Betrayal in the City* by Imbuga and *The River and the Source* by Ogola. Teacher 10 quoted an instance where the writer uses non official form of English in *The River and the Source*:

*“Sometimes she remembered how it had been and this was painful for now she, a migogo, was reduced to living with her brother.”*(p.9). Teacher 4 also quoted *“father, even if I go away, you can trust me to come back. I would like to see the jorochere, the white people and their magic.”* (p. 51).

On the item ‘do your learners use non-official forms of English language?’ All the teachers interviewed reported that their learners used non-official forms of English language during English lessons. When the teachers were asked ‘why did their learners use these forms of English language in class?’ The answers they gave were varied. However, most mentioned that their students used these non-official forms of English in order to facilitate or ease communication in class. This is because most of the time some of the learners cannot express themselves well in official English as such they prefer Sheng.

Others teachers reported that their learners use these forms of English because these forms of language are widely used in the environment, others said the learners do this in order to create humor in class, others said the learners pick these forms of English from the literary books they use in class where writers use non-official forms of English to pass across their themes. Others teachers reported that their learners did

this because they carry out direct translation from Kiswahili to English. For example, in an expression like ‘me *I want to tell you ...*’ this occurs because of direct translation from Kiswahili to English.

In addition, other teachers reported that their learners did this because it helps them to understand/appreciate the culture of the people used in texts. For example, in oral literature that is oral narratives, riddles, proverbs, tongue twisters and many others. They say this places what the learners are learning in historical and linguistic contexts and hence helps the students understand the texts better. Some of the teachers reported that some of the learners find the official English a bit difficult to speak. This is because of the fact that the learners lack exposure to English language as it is not spoken outside class. It is also due to poor reading culture among the students. Other teachers cited the school language policy which states the use official English in school has not been fully entrenched as a tradition in most schools. Other teachers reported that their learners use non official English because they want to be understood by their peers. Others learners derive pleasure by using such forms of English as they see it as fashionable.

On the item, ‘during classroom instruction do you sometimes find yourself using vocabulary which your learners do not understand?’ All the teachers interviewed agreed that during classroom instructions they sometimes find themselves using vocabulary which their learners do not understand. They reported that this form of vocabulary may be the kind that is used in the learners’ text books. The teachers used these forms of vocabulary on the assumption that the learners understand them. Other teachers reported that they use specific vocabulary that is tested during national examinations. Others reported that their learners find out that the language they use as



teachers may be difficult for the learners to understand. This is because the linguistic proficiency of some of the learners is low.

In those situations where the learners may not understand the vocabulary used by their teachers, most of the learners sought for clarification from their teachers. For example, one teacher reported that a learner might ask a question like *'What is the meaning of the term you have just mentioned?'* Other teachers reported that some of their learners might just murmur among themselves in order to express their discontent or lack of understanding of the meanings of certain words, statements or concepts that they teach. Other teachers reported that other learners usually just stare at them blankly and they therefore need to deduce that something is not well.

On the item 'during classroom instruction do some of your learners use vocabulary that other learners do not understand?' Most of the learners agreed that during classroom instruction some of their learners used vocabulary which most of the other learners did not understand, while a few said that their learners did not use vocabulary which most of the other learners did not understand. Those teachers who reported that some of their learners used vocabulary which most of the other learners did not understand said that such learners might have researched or they widely read hence their level of language is higher than those of their peers. Others reported learners copy the kind of vocabulary used by their teachers. Others may be because of their background; some learners come from homes or regions where English is the language of daily communication and as such their linguistic competence is very high. Finally, a few of them may use vocabulary that others may not understand just to show off that they have mastered a lot of vocabulary than their peers.

On the item, ‘in order to make the teaching of English meaningful and rewarding to the learners, how should the teachers of English language use the various registers of the English language?’ Most of the teachers interviewed reported that teachers of English should use the various registers of the English language in class. This they said when the various varieties of English are used it makes learners’ understanding of concepts easy. Other teachers reported that teachers should use both official and non-official forms of English, one teacher reported:

*We as teachers we should use both the official and non-official forms; however we should inform the learners that the non-official English is not acceptable especially when writing. Non-official forms of English should only be used during oral interaction; teachers should only use these forms of English only during explanation (Tr 10).*

Those teachers who reported that teachers should stick to formal English during classroom interaction said teachers should do so because learners tend to copy a lot from their teachers, that is, if informal language is used by the teachers the learners will take it as a norm which in turn will compromise language learning and hence communicative competence among the learners. For example, one teacher said:

*We should use the non-official English in context; we should use the Standard English most of the time; if we use the non-official English it will confuse the learners in terms of structure and as such we might not achieve much in our teaching of English language (Tr 4).*

Other teachers echoing the same said that teachers should use formal English as prescribed by the KIE (2006) English language syllabus, however, if we use non-official English we should explain to the learners whenever we use these forms of English language.

On the item, ‘do you think the use of non-official language in English language class aid the learners in learning English?’ Most of the teacher interviewed reported that the use of non-official forms of English classes aid the learners in learning English while

very few of the teachers disagreed. Those teachers who agreed said that when teachers use non-official English they will be at the same level with their learners and this will facilitate language learning as teacher 13 reported:

*When you use non-official English you bring yourself to the level of the learners, hence you can easily interact with them and they can open up and state their learning difficulties (Tr 13).*

Other teachers reported that the use of non-official languages in English language classes aid the learners in learning English as it facilitates understanding. It also makes learning fun and it also arouses the learners' curiosity. Other teachers interviewed said the use of these forms of English breaks class monotony. Others said it makes the English language familiar. Others said it encourage the learners to participate in the lesson. Finally, others said that it also makes complex concepts simple to learn.

Those teachers who disagreed said that the use of non-official forms of English will encourage the use of non-official forms of English among the learners. This may thus be transferred to written English leading to mistakes and incorrect usage of the target language. This scenario will thus affect learners' communicative competence and performance in English language during examinations.

On the item 'what are some of the classroom activities that learners use the various forms of the English language during classroom interaction?' The teachers interviewed reported that the learners used formal English when they were constructing oral sentences instructed by the teacher and asking and answering oral questions in class. On the other hand, most of the teachers reported that the learners use non-official forms of English during class discussion, debates, oral presentations and drama lessons. Other teachers reported that their learners use non-official English

when reporting specific literary texts; this happens especially in situations where the writer of a certain text has used non-official English. In such cases the learners tend to emulate these forms of languages as they give them the license to use the non-official forms of English during classroom interaction.

#### **4.5 Oral Communication Challenges encountered during the Instruction of English Language**

Some of the oral communication challenges that the teachers reported they encounter during classroom interaction are varied in nature. Most of the teachers interviewed reported that, the most common problem learners faced is difficulty in pronouncing certain words; when learners encountered such words which they could not pronounce they either skipped such words or abandoned them completely. The teachers also reported that some of their learners did not participate during oral lessons; therefore there was uneven participation among the learners. Similarly, some of the learners dominated classroom discourse, while others just kept quiet. Most teachers said this is a challenge because you cannot gauge the level of understanding of all the learners in class. It is also difficult for a teacher to find out if a certain concept or aspect of language has been understood by all the learners. They also reported that some learners did not seek for clarification or ask questions if they did not understand what the teacher was teaching. Teacher 2 reported:

*Majority of the learners in my class especially the slow learners do not seek for clarification or ask questions if they have not understood what I am teaching them. It is therefore very difficult for me to find out whether they have understood what I am teaching or not (Tr 2).*

Other challenges reported by the teachers included shyness by some learners. Teachers said that shy learners did not want to speak. For example, during class

discussion, some students also found it difficult answering questions if they were not sure of the answers; they feared other learners would laugh at them.

On the item 'what do you think is the cause of these oral communication challenges during classroom interaction?' A few of the teachers reported that because of the large class sizes they could not reach out to all the learners in class as such most of the learners did not get a chance to participate. Most of the teachers interviewed reported that the causes of these oral communication challenges are varied. For example, most of the teachers said that most of the learners have limited vocabulary because of poor reading culture as most of them did not read extensively.

Other reasons the teachers gave included learner background. For example, some teachers reported that learners who come from urban areas tend to speak out in class as opposed to those from rural areas. Other teachers reported that some of the learners have negative attitude towards English language as a subject; they have a feeling that English is a difficult subject. Other teachers pointed out that some of their learners do not practice speaking English in and outside class. In addition, some teachers reported that this occurs because of learners' personalities; most learners who are extroverts like dominating discussions in class as such they participate more often than the introverts, this contributes to uneven participation by the learners in English language classes. Finally, a few teachers reported that they do not have time to teach oral work because there are deadlines to meet. For example, the syllabus needs to be covered within a certain time frame. Others said the integrated syllabus is a challenge in itself as it requires a teacher to handle both English language and literature at the same time.

When asked ‘to suggest some of the ways they could use to minimize these oral communication challenges, most of the teachers interviewed reported that the students should be encouraged to read widely in order to build their vocabulary and enhance their confidence in language use. Other teachers reported that they should boost the learners’ confidence by providing corrective feedback instead of pointing out the mistakes their learners make in class. Similarly, other teachers suggested that all the students should be encouraged to participate during class; teachers should employ learner centered teaching techniques where learners can participate in debates, discussions, use of drama and role play among others.

In addition, the teachers suggested that they should use audio materials when teaching speaking and listening in order to expose the learners to authentic language use. Other teachers said that schools should have functional language policies where the learners speak English most of the time while in school in order to improve their proficiency in English language. Others reported that all the learners in class should be given equal opportunities to speak instead of teachers choosing the same students to answer questions most of the time. In relation to this, teachers should be friendly to their learners; this will encourage the learners to speak out in class. Finally, teachers should reenergize subject support clubs for example debating and drama clubs; this they say will allow the learners to use English away from the normal class routine thus building their confidence and proficiency in spoken English.

#### **4.6 Findings from Lesson Observation Schedule**

The lesson observation schedule specifically targeted form three English language classes. A total of 13 form three English language classes were observed by the researcher. Generally, observation intended to gather information on the influence of

oral communication styles on the instruction of English language in secondary school classes. The key aspects emerging from the above information have been summed up under the following headings:

- a) Teachers' oral communication strategies.
- b) Learners' oral communication strategies.
- c) Teacher- learner interaction patterns.
- d) Language registers in English language classes.
- e) Oral communication challenges during classroom interaction.

#### **4.6.1 Teachers' oral communication strategies**

In the study it was established that the teachers of English language employed various oral communication strategies during the instruction of English language in their classes. Some of the oral communication strategies which the teachers were observed to use frequently are: the use of repetition; most of the teachers were observed to use repetition mostly during instruction. The teachers repeated their points or statements in order to make sure that their learners understood them well. The teachers were also found to use comprehension checks most of the time during their teaching. For example, one teacher was observed saying '*am I too fast?*' this was seen as a strategy adopted by the teacher to gauge his pace when giving instructions and also to make sure that his learners understood him well.

Other oral communication strategies that the teachers were observed to use included the use of oral questions to elicit learners responses. Most teachers were also found to rephrase their oral questions when the learners did not understand them. When students answered questions, most teachers were observed to repeat the answers in

order to benefit the whole class. The teachers were also observed to provide corrective feedback if the students gave incorrect answers to questions; they did this in order to encourage the learners to speak out.

It was also observed that the teachers provided an opportunity for the learners to participate and speak in class by the use of high interest learner centred activities. For example, the use oral questions, group discussion and debates. In addition to this the teachers were seen directing questions to the whole class in order to make sure that all the learners are involved in the lesson. He randomly asked the learners oral questions. In order to motivate the learners the teachers rewarded them by using statements like *'that is good'*, *'very good'*, *'keep it up'* and many others. Other teachers called the learners by their names; this also motivated the learners as they felt appreciated that their teachers know them by their names.

#### **4.6.2 Learners Oral Communication Strategies**

In the study it was observed that during classroom interaction the learners employed various oral communication strategies during classroom interaction. Most of the learners employed *circumlocution*; that is the learners described situations or concepts they do not have direct answers. Related to this is *the use of context*; the learners also used context to describe a concept or a situation. For example, one learner was asked by a teacher to explain the meaning of corruption, the learner used a context in Betrayal in the City by Imbuga by referring to the milk tender which is offered to Mulili by his cousin Boss. The learner says this situation of giving priority to one's relatives in public institutions is referred to as corruption.



The learners were also observed to use *non-linguistic* means to communicate in class. Among the *non-linguistic* means the learners used include the *use of facial expressions, use of gestures* to emphasize their points to either their fellow learners or their teacher. Other learners were observed *nodding* their heads to confirm to their teacher that they have understood a point that their teacher is teaching or another learner is explaining to them. Other learners were also seen to carry up their hands whenever they wanted to say something or to answer questions in class.

In addition to the above oral communication strategies the learners were also seen *to appeal for help* from their teacher. For example, a learner constructs a sentence and there after asks the teacher to confirm whether the sentence is correct or not. This is a strategy used by learners who are not sure whether their sentences are grammatically correct or they are not sure about an answer as such they appeal for help from either the teacher or from their colleagues in class. Other learners were observed to complete sentences for their colleagues if their colleagues could not pronounce such words correctly.

Other oral communication strategies employed by the learners include the use of fillers like *hmm, eeh...* to gain time to think in order to find the right words to use when speaking. Some of the learners were observed *to approximate/generalize the meanings of words or concepts they are not sure of their meanings*. A few of the learners were observed *to code-switch from English to Kiswahili* while in class. Finally, a small number of the learners adopted *message abandonment* especially when they come across a word they cannot pronounce well or some words they consider as taboo in their language.

### **4.6.3 Teacher- Learner Interaction Patterns**

The most dominant interaction pattern observed during classroom interaction was teacher- learner interaction pattern. Most of the time teachers were seen to initiate classroom conversation or talk. This started from the time they entered the classes. They begin by greeting the learners and the learners respond to their greetings. In class, the teachers mostly used question and answer method; this followed the teacher – learner interaction pattern.

The second most observed interaction pattern that occurred in English language classes is learner – teacher interaction pattern. This manifested itself in the form of learners answering and asking questions in class. It was also seen when learners asked for clarifications from their teachers. This was observed when a teacher explains a concept and a learner does not get what the teacher is teaching. The learner sought for clarification from him/her. This interaction pattern was more pronounced mostly during literature lessons especially during the discussion of set books. Most of the learners during these lessons sought clarification from their teachers. This was a strategy that the learners used to ensure that they understood what their teachers were teaching.

The third most observed interaction pattern that occurred in English language classes was learner – learner interaction pattern. This interaction pattern was not very common; however it was observed when learners posed questions in class and their colleagues answered them. It was also seen during classroom discussion; that is when learners discussed among themselves under the guidance of the teacher. This form of interaction was seen as the most rewarding form of classroom interaction. The learners were seen to enjoy this form of interaction as they participated fully without

any fear. They were seen exchanging their views and opinions. Other interaction patterns observed were turn taking, whereby both teachers and learners took turns during classroom interaction. It was also observed that most of the learners responded to the teachers' questions using chorus answers.

#### **4.6.4 Language Registers in English Language Classes**

In the English language classes the language registers used by both the teachers and learners are varied. It ranged from the use of informal English, the use of formal English, use of basic (simple) English, the use of other languages and finally code-switching and code mixing. Most of the teachers were observed to use formal English most of the time followed by the use of basic English. The teachers were seen to use formal English as the language policy demands; however, they simplified the language in order to facilitate learning among the learners. Apart from the teachers using formal English they sometimes used informal English when explaining difficult concepts or when making references.

The learners were observed using formal English when communicating with the teachers; that is when responding to oral questions asked by the teachers and also when they are asking questions in class. They used informal English during group discussions, during dramatization and during literature lessons especially during the study of those texts where the writers have used informal English as a style. This was seen during the discussion of themes in texts such as *The River and the Source* and *Betrayal in the City* where the writers have infused informal English in their works. The learners were also observed to code switch and code mix English and Kiswahili words during their oral interactions.

#### **4.6.5 Oral Communication Challenges encountered during Classroom Interaction**

In the English language classes it was observed that there were various challenges encountered during classroom interaction. The cause of these oral communication challenges can be attributed to both the teachers and the learners. It was observed that some of the teachers dominated classroom talk. This was evident mostly in those situations where the learners could not open up during class interaction. It also happened when the teacher was introducing a new concept or a new topic which was not familiar to the learners. Some of the teachers were also seen to select particular learners many times to participate in class at the expense of the other students. The teachers were often seen to favour those learners who raised their hands up; this created uneven participation among the learners.

In the study it was also observed that most of the learners refused to participate in class. Most of them just kept quiet, they did not raise their hands up to participate during lessons. This hindered oral communication. Those students who refused to speak sat mostly at the back row of the class. In relation to this some students only participated when the teacher confronted them. Others when asked to answer questions said 'what they wanted to say had been said by an earlier speaker or they said 'they do not have an answer'. These oral communication challenges therefore affect classroom interaction in one way or another as the teachers faces challenges when giving instruction to the learners. When learners refuse to participate it becomes difficult for the teacher to gauge their understanding, language use, communicative competence and finally their linguistic competence.

## **4.7 Findings from Learner Questionnaire**

The questionnaire was administered to form three learners. All the 195 students targeted completed the questionnaire. The questionnaire had items on the following: teachers' oral communication strategies, learners' oral communication strategies, oral interaction patterns in English language classes, language registers used by teachers and learners in English language classes. Finally, oral communication challenges encountered during the instruction of English language.

### **4.7.1 Teachers' Oral Communication Strategies**

On the item, 'when you make mistakes during oral interaction/speaking in class, what does your teacher do?' In the study most of the learners reported that their teachers interrupted them and made corrections, followed by those who said that their teachers made the corrections later. While a few of them reported that their teachers asked other students to correct them. None of the learners reported that their teachers did not correct them at all. When the teachers corrected the learners' mistakes in class it was reported that most of them reformulated the answer that their student had said correctly.

On the item, 'do you always understand every point your teacher communicates orally in class?' It was established that 66 (33.8%) of the learners agreed that they understood every point their teacher communicated orally in class, while 129 (66.2%) reported that they did not understand every point their teacher communicated orally in class. This is summarized in Table 4.1. It can thus be noted that most of the learners do not understand every point their teachers communicate orally in class.

**Table 4. 1: Learners Understanding of Teachers' Points during Oral Communication**

<b>Opinion</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	66	38.8
No	129	66.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>100.00</b>

The reasons that the learners reported as to why it was sometimes difficult for them to understand every point their teacher of English communicates orally during classroom interaction are varied. However, most of them reported that some of their teachers were too fast in their speaking; they could not hear everything that they said. Others reported that their teachers of English used terminologies that were not familiar to them. Others reported that some teachers did not use clear examples, while others reported that their teachers did not clarify their points. Other teachers made incomplete explanations. Finally, other teachers were reported to make many points at the same time, therefore confusing the learners.

It was established that when the learners could not understand a point their teachers made, they reported that most of their teachers repeated their points to make sure that they (learners) understand them well. Other teachers used simple and familiar terminologies; others used familiar examples, while others used simple English that could be understood by the learners. Finally, other teachers repeated the same point in Kiswahili that is they code-switched from English to Kiswahili to be understood.

#### **4.8 Learners' Oral Communication Strategies**

One of the objectives of the study was to establish the learners' oral communication strategies and how they influence the instruction of English language. Part two (2) of

the student questionnaire was intended to find out these oral communication strategies.

#### 4.8.1 Attempting to Think in English Strategies

From the study it was established that learners in secondary school employed attempting to think in English language strategies during oral communication. Table 4.2 presents a summary of this information.

**Table 4. 2: Attempting to Think in English Strategies**

N= 195

Oral Communication Strategy	Frequency (%)				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Thinking of what to say in native language and then construct the English sentence	45 (23.1%)	51 (26.1%)	21 (10.8%)	36 (18.5%)	42 (21.5%)
Thinking of a sentence already known to the speaker in English and then try to change it to fit my situation	54 (27.5%)	66 (33.8%)	24 (12.3%)	48 (24.6%)	3 (1.6%)

On the statement, ‘I first think of what to say in my native language and then construct the English sentence,’ ‘from the study it was established that 51 (26.2%) of the learners agreed that they first think of what they want to say in their native languages, 45 (23.1%) strongly agreed, while 21 (10.8%) were undecided, 36 (18.5%) disagreed and finally 42 (21.1%) strongly disagreed. It can thus be noted that majority of the learners in secondary school, first think of what they want to say in their native languages and then construct the English sentence.

On the statement ‘I first think of a sentence I already know in English and then try to change it to fit my situation’ in the study it was established that 66 (33.8%) of the learners agreed that they think first of a sentence they already know in English and

then try to change it to fit the situation, 54 (27.7%) strongly agreed, 24 (12.3%) were undecided, 48 (24.6% disagreed and finally only 3 (1.5%) strongly disagreed. It can therefore be observed that during oral communication learners think first of sentences they already know in English and then try to change them to fit their situations.

#### 4.8.2 Message Reduction and Alteration Strategies

From the study it was established that majority of the learners in secondary school did not employ message reduction and alteration strategies during oral interaction. This is because the learners reported that they often used words which are familiar to them and they did not replace their original messages with other messages because of feeling incapable of executing their original intentions. Table 4.3 presents a summary of this information.

**Table 4. 3: Message Reduction and Alteration Strategies**

		N=195				
Oral Strategy	Communication	Frequency (%)				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Use of familiar words		99 (50.8%)	60 (30.8%)	12 (6.2%)	24 (12.3%)	0 (00%)
Replacement of original message		9 (4.1%)	39 (20.0%)	24 (12.3%)	42 (21.5%)	81 (41.5%)

On the statement ‘I use words which are familiar to me,’ from the study it was established that 60 (30.8%) of the learners agreed that during oral communication they used words which are familiar to them, 99 (50.8%) strongly agreed, while 12 (6.2%) were undecided, 24 (12.3%) disagreed and none of them strongly disagreed. It can thus be noted that most of the learners in secondary schools in Elgeyo Marakwet County often used words which are familiar to them during oral communication.



On the statement, 'I replace the original message with another message because of feeling incapable of executing my original intent,' in the study a few of the respondents reported that they replace the original message with another message because of feeling incapable of executing their original intent, 39 (20.0%) agreed, 9 (4.6%) strongly agreed, while 24 (12.3%) were undecided, 42 (21.5%) disagreed and finally 81 (41.5%) strongly disagreed. It can therefore be observed that most of the learners in secondary school in Elgeyo Marakwet County did not replace their original messages with other messages because of feeling incapable of executing their original intentions. This means that most of the students lacked the capability to reformulate their sentences if they felt that they were incapable of executing their original intentions.

#### **4.8.3 Fluency- oriented Strategies**

From the study it was established that most of the learners in secondary schools employed fluency oriented oral communication strategies during classroom interaction. This information is summarized in Table 4.4.

**Table 4. 4: Fluency- oriented Strategies***N=195*

<b>Oral Communication Strategy</b>	<b>Frequency (%)</b>				
	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Undecided</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
Changing communication according to context	42 (21.5%)	57 (29.2%)	24 (12.5%)	57 (29.2%)	15 (7.7%)
Taking time to make an expression	99 (50.5%)	81 (41.5%)	3 (1.5%)	15 (4.6%)	3 (1.5%)
Paying attention to pronunciation	96 (49.2%)	63 (32.3%)	15 (7.7%)	9 (4.6%)	12 (6.2%)
Trying to speak clearly and loudly to be heard	102 (52.2%)	51 (26.2%)	3 (1.5%)	24 (12.3%)	15 (7.7%)
Paying attention to own rhythm and intonation	36 (18.5%)	72 (36.9%)	39 (20.0%)	27 (13.8%)	21 (10.8%)
Paying attention to conversation flow	69 (35.4%)	96 (49.2%)	6 (3.1%)	27 (13.8%)	21 (10.8%)
Paying attention to the speaker's rhythm and intonation	75 (38.5%)	61 (32.8%)	33 (16.9%)	12 (6.2%)	12 (6.2%)
Paying attention to the speaker's pronunciation	75 (38.5%)	60 (30.0%)	9 (4.6%)	30 (15.4%)	21 (10.8%)

On the statement, 'I change my way of saying things according to context,' from the study most of the respondents 57 (29.2%) agreed that they change their ways of saying things according to context, 42 (21.5%) strongly agreed, while 24 (12.3%) were undecided, 57 (29.2%) disagreed and finally 15 (7.7%) strongly disagreed. This means that most of the learners in secondary schools change their ways of saying things according to context.

On the statement 'I take my time to express what I want to say,' from the study most of the students answered to the affirmative 81 (41.5%) agreed, 99 (50.8%) strongly

agreed, while 3 (1.5%) were undecided, 9 (4.6), disagreed and finally only 3 (1.5%) of the respondents strongly disagreed. It can therefore be observed that most of students in secondary schools in Elgeyo Marakwet County take their time to express what they want to say.

On the statements, 'I pay attention to my pronunciation,' from the study majority of the students 63 (32.3%) agreed that they pay attention to their pronunciation, 96 (49.2%) strongly agreed, 15 (7.7%) were undecided, while minority of them 9 (4.6%) disagreed and finally 12 (6.2%) strongly disagreed. This means that majority of the students in secondary schools pay attention to their pronunciation while communicating orally in class.

On the statement, 'I try to speak clearly and loudly to make myself heard,' from the study 51 (26.2%) of the students agreed that they try to speak clearly and loudly to make themselves heard, 102 (52.3%) strongly agreed, while 3 (1.5%) were undecided, 24 (12.3%) disagreed and finally 15 (7.7%) strongly disagreed. It can thus be observed that most of the students in secondary school try to speak clearly and loudly to be heard.

On the statement, 'I pay attention to my rhythm and intonation,' majority of the learners 72 (36.9%) agreed that they pay attention to rhythm and intonation during oral interaction in English language classes, 36 (18.5%) strongly agreed, while 39 (20.0%) were undecided, 27 (13.8%) disagreed and finally 21 (10.8%) strongly disagreed. It can thus be noted that majority of learners in secondary school classes pay attention to rhythm and intonation during oral interaction.

On the statement, 'I pay attention to conversation flow,' in the study majority of the respondents 96 (49.2%) agreed that they pay attention to conversation flow when communicating orally, 69 (35.4%) strongly agreed, while 6 (3.1%) were undecided, 27 (13.8%) disagreed and finally 21 (10.8%) strongly disagreed. It can therefore be observed that most of the students in secondary school in Elgeyo Marakwet County pay attention to conversation flow during classroom interaction.

On the item 'I pay attention to the speaker's rhythm and intonation,' in the study it was established that 69 (32.8%) of the learners agreed that they pay attention to the speaker's rhythm and intonation during classroom interaction, 75 (38.5%) strongly agreed, while 33 (16.9%) were undecided, 12 (6.2%) disagreed and finally 4 (6.2%) strongly disagreed.

On the item, 'I pay attention to the speaker's pronunciation,' in the study it was established that 60 (30%) of the learners agreed that they pay attention to the speaker's pronunciation, 75 (38.5%) strongly agreed, while 9 (4.6%) were undecided, 30 (15.4%) disagreed and finally 21 (10.8%) strongly disagreed. It can thus be concluded that majority of the learners in secondary school pay attention to the speaker's pronunciation during classroom interaction.

#### **4.8.4 Use of Non-verbal Strategies While Speaking**

From the study it was established that the learners in secondary school employed the use of non-verbal strategies while speaking. Table 4.5 presents this information.

**Table 4. 5: Use of Non- Verbal Strategies While Speaking**

N= 195

Oral Communication Strategies	Frequency (%)				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Trying to make eye-contact when talking	75 (38.5%)	75 (38.5%)	15 (7.7%)	24 (12.3%)	6 (3.1%)
Using gestures and facial expression during communication	60 (30.8%)	69 (25.4%)	33 (16.9%)	24 (12.3%)	9 (4.6%)
Using gestures when experiencing difficulties in understanding	36 (18.8%)	78 (40.0%)	24 (12.3%)	27 (13.8%)	30 (15.4%)
Paying attention to the speaker's eye contact, facial expression and gestures	69 (35.5%)	84 (41.3%)	15 (7.7%)	24 (12.3%)	3 (1.5%)

On the statement 'I try to make eye-contact when I am talking,' majority of the learners 75 (38.5%) agreed that they try to make eye contact when they are talking. Similarly, an equal number 75 (38.5%) strongly agreed, 15 (7.7%) were undecided, while minority of the learners 24 (12.3%) disagreed and finally 6 (3.1%) strongly disagreed. This means that most of the learners in secondary school classes try to make eye- contact when talking in English language classes.

On the statement 'I use gestures and facial expressions if I cannot express myself well,' from the study it was established that most of the learners 69 (35.4%) agreed that they use gestures and facial expressions if they cannot express themselves well, 60 (30.8%) strongly agreed, 33 (16.9%) were undecided, while minority of them 24 (12.3%) disagreed and 9 (4.6%) strongly disagreed. This means that majority of the learners in secondary school English language classes use gestures and facial expressions if they cannot express themselves well.

On the item, 'I use gestures when I have difficulties in understanding,' from the study it was established that 78 (40%) of the learners agreed that they use gestures when they have difficulties in understanding, 36 (18.5%) strongly agreed, while 24 (12.3%) were undecided, 27 (13.8%) disagreed and finally 30 (15.4%) strongly disagreed. It can thus be observed that during classroom interaction majority of the learners in secondary school use gestures to notify their interlocutors that they have not understood. This learning strategy greatly improves classroom interaction. Teachers should therefore take notice of their learners' use of gestures in English language classes.

On the item 'I pay attention to the speaker's eye contact, facial expression and gestures', from the study it was established that 84 (43.1%) of the learners agreed that they pay attention to the speaker's eye contact, facial expression and gestures, 69 (35.5%) strongly agreed, while 15 (7.7%) were undecided, 24 (12.3 %) disagreed and finally only 3 (1.5%) strongly disagreed. It can therefore be argued that majority of the learners in secondary school pay attention to the speaker's eye contact, facial expression and gestures. The use of these non-linguistic features aid in oral communication in the classroom as it facilitates language learning among the learners.

#### **4.8.5 Accuracy- Oriented Strategies**

From the study it was established that majority of the learners in secondary school employed accuracy –oriented strategies during classroom interaction. Table 4.6 presents a summary of this information.

**Table 4. 6: Accuracy – Oriented Strategies**

N=195					
Oral communication strategy	Frequency (%)				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Self-correction	81 (41.5%)	69 (49.2%)	15 (4.6%)	2 (1.1%)	6 (3.1%)
Using and expression which fits a rule that I had learnt	36 (18.5%)	60 (30.8%)	66 (33.8%)	27 (13.8%)	6 (3.1%)
Paying attention to grammar and word order during conversation	105 (53.8%)	60 (30.0%)	18 (9.2%)	9 (4.6%)	3 (1.5%)
Emphasizing the subject and the verb of the sentence	45 (23.1%)	108 (55.4%)	18 (13.8%)	12 (6.2%)	3 (1.5%)
Trying to talk like a native speaker	24 (12.3%)	33 (16.9%)	42 (21.5%)	36 (18.5%)	60 (30.8%)

On the statement, ‘I correct myself when I notice that I have made a mistake,’ in the study it was established that 69 (49.2%) of the learners agreed that they correct themselves when they notice that they have made mistakes, 84 (41.5 %) strongly agreed, while 9 (4.6 %) were undecided, 3 (1.5%) disagreed and finally 6 (3.1%) strongly agreed. It can thus be observed that majority of the learners in secondary school correct themselves when they notice that they have made mistakes while communicating orally in class. This strategy makes the learners creative in their use of language. Self-correction in English language classes should be encouraged by the teachers because if someone puts something right in his or her own words it is easy to remember.

On the item ‘I notice myself using an expression which fits a rule that I have learned,’ in the study it was established that 60 (30.8%) of the learners agreed that they notice

themselves using expressions which fit rules that they had already learned, 36 (18.5%) strongly agreed, while 66 (33.8 %) were undecided, 27 (13.8%) disagreed and finally 6 (3.1%) strongly disagreed. It can therefore be noted that most of the students in secondary school notice themselves using expressions which fit language rules that they had previously learned. This means that the learners commit into memory the linguistic rules that they learn in English language lessons.

On the item, 'I pay attention to grammar and word order during conversation,' most of the respondents in the study 60 (30%) agreed that they pay attention to grammar and word order during conversation, 105 (53.8%) strongly agreed, while 18 (9.2%) were undecided, 9 (4.6%) disagreed and finally 3 (1.5%) strongly disagreed. It can therefore be observed that most of the students in secondary schools pay attention to word order during classroom interaction.

Similarly, 'on the statement I try to emphasize the subject and verb of the sentence,' most respondents in the study 108 (55.4%) agreed that they try to emphasize the subject and verb of the sentence, 45 (23.1%) strongly agreed, while 18 (13.8%) were undecided, 12 (6.2%) disagreed and finally only 3 (1.5%) strongly disagreed. It can therefore be argued that majority of the learners in secondary schools try to emphasize the subject and verb of the sentence.

On the statement 'I try to talk like a native speaker,' in the study it was established that 33 (16.9%) of the learners agreed that they try to talk like native speakers, 24 (12.3%) strongly agreed, while 42 (21.5%) were undecided, 36 (18.5%) disagreed and 60 (30.8%) strongly disagreed. It can therefore be noted that most of the learners in secondary school do not try to talk like native speakers during English language lessons. This could be attributed to the fact that the learners in the Kenyan context



learn English as a second language. In addition, factors like exposure to the language outside the class, the multilingual and multicultural nature of the classes shape how the learners speak the language.

#### 4.8.6 Negotiating for Meaning While Speaking Strategies

From the study it was established that most of the learners in secondary school employed negotiation for meaning while speaking strategies during classroom interaction. Table 4.7 summarizes this information.

**Table 4. 7: Negotiation for Meaning While Speaking Strategies**

Oral Communication Strategies	Frequency (%)				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Paying attention to the listener's reaction to speech	69 (35.3%)	78 (40.0%)	9 (4.6%)	33 (16.9%)	6 (3.1%)
Using examples if the listener doesn't understand	102 (52.3%)	78 (40.0%)	6 (3.1%)	6 (3.1%)	3 (1.5%)
Speaker repeats what he/she wants to say until the listener understands	69 (35.4%)	75 (38%)	21 (10.8%)	18 (9.2%)	12 (6.2%)
Making comprehension checks to make sure the listener understands	78 (40.0%)	75 (38.5%)	18 (9.2%)	18 (9.2%)	6 (3.1%)

On the statement, 'while speaking I pay attention to the listener's reaction to my speech,' in the study it was established that majority of the learners 78 (40.0 %) agreed that while speaking they pay attention to the listener's reaction to their speech, 69 (35.4%) strongly agreed, while 9 (4.6 %) were undecided, 33 (16.9 %) disagreed and finally 6 (3.1%) strongly disagreed. It can therefore be noted that while speaking majority of the learners in secondary school while speaking pay attention to listener's reaction to their speech.

On the item, 'I give examples if the listener doesn't understand what I am saying,' from the study it was established that 78 (40.0%) of the learners agreed that they give examples if their listener doesn't understand what they are saying, 102 (52.3%) strongly agreed, while 6 (3.1%) were undecided, 6 (3.1%) disagreed and finally 3 (1.5%) strongly disagreed. It can therefore be noted that most of the secondary school students use examples if their listeners do not understand what they are saying.

On the item, 'I repeat what I want to say until the listener understands,' in the study it was established that 75 (38%) of the learners agreed that they repeat what they want to say until their listeners understand, 69 (35.4%) strongly agreed, while 21 (10.8%) were undecided, 18 (9.2%) disagreed and finally 12 (6.2%) strongly disagreed. It can therefore be noted that most of the students in secondary school repeat what they want to say until their listeners understand them.

On the statement 'I make comprehension checks to ensure the listener understands what I want to say,' in the study it was established that 75 (38.5%) of the learners agreed that they make comprehension checks (For example, do you understand?), to ensure their listeners understand what they want to say, 78 (40.0%) strongly agreed, while 18 (9.2%) were undecided, equally, the same number 18 (9.2%) disagreed and finally 6 (3.1%) strongly disagreed. It can therefore be noted that majority of the students make comprehension checks to ensure that their listeners understand what they want to say.

#### 4.8.7 Negotiation for Meaning While Listening Strategies

From the study it was established that most of the learners in secondary school employed negotiation for meaning while listening strategies during classroom interaction. This information is presented in Table 4.8.

**Table 4. 8: Negotiation for Meaning While Listening Strategies**

Oral Communication Strategy	Frequency (%)				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Asking the speaker to slow down to ease understanding	75 (38.5%)	72 (36.5%)	15 (7.5%)	21 (10.8%)	12 (6.2%)
Asking the speaker to use easy words to ease comprehension	60 (30.8%)	60 (30.8%)	21 (10.8%)	36 (18.7%)	15 (7.7%)
Asking for repetition when the speaker is not understood	105 (53.8%)	75 (38.5%)	6 (3.1%)	9 (4.6%)	0 (0.0%)
Making clear to the speaker what has not been understood	69 (35.4%)	72 (36.9%)	33 (16.9%)	21 (10.8%)	0 (0.0%)
Asking the speaker to use an example to aid understanding	91 (47.7%)	75 (38.5%)	18 (9.2%)	3 (1.5%)	6 (3.1%)

On the item 'I ask the speaker to slow down when I cannot understand what he/she has said,' in the study majority of the learners 72 (36.9%) agreed that they ask the speaker to slow down when they cannot understand what the speaker has said, 75 (38.5%) strongly agreed, while 15 (7.7 %) were undecided, 21 (10.8%) disagreed and finally 12 (6.2%) strongly disagreed. It can therefore be observed that majority of the learners ask their speakers to slow down when they cannot understand what the speaker has said.

On the item 'I ask the speaker to use easy words when I have difficulties in comprehension,' in the study it was established that 60 (30.8%) of the learners agreed that they ask the speaker to use easy words when they have difficulties in

comprehension, an equal number 60 (30.8%) strongly agreed, 21 (10.8%) were undecided, while 36 (18.5%) disagreed and finally 15 (7.7%) strongly disagreed. It can thus be observed that majority of the learners in secondary school ask their speakers to use easy words when they have difficulties in comprehension. This strategy assists the learners to negotiate meaning.

On the item 'I ask for repetition when I can't understand what the speaker has said,' in the study it was established that most of the learners 75 (38.5%) agreed that they ask for repetition when they can't understand what the speaker has said, 105 (53.8%) strongly disagreed, while 6 (3.1%) were undecided, 9 (4.6%) disagreed and none of them strongly disagreed. It can therefore be noted that majority of the learners in secondary school ask for repetition when they cannot understand what the speaker has said.

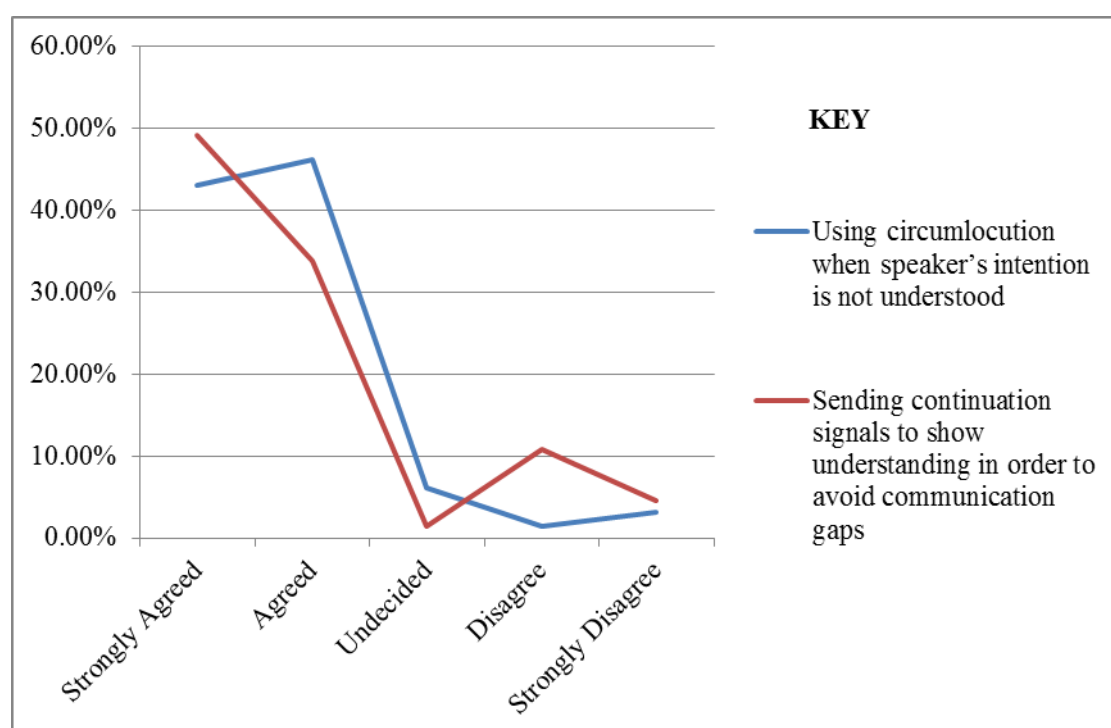
On the statement 'I make clear to the speaker what I haven't been able to understand,' in the study it was established that 72 (36.9%) of the learners agreed that during classroom interaction they make clear to the speaker what they haven't been able to understand, 69 (35.4%) strongly agreed, while 33 (16.9%) were undecided, 21 (10.8%) disagreed and none of the learners strongly disagreed. It can thus be argued that most of the learners in secondary school make clear to the speaker what they haven't been able to understand. This oral communication strategy improves language learning during classroom interaction as the learners will seek for clarification from their teachers and colleagues on what they may not have understood.

On the item 'I ask the speaker to give an example when I am not sure of what he/she has said.' from the study it was found out that 75 (38.5%) of the learners agreed that they ask the speaker to give an example when they are not sure of what he/she has

said, 93 (47.7%) strongly agreed, while 18 (9.2%) were undecided, 3 (1.5%) disagreed, and finally 6 (3.1%) strongly disagreed. It can therefore be observed that most of the students in secondary school ask the speaker to give an example when they are not sure what he/she has said.

#### 4.8.8 Fluency- Maintaining Strategies

From the study it was established that most of the learners in secondary school employed fluency maintaining strategies during classroom interaction. This information is summarized in Figure 4.1.



**Figure 4. 1: Fluency- Maintaining Strategies**

On the item 'I use circumlocution (I request the speaker to describe the properties of the object or action) when I don't understand his/her intention.' In the study it was found out that majority of the learners 90 (46.2%) agreed that they use circumlocution when they don't understand the speaker's intention well, 84 (43.1%) strongly agreed while 12 (6.2%) were undecided, 3 (1.5%) disagreed and 6 (3.1%) strongly disagreed.

It can thus be observed that majority of the learners in secondary school use circumlocution when they do not understand the speaker's intention well.

On the item 'I send continuation signals (For example, okay, yaah, mm, eeh among others) to show my understanding in order to avoid communication gaps,' from the study it was established that 66 (33.8%) of the learners agreed that when listening they send communication signals to show their understanding in order to avoid communication gaps, 96 (49.2%) strongly agreed, while 3 (1.5%) were undecided, 21 (10.8%) disagreed and finally 9 (4.6%) strongly disagreed. It can therefore be noted that majority of the students in secondary school send communication signals to show their understanding in order to avoid communication gaps.

#### 4.8.9 Message Abandonment Strategies

From the study results the student questionnaire revealed that most of the learners in secondary schools did not employ message abandonment strategies in their oral communication. Table 4.9 presents a summary of this information.

**Table 4. 9: Message Abandonment Strategies**

N= 195					
Oral Communication Strategy	Frequency (%)				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Abandoning the execution of a verbal plan and just say some words	12 (6.2%)	15 (7.7%)	33 (16.9%)	42 (21.5%)	93 (47.7%)
Leaving a message unfinished because of some language difficulty	6 (3.1%)	27 (13.8%)	15 (7.1%)	36 (18.5%)	111 (56.9%)
Speaker giving up when she/he cannot be understood	6 (3.9%)	39 (20.0%)	15 (7.7%)	27 (13.8%)	108 (55.4%)
Speaker asking other people to help when she/he cannot communicate well	30 (15.4%)	51 (26.2%)	30 (15.4%)	42 (21.5%)	42 (21.5%)

On the item 'I abandon the execution of a verbal plan and just say some words when I don't know what to say,' in the study, a few of the learners reported that they abandon the execution of a verbal plan and just say some words when they don't know what to say, 15 (7.7%) agreed, 12 (6.2%) strongly agreed, while 33 (16.9%) were undecided, 42 (21.5%) disagreed and finally 93 (47.7%) strongly disagreed. It can thus be noted that most of the students in secondary school do not abandon the execution of a verbal plan and just say some words when they do not know what to say.

On the item, 'I leave a message unfinished because of some language difficulty,' in the study it was established that 27 (13.8%) of the respondents agreed that they leave a message unfinished because of some language difficulty, 6 (3.1%) strongly agreed, while 5 (7.7%) were undecided, 36 (18.5%) disagreed and finally majority of the learners 111 (56.9%) strongly disagreed. It can thus be argued that most of the learners in secondary school do not leave a message unfinished because of some language difficulty.

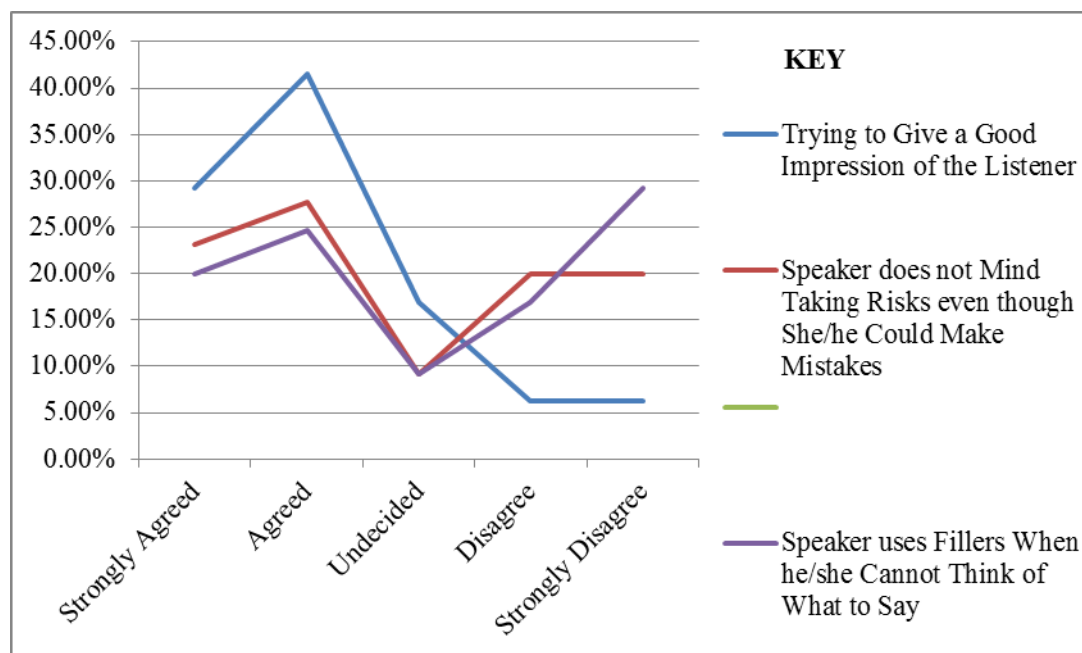
On the item 'I give up when I can't make myself understood,' in the study it was established that 39 (20.0%) of the learners agreed that they give up when they can't make themselves understood, 6 (3.1%) strongly agreed, while 15 (7.7%) were undecided, 27 (13.8%) disagreed, and finally 108 (55.4%) strongly disagreed. This has been summarized in Table 4.9. It can thus be argued that majority of the students in secondary school do not give up when they can't make themselves understood. This situation facilitates language learning.

On the item 'I ask other people to help when I can't communicate well,' in the study it was established that 51 (26.2%) of the learners agreed that they ask other people to help when they can't communicate well, 30 (15.4) strongly agreed, while 30 (15.4%)

were undecided, 42 (21.5%) disagreed and finally 42 (21.5%) strongly disagreed. It can thus be noted that opinion was divided among the students on whether they ask other people to help them when they cannot communicate well.

#### 4.8.10 Social Affective Strategies

From the study it was established that most of the learners in secondary school employed the use of social affective strategies during classroom interaction. Figure 4.2 summarizes this information.



**Figure 4. 2: Social Affective Strategies**

On the item ‘I try to give a good impression of the listener,’ in the study it was established that majority of the learners 81 (41.5%) agreed that they try to give a good impression to their listeners 57 (29.2%) strongly agreed, while 33 (16.9%) were undecided, 12 (6.2%) disagreed and finally 12 (6.2%) strongly disagreed. It can thus be observed that majority of the learners in secondary school try to give a good



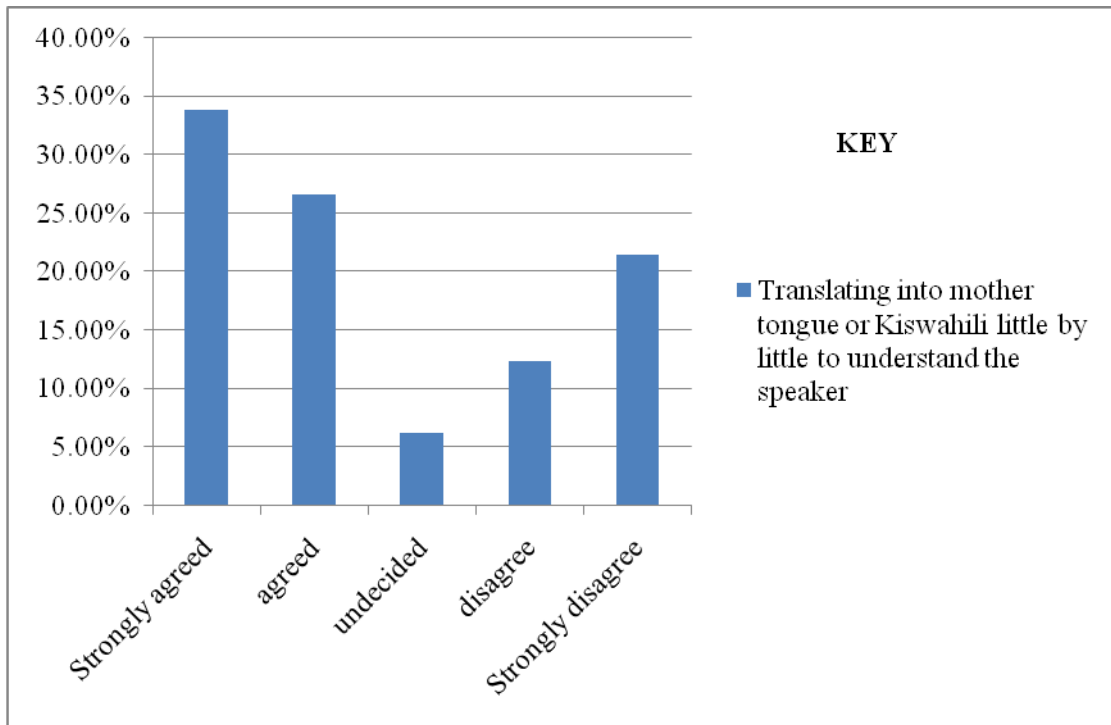
impression to the listener. This scenario positively influences the instruction of English language as it encourages active participation in class from the learners.

On the item, 'I don't mind taking risks even though I could make mistakes,' in the study it was established that 54 (27.7%) of the learners agreed that they don't mind taking risks even though they could make mistakes 45 (23.1%) strongly agreed, while 6 (9.2%) were undecided, 39 (20%) disagreed, and finally an equal number 39 (20.0%) strongly disagreed. It can therefore be observed that most of the learners in secondary school don't mind taking risks when communicating in class even though they might make mistakes. This scenario helps them to learn English as the several attempts they make during speaking will assist them to improve their spoken language and hence their communicative competence definitely improves as well.

On the statement 'I try to use fillers ( For example, yah, mm, haa etc) when I cannot think of what to say,' in the study it was established that 48 (24.6%) of the learners agreed that that they use fillers when they cannot think of what to say, 39 (20.0%) strongly agreed, while 18 (9.2%) were undecided, 33 (16.9%) disagreed and finally 57 (29.2%) strongly disagreed. It can thus be noted that learners' opinion was divided on their use of fillers when they cannot think of what to say as almost an equal number of learners agreed that they use fillers when they cannot think of what to say and an almost equal number number disagreed.

#### **4.8.11 Less Active Listener Strategies**

From the study it was established that most of the learners employed less active listener strategies during oral interaction. This information is surprised in Figure 4.3.

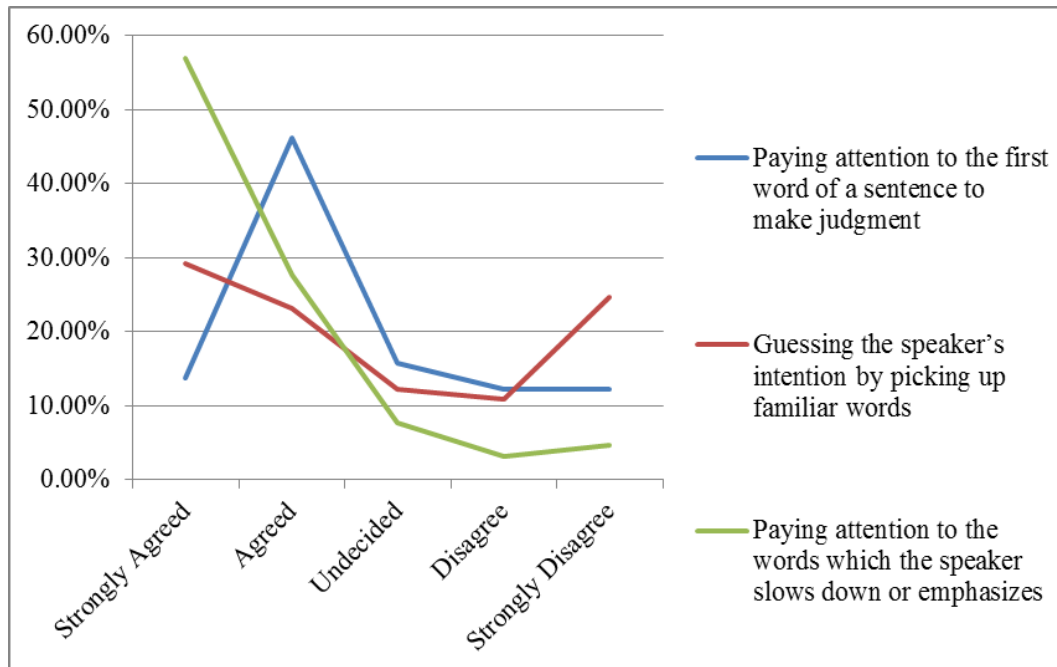


**Figure 4. 3: Less Active Listener Strategy**

On the item ‘I try to translate into mother tongue or Kiswahili little by little to understand what the speaker has said,’ in the study it was established that 51 (26.6%) of the learners agreed that they try to translate into mother tongue or Kiswahili little by little to understand what the speaker has said 66 (33.8) strongly agreed, while 12 (6.2%) were undecided, 24 (12.3%) disagreed and finally 42 (21.4%) strongly disagreed. It can therefore be noted that during classroom interaction most of the learners try to translate into mother tongue or Kiswahili little by little to understand what the speaker has said.

#### 4.8.12 Word-Oriented Strategies

From the study it was established that most of the learners in secondary schools employed word –oriented strategies during classroom interaction. This information is summarized in Figure 4.4.



**Figure 4. 4: Word-Oriented Strategies**

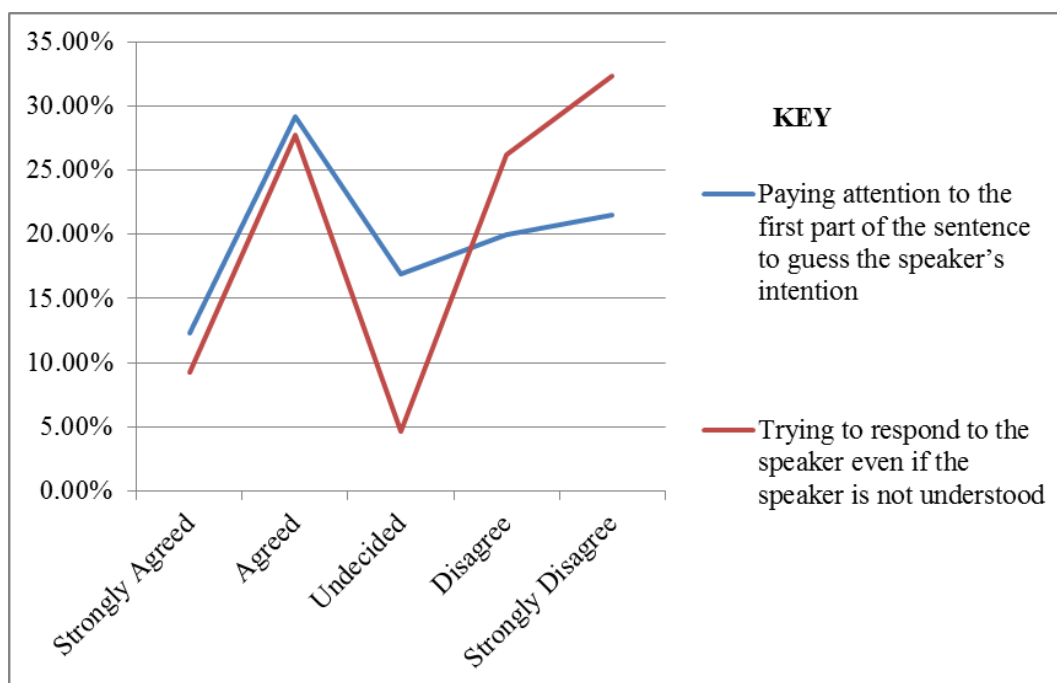
On the item 'I pay attention to the first word to judge whether it is an interrogative sentence or not,' from the study it was established that 90 (46.2%) of the learners agreed that they pay attention to the first word to judge whether it is an interrogative sentence or not, 27 (13.8%) strongly agreed, while 30 (15.8%) were undecided, 24 (12.3%) disagreed and finally an equal number of the learners 24 (12.3%) strongly disagreed. It can thus be noted that majority of the learners in secondary school pay attention to the first word to judge whether it is an interrogative sentence or not.

On the item 'I guess the speaker's intention by picking up familiar words,' from the study it was established that 45 (23.1%) of the learners agreed that they guess the speaker's intention by picking up familiar words, 57 (29.2%) strongly agreed, while 24 (12.3%) were undecided, 21 (10.8%) disagreed and finally 48 (24.6%) strongly agreed. It can therefore be observed that most of the learners in secondary school try to guess the speaker's intention by picking up familiar words.

On the item 'I pay attention to the words which the speaker slows down or emphasizes,' from the study it was established that 54 (27.7%) of the learners agreed that they pay attention to the words which the speaker slows down or emphasizes, 111 (56.9%) strongly agreed, while 15 (7.7%) were undecided, 6 (3.1%) disagreed and finally 9 (3.1%) strongly disagreed. It can therefore be concluded that majority of the learners in secondary school pay attention to the words which the speaker slows down to emphasize.

#### **4.8.14 Scanning and gettingh the Gist Strategies**

From the study opinion on the use of scanning strategies by the learners in secondary school was divided. This was because the number of those students who reported that they employed the use of these strategies was equal to those who did not employ the use of these strategies. Similarly, majority of the learners did not employ the use of getting the gist strategies. Figure 4.5 summarizes this information.



**Figure 4. 5: Scanning and getting the Gist Strategies**

On the item 'I pay attention to the first part of the sentence and guess the speaker's intention,' from the study it was established that 57 (29.2%) of the learners agreed that they pay attention to the first part of the sentence and guess the speaker's intention, 24 (12.3%) strongly agreed, while 33 (16.9%) were undecided, 39 (20.0%) disagreed and finally 42 (21.5%) strongly disagreed. It can therefore be concluded that half of the learners in secondary school pay attention to the first part of the sentence and guess the speaker's intention.

On the statement, 'I try to respond to the speaker even when I don't understand him/her perfectly,' in the study it was established that 54 (27.7%) of the learners agreed that they try to respond to the speaker even when they don't understand him/her, 18 (9.2%) strongly agreed, while 9 (4.6%) were undecided, 51 (26.2%) disagreed and finally 63 (32.3%) strongly disagreed. It can thus be noted that majority of the learners in secondary school do not respond to their speakers even when they do not understand them perfectly.

#### 4.9 Oral Interaction Patterns in English Language Classes

The third objective of the study was to establish the oral interaction patterns in English language classes. Items (3a- j) were used to establish this. On the item ‘who does most of the talk in your English language class?’ In the study almost all the learners 168 (86.2%) reported that their teachers did most of the talking during English language classes, while a few 27 (13.8%) reported that they (learners) did most of the talk during English language classes. It can thus be observed that in English language classes the teachers of English language did most of the talking during classroom interaction. This information is presented in Table 4.10.

**Table 4. 10: Talking in English Language Classes**

<b>Opinion</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Teachers	168	86.2
Learners	27	13.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>100</b>

On the item ‘how often does your teacher of English give you an opportunity to interact with him/her?’ In the study 84 (43.1%) of the learners reported that their teachers always give them an opportunity to interact with them in class, 96 (49.2%) reported that their teachers sometimes give them an opportunity to interact with them in class and finally 15 (7.7%) reported that their teachers never give them an opportunity to interact with them in class. It can thus be noted that majority of the teachers give their learners an opportunity to interact with them in class. Table 4.11 summarizes this.

**Table 4. 11: Frequency of Teachers' giving their Learners an Opportunity to interact with them in Class**

<b>Number of Times</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Always	84	43.1
Sometimes	96	49.2
Never	15	7.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>100</b>

On the item, 'does your teacher always provide comprehensible input that is suitable to your language level?' In the study it was established that majority of the learners 174 (89.2%) agreed that their teachers provide comprehensible input that is suitable to their language level, while 28 (10.8%) did not agree. This is summarized in Table 4. 12. It can thus be observed that in secondary school teachers provided comprehensible input that is suitable to the learners' language level.

**Table 4. 12: Provision of Comprehensible Input that is suitable to the Learners' Language Level**

<b>Opinion</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	174	89.2
No	28	10.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>100</b>

On the item 'how often do you interact with your classmates during English lessons?' From the study it was established that 69 (35.4%) of the learners reported that they always interact with their classmates during English language lessons, more than half of the learners 108 (55.4%) reported that they sometimes interacted with their classmates, while 18 (9.2%) reported that they never interact with their classmates during English lessons. It can thus be observed that majority of learners in secondary school interact with their classmates during English language lessons. Table 4.13 summarizes this information.

**Table 4. 13: Learners' Frequency of Interaction during English Lessons**

<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Ferquency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Always	69	35.4
Sometimes	108	55.4
Never	18	9.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>100</b>

#### **4.9.1 Oral Activities Engaged by Learners that Promote Oral Interaction in English Language Classes**

On the item 'state some of the oral activities that you engage in during English language lessons that promote interaction in class and hence language learning,' from the study most of the learners reported that the oral activities that they engage in class which promote classroom interaction include: class discussions, oral questions and answers. Other learners cited oral narratives and stories. They reported that oral narratives and stories help them to interact in class. When some learners present their stories others listen and after the presentation they engage each other in discussions, asking and answering questions. Others reported that the other activates that promote oral interaction include use of drama, debates, giving of speeches, oral talk, public speaking, dialogue, discussion of plays, novel themes and characters in class.

#### **4.9.2 Interaction Patterns that take Place in English Language Classes**

Most of the learners reported that three interaction patterns occur in English language classes; these patterns are: teacher- learners, learner- teacher and learner- learner. On how each of these interaction patterns happens in class; the learners reported that teacher – learner interaction pattern occurred when the teacher comes to class and initiates a conversation and the learners only answer questions or make their comments. Other learners reported that when their teacher told them a story and the



thereafter asked them questions. It also occurred when the learners faced difficulties in some of the questions they came across in class; as such they resorted to ask their teachers for clarification, when asking for a question or for repetition when a learner has not understood the teacher.

On the other hand, learner- learner classroom interaction took place when the learners were given tasks by the teachers to tackle. They did this during class discussion, debates and dramatization. It also occurred when students asked each other a question or when commenting on an answer given by another learner. When the learners were asked which of these interaction patterns help them improve the way they listen, speak, read or write during the learning process. From the study learners' opinion was divided in that almost the same number of learners reported that teacher- learner interaction pattern helps them to improve on how they listen, speak, read and write during the learning process. They said, this is because the teacher gives detailed explanation to the learners and hence they understand the content better. In the same vein they said that the teacher offers corrective feedback in case a learner makes some errors; this they said help them improve on their pronunciation, grammar and sentence construction and hence their communicative competence. Other teachers reported that during teacher- learner interaction the learners' attention in class is enhanced.

On the other hand, those learners who reported that learner- learner interaction help them improve on how they listen, speak, read and write during the learning process, they said that in learner – learner interaction the students do a lot of research and later do presentations in the classroom; this they say allow them to develop the four language skills that is listening, speaking, reading and writing. This definitely helps

them to develop their communicative competence. Other learners reported that learner–learner interaction makes them alert in class. They reported that most of the time they are aware that they are making presentations, asking and answering questions in class. Others reported that this interaction gives them more time to interact and learn more.

A few of the learners reported that all the interaction patterns help them improve in how they listen, speak, and write during the learning process. They said this is because oral interaction in class does not progress in only one direction. At one time the teacher speaks and the learners listen, at another time it is vice versa. When the teacher asks a question the learners answer. Similarly, when a learner commits an error their teacher offers them corrective feedback. In the same vein the learners seek for clarification from the teacher. It can be observed that all the above interaction patterns play a significant role during classroom interaction.

#### **4.9.3 Interaction Patterns Preferred by Learners**

When the learners were asked to state the interaction patterns they prefer and why? Most of the learners reported that they prefer learner- learner interaction because it facilitates them to express themselves during class discussion as they are free with each other, unlike when there is a teacher in their midst who make them nervous and as such they are afraid to speak in presence of him/her. They also reported that in this form of interaction they are free to exchange ideas unlike in learner- teacher interaction where one tends to listen to the teacher's ideas at the expense of thinking of his/her ideas. In addition, they are free to ask each other questions during this form of interaction unlike in teacher- learner interaction. Finally, during this form of interaction they are also free to ask their peers questions unlike in teacher- learner

interaction where most learners fear asking questions and even participating during the lesson.

#### 4.10. Language Registers in English Language Classes

The fourth objective of the study was to establish the language registers used in English language classes, questions 4(a-g) were used to establish this. On the question ‘in your English language classes do you sometimes use informal language?’ In the study it was established that more than half of the learners 117 (60.0%) agreed that in their English language classes they sometimes used informal language, while 78 (40.0%) disagreed. It can therefore be observed that most of the learners in secondary school sometimes used informal language in their English language classes. Table 4.14 illustrates this.

**Table 4. 14:** *Students use of Informal Language during English Language Classes*

<b>Opinion</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	117	60.0
No	78	40.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>100</b>

Those learners who said that they sometimes use informal language during classroom interaction reported that they used these forms of language during debates when they cannot retrieve the correct form of formal English words to use as such they resorted to colloquial language that is Sheng. Others reported that when they do not get or understand a point a colleague is making they tend to ask in colloquial language for example ‘*and kama what?*’ they also said that they used informal language when they were discussing among themselves. Other situations that they used informal language were when they were told to give a narrative they sometimes infused informal language in their narrations when explaining so that other students could pay attention

and comprehend. Finally, they reported that they used these informal languages to arouse the attention of their colleagues.

On the reasons why the learners used language in such a manner? The learners gave varied reasons. Some reported that they used language in such a manner because some words are hard to translate from mother tongue to English; as such they preferred using slang. Others said that their use of informal English fosters understanding among them, as that is the kind of English they often use in and outside class when they are communicating among themselves. Others reported that using language in such a manner makes learning fun and interesting. Others reported that some words in English are hard to pronounce and hence they resorted to the use of slang instead of using words that are rather difficult and awkward to pronounce in formal English. Similarly, others learners reported that they used English in this manner in order to emphasize certain points. Others said they did this in order to avoid the use of complicated English words. Others said that they used English in this manner because of their limited vocabulary of the target language English because they do not read widely in order to increase their repertoire of the English vocabulary. Others also reported that they did this because of direct translation of words from their first language to English. This situation gave rise to the use of informal languages in English language classes.

On the question, 'do you sometimes use other languages during English lessons?' From the study it was established that majority of the learners 135 (69.2%) reported that they sometimes used other languages during English lessons, while 60 (30.8%) said that they did not use other languages during English lessons. This is summarized

in Table 4.15. It can thus be noted that in secondary school learners used other languages during English lessons.

**Table 4. 15: *Students' use of other Languages during English Lessons***

<b>Opinion</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	135	69.2
No	60	30.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>100</b>

On the other languages that the learners used in English language classes, the learners reported that they used Kiswahili and Sheng mostly and in some rare occasions they used mother tongue. The learners reported that they used these other languages during debates class/group discussions, oral literature lessons, class presentations, asking and answering questions, dramatization and finally when explaining difficult concepts to their colleagues in class.

On the question 'what makes you use these languages in class?' The learners gave varied reasons as to why they use these other languages in class. Most of the learners reported that they use these other languages in order to make their colleagues understand what they are explaining or discussing with much ease. Others learners reported that it is fun to use these languages, while others reported that they use these languages for emphasize and to make clarification of certain points in class. Similarly, other learners reported that they use these languages to make learning lively. Others said they use these languages when they encounter difficulties while speaking English; thus they use other languages in order to continue communicating what they are saying. Finally, other learners also said that they use these languages to facilitate understanding among all the learners in class.

#### 4.11 Oral Communication Challenges encountered during Classroom Interaction

On the question ‘do you sometimes experience oral communication challenges in your English language classes?’ From the study it was established that majority of the learners 153 (78.5%) reported that they sometimes experienced oral communication challenges in their English language classes; while a few of the learners 42 (21.5%) reported that they did not experience oral communication challenges in their English language classes. It can thus be noted that majority of the learners in secondary school classes experienced oral communication challenges in their English language classes. This is summarized in Table 4. 16.

**Table 4. 16: Students’ Experience of Oral Communication Challenges in English Language Classes**

<b>Opinion</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	153	78.5
No	42	21.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>100</b>

The learners reported that they experienced these oral communication challenges because they do not understand some of the English words and phrases their teachers used in class. They also reported that some teachers used complicated English. Others reported that they experienced challenges pronouncing certain English words as such they feared their peers laughing at them. In such situations they experienced communication breakdown as they either skipped reading a text loudly or they abandoned speaking and just kept quiet or they sometimes code switched to Kiswahili, Sheng or mother tongue. Others reported that the English language has a variety of words with some that they have never encountered before. The learners reported that they experienced these challenges because they did not read widely and therefore their vocabulary repertoire is limited. Others said that they did not practice

speaking in English in and outside class. Others said that they lack self-confidence. Others said that they experienced these challenges because of the influence of other languages that is mother tongue, Kiswahili and Sheng. Other learners reported that they are not articulate and hence they are shy to speak in English. Finally a few of the learners reported that they are not attentive in class.

On the question 'state the areas you experience these oral communication challenges?' From the study most of the learners reported that they experience these oral communication challenges when they are giving a speech in class and during class presentation. They said that they at times experienced challenges constructing correct sentences or pronouncing some words well, during debates, when reading excerpts from set books or comprehension passages loudly; they at times encounter words that they cannot pronounce well. Others reported that they experience challenges when having dialogue with their teachers, when asking and answering oral questions. Finally, others reported that they experienced challenges when reciting poetry in class and also when narrating oral narratives.

On the question, 'what do you suggest to be done in order to minimize these oral communication challenges?' From the study most of the learners suggested that they should read authentic materials; that is novels, newspapers, magazines and plays widely in order for them to increase their stock of English vocabulary and learn how various writers use these words in their writings. In addition, they will also be exposed to various ways in which writers construct correct sentences. Other learners suggested they should participate in debates, public speaking and drama while in school; they said this will go a long way in enhancing their linguistic and communicative competence and fluency in English language.

Apart from that they suggested that they should participate regularly in class discussions. They should also participate in asking and answering questions. Others suggested that they should use English most of the time in and outside class. Others said that they should avoid mixing languages during lessons. For example, use of English and Kiswahili at the same time. These scenarios greatly influence their communicative competence in English language. Some of the learners suggested that their teachers should give them opportunities to participate in class. Teachers for example should organize inter- class symposiums and presentations. Others reported that teachers should identify those areas where learners are weak in and work on them in order to improve learners' oral communication skills.

In addition, to the above suggestions other learners said that their teachers should be good role models by using English all the time while in school; this they say will encourage them to use English while in school. Others said that their teachers should be friendly to them so that they can speak in their presents instead of just keeping quiet when their teachers are around for fear of committing errors in their presence. Finally, the learners suggested that there should be a language policy in school where the learners should speak in English in and outside the class.

#### **4.12 Discussion of the Findings**

This section discusses the findings of the study. These findings have been presented thematically based on the study objectives and the theory that guided the study. In retrospect, the literature review was considered with the objective of comparing the results with the findings of other researchers who did similar studies, divergence, convergence and conclusions were then drawn.



#### 4.12.1 Teachers' Oral Communication Strategies and how they Influence the Instruction of English Language

The teachers' interview guide revealed that the teachers of English language in secondary school classes employed various oral communication strategies during classroom instruction. These strategies they said include: *repetition, rephrasing of sentences, paraphrasing, checking of understanding, corrective feedback, and use of simple sentences*, among others. Lugendo (2014) points out that teachers in English language classes create dialogic spaces which are facilitated by repetition, assisting questions, extended wait time, offering model answers and calling on other students to answer questions, reformulation, comprehension checks, and explicit feedback and probing questions. These oral strategies she says resulted in longer turns in co-construction of meaning, which in turn appeared to be received as an open opportunity for the wider participation by the learners.

This was corroborated during the classroom observation. It was observed that the teachers during classroom instruction often used *repetition, comprehension checks, paraphrase and rephrasing of questions* among others. These oral communication strategies serve a similar purpose as Kumaradivelu's (2006) macrostrategies: maximize learning opportunities, facilitate negotiated interaction, minimize perceptual mismatches, activate intuitive heuristics, foster language awareness, contextualize linguistic input, integrate language skills, promote learner autonomy, ensure social relevance, and raise cultural consciousness.' (p. 210). These strategies aid comprehension and language acquisition among the learners.

These findings support those of Lightbown and Spada (2006) who pointed out that the teachers' oral communication strategies are forms of modified speech forms and

scaffolding. They argue that the purpose of these modified speeches is to aid comprehension. It can thus be argued that the aim of the teacher's oral communication strategies is to facilitate the learning of English language among students in secondary school. Similarly, these findings support those of Saville- Troike (2005) who pointed out that high frequency phrases which may be memorized as chunks of speech to be processed automatically; pauses at appropriate grammatical junctures which can help listeners recognize relevant structures, a slower rate speech which allows more time for internalization, processing and topicalization which helps in identifying the theme of the sentence. This scenario plays out in the English language classrooms in that the oral communication strategies employed by the teachers are forms of modified speech which aid comprehension.

From the study most of the learners reported that when they make mistakes in class most of the time their teachers interrupted them and made corrections. These findings support those of Ellis (2005) who pointed out that learners need to be shown what is not correct as well as provided with examples of what is correct. He further argues that negative feedback should always be changed into positive feedback and teachers are advised to apply it in a way that learners are aware of their mistakes, but that they should learn from it and serve as motivation to correct their mistakes. This was also noted during classroom observation when the teachers offered corrective feedback whenever their learners made mistakes. It can thus be observed that most of the time during classroom instruction most of the teachers interrupted their learners to correct them. These findings are in line with those of Tchudi and Michehell (2005) who suggested that the role of the teacher in language classroom is to engage students in the learning process, to provide opportunities for feedback and to use group and individual activities so as to bring student's initiative into full play.

Other oral communication strategies employed by the teachers included repetition and use of oral questions to elicit responses from the learners. It was also observed that the teachers provided an opportunity for the learners to participate and speak in class. The teachers achieved this through the use of high interest student activities such as group discussion, oral questions and debates. Shteivi and Hamuda (2016) pointed out that the major goal of all English language teaching process should give the learners the ability to use English effectively and accurately in communication.

These forms of oral communication strategies employed by the teachers provided the students with an opportunity to produce language comfortably and in authentic contexts without the risk of initiating the language by themselves. This approach to classroom interaction is in tandem with the findings of Choudhury (2005) who observes that in second language classrooms where learners often do not have a great number of tools for initiating and maintaining language, the teacher's questions provide necessary stepping-stones to communication. He asserts that appropriate questioning in an interactive classroom can fulfill a number of different functions. Teacher's questions give students the opportunity to produce language comfortably without having to risk initiating language themselves. This is attributed to the fact that some students are afraid to initiate a conversation or a discussion in class.

#### **4.12.2 Learners Oral Communication Strategies and how they Influence the Instruction of English Language**

From the study the teachers' interview revealed that most of the learners used non-linguistic forms of communication. For example, *use of facial expression, gestures and nodding of their heads* to confirm their understanding of concepts. Teachers also reported that some of their learners used fillers such as *hmm, hee, yah* among others to

confirm that they have understood what their teachers or other learners are communicating. Teachers reported that their learners use these fillers to gain time when they are communicating points and they lack the correct words to use in class. These oral communication strategies play an important role in language learning as Morreale et al. (2010) observe that in the learning of English as a second language, oral communication strategies employed by the learners during classroom interaction play a critical role in the development of learners' communicative competence in the target language.

The classroom observation revealed that learners employed non- linguistic means of communication in class. These included the use of facial expression, use of gestures to emphasize points to either their fellow learners or their teacher. Other learners were also observed to nod their heads to confirm to their teachers that they have understood. Learners were also seen to carry up their hands whenever they wanted to ask or answer questions in class. The learners' questionnaire revealed that the learners used non-verbal strategies while speaking. Most of the learners 150 (77 %) reported that they try to make eye contact when they are talking. It was also established that slightly more than half of learners 129 (66.2 %) said they used gestures and facial expressions when they could not express themselves well. These findings support those of Yaman et al., (2013) who carried out a study on communication strategies used by Turkish university students. They established that Turkish students use gestures when they have difficulty in understanding and the listener clarifies what they may not have understood. It is also in line with the findings of Abdulraman and Ismael (2015) in their study looking at the communication strategies used by Yemeni EFL students. They established that majority of Yemeni students used gestures followed by body movement and lastly eye contact while talking.

During the class observation it was also noted that the learners employed the use of fillers like *hmm*, *eeh* to gain time to think in order to find the right words to use when speaking. These findings therefore adds to those of Shteiwi and Hamuda (2016) who established that most of the English major students in Misrata University in Libya lack essential vocabulary and this leads to their inability to express themselves in English language. In addition they also noted that most students cannot retrieve suitable vocabulary rapidly when speaking.

From the study, the learners' questionnaire revealed that most of the learners employed attempting to think in English language strategies during oral communication. It was established that almost half of the learners 96 (49.3%) thought of what to say in their native languages and then constructed the English sentence, while 120 (61.5 %) reported that they first thought of a sentence they already know in English and then tried to change it to fit their situation. The use of these oral communication strategies facilitated language learning and acquisition. These findings support those of Richards (1991) who states that second language learning is facilitated when learners are engaged in interaction and meaningful communication.

From the study the learners' questionnaire revealed that most of the learners did not employ message reduction and alteration strategies during their oral interaction. It was established that majority of the learners 159 (81.6%) agreed that they used words that were familiar to them during oral communication. It was also established that a few of the learners 48 (24.6%) reported that they replaced the original message with another because of feeling incapable of executing their original intent. These findings contradict those of Bitchener (2004) who points out that through negotiation students

modify close to two thirds of their (problematic) utterances and examples of successful modifications are an indication that learning has occurred.

From the study the learners' questionnaire revealed that most of the learners in secondary school in Elgeyo Marakwet County employed fluency oriented strategies during their oral communication. It was established that half of the learners 99 (50.7%) reported that they modified their way of saying things according to context. It was also established that majority of the learners 180 (92.3%) reported that they take their time to express what they want to say. It was also found out that most of the learners 159 (81.5%) reported that they pay attention to their pronunciation when speaking in class. In addition, it was established that majority of the learners 153 (78.4%) reported that they speak clearly and loudly to make themselves heard. Similarly, it was established that more than half of the learners 153 (63.1%) reported that they pay attention to rhythm and intonation during oral interaction in English language classes. These findings support those of Yaman et al., (2013) who established that Turkish students pay attention to their rhythm and intonation during oral communication.

From the study results most of the learners employed accuracy- oriented strategies during their oral interaction. Majority of the learners 177 (90.2%) reported that they corrected themselves when they noticed that they have made mistakes while speaking in class. Similarly 165 (83.8%) of the learners reported that they pay attention to grammar and word order during conversation. In addition, it was also established that 148 (78.5%) of the learners reported that they try to emphasize the subject and verb of the sentence. On the other hand, almost half of the learners 96 (49.3%) reported that they notice themselves using expressions which fit rules that they had learned. In the

same vein slightly less than half of the learners 57 (29.2%) reported that they try to talk like native speakers when interacting in English language classes. The findings of this are similar to those of Abdulrahmahn and Ismael (2015) who established that the learners frequently used achievement strategies, especially, approximation and circumlocution strategies. In terms of reduction strategies, it was found that the learners always used reduction strategy and the strategy of reducing the intended message. For repairing strategies the learners used the strategy of correcting the incorrect phrasing and using fillers. In terms of negotiation strategies used, it was established that among the strategies that the learners used was the strategy of repeating what they say until the listener understands.

From the study results the learners' questionnaire revealed that most of the learners employed negotiation for meaning while speaking strategies. Majority of the learners 147 (75.3%) reported that while speaking they pay attention to the listener's reaction to their speech. Related to this is that most of the learners 180 (92.3%) reported that they give examples if the listener does not understand what they are saying. These findings add to those of Gass and Selinker (2008) who while explaining the importance of negotiation say negotiation serves as a catalyst for change because of its focus on incorrect forms. By providing learners with information about incorrect forms negotiation enables learners to search for additional confirmatory or non-confirmatory evidence. Similarly, 144 (73.4%) of the learners reported that they repeat what they want to say until the listener understands.

From the study results it was established that 153 (78.5%) of the learners reported that they make comprehension checks to ensure their listeners understand what they want to say. These findings are consistent with those of Ounis (2016) who while

exploring the use of oral communication strategies by high and low proficiency learners of English in Tunisia observed that majority of the participants consider achievement strategies such as ‘negotiation for meaning,’ ‘non-verbal strategies’ and ‘message reduction and alteration’ as the most practical and effective strategies used to cope with communication problems and to transmit the intended message.

This is corroborated by the results from the teachers’ interview guide whereby majority of the teachers interviewed reported that their learners often sought for clarification from either their colleagues or the teacher, followed by repetition. They reported that the learners sought for clarification especially when they did not understand what they were being taught or what their colleagues are passing across. These findings are in line with those of Lee (2006) who points out that L2 classroom interaction itself relies on competent language use for its accomplishment and the competence that is already in the room is a constitutive feature of the work-parties of teaching and learning and that L2 classroom interaction is not just an instrument to accomplish communicative competence as an instructional goal, but is also a practical occasion that exhibits competent language use. In addition, the classroom observation revealed that learners sought for help from their teachers whenever they encountered communication challenges. These findings therefore add to those of Gass and Selinker (2008) who pointed out that by providing learners with information about incorrect forms, negotiation enables learners to search for additional confirmatory or non-confirmatory evidence.

From the study results the learners’ questionnaire revealed that most of the learners in secondary schools employed fluency maintaining strategies during their oral communication. Majority of the learners 174 (89.3%) reported that they used



circumlocution (request the speaker to describe the properties of the object or action) when they did not understand his/her intention. Similarly, 162 (83%) of the learners reported that they send continuation signals (for example *okay, yaah, mm, eeh* etc) to show their understanding in order to avoid communication gaps. Sener and Balkir (2013) found out that the three most frequently used sub-categories of communication were approximation, followed by circumlocution and modification devices in that order, while the least frequently used sub-categories were overgeneralization and code-switching. When they examined the relationship between the strategy use and success they found out that those students who employed the modification strategies were successful followed by those who used code-switching, overgeneralization, on-linguistic devices and forieingnising in that order. This is corroborated by the results of the classroom observation whereby it was observed that most of the learners employed circumlocution. These findings support those of Nakatani (2006) who observes that negotiation strategies are used to maintain the conversation goal with the speaker.

From the study results the learners' questionnaire revealed that most of the learners in secondary school did not employ message abandonment strategies in their oral communication. It was established that a few of the learners 27 (13.9%) reported that they abandoned the execution of a verbal plan and just said some words when they did not know what to say. Similarly, a small percentage of the learners 33 (16.9%) reported that they left a message unfinished because of language difficulty. In addition, 45 (23.1%) of the learners reported that they gave up when they could not make themselves understood. In the same vein 81 (41.6%) of the students reported that they asked other people to help when they could not communicate well. These

findings support those of Ellis (2005) who observed that students need to be shown what is correct as well as provided with examples.

Results from the teachers' interview guide indicated that most of the teachers interviewed pointed out that whenever their learners encountered communication breakdowns most code switched to Kiswahili while others used gestures and facial expressions in order to continue communicating. Others reported that their learners used Sheng while a few of the teachers reported that some of their learners sought for clarification from them and from other students as well. These findings add to those of Yaman and Ozcan (2015) in their study on oral communication strategies used by Turkish students learning English as foreign language who established that the students mostly employed negotiation for meaning and compensatory strategies frequently during classroom interaction, this was followed by affective strategies, planning/organization whereas message abandonment strategies were the least used strategies.

From the study results the learners' questionnaire revealed that most of the learners in secondary school employed social affective strategies in their oral communication. It was established that majority of the learners 138 (70.7%) reported that they try to give a good impression to their listeners compared to 24 (12.4%) who reported that they did not give a good impression to their listeners. It can thus be concluded that this scenario positively influenced the instruction of English language as it encouraged active participation in class from the learners. Scrivener (2005) suggested that in order to maximize student interaction in class the teachers should encourage a relaxed learning environment. Similarly, half of the learners 99 (50.8%) reported that they did not mind taking risks even though they could make mistakes, while less than half 78

(40%) reported that they minded taking risks even though they could make mistakes. It was also established that almost half of the learners 87 (44.6%) reported that they used fillers when they could not think of what to say while an almost equal number of students 90 (46.1%) reported that they did not use fillers when they could not think of what to say. These findings add to those of Abdulraman and Ismael (2015) who established that the students used reduction strategy and strategy for reducing the intended message. For repairing strategies they found out that the students used the strategy of correcting the incorrect phrasing and they also used fillers.

In terms of negotiation for meaning strategies the study results established that the learners mostly used the strategy for repeating what they say until the listener understands. It can thus be concluded that majority of the learners in secondary school employed the use of social affective strategies in their oral communication. These findings are consistent with those of Nakatani (2006) who established that in order to communicate smoothly, learners try to control their anxiety and enjoy the process of oral communication. He also observed that learners encouraged themselves to use English and to risk making mistakes. They also behaved socially in such a way as to give a good impression and avoided silence during interaction.

From the study results the learners' questionnaire revealed that majority of the learners in secondary school in Elgeyo Marakwet County employed less listener strategies in their oral communication. It was established that more than half of the learners 117 (60%) reported that they try to translate into mother tongue or Kiswahili little by little to understand what the speaker has said. The use of these strategies according to Nakatani (2006) represents negative attitudes towards using active

listening strategies for interaction. Therefore learners using these strategies cannot improve their listening comprehension ability during authentic classroom interaction.

The learners' questionnaire revealed that most of the learners in secondary school employed word- oriented strategies in their oral communication. It was established that most of the learners 117 (60.0%) reported that they paid attention to the first word to judge whether it is an interrogative sentence or not. Similarly, slightly more than half of the learners 102 (52.3%) reported that they guessed the speaker's intention by picking up familiar words, while 69 (35.4%) reported that they did not guess the speaker's intention by picking up familiar words. In addition, majority of the learners 165 (84.6%) reported that they paid attention to the words which the speaker slows down to emphasize.

The learners' questionnaire revealed that opinion was divided on learners' use of scanning strategies. In the study results, it was established that 81 (41.5%) of the students reported that they paid attention to the first part of the sentence and guessed the speaker's intention. Similarly, an equal number were of the contrary opinion. The learners' questionnaire revealed that most of the learners in secondary school did not employ getting the gist strategies during oral communication. From the study a few of the learners 72 (36.9%) reported that they tried to respond to the speaker even when they did not understand him/ her perfectly, while majority of the learners 114 (58.5%) were of the contrary opinion that they did not try to respond to the speaker even when they did not understand him/her perfectly. These findings are consistent with those of Yaman, Irvin and Kavasoglu (2013) who found out that university students mostly prefer negotiation for meaning while listening strategies, then followed by compensatory strategies and finally getting the gist strategies were the least used

communication strategies. Negotiation for meaning while using listening and speaking strategies is characterized by negotiation behavior in listening and speaking when students have problems during interaction.

#### **4.12.3 Oral Interaction Patterns in English Language Classes and how they influence Classroom Instruction**

The teachers' interview revealed that three interaction patterns occurred in their English language classes. These are: teacher-learners, learners- teachers and learner-learners. During the classroom observation it was noted that the most dominant interaction pattern in English language classes was teacher-learner interaction pattern. Most of the time in class the teachers used question and answer method; this followed the teacher-learner interaction pattern. These findings add to those of Walsh (2013) who identified the following interaction patterns in English language classes: teacher-learner, teacher- learners, learner-learner, learners- learners and finally learners-learners. While Al- Zahrani and Al-Albargi (2017) classify the interaction patterns into two: teacher – learner and learner –learner interaction patterns. Similarly, Biswas (2015) observes that during classroom interaction a variety of interaction patterns take place. These are (Teacher – Student) T-S/S-T, (Teacher- Students T-Ss/Ss-T) and (Student-Students) S-S/Ss - Ss interaction patterns happen in classroom.

The second most common interaction pattern observed in English language classrooms is learner- teacher interaction pattern. This manifested itself in the form of learners answering and asking questions in class. It was also seen that learners sought for clarification from their teachers. This was observed when a teacher explained a concept and a learner does not understand what the teacher is explaining, the learner sought for clarification from him or her.

The third most observed interaction pattern in English language classes was learner – learner interaction pattern. This was seen when learners posed questions in class and their colleagues answered. These findings support those of (Wash 2013, Al-Zahrani and Al – Bargi 2017). The teachers’ interview revealed that the learners in English language classes preferred learner – learner interaction pattern. When the teachers were asked why they thought that their learners preferred this interaction pattern, they said that through this form of classroom interaction the learners are free with each other as such that they have the opportunity to ask each other questions without the fear of making mistakes. These findings are in line with those of Omulando (2009) who observes that most of the learners in secondary schools are freer and seem to learn better when prompted by fellow learners than by the teachers. Other teachers reported that this form of interaction makes the learners feel that the learning is about them and not the teachers.

Similarly, other teachers reported that this form of interaction motivates the learners to speak out. These findings support those of Van Lier (2014) who observes that learner-learner interaction is student centered because the teacher acts as a facilitator; giving students increased responsibility and leading them to become increasingly independent. He further says this form of interaction encourages the development of a more social classroom atmosphere that allows students to feel more comfortable and increase their willingness to talk more with their peers. These findings are also in line with those of Hammer (2007) who says that student- centered structure increases students’ talk time and all members of the class add to the interaction according to the limits of their language proficiencies. They also support those of Scrivener (2005) who observes that student- student interaction maximizes language learning and acquisition among the learners.

In the study the teachers' interview revealed that most of the teachers preferred teacher – learner interaction pattern. They said this form of interaction saves much time as the teacher dictates the pace of the lesson and can also focus on particular linguistic aspects and improve on them. They also reported that this form of interaction provided them with an opportunity to offer in depth teaching of English language as it saves much time as interruptions from the learners are controlled by the teacher. These findings support those of Al- Zahrani and Al-Bargi (2017) who observed that teacher-learner interaction is usually controlled by the teacher who is a dominant figure in the classroom. The students' role is limited to providing answers and receiving commands. In this case, the teacher is the sender and the students are the receivers of information. They reported that the primary function of this form of interaction is to practice language in a controlled pattern. This form of interaction falls into traditional form of teaching.

Traditional teaching comes in many varieties, but is often characterized by emphasizes on 'chalk and talk'- in other words, the teacher spends quite a lot of class time using the board and explaining things- with occasional questions to or from the learners. After these explanations, the students will often do some practice exercise to test whether to have understood what they have been told. Throughout the lesson, the teacher keeps control of the subject matter, makes decisions about what is needed and orchestrates what the students do. In this classroom, the teacher probably does most of the talking and is by far the most active person. The students' role is primarily to listen and concentrate and perhaps, take notes with a view to taking in the information. Often the teacher takes as if by right (usually, but not always, benignly) permission to direct, give orders, tell off, rebuke, criticize and many more possibly with limited or no consultation, (Scrivener, 2005).

From the study results the learners' questionnaire revealed that the oral activities that promote classroom interaction that learners engaged in included: class discussions, oral questions and answers, oral narratives and stories. Learners reported that oral narratives and stories helped them to interact in class because when they present their stories in class others listen. After the presentations they engaged each other in discussions, asking and answering questions. Other activities they reported that promoted classroom interaction included use of drama, debates, speeches, oral talk, public speaking, dialogue, discussion of plays and novels. These findings are in tandem with those of Choudhury (2005) who observes other strategies, besides questioning, that promoted oral communication in a language class are pair work and group work that obviously give rise to interaction. Encouraging students to develop their own strategies is an excellent means of stimulating the learner to develop tools of interaction. This was also noted during classroom observation during learner-learner interaction pattern when learners posed questions in class and their colleagues answered them. It was also seen during classroom discussion when learners discussed among themselves. This form of interaction was seen as the most rewarding form of classroom interaction as the learners were seen to enjoy this form of interaction. They participated fully without any fear of making mistakes or the teacher correcting them.

The teachers reported that they used various activities to promote classroom interaction at different levels in English language classrooms. These activities they reported included group discussion, drama, debates, question and answer, news reading, role play, reading aloud and classroom presentations. These findings support those of Shteiwi and Hamuda (2016) who noted that students need to be given enough time to express themselves, discuss, debate, or argue with others in the classroom; this increases their ability of speaking skills. On the contrary, these findings contradict



those of Muriugi and Kibui (2015) who established that most of the teachers rewarded performers only as opposed to getting a way of motivating the whole class.

From the study results the learner questionnaire revealed that most of the learners 168 (86.2 %) reported that their teachers did most of the talk during English language lessons. This is collaborated by the classroom observation whereby the teachers were seen to initiate classroom conversation or talk. This started from the time they entered the classes. They began by greeting the learners and in turn the learners responded to the teacher's greetings. These findings support those of Dagarin (2004) who observed that in most cases the teacher's role in teacher- learner interaction is transmitting knowledge to students because most of the patterns are in form of modeling and drilling. The teacher initiates and ends the interaction and also chooses the topic.

#### **4.12.4 Language Registers in English Language Classes and how they influence Classroom Instruction**

From the study results the learner questionnaire established that more than half of the learners 117 (60.0%) reported that in their English language classes they sometimes used informal English. Similarly, during the teachers' interview the teachers reported that their learners sometimes used non- official forms of English during English language lessons. Conversely, this was also noted during the classroom observation. It was observed that learners used informal English during group discussion, dramatization and literature lessons; especially during the discussion of text books where the writers have used informal English as a style. These findings add to those of Ouma (2014) who points out learners in primary school code- mixed English and mother tongue words. She observed that the learners did this because of various reasons that include the need to fill a lexical gap; she found out that whenever the

learners were involved in an informal engagement whereby the teachers were not with them to instill the use of the target language (TL) almost every learner inserted a Dholuo word whenever they missed an English equivalent. This she reports was seen as a way of keeping expression flowing and making communication easy to avoid breakdown due to lack of a word that they are not able to comprehend quickly.

The learners' questionnaire further revealed that the learners used informal English during classroom interaction during debates especially when they could not retrieve the correct form of the formal English words they resorted to Sheng. Other learners reported that when they did not understand a point their colleague was making they tend to ask in colloquial English. They also reported that they used informal English during class discussions, when presenting a narrative in class and finally when they want to arouse the attention of their colleagues. The students used these informal forms of English as a learning strategy as Morreale et al., (2000) observe that in the learning of English as a second language, oral communication strategies employed by the learners during classroom interaction play a critical role in the development of learners' communicative competence in the target language.

In relation to the use of non-official English by the teachers, the teachers' interview revealed that all the teachers reported that they sometimes used non official forms of English language during classroom interaction. They explained that they used these non- official forms of English when they found out that their learners have not understood what they were teaching them especially during poetry and drama lessons. These findings support those of Biswati (2015) who noted that in the teaching of English; the teachers were interested in speaking other languages with their students. Other reasons cited by the teachers as to why they used these forms of English

included: breaking monotony in class, to draw the learners' attention. They said, this is because if you deviate from official English the learners pay much attention because they are attracted by the speaker's way of communication.

Other teachers reported that they used non-official English to crack jokes with their learners hence make their lessons lively and enjoyable. Others said they did this in order to bring themselves to the level of learners and this situation motivated the learners to use non-official forms of English because some of the literary texts they teach in class uses some of these forms of English. This, they need to explain to the learners as a style that writers adopt in their work. Examples of such texts include *Betrayal in the City* by Francis Imbuga and *The River and the Source* by Margaret Ogola. Teacher 10 quoted an instance in *The River and the Source* where the writer has used non official forms of English, "*Sometimes she remembered how it had been and this was painful for now she, a migogo, was reduced to living with her brother p.94.*" Another teacher also quoted "*father, even if I go away, you can trust me to come back. I would like to see the joroche, the white people and their magic.*" (p. 51). These findings support those of Momanyi (2009) who observes that Kiswahili as well as English has been hit by a wave of Sheng speakers who are mostly pre-adolescents and young adults. She says that the youths developed this kind of secret code which they wanted to identify themselves with and a variety of the subculture. She further observes that the term 'Sheng' was originally coined as a result of emerging mixture of Swahili and English words but as time went by the code no longer was situated in these two languages. It is now a blend of these two languages and other ethnic Kenyan languages.

On the reasons why the learners use informal forms of English in class, the student questionnaire revealed that most of the learners use language in such a manner because some words are hard to translate from mother tongue to English as such they prefer using slang. Other learners reported that their use of informal English fosters their understanding as this is the kind of English they often use in and outside class, when they are communicating among themselves. These findings add to those of Barasa (2005) who observes that what vernacular does to English in rural schools, Sheng does to urban schools. He further asserts that this is significant because it reflects changing values in society. Others said that using language in such a manner makes learning fun and interesting.

Other learners reported that some words in English are cumbersome to pronounce and hence they resort to the use of slang instead of using words that are rather difficult and awkward to pronounce in formal English. Others reported that they use English in this manner because of their limited vocabulary of the target language (English). These findings mirror those of Muriungi and Kibui (2015) who studied the influence of motivation on acquisition of English language skills among day secondary school students in Kenya observes that teachers reported that majority of their students make pronunciation errors while reading aloud or when participating in class discussions. It is only a minority of the learners about (12.5 %) who do not often make these errors. They also established that while the teachers endeavored to correct the mistakes instantly and use them as an opportunity to teach oral skills most of the students (75%) treat it as indifference as well as making fun of it. This can result in serious setbacks like anxiety to the affected learner.

The above results is also reflected by the findings from the teachers' interview which revealed that most of the teachers reported that their learners used non-official forms of English in order to facilitate or ease communication in class. This they reported is because most of the time some of the learners cannot express themselves well in official English as such they prefer slang (Sheng). These findings are consistent with those of Shteiwi and Hamuda (2016) who found out that most students lack essential vocabulary and this situation leads to their inability to express themselves in English language. They also noted that most students cannot retrieve suitable vocabulary rapidly. When they speak they cannot use some grammatical categories such as complex sentences.

Other teachers reported that their learners use these forms of English because these forms of language are widely used in their environment. Mukhwana (2015) observes Youthful respondents aged 35 years and below argue that as Sheng is used by everyone in the Kenyan society; the stigma once attached to the language has long since been removed. Other teachers reported that learners used these forms of English in order to create humour in class. Others said that some students pick these forms of English from literary books they read where writers have used non-official forms of English to pass across their themes. Other teachers reported that their learners did this because they carry out direct translation from Kiswahili to English. For example, expressions like *'me I want to tell you...'* this occurs because of direct translation from English to Kiswahili.

In the study the students questionnaire revealed that majority of the learners 135 (69.2%) reported that they sometimes used other languages during English language lessons. They reported that they mostly used Kiswahili and Sheng and in rare

occasions they used mother tongue. They reported that they used these other languages during debates, class and group discussions, oral literature lessons, class presentations, asking and answering questions, dramatization and when explaining difficult concepts to their colleagues in class. These findings are in line with those of Cervantes and Rodrigues (2012) who established that in Mexico learners in the English language classes mostly employed language switch from English to Spanish, followed by confirmation request, comprehension check, asking for confirmation, translation, repetition, paraphrase, code- based confirmation check, reformation, meaning replacement, and finally mime.

In the study results most of the learners reported that they used other languages in order to make their colleagues understand what they are explaining or discussing with much ease. Others reported that it is fun to use those languages. Others reported that they used these languages for emphasize and clarification of certain points in class. Similarly, others reported that they used these languages to make learning lively. Others said that they used these languages when they encounter difficulties while speaking English; thus they used other languages in order to continue communicating in class.

During the classroom observation it was noted that most of the learners code switched and code mixed English and Kiswahili words during their oral interaction. These findings support those of Onchera (2013) who observed that mother tongue interference was a crucial factor hindering the teaching of oral skills alongside learner's shyness. Most of the learners in secondary school in Kenya spoke mother tongue and this highly impacted on their performance in spoken English. Similarly these findings support those of Gathumbi et al., (2014) who reported that among the

reasons for the learner's inability to learn English is the introduction of vernacular radio stations in various local languages. These reduce the learners' exposure to English language. They reported that learners preferred listening to such radio stations and not those which broadcast in English as they understand and enjoy listening to local programmes than when they listen to broadcasts in English language.

#### **4.12.5 Oral Communication Challenges Experiences during Class Interaction**

The learners' questionnaire revealed that majority of the learners 153 (78.5%) reported that they sometimes experienced oral communication challenges in their English language classes. They reported that they experienced these challenges because they did not understand some of the English words and phrases their teachers used in class. This situation occurred because of the learner's limited vocabulary of the target language. These findings add to those of Muter et al. (2004) who point out that word recognition senses critically depend on phonological processes (particularly phonemic sensitivity, and letter knowledge) while reading comprehension is dependent on higher-level language skills (vocabulary knowledge and grammatical skills). They also reported that some teachers used complicated English.

Similarly, other learners reported that they experienced challenges pronouncing certain English words as such they feared their peers laughing at them. In such circumstances they experienced communication breakdown as they either skipped reading a text loudly or abandoned speaking and they just kept quiet or they sometimes code switched to Kiswahili, Sheng or mother tongue. Muriungi and Kibui (2015) observe that teachers reported that majority of their students make pronunciation errors while reading aloud or when participating in class discussions.

Other learners reported that the English language has a variety of words in which some of them they have never encountered before. The teachers' interview corroborates this. Most of the teachers interviewed reported that the most common problem their learners faced in class is difficulty in pronouncing some English words. The teachers reported that when the learners encountered such words that they could not pronounce they either skipped or abandoned them completely. These findings support those of Gathumbi et al. (2014) who established that in Kenyan secondary schools learners are faced with the inability to read fluently and comprehend passages, pronunciation and speaking challenges among others.

The learners' questionnaire revealed that the learners experienced oral communication challenges because they did not read widely and therefore their vocabulary repertoire is limited. Brown, (2001) says that as learners interact with each other through oral and written discourse, their communicative abilities are enhanced. Hall (1993) and also Pica (1994) point out that interaction also creates the opportunity for the learners to negotiate to have increased chances for comprehension of the target language and to acquire target discourse conventions and practice higher level academic communicative skills.

Other learners reported that they do not practice speaking in English in and outside class. Others said that they lack self-confidence. They reported that they experienced these challenges because of the influence of other languages that is mother tongue Kiswahili and Sheng. Kisaka (2015) points out learners in both primary and secondary school reported that the major cultural practice that influences mastery of English language was the frequent use of Kiswahili and mother tongue for communicating at home. Others reported that they are not articulate in spoken English



and hence they are shy to speak in English. These findings are consistent with those of Adaba (2017) who found out that the speaking problems most students face in oral expression according to the teachers' explanations include: large class sizes, shyness, anxiety and stress, low proficiency of the learners in the English language. Finally, methodology; majority of the teachers had limited experiences about CLT and they had used traditional type or teacher- centered English teaching methodologies.

Other challenges affecting classroom interaction include fear of making mistakes, nothing to say, limited vocabulary knowledge, learners' low proficiency in English language, failure of the learners to use the target language outside the class, low participation, mother tongue use, lack of background knowledge, lack of/or low confidence, lack of enough time, lack of appropriate activities in learners' text, different learner's learning styles and finally textbooks lacking certain oral communicative activities. These add to the findings of Ur (1995) who points out that the problems observed in English language classrooms include inhibition- fear of making mistakes, losing face, criticism; shyness; nothing to say – learners have problems with finding motives to speak, formulating opinions or relevant comments; low or uneven participation-often caused by the tendency of some learners to dominate in the group; mother tongue use- particularly common in less disciplined or less motivated classes, learners find it easy or more natural to express themselves in their native languages.

During the teachers' interview the teachers reported that the cause of these oral communication challenges are varied for example most of the teachers reported that most of their learners have limited vocabulary because of poor reading culture as most of the learners did not read extensively. These findings are in line with those of

Aleksandrak (2011) who asserts that every learner enters any learning and communicative environment with his/her entire personality additionally shaped by their prior learning and communicative experiences both positive and negative.

Other reasons given by the teachers as what they thought were the cause of these oral communication challenges. Most of the teachers mentioned learner background; some teachers reported that learners who come from urban areas tend to speak out in class as opposed to those from rural areas. Others reported that some of their learners have negative attitude towards English language as a subject. Others do not practice speaking English in and outside class. These findings are consistent with those of Gathumbi et al. (2014) who established that one of the reasons why learners find it difficult learning English is because of their attitude to English. They found out that many learners have negative attitude towards learning English as they believe it is difficult to master. They reported this affect their ability to listen, speak, read or write. They said that, it is incumbent upon the teachers to use interesting teaching techniques that would help learners to develop the requisite skills to function effectively in English.

The teachers' interview further revealed that other causes of oral communication challenges during classroom interaction are learner's personality; teachers reported that learners who are extroverts like dominating class discussions in class as such they participated more often than the introverts; this contributes to uneven participation in English language classes. These findings are consistent with those of Onchera (2013) who observes that teachers reported that several factors hindered the teaching of oral communication skills and learner participation during lessons. He said that majority of teachers cited learners' shy disposition as a major hindrance in the teaching of oral

skills. Teachers said that most of the learners preferred to remain quiet allowing only the articulate ones to dominate. They reported this happened to most learners who when selected by the teacher know the correct answer to the question asked, but chose to keep quiet pretending not to know. This is corroborated by the findings of the classroom observation where it was observed that some of the teachers dominated classroom talks. This was evident mostly in those situations where the learners could not open up during class interaction.

It was also observed when a teacher is introducing a new concept or a new topic which is not familiar to the learners. Some of the teachers were also seen to select some specific learners many times to participate in lessons. Teachers were seen to only choose those learners who carried up their hands; this situation therefore created uneven participation among the learners in class. These findings support those of Scrivener (2005) who observes:

The language classroom is rich for language for learners, quite apart from the language that learners and teacher may suppose they are focusing on in the subject matter of the lesson. Students learn a lot of their language from what they hear the teacher say: the instructions, the discussions, the asides jokes, the chit-chat, the comments etc. It would be unsatisfactory if the teacher's talk dominated the lesson to the exclusion from as many learners as possible (p. 84).

#### **4.12.6 Discussion Based on the Theoretical Framework**

The study was based on the interaction hypothesis stemming from the work of Long (1983) which offers an explanation how ESL learners can best succeed at learning a target language. SL development can be facilitated through interaction between non-native speakers and native speakers or non-native speakers of a higher level by creating a naturalistic SL acquisition environment, therefore providing awareness of L2 gaps through negotiation of meaning.

From the study results it was established that the teachers of English in secondary school classes employed various oral communication strategies during classroom instruction. These strategies included *repetition, rephrasing of sentences, paraphrasing, checking of understanding, and corrective feedback* among others. These oral communication strategies employed by the teachers facilitated language learning and acquisition among the learners. Most of the teachers employed these oral communication strategies during classroom interaction. The teachers engaged the learners using the above strategies.

It was also noted in the study results that when the learners made mistakes in class most of the time their teachers interrupted them and made corrections. It was also noted during the classroom observation that the teachers offered corrective feedback whenever their learners made mistakes. Similarly, majority of teachers interviewed reported that their learners often sought for clarification from either their colleagues or their teacher, followed by repetition. They reported that their students sought for clarification especially when they did not understand what they were being instructed or what their colleagues were passing across. It was also found out that learners sought for help from their teachers and their colleagues whenever they encountered communication challenges.

From the study results it was established that the teachers' use of oral communication strategies helped the learners to acquire the correct forms of English language. In this study the teachers played the role of Native Speakers (NS). They were observed restating their information using synonyms. They also modified their utterances through the use of recasts and comprehension checks. On the other hand, the learners played the role of a Non Native Speakers (NNS). Similarly, the learners' use of fillers

such as *hmm*, *hee*, *yah* among others is consistent with the findings of Long (1983) who established that L2 speakers use such strategies to provide ‘back channel’ cues which indicate to the native speaker that communication is proceeding and comprehension has been achieved. In this study the learners employed the use of fillers to indicate to their teachers that comprehension has occurred.

It can therefore be concluded that the interaction hypothesis was relevant in this study the influence of oral communication styles in the instruction of English language in secondary school classes, in that, it helped to explain how learners and teachers communicate orally in English language classes. In addition it sheds light on how teachers and learners negotiate meaning in English language classes. It also showed how these oral communication strategies aided in language learning and acquisition among the learners.

#### **4.13 Chapter Summary**

In this chapter, the results of the study presented were obtained using the teachers’ interview guide, classroom observation schedule and student questionnaire. Data analysis was done both qualitatively and quantitatively. After the analysis the data was presented and discussed in line with the research objectives. Results from the teachers’ interview guide revealed that the teachers of English language in secondary school classes employed various oral communication strategies during classroom interaction. These strategies include repetition, rephrasing of sentences, paraphrasing, checking of understanding, and corrective feedback among others.

It was also established that the learners in secondary school employed various oral communication strategies during classroom interaction. These strategies included: use of non-linguistic forms of communication, attempting to think in English strategies

and fluency oriented strategies among others. These oral communication strategies employed by both the teachers and learners in English language classes aid in comprehension and language acquisition among the learners in secondary school classes. In the study it was also established that three interaction patterns occurred in English language classes. These are: teacher-learner, learners- teacher and learner – learners. It was also established that learners in secondary school sometimes used non- official forms of English during English language classes.

Finally, it was established that the learners in English language classes experienced oral communication challenges during the instruction of English language. It was therefore concluded that the interactional hypothesis by Michael Long was relevant to this study in that it sheds light on how teachers and learners interact and construct meaning orally in English language classes. The next chapter presents the summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND

### RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the summary of the findings of the study, conclusions and recommendations. This was done in reference to the research objectives and variables. Conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research were then made.

#### 5.2 Summary of Findings

The summary of the findings is organized based on the objectives of the study as follows:

The first objective of the study was **to examine the teachers' oral communication strategies during the instruction of English language and how they influence the instruction of English language in secondary school**. The teachers' interview guide revealed that the teachers of English language in secondary school classes employed various oral communication strategies during classroom interaction. These strategies included repetition, rephrasing of sentences, paraphrasing, checking of understanding, corrective feedback, use of simple sentences and the use of oral questions to elicit responses from the learners among others. In the study most of the learners reported that their teachers interrupted them and made corrections whenever they made mistakes during English lessons. During the class observation it was also established that teachers offered corrective feedback whenever their learners made mistakes or committed linguistic errors during lessons.

It was also observed that teachers provided an opportunity for the learners to participate and speak in class. The teachers achieved this through the use of high interest learner activities such as group work, oral questions, drama and debates. These forms of interaction between the teachers and the learners provided the students with an opportunity to produce language output comfortably in natural and authentic contexts. It can thus be observed that the aim of teachers' oral communication strategies is to facilitate the learning of English language among secondary school learners.

The second objective of the study was **to assess the learners' oral communication strategies and how they influence the learning of English language in secondary school**. In the study most of the teachers reported that their students employed non-linguistic forms of oral communication during classroom interaction. These non-linguistic forms of communication included the use of facial expressions, gestures, nodding of the head to confirm understanding of concepts among others. Teachers also reported that their students used fillers such as *hmm, hee, yah* and many others during their oral interaction. They reported that their learners used these fillers in order to gain time when they lack points or the correct words to use during oral interaction.

During the class observation learners were seen to carry up their hands whenever they wanted to ask or answer questions in class. The use of these non-verbal strategies aided in language learning and acquisition. The learners' questionnaire revealed that most of the learners in secondary school employed the use of non-verbal strategies while speaking. Most of the learners reported that they try to make eye contact when talking; they also used gestures and facial expressions when they could



not express themselves well. It can thus be noted that the learners used non- verbal strategies to fill communication gaps during oral interaction in English language classes.

Other oral communication strategies that the learners employed during classroom interaction included attempting to think in English language strategies. For example, many learners were found to attempt to think in their native languages and then construct the English sentence. They also employed fluency oriented strategies. For example, most of the learners reported that they modified their way of saying things according to context. Most of the learners also employed negotiation for meaning while speaking strategies. For example, many of the learners reported that they paid attention to the listener's reaction to their speech.

In addition to the above strategies the learners employed fluency maintaining strategies. for example, the use of circumlocution, when they do not understand the intentions of their speakers. They also employed social affective strategies. For example, most learners reported that they try to give a good impression to their listeners. Other oral communication strategies that the learners were found to use are accuracy maintaining strategies, less listener communication strategies, word oriented strategies and finally scanning strategies. In the contrary, the learners did not employ message reduction and alteration strategies, message abandonment strategies and finally getting the gist strategies.

The third objective of the study was **to evaluate the different oral interaction patterns in English language classes and how they influence the instruction of English language.** From the study it was established that three interaction patterns occurred in English language classes. These are: teacher-learners, learners-teachers

and learner- learners. It was established that the most dominant interaction pattern in English language classes was teacher – learner interaction pattern. It was found out that most of the time in class the teachers mostly used question- answer method to elicit oral communication from the learners. This followed the teacher –learner interaction pattern.

The second most common observed interaction pattern in English language classes was learner- teacher interaction pattern. This manifested itself in the form of learners answering and asking questions in class. It was also noted that learners sought for clarifications from their teachers. This was observed when a teacher explained a concept and a learner does not understand what the teacher is explaining. The learners sought for clarification from him/her. Finally, the third most observed interaction pattern in English language classes was learner – learner interaction pattern. This was noted when the students posed questions in class and their colleagues answered them.

It was noted that learners in English language classes preferred learner- learner interaction. Teachers reported that learners preferred this kind of interaction because in this form of classroom interaction the learners are free with each other such that they can have the opportunity to ask each other questions without the fear of making mistakes. They also reported that this form of interaction makes the learners feel that the learning is about them and not about the teachers. This form of interaction they said motivates the learners to speak out. The role of the teacher in this form of interaction is that of a facilitator.

In the study, it was also noted that the teachers in English language classes preferred teacher- learner interaction pattern. The teachers reported that they preferred this form of interaction because it saves time during the delivery of lesson content as the

teacher is the one who dictates the pace of the lesson and they can also focus on particular linguistic aspects and improve on them. They also reported that this form of interaction provided them with an opportunity to offer in depth teaching of the English language as it saves much time as interruptions from the learners are controlled by the teacher.

From the study results it was established that the oral activities that promote classroom interaction that most of the learners engaged in included class discussions, oral questions and answers, oral narratives and stories, drama, speeches, public speaking, dialogue, news reading, role play and class presentations among others.

The fourth objective of the study was **to establish the language registers used by teachers and learners in English language classes and how they influence the instruction of English language.** From the study results it was established that learners in secondary school classes sometimes used non- official forms of English during English language lessons. It was established that learners used these forms of English during debates, class discussions, when presenting narratives in class and finally when they want to capture the attention of their colleagues.

It was also observed that learners used these informal forms of English because some words are difficult to translate from mother tongue or Kiswahili to English as such they preferred using slang. Others reported that their use of informal English fosters understanding as this is the kind of English they often use in and outside class when they are interacting. Others reported that using language in such a manner makes learning fun and interesting.

Similarly, other learners reported that some English words are cumbersome to pronounce and hence they resort to the use of slang instead of using words that are rather difficult and awkward to pronounce in formal English. Others reported that they used English in this manner because of their limited vocabulary of the target language (English). It was also established that learners used these forms of English in order to create humour in class. Other learners reported that they pick these forms of English from literary books they read in class where the writers have used non-official forms of English to pass across their themes.

In the study all the teachers reported that they sometimes used non-official forms of English language during classroom interaction. They explained that they used these non-official forms of English during classroom interaction when they find out that their students have not understood what they are teaching especially during poetry and drama lessons. The teachers also reported that they used these non-official forms of English in order to break monotony in class and to draw learners' attention. They said this is because if they deviate from official English their learners pay attention because they are attracted by the way they are communicating. Other teachers said that they use non-official forms of English to crack jokes with their learners in class. This situation makes their lessons lively and enjoyable. Other teachers reported that they do this in order to bring themselves to the level of the learners and these situations motivate the learners to use these forms of non-official English in class.

Finally, teachers reported that they used these forms of English because some of the literary texts they teach in class use these forms of English in a limited way. This they need to explain to the learners that writers use these forms of English as a style. Such

texts include *Betrayal in the City* by Francis Imbuga and *The River and the Source* by Margaret Ogola.

In the study it was also established that learners sometimes used other languages during English lessons. The learners mostly used Kiswahili and Sheng and in rare occasions they used mother tongue. These other languages were found to serve the same functions as non-official forms of English discussed in the previous paragraphs.

The last objective of the study was **to find out the oral communication challenges experienced during the instruction of English language**. From the study results the learners' questionnaire revealed that majority of the learners experienced oral communication challenges in their English language classes. They reported that they experienced these challenges because they do not understand some of the English words and phrases their teachers use in English language classes. Others reported that they experienced challenges pronouncing certain English words as such they fear their peers laughing at them. In such circumstances they experience communication breakdowns and they either skip reading a text loudly or abandon speaking and they just keep quiet or they sometimes code switch to Kiswahili, Sheng or mother tongue.

The learners' questionnaire revealed that the learners experienced oral communication challenges because they do not read widely and therefore their vocabulary repertoire is limited. Others reported that they do not practice speaking English in and outside class. Other learners reported that they experience these challenges because they lack self-confidence. Other learners reported they experienced these challenges because of the influence of other languages that is mother tongue, Kiswahili and Sheng. Finally, others reported that they experience these challenges because they are not articulate in spoken English and hence they are shy to participate in class activities.

In the study the teachers reported that the cause of these oral communication challenges included learner's limited vocabulary because of poor reading culture as most of the learners do not read extensively. They also reported that other causes of these oral communication challenges included learner background; some teachers reported that learners who come from urban areas tend to speak out in class as opposed to those from rural areas as the former have been exposed to television, newspapers and the internet. Teachers also reported that some of the learners have negative attitude towards English as a subject.

In addition, some learners do not practice speaking English in and outside class. Teachers also reported that other causes of oral communication challenges included learner's personality. They reported that extroverted learners like dominating other learners in class, this contributes to uneven participation among the learners. Other oral communication challenges were attributed to the teachers. Some teachers were seen to dominate the class in their discourse. Others were also seen to select particular learners more often in class. This situation therefore created uneven participation among the learners.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

From the study, conclusions were drawn from the findings and presented in line with the study objectives. It was established that teachers of English language in secondary school classes employed various oral communication strategies during classroom instruction. These strategies included repetition, rephrasing of sentences, paraphrasing, checking of understanding, corrective feedback and use of simple sentences among others. These oral communication strategies employed by the teachers made learning interesting, simplified the content, aroused learner's interest

and prompted the learners to engage with the teachers. It was also established that teachers used oral questions to elicit responses from the learners. Finally, teachers provided opportunities for their learners to participate and speak in class.

Learners in secondary school employed various oral communication strategies during classroom interaction. These strategies included the use of non-linguistic means of communication; attempting to think in English strategies, fluency oriented strategies. In addition, the learners also employed negotiation for meaning while speaking strategies, fluency maintaining strategies, social affective strategies, accuracy maintaining strategies, less listener communication strategies, word oriented strategies and finally scanning strategies. These Learners' oral communication strategies aided language interaction. They therefore assisted the learners to build confidence during oral interaction. On the other hand, learners did not employ message reduction and alteration strategies, message abandonment strategies and finally getting the gist strategies during oral communication.

Three interaction patterns occurred in English language classes, these are: teacher-learners, learners-teachers and learner-learners. The interaction pattern which occurred most in the majority of the English language classes was teacher- learner interaction pattern; followed by the learner-learner interaction pattern and finally learner- learners interaction pattern. The learners in secondary school preferred learner – learner interaction pattern as this form of interaction allowed them to participate fully in class. The most rewarding interaction pattern in English language classes was learner – learner interaction pattern as it allowed the learners to participate fully in class.

The teachers as well as the learners used non-official forms of English during classroom interaction. The use of these non-official forms of English in English language classes facilitated language learning and acquisition among the learners as it minimized communication breakdown during oral interaction. Learners in English language classes sometimes used other languages during English language classes. They mostly used Kiswahili, Sheng and in rare occasions mother tongue.

The challenges that learners experienced in English language classes included: inability to understand some of the English words and phrases that their teachers used in class and difficulty in pronouncing certain English words. The learners experienced these challenges because they do not read widely and therefore their vocabulary repertoire is limited. In addition, they do not practice speaking English in and outside class and they also lacked confidence, influence of other languages. Finally, lack of being articulate in spoken English and hence they are shy to speak English in front of other learners.

#### **5.4 The Thesis of the Study**

Oral communication is important in language learning. It is the foundation of language learning. It is even more critical in contexts where English is learnt as a second language such as Kenya. This is because people who have mastery of oral language control the vocabulary and grammar of that language and can better negotiate meaning, hence competency in reading and writing. Oral language is therefore critical when learning English language.

#### **5.5 Recommendations**

Teachers should use high interest student activities such as group work, oral questions, drama and debates in order to create an opportunity for their learners to



participate and speak in class in order to enhance language learning and acquisition. Teachers should not always correct learners whenever they make mistakes in class, instead they should allow them to self- correct themselves. Teachers should use learner centred activities during classroom interaction in order to promote learner – learner interaction in English language classes. These learner centred activities include pair work, group discussion, peer teaching, drama, debates and class presentations. Teachers should expose learners to a lot of authentic reading materials. This will expose them to the use of English language in different contexts. This will also aid in increasing their repertoire of English vocabulary and sentence structures. Finally, teachers should use varied authentic communicative contexts during classroom instruction to provide near native speaker competence.

Authors and publishers of English language text books should design text books with classroom activities that promote oral communication and interaction among the learners and the teachers, thus improving language learning. Such activities include debates, drama activities and role play among others.

The Ministry of Education (MOE) should provide enough facilities that will aid in the improvement of oral communication in English language and hence language learning and acquisition. Such facilities include provision of spacious classrooms, enough text books for English language and reading materials such as newspapers and magazines.

### **5.5 Suggestions for Further Research**

In the study a number of issues have been raised that require further investigation:

- 1) Teacher cognition and the choice of oral communication strategies in English language classes in Kenya.

- 2) The interplay between oral communication strategies and communicative competence among secondary school learners in Kenya.

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## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1: LESSON OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

Item	Comments on how this happens during the lesson.
<b>1) Teachers' Oral Communication Strategies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Creates opportunities for students to speak</li> <li>b. Repetition</li> <li>c. Paraphrasing</li> <li>d. Makes frequent use of comprehension checks that require the students to demonstrate their understanding</li> <li>e. Uses non- verbal communication, realia and technology to communicate meaning</li> <li>f. Structures and facilitates high –interest student centered activities</li> <li>g. Provides all students with the opportunity to participate and speak</li> </ul>	
<b>2) Learners' Oral Communication Strategies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Message abandonment</li> <li>b. Topic avoidance</li> <li>c. Circumlocution</li> <li>d. Approximation (Generalization)</li> <li>e. Use of context</li> <li>f. Word coinage</li> <li>g. Use of non- linguistic means</li> <li>h. Direct translation from L1 to L2</li> <li>i. Code- switching</li> <li>j. Appeal for help from the interlocutor</li> <li>k. Use of fillers to gain time to think</li> </ul>	
<b>2) Teacher – Learner Interaction Patterns</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Teacher- Learner Interaction</li> <li>b. Learner- Teacher Interaction</li> <li>c. Learner- Learner interaction</li> <li>d. Turn taking</li> <li>e. Chorus answers</li> </ul>	
<b>4) Language Registers in English Language Classes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Use of informal language</li> <li>b. Use of basic English (simple language)</li> <li>c. Use of other languages</li> <li>d. Code- switching and code mixing</li> </ul>	
<b>5) Oral Communication Challenges During Classroom Interaction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Inhibition (students refusing to speak)</li> <li>b. Learners claim they have nothing to say</li> <li>c. Uneven participation by learners</li> <li>d. Teacher dominates the talk</li> </ul>	

## APPENDIX 2: TEACHERS' STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE

### 1. Teachers' Oral Communication Strategies

- a) The following are some of the oral communication strategies employed by teachers during English language lessons: repetition, rephrasing of sentences, paraphrasing, checking of understanding, corrective feedback, use of simple sentences, use of synonyms, code- switching and message abandonment. Which of these oral communication strategies do you employ in your English language classes?
- b) State these communication strategies in order of frequency of use.
- c) State some of the teaching areas/ topics you prefer using particular communication strategies.
- d) Why do you prefer using these communication strategies in your English language classes?
- e) Apart from the oral communication strategies mentioned above, what are some of the other oral communication strategies that you use in your English language classes?
- f) Do you think the use of oral communication strategies aids language instruction?  
 You  [ ]  
 No  [ ]  
 Explain your response in (f) above.
- g) During classroom instruction do you sometimes find out that your students do not understand what you are trying to pass across?  
 Yes  [ ]  
 No  [ ]
- h) Explain your response in (h) above.
- i) What informs/determines your choice of oral communication strategies during classroom instruction?

### 2. Learners' Oral Communication Strategies

- a) State some of the communication strategies used by your learners during classroom interaction.
- b) State these strategies in order of frequency of use.
- c) During classroom interaction do your students pay attention to grammar and word order during oral interaction?  
 Yes  [ ]  
 No  [ ]
- d) Explain your response in (c) above.
- e) If your learners encounter communication breakdowns during classroom interaction, what communication strategies do they adopt in order to continue communicating?
- f) What strategies do you suggest that students can adopt in order to improve oral interaction in English language classes?
- g) When your learners encounter a word they are not familiar with, what do they always do in order to continue communicating in class?
- h) Do your students code- switch during classroom interaction?

Yes [ ]

No [ ]

- i) If yes, what do you think makes them code switch?
- j) Which languages do they code switch between?
- k) Do your students code-mix English words with words from other languages?  
 Yes [ ]  
 No [ ]
- l) Which languages do they code mix with English words?
- m) What do you think makes your students to use language in this manner?
- n) If your learners encounter communication breakdown, what communication strategies do they adopt in order to continue communicating.

### 3. Oral Interaction Patterns in English Language Classes

- a) The following are some of the oral communication patterns used in your English language class: Teacher- learners, Learners- Teacher, Learners-Learners. Which of these interaction patterns occur in your English language classes?
- b) Which of these interaction patterns promote oral classroom interaction and why?
- c) State how each of the oral communication patterns either hinder or promote the teaching and learning of English language.
- d) Which of these interaction patterns do you prefer using?
- e) State the reasons why you prefer using those interaction patterns mentioned in (d) above.
- f) Which of these interaction patterns are preferred by your learners?
- g) Why do you think your learners prefer those interaction patterns?
- h) State some of the oral activities that can be used to promote classroom interaction at different levels in English language classrooms?
- i) According to you, what should teachers do in order to improve classroom interaction and hence English language acquisition/learning?

### 4. Language Registers used by Teachers and Learners in English Language Classes

- a) Do you sometimes use non-official forms of the English languages during classroom instruction?  
 Yes [ ]  
 No [ ]
- b) Explain your response in (a) above?
- c) What makes you use these non – official forms of the English languages during classroom instruction?
- d) Do your students sometimes use non-official forms of the English languages during English lessons?  
 Yes [ ]  
 No [ ]
- e) Explain your response in (d) above?
- f) What do you think makes your learners use these non- official forms of English languages in class?

- g) During classroom instruction do you sometimes find yourself using vocabulary which your students do not understand?  
Yes [  ]  
No [  ]
- h) Explain your response in (g) above.
- i) In such situations, what reaction do your students exhibit?
- j) During classroom instruction do some of your students use vocabulary which most of the other students do not understand?
- k) Explain your response in (j) above.
- l) In order to make the teaching of English meaningful and rewarding to the learners, how should the teachers of English language use the various registers of the English language?
- m) Do you think the use of non- official languages in English language classes aid the learners in learning English?
- n) What are some of the classroom activities that learners use the various forms of the English languages during classroom instruction?

### **5. Oral Communication Challenges in Classroom Interaction in the Instruction of English Language**

- a) What do you think is the cause of oral communication challenges during classroom interaction?
- b) State the oral communication challenges you encounter during classroom interaction.
- a) Suggest some of the ways you can use in order to minimize these communication challenges.
- b) What are the communication challenges encountered by your learners during classroom interaction?
- c) Suggest solutions to the challenges encountered by your learners during oral classroom interaction.

### APPENDIX 3: LEARNER QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear respondent,

Below are questions on oral communication styles used in the instruction of English language in secondary schools during classroom interaction. Please assist by filling in the questionnaire as honestly as possible. Put a tick or comment on the spaces provided. The information you provide shall be treated with confidentiality and it is purely for academic purposes. Do not write your name or that of your school anywhere on this questionnaire.

#### 1. Teachers' Oral Communication Strategies during the Instruction of English

a) When you make mistakes during oral interaction/speaking in the class, the teacher. (Tick against all your teacher does)

- i. Interrupts to make correction
- ii. Makes the correction later.
- iii. Asks other learners to correct you.
- iv. Does not correct me at all.

b) Do you always understand every point your teacher communicates orally in class?

c) Why is it sometimes difficult for you to understand every point your teacher of English communicates orally during classroom interaction?

d) When you do not understand a point your teacher has stated how does he/she make his /her point clearer?

e) When you make mistakes during oral communication, your teacher. (Tick against all your teacher does)

- i. Interrupts you to make corrections
- ii. Make the correction later
- iii. Ask other students to correct you
- iv. Do not correct you at all

d) When your teacher corrects your mistakes in class, does she/he? (Tick against all your teacher does).

- i. Tell you your mistakes
- ii. Reformulate what you said correctly

#### 2. Learners' Oral Communication Strategies

Use the key provided to rate the following communication strategies that you use in English language classrooms. Put a tick on the space provided.

**Key**

A- Agree

U- Undecided

SD- Strongly Disagree

SA- Strongly Agree

D- Disagree

**Strategies for Coping with Speaking Problems**

<b>Communication Strategies</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
1. I think first of what I want to say in my native language and then construct the English sentence.					
2. I think first of a sentence I already know in English and then try to change it to fit the situation.					
3. I use words which are familiar to me.					
4. I reduce the message and use simple expressions.					
5. I replace the original message with another message because of feeling incapable of executing my original intent.					
6. I abandon the execution of a verbal plan and just say some words when I don't know what to say.					
7. I pay attention to grammar and word order during conversation.					
8. I try to emphasize the subject and verb of the sentence.					
9. I change my way of saying things according to the context.					
10. I take my time to express what I want to say.					
11. I pay attention to my pronunciation.					
12. I try to speak clearly and loudly to make myself heard.					
13. I pay attention to my rhythm and intonation.					
14. I pay attention to the conversation flow.					
15. I try to make eye-contact when I am talking.					
16. I use gestures and facial expressions if I can't communicate how to express myself.					
17. I correct myself when I notice that I have made a mistake.					
18. I notice myself using an expression which fits a rule that I have learned.					
19. While speaking, I pay attention to the listener's reaction to my speech.					
20. I give examples if the listener doesn't understand what I am saying.					
21. I repeat what I want to say until the listener understands.					
22. I make comprehension checks (For example, Do you understand?) to ensure the listener understands what I want to say.					
23. I try to use fillers (For example, yah, mm etc) when I cannot think of what to say.					
24. I leave a message unfinished because of some language difficulty.					
25. I try to give a good impression to the listener.					
26. I don't mind taking risks even though I might make mistakes.					
27. I try to enjoy the conversation.					
28. I try to relax when I feel anxious.					

29. I actively encourage myself to express what I want to say.					
30. I try to talk like a native speaker.					
31. I ask other people to help when I can't communicate well.					
32. I give up when I can't make myself understood.					

### Strategies for Coping with Listening Problems

Communication Strategies	A	SA	U	D	SD
1. I pay attention to the first word to judge whether it is an interrogative sentence or not.					
2. I try to catch every word that the speaker uses.					
3. I guess the speaker's intention by picking up familiar words.					
4. I pay attention to the words which the speaker slows down or emphasizes.					
5. I pay attention to the first part of the sentence and guess the speaker's intention.					
6. I try to respond to the speaker even when I don't understand him/her perfectly.					
7. I guess the speaker's intention based on what he/she has said so far.					
8. I don't mind if I can't understand every single detail.					
9. I anticipate what the speaker is going to say based on the context.					
10. I ask the speaker to give an example when I am not sure what he/she said.					
11. I try to translate into mother tongue or Kiswahili little by little to understand what the speaker has said.					
12. I try to catch the speaker's main point.					
13. I pay attention to the speaker's rhythm and intonation.					
14. I send continuation signals (For example, okay, yah, mm, eeh..) to show my understanding in order to avoid communication gaps					
15. I use circumlocution (I request the speaker to describe the properties of the object or action) when I don't understand his/her intention well.					
16. I pay attention to the speaker's pronunciation.					
17. I use gestures when I have difficulties in understanding.					
18. I pay attention to the speaker's eye contact, facial expression and gestures.					
19. I ask the speaker to slow down when I can't understand what the speaker has said.					
20. I ask the speaker to use easy words when I have difficulties in comprehension.					
21. I make a clarification request when I am not sure what the speaker has said.					

22. I ask for repetition when I can't understand what the speaker has said.					
23. I make clear to the speaker what I haven't been able to understand.					
24. I only focus on familiar expressions.					
25. I especially pay attention to the interrogative when I listen to WH-questions.					
26. I pay attention to the subject and verb of the sentence when I listen.					

Adopted from Nakatani, (2006)

### 3) Oral Interaction Patterns in English Language Classes

- a) Who does most of the talk in your English language classes?
- i. The teacher [ ]
  - ii. The students [ ]
- b) How often does your teacher give you an opportunity to interact with him/her?
- i. always [ ]
  - ii. sometimes [ ]
  - iii. never [ ]
- c) Does your teacher always provide comprehensible input that is suitable to your language level?
- Yes [ ]
- No [ ]
- d) How often do you interact with your classmates during English lessons?
- i. Always [ ]
  - ii. Sometimes [ ]
  - iii. Never [ ]
- e) State some of the oral activities that you engage in during English lessons that promote interaction in class and hence language learning.
- 

- f) Which of the following interaction patterns take place in your English language class? (Tick against all your teacher does)

- i. Teacher - Learner [ ]
- ii. Learner - Teacher [ ]
- iii. Learner- Learner [ ]
- iv. All of the above [ ]

Explain how each of these interactions happens in your English language classroom.

---

- g) i) Which of these interaction patterns help you improve in how you listen, speak, read and write during the learning process?
-



ii) Comment on your answer in g (i) above.

---

h) Which of these interaction patterns do you prefer and why?

---

g) State some of the activities in English language classes that promote classroom interaction and hence language learning.

---

#### 4. Language Registers in English Language Classes

a) In your English language classes, do you sometimes use informal language? (For example, use of sheng or colloquial language, code mixing English words with words from other languages in the same sentence)

Yes

No

b) If yes, state these situations?

---

c) Why do you think you use language in this manner?

---

d) Do you sometimes use other languages during English lessons?

Yes

No

e) If yes, what languages are these?

---

f) During which classroom activities do you use these languages?

---

g) What makes you use these languages in class?

---

#### 5. Oral Communication Challenges during Classroom Interaction in the Instruction of English Language

a) Do you sometimes experience oral communication challenges in your English language classes?

Yes

No

b) If yes, why do you think you experience these challenges?

---

---

c) State the areas that you experience these challenges?

---

---

d) What do you suggest to be done in order to minimize these oral communication challenges?

---

---

**The End, Thank You.**

## APPENDIX 4: NAKATANI'S ORAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGY INVENTORY (OCSI)

Please read the following items, choose a response, and write it in the space after each item.

1. *Never or almost never true of me*
2. *Generally not true of me*
3. *Somewhat true of me*
4. *Generally true of me*
5. *Always or almost always true of me*

### *Strategies for Coping with Speaking Problems*

1. I think first of what I want to say in my native language and then construct the English sentence.
2. I think first of a sentence I already know in English and then try to change it to fit the situation.
3. I use words which are familiar to me.
4. I reduce the message and use simple expressions.
5. I replace the original message with another message because of feeling incapable of executing my original intent.
6. I abandon the execution of a verbal plan and just say some words when I don't know what to say.
7. I pay attention to grammar and word order during conversation.
8. I try to emphasize the subject and verb of the sentence.
9. I change my way of saying things according to the context.
10. I take my time to express what I want to say.
11. I pay attention to my pronunciation.
12. I try to speak clearly and loudly to make myself heard.
13. I pay attention to my rhythm and intonation.
14. I pay attention to the conversation flow.
15. I try to make eye-contact when I am talking.
16. I use gestures and facial expressions if I can't communicate how to express myself.
17. I correct myself when I notice that I have made a mistake.
18. I notice myself using an expression which fits a rule that I have learned.
19. While speaking, I pay attention to the listener's reaction to my speech.
20. I give examples if the listener doesn't understand what I am saying.
21. I repeat what I want to say until the listener understands.
22. I make comprehension checks to ensure the listener understands what I want to say.
23. I try to use fillers when I cannot think of what to say.
24. I leave a message unfinished because of some language difficulty.
25. I try to give a good impression to the listener.
26. I don't mind taking risks even though I might make mistakes.
27. I try to enjoy the conversation.
28. I try to relax when I feel anxious.
29. I actively encourage myself to express what I want to say.
30. I try to talk like a native speaker.
31. I ask other people to help when I can't communicate well.
32. I give up when I can't make myself understood.

***Strategies for Coping with Listening Problems***

1. I pay attention to the first word to judge whether it is an interrogative sentence or not.
2. I try to catch every word that the speaker uses.
3. I guess the speaker's intention by picking up familiar words.
4. I pay attention to the words which the speaker slows down or emphasizes.
5. I pay attention to the first part of the sentence and guess the speaker's intention.
6. I try to respond to the speaker even when I don't understand him/her perfectly.
7. I guess the speaker's intention based on what he/she has said so far.
8. I don't mind if I can't understand every single detail.
9. I anticipate what the speaker is going to say based on the context.
10. I ask the speaker to give an example when I am not sure what he/she said.
11. I try to translate into native language little by little to understand what the speaker has said.
12. I try to catch the speaker's main point.
13. I pay attention to the speaker's rhythm and intonation.
14. I send continuation signals to show my understanding in order to avoid communication gaps.
15. I use circumlocution to react the speaker's utterance when I don't understand his/her intention well.
16. I pay attention to the speaker's pronunciation.
17. I use gestures when I have difficulties in understanding.
18. I pay attention to the speaker's eye contact, facial expression and gestures.
19. I ask the speaker to slow down when I can't understand what the speaker has said.
20. I ask the speaker to use easy words when I have difficulties in comprehension.
21. I make a clarification request when I am not sure what the speaker has said.
22. I ask for repetition when I can't understand what the speaker has said.
23. I make clear to the speaker what I haven't been able to understand.
24. I only focus on familiar expressions.
25. I especially pay attention to the interrogative when I listen to WH-questions.
26. I pay attention to the subject and verb of the sentence when I listen.

**APPENDIX 5: CANDIDATES' OVERALL PERFORMANCE  
NATIONALLY IN ENGLISH (101) IN KCSE FROM 2014- 2017**

Year	Paper	Candidature	Maximum Score	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
2014	1	482,499	60	29.02 (48.37%)	8.80
	2		80	28.70 (35.88%)	11.26
	3		60	19.97 (33.28%)	6.30
	Overall		200	77.68 (38.84%)	24.28
2015	1	525621	60	29.37 (48.95%)	8.28
	2		80	31.86 (39.82%)	12.43
	3		60	19.35 (32.25%)	6.14
	Overall		200	80.58 (40.29%)	24.40
2016	1	571644	60	29.15 (48.58%)	8.15
	2		80	20.39 (25.49%)	10.86
	3		60	18.52 (30.86%)	5.23
	Overall		200	68.06 (40.29%)	22.03
2017	1	610084	60	25.89 (43.30%)	7.12
	2		80	28.24 (35.30%)	11.73
	3		60	19.42 (32.37%)	5.92
	Overall		200	73.55 (40.29%)	22.57

**Source: KNEC, 2018**

**APPENDIX 6: NACOSTI RESEARCH PERMIT**

**THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:**  
**MR. JOSEPH KOMENN KABELLOW**  
of MOI UNIVERSITY, 7707-30100  
Eldoret, has been permitted to conduct  
research in *Elgeyo-Marakwet County*

**Permit No : NACOSTI/P/17/30918/17573**  
**Date Of Issue : 28th June,2017**  
**Fee Recieved :ksh2000**

on the topic: ***INFLUENCE OF ORAL  
COMMUNICATION STYLES IN THE  
INSTRUCTION OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ELGEYO  
MARAKWET COUNTY, KENYA.***

for the period ending:  
*19th June,2018*



.....  
**Applicant's  
Signature**

.....  
**Director General**  
**National Commission for Science,  
Technology & Innovation**

**APPENDIX 7: MAP OF ELGEYO MARAKWET COUNTY**

