

**IMPLICATION OF PEDAGOGICAL STRATEGIES ON UPPER PRIMARY  
SCHOOL LEARNERS' COMPETENCIES IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE  
COMPOSITION WRITING IN BOMET COUNTY KENYA**

**BY**

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## DECLARATION

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to members of my nuclear family: Sophie, Caroline, Gilbert, Gloria, Kipngeno, Mercyline, Kibet, Kyle, Gianna, and Tarik; whose time I sacrificed at the altar of scholarship. May the Lord reward you richly for being patient with me for over five years.

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## ABSTRACT

The Kenya Certificate of Primary Education examination results over the years have consistently indicated varying competencies of primary school leavers in English composition writing. Most candidates perform poorly, suggesting that the expected learning outcomes of the Kenya primary school English language syllabus are not being fully achieved. Pedagogical strategy is a critical pillar in the development of learner competencies in writing skills. Yet, its implications on competencies of upper primary learners in composition writing have not been empirically investigated in Kenya. The purpose of this study was to investigate the implications of pedagogical strategies on upper primary learners' competencies in English composition writing. The research objectives were to: investigate the implications of teacher planning, establish the implications of instructional techniques used by teachers, examine the implications of utilisation of learning materials by teachers and determine the implications of assessment procedures on competencies in English language composition writing of upper primary learners in Bomet County in Kenya. The study was based on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) theory propounded by Hymes and Wilkins as conceptualised within the more recent concept of Competency-Based Language Teaching (CBLT) as elucidated by Richards and Rodgers. The study adopted the pragmatist philosophical paradigm and used explanatory sequential mixed design. Survey and case study methods were employed for quantitative and qualitative phases, respectively. Target population included all standard 5, 6 and 7 pupils and all upper primary teachers of English from 654 public schools. Stratified, simple random, convenient and purposive sampling techniques were used to select 617 teachers and 130 pupils from a sample size of 196 schools. Data was generated using questionnaires, document analysis, interviews, observations and Focused Group Discussions. Descriptive statistics was adopted to analyse quantitative data, followed by inferential statistics using Anova and Multiple linear regression at a significance level of 0.05. Qualitative data was analysed thematically then reported through exposition and direct participants' citations. Findings revealed that teacher planning ( $B = -.585, p < 0.05$ ) had the largest *Beta* contribution and was the strongest pedagogical strategy in explaining the outcome whose variance was at 31.9% from adjusted R-square. Instructional techniques ( $B = -.004, p > 0.05$ ), learning materials ( $B = -.004, p > 0.05$ ), and assessment ( $B = -.038, p > 0.05$ ) had no statistically significant influence in predicting learner outcomes. Qualitative data revealed that planning focused on developing writing mechanics, and teachers did not prepare lesson notes, with only one composition writing lesson allocated fortnightly while the expository technique was predominantly used. Documented materials were hardly utilised while assessment focused on error identification and limited to single-drafting. Based on the findings, it was concluded that each pedagogical strategy had unique implications on upper primary learners' competencies in English language composition writing (ELCW). It is recommended that teachers plan for more weekly composition lessons, promote learner participation in written communicative tasks, utilise authentic learning materials, and enhance assessment feedback on learner tasks in ELCW. The study contributes to research in English Language Teaching by highlighting implications of pedagogical strategies on learner competencies and raising the benefits of methodological triangulation in educational research.

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

BECF	Basic Education Curriculum Framework
CBC	Competency Based Curriculum
CBLT	Competency Based Language Teaching
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
CREDE	Centre for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence
CTPD	Continuous Teacher Professional Development
DV	Dependent variable
EL	English Language
ELCW	English Language Composition Writing
ELL	English Language Learning
ELT	English Language Teaching
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
IV	Independent variable
KCPE	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
KICD	Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development
KNEC	Kenya National Examinations Council
MOE	Ministry of Education
NESSP	National education Sector Strategic Plan (2018-2022)
POWER	Plan, Organise, Edit, Write and Revise
SCT	Social Constructivist Theory
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
TSC	Teachers Service Commission
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

## OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

The following terms were key in this study and shall keep recurring in the thesis. In this study, the terms were operationalized as defined below.

**Assessment:** Processes used by teachers to examine the level of learner academic performance, in this thesis, in English composition writing proficiency.

**Competency:** Learner ability to apply appropriate knowledge and skills to perform expected tasks successfully.

**Composition Writing:** A specific type of writing expected of learners at upper primary school level which involves developing a complete meaningful text (usually in prose form) on a particular topic within the experiential level of the learners.

**Instruction:** The purposeful guidance of the learning process in the classroom by the teachers of English.

**Instructional Techniques:** Classroom tactics and processes employed by teachers to help learners develop competencies in composition writing effectively. In this study, instructional techniques include exposition, task-based learning, questioning, drawing from experiences, collaboration, and other activities.

**Learning Materials:** Resources that teachers use to deliver instruction such as reference books, textbooks, and supplementary books.

**Pedagogical Strategies:** A set of related tasks that teachers employ to achieve expected learning outcomes in specific subjects at particular levels of learning. For the purpose of this study, pedagogical strategies include planning, instructional techniques, use of materials and assessment for English language composition writing.

**Pedagogy:** The Art of teaching together with the ideas, values, and beliefs by which that act is informed, sustainable, and justifiable. It informs both the curriculum and teaching in a service.

**Planning:** Teacher preparation of documentation and setting of appropriate conditions towards conducting English composition lessons.

**Teaching and learning activities:** A set of classroom events designed by teachers to enhance and activate a desired knowledge process. In this study, the activities include



drafting, revision, pair work, group work, class discussion, completing sentences, individual learner attention, and writing poems.

**Upper primary:** In this study, this refers to classes five, six, and seven. (Ordinarily, it is from Standard 4 to 8).

**Writing:** Production, in text form, of complete and meaningful expressions of thought. For the purpose of this study, writing includes the effective use of prewriting activities, note-taking, character development, sequencing, coherence, cohesion, use of sentence structures, spelling, punctuations, paragraphing, and handwriting.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

#### 1.1 Introduction

This study investigated the implications of pedagogical strategies on English language composition writing competencies of upper primary school learners in Bomet county in Kenya. Pedagogical strategies were defined in this study as a set of related tasks that teachers of English utilise in the teaching and learning process to help upper primary school pupils to achieve good learning (Ur, 2014) and attain desired competencies in English language. Pedagogical strategies considered in this study were limited to teacher planning, instructional techniques, use of learning materials, and assessment strategies applied in enhancing learners' writing skills. These are some of the strategies identified by several authors for curriculum implementation (Genlott & Gronlund, 2013; Syomwene, Nyandusi & Yungungu, 2017; Ong'ondo, 2017c; Otunga, Odero & Barasa, 2011). This study was mainly concerned with pedagogical strategies applicable to EL composition writing.

In Kenya, English language is a compulsory subject from Primary school. It is also a medium of instruction besides being one of the official languages in the country, the other being Kiswahili (KIE, 2002a). English language (hereafter, EL) is learned as a second language (L2) as most learners will have learned a first language by the time they go to Primary school – and certainly by the time they get to upper primary. In many cases also, the learners shall have known Kiswahili, which is a language of wider communication in the country.

The learners at Primary school level at the time this study was conducted were learning within the 8-4-4 education structure where the Primary and Secondary school levels took eight and four years, respectively, while those who proceeded to University level

studied for a minimum of four years. Upper primary in this context meant classes four to eight.

This chapter provides the context of the study, a statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, research question, research objectives, and research hypotheses. It also explains the justification, significance, scope, limitations, and assumptions of the study. The theoretical and conceptual framework and a summary are then given. The rest of the thesis is organised in four Chapters.

Chapter two entails a review of literature; it situates the study within the discipline of English Language Teaching (ELT), reviews pedagogical strategies, theories, and concepts related to the current study. The chapter also reviews related previous research nationally and internationally, providing a rationale for the study based on the review. Chapter Three, the research methodology section, encompasses the research paradigm, research design (approach), methods and sampling, which will cover the study area, target population, sample size, and sampling procedures. Furthermore, the chapter reports on data generation tools used, data analysis, trustworthiness and ethical issues that were considered during the study.

Chapter four entails data presentation, analysis, and interpretation. The chapter starts with brief highlights of the respondents and their demographic information, followed by sequential reporting of quantitative and qualitative findings according to the research objectives. The results of the multiple regression analysis and hypothesis testing are presented immediately after quantitative findings. Chapter five presents a discussion of key findings compared to theories reviewed and previous research. The chapter shall also draw conclusions, and in addition to expounding on the study, submit what it

contributes to the education field, then give recommendations, and propose suggestions for further study. In the next section, the context of the study is explained in detail.

## **1.2 Context of the Study**

This section presents the context of the study at three levels: academic, geographical context, and educational context. Each of these levels is elaborated below, beginning with the academic context.

### **1.2.1. Academic Context.**

Internationally, English language (EL) is accepted as a language of communication, which is also used in business, science, information technology, and entertainment (Crystal, 2010). Studies have shown that the use of English language skills is related to social and economic indicators (Mertens, 2014). In Kenya, English is an essential language that is used in all government documents and other organisational, personal, and official transactions (Ong'ondo, 2017b).

Currently, good knowledge of English remains among the essential requirements in many professions, especially writing skills (ibid). The ability to achieve communicative competence in writing is a major aspect of language development and academic success among students at all levels of the education system (Opoola & Fatiloro, 2014). In addition, as Ong'ondo (2017b) emphasises, "we require citizens who are competent communicators in English language as it will provide a medium of communication among the Kenyan linguistic communities and neighbouring counties... and the wider international communities" (p. 152). It explains why, in many countries, Kenya included, English has been adopted as an official language and is taught as a compulsory subject in schools.

Generally, English language as a subject of study takes the skills approach, especially at the basic education (school) level. The four skills typically taught include listening, reading, speaking, and writing. These skills are related to each other via two parameters: First as a mode of communication (which is either oral or written), and the second one as the direction of communication, which entails reception or production of the message (Aydogan & Akbarov, 2014). Listening is a receptive skill in the oral mode that connotes understanding what we hear, while speaking is a productive skill in the same oral mode. Both skills, as indicated by Aydogan and Akbarov, are intertwined and may not be isolated from the expressive aspects of oral communication since children develop the listening ability as they simultaneously acquire communicative powers.

Reading, on the other hand, is a productive skill that can develop independently of the above two skills but is usually taught and developed alongside them. Reading helps in building vocabulary, which is useful in listening comprehension at advanced stages. Writing is also productive, but in the text form that involves the graphic representation of speech and structured development and expression of thoughts. The writing skill is considered more complicated (Maolida & Mustika, 2018). It has been reported to be the hardest even among native speakers of language due to the stated intricacies above (Aydogan & Akbarov, 2014).

From the above, it is clear that there is a need for learners to develop all the four skills to help learners comprehend and make effective use of study materials, develop relevant language and vocabulary, write coherently, and communicate productively. However, despite the interrelationships between the four skills, this study focused on writing skills. Hinkel (2006) indicates that unlike the other skills, writing requires unique and systematic approaches, considering the writers' rhetoric, culture, and linguistic variations between First Language (L1) and L2. Hinkel adds that to achieve writing

competency demands explicit pedagogy in grammar and lexis since a writer's linguistic repertoire and writing skills mostly positions one in a given social and economic status. More literature on writing is presented in the literature review section since the skill is the focus of the study. Next is a highlight of the Kenyan educational context that this study encompasses.

### **1.2.2. Kenyan Educational System**

Education systems in any country are influenced by historical, geographical, political, religious, and ideological persuasions. In Kenya, these factors are given consideration, but more so, the political factor seems to take centre stage (Mackatiani, Imbovah, Imbova & Gakungai, 2016). This trend emanated from the colonial era to the present period. It, therefore, follows that a country's national character that is influenced by politics, thereby shapes the education system. This affirms that there is a close relationship between governance and education.

At independence, a 7-4-2-3 structure of education similar to the British system was adopted in the three East African countries, which consisted of 7 years in primary education, four years at secondary school, two years at the advanced level, and 3 to 5 years of university education. This system was meant to serve the immediate post-colonial needs that included the promotion of economic and social development to build the required human resource and promote the social fabric, respectively (Mackatiani et al., 2016).

As the political landscape changed, so did the education development. Several commissions have been set up to look into and make recommendations as the need arose. These include, but not limited to: the *Kenya Education Commission* (The Ominde Commission, 1964) that endorsed free primary education and made English to be a

formal language of instruction from grade one; the Ndegwa Report, 1971 which recommended the re-establishment of District Education Boards to promote primary education and to phase out of all unqualified instructors in schools; the *National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies* (Gachathi report, 1976) which recommended the use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction in lower primary and the teaching of English as a subject from class one. Another initiative was the *Presidential working party on the establishment of a second university in Kenya* (The Mackay Commission, 1981) that recommended the introduction of 8-4-4- system of education being phased out at the time of this study.

Based on recommendations of the Mackay Commission in 1985, Kenya changed to the 8-4-4 system of education by adopting eight years of primary education, four years of secondary education, and four minimum years of university education. The guiding philosophy then was 'education for self-reliance'. However, this system was deemed to have been politically muzzled into the country, leading to some elites taking their children to private schools that continued to offer the British system.

With time, the 8-4-4 system was discredited for being overloaded and too demanding; that it required the public to participate in the provision of facilities (Gikungu, Karanja & Thinguri, 2014; Kaviti, 2018). As a result, a need to review the system which gave rise to the *commission of inquiry into the Education System and Training* (The Koech Commission, 1999). This commission was instituted to make recommendations on the provision of quality education in Kenya as the global clamour for free primary education intensified. It proposed compulsory basic education from 8 to 12 years and the preparation of manageable curriculum content for learners. However, Koech's (TIQET) report was not wholly adopted by the government.

Later, a task force chaired by Prof. Odhiambo produced a report on '*Task Force on the Re-alignment of the Education Sector to the Constitution of Kenya 2010*': The report recommended a raft of changes to the education sector. Following the Odhiambo Report, a needs assessment for curriculum reforms was conducted by the KICD whose product was the Basic Education Curriculum Framework (BECF), a blueprint for a new curriculum for Kenyan basic education. The BECF spells out the rationale for curriculum reforms in Kenya that include alignment to Kenya Vision 2030; the constitution of Kenya, 2010; and the East African community harmonisation structure and reforms (KICD, 2017a). The BECF, which was adopted during a national education conference in 2017 recommends a Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) within an education structure of 2-6-3-3; that is two years in pre-school, six years of primary education, three years of junior secondary education, three years of senior secondary education (KICD, 2017a).

At the time of this study, the newly introduced CBC curriculum was operational at grades 1, 2, 3 and 4. English remains a compulsory subject (renamed as learning area) from grade 1 and the language of instruction from grade four onwards in all other subjects, thus playing a central role in CBC. However, the learners in this study were those of the 8-4-4 system in classes 5, 6, and 7. Next is a brief highlight of the place of English language teaching in the Kenyan context.

### **1.2.3 English language teaching (ELT) in the Kenyan context**

As a former British colony, Kenya, just like in many other countries in Africa and Asia, adopted English as an official language and language of instruction (Ong'ondo, 2010; Roy-Campbell, 2015). The language had earlier been introduced to Kenya in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries as a result of colonisation (Budohoska, 2013). The other language in use nationally is Kiswahili, which initially spread from the coast throughout



the country as a language for trade (Ogechi, 2009). Kiswahili is thus a national language (lately adopted as a co-official language) and popularly used for broader communication (Constitution of Kenya, 2010; Nuffic, 2015) alongside the other ethnic dialects. It is also treated as a language that propels national unity and is used for business transactions, socio-economic engagements among intra-communities, and in politics (Ong'ondo, 2010). Therefore, it implies that for the majority of Kenyan learners, more so in the rural setting, English is learnt as a third language (L3) after mother tongue (L1) and Kiswahili (L2), and is thus rarely used outside the classroom.

The primary school curriculum focuses on achieving 13 objectives of Primary Education (KIE, 2002). The first three of these state that, Primary Education should provide the learner with opportunities to; i) acquire literacy, numeracy, creativity and communication skills, ii) enjoy learning and develop a desire to continue learning, and iii) develop the ability for critical thinking and logical judgment that lead to the generation of ideas (KIE, 2002).

The specific objectives of the Primary school English course conform to the above-cited general objectives. These are reflected in the Primary Education Syllabus Volume One of 2002 (KIE, 2002) thus:

... At the end of the Primary English Course, all pupils are expected to have acquired sufficient command of English, in verbal and written forms to enable them to communicate fluently, follow subject courses and textbooks, and read for pleasure and information. It aims at meeting the needs of those pupils who secure admission to secondary level institutions, as well as those who will enter the world of work and get no opportunity for further education (p. 2).

These objectives relate to this study since competency in English composition writing requires several skills that include: reading and writing abilities and development of practical communication skills. A brief highlight of the research context (where the study was done) is presented next.

#### **1.2.4 The Research Context (Bomet County)**

With the promulgation of the new constitution in the year 2010, came a two-tier structure of governance: one central government and 47 devolved county governments (Khaunya & Wawire, 2015). The constitution anticipates that each level should implement their assigned functions with integrity and respect among them (Omari, Kaburi & Sewe, 2012). Basic education (Primary and secondary) matters, for example, are a function for the central government but is managed from the counties while Pre-schools are in the domain of County governments.

This research took place in Bomet County which is situated within the southern part of the Rift valley region and shares boundaries with four counties, namely: Kericho to the north, Nyamira to the west, Narok to the south, and Nakuru to the north. Administratively, the county is further subdivided into Sotik, Konoin, Chepalungu, Bomet, and Mulot sub-counties (<https://bomet.go.ke/about-bomet/>). Educationally, the county, just like all other counties in the country, is managed by county directors from both Ministry of Education and the Teachers Service Commission who are assisted at the sub-counties by their respective sub-county directors.

With the introduction of free primary education policy, the primary sector in this county experienced an influx of pupils, thus putting pressure on available facilities. For instance, the enrolment of 173,319 in 2009 was expected to rise to 233,246 in the year 2020. On the staffing position, public primary schools as of 2018 had an establishment of 4,212 teachers from a requirement of 6,684 teachers. This implies that few teachers handle a large number of learners per class, which in turn affects quality teaching in English language and other subjects. Efforts by stakeholders to expand and equip schools with infrastructure, including human resources to match the growing demand

for access and reduction of dropouts remain strenuous to both national and county governments.

The predominant community living in Bomet county is the Kipsigis (Langat, 2015), who extend their territory to the neighbouring Kericho County. They are the most populous sub-tribe among the eight closely related Kalenjin community and live in the highland parts of the Rift valley. Thus, they are categorised linguistically as Highland Nilotes (Chelangat, 2019; Naibei & Lwangale, 2018). Majority of learners from this county, therefore, are those from the Kipsigis community. One study on the Kipsigis language has established that it has a tripartite system of number marking as quoted from Kouneli (2019) thus:

...Kipsigis has a tripartite system of number marking. Some nouns are morphologically unmarked in the singular, and form their plural with a plural suffix. Other nouns are unmarked in the plural and form their singular with a singulative suffix. In contrast, the third class of nouns always have a singulative suffix in the singular and a plural suffix in the plural (p. xii).

The author argues that this pattern in the language is due to a noun classification system based on several features that interact with some other features to generate the three types of number markings. English language, on its part, commonly has two number markings (Dalrymple, 2012). The example below illustrated by Dalrymple affirms this point:

The	<b>boy</b>	<b>is</b>	laughing
	SG	SG	
The	<b>boys</b>	<b>are</b>	laughing
	PL	PL	

**Key:** SG- Singular; PL- Plural

The above contextual information is important as it could impact on English language learning and specifically structuring of sentences which is critical to composition writing. The implication is that teachers' pedagogical strategies ought to take

cognisance that learners of English from this community (who are the majority in classrooms in Bomet County) may need more effort to adjust to apparent differences in linguistic structures considering that the first language's elements have already been established. It could explain the low performance in composition writing. Against the context of the study explained above, a problem was conceptualized that underpinned the current study, as stated in the next subsection.

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

The problem that prompted this study can be expressed socially, academically, and contextually. Socially, the concern is that the country needs to have a communicatively competent citizenry in English Language (EL), especially in writing skills even at the end of the primary level where (previously), many citizens would drop out of school (Lucas & Mbiti, 2012; Zuilkowski, Jukes, & Dubeck, 2016). Yet, many learners still show considerable incompetence (Dhillon & Wanjiru, 2013), even though this is a skill they will need throughout their lives for interaction, communication, and societal placement with the rest of the world (Ong'ondo, 2017b). There have been concerns that most Kenyan high school and university students are unable to communicate effectively in both verbal and written contexts with evident inability to write formal application letters (Dunlosky et al., 2013).

Academically, the problem is that much investment goes towards developing teachers' pedagogical strategies at college, and in Continuous Teachers Professional Development (CTPD), (Bett, 2016; TSC, 2015b). Teachers are relied upon to make the difference in learners' competencies in writing in EL (Chege, 2015); yet, pupils still perform dismally in English at KCPE, which is a yardstick of their language competency levels.

The KCPE English examination paper has two sections, namely: The Objectives part, and the Composition section which are examined separately, then finally, results are combined as English Language subject. The objectives section tests English grammar and comprehension and requires to show learners' understanding of passages and reasoning through the choices given (KNEC, 2017). The Composition part tests the learners' ability to: be legible; compose personal and convincing account; write a story that is grammatically accurate, fluent, interesting and original; depict mastery of plot as well as proficiency in the use of a variety of structures and vocabulary; depict independence; exemplify meaningful expression of ideas; introduce suspense, twists and turns in the plot to make the story interesting; convey information convincingly and communicate effectively (KNEC, 2015, 2016, 2017).

The kind of English composition questions set during the period reviewed reveals that learners need to be imaginative in building up convincing and exciting stories in narrative form. The following examples are beginnings of a story that learners are expected to build:

**KCPE 2018:** We all waited for him to arrive. He had been away for long.... (p. 7)

**KCPE 2017:** When I got to school that morning, the headteacher had very good news for me.... (p. 9)

**KCPE 2016:** It was the beginning of the term, and I was planning to make it the best out of my primary school life.... (p. 11)

**KCPE 2015:** When my uncle invited me to spend the August holiday with him at his place, I never imagined it would be enjoyable.... (p. 9)

**KCPE 2014:** We may never know that we are talented in something until we try. I never knew that I could excel in sports until the day the games teacher asked me to participate during school games time.... (p. 11)

A report by the National Education Sector Strategic Plan (NESSP) 2018-2022 indicates that KCPE mean score remained slightly above 50% in the past seven years,

characterised by poor performance in English composition writing (Menjo, 2016; Oduor, 2019). Another report by Odour (2019) stated that in the 2016 KNEC analysis of KCPE results, the student who posted the lowest grade in English composition largely used ‘mother tongue’ to answer the question. The report exposed some of the learner incompetence to include: oral use of ‘Sheng’ in communication and transferring the same to the written language, use of words that could hardly be recognised as English, and correctly written ones not connected to make any significant meaning. This study found this a reason to get concerned and chose to focus on a smaller area of Bomet County.

KNEC (2018) report indicate that performance in English composition in Kenya has declined consistently in percentage mean since 2014. **Table 1.1** below provides results which reveal that in 2014, for instance, the Composition percentage (%) mean stood at 41.45, which reduced to 41.38 in 2015, then down to 40.25 in 2016. It dropped further to 39.60 in 2017 and worse still to 39.40 in 2018! In comparison, the performance of the English objectives part has instead kept increasing in % mean score during the same period, except for the year 2017.

**Table 1.1: General Performance in English for Five Consecutive Years**

Year	2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
Paper	Obj	Comp	Obj	Comp	Obj	Comp	Obj	Comp	Obj	Comp
% Mean	47.64	<b>41.45</b>	49.98	<b>41.38</b>	47.62	<b>40.25</b>	47.62	<b>39.60</b>	54.68	<b>39.40</b>

**Key: Obj.-** Objective; **Comp.-** Composition

**Source:** KNEC, 2018

Contextually, the concern is that despite several interventions over the years, weak learner competencies continue to manifest in ELCW, as demonstrated by reports of dwindling performance in KCPE composition writing by KNEC (KNEC, 2015, 2016,

2017, 2018). In spite of the low performance, from the literature search, no known empirical study has been conducted on this specific topic in Kenya.

The results of English composition writing at primary schools in Bomet County over the same period reflect similarity to the national trend, as shown in **Table 1.2** below. Public schools in Bomet County were specifically targeted since the teaching/ learning conditions are near similar in all schools. The conditions include the provision of the teaching staff of equivalent qualification by one employer (the Teachers Service Commission), similar school-based administrative structures, uniformity in the provision of learning materials by the Ministry of Education, and learners' catchment area is from near similar social strata (MOE, 2012a). Performance in the majority of private schools was above the national average grid and thus not targeted.

**Table 1.2: Performance of English Composition in Bomet County**

Year	2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
Paper	Obj	Comp	Obj	Comp	Obj	Comp	Obj	Comp	Obj	Comp
% Mean	50.21	<b>43.88</b>	52.77	<b>43.59</b>	53.30	<b>41.47</b>	51.13	<b>41.09</b>	52.68	<b>40.98</b>

**Source:** CDE's office, Bomet (2019)

From literature, several interventions have been made towards the improvement of English Composition writing in Kenyan schools and beyond, yet, there remains a gap that demands further attention (Barasa, 2016; Cherkut, 2011; Gardner, 2011; Gumpo, 2018; Kemboi, Andiemba & Mbone, 2014; Mugure, 2012; Silby, 2013). Teachers of English still have a burden in seeking effective strategies to enhance the learners' development of these essential language writing skills. The skills help in effective and communicative competencies in English composition writing in primary schools.

Meanwhile, it is not academically empirically established – which pedagogical strategies have the greatest implication for learner competencies in English Language

Composition Writing (ELCW), so that teacher training and professional development may be directed appropriately. This problem, as stated above, prompted the purpose of the study, the overall research question and specific research objectives as highlighted in the subsequent sections.

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

The purpose of this study was to investigate the implication of pedagogical strategies on upper primary school learners' English Language Composition Writing competencies in Bomet County in Kenya.

#### **1.5 Research Objectives**

The specific objectives stated in this study were to:

- i. Investigate the implication of teacher planning on English language composition writing competencies of upper primary school learners
- ii. Establish the implication of instructional techniques on English language composition writing competencies of upper primary school learners;
- iii. Examine the implication of the utilisation of learning materials on English language composition writing competencies of upper primary school learners;
- iv. Determine the implication of the assessment procedures on English language composition writing competencies of upper primary school learners.

#### **1.6. Research Question**

What are the implications of pedagogical strategies on upper primary learners' English language composition writing competencies?



### 1.7 Research Hypothesis

- i. **H<sub>01</sub>**: There is no statistically significant relationship between teacher planning and English language composition writing competencies of upper primary learners at alpha 0.05;
- ii. **H<sub>02</sub>**: There is no statistically significant relationship between instructional techniques and English language composition writing competencies of upper primary school learners at alpha 0.05;
- iii. **H<sub>03</sub>**: There is no statistically significant relationship between learning materials and English language composition writing competencies of upper primary school learners at alpha 0.05;
- iv. **H<sub>04</sub>**: There is no statistically significant relationship between the assessment procedures and English language composition writing competencies of upper primary school learners at alpha 0.05.

### 1.8 Justification of the Study

Literature review done shows that with the many studies on ELT and specifically in writing skills, research in composition writing has not attracted many scholars. Majority of the studies have concentrated on addressing the concerns of other language skills as well as the secondary school level. A few studies cited below illustrated this assertion.

In the international context, many studies have concentrated on general pedagogy (Jeyaraj & Harland, 2016; Kalia, 2017; Zembylas, 2018). For example, Jeyaraj and Harland (2016), in a study in New Zealand, sought to discover key challenges faced by teachers of English language of critical pedagogy and how the practice is understood. The study established that teachers withheld their political views from learners while accepting a limited degree of risk not usually associated with teaching a language. Another study by Kalia (2017) on 'English language teaching in India: Trends and

challenges' and found out that teaching and learning of English remains a challenge for both the teachers and the taught as a result of the conflict between English and Punjab languages. Zembylas (2018) conducted a study in Cyprus on 'reinventing critical pedagogy as decolonising pedagogy: the education of empathy'. The study concluded that critical pedagogy and decolonising pedagogy are always entangled.

In Africa and other parts of the world, research has mainly revolved around secondary schools (Faraj, 2015; Fatiloro, 2015; Malunda, Onen, Musaazi, & Oonyu, 2016; Oyedele & Chikwature, 2016). For instance, Faraj undertook a study in secondary schools in the Kurdish region, Iraq on scaffolding EFL students' writing through the writing process approach and established that scaffolding students writing through process writing met learner needs and improved their writing skills. Fatiloro's study in Nigerian secondary schools was on tackling the challenges of teaching English language which singled out inadequate human resource, overpopulation, lack of essential teaching facilities, mother tongue interference, among others.

Malunda, et al. (2016) who conducted a study in Uganda on instructional supervision and pedagogical practices of secondary school teachers reported that most researches in the country focused on technicalities of supervision, rather than how teachers responded to it. In yet another study in Mutare district, Manicaland on English composition writing skills at Ordinary level and its effect on students' performance in three-day secondary schools, Oyedele & Chikwature (2016) deduced a myriad of student writing challenges. They include inconsistent use of tenses, mother tongue interference, spellings, and many more.

In Kenya, for example, one of the recent studies looked at extensive reading and its influence on language skills among English language learners in secondary schools

(Wafula, 2017). Kabita (2015) investigated instructional techniques used to enhance reading comprehension among primary school pupils, while Manyasi (2012) investigated English language secondary schools' teacher cognition in the teaching of reading for nationhood. Kemboi, Andiema & M'mbone (2014) conducted a study on challenges in teaching English composition in secondary schools in Pokot County.

The literature search indicates that notwithstanding some research on ELT at Primary school level such as the studies cited above; studies on Writing Skills generally; and composition writing at Primary school level in particular, have not featured. Therefore, this informed the current study in investigating the implications of pedagogical strategies on upper primary learners' English language composition writing competencies in Kenya. More details on the rationale for the study based on literature is provided in chapter two. Next is a presentation of the significance of the study.

### **1.9 Significance of the Study**

The study results could be important to practising teachers as it signals the effective pedagogical strategies that heighten the learning of English composition writing and thus lead to competent language base. Specifically, the findings will draw the attention of teachers in the primary sector to issues to consider for effective planning, appropriate instructional techniques, functional appropriate learning materials, and assessment procedures that enhance the desired competencies in upper primary learners.

The curriculum developers, KICD, could use the study findings to reconsider the structure of the English language syllabus to give more emphasis to composition writing. The Ministry of education and the KNEC could benefit from these study findings to get an insight into the causes of low performance and remedy them. The knowledge derived from this study could also lead the Teachers Service Commission

to re-examine the workload for English language teachers. It will hopefully equip the teachers' employer with content to enhance continuous teacher professional development programmes in composition writing.

The findings, which have reflected a gap in teacher preparation, could signal a review of the primary teacher training college curriculum to equip trainees with insights on effective pedagogical strategies for enhancing learners' competencies in English language composition writing or English language, generally. More contributions of the study are raised in chapter five. Next is the scope of the study.

### **1.10 Scope and limitations of the Study**

The following sub sections describes the extent (scope) of the research topic and the shortcomings (limitations) of the study.

#### **1.10.1 Scope of the Study**

The scope of the study focused on content, research site, and methodology employed. In terms of content, the study first endeavoured to ascertain the extent to which teacher planning addresses learner competencies in EL composition. Planning entailed investigating the range of professional documents available, issues affecting teacher planning, frequency of preparation of documents and the challenges encountered during planning.

Secondly, the study sought to establish the extent to which instructional techniques and learning activities used, enhanced learner competencies in EL composition writing. The instructional techniques entailed: expository technique, task-based technique, questioning technique, experiential technique, and collaborative technique. The learning activities included drafting, revision, pair work, class discussion, and individual learner attention.

Thirdly, the study examined how learning materials used facilitate learner competencies in EL composition writing. It included examining the range/variety of materials in use such as the KICD recommended books, additional supplementary books, and other materials other than textbooks, such as pictures, charts, newspapers, magazines, and the internet. It encompassed establishing issues that determined the selection of materials, the frequency of selection and use of such learning materials.

Fourthly, the study sought to determine how teachers' assessment procedure enhanced learner competencies in EL composition writing. These included a consideration of the range of assessment procedures used to develop desired competencies such as prewriting organisation, thematic choice and development, character development, sequencing, coherence and cohesion, fluency, vocabulary, and mechanics of writing. Others were on issues determining teacher's use of assessment, and the frequency of assessment which included whether the frequency of giving and marking of assignments was adequate, whether there was useful teacher feedback, and whether teachers made self-evaluation of their lessons.

Methodologically, the study adopted a mixed approach involving descriptive survey and multiple case study methods. In the survey method, the instrument used was mainly the questionnaire while in the multiple case study method, the tools used were lesson observation schedule, teachers' interview guide, focus group discussion guide, and document analyses. The sample included 617 teachers of English and 130 pupils selected using both probability and non-probability sampling techniques. More information on the methodological scope is provided in Chapter Three and Four.

### **1.10.2 Limitations of the Study**

First, the study was limited to only four pedagogical strategies, namely; teacher planning, instructional techniques, learning materials, and assessment procedures used. These core strategies are adequate to equip a teacher for effective teaching and learning (Gafoor & Umerfarooque, 2010). There was also a need to identify the effectiveness of the varieties within these strategies that apply specifically to English composition writing. Other strategies not selected did not have a direct impact on classroom teaching, and thus did not influence the study findings negatively. Secondly, geographically, the study was limited to Bomet County, which is one out of the 47 counties in Kenya. The study could be more exhaustive had it been conducted in at least 05 (10%) of all the counties. Nevertheless, the similarity of KCPE English composition results in this particular county to the national trend allayed the fears, thus making the findings a true reflection of the whole country.

Thirdly, the study was limited to public primary schools only. Ordinarily, primary schools entail both public and private institutions. Whereas private schools (who have traditionally performed better in all academic aspects) were omitted from the study, findings were obtained from low performing public schools to unravel the genesis of under-performance. This gave a true reflection on the level of learner competencies in composition writing since they are the majority.

Fourthly, only upper primary learners of classes 5, 6, and 7 were engaged in the study, and omitted classes 4 and 8. This was unavoidable for class 4 since composition writing is introduced in class 5 while for class 8, both teachers and learners are engaged in preparing for a national examination, thus hardly spare time for research. However, this limitation did not affect the findings since the majority of class 8 teachers also teach the classes under study.

Finally, in terms of content, the study was limited to composition writing. Being the most complex skill of the four in English language, it was important to focus on the desired competencies necessary for learners to communicate effectively in writing. As such, the study limitation to composition writing did not affect findings since competency in written also signifies proficiency in all the three other skills.

In this study, mixed methods, multiple methods and techniques, being methodological triangulation, were used as the main way to ensure that the findings are credible, reliable, objective and generalisable. Please refer to chapter 3 ahead for more details. Below are the assumptions of the study.

### **1.11 Assumptions of the Study**

Assumptions are important for uniformity in all schools since the examining body, KNEC, pegs their assessment on the expected coverage of content prescribed in the syllabus and approved materials. In addition, teachers' knowledge of pedagogical strategies is critical in guiding learners effectively in English composition writing. The assumptions underlying this study were that: -

- i. Teachers of English Language in public primary schools use the same prescribed syllabus by KICD, and the content taught is the same in all schools.
- ii. Teachers of EL Composition writing are aware of the pedagogical strategies for EL composition writing.
- iii. Pedagogical strategies have implications on EL Composition writing of upper primary learners.
- iv. Learners have similar entry behaviour per class in writing skills. The standard practice on the transition from one level to another is pegged on the attainment of a given pass mark for all pupils based on common evaluation tests administered for all schools in each Sub County or County.

### **1.12 Theoretical Framework**

This study was underpinned by Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) advanced by Hymes (1972) and Wilkins (1972) and is reviewed in detail alongside other related theories in the literature review. CLT has been defined by Richards & Rodgers (2014) as an approach to second language teaching which emphasises that the goal of language learning is basically for communicative competence. The authors contend that CLT is a theory that begins from a communicative model (design) for language and language use. It influences the instructional system, use of materials, teacher and learner roles and behaviours, and the classroom activities and techniques.

Historically, CLT developed from changes arising from the teaching tradition of the British language since the 1960s, and during the developments of Europe and the Northern part of America. Both Candlin (1981) and Widdowson (1978) preferred focusing language teaching on communicative competence instead of mere mastery of structures. Richards & Rodgers (2014) among other proponents of CLT, treat it more of an approach than as a method. The theory advances that language is a vehicle that transmits meaning. At the same time, knowledge is conveyed through communication that engages two parts, including the speakers and listeners, as well as writers and readers. In other terms, CLT views learners as active players in the learning process (Desai, 2015). The approach is concerned with every learner uniqueness who acquires desired skills rapidly and agreeably since the language is made relevant to the world rather than to the classroom (Thamarana, 2015).

The central tenets propagated by this theory are that; language is learned majorly for communicative functions; the target language must be appropriately put into use and integrate all language skills. Ong'ondo (2017b) observed that CLT is an approach that recognises language as a social tool that is used for social interactions. Ong'ondo further



noted that CLT encourages flexible learning arrangements such as working in pairs and groups to personalise the content by using the language to talk about themselves, their environments, and experiences. Thus, the target language is not only an object of study but also a vehicle for classroom communication.

In addition to the above, there is a need for a teacher-learner and learner-learner relationships that enhance a relaxed classroom atmosphere, which in turn promotes effective learning. Other aspects include; imbibing the functional elements of language, individualised learning and teaching, and process-oriented instruction. Considering that knowledge and learning have been embraced as socially developed in the course of negotiations according to socio-cognitive views, CLT is thus viewed as learner-centred and experience-based.

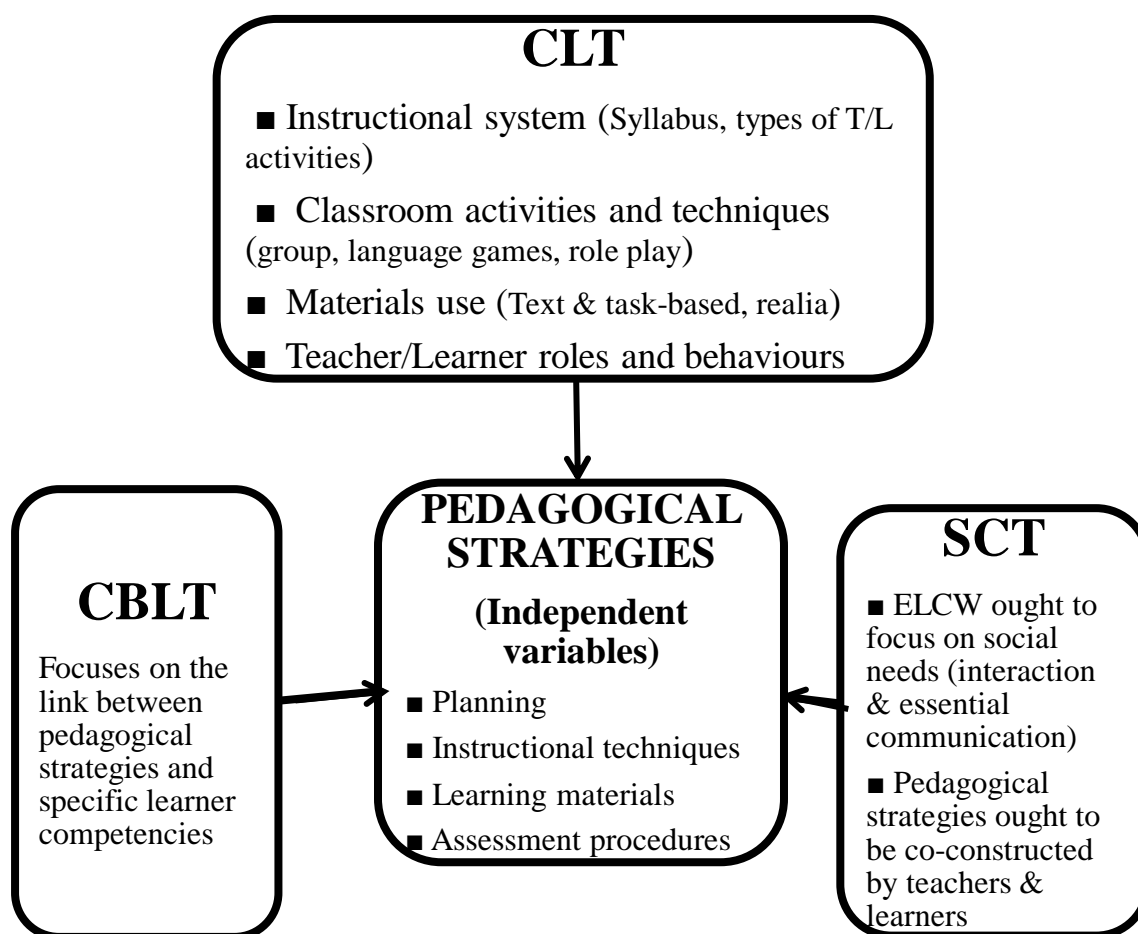
These aspects apply to composition writing that requires the teacher to develop writers who use the target language in depicting several proficiencies. Such proficiencies include personal/ individual voice, convincing account, fluency, exciting story, originality, legibility, and independence. Others are the correct use of grammar, the use of varied structures, varied use of vocabulary, effective conveyance of information, meaningful expression of ideas, and overall, effective communication. Moreover, the use of the CLT approach in Kenyan schools in the teaching of English language in active use on a relevant day-to-day context and functions has been highly recommended by the Ministry of Education (Ong'ondo, 2018). In this study, this theory was used to address the choice of teaching techniques and learning activities as well as the use of materials.

Other related theories that influence the pedagogical strategies are the Competency-Based Language Teaching (CBLT), and the social constructivist theory (SCT). These

theories are post-CLT developments and are consistent with the tenets of CLT. For instance, on CBLT, the proponents contend that the main focus is what the learners are expected to do with the language (Richards & Rodgers, 2014/2001). That means that attention is on outcomes derived from an analysis of learner tasks to function proficiently, and therefore, the syllabus is tailored around the desired competency, which in this case is in composition writing. Therefore, CBLT in this study focuses on the link between the pedagogical strategies and the desired learner competencies.

On the social constructivist theory, it contends that any human development has to be socially constructed since knowledge is created and not discovered. English composition writing needs to focus on social needs (i.e. for interaction and essential communication). Besides, since learning is a social activity, both teachers and pupils must be actively involved in the process by use of strategies such as collaborative learning, sharing of ideas before individual writing of compositions where the teacher only acts as a guide. At the same time, learners are scaffolded from knowledgeable teacher support (Mckinley, 2015). The theory, therefore, informed this study in that pedagogical strategies ought to be co-constructed by both teachers and learners. A detailed review of these theories as related to this study is discussed in chapter two ahead. A summary of the theoretical framework is presented as a model in **Figure 1.1** on the next page. The next section then addresses the study's conceptual framework.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK MODEL



**Figure 1.1: Theoretical Framework**

Source: Researcher

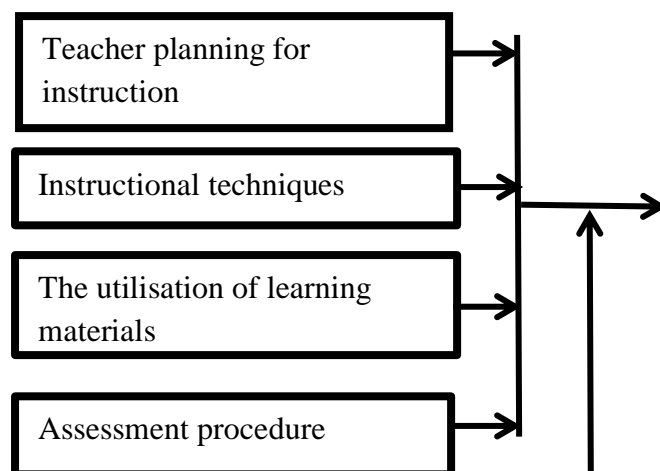
### 1.13 Conceptual Framework

This subsection explains the relationship between independent and dependent variables together with an illustration of possible effects of the intervening variables on the intended outcome. A conceptual framework may be defined as a relationship between variables- independent, dependent and intervening variables that relate to the manifestation of a phenomenon such as English language composition writing. It is a

scheme of concepts or variables that the researcher operationalises in a bid to achieve the study objectives (Serem, Wanyama, & Boit, 2013).

In this case, the independent variables were; teacher planning for instruction, instructional techniques, learning materials selected and used, and assessment procedure employed in developing learner competencies in English composition writing. The dependent variable is the set of learner competencies in composition writing. It includes; prewriting organisation, thematic choice and development, character development, sequencing (plot), coherence & cohesion, fluency (sentence structures), choice of words (vocabulary), and mechanics of writing (spellings, punctuations, & paragraphing). The intervening variables were teacher attributes, learner attributes, and both contextual and environmental factors.

This conceptual framework has been developed from the pedagogical strategies, which are the independent variables as described and illustrated in 1.12. The desired composition skills were derived from literature, the Primary English language syllabus content, and from KCPE newsletter reports which point out expected competency areas. These desired competencies are dependent on the interpretation of the related theories in conceptualisation of pedagogical strategies. Therefore, any slight change in the independent variables affects the outcome either negatively or positively. When these factors are positive, the learners' writing skills are enhanced and vice versa. However, the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable may be impacted by the intervening variables identified herein. A graphical illustration showing the relationships among the variables of this study is as presented in **Fig.1.2** on the next page.

**INDEPENDENT VARIABLES****DEPENDENT VARIABLES****Pedagogical strategy****Learner competencies in English composition writing**

- a. Prewriting organisation
- b. Thematic choice and development
- c. Character development
- d. Sequencing, (Plot)
- e. Coherence & Cohesion
- f. Fluency (Sentence Structures)
- g. Choice of Words (Vocabulary)
- h. Mechanics of Writing (Spellings, Punctuations, & Paragraphing)

**INTERVENING VARIABLES**

- Teacher attributes
- Learner attributes
- Contextual/ Environmental factors

**Figure 1.2: Conceptual Framework Model (and intervening variables)****(Source: Researcher)****1.14 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has presented an introduction that provided: the context of the study; the statement of the problem; the scope that focused on content, Bomet county and methodology employed; limitation of the study; justification; the significance of the study in contributing to ELT; existing underlying assumptions; and both theoretical and conceptual framework that underpinned the study. The next chapter reviews the literature and is described in detail. The key issues which were raised in this chapter that arose from the study context are given in **Table 1.3** on the next page.

**Table 1.3: Key Issues arising from Study Context**

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**Context of the Study****The academic context**

- i. English language (EL) is the language of communication which is also used in business, science, information technology, and entertainment
- ii. Communicative competence in writing is a significant aspect of language development and for academic success at all levels of the education system
- iii. Writing skills help one to express own ideas meaningfully and legibly, convey information, and communicate effectively in English.

**The Kenyan context**

- i. Kenya adopted English as an official language and language of instruction. English is a compulsory subject in Kenyan Schools
- ii. The educational system has undergone reforms based on reports from several commissions and is currently in the process of implementing a new system of 2-6-3-3 defined as Competency-Based Curriculum.
- iii. English language teaching is underpinned on the objectives of the primary school syllabus, which include the need to acquire literacy, creativity and communication skills.
- iv. There is a similarity of low performance in KCPE English language composition writing nationally to Bomet County, situated within the southern part of the Rift Valley region.

**Problem statement**

- i. Despite several interventions and massive investment, many learners still show communicative incompetence based on the poor KCPE results over the years in English language composition writing.

**Theoretical framework**

- i. The tenets of Communicative Language Theory, Competency-Based Language Teaching, and Social Constructivist Theory underpinned the study.
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## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature on pedagogical strategies used to develop competencies in EL composition writing. This is organised under the following headings: Situating the study in the discipline of ELT, Review of related theories and concepts, Review of previous related research, Rationale for the study based on literature review, and finally a Summary.

#### 2.2 Situating the Study within the Discipline of English Language Teaching (ELT)

In this section, the discussion that ensures is to underpin the study to the discipline of English language teaching. English language teaching has a convergence with a series of domains and areas of research, including Second language acquisition, applied linguistics teaching and learning, English education, English literature, and sociolinguistics (Mumba & Mkandawire, 2019). This interdisciplinary collaboration takes place amongst colleagues within and or across the institutions in research and teaching and whose benefits include continued learning and development, teacher suitability to meet demands, enhanced effectiveness in course planning, delivery, and evaluation (Lee, 2010; NCTE, 2017; Richards, 2017). To situate the current study in the discipline of ELT, the following are addressed as sub-topics: Teaching English as a second language, teaching EL writing skills, pedagogical strategies for teaching EL composition writing, and learner competencies in composition writing.

##### 2.2.1 Teaching English as a Second Language.

This subsection reviews the literature on the teaching of English as a second language (ESL) from global to Kenyan contexts. In ESL, learning takes place within an English environment where the learner seeks to learn English to understand and utilize the

language in and outside the classroom. In teaching ESL, students are exposed to the English-speaking culture despite their understanding being limited by their language skills (Abdullah, 2015).

Recent developments in ELT suggest a paradigm shift from teaching ESL to teaching English as an International Language (EIL), and that it should be manifested in the curriculum, classroom practices, and in the teaching and learning materials (Nguyen, Marlina, & Cao, 2020). The authors argue that there is a need to embrace linguistic diversity by learning to use English in global contexts and similarly retain linguistic identity in the multilingual use of language (Matsuda & Matsuda, 2017). Therefore, other than the cultural knowledge of the target language, EIL considers it meaningful to develop a language learner's intercultural communicative competence (Lai, 2014). English is thus used as a global communication tool (ibid).

One consequence of pedagogy underpinned by this study in ELT is the creation of opportunities for teachers of English to draw on content and teaching skills and thus gain experience (and assume an identity of language teachers). That is essential in achieving the desired learners' communicative competence (Pennington & Richards, 2016). The relationship between learner language competencies and teaching ability as situated in this study is a focus in second language teacher education, mainly through the work on teacher cognition and teaching knowledge as intimated by various authors (Freeman, 2002; Freeman, 2016; Freeman, Garcia, Katz, & Burns, 2015).

ELT advances teachers' content knowledge of their teaching subject which may be derived from disciplines in which language is the object of study, such as linguistics, second language acquisition, sociolinguistics, and discourse analysis (Bayyurt, 2013; Freeman, 2016; Khansir, 2013; Ong'ondo, 2010;). In addition, pedagogical knowledge



and ability assert the teacher's subject matter knowledge, the repertoire of techniques and activities employed in teaching, adapted to the diverse interests and abilities of learners and presented for instruction' (Shulman, 1987). However, as alluded to by Ong'ondo and Borg (2011), teaching is a complex which requires teachers to take into account by making sense of the often unpredictable and dynamic interrelationships among some variables such as teachers, learners, context and the curriculum. Discourse skills also provide the means and ability to maintain communication in English that is fluent, accurate, and understandable to the learners. These instructional techniques towards imbuing desired learner communicative competencies were situated in the current study done in Kenya.

Kenya has more than 40 indigenous languages (mother tongues), but English and Kiswahili are the official languages (Nabea, 2009). Pupils begin learning English as a second (actually third) language as a subject at the beginning of primary school in class One. Research has found, however, that most Kenyan learners are not sufficiently proficient in English at the end of Class Three to effectively learn content in English from Class Four (Bunyi, 2008; Dhillon & Wanjiru, 2013). By the end of primary education, one out of four pupils are still to attain communication skills (Abobo, 2018). Since all the subjects, except Kiswahili, are taught in English, Kenyan students learn English while using the language to understand the curriculum.

Second language teaching in the country has been geared towards playing a critical role in the attainment of the Kenyan National Goals of Education, which, according to KIE (2002a), to mention only one, is to promote the social, economic, technological and industrial needs for national development. This goal focuses on fostering individual growth and self-fulfilment, promoting international consciousness, and fostering

positive attitudes towards other nations (Mwaka, Kafwa, Musamas, & Wambua, 2013). The teaching of EL writing skills is now reviewed next.

### **2.2.2 Teaching EL Writing Skills**

This subsection begins with a review of the writing skill and then the teaching of EL writing skills. Writing skills are a shared obligation across many disciplines, thus requiring learners to have good command in the skills. Oyedele and Chikwature, (2016) state that writing is an intricate and complex task and is the most difficult of all language skills to acquire. They posit that many students understand English language but have a limitation in communicating their ideas effectively as a result of inadequate vocabulary, creativity in writing, among other factors (Adas & Bakir, 2013). To write effectively, students must implement a writing process involving several components required to yield specific writing proficiencies. This is because writing is an interactive process; as such, learners need to implement the components in a different order and also implement some of the components simultaneously (Mackenzie, 2015). Below is a review of the concept of pedagogical strategies on the principles of writing.

#### ***2.2.2.1 The writing process.***

In this subsection, a brief description of the stages of the writing process is discussed. Writing is considered a process of delivering ideas through written texts involving the application of grammar, vocabulary, and rhetoric conception, among other parts of the language (Al-Shourafa, 2012). It is a recursive process defined by stages where the writer moves back and forth through planning and drafting up to the production of a final version (Velasco & García, 2014). It is also one of the essential skills that pupils require to enrich their personal development and academic success (Defazio, Jones, Tennant, & Hook, 2010). Ideally, the writing process resembles a road map through

which the students' actions and thoughts can be monitored right from the beginning till the end (Nasir, Naqvi, & Bhamani, 2013).

However, writing at whatever level is one of the most complex skills (Maolida & Mustika, 2018) to grasp due to the cognitive demands it has on the writer's long term memory which stores knowledge, the task environment which manages the specifics of the assignment, and the actual writing process (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 2013). The complexity is contributed by the demand to simultaneously attend to the four main components of writing, which include; planning, translating ideas into language, reviewing, and finally monitoring (Marion, 2012). Therefore, the teaching of writing is challenging, as the latter requires more specificity in addressing an 'absent' audience as opposed to oral communication, whose verbal and nonverbal feedback is immediate as it provides contextual clues. Thus, it calls for English language educators to pay more attention to writing skills (Nosratinia & Razavi, 2016).

World over, the teaching of writing skills requires great efforts. For instance, in the United States of America, students are taught persuasive writing as a vital component of their' literacy achievement and writing as a critical communication tool to convey thoughts and opinions, describe ideas and events, and analyse information (Shanahan, Fisher, & Frey, 2016). Elsewhere in Bangladesh, teachers use innovative techniques to attract students towards writing skills and to overcome any weaknesses in writing (Hamid, Jahan, & Islam, 2013). This is because acquiring English as a second language is a challenge for people in different continents (Gakori, 2015).

A similar scenario has been reported in Burundi, where challenges are faced in English writing at the primary schools. The causes were lack of adequate pre-service preparation of teachers, interpretation of the curriculum and its optimal exploitation,

and language proficiency of the teachers with its impact on the model transmitted through teaching (Ndayimirije, 2015). In such countries, English is used as the medium of instruction but experiences competition from indigenous languages, which learners use in and out of class (Mujumdar, 2010).

In the Kenya context, the development of writing skills in a country with more than 40 indigenous languages (mother tongues) remains an uphill task for the curriculum developers and implementers. English and Kiswahili are used right from primary school as the official languages (Nabea, 2009; Trudell & Piper, 2014). Writing has a significant role in the school curriculum, and yet primary school learners still lack necessary writing skills. Writing is one of the four skills a learner must acquire in English to successfully qualify at the end of the eight years with a good grade in English language in KCPE. It involves putting thoughts on paper in a sequence, and therefore, grammar has to be written easily and in an organised manner.

Most teachers do not put much emphasis on writing skills hence denying learners a vital tool in written communication (Crossley & McNamara, 2011; McDonough, 2012). Otunga, Odeo & Barasa (2011), while underscoring the importance of writing, stresses that the learner should acquire writing skills so as: 'to be able to express own ideas meaningfully and legibly in English, to convey information and to communicate effectively' (p. 174). Towards this desire, among other target learning experiences, the government of Kenya has continued to provide primary schools with instructional materials since 2003 (Republic of Kenya, 2005).

Reports, however, show that there has been no significant improvement in developing the desired proficiencies in learners (Mugure, 2012; Mutea, 2015; Serdyukov, 2017). This is an indication that there is a need in the primary school curriculum to go beyond

the supply of instructional materials to address learner competencies in writing. That makes it the basis of this study, which focused on investigating the current teaching strategies employed towards learner competencies in writing skills, more so, composition writing at the upper primary classes. The learners' ability to communicate effectively in writing demands a combination of creativity, communication skills, interest, and critical thinking (Bean, 2011). Learner ability is consistent with the tenets of Communicative Language Theory, which promotes the use of target language to enhance appropriateness and competence in communication.

Over the recent past, there has been debate by L2 practitioners on various approaches to the teaching of writing with emphasis revolving around three major approaches, namely, product-based, process-based, and genre-based approaches (Nordin & Mohammad, 2017). In a product-based approach, learners write an essay imitating a given pattern with the main focus being on the product (Hounhanou, 2018) and not on the process of writing. Knowledge about language structure is given preference, with learners expected to align with the teacher's input, thus making it teacher-centred.

The process-based approach emphasises how a text is written rather than the outcome (product). It, therefore, influences comprehending the nature of writing and the way it is taught. This approach gives attention to the recursive procedure of prewriting, drafting, evaluating, and revising, where learners produce several drafts arising from discussions and feedback, which prompt revisions. Key elements in this model are the writer, the content, the purpose, and multiple drafts, with the teacher serving principally as a facilitator who draws out the learners' potential (Nordin & Mohammad, 2017). In essence, the class operates as a workshop (Hounhanou, 2018), where students learn the craft of writing through sharing and discussion. This makes the process approach learner-centred.

The Genre-based approach (GBA), just like the product approach, view writing as majorly linguistic. However, GBA emphasises the social context in which the writing is produced. It, therefore, advances the need to provide students with explicit and orderly illustrations on how language functions socially. The underlying theory, as explained by Hyland (2003; cited in Nordin & Mohammad, 2017), is that the teacher and the student take interactive roles with the former performing the authoritative functions of scaffolding the latter to move towards their potential. The teacher does this by providing a model for the students to interrogate the language and structure therein. With time, this modelling (scaffolding) element is reduced as learners produce texts parallel to it, thus leading to learner autonomy (Hounhanou, 2018).

Each of the three approaches briefly highlighted above have responded to critiques (Hyland, 2011) that will not be expounded since they are outside the parameters of this study. However, it is noteworthy to reckon that teachers employ a combination of these approaches, which serve as complementary rather than opposing each other. This combination is expected to influence learner performance in EL composition writing. The writing process entails activities that occur during the production of written text, treated as a process rather than a product. A final product concerns the final written text, such as the content, length, and spelling, among others of the written text product (Torkildsen, Morken, Helland & Helland, 2015). As indicated earlier, the written expression is one of the four skills in language learning, which is considered to be the most challenging to learners (Bayat, 2014; Marza & Al-Hafizh, 2013). This difficulty could be attributable to the demand by schools for formal features in writing.

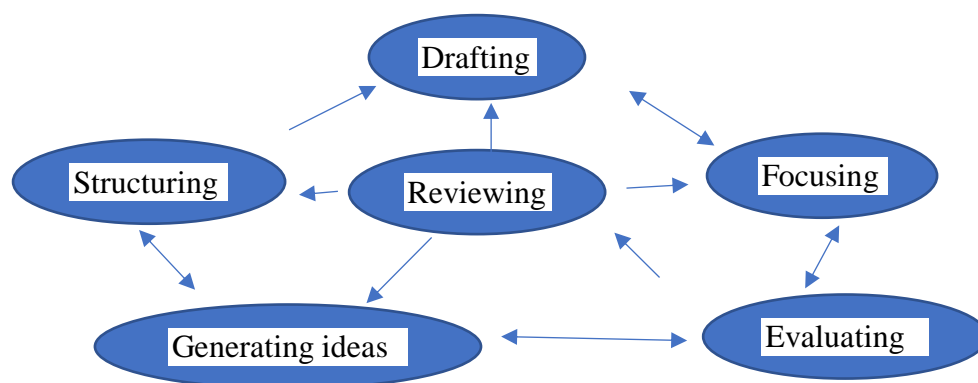
Brooks (2015), describes the writing process from five perspectives: First, writing is problem-solving. It is the use of invention strategies and extensive planning to resolve linguistic problems that each writing task presents. Secondly is that writing is

generative, where writers explore and discover ideas as they write. Thirdly, writing is recursive, such that writers continuously review and modify their texts as they write, thus producing several copies before a final product is achieved. For example, one could, for instance, be revising then return to prewriting for expansion of ideas. Fourthly, is that writing is collaborative, where writers benefit from focused feedback from a variety of resources. Finally, writing is developmental, in that evaluation should be based on improvement and not just on the final product.

Process writing, on its part, is an activity that enables learners to explore a topic through writing, showing the teacher and each other, the learners drafts, and using what they write to read over, think about, and move them on to new ideas (ibid). A student needs time for the process to work, with appropriate feedback from readers such as the teacher and other students. This process approach is attributed to, in part, the 1963 Conference of College Composition and Communication, where educators and scholars revived discussions about rhetoric and composition theory (Clark. & Moss, 2011). The conference created a new research area on the best approach to composition, which in turn led to the development of related methods and techniques like prewriting peer response, staged writing, teacher-student conferencing, invention strategies, guided reflection, and revision (ibid). A psychologist, Bruner (1966) influenced the process approach and viewed learning as a process that emphasised the role of a learner's participation and discovery in the learning process.

Clark (2011), a composition scholar, interpreted Bruner's ideas into an instructive emphasis on engaging learners in composing activities to discover their composition process. This meant that teachers would spend less time assigning grades and correcting grammar. Instead, it would create a facilitative learning environment to enable students

with opportunities to write for effective communication. A student needs time for the process to work and appropriate feedback from readers who include teachers or other students. Figure 2.1 below, sourced from Makerere University website (<https://muele.mak.ac.ug/course/view.php?id=2044>), depicts what is entailed in process writing:



**Figure 2.1: Diagram of Process Writing**

The above diagram illustrates that in process writing, reviewing takes centre stage and correlates with drafting, focusing, evaluating, generating ideas, and structuring. Classroom activities are greatly influenced by the role the teacher brings to facilitate interaction. Generally, writing (as depicted in **Figure 2.1**), is seen as a process in which students are given time to think about and discuss their ideas on a specific topic, write a draft or framework of what they have in mind, discuss this again, and then write a more detailed account (Mallia, 2017). In this approach, students are not expected to write on a given topic in a restricted time and hand in the composition for the teacher to correct – which usually means to find errors. Contrary to this approach, Okwara (2012) found out that the most popular type used for teaching composition writing in Kenyan schools revolves around a 'topic' or 'title.' Notwithstanding, Ochako, Okwako, and Okoth (2019) allude that pupils hardly get the opportunity to write in English.

Some of the desired proficiency skills needed for success at work in writing include the ability to write a summary of information from varied sources, present and defend a



point of view in writing, organise information in the form of a coherent report, and use writing as a tool for learning (Graham, Harris & Herbert, 2011). As argued by DeVoss, Eidman-Aadah & Hicks (2010), writing has gone beyond the classroom to the world of work. They add that technological innovation of the twenty-first century, such as emailing, Facebooking, texting, blogging, and all electronic forms have made writing the norm to social, community, and civic participation.

For pupils to develop into becoming proficient writers (Brooks, 2015), they need to be acquainted with the commonly used steps of the writing process (about composition writing). These include; prewriting, organisation, drafting, revising, and finally, proofreading (Chao & Lo, 2011; Faraj, 2015; Maolida & Mustika, 2018; Sedita, 2013). These five steps are briefly highlighted below, with some reviewed further in 2.2.4 of this study.

The prewriting stage involves planning through thoughts and making decisions. It pertains to understanding the assignment, what to write on, and brainstorming about the subject. 'Organisation' is putting the ideas into form and searching for content if need be. Next, after organisation, is drafting. It entails placing information into words through sentences and paragraphs until all that was planned is exhausted. The next is revising, which involves rearranging words and sentences or paragraphs, replacing overused or unclear terms, and ensuring a smooth flow. Finally, editing and proofreading are next which encompasses providing that all sentences are complete; there is a correct use of spelling, capitalisation, and punctuation; and ensuring that the appropriate style is in place (Archibald, 2011; Berg, 2015; Chao & Lo, 2011; Faraj, 2015; Prasad, 2014). These skills are critical in composition writing in English language, which is reviewed next.

### 2.2.2.2. *Composition writing in EL.*

As discussed earlier, writing is one of the ways that enable people to express themselves, share ideas, and even reveal their position on pertinent matters in society (Hounhanou, 2018). To be able to do these, students need to be equipped with manipulating a group of related sentences to develop a central idea. Nunan (2003) contends that writing is physical as well as a mental activity, which is about discovering ideas, thinking about ways to communicate, and developing them into statements and paragraphs that the anticipated reader will find comprehensible, expressive, and impressive. Therefore, students need to consolidate appropriate vocabulary to help them translate their ideas into meaningful paragraphs in context (Hounhanou, 2018).

Writing is an essential literacy skill and a form of communication needed to demonstrate learning, expression, and understanding of content (McCurdy, Schmitz, & Albertso, 2009). It is a critical skill for successful progression in all academic areas (Hosseini, Taghizadeh, Abedin, & Naseri, 2013). Therefore, the ability to write effectively must not be overlooked or understated. However, writing, especially for second language learners, is bound to be prone to errors and mistakes. These are what teachers of English look for (to correct) in learners' composition writing. Jobeen, Kazemian, and Shahbaz (2015) introduced the distinction between errors and mistakes. This distinction directed the attention of second language acquisition researchers to competence errors and provided a more robust framework. Thus, in the 1970s, researchers began examining learners' competence errors and tried to explain them.

In addition to studies focusing on error categorisation and analysis, some studies focused on these three different areas. Such studies include Kroll and Schafer's '*Error-Analysis and the Teaching of Composition*'. The authors demonstrate how error analysis could be used to improve writing skills. These authors analyse possible sources of error

in non-Native-English writers and then attempt to provide a process approach to writing where error analysis can help achieve better writing skills. Since these errors are systematic and usually not explicitly corrected, children could never learn to transition to adult language based on experience alone (Phuket & Othman, 2015).

Kissau, McCullough, and Pyke (2013) cited a previous study by Freiermuth & Jarell (2006), who asserted that when children create language, they will most likely make errors and thus, correcting will be ineffective because the learner is not aware of them. Gudu, Barasa, and Ong'ondo (2016) established that there is a mismatch between teachers' and students' views about error correction. Thus, error correction would result in acquiring the correct form, if the learner was previously exposed to that particular language form.

On the seriousness criterion, Freiermuth and Jarell claim that the teacher must determine errors that impede communication before being considered an error that necessitates correction. But what constitutes a serious error? Which errors are those that should not be corrected? As an example of non-serious errors, Freiermuth and Jarell set a benchmark that agrees with Hagege's (2009) assessment and single out those errors that arise due to learner stress and nervousness as a consequence of pressure to produce linguistically correct forms with accuracy in the L2 (ibid).

Tofade, Elsner & Haines (2013) approached error correction differently and stressed the importance of self-correction, which brought out the distinction between errors and mistakes. The authors reckon that students should know how to identify an error to avoid it in the future. They agree with Corder that it is more efficient for learners to correct themselves than be fixed by the teacher and suggest a four-step approach for individual correction. The approach consists of questions that the teacher provides to

learners. After writing an essay, pupils should read it four times. For each time, they should try to answer the questions included in each of the four steps. Thus, in each re-reading task (each step), they concentrate on a different aspect of their essay (Tofade, Elsner, & Haines, 2013).

In Kenya, English Composition writing is introduced to learners in class five and later tested in the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) examination towards the end of class eight under the current 8-4-4 system of education. In their composition writing, learners should depict competencies in the ability to: be legible; compose personal and convincing account; and write a story that is grammatically accurate, fluent, interesting, and original. Besides, they are to portray mastery of plot as well as proficiency in the use of a variety of structures and vocabulary; reflect independence; exemplify meaningful expression of ideas; introduce suspense, twists and turns in the plot to make the story interesting; convey information convincingly and communicate effectively (KNEC, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018). Learners should also attempt to achieve all the above (which appear daunting) within the allocated 40 minutes of the examination time. Teachers, therefore, employ specific pedagogical strategies reviewed next to develop these competencies on learners.

### **2.2.3 Pedagogical Strategies for Teaching EL Composition Writing**

In the next subsections, this study interrogated from literature, four selected aspects that related to this investigation on the place of the teacher of English to develop learner competencies in English language composition writing within the context of the Kenyan public primary schools. These elements are; teacher planning for instruction, instructional techniques in use, utilisation of learning materials, and assessment procedures used by teachers of English. First is a background on pedagogical strategies.

### ***2.2.3.1. The Concept of Pedagogical Strategies***

Pedagogy may be referred to as the method and practice of teaching, which encompasses teaching styles, teaching theory, feedback and assessment. It is the way teachers deliver the content of a curriculum, influences and is influenced by social, political and psychological development of learners (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pedagogy>). It is a conscious activity that seeks to evoke changes in a learner as a product of a sustained process acquisition of new forms or a development of existing forms of conduct, knowledge or practice deemed appropriate (Westbrook, Durrani, Brown, Orr, Pryor, Boddy & Salvi, 2013).

Language pedagogy is defined as a coherent set of teaching and learning procedures and behaviours based on a given theory of what language is, and consequently, how it is learned (Ur, 2014). Teaching methods such as grammar translation, audio-lingualism, and task-based learning have been popularised at varying times as the 'best' approach to teach second language learners. Each method advocates a set of pedagogical strategies based on a particular theoretical conceptualisation of the nature of the language and language acquisition. In selecting teaching procedures, language teachers' choices are shaped by various general pedagogical considerations, as well as by local factors, and also by the teacher himself or herself (Ur, 2014).

From the aforementioned, language pedagogy is based on the rationale for choosing appropriate procedures based on general pedagogical considerations that apply to the teaching of all subjects. Some of these considerations include, but are not limited to, classroom management, stimulation, and maintenance of student motivation and interest, creating a favourable classroom environment and lesson planning. These factors are described further below.

First, language pedagogical strategies must be principled and eschewed towards attaining good learning (Ur, 2014). Therefore, it should not be opportunistic or based on insincere goals such as 'keeping learners busy' or 'completing the syllabus quickly.' There should be clarity of purpose on the choices of procedures made. One criterion may take preference over another, taking into account aspects such as the degree to which it promotes educational values and promotes student autonomy.

Secondly, pedagogical strategies need to be localised based on explicit consideration of the particular background in which learning occurs. Part of such references includes nature and culture of learning within the society of learners, learner talents and preferences, teacher's personality, the culture surrounding the population, the influence of stakeholders such as parents, school administration, ministry of education, and content and grading of examinations (Ur, 2014).

The third factor is the principle that pedagogical strategies are determined by the teacher who decides his or her pedagogy and selects materials singly, together, or with colleagues in the same institution. It is this autonomy that affords the teacher the rights of a professional in contrast to the mere technician (Ur, 2014). It is also assumed that the teacher has the requisite knowledge base to do so successfully. One such knowledge base that makes the teacher thoroughly competent is the accumulated classroom experience (Yates & Hattie, 2013).

Effective pedagogical strategies that enhance desired learner proficiencies are vital in English language teaching. The Centre for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence at the University of California (CREDE, 1991-2019) identifies five standards of effective pedagogy that need to be incorporated for effective teaching and learning process. These include;

- i) joint productivity where teachers and students 'produce' together,
- ii) development of language across the curriculum,
- iii) Contextualisation (making meaning by connecting school to students' lives, engaging learners in challenging activities to develop complex thinking),
- iv) Instructional conversation (teaching through discussion),
- v) All the above standards apply to composition writing.

According to (Wossenie, 2014), some characteristics of effective teachers are worldwide and related to general education while others are domain-specific. For instance, Wossenie (2014), prepones that the features of effective teachers of English are in five major categories: Rapport, Delivery, Fairness, Knowledge and Credibility, and Organization and Preparation). A study by Kourieos & Evripidou (2013) visualised the effectiveness of language teaching from the perspective of communication. He classified the characteristics of effective language teachers as teacher-student interaction styles, teaching methods, planning and organisation, interest and attention in the class, and importance of personality in the classroom.

Critical pedagogy is another aspect of pedagogy in ELT that is available in the literature. It describes an attitude to language teaching that relates classroom context to the broader social, cultural, political, and economic contexts. It aims at social transformation and improvement of the status quo through education (Akbari, 2012; Kincheloe, 2008; Moreno-Lopez, 2005, cited in Abednia & Izadinia, 2012). While banking on teaching approaches, learners are considered to be passive recipients of deposits of pre-selected knowledge and are expected to ask questions to enable them to think critically and achieve deep awareness of the social realities commonly masked by the status quo (Abednia & Izadinia, 2012).

In the context of this study, four pedagogical strategies that are instrumental in enhancing learner competencies in EL Composition writing are brought to the fore. These are planning, choice of instructional techniques, selection of learning materials, and learner assessment (Genlott & Grönlund, 2013; Ong'ondo, 2017c). These key components of teaching and learning activities are discussed briefly below, beginning with planning.

### ***2.2.3.2. Planning for composition writing.***

Planning is a critical component in the teaching of writing (Mwangi & Syomwene, 2018), the focus of this study. Conway & Munthe (2017) cites Yinger, 1980, and identifies three stages of planning: First, the problem-finding stage. This stage covers content, goals, and own knowledge. Second, the problem formulating and solution finding stage. It entails the design of instructional activities to be carried out through continuing mental or hypothetical testing and adaptation processes. Third, the implementation and evaluation of the activities as they unfold in the classroom.

Planning, therefore, brings about six benefits that accrue from preparation, as Derrick (2018) put it. It makes one a better teacher, boosts student performance and achievement, maximises students' learning, minimises classroom discipline issues, helps build teacher confidence, and, lastly, aids in earning the respect of peers and administrators. The implication is that planning creates a conducive environment for both the teacher and learner that make lessons effective and impactful.

Planning a lesson is an important endeavour that teachers should appropriately undertake before they go to class. According to Saunders and Goldenberg (2010), planning helps one know how to interact with their students efficiently. Besides, Moradi (2019) states that lesson planning is a primary technique in teaching, where a teacher's



ability and knowledge in the classroom are sequenced. Lesson planning is the teacher's role in the class to effectively represent his/her experience (Darling-Hammond, 2012).

To facilitate student learning, teachers should prepare effective lessons to create a 'powerful climate and atmosphere' in the classroom. Jaipal & Figg (2010) states that teachers plan lessons to discuss their teaching activities through subject-matter. In the same vein, she states that many experienced teachers often reduce lesson plans to a mental map or short outline. As such, all teachers, either experienced or novice, should prepare their lessons because they cannot go to class unequipped (Gafoor & Umerfarooque, 2010).

There are three major components of planning that Richards and Renandya (2002) presents: what to teach, what the objective is, and how much time is available. These authors purport that lesson plans guide the teacher to teach an appropriate lesson to: find solutions, organise the structure, and to give an outline of what he/she is going to teach. Moreover, they also document that there are internal and external reasons for planning lessons. The internal reasons are: to present their lessons with honesty, to know more about the specific subject matter, to help teachers' lessons to be organised, and to avoid discipline problems in the classroom. Some external reasons include fulfilling administrative requirements as a mandatory document, as evidence of classes attended, and helping the substitute teacher on what the students need to learn in his/her absence. Therefore, planning is an essential requirement that a teacher must endeavour to accomplish before interacting with learners (Tomlinson, 2014).

The Kenyan context entails the preparation of two primary documents (among others); the schemes of work and the lesson plan. These documents draw content from an approved syllabus for each educational category and class level (KIE, 2002). Another

vital requirement before a teacher attends to their lessons is the preparation of lesson notes. The Teachers Service Commission (2015b) Code of Regulation for Teachers explicitly accords the heads of institutions the role of supervising professional documents' maintenance as cited in the legal notice No. 196, Regulation 71(h). It includes,

...ensuring maintenance of teaching standards and professional records, maintained by a teacher including schemes of work, lesson notes, records of work, and pupils' exercise books (p.34).

As stated above, the teacher's preparation and use of these documents are required by law by the employer of teachers (TSC) in Kenya. Two of these documents are reviewed next.

### *Schemes of work*

This document defines work to be done in the classroom for a specific period. It is commonly prepared beforehand by subject teachers to cover a school term (Ong'ondo & Borg, 2011). On average, it lasts three months, three times a year in Kenyan primary and secondary schools with holiday breaks between them. A teacher's scheme of work is, therefore, is a plan of action to facilitate the organisation of teaching ahead of time (Wanjiku, 2013). It is a forecast of what the instructor considers appropriate for the class to cover within the given period based on the topics already provided in the syllabus (KIE, 2002).

Some of the salient features of a syllabus are a sequential listing of tasks and relating content to support materials. Wanjiku (2013) contends that a teacher must bear in mind some important considerations while preparing a scheme of work; one is a thorough understanding of the subject's syllabus and its content to achieve the set objectives. This helps the teacher first, to implement the curriculum. Secondly, there is familiarity

with the reference materials in the form of teachers' guides, pupils' textbooks, and other resources to facilitate adequate coverage of the content of the topics. It also aids in the appropriate allocation of time for each topic and revision purposes. The third one is time estimation by accommodating interruptions such as mid-term breaks, public holidays, examination periods, and co-curricular activities.

The main components of a scheme of work will include subject, class level, term, and year. Other elements recorded in columns are week, lesson number, topic, sub-topic, objectives, content, teacher's and learners' activities, teaching/ learning aids, resources, and remarks (KIE, 2002). For every lesson per week, information is recorded in rows and columns until termly requirements are exhausted.

Preparation and use of the scheme of work (Mwamuye, Mulambe, Mrope & Cherutich, 2012) have been associated with sequential teaching and resulted in improved achievement in primary schools' academic performance (Mbugua, Reche, & Riungu 2012). There have also been reports that lack of preparation of the schemes of work and lesson plans or when not up to date (Nyagah & Irungu, 2013) contributes to adverse negative effects on schools' academic performance. Another essential document prepared by a teacher of English (and all others) is the lesson plan.

### ***Lesson plan***

It is a teacher's description of the learning trajectory or course of instruction of a given lesson (Mbugua, Reche, & Riungu 2012). This is done daily to guide class learning (Wanjiku, 2013) and to attain the set objectives. It is developed from the scheme of work with content sourced from reference materials. The details will vary based on the subject, class level, content, methodology, and learners' needs. Before lesson planning, a teacher needs to classify the desired learning outcomes to guide in the maintenance

of a standard teaching pattern and to deter a deviation from the subject matter. Pre-planning also aids in equipping the teacher (Mwamuye, Mulambe, Mrope & Cherutich, 2012) in readiness for questions that may be asked by pupils and thus avoid potentially embarrassing situations of being 'caught off-guard.'

Well-designed lesson plans help to meet learner needs from the onset of instruction (Courey, Tappe, Siker & LePage, 2012). It also makes it possible for the teacher to attend to learners with vast differences in writing abilities and other language skills. This is to facilitate their participation and inclusivity. Besides, lesson planning helps teachers meet the challenges of diverse learner populations through the incorporation of "... flexible instructional materials, techniques, and strategies" (Courey et al. 2012:11).

A basic and effective lesson plan has three essential components (Setyawan, 2014). One of them is the aims and objectives of the lesson. It regards what the learners should be able to 'take away' by the end of the class. Next are the teaching and learning activities. This is to ascertain that learners understand the content, and thus, the teacher prepares to use a variety of teaching methods and approaches. Time management is put into focus to complete all that is planned within the set time. The third one is on assessment, which serves to check learner understanding after the planning and learning activities are accomplished. Assessment may be in the form of oral or written questions towards the end of the lesson (Richards & Renadya, 2002; Reed & Mauchad, 2010; Tomlinson, 2014).

A well-trained teacher should be able to enjoy planning for teaching. By having a lesson plan, a teacher can efficiently manage his time, effort, and resources. In addition, it helps in saving much time in the coming years since the lesson plan developed can be

applied several times without forgetting to update it. It also enables variation of activities, methods, and materials to keep out lesson monotony and redundancy. Furthermore, lesson plans help teachers to achieve the set goals and objectives, instil self-confidence, and at the same time, get rid of potential problems. However, developing a lesson plan can be challenging to do and requires effort, energy, and time to accomplish.

In the Kenyan context, lesson plans have varying formats suited to each subject but generally adopt a given design. KICD (2017b) provides guidelines on the stages of an ideal lesson plan: It begins with learning organisation, which indicates where learning will take place, be it in a classroom, outside, under a tree, in a library, or even in a farm, among others. Next is the introduction that should arouse learner curiosity. It is where the teacher integrates learners' prior experience and knowledge to prepare them for additional content to be introduced. Next is the lesson development, which forms the actual teaching of the content area. It is subdivided into steps that each has a central idea or experience, indicating how both teachers and learners will undertake the concepts. Teaching and learning activities anticipated will be varied as the need arises.

The conclusion stage is a summary where an emphasis on primary points and concepts are consolidated. It is a wrap up of the lesson to enable learners to organise the content obtained into meaningful context in their minds. Techniques used include: asking questions, learners seeking clarification, a summary of main points, and giving of assignments. The final stage is the lesson reflection. It is a critical analysis of learning where the teacher makes an honest assessment of his/ her performance and that of learners (Mbugua, Reche, & Riungu 2012; Ong'ondo & Borg, 2011). Key questions to ask are: *How successful was the lesson?* and *what could I have done to make it better?*

(KICD, 2017b, p. 30). Possible reasons for successes and failures encountered and remedies are highlighted in this section.

From the preceding, lesson planning has various benefits. It helps the teachers prepare the teaching and learning materials in advance since it is possible to identify teaching aids that will be of relevance to the lesson. A well planned and executed lesson allows saving of time to attend to learners who may require additional support (Ashcraft, 2014). A sense of control and direction is established when teaching as well as equipping the teacher with self-confidence. Planning also enables the teacher to create a conducive learning environment in the classroom, which encourages learner participation and thus remove invisible communication obstacles (Syomwene, 2016). Early preparation inspires learners who are young and dependant on the teacher and therefore set a good example for them to emulate in other disciplines later in life. The next subsection is a review of instructional techniques.

### ***2.2.3.3 Instructional techniques for composition writing.***

This study identified and reviewed some of the relevant instructional techniques on the teaching of composition writing. Available literature indicates that globally, teachers of English prefer some form of communication, teaching and learning techniques (Dearden, 2014). However, a successful teacher is not biased in favour of one technique or another and should be competent and comfortable with the available techniques for use. Dockrell, Marshall, & Wyse (2016), Gakori (2015) and Teshome, Bezabih, Admassu, & Wolyie (2017) all indicate that teachers have different techniques, which can be used to improve learners' writing and other language skills. Therefore, a diligent teacher continuously learns new techniques and knows the new directions in the teaching of English.

From the preceding, English composition writing can be taught using a variety of techniques. The prevalent practise in Kenyan primary schools involve; writing the topic of the composition on the chalkboard, discussing the story plan, and then allowing pupils to write the essay using either the individualised or the group/cooperative/collaborative techniques. Adera, Kochung, Adoyo, and Matu (2016) recommend that teaching English composition writing to learners in Kenya should begin at Class 1 level to focus on mastery of pronouns as cohesive ties prior knowledge of the world and sentence structure. There is, therefore, a need to integrate different strategies in class to develop learners' composition writing skills. Some of the techniques include use of the expository technique (lecture), task-based technique, questioning technique, experiential technique (building on learner experience) and collaborative techniques (group work, brainstorming, problem-solving technique, learner participation). Each of these is briefly elaborated below.

A group work technique is an approach where the language teacher engages learners in groups to initiate deliberations on the given task. Group participation and the shared thought process will have a say at the end of the interaction, resulting in improved performance (Otunga et al., 2011). In this approach, assignments are done and handled by the teams. The main focus is the involvement of learners to enhance their approach to language learning and their adaptability. Positive interdependence, working for the group/team's success, both as an individual and group-wise accountability, focus on unified performance, emphasis on teamwork skills, and collaborative work pattern – are some of the salient features of this approach (Grove, 2018). The teacher takes the place of a facilitator, and learners explore the avenues to learn the language elements. Language learning, group behaviour, contribution to the group, among other aspects, are practically on usage.

Learner participation is another technique whereby the language teacher enables learners to get involved in course-related activities rather than just listening to the instructor individually. This approach encourages learners to think individually and respond differently through active involvement. It energises the entire class and makes it curious to know how innovatively or differently the pupil responds on a given task and encourages the spirit of competitiveness among the learners. In an enthusiastic mood, the learners voluntarily get involved in the learning process, bringing out solutions to the problems adduced by the language teacher (Dunlosky, Rawson, Marsh, Nathan, & Willingham, 2013).

Building on learner experience is a technique where the teacher asks questions to support learners in eliciting correct responses. It helps learners to think critically and work towards mastery of content. Most probing questions are open-ended and are designed for deep thought on a specific topic. English language has four types of probing questions: yes, or no questions, use of wh-words (what, when, where, which, whom, whose, why, who, and how), choice questions, and tag or tail questions. The language teacher asks questions on a particular context for learners to develop their thoughts and views to ventilate upon their opinions in response (Bada & Olusegun, 2015).

The task-based technique is mainly based on tasks as part of the core unit of planning and instruction in language teaching. The focus is heavily on the process of communication than on the delivery of the final product (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Here, traditional grammar methods, structural grammar methods, etc. are not in focus, but instead, this method compels learners to take part in the task given by the teacher. Learners have no grammatical barriers to deter them from expressing their ideas.



Hence, they, to a large extent, shun their inhibitions and take part in the deliberations voluntarily in an attempt to be successful on the tasks given (Chiu, 2011). The language teacher acts as a facilitator. At times, lessons become competitive by nature among the learners, forcing them to actively take part in a given task, thus enhancing the zeal to learn more (Prasad, 2014).

The expository (lecture) technique is used by teachers of English to develop listening and speaking skills, which is paramount to developing writing skills. This is attending and interpreting oral English. The student listens to oral speech in English, then separates into segments, the stretch of utterances he hears, groups them into words, phrases and sentences and finally, understands the message that these carry (Casanave, 2013). Through the lecture method, internal thinking and reasoning are carried out. Students listen in order to repeat and understand. In listening to the lecture, students imitate and memorise linguistic items such as words, idioms, and sentences.

Learners listen to understand as part of using English for the communicative purpose (Sevik, 2012). Sevik further points out that in listening to understand, learners may be involved in the question-oriented response model or in the task-oriented model of learning. In the question-oriented response, students may be asked to listen to a sentence, a dialogue, a conversation or lecture, and asked to answer questions presented. The constructs obtained from the listening sessions will be useful in writing.

Another technique is problem-solving. This technique attempts to address language problems through the process of learning and unfolds the problem aspects through the application of knowledge and skills, intending to solve them. In the communicative approach, the teacher does not look at the language learning as a set of linguistic patterns to store in learners' memory. Instead, the teacher aims at developing learner

communicative competence (Andersen, 2013). The language teacher intelligently involves the set of learners, who feel shy about involvement to learn a particular language item, to find a solution to the language problem (Habrat, 2018).

Brainstorming is one of the essential techniques in provoking creativity and problem-solving in the educational, commercial, industrial, and political fields (Al-Khatib, 2012). The goal is to pour out thoughts onto paper without worrying whether they make sense or not even how they fit together (Fleming, 2014). In this strategy, learners build on a given topic, which helps them develop creative thinking to spark other ideas further. Brainstorming is designed to facilitate lateral thinking. It is based on the premise that the brain is a pattern recognition machine. Human beings interact with their environment in patterned ways, and it can sometimes get challenging to move beyond these patterns and develop creative problem-solving solutions (Bickhard, 2013). It is a useful tool to generate ideas or find answers to a given situation.

Moreover, brainstorming in class motivates students to express their ideas and thoughts on a subject freely. Since there are no wrong or right answers, the sessions provide students with a platform where they can voice their opinions without fear of failure. These sessions give the class a chance to tap into their prior knowledge and form connections between the current topic and what they have already learned. It also encourages them to listen and consider others' ideas, showing respect for their classmates (Hammar, 2014).

Besides the above techniques, available literature identifies other teaching and learning activities associated with English language composition writing. These include group discussion, brainstorming (which has been considered both as a technique and an activity), small group discussions, drafting, revision, process writing, use of poems and

stories. Otunga et al. (2011) identify the discussion, brainstorming (discussed above), and small group discussion as some of the other types of significant classroom activities. Terms like brainstorming, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing are useful while talking about the parts of the writing process, which do not necessarily occur in a fixed order for individual writers in specific situations (Williamson, 2015). Otunga and colleagues state that discussions involve either large or small groups of learners and that teachers may use this method to encourage the pooling of ideas and to come up with conclusions to build upon the knowledge already acquired.

A small group discussion strategy on its' part makes use of a limited number of participants to explore several ideas through the learning process. It allows for participation by all learners and reaches consensus with ease (Otunga et al. 2011). They state that teachers may use this activity to encourage the pooling of ideas and to come up with conclusions to build upon the knowledge already acquired.

The next classroom activity is about drafting. As students have been working on their ideas, they have made a series of choices that would make them feel "prepared" to put them in a more complete and coherent form. Nonetheless, for most writers, the challenging moments of real "writing" begin at this point. Stints of feeling that they "have ideas" but have trouble "getting them on the page" will still pop out. Some will suddenly be plunged into "writing a paper" mode, constrained and guided by their assumptions about what an assignment asks them to do, what academic writing is, and what prior experience has taught them about writing for teachers. The exercises may ease their entry into shaping their ideas for an assignment (Prasad, 2014). Drafting activity is closely followed by revision.

Revision is the process of making changes and improvements to a piece of written discourse at the overall structural and/ or paragraph levels (Sparks, Song, Brantley & Liu, 2014). It is distinct from its rhetorical 'cousin,' editing, which is the process of changing and correcting words and sentences within a written text. Revision is a recursive process and is not a final or penultimate stage in creating texts. Writers continually revise their work as they write and not necessarily after a draft is done (Archibald, 2011). As a rule, mature writers edit and revise their work while immature writers edit but give revision short shrift. In their study of revising practices, Berg (2015) found those beginning writers are inclined to proofread than revise their texts. However, successful writers composed texts that had a specific purpose, a goal to achieve, and when they revised, did so to clarify and enhance meaning (Berg, 2015).

There are several reasons as to why writers revise texts. They revise to: clarify the purpose; consolidate the thesis of their text; search for the best way to impose order and structure onto their work that will best help readers follow along and understand the content of the text; add the information, the examples, details, definitions, comparisons, contrasts, causes, and effects their readers need; and to eliminate the content readers would find superfluous. The writers undertake all aspects of the writing process for the benefit of their readers to make their texts "reader-friendly," but no component of the process is more selfless than revision (Archibald, 2011).

The use of poems has been left out of writing lessons in the classroom. Yet, it can be instrumental in learning English as leading authorities in English Language Teaching (ELT) agree that poetry stimulates [and] wakes learners up to see things in new ways, and think of things anew (Scrivener, 2011). Poetry offers numerous options to become creative. These include short and long poems, song lyrics, acrostic poems, drama, or

rhymes, with all of them allowing students to play with language and discover themselves and their abilities. Crystal (2010) stresses that poetry ought to be presented to all children as a natural expressive medium as soon as they enrol in school. Therefore, poetry forms offer learners several features that are especially useful in practising their language skills (Khatib & Meihami, 2015). Using poetry in teaching writing in English; therefore, according to Armbruster (2010), is beneficial and worth trying.

Students of this calibre often begin their sentences with subjects, though have at their disposal other effective strategies to form sentences, in the interest, again, of rhythm, variety, and cohesion. They have vocabularies that are expansive enough to select appropriate, concrete, and specific words for various rhetorical contexts and to adhere rigorously to the conventions of Standard English. Robust student writers tend to be cautious and conservative in figurative language, occasionally quoting metaphors used by source authors but shunning figurative language themselves (Myhill, 2018). Their work has that upright, official tone that their rigorous observance to the conventions of Standard English begets. However, its correctness may be undermined in the right way by using a first or second-person point-of-view. This helps deflect criticism that the style is too remote, unfriendly, pompous, or showy (Soles, 2006).

Another activity in composition writing is the use of stories. Short stories, fables, fairy tales, mysteries, or horror stories can be chosen, depending on the topic and season. By writing stories, learners gradually learn preparation, drafting, and editing techniques, which are important issues that should have enough attention in both mother tongue lessons as well as the foreign language ones. Babae (2015) posits that stories are used to practice in all kinds of language. In a good essay, places are described as well as people, write dialogues using different voices, make things happen, and show the results

and causes of things. Story writing also offers students the opportunity to practice both formal and informal writing because short stories can have many different settings and plots. By composing a story, learners train memory and practice clarity as well. It will, therefore, develop the enhancement of composition skills.

Evidence exists, which indicates that the quantities of time students are provided for instruction always have a positive consequence on their accomplishment. Students that take a large percentage of their time in learning activities premeditated to enhance their knowledge and skill enhance their chances of raising those skills more than students that spend less time in such activities (Gak, *Textbook—An Important Element in the Teaching Process.*, 2011).

This study investigated whether the instructional techniques and activities reviewed above are in use and to ascertain their effectiveness in the teaching of English composition writing. It was followed by another aspect to be put into consideration, which is the implication of learning materials in English composition writing lessons.

#### ***2.2.3.4 Learning materials in composition writing.***

The literature on the selection of teaching and learning materials in composition writing in English language was reviewed in this subsection. However, available literature was on the use of textbooks and pictures, whereas, choice of improvised materials, use of real objects, internet, charts, and other materials such as newspapers, magazines, and storybooks were hardly available. These were part of the rationale that prompted the need to conduct the present study.

Learning materials make learning more enjoyable and exciting to the students since they provide practical experience that stimulates self-activity and creativity among the students (Carr, Éireann, Cliath, & Rúnaí, 2007). The materials also offer a concrete

foundation for abstract thoughts, thus reducing pointless word responses from students. Resources, therefore, as underscored by Okwara (2012) are not an adjunct, but an integral part of the learning situation. Their availability offers opportunities to the teacher. Lack of resources imposes the restriction that may mean that pupils cannot be taught by the methods that would otherwise be the most suitable. Hence, the provision of sufficient learning materials and teaching aids would enhance the teaching and learning process. The constant interaction of students and teachers in learning may significantly determine student performance.

According to Kukulska, Hulme, and Norris (2017), authentic resources help learners explore verbal and written communication in everyday life customised to meet their needs and interests. Further, UNESCO (2010) noted that availing the teaching and learning resources, particularly books, is a valuable way of improving results. Nevertheless, the UNESCO world education report indicated that harsh conditions exist in many countries concerning the infrastructural state of schools, access to training materials, class sizes, or the dynamic distinctiveness of the learners' population. This lack of sufficient resources could result in poor performance in English and, to a large extent, the overall academic performance.

The presence and utilisation of training materials influence the efficacy of a teacher's lesson. Moreover, Kiveli, (2013) observed that the ingenious use of an assortment of media in teaching enhances the likelihood of the student to learn more, preserve better what they learn and improve their achievement on the skills that they are projected to develop. Additionally, Kotut (2016) acknowledged that little children could understand conceptual ideas if provided with enough resources and practical experience with the event they are to comprehend. Thus, a variety of teaching materials enhances the ability of the students to grasp the curriculum content.

Textbooks give an outstanding contribution to the teaching-learning process both to the teachers and to learners. Textbooks help pupils to trail the teacher's order of presentation and assist in understanding the lessons (Amalu & Abang, 2016; Gak, 2011; Kotut, 2016). They offer a framework to guide and orient. However, apart from numerous benefits, a single textbook frequently does not meet the diverse needs of the learners and may not contain all the desired learning experiences (Gak, 2011; Syomwene, 2016b). It generates a need for textbook adaptation at the activity, unit, and syllabus levels. Adapting provides teachers with the opportunity to make greater use of their professional skills and to be involved in the learning process (Gak, 2011).

The use of pictures in composition writing has also been identified as a resource by Jumba, Etyang, and Ondigi (2015). Since composition writing involves an aspect of imagination, creativity, and thought processes that must be fully utilised, appropriate techniques must, therefore, be employed to aid learners in writing with ease. Syomwene (2016a) signifies that the use of pictures is instrumental in providing good opportunities to elicit a language. Therefore, for learners to write suitable compositions effectively, teachers must provide the relevant resources to aid the learner. A review of the implication of teacher assessment used in developing learner competencies in composition writing in English language was done next.

#### ***2.2.3.5 Assessment procedure in composition writing.***

In this subsection, a discussion was done on assessment strategies used in developing writing skills in English language through composition writing. It begins with an understanding of what assessment is, followed by teachers' considerations in the assessment of composition writing.



Assessment is among the cornerstones of the educational process and yet perceptions and needs related to it continue to evolve depending on the context (Hatipoglu, 2015). As adduced to by Jabbarifar (2009), classroom assessment entails questions developed, administered, and analysed by the teacher to gain feedback on the effectiveness of instruction and to measure learner progress. Jabbarifar identifies four components associated with assessment: 1) measuring improvement over a while; 2) motivating pupils to learn; 3) evaluating teaching methods; and 4) ranking of pupils' capabilities compared to the whole class. Graham, Harris & Herbert (2011) indicate that the purposes of teacher assessment are to monitor learner progress, inform instruction, provide feedback, and to judge teaching effectiveness. Assessment in this study relates to teachers' strategies to examine the level of learner performance in composition writing in English language.

As indicated above, the primary purpose of writing assessment is to improve writing. Therefore, teachers must be careful on how to assess learners' writing as it has consequences. It is succinctly put forth by Graham, Harris & Herbert (2011) in the quote below;

... The types of assessments that teachers typically undertake influence what and how writing is taught, what kind of feedback students receive about their writing, and which students get extra help from teachers. Because assessment is evaluative, teacher assessments impact students' grades and perception of their writing competence (p.15).

Schinske and Tanner (2014) identified three types of classroom assessments. The first is the 'sizing-up' assessments, usually done in the first week of school, to provide the teacher with fast information about learners when beginning their instruction. The second type, instructional assessments, is used for the daily tasks of planning teaching, giving feedback, and monitoring learner progress. The third type is referred to as

official assessments, which are the periodic formal functions of evaluation, for grouping, grading, and reporting. Teachers use assessment to identify strengths and weaknesses, to plan instruction to fit analysed needs, evaluate instructional activities, give feedback, monitor performance, and report progress.

According to Cremin, Myhill, Eyres, Nash, Wilson, and Oliver (2018), a teacher's first responsibility is to provide opportunities for writing and to encourage students who attempt writing. A teacher's second responsibility is to develop learners' success in writing. The teacher does this by critically monitoring students' writing to assess strengths and weaknesses while teaching specific skills and applying strategies in response to student needs and giving detailed feedback that will enhance newly learned skills and correct recurring problems. These responsibilities reveal that assessment is an integral part of good instruction and an essential component of effective teaching (Angelo & Cross, 2012).

An effective writing process should, therefore, lead to a successful product. The writing product fulfils its' communicative intent if it is of appropriate length, is logical and coherent, and has a readable format (Hasan & Akhand, 2010; Pasand & Haghi, 2013; Hashemnezhad & Hashemnezhad, 2012). It is pleasurable to read if it is composed of well-constructed sentences and a wide variety of words that convey the author's meaning. Often, teachers focus their attention primarily on surface features of a learner's composition related to the mechanical aspects of writing, or conventions while content and communication aspects are ignored (Adeyemi, 2012). A balanced assessment should consider all five elements of a student's writing.

To make instructional relevant observations, the observer must work from a conceptual model of the writing process. Educators have reached a little consensus about the

number of steps in the writing process. Some writing experts have proposed as few as two (Elbow, 1983) and as many as nine (Frank & Goodman, 2014). Harris, Graham, MacArthur, Reid, & Mason (2011) provided a model of a five-step writing process by using the acronym POWER: Plan, Organise, Write, Edit, and Revise. Each step has its sub-steps and strategies that get more sophisticated as the students get mature as writers, accommodating their style to specific structures and writing purposes. This study shall not get into the details of this model.

Assessment of the writing process could be done by way of observation of students as they go through the steps of writing (Azarnoosh, 2013; Daskalogiannaki, 2012; Lee, 2011). Having students assess their writing process is also essential for two reasons. First, self-assessment allows students to observe and reflect on their approach, drawing attention to meaningful steps which may be overlooked. The second is self-assessment following a conceptual model like POWER, which is a means of internalising an explicit strategy, giving room for the student to rehearse the strategy steps (Trisnaningsih, 2017) mentally.

DeVoss, Eidman-Aadahl, and Hicks (2010) adduce several benefits that accrue from a practical assessment of writing. Learners' writing improves: when teachers and peers provide learners with information about the effectiveness of their writing; when pupils are taught to evaluate their writing; and when teachers monitor the progress of pupils continuously. Learner improvement occurs where teachers do not allow factors such as handwriting to judge the quality of students' writing. Finally, improvement occurs when assessment adopts procedures that ensure specific aspects of writing, and its primary attributes are measured reliably.

In the conclusion of this section, the assessment of learners is a mandatory legal requirement underpinned in the Kenyan law (Teachers Service Commission, 2015a). It requires teachers to evaluate learners honestly based on their performance. However, honesty remains a subjective attribute that is difficult to measure (Bullough, 2011; Santoro, 2011). Next is a review of specific desired competencies in composition writing within the primary school context in Kenya.

#### **2.2.4 Learner Competencies in English Language Composition Writing.**

This subsection discusses learner competencies in composition writing in English language. As alluded to in chapter one of this study, writing in this context refers to the use of desired skills for expressive communication in English language through composition writing. Compositions in English subject seeks to test a learner's command of the language, and the ability to communicate fluently in written form (Daily Nation, March 30, 2020). Besides, skills acquired in composition writing come in handy for a lifetime. This article cautions that there are people who miss out on life-changing opportunities due to the inability to express themselves in writing.

Learners (writers) need to be equipped further with specific desired skills to achieve competencies in English language composition writing. The anticipated composition skills facilitating effective communication and enrichment of texts reflected as dependent variables have been captured in this study's conceptual framework. They include prewriting organisation, thematic choice and development, note-taking, character development, sequencing, coherence, cohesion, sentence structures, spellings, punctuations, paragraphing, and handwriting (KICD, 2017a; KNEC 2018; MOE, 2012b). Successful writers have attained proficiency by manipulating these techniques in their compositions (KNEC, 2016; 2017; 2018). A brief description of each as related to this study is given below.

As indicated earlier, the prewriting organisation involves silent thinking, clustering, and outlining strategies (Maolida & Mustika, 2018). It refers to '... conscious thoughts, actions, or behaviours used by writers at the planning phase' (Shafiee, Koosha & Afghari, 2015:115) under different conditions. Shafiee et al. established that prewriting organisation has a significant impact on the quantity of writing and resulted in the better final product. They noted further writing in a new language is most demanding for novice writers (who struggle to find words in addition to remembering grammatical structures) to achieve communicative competence.

Prewriting strategies, including brainstorming and organising ideas, provide a scaffold for young writers as they plan what to write and how to write. Prewriting organisation thus contributes to the reduction of the burden of information-processing during the actual writing process, generation of content, and the creation of an organised structure of compositions (Limpo & Alves, 2013).

Choice of words (vocabulary) is another strategy that supports successful communication. Vocabulary concerns not just correctly spelt words but also the use of the intended words (Olinghouse & Leaird, 2009). Written words (just like spoken) are used to communicate thoughts, ideas, and emotions within our surrounding. A strong vocabulary is evident when a learner has a repertoire of synonyms to choose the appropriate words from and thus be able to write descriptively. In addition, it enables learners (writers) to suit vocabulary to the target audience as well as create variety in sentences and paragraphs to sustain readers' interest.

Writing, demands the use of transitional phrases, linking words, among others, which demands persistent practice (Fisher & Frey, 2014). Therefore, teachers of English need to be equipped with skills on how learners could develop vocabulary and apply to

composition writing (<https://www.time4writing.com/articles-about-writing/vocabulary/>).

Thematic choice and development entail that which the clause concerns (Halliday, 2014). It is the starting point of a message. It is how texts are constructed to make them fit into an unfolding language event (Thomson, 2014). The clause is followed by a Rheme, which is part of the information that the text presents. What comes first is critical as it raises some expectations from the reader about the Theme and Rheme. Therefore, as texts unfold, Themes connect to the Themes and Rhemes of previous clauses through repetition of important concepts and developing them. These connections develop progressive patterns and development (Jing, 2015).

The skill of Thematic choice and development is essential for English composition writing to enable learners to write coherent sentences. Second language learners, however, do not have the advantage of native speakers who learn coherent discourse as they grow in language learning. EFL/ESL learners are challenged in the positioning of the Theme and to continually raise and develop key concepts (Hawe & Thomas, 2012).

Note-taking entails the ability to record and hold information in working memory (MM) while deciding which content to retain or discard (Boyle, 2010). The working memory can manipulate data for a limited amount of time (Bui & Myerson, 2014). It is a challenging but essential skill since pupils use at least three senses of sight, sound, and touch to benefit while processing the materials (Quintus, Borr, Duffield & Welch, 2012). This activity, sometimes combined with the lecture method, has been useful in creating and developing a writing environment (Graham, Gillespie & McKeown, 2013).

Character development, as the words suggest, involves using creativity by sequentially building up a captivating story rubric revolving around an imaginary personality or character (Olinghouse & Wilson, 2013). This entails providing details that make characters individual and particular, thus making characters vivid, alive, and credible. It is a critical feature in short story writing through the creation of conflicts, tensions, and resolutions (Schneiderman, 2015) and, thus, enriching composition writing.

Sequencing encompasses the notion of selecting and ordering words, sentences, and paragraphs (Batholomae, 2013) to avoid repetition and mixing up events in an essay. It requires the writer to organise the story for clarity and develop a logical flow of ideas, which in turn makes it easy to draw the reader's attention. Generally, composition writing at the upper primary anticipates a story to be organised in three main parts, namely an introduction, the main part, and a conclusion. Sequencing is, therefore, a critical aspect of the writing process.

Cohesion and coherence in sentences and paragraphs require learners to be obedient to and have regard to their syntactic rules (Palupi, Subiyantoro & Rukaya, 2019). Specifically, coherence is the connection of ideas at the idea level, whereas cohesion is the connection of ideas at the sentence level. Further, cohesion is a vital textual component in creating organised texts and rendering the content logical to the reader (Ghasemi, 2013). **Fluency** (Sentence structure) pertains to how sentences are grammatically arranged and are devoid of syntactic errors (Fareed, Ashraf & Bilal, 2016) to develop the flow of a story. This helps to create a suitable style for the subject matter and to the target readers (Alfaki, 2015).

Mechanics of writing are conventions that govern the technical components of writing and include the strategies of spelling, punctuation, and paragraphing (Nordquist, 2020).

Correct spelling (ordering of letters in a word) and handwriting (an act of writing with the hand for legibility), are essential ingredients to written expression (Puranik & ALOtaiba, 2012) in that they enhance the quality of young learners' texts (Graham, Gillespie & Mckeown, 2013). Both facilitate fluency in reading as they (and specifically, handwriting) enhance visual perception of letters. Besides, handwriting is a predictor of success that positively impacts grades and has both cognitive and motor benefits (McFarland, 2015). However, some 'writers' have been known to limit their writing to words that they are conversant with (Muslim,2014).

Punctuation, alongside correct spelling, remains critical towards the development of literate writers and are pertinent in composition writing improvement at Senior (Upper) primary school (Daffern, McKenzie & Hemmings, 2017). Okari (2016) enumerates three basic punctuation marks that must be taught at the primary school level: a full stop at the end of each sentence; a question mark after every question; and a comma where there is a pause for a moment. However, one study (Said, 2018) has noted that much attention to punctuation and spelling may distract the writers' concentration and flow of ideas. This discussion is outside the scope of the current study and will not be delved further.

Finally, paragraphing, which is the art of dividing texts into paragraphs to signal shifts in thinking, is a strategy of making it visible to the reader, the stages of the writer's thinking (Nordquist, 2019). It is a written convention where texts are broken by white space to denote a new paragraph (Goodman, 2014). Besides, Heurley (2014) indicated that the role of paragraphing is to 'create or to suggest periodic rhythms in texts' and is also a 'pattern maker.' A well-paragraphed essay signals a well-organised writer (Guang, 2017) and is an avenue of scoring high marks (in this case) in composition writing.



Despite the role played by mechanics of writing, the use of traditional, product-oriented approach by teachers tends to emphasise the technical aspects of writing with little attention paid to individual writer's communicative proficiencies (Nordquist, 2020). As a summary, learner competencies in composition writing are rated and based on the variables reviewed. The next section reviewed related theories and concepts that were deemed applicable to this study.

### **2.3 Review of Related Theories and Concepts**

In chapter one (see 1.12), a brief introduction was made on the related theories that underpinned this study. In this section, a further review was done on related literature on the Communicative Language Teaching, which was the leading theory. Other theories reviewed were: The Competency-Based Language Teaching and the Social Constructivist Theory, which all espouse the tenets of CLT in relation to this study.

The present study interrogated the implication of instruction in developing learner competencies in composition writing for effective communication. Therefore, there was a need to review the literature on related theories and concepts from multiple theoretical perspectives (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). Applicable to this study, Ong'ondo (2017c) identified various theory categories that include, levels of approaches and methods of teaching such as grammar translation, audio-lingualism, and communicative approach as well as the level of techniques on areas such as pair or group work, among others. First, is a review of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in the teaching of English language writing skills.

#### **2.3.1 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)**

In this review, a brief description and background of CLT are discussed, followed by a highlight of its main tenets concerning the writing skills as advanced by a few scholars. According to Richards and Rodgers (2014), CLT is a theory of language teaching that

begins from a communicative model (design) for language, and language to influence four elements: First is the instructional system which entails the design of the syllabus and the types of teaching and learning activities. Second, is the use of instructional materials which are broken down in three categories, namely the text-based, task-based materials, and the realia. Third, is the role of the teacher and learner together with their behaviours. A teacher has more roles to perform, which include being a needs analyst, counsellor, and a group process manager. Finally, are the classroom activities and techniques which include group activities, language games, and role-plays.

CLT has been described as an approach to teaching foreign languages, which emphasises interaction as a means and ultimate goal of learning a language to enable learners to communicate effectively in the target language (Desai, 2015). Maryslessor, Barasa & Omulando, (2014), as indicated earlier by Ong'ondo (2005), assert that CLT starts from a theory of language as communication whose goal of teaching is to develop communicative competence. Communicative, as elaborated by Vongxay (2013), is what a person needs to know to communicate effectively. Thornbury (2016) argues that CLT is not limited to oral skills only but influences reading and writing skills to promote student confidence.

CLT was a British innovation that arose in the 1970s as a reaction to L2 learners' inability to communicate effectively despite their ability to read and write well in the target language. The predecessor of CLT was Situational Language Teaching, which focused on practising basic structures in meaningful situation-based activities (Uys, Reyneke, & Kaiser, 2011). Chomsky's theories in the 1960s focused on competence and performance in language learning that gave rise to communicative language teaching (Chomsky, 2006). However, the conceptual basis for CLT was laid in the

1970s by linguist Michael Halliday who conducted a study on how language functions are expressed through grammar, and Dell Hymes, who introduced the idea of a broader communicative competence, thus expounding of Chomsky's narrower linguistic competence. The rise of CLT in the 1970s and the early 1980s was partly due to the lack of success with formal language teaching methods and partly due to the increase in demand for language learning (Chang, 2011).

Lately, the British and American scholars regard CLT as an approach (as opposed to a method) whose twin aim is to i) make communicative competence the goal of language teaching, and ii) develop procedures to teach the four language skills that appreciates the independence of language and communication (Koosha & Yakhabi, 2013). It concurs with Desai (2015) who assert that CLT is to make learners attain accuracy and appropriateness in language use in both spoken and written forms. Desai highlights some vital principles of CLT as follows:

- i) The main focus is to enable learners to understand the intention and expressions of writers and speakers.
- ii) Communicative functions are more vital than linguistic structures by combining functional and structural aspects of language.
- iii) The target language is judiciously used in the classroom as a vehicle for communication.
- iv) Emphasis is on appropriate language use rather than accuracy, which is assumed to come automatically later.
- v) All language skills should be integrated into teaching as opposed to developing a particular one per time.

- vi) Language should be learnt within social interaction by struggling to communicate in the target language (Richards & Rodgers, 1986). Rote learning does not apply to language learning
- vii) Errors made by students during language use are tolerated with a view of correcting them later.
- viii) Teacher-student and student-student interaction are encouraged for cooperative relationships. Group assignments are given to enhance communication.
- ix) Language use in a social context is entrenched by the teacher, giving learners to engage in activities like role play.
- x) The importance is given to functional aspects of language through language teaching techniques such as drama that promote real and authentic communication (Larsen- Freeman, 2002:128).

From the above principles, CLT contributes to the development of writing skills to enhance what has been referred to earlier as communicative competence (CC). Canale and Swain's (1980) model regards CC as the achievement of language learning in four areas: grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic appropriateness (Savignon, 2010). Grammatically, it is the effective use of grammar, vocabulary, and writing conventions to enhance meaningful communication. In sociolinguistic competence, it is the appropriateness of language used to suit a given situation, purpose, and functions, such as the use of written language for official or non-official communication such as letter writing.

Discourse competence entails mastery of understanding and production of varying types of texts that are of relevance, clarity, coherent, and cohesive. Finally, strategic

competence is the appropriate use of communicative strategies, despite the limitation in one's language knowledge in overcoming imperfections, challenges and difficulties that may lead to a breakdown in communication (Barasa & Omulando, 2014; Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Savignon, 2010; Thamarana, 2015; Ong'ondo & Barasa, 2005).

CLT, therefore, got popularised as a consequence of grammar-translation and audiolingual methods not being able to equip learners in the use of language to interpret, express, and negotiate meaning in reading and writing activities (Savignon, 2010). With the major paradigm shifts brought about by CLT, the planning stage for instruction should consider some of the changes advanced by Jacobs and Farrell (2003; cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2014). These include learner autonomy in giving them a choice to select topics to write on, promoting the social nature of learning by organising lessons to suit group work; accommodate and account for learner diversity, and propel learners to engage their thinking skills in situations that go beyond the classroom.

CLT, on instructional techniques, has moved towards an emphasis on the use of group work, task-work, information-gap activities, and projects as part and parcel of the processes. Teacher roles have changed to being facilitators of learners' language learning and monitoring of learner performance (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). For instance, it is achieved by assigning learners with writing tasks after providing guidelines, allowing organised discussions, and tracking performance periodically. The teacher intervenes as the need arises. Learner roles have also deviated from being passive listeners of instructions to a negotiator between self, the group, the class procedure, and the assigned group activities (Maryslessor, Barasa & Omulando, 2014).

On the selection of learning materials, CLT advances the use of content that is adapted from 'authentic' or real-life situations such as materials from newspapers and

magazines. Therefore, these materials make classroom situation parallel to the 'real world,' thus linking learning to everyday activities (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). This hopefully creates learner interest as it connects to students' lives. From the following quote, Savignon (2010) elaborates on the application of CLT in developing materials and methods that suit a given situation;

... In keeping with the notion of context of the situation, CLT is properly seen as an approach or theory of intercultural communicative competence to be used in developing materials and methods appropriate to a given situation (p. 645).

On assessment, CLT applies to this study as it focusses on process writing rather than giving attention to the end product. Savignon asserts that assessment seems to be a significant motivation for any curricular innovation. She adds that learners need to prepare for a test that they must pass, and as a consequence, their performance reflects on teaching effectiveness. However, Savignon rightly argues that tests cannot "*adequately capture the context-embedded collaboration that is the stuff of human communicative activity*" (p. 649). Therefore, in composition writing, the teacher encourages the production of several drafts for continuous improvement. The use of small groups is also useful for self-assessment (Jacobs & Farrell, 2003; cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2014). It is thus, a shift from product-oriented to process-oriented instruction (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

In conclusion, language, according to CLT, is inseparable from individual identity and social behaviour. Language, therefore, defines a community, the same way a community likewise defines the form and use of that same language (Savignon, 2010).

Next was a review of the Social Constructivist Theory.

### **2.3.2 Social Constructivist Theory.**

This review addresses a brief history of social constructivist theory, its central tenets, and the application to the teaching of writing skills. Fahmy and Lagowsky (2011) trace historical roots of modern constructivist ideas to the 18th-century philosopher, Giambattista Vico, who maintained that humans could only understand what they have constructed. The "modern" roots of constructivism go back to Jean Piaget, who, for the first time in 1955, used the term "constructivist." John Dewey, Von Glasersfeld, Vygotsky, and Bruner are among the scholars who contributed to these ideas (Fahmy & Lagowski, 2011). From this theory, tenets have emerged that relate to classroom situations to facilitate effective learning.

Vygotsky (1978; cited in Mckinley, 2015), in particular, assert that human development is socially situated such that knowledge is constructed during interaction with others. Constructivists argue that knowledge is not always out there; it is built and not discovered (Masouleh & Jooneghari, 2012). Creswell (2009) applauds social constructivism as a useful theoretical framework in revealing insights through qualitative analysis on how human beings interact with their world. The theory contends that people's ideas coincide with their experiences and, as such, writers build on their socio-cultural sensitivity and identity (Amineh & Asl, 2015; Jia, 2010). This influences the critical thinking process and is thus a basis of construction (Mckinley, 2015).

In the constructivist approach, learning is an active process in which the learner constructs meaning by use of sensory input. Dewey stresses that the learner needs to do something since learning is not the passive acceptance of knowledge outside of the mind, but that learning involves the learner engaging with the world (Ultanir, 2012). Learning is associated with tendencies to appreciate knowledge as 'constructed' and not as 'given' (Stephens, Castanheira, Hobson, Ayot, Ondigi, Ong'ondo, & Jowi, 2017).

The teacher's role is to ascertain that he or she understands the students' pre-existing conceptions to guide the writing activity, address them, and build on them (Bishaw & Ezigiabher, 2013; Omulando & Barasa, 2014; Smagorinsky, 2013).

From the constructivist perspective, learning is also a social activity. Learning is closely associated with the students' association with others who include their teachers, peers, family members, and off-the-cuff acquaintances. The use of pair-work and group work in composition writing, therefore, makes learning a one-on-one relationship between the learner and the content to be acquired (Bishaw & Ezigiabher, 2013; Smagorinsky, 2013). Another aspect of this theory is that learning is contextual (Zeki, 2014). Learning takes place about what else is known, believed, prejudiced, and feared. Therefore, some structure is developed from prior knowledge to build on (Cobern, 2012). This suggests that prior knowledge is the foundation for new learning to take place. Ong'ondo (2017c) adds that teachers need to be aware of contextual factors that may affect pedagogy.

The constructivists also conceive that learning is not instantaneous. For substantial learning to occur, ideas need to be revisited, wondered about, tried out, played with, and used. When one reflects on anything he or she has learned, it soon dawns on one that it is the outcome of repeated exposure and thought (Bishaw & Ezigiabher, 2013). The implication is that exposure to composition writing must be done frequently to enhance desired competencies.

Another tenet of social constructivism is that L2 writing is pragmatic and steers learners into meeting immediate needs, such as understanding tasks given and structuring appropriate composition essays. This comprehension of the pragmatics of writing in the English language is easily attained through the lens of social constructivism. It also



demands the teacher's socio-cultural consciousness of the learners' position in their approaches to the writing skill. This makes it possible for necessary intervention.

The social constructivists contend that through interaction with a more knowledgeable person such as a teacher, learners can participate in their development of skills (such as writing) and attain higher competencies. It is explained by Hyland (2003, cited in McKinley, 2015), who expound that in the early stages of teaching composition writing, scaffolding is engaged through heavily assisted instruction. This massive support is relaxed at later stages to encourage learners to negotiate with the writing process through peer support and teacher feedback. This makes them develop more independence, autonomy, and finally have the ability to construct their own written texts.

Social constructivism also serves as a tool for assessment of learners' writing. The instructor's role is to help learners identify their own writing construction identity. According to Storch (2005; cited in McKinley, 2015), this collaborative relationship also helps them understand the writing process. Therefore, this theory is applicable as it emphasises how meanings and understanding of the writing process is build-out of learners' social interactions and environments.

In conclusion, the theory contends that a teacher who is too dominant in teaching may trigger tension and conflict in the classroom, which may lead to a lack of competence. Consequently, this theory advocates for wit on the part of the teacher in drawing a balance by creating a conducive 'climate' in the classroom that facilitates effective teaching and learning and thus develop learner interest in composition writing. Next is a review of competency-based language teaching.

### 2.3.3 Competency-Based Language Teaching (CBLT)

Competency-based language teaching (CBLT) shares some features with communicative language teaching since it is based on the functional and interactional perspective on the nature of language. Secondly, language is used as a medium of interaction and communication to achieve specific goals and objectives. In CBLT, language is also taught about the social context used (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). This indicates that more significant achievement in enhancing learner competencies in composition writing is by continued use of the target language for interaction.

CBLT adopts the mosaic approach where the whole (communicative competence in composition writing) is built on small parts correctly assembled. Competencies are described as: breaking down competency into smaller components and then refer to key linguistic features of the text; specifying a minimum performance needed to achieve a competency; having a range of variables that set limits towards the performance of the desired competency, and getting sample texts and assignments that relate to the competency. Criterion-based assessment is used to test how well a learner can perform tasks (in composition writing).

The teaching of composition writing benefits from the eight features involved in the implementation of competency-based education provided by Auerbach (1986). These are: i) enabling learners to cope with the demands of the world; ii) teaching language forms/skills that learners require to function in required situations (life skills); iii) performance-centred orientation (level of learner competence after instruction); iv) breaking down of objectives for clarity of teacher and learner progress; vi) use of continuous and ongoing assessment to check the level of mastery; vii) assessment tests on demonstration of prespecified behaviours; and viii) concentration is on areas where individual learners lack competence.

On their part, Richards and Rodgers enumerate four advantages that competency approach has from the learner's perspective:

- i. Competencies are practical and specific and seen to relate to learner needs and interests.
- ii. The learner is able to determine if the competencies are useful and of relevance.
- iii. Competencies to be taught are open and specific; thus, a learner is aware of what to be learned.
- iv. Competencies can be acquired one at a time such that the learner is aware of what remains to be learned.

Even with the benefits cited above, some critics have argued that CBLT is prescriptivist by preparing learners to fit into a set system and maintain a social class. Also, that teaching focuses more on behaviour and performance than developing thinking. Finally, that competency anticipates learners to participate effectively, therefore has a value judgement on what such participation should be. With the criticism notwithstanding, CBLT is of great relevance in improving learner competencies in English composition writing, more so on the elements of assessment procedures. The concept of assessment in reflective teaching relates to CBLT, as explained below.

Reflective teaching is a technique in which teachers regularly assess their performance, their teaching style, methodology, and pedagogy. They then keep evolving their teaching approaches periodically to produce optimal learner outcomes. The approach requires teachers to take time to evaluate and adjust their teaching style as applicable (<https://plsclasses.com/three-benefits-of-reflective-teaching>). Language teachers face varied classroom situations. They try to adopt an appropriate theory of learning, instructional techniques, and materials to create learner understanding in context.

Teachers draw upon their experiences and that of their peers to resolve concerns and issues through the pathway of reflection (Al-Awaid & Al-Awaid, 2014). It takes consistent and persistent research and exposure to develop competence to cope with classroom situations and to eliminate any social or psychological barriers among learners. Language teachers observe their learners' reactions and reflect on the results after responding to such learning behaviour of the learners. Thereafter, the teacher decides to adopt or modify a theory chosen earlier (Mann & Walsh, 2017).

Richards and Farrell (2011) contend that in reflective language teaching, reflection begins before the lesson. Three reflective issues arise: which teaching model to use, how the model applies to the current situation, and how well it is working. Before teaching, the teacher's experience as a language learner, training, and continuous professional development impacts on the choice of a theory of language teaching and learning. Richards and Farrell ascertain that all these elements interact prior to and during active teaching. A teacher, therefore, becomes a lifelong learner as he or she evaluates new experiences, tests new theories, approve or disapprove, and modify continually. The authors adduce four benefits of teacher reflection:

- i. Reflective language teaching exceeds the routine method-based classroom conduct, thus eliminates monotony.
- ii. Reflection is a sign of intelligent action.
- iii. It is an indication of teacher professionalism where existing theories are used intelligently, and at the same time, teachers generate their own.
- iv. Reflection helps the teacher to evaluate drawbacks and limitations and afford the opportunity to generate workable solutions within the classroom contexts.

Teachers of English composition writing should thus not limit themselves to knowledge transmitters but also take up other roles in class that include organiser, guide, and motivators. They should also periodically seek learner feedback to help them teach the way pupils learn, where pupils fail to learn the way teachers teach them (Al-Awaid & Al-Awaid, 2014).

Another aspect that CBLT takes its' impetus from and relevant to composition writing is teacher cognition. Teacher cognition as expounded by Borg (2015) provide its implication to explain what shapes the teachers' instructional decisions in the teaching of writing skills (Nishimuro & Borg, 2013). This study relates to the concept of classroom practice in developing writing skills that empirically has received little attention.

As a summary, teachers do have cognitions that concern all aspects of their work (Borg, 2003) and that what they experience as learners can influence lifetime cognition about teaching and learning. Besides, teachers' prior beliefs must be considered during training to impact them. Similarly, contextual factors (e.g., thoughts on specific instructional activities and availability of time) have been found to play a significant role in the determination of how far teachers implement instruction that aligns with their cognition (Borg, 2003). Therefore, teachers have their own theoretical beliefs and perceptions about language teaching and learning, which ultimately influence their teaching practice (Hung, 2012).

Teaching experience shapes teacher cognition from an accumulation of trial and error encounters (Bernard & Burns, 2012). Therefore, more experienced teachers who have experimented with various methods over time and isolated those that are more effective are better placed in making tangible decisions in teaching composition writing. The less

experienced (novice) teachers are less competent in: “(a) thinking about the subject matter from the learner’s perspective; (b) having a deep understanding of the subject matter; (c) knowing how to present subject matter in appropriate ways, and (d) knowing how to integrate language learning with broader curricular goals” Borg (2003:95). This gives a head start to the experienced teachers in handling composition writing and affirms the relationship between teacher cognition and practice.

From the preceding, it is crucial to understand what language teachers believe and do in the teaching of composition writing in the English language since they are the implementers of the curriculum. As complicated as it is (Bernard & Burns, 2012), their cognition shapes their planning of lessons, the choice of approaches and learning materials used, and learner assessment procedures adopted for learner feedback. This notion concurs with Onsare (2011), who established that teachers have varying cognitions and beliefs, which is reflected in how they approach the teaching of functional writing skills. Arising from the foregoing, the study revealed that teachers gave very minimal support to learners. Therefore, teacher cognition cannot be avoided when conducting a study such as this, where pedagogical strategies are under investigation.

In summary of this section, it is apparent that the three theories reviewed are near related and underpin the current study. Communicative language teaching (CLT), the Social Constructivist Theory (SCT), and the Competency-Based Language Teaching (CBLT), all place the teacher at the centre in influencing and providing a link between pedagogical strategies and learner outcomes of English language composition writing. This leads next to a review of previous related research to this study.

## **2.4 Review of Related Previous Research**

In this section, a review is made of previous related research from available literature both within and outside Kenya. These are presented next under the subheadings, 'International Studies ' and 'Kenyan Studies'.

### **2.4.1 International Studies.**

This subsection presents a review of related literature to the study objectives. Available literature was on planning, approaches, teaching and learning materials, and assessment procedures used in the teaching of composition writing in English language, beginning with teacher planning.

Munthe and Conway's (2017) study on 'evolution of research on teachers' planning: Implications for teacher education' established that teachers plan lessons to anticipate and design a framework and environment where learning will take place. Planning was also done as a pre-active phase of teaching and to ensure effective classroom management. In addition, it was also used as a means of professional learning and thus served as a core competence in itself. This indicates that teachers learnt as they planned.

This study revealed further that when planning, teachers aligned goals, teaching and learning activities, and assessment in repeated cycles of planning, implementation, self-evaluation, and re-planning. Planning was thus viewed from this study as a combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that lead to effective lesson delivery. The study concluded by making three key observations:

- i. Planning is a process that has steps, decision making, and is also uncertain of outcomes.
- ii. Planning is a cultural activity and demands varying competencies.

- iii. Competency in planning should be developed in the teacher's professional life.

These findings informed the current study in reckoning that planning requires teachers' thorough preparedness and is also a skill needing continual development. This set a background to investigate the frequency and conditions that influence the preparation of professional documents like schemes of work, lesson plans and lesson notes to teach composition writing. Next is a review of three related studies on instructional techniques.

Mouri (2016) conducted a study titled 'English composition writing skills of class five students: Teaching and learning practices at government primary schools in Dhaka'. The study interrogated the existing teaching and learning practices and challenges in writing skills at government (public) primary schools in Bangladesh. The purpose of that study was to find out teaching-learning practices and challenges in writing skills at government primary schools. It also tried to discover the existing condition of the students' writing skills, how teachers help them write compositions, and what kind of challenges (teachers and students) face while dealing with writing skills.

Like the current study, data was collected through research instruments like survey questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions, and classroom observation. For this study, however, document analysis was also used for further triangulation purposes. There was a commonality in the use of Communicative Language Theory (CLT) to inform both studies. Mouri also reviewed the literature on the Grammar-Translation method in addition to process and product-oriented writing. The present study explored many other ways and approaches for broader perspectives in a bid to unearth pedagogic pit holes in English composition writing in Kenyan primary schools. Mouri's research



was considered of relevance as it employed both qualitative and quantitative methods for data analysis, as was the case in this study.

The study recommended that teachers should guide and regularly give tasks that motivate learners. This was in agreement with Kemboi, Andiema, and M' Mbone (2014) findings. Mouri was also in synchrony with (Edorogan & Edorogan, 2013), who recommended that the teacher should motivate learners to have the right attitude and perception towards writing through the cultivation of a favourable classroom environment. Finally, Mouri stressed the need for teachers to engage learners more to practice language skills through various activities, thus enhancing autonomy, which is key to developing their thinking level towards learning. These recommendations shaped part of the objectives of the current study.

Adeyemi (2012) who conducted a study on 'Approaches to composition writing: the case of junior secondary schools in Botswana,' unveiled the everyday use of the product-based approach. As a result of this approach, the study revealed that students were unable to write meaningfully due to evident surface errors, lack of ideas and vocabulary, organisational skills, lack of composing skills, poor handwriting, and apathy to composition writing. On the contrary, the study observed that process-based writing is beneficial since the teacher is concerned with helping students develop specific ideas and elaborate on them. Adeyemi adds that this support occurs during (and not after) the entire writing process. The current study, therefore, interrogated approaches used in Kenya and their implications.

In yet another related research, a study was done within Africa by Zamil (2015) titled, 'Problems Encountered by EFL Learners in Composition Writing: A Case Study of Secondary Schools, Al Managil Locality, Gezira State, Sudan'. The study purposed to

investigate learners' problems in composition writing and aimed at stressing the importance of EFL composition writing with one drive being for communication purposes, just like the present study. Another aim was to explore some teaching techniques that may improve learners' writing skills. It informed the purpose of the present study, which was to investigate the implication of pedagogical strategies on learner competencies in English composition writing.

The study chose the descriptive-analytical method and utilised a questionnaire for data collection from 50 secondary school teachers. This also informed this study that used the questionnaire as the primary tool but resorted to a larger sample of 588 teachers, albeit from the primary section. The larger sample was to gather data from as many teachers as possible for clarity and convergence. As indicated earlier, other tools were used for corroboratory purposes. Since concerns on composition writing proficiency exist at the secondary school level as established in the study by Zamil, among others, this study determined to investigate the issue from the primary school level where composition writing is introduced, specifically in Kenya.

Part of the results of this study reveals that most EFL students cannot yield expressive, coherent, and logically sequenced ideas in composition writing and that brainstorming technique enhances students' essay writing process. Besides, Zamil reported that collaboration allows learners to interact on different aspects of writing. The study recommended that teachers should find time to correct students' work, despite the large classes and that the practice of feedback and follow up strategies be enhanced as a systematic classroom process. The results and recommendations reviewed above all conform to the present study findings.

Recommendations on teaching and learning materials from the study by Adeyemi (2012) reviewed on the previous paragraphs concluded that student improvement in writing instruction would be made possible if schools were provided with better-equipped libraries and relevant textbooks, and other materials for teaching language. The study had established that resources for use in teaching composition writing in secondary schools in Botswana were scarce and wanting. This finding ignited a desire for the current research to look into the Kenyan scenario to investigate the selection and frequency of use of instructional materials to teach writing skills.

On the assessment procedure, Adeyemi (2012) established that during an assessment of students' composition writing, teachers concentrated on surface-level errors such as mechanics of spelling, punctuation, and grammar at the expense of content that delves on communicating effectively. Teachers also awarded number grades that do not serve any meaning to students' writing. Coupled with these were comments such as 'very good' and 'keep it up' that sounded vague since what the student did well or could have done better was not pointed out specifically.

The study concluded that awarding meaningless number grades and non-specific comments as traditional forms of assessment do not support learner's acquisition of necessary writing skills. It signalled for an end to teachers taking the role of judges of students writing and instead, adopt more effective trends where learners are treated with respect as unique individuals. These findings prompted the current study to interrogate how the assessment of pupils' writings are conducted in primary schools. Next is a review of related studies within the Kenyan context.

### 2.4.2 Kenyan Studies.

In Kenya, available studies were on planning, approaches, teaching and learning materials, and assessment strategies used to teach writing skills in English language. These are presented below.

On teacher planning, two related studies and similar contexts were reviewed. Mwangi, Murunga & Syomwene (2018) conducted a study on the status of teacher planning and its influence on Kiswahili language composition instruction in Kenya's secondary schools. The study, which is on composition writing in the Kiswahili language, relates closely to composition writing in English. Both subjects are examined at the KCPE and KCSE level and address similar concepts of writing skills. This study sought to investigate the impact that teacher planning has on Kiswahili language composition teaching. The importance of teacher preparation of schemes of work and lesson plans were explicitly emphasised in the study as indicated in the following quotation;

... some teachers do not complete detailed schemes of work and lesson plans and then wonder why students do not learn. Although years of experience can shore up less-than-complete planning, nothing compares to well-planned lessons. Comprehensive schemes and plans increase the likelihood that lessons run smoothly so that students receive quality instruction (p. 37).

The above citation is an indication that these important documents (schemes of work and lesson plans) were not being prepared as expected. It also expounds that without proper planning, poor performance in composition writing is inevitable and not surprising. No wonder Murunga (2013) placed planning as the first among the three basic steps of the instructional process: delivery of the lesson, which comes second, and finally assesses the learning outcomes.

Mwangi, Murunga & Syomwene found out that the preparation of Kiswahili lessons was not as anticipated. In addition, they established that even with the majority preparing these professional documents, quite a number did not refer to them during

the actual teaching and, as a consequence, used inappropriate methods and resources. The authors recommended that teachers of Kiswahili language be encouraged to prepare lesson plans and lesson notes.

Kazungu (2018) likewise conducted a study on influence of teacher pedagogical competencies on students' writing skills in Kiswahili composition (Insha) in public secondary schools in Kenya. One of the pedagogical competencies that the study investigated was on teacher planning to teach. Findings revealed that little attention was given to planning for teaching writing skills in Kiswahili composition (Insha) as reflected by very few lessons in the schemes of work for teaching the subject. There were also no lesson plans as evidence of lessons taught.

Consequently, the study reflected that teacher pedagogical competence in planning influenced learner performance in Insha writing. It was made evident by students' low pre-test scores where teachers either did not prepare schemes of work and, or lesson plans and or had very few lessons. The study affirmed that despite the lesson plan being the most neglected document for planning to teach, it remains the most effective in positively altering student performance. The study concluded that teachers do not just require competence in planning but also need pedagogical skills, commitment, and motivation to holistically apply this competence (of planning). In conclusion, both studies drew the current study's attention to investigate teacher planning at the primary school level.

A review of previous related research on instructional techniques was done for Kiarie (2016) and Cherkut (2011). Kiarie (2016) conducted a study on strategies of teaching English vocabulary for the teaching of writing composition in standard seven in public primary schools in Thika sub-county. The study sought to determine the strategy used

in teaching and learning vocabulary to write compositions. It also investigated: the extent to which learners were able to utilise vocabulary, how teachers were able to assess vocabulary mistakes in learners, and finally, established learners' responses to teachers' assessment in their composition writing. She realised that 40% of teachers in the study had no time for teaching vocabulary during content delivery in the classroom.

The study noted that teachers' level of education had no impact on the performance of the class seven pupils in regards to vocabulary learned and used in composition writing. She further pointed out that 60% of learners' performance was still below average in the composition writing test given to them. The current study went beyond the scope of vocabulary variable and extended to identifying teachers' preparedness and classroom environmental effects in the teaching of composition writing.

Another study by Cherkut (2011) investigated factors that influence the teaching of English composition writing in secondary schools in West Pokot District, Kenya. Some of the study objectives were to find out the techniques used by teachers to teach composition writing and to establish the challenges encountered in the teaching and learning of composition writing. Cherkut's findings revealed that writing is not taught effectively in secondary schools. The heavy workload for teachers in the study area was given as a reason for the concerns raised. Besides, the study revealed that both teachers and students do not often speak English in schools, and this affects their competence in writing.

The study was of interest to the current investigation since it targeted the teachers' place towards learner proficiencies in English composition writing by students. Secondly, the secondary school context helped to unveil whether there is similarity or divergence as compared to the primary school situation being investigated. Thirdly, this was a

descriptive survey study that used Interlanguage theory and Krashen's Input Hypothesis to underpin the study. Instead, the current study employed the Communicative Language Teaching, Competency-Based Language Teaching and Social Constructivist theories.

On learning materials, related studies reviewed were Cherkut (2011) and Teykong (2018). The study by Cherkut (2011) also investigated whether there are adequate resources to teach composition writing in secondary schools in West Pokot District, Kenya. She established that reference books and textbooks that address composition writing were hardly available for use in the classrooms. This signalled a need for the current study to determine whether the same concern exists in primary schools.

The study by Teykong (2018) on 'Influence of teachers' pedagogical competencies on pupils' academic performance in public primary schools in Chepkorio ward, Elgeyo Marakwet County, Kenya, revealed that the most common instructional materials in use were textbooks and reference books. The use of audio and video media was minimal. The study recommended that headteachers supervise the preparation and utilisation of a variety of instructional materials. From these two studies, it was clear that textbooks and reference books were the leading choices of materials used for instructions. Therefore, this study went further to investigate whether other materials were in use in teaching composition writing.

On the learner assessment procedure, Cherkut (2011) established whether learners are given writing tasks regularly and investigated the role of the feedback given to learners on their writing ability. She found out that most teachers' remedial work is not done, which leaves learners poorly motivated to write. This informed the current study in

constructing appropriate questions that interrogated assessment procedures used in giving feedback to learners on composition writing in primary schools in Kenya.

The same study conducted by Teykong (2018) also investigated teachers' evaluation techniques to improve pupils' academic performance. Findings established that question and answer was the most common approach used to gauge learner acquisition competencies. However, other modes of assessment and evaluation were not done regularly. This study thus sought to investigate the implication of assessment strategies used by teachers on learner competencies in composition writing in English language.

In the conclusion of this section, and considering that most of the related studies reviewed were within the context of secondary schools, it became apparent that the source of challenges encountered could be at lower levels. For this reason, the current study chose to research the primary school level. Adeyemi (2012), in his recommendation for further studies, proposed that future research should focus on the type of writing/creative pupils do at the primary school level to ascertain the source of student difficulties in secondary schools. The next section presents the rationale for the study based on the literature reviewed.

## **2.5 Rationale for the study Based on Literature Review**

The literature review shaped this study in a number of ways. First, it revealed that not many empirical studies had been conducted on learner competencies in composition writing for effective communication in English language at the primary school level. As indicated in chapter one (see 1.8), the literature on several studies available from outside Kenya are on general pedagogy (Aldrich, 2010; Burnham & Powell, 2014; Hasan & Akhand, 2010; Johnson, 2014) whereas, on the local context, the majority on



composition writing are based on the secondary school curriculum (Cherkut, 2011; Kiarie, 2016; Kazungu, 2018; Mwangi, Murunga & Syomwene, 2018).

Cherkut's study used interlanguage and input hypothesis theories which did not address assessment procedures. For this reason, the current study employed CBLT as an intervention. Kiarie limited her study to strategies of teaching vocabulary for composition writing, yet, the use of vocabulary is not part of the main issues raised by KNEC as student challenges. Since the study findings revealed that the performance of up to 60% of students in secondary schools was below average in composition writing, there was a need for an investigation on pedagogical strategies used at the primary school level.

Kazungu's (2018) study on influence of teachers' pedagogical competencies in students' writing skills in 'Insha' composition writing addressed the frequency of teacher planning but did not establish circumstances and issues that led to the lack of lesson plan preparation. The current study, therefore, addressed this gap and used both quantitative and qualitative data generation tools to obtain rich data. Still, on planning, Mwangi, Murunga & Syomwene's (2018) study revealed that teachers did not refer to the prepared professional documents during lessons. However, the study did not investigate the reasons that made teachers not to do so. This was addressed in this study.

Second, the review affirmed the need to investigate specific pedagogical strategies that may lead to inculcating the desired learner competencies in composition writing. Literature established these to be: planning to teach (Conway & Munthe, 2017; Mwangi, Murunga & Syomwene, 2018); using of effective instructional techniques (Adeyemi, 2012; Cherkut, 2011; Kiarie, 2016; Gakori, 2015; Mouri, 2016); selection and use of relevant teaching and learning materials (Adeyemi, 2012; Cherkut, 2011;

Teygong, 2018); and use of appropriate assessment procedures (Kazungu, 2018; Oxford, 2016; Silby, 2013). This helped in situating this study in the field of ELT and in the formulation of objectives.

Finally, literature ascertained that very few studies were grounded on communicative language teaching theory and yet the primary purpose of learning a language is to enable effective communication (Desai, 2015; Ong'ondo, 2018). Therefore, this theory and other related ones were selected to underpin this study on composition writing based on the applicable tenets such as; well-ordered instructional system, organised classroom activities, building a strong link between pedagogical strategies (constructed by both teachers and learners) and learner competencies, and finally, the importance of focusing on social needs.

There have been no known empirical studies that investigated pedagogical strategies in use to develop composition writing competencies for learners in upper primary classes as done in the current study. Next is a summary, that hopefully consolidates this section.

## **2.6 Summary**

In this chapter, it situated the study within the discipline of ELT, reviewed related theories and concepts, and reviewed previous related research. A rationale for the study based on literature review was then presented. Therefore, the issues raised from the literature is given in **Table 2.1** on the next page. The next chapter presents detailed descriptions of the research methodology employed in this study.

**Table 2.1: Key Issues Arising from Literature Review**

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**Situating the study in ELT**

- i. Developments in ELT suggest a paradigm shift from teaching ESL to teaching English as an International Language (EIL)
- ii. Writing is one of the most complex skills and requires great effort to teach
- iii. The **process-based** approach emphasises how a text is written rather than the outcome (product).
- iv. Language pedagogy is based on the rationale for choosing appropriate procedures based on general pedagogical considerations.
- v. Pedagogical strategies for learner competency in composition writing are planning, instructional techniques, learning materials and assessment procedures.
- vi. Desired composition writing competencies are the prewriting organisation, thematic choice and development, character development, sequencing, coherence and cohesion, fluency, choice of words, spellings, punctuations, paragraphing and handwriting.

**Related Theories and Concepts**

- i. In CLT, language is learnt within social interaction by struggling to communicate in the target language.
- ii. In SCT, language is constructed by both teachers and learners.
- iii. In CBLT, the focus is on the functional and interactional perspective of language.

**Related Previous Research**

- i. On planning, most studies dwelled on the frequency of preparation of professional documents but left out issues affecting teacher planning
- ii. Limited literature on the use of poems to teach composition writing
- iii. Literature on learning materials to teach composition writing hardly available
- iv. Teachers award number grades and concentrate on assessing surface-level errors, leaving out other communicative competency skills
- v. Majority of empirical studies in composition writing is skewed towards secondary school level

**Rationale for the study**

- i. Key concerns by KNEC not exhaustively addressed by previous researches
  - ii. A large percentage of students perform poorly in composition writing
  - iii. The primary syllabus advocates for the use of CLT tenets in teaching language, yet many studies use other theories to underpin their empirical studies.
-

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the research paradigm, research design/approach, research methods, and sampling procedures: study area, target population, sampling size, and sampling method. The chapter also explains the data generation tools used, data analysis procedures adopted, the trustworthiness of the mixed study, the ethical considerations, and finally, the chapter summary.

#### 3.2 Research Paradigm

The pragmatist paradigm was adopted for this study. Pragmatism is a philosophical approach that underpins mixed methods studies where researchers are free to choose the methods, techniques, and procedures of research that best suit their needs, persuasions, and purposes. Creswell & Plano Clark (2018) posit that the main focus of pragmatism is on the consequences of the study, that is: i) importance is attached to the question asked rather than the method; and ii) use of a variety of data collection methods to inform the problem under research. Therefore, as these authors affirm, it is pluralistic, aligned to 'what works,' and is a real-world practice.

A research paradigm is defined as a set of common beliefs and agreements shared between scientists about how problems may be understood and solved (Kuhn, 1962; cited in Patel, 2017; Guba & Lincoln, 1994, cited in Makombe, 2017). According to Makombe (2017), these beliefs are basic in the sense that they must be accepted simply on faith. Kuhn used the word paradigm to refer to a way of thinking but is lately used by educationists to describe a researcher's 'worldviews' (Kivunja & Kuyuni, 2017).

Better still, Jwan & Ong'ondo (2011) consider the research paradigm as "a way of looking at the world and interpreting what is studied, and therefore, an indication of how research ought to be conducted ..." (p.20). The two authors contend that every researcher tends to lean towards a philosophical inclination that is aligned by a particular paradigm, which may influence the research process. Therefore, this worldview is a lens through which the researcher looks at the world and informs the interpretation of data to construct the embedded meaning (Kivunja & Kuyuni, 2017).

Pragmatism was adopted in this study to investigate the implications of pedagogical strategies on learner competencies in composition writing. This is a complex social phenomenon that needed to be approached from a variety of dimensions to understand the realities relating to the context of the current study. In addition, the pragmatist paradigm provided the best understanding of the research problem, and by using pluralistic approaches, it helped to derive knowledge about the problem from whichever way was possible (Morgan, 2014). The guiding epistemological framework of pragmatism was used as a lens to focus on the purpose of the study in all stages of the research process. It focused on the production of actionable knowledge in learner composition writing competencies and that the study was contextually relevant and informed by the underpinning theories (Kelly & Cordeiro, 2020).

### **3.3 The Research Approach.**

The study adopted a Mixed Approach. A mixed approach is consistent with the pragmatist paradigm that was adopted. Many terminologies have been used to describe this approach, including mixed research, mixed methodology, multimethod, and integrating, and synthesis (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). For this study, the term 'mixed-methods' is adopted as commonly used by recent researchers (Creswell, 2015, 2018; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). This approach is described as a research in which the

researcher collects and analyses data, integrates the findings, then draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative techniques and methods in a single study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007).

By employing a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches, mixed methods research has gained popularity since research methodology continues to evolve and develop (Creswell, Vicki, & Plano Clark, 2017; Greene, 2007; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2007; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Creswell, Vicki, & Plano Clark contend that subscribing to only one way (either quantitative or qualitative) could limit the rich data collection obtained from the mixing. The researcher found it appropriate to use quantitative and qualitative elements for this study to draw liberally from both assumptions. This enabled the collection of data through the use a questionnaire for the first phase of the study that was followed by use of qualitative instruments. It thus gave freedom to choose the methods, techniques, and procedures of research that best met the current needs and purposes (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Johnson & Christensen, 2014; Makombe, 2017). The mixed-methods approach combines methods, research designs and philosophical orientations as argued by Creswell & Plano Clark in the citation below, that in mixed methods, a researcher;

- i. collects and analyses both the qualitative and quantitative data rigorously in response to research questions and hypotheses,
- ii. integrates (or mixes or combines) the two forms of data and their results,
- iii. organises these procedures into specific research designs that provide the logic and procedures for conducting the study, and
- iv. frames these procedures within theory and philosophy (p. 41)

These core characteristics of the mixed methods approach provided this study with the advantages it has over quantitative or qualitative approaches. Creswell & Plano Clark points them out that include harnessing strengths that offset the weaknesses of using one approach, provision of more evidence by use of all available data collection tools, answering questions beyond one approach such as whether views from interviews of teachers diverged or converged with questionnaire findings, and use of multiple worldviews, to name but a few (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

However, despite the complexity of this method, which includes a need for the familiarity of both quantitative and qualitative forms, and the extensive nature of data analysis and interpretation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), the method was best suited to this study's context. Next is a description of how the study was designed.

### **3.4 The Research Design.**

This study adopted the sequential mixed-method design based on the time-oriented criterion (Johnson & Christensen, 2014; Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007), with more weight on the quantitative approach.

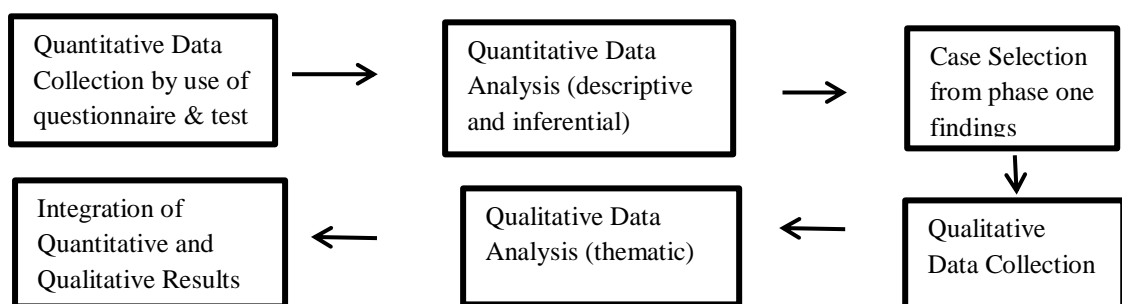
A research design is defined as a laid down procedure that describes the collection, analysis, interpretation, and reporting of data from research (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). According to Schoonenboom & Johnson (2017), a research design is a plan, or strategy that one uses to answer a research question; The plan required to collect data that will be sufficient in testing the research hypotheses. Simply put, a research design is planning (Du Toit & Mouton, 2013).

Apart from the sequential design, there exist other sets of mixed-method designs as identified by Schoonenboom & Johnson (2017). These are parallel mixed designs, convergent mixed designs, multilevel mixed designs, and fully integrated mixed

designs. Creswell & Creswell (2018) indicates that research designs (RDs) are approaches that provide specific direction for procedures in research design.

The first phase was used for the collection of quantitative data, whose results were analysed, and after that, the results were used to plan for the qualitative phase. Data collection in the second phase was to establish corroboration and complementarity (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The design also considered the interpretation of data in the discussion section by first reporting the quantitative (first-phase) results, then the qualitative (second phase) results. A discussion on how qualitative results helped to explain and give more depth and insight to quantitative results was done next. **Figure 3.1** below shows the adopted research design from Creswell and Plano Clark, (2018). It is followed in the next section by a presentation of the research methods employed in this study.



**Figure 3.1: Stages of Explanatory Sequential Design**

### 3.5. Research Methods

In this study, consistent with the mixed-methods approach, two research methods were used: the survey and case study, as explained further in the subsequent sections. The explanation begins with the survey method.



### **3.5.1. The Survey Method.**

The survey method was used for the first phase of the study, which came first sequentially. A survey has been defined as "a method of social science research that encompasses measurement procedures which involve asking questions through a variety of data collection instruments, such as questionnaires..." (Ngigi, Wakahiu & Karanja, 2016:21). On their part, Johnson & Christensen (2014) define survey as a non-experimental research method based on questionnaires or interviews.

According to Creswell & Creswell (2018), the survey method provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a select population by studying a sample of that population. Some characteristics, attitudes, or behaviour of a population are inferred. In essence, a survey study is concerned with assessing attitudes, opinions, procedures, and practices (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). One benefit of the survey method that Creswell raises is that it allows for the generalisation of findings. In turn, it provides a better understanding of the larger population from which the sample was initially selected.

The principle purpose of the survey in this study was to gather quantitative data by use of a questionnaire to elicit background information from research participants on teacher preparation, instructional techniques, choice of learning materials, and assessment procedures used in the classroom. The main themes of the written questionnaire sought to address some general characteristics of the primary school English language syllabus with emphasis on guidelines on the teaching of English composition writing, concerning the set general and specific objectives. The experimental method was not used because it could have been prohibitive and unethical to have some pupils taught with teachers, for example, not planning for the lessons.

The survey provided the components and characteristics that were viable for this study. Data was collected from teachers at one point in time (cross-sectionally). This is the reason the researcher chose a survey to give a reflection on the trends of composition writing in public primary schools in Kenya. It is affirmed by Creswell & Plano Clark (2018), who contend that a quantitative survey method best fits the need to understand the views of participants in the whole population. The use of a survey, also, was convenient, cost-effective, and facilitated the collection of readily available data from practising teachers of English involved in the teaching of composition writing in upper primary classes. The case study method is presented next.

### **3.5.2. Case Study Method.**

The multiple case study method was used for the qualitative phase. A case study is defined by Yin as "a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between a phenomenon and context are not clear and the researcher has little control over the phenomenon and context" (Yin, 2012:13). Johnson & Christensen (2014) consider a 'case' as a bounded system, and therefore, a case study narrates a story about a bounded system. Emphasis is laid on 'bounded' to indicate that boundaries of the system must be identified to isolate what a case is and what is not. Boundaries may be segmented by time frame, location, and activities (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The current study specifically adopted the multiple case study method, "... to gain multiple perspectives from various sources while focusing on the units of the study" (Obuya & Ong'ondo, 2020:6). Data was collected from selected schools by use of lesson observation, teachers' interview, document analysis, and focus group discussion on addressing the composition writing phenomenon. In a multiple case study, several case studies (which may be similar or not) could be studied jointly to investigate a

phenomenon, population, or general condition for better understanding or theorising (Jwan and Ong'ondo, 2011).

Case studies have been categorised differently by various authors as argued by Jwan and Ong'ondo (2011). These authors cited Yin (2012), Stake (2005), and Bassey (1999) and adopted their three categories, namely; intrinsic, instrumental, and multiple cases. Case study methods have been used in qualitative research to focus on providing detailed accounts of one or even more cases (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). The researchers choose their objects of study (and calls them 'cases') by primarily collecting qualitative data and organise their research efforts around the said cases. Being a bounded system, the researchers undertake a holistic description (Yin, 2014) by studying all the components that make up the system and form a synergy.

Yin (2012) upholds that in a case study, an in-depth analysis of a case is developed by the researcher. It is done by relating it to the contextual situations in which the quantitative findings were produced. These databases were analysed and interpreted, then later used to explain the quantitative results. Schoonenboom & Johnson (2017) contend that qualitative analysis of a case study takes the outcome of the quantitative component, and aims at explaining the result of the quantitative data analysis. Creswell & Creswell (2018), on their part, advocate that "... case study can yield different cases that become the focus on important variables" (p.362) in the first quantitative phase. Starman (2013) reiterates the merits of a case study in the quotation below:

... a case study is more than just a type of qualitative research. It is a ticket that allows us to enter a research field in which we discover the unknown within well-known borders while continually monitoring our own performance; scalability; and our own, as well as general, existing knowledge (p.42)

From all the above, case study research is done within natural settings and is observed by an individual or groups of individuals. For these reasons, the case study method was

applicable. In this study, specific cases were chosen to obtain further information based on results obtained quantitatively. Data were obtained on teachers' strategies to teach composition skills and their actual teaching by the use of interviews, lesson observations, and by analysing both teachers' professional documents and pupils' composition books. Data was also obtained from pupils on the efficacy of the instructional techniques employed by teachers on their competencies in composition writing through focus group discussion. Both Creswell & Creswell (2018) and Yin (2012) concur that information is collected through various data collection procedures and is done over a sustained period because cases are bound by time and activity. The next section presents the study area.

### **3.6 The Study Area.**

The study was conducted in Bomet County within the Rift Valley Region of Kenya (refer to Appendix P). This county consists of Sotik, Konoin, Chepalungu, Bomet Central, and Bomet East sub-counties. The county was selected from among the South Rift counties due to its consistent low performance, as shown in Chapter One, **Table 1.2** of this study, which reflects similar trends to the national KCPE performance in English composition, especially in the public primary schools. Additionally, despite several studies on composition writing done globally and locally on composition writing (refer to 1.3), little impact had been realised based on the cited KCPE results. Further, a search conducted on related studies of other researchers obtained from university libraries confirmed that little or no study had been done on the implication of pedagogical strategies on learner competencies in English composition writing for public primary schools in this county.

### 3.7 Sampling

The next sub-sections cover the target population, the sample size and sampling methods employed. Neuman (2012) and also Jwan and Ong'ondo (2011) regard sampling as the way the participants of a research study are identified and accessed. The suitability of strategies employed in sampling (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2018) is of importance in research since it is a significant determinant of the quality of the study and on the trustworthiness of findings. First is a description of the target population.

#### 3.7.1 Target Population.

The study targeted upper primary level of all public primary schools in Bomet County. Specifically, the teachers of English and learners in standard five, six, and seven were involved in the study. Ordinarily, upper primary classes begin at standard four up to standard eight. Public primary schools were targeted due to their generally low performance in KCPE national examinations. Besides, upper primary school teachers of English are directly involved in the teaching of English composition writing. Standard 5, 6 & 7 pupils were also targeted because they are in a position to read and write well and are headed towards sitting for their KCPE examination. **Table 3.1** below presents the study population-strata. This is followed by the sample size and sampling procedures.

**Table 3.1: Bomet County Study Population Strata**

<b>Sub County</b>	<b>No. of public Schools</b>
Bomet Central	125
Konoin	120
Chepalungu	178
Sotik	118
East	113
<b>Total</b>	<b>654</b>

**Source: CDEs Office Bomet, (2018)**

### 3.7.2 Sample Size and Sampling Methods.

In line with mixed-methods research, the study adopted two sampling techniques. These were probability and purposive sampling techniques. Sampling refers to taking a portion of the population of the universe (sample size) as a representative of that population (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000). According to Kantowitz, Roediger, and Elmes (2014), the entire population is hardly used in study. Additionally, Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2018) contend that to acquire data from the whole population is impossible because of expenses, time and accessibility. Therefore, in mixed-methods research, sampling is done distinctly for the quantitative and qualitative phases (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

In this study, two streams per class were selected randomly (where there were more than two) per school and labelled as stream 'A' and stream 'B' respectively. The two streams were used for the first and second phase respectively. This was to limit administering the varied research tools to the same respondents. The sampling procedures for each of these two phases are described below.

#### 3.7.2.1 Sampling for quantitative phase

The first phase of the study was quantitative. Representation in the form of a percentage of each sub-county was used to obtain the sample size. Creswell & Creswell (2018), Kothari & Garg (2014) and Suresh & Chandrasekhara (2012) all concur that 10% to 30% of the sample is a sufficient representation of the study population. However, Fowler (2014) opine that sample size determination is dependent upon the anticipated analysis plan. This is to ensure that the subjects' characteristics in a study appear in the same proportion as they do in the total population (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006).

In this study, since the target population, as presented in **Table 3.1** was 654 schools, stratified sampling was used to categorise schools per Sub County. Purposive sampling

was used to select schools with more than one stream in each of the classes 5, 6 and 7. Simple random sampling was then used with the help of a statistical computer program (available from [www.randomizer.org](http://www.randomizer.org)) to select a sample of 196 schools, that is 30% from each of the sub-counties.

**Table 3.2** below provides a breakdown of how sampling was undertaken and described above. This is followed by a description of the sampling procedure in the qualitative phase.

**Table 3.2: Bomet County Sample Grid Size for the Quantitative phase**

Sub County	Number of Schools (30%)	Questionnaire	Term 2, 2019 Composition writing (ELCW) mean scores
<b>Bomet Central</b>	38	114	114
<b>Konoin</b>	36	108	108
<b>Chepalungu</b>	53	159	159
<b>Sotik</b>	35	105	105
<b>East</b>	34	102	102
<b>Total no. of Respondents</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>588</b>	<b>588</b>
<b>Category of Respondents per selected school</b>	Teachers and pupils	1 Teacher of English each from class 5,6 &7	Class 5, 6 & 7 per selected school

**Source:** Researcher

### **3.7.2.2 Sampling for the qualitative phase**

This phase of the study was a follow-up of findings obtained from the first phase. It sought to explore further why there was no statistically significant influence of instructional techniques, teaching and learning materials, and assessment procedures used on learner competencies in English composition writing. Sampling was thus done with this in mind to suit the study context. Jwan and Ong'ondo (2011) assert that sampling in qualitative research is more concerned with what we seek to get from the case(s) in terms of details as opposed to the number of cases. These authors also cite Mason (2002) and reiterate the consideration of the two principles of practicality and

focus on guiding in sampling, which calls for strategy. Ngigi, Wakahiu, and Karanja (2016) add that it is purposive with the intent of selecting small, more focused, and not necessarily representative sample to achieve an in-depth understanding. Obuya and Ong'ondo (2020) add that purposive sampling researchers “build a sample that is satisfactory to their specific needs” (p.6). The main purpose of sampling in this second phase, therefore, was as described earlier (see 3.3.1); to strategically select participants to obtain data that would be useful in explaining quantitative findings.

Four data generation techniques; namely; document analysis, lesson observation, teachers' interview, and focus group discussion, were used in the investigation for triangulation purposes. Jwan and Ong'ondo (2011) identify them as commonly used and recommended techniques in qualitative research. They agree with other authors (Yin, 2003; Mason, 2002; Bassey, 1999; Stake, 1995) that the use of multiple sources helps in strengthening qualitative research. They reckon that each method has strengths and weaknesses; therefore, a convergence helps in getting the real picture.

In this phase, *criterion-based selection* (purposeful sampling) of respondents, as advanced by Johnson and Christensen (2014), was adopted. According to these authors, the term purposive sampling aims at identifying data sources that provide useful information in addressing the purpose of this study. A few of the schools used during the first phase were sampled for this second phase. A criterion to select participants was based on an analysis of the range of marks obtained in Term 2, 2019 evaluation test results (Appendix L). Ten schools from class five, ten schools from class six, and nine schools from class seven formed the sample of 29 schools.

Within this sample, categorisation of schools per marks obtained was done where those between 21-30 marks and rated as 'Good' were only two while those categorised as



'Average' (16-20) marks were 23 schools and were the majority. Only four schools were 'Below Average' (1-15) marks. None fell within the bracket of excellent (31-40 marks). The main focus of selection was on how and why it was done, as well as inclusion, length and depth of the interviews (Hunt, 2011).

The (29) teachers of English from stream B in these classes provided their English language schemes of work, lesson plans, and lesson notes for analysis. Ten of these teachers were sampled conveniently based on availability for lesson observation, and later interviewed. The same 29 classes whose teachers' professional documents were analysed were purposively selected for the analysis of pupils' English composition exercise books obtained from one boy and one girl, totalling two per class, thus making 58 exercise books.

For focus group discussion, the same nine schools in class seven were purposively selected but from Stream A, whose teachers had filled the questionnaire. Stream B was excluded since they were already engaged in lesson observation and document analysis. The possibility of engaging the same learners whose books had been analysed was thus eliminated. Learners in this class were expected to be more expressive in English language as compared to classes five and six. From 09 schools, the selection of 04 girls and 04 boys, making a total of 08 pupils per school was made through the help of their teachers to get expressive learners, making 72 pupil participants. In the conclusion of this section, **Table 3.3** on the next page is a combined overview of tools used for both quantitative and qualitative phases, as elaborated above.

**Table 3.3: Summary of Combined Sampling Grid per Stream**

S/NO.	TOOL	STREAM A	STREAM B	TOTAL
1	Questionnaire Term 2, 2019 Test Results	√		588 Trs 588 Classes
2	Document Analysis			
	a) Professional documents		√	29 Trs
	b) Pupils' Exercise Books		√	58 Pupils
3	Lesson Observation		√	10 Trs
4	Teachers' Interview		√	10 Trs
5	Focus Group Discussion	√		72 Pupils

**Key:** - Trs- Teachers; S/NO. - Serial Number

**Source:** Researcher

The next section presents the data generation procedure used in this study. It explains how data was generated for both quantitative and qualitative phases.

### 3.8 Data Generation

This study utilised the approved data generation techniques by mixed methods researchers (Caruth 2013; Johnson & Christensen, 2014; Zohrabi, 2013). This section presents a description of how research tools were adopted in this study. Data generation is defined as the art of assembling information by use of various techniques (Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011). Fraenkel and Wallen (2012) espouse that data collection is a crucial part of all research; the conclusions of a study are primarily based on what the data unearths. Therefore, the kind(s) of data to generate, the method(s) of generation used, and the data's scoring required utmost caution. The study utilised five instruments to accomplish the research objectives. The techniques used in each phase are presented next.

#### 3.8.1 Data Generation for the Quantitative Phase.

In this study, quantitative data was obtained majorly from the teachers' questionnaire and from the test results analysis of Term Two English language composition Writing test-ELCW during Term 2 of 2019 (see 3.5.3.1). The ELCW results (see Appendix L)

are from each of the three classes (all streams combined) in the sampled 196 schools. A highlight of each tool is presented next.

### ***3.8.1.1 Questionnaire for teachers.***

Questionnaires are research instruments that consist of a series of questions to gather information from target respondents. They are commonly used by researchers to obtain quantitative data with the intent of generalising from a sample to population (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Yilmaz, 2013). They are also economical, in that all participants are asked the same questions that seek specific information needed in research, thereby enhancing fairness (Macmillan & Schumacher, 2010). Kothari and Garg (2014) agree that questionnaires are appropriate to; secure data from large samples at a time, give freedom for the participants, and are free of interviewer's bias.

In this study, the questionnaire was filled by teachers of English from stream A in all the three classes per school who made a total of 588 teachers. Term Two composition writing results from these schools were analysed per class in three categories of Group A (21-30), Group B (16-20) and Group C (1-15) marks. The quantitative data was used to triangulate with the qualitative data gathered from the other tools. The designed questionnaire, which partly adopted and customised Abu-Riash, (2011) questionnaire to suit the context of this study, was numbered and administered to upper primary teachers of English from the sampled schools in Bomet County, with the help of well-guided research assistants. Questions were carefully structured and ordered to limit respondents' response bias (Bogner & Landrock, 2016). Questionnaires were collected at the end of each day of visit to minimise loss. The questionnaire (Appendix B) consisted of five sections 'A-E'. Section A comprised of the demographic section that described the gender of the participants.

The second part, 'B' titled "Teacher Planning," contained information on teacher preparation to teach Composition writing in English language. Information sought included ascertaining whether teachers allocated and planned for these lessons from their schemes of work, lesson plans, and lesson notes. In addition, the relevance and variety of selected instructional activities and the provision for learner participation, and feedback were examined.

The third section, 'C,' was titled "Instructional techniques that enhance English composition writing." Several teaching techniques were highlighted. Participants were then asked to select one out of the choices provided that measure the frequency of use from; Very often, Often, Rarely and Never. This section also addressed the implication of teaching/learning activities used to enhance English Composition writing. It aimed at establishing the semantic rating from least '1' to most '6' of various writing activities used by teachers. Finally, the frequency of developing learners in specific competency areas was interrogated. Respondents were asked to select by stating how regular they taught each of these writing skills from; Very often, Often, Rarely or Never.

In the fourth section, 'D', it contained information on the available learning materials used to enhance composition writing in Kenyan primary schools. It sought responses on their level of agreement or disagreement with teachers' selection, organisation, and adequacy of English composition learning materials. Also, respondents were asked to indicate the frequency of use of specific materials in the classroom using the same four parameters.

In conclusion, the fifth section, 'E' of the questionnaire aimed to explore the nature of assessment strategies that teachers use in enhancing learners' composition writing competencies in English. It contained statements that helped obtain information on the

range of tests and exercises, their relevance, frequency of assignments, learner involvement, and promptness of feedback. Semantic rating from very poor '1' to Excellent '10' was provided for participants to select as appropriate. Next is a description of how test results were used in this study.

### ***3.8.1.2 Test results analysis.***

In this study, the researcher obtained existing data of English composition marks commonly recorded in the form of mean scores from the sampled schools and classes. This was a joint test done by all pupils in Bomet County as part of Term 2, of 2019 evaluation tests. Zohrabi (2013) identifies tests as one of the procedures used in quantitative research for data collection. Wafula (2017), who cited Papura (2004), noted that tests "seek to obtain and often provide information about how well a student knows a language skill, in order to convey meaning in some situations where the target language is used" (p.61). Wafula reckons that teachers derive tests from the syllabus or textbooks, and as such, it helps gauge whether learners have gained mastery of the targeted language skills.

The use of scores to gauge performance in composition writing is used by the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) and is adopted in counties and at the school level. The choice of existing scores to evaluate current learner competencies in composition writing in English language was to obtain raw data generated in a natural school setting (administered by their teachers). This assisted in eliminating possible 'Hawthorne effect' on learners who could know that they are participating in research (had the study administered a test) and thus behave differently and present a 'positive image.' On the effects of experimental arrangement, Ngigi, Wakahiu & Karanja (2016) affirm this in the following quotation:

... This situation arises whenever participants happen to be aware that they are involved in a study. As a result, their response is different from what it would have been if they were unaware. The effect on performance may be due to the conviction on the part of participants that they are receiving exceptional treatment, usually referred to as 'Hawthorne effect' (p.46).

The same authors advance the use of 'blind' data collection procedures as an effective means of minimising external validity as a result of experimenter effects alluded to above. Therefore, in this context, the researcher collected English composition scores from the examination department at the County Education office, Bomet, for the sampled schools. The mean scores were entered into the SPSS software alongside data from the questionnaire for further analysis in relation to the objectives and hypotheses of the study. Next is a discussion of data generation for the qualitative phase.

### **3.8.2 Data Generation for the Qualitative Phase.**

In this phase, the instruments used were document analysis, lesson observation schedule, teachers' interview guide, and focus group discussion schedule. The said instruments served as multiple sources of evidence to warrant claims (Johnson & Christensen, 2014) on the implication of selected instructional techniques on learner competencies in English composition writing in upper primary classes. Using various tools helps fill the limitation of one tool by the other and triangulate each tool's responses. Triangulation refers to the use of a variety of data collection tools (Bush, 2012; Fusch, Fusch, & Ness, 2018; Wessels, 2011).

There was a need to use the four data generation techniques to corroborate findings, for more convincing and accurate findings (Obuya & Ong'ondo, 2020), and to help in understanding and to explain the findings of the quantitative phase conducted earlier (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Schoonenboom & Johnson, 2017). Each of the data generation techniques is discussed next.

### ***3.8.2.1 Document analysis.***

In this study, the purpose of analysing documents was to obtain the frequency of preparation of teachers' professional documents, namely, the schemes of work, lesson plans, lesson notes, and records of work. In addition, data from pupils' composition writing exercise books was used to compare with the anticipation of the primary English language syllabus.

Documents are a rich source of raw data in social research (Gammie, Hamilton, & Gilchrist, 2017) and are essential for triangulation purposes. The administration of documents does not directly involve researchers in social interactions with respondents. Qualitative researchers use documents to collect qualitative data alongside other research tools (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011). In addition, Jwan and Ong'ondo reiterate that by use of documents, there is the enhancement of credibility, which is an essential aspect of trustworthiness in a study. They, however, caution that documents "are best used alongside other (more primary) techniques of data generation, such as interviews and observations" (p.94). Therefore, data obtainable from the documents and the principles that deal with selectivity and perspective in the handling of documents was considered (Flick, 2014).

In the current study, class 5, 6, and 7 subject teachers' English schemes of work and lesson plans were checked to establish the details captured towards the preparation of composition writing lessons. Lesson allocation, choice of instructional techniques, together with the suggested teaching and learning activities, resources used in teaching, and self -evaluation ratings were recorded. Data from lesson notes which entailed identification of the desired composition writing competency skills were obtained. In addition, records of work sought data on continuous learner assessment. This aided in

determining the extent pedagogic inputs influence learners' competencies in English composition writing.

English composition exercise books from one boy, and one girl per school were also sampled randomly from one of the three classes. The analysis of the content in the exercise books helped to identify learners' frequency of composition writing, marking criterion, legibility, and remedial exercises. It also helped affirm whether there was conformity between the specific English composition constructs targeted in the schemes of work and what was reflected in the learners' output from their exercise books. The two analyses also aided in making conclusions based on the themes of the study. A sample document analysis is presented as Appendix C. Data generation from lesson observation is discussed next.

#### ***3.8.2.2 Lesson observation guide.***

Lesson observation in this study referred to silently watching teachers as they conducted lessons in the teaching of writing skills in English language composition writing. Jwan and Ong'ondo (2011), describe observation as getting data by watching as a person or persons engage in certain activities to secure a deeper understanding of the said activities under study. They cite Cohen et al. (2007) to contend that observation is a critical data generation technique in qualitative research.

Degago (2015) argues that direct observation of the context in which teachers work is of paramount importance as what people claim they do, and the reality on the ground could be of contrast. Supporting this, Gaete, Gomez, and Benavides (2018) note that what instructors report that they do in surveys may not necessarily be what they believe in and do in practice. Therefore, lesson observations offered the researcher the opportunity to ascertain the reality of instructors' actual pedagogical practices.



Consequently, classroom observations enabled the analysis of teachers' actual teaching practices and to examine the conditions that have implications on the teaching of English composition writing.

This research used non-participant observation (Liu & Maitlis, 2010) that allowed the teachers to execute lessons without interference from the researcher (Sepeng, 2013). It also allowed the researcher to obtain information on how the learners respond to instructions during the lessons. However, lesson observation was only possible in each school during class times as per time table schedule because that is the only time that pupils are together in one place with the teacher present and guiding them.

The time schedule was randomly selected per day, depending on the contact periods when the teacher of English had a lesson. During the classroom observations, the researcher carefully took note of all classroom activities as per the observation guide that was developed earlier. The observation guide (see Appendix D) comprised the teaching strategies employed by the teachers, the curriculum delivery, methodology, use of learning materials, and assessment strategies that captured learner feedback. The extent of use of these strategies was observed and rated as either 'not used at all,' 'fairly used' or 'excellently used.'

Data obtained was useful in corroborating findings from other qualitative data generation techniques and in interpreting the results on learner performance from their Term Two, 2019 composition test results. The teachers' interview guide is another data generation technique presented next.

### ***3.8.2.3 Teachers' interview guide.***

Interviews refer to a technique of generating data by gathering data from individuals engaged in direct verbal interaction (Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011). Cohen further identifies

four major categories of interviews: the interview guide approach, informal conversation approach, closed qualitative interviews, and the standardised open interview approach. Without getting into details of other categories, this study adopted the interview guides approach that was semi-structured.

The semi-structured interviews approach is less formal and therefore gave room for more comprehensive and detailed probing of information. Jwan & Ong'ondo (2011) cite some researchers (Cohen et al., 2007; Richards, 2003; Nunan, 1992) who contend that semi-structured interviews allow more in-depth exploration of participant responses. It also facilitates exploration of other dimensions which hitherto, may not have been regarded as pertinent.

Some of the advantages of conducting interviews include; better response rate from respondents, an opportunity for the interviewer to judge non verbal behaviour, control the order of questions, and the ability to evaluate the respondent (Rowley, 2012). Despite some disadvantages associated with the use of interviews in research, such as limitation of the range of questions that deter respondents from expressing their wishes (Gitogo, 2018), interviews allow the researcher to digress and probe for more information (Wafula, 2017).

In this study, the interview guide was designed for classes 5, 6, and 7 teachers of English, and covered the four key areas of; planning, instructional techniques, learning materials, and assessment. These were the same teachers who had been observed conducting lessons in composition writing. The choice of teachers of English was due to their presumed expertise and experience in the classroom. Therefore, they could be trusted as a vital resource in providing authentic information (Wolff, Jarodzka, van den Bogert, & Boshuizen, 2016).

The guide covered the introduction, the content questions with probes, and the closing instructions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The tool, whose copy is provided in Appendix E, took an average of 30 minutes to administer, which was consistent with the recommendation of Serem, Boit, and Wanyama (2013) that 30-45 minutes is sufficient for an interview. Jwan and Ong'ondo (2011) proffer that concerns for timing, personality in terms of language use, particularity, listening, note-taking, recording, and evaluation must be considered during the interview.

An effort was made to avoid bias based on hunches and opinions formed due to the researcher's experience in teaching composition writing. The study concentrated on probing the participants to capture each moment (Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011). In particular, probing was done to secure the desired information, such as specific challenges that teachers encounter as they teach composition writing. Keeness was on listening as they talked, with minimal prompts for clarity and to encourage participants to give more information. Consent was sought from the respondents to audio-record the interviews to maximise on information gathering as the researcher-maintained eye contact (Wafula, 2017).

The type of questions asked served purposes of the moment and ranged between opening, reflecting, follow up, probing, and structuring (Richards, 2003; cited in Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011). Finally, by evaluating the conduct of one interview, interviewing skills kept improving for the subsequent sessions and thus generated in-depth data. Data obtained was later transcribed into text and analysed descriptively. This was a critical stage to secure crucial data from the curriculum implementers ('actual players') whose actions or inaction shape learner competencies in composition writing. Due attention was thus accorded to all the stages of data generation and made consultations as the need arose. The next data generation technique presented is the focus group discussion.

#### ***3.8.2.4 Pupils' focus group discussion.***

Focused Group Discussion (FGD) is an interview of a small group on a particular topic and is conducted by a moderator (Jwan and Ong'ondo, 2011). The authors contend that elements of an individual interview and participant observation are combined in FGDs. Therefore, it suggests that FGDs are a rich source of data in terms of content and expression as it takes advantage of the complexities of group dynamics. It is also a forum to generate data from many people within a short time (Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011). The purpose of the discussions was to obtain information by actually talking to the participants (Jamshed, 2014).

Participants in the context of this study were the pupils who are engaged in composition writing as a subject. The discussions helped to collect first-hand information during interaction with learners on developing desired skills in English language composition writing. Mertens (2014) argues that the philosophical underpinning of the focus group methodology is based on the premise that attitudes and perceptions are not developed in isolation but through interaction with other people.

On the membership of a focus group, Stewart and Shamdasani (2014) contend that ideally, it should consist of five to twelve relatively homogenous participants. Babbie (2013) also suggests six to twelve members, while Ngigi, Wakahiu, and Karanja (2016) suggest eight to ten participants. This is to control domination and unmanageability.

Therefore, in this study, eight expressive pupils from class seven per school were purposively selected with their teachers' help and were of equal representation from each gender. The discussion helped gather qualitative data at the learner level and created space for learners to share their experiences on factors that limit and deter them

from attaining fluency, independence, originality, mastery of plot, and effectiveness in conveying information through English composition writing.

The questions captured in the FGD protocol sample, (see Appendix F) were tailored towards obtaining learner perspectives on available learning materials, their involvement in learning activities, and the nature of evaluation strategies employed in the classroom. As contended by Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2018), open-ended questions were found to be flexible and allowed the interviewer to probe. Just like the teachers' interview, these FGDs were guided by discussions and audio recording for later replay to capture all details (Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011). Data collected were transcribed later and enabled the current study to make sense of the factors that affect the competencies of learners in English language composition writing in upper primary classes in Kenya.

In the conclusion of this subsection, **Table 3.4** below provides a summary of the nature of data collected by each data generation tool, followed next by data analysis procedures.

**Table 3.4 Research Instruments and Nature of Data**

<b>Instrument</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Nature of Data Generated</b>
Questionnaire	1,2,3,4	Teacher ratings of pedagogical strategies on composition writing
Test	1,2,3,4	Levels of learner competencies in the form of mean scores
Documents Analysis	1,2,3,4	Evidence of instructional interventions and follow up
Lesson Observation	2,3	Reflection of classroom practices influenced by instruction
Teachers' interview	1,2,3,4	Teacher perceptions on approaches to composition writing
Focus Group Discussion	2,3,4	Learner perceptions, impressions and classroom experiences on composition writing

**Source:** Researcher

### **3.9 Data Analysis**

In this study, quantitative data analysis was the primary source of the interpretation of findings whereas qualitative data results were used for corroboration and complementarity. Data analysis may be defined as a systematic search for meaning (Ngulube, 2015). Successful research is majorly dependent on the analysis of data and is, therefore, one of the most critical parts of research (Saketa, 2014). According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2018), data analysis in mixed methods research entails a separate analysis of quantitative data by the use of quantitative methods and analysis of qualitative data by the use of qualitative methods as well. The combination of both databases is then done using approaches that either mix or integrate the two databases and results. Research questions or hypotheses guide the analysis.

This section covers procedures employed in accumulating and making sense of all the data from the questionnaire, test results, document analyses, lesson observation, teachers' interviews, and focus group discussion. Researchers agree that it is a cumbersome, challenging, and quite a rigorous exercise (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011; Ong'ondo, 2009). It is captured by Yilmaz (2013), who asserts that data analysis demands time that is equivalent to the time in the field and calls for continuous data analyses.

#### **3.9.1 Quantitative Data Analysis Stage.**

In this study, descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to describe and compute the constructs of variables whose principal concern was to display how the cases were distributed across the variable (Nestor & Schutt, 2012). Descriptive statistics, on the one hand, summarise a set of data and involves calculations to aid in making factual statements about the features of collected data (McBurney & White, 2010). McMillan and Schumacher (2010) contend that descriptive statistics are the most

fundamental way to summarise data. Inferential statistics, on the other hand, involve statistical techniques to arrive at conclusions that go beyond the sample (Ngigi, Wakahiu & Karanja, 2016).

In this study, returned questionnaires were first sorted out and organised before analysis began. They were checked for completeness after which those not completed at 50% were eliminated. Out of the 588 questionnaires that had been sent out, 574 were completed to obtain the researcher's satisfaction. Raw data was then converted to numeric values by assigning specific values to each response and created unique variables for recoding and computing (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Scores obtained from test results analysis were entered as the dependent variable. This was followed by statistical analysis using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 20 for windows, that was applied for data management and analysis.

Next, parametric analysis was conducted since the items were treated categorically after ensuring that the data sets were normally distributed (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This procedure led to the use of frequencies, percentages, and mean scores to summarise and interpret the participants' responses. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to compare group differences regarding some of the independent variables based on scores obtained in the composition test results.

Multiple linear regression analysis was employed to test collinearity and correlation among all the predictor variables and the dependent variable. It helped determine which among the variables had the most significant influence on English language learners' competencies in composition writing. The findings of this phase were used to prepare for the qualitative phase, whose analysis is discussed next.

### 3.9.2 Qualitative Data Analysis Stage.

This phase of the study encompassed bringing order, structure, and meaning to the large volume of qualitative data collected. Qualitative data analysis may be described as developing a detailed description of each case and themes associated with specific activities and situations concerned in the case study (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014; Yin, 2011; Yin, 2012). According to Wang (2013) and alluded to by Ong'ondo (2018), it aligns with the following order: organising data, generating categories, identifying patterns and themes, and coding of the data. Yilmaz (2013) calls for a bottom-up approach to qualitative data analysis by employing open coding strategies to allow themes and patterns to emerge.

In this study, thematic data analysis was used since several qualitative Researchers advocate for it (Alhojailan, 2012; Clarke & Braun, 2013; Creswell, 2014; Cohen et al., 2018; Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011; Obuya & Ong'ondo, 2020). For instance, Alhojailan contends that thematic analysis provides rich, detailed, and complex data and is also useful in determining relationships between concepts. The author aptly puts it clear in the following quotation:

The thematic analysis allows the researcher to determine precisely the relationships between concepts and compare them with the replicated data. By using thematic analysis, there is the possibility to link the various learner concepts and opinions and compare these with the data that has been gathered in a different situation at different times during the project (p.40).

Therefore, it meant organising and interrogating data in ways that allowed the researcher to see patterns, identify themes, discover relationships, develop explanations, make interpretations, and generate theories (Saketa, 2014). The use of the mobile phone to record interviews and FGDs helped capture all the participants' experiences. All data collected was summarised dependably and accurately. This phase



helped in clarifying findings in comparison to those obtained from the quantitative phase and also played the role of facilitating the internal validity of the study.

Since the purpose of the study was to unravel the implication of pedagogy on learner competencies in composition writing, it was vital to analyse the data and make it easy for readers to comprehend. Consequently, it gave a complete picture of the quantitative findings (Mengistu, 2012). What follows next is a description of the procedure used that followed six steps of data analysis. This was adapted from the above-cited authors and customised to suit this study.

#### ***3.9.2.1 Transcribing of data.***

Transcription was the stage of organising and preparing data for analysis. It entailed converting verbal and non-verbal data obtained from teachers' interviews and pupils' focus group discussion to written form. The purpose of transcribing this data, which was done in person, was to: assist in data presentation, serve as a valuable resource in the anticipated publications, and to help in gaining insight to the data (Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011). All the field photos that included those of classroom observations, and document analyses were put into the relevant catalogues (see samples in Appendices G, H, I, J, & K).

#### ***3.9.2.2 Re-familiarization with data.***

This phase was meant to have a general sense of information and to get a chance to decipher meaning out of them. The transcriptions were read through while recording interpretation of participants' statements, and the tone of their ideas (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). These were recorded as themes in a notebook and, later, typed and engaged in the winnowing process by expunging unnecessary data. Creswell and Creswell add that winnowing is the act of focusing on useful data while disregarding others deemed unessential. However, all data were saved in separate files for cross-

referencing as the need arose. Unnecessary words like *you see*, *oh yes* and *in fact*, and irrelevant words and phrases were omitted.

### **3.9.2.3 Data coding.**

Coding for this study means organising data by assigning a label (or heading) to a specific chunk of data collected during data collection (which are highlighted, put in groups) that makes relevance to a particular point of a study (Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011). Jwan & Ong'ondo have described other essential terms used in coding, namely *category* and *theme*. They use the term *category* to mean broader headline to which several codes may be grouped (something like a sub-theme) and *theme* to suggest a major topic (within the study in question) under which a set of categories may be grouped' (p.110-111).

The coding process began with the teachers' interviews, which was considered as carrying most of the pertinent issues regarding this study. It was followed up by focus group discussion, lesson observation, and then data from the documents in that order (Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011). Coding was done in three phases, as described below.

#### ***Phase One Coding***

In this phase, a separate Microsoft (MS) word file was used to save the file that had been edited earlier. Guided by the main research question, the researcher went through the transcripts and highlighted themes that emerged. Codes were allowed to occur, as is recommended in social sciences (Creswell, 2014). Issues that appeared not applicable at this stage but deemed essential to the study were not discarded but identified and marked uniquely. They could be useful later on (Clarke & Braun, 2006 cited in Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011).

### ***Phase Two Coding***

A new MS word file for this phase was again opened and copied phase one coding to it. Next was reading through and regrouping similar codes where there were repetitions and overlaps. Some codes were turned into categories during the process of merging. This reduced the number of codes considerably. Besides, phase one transcript was relooked into to ascertain whether the 'banked' and uniquely marked chunks were of relevance at this stage. A few were amalgamated into one of the themes. Excerpts that relate to the study objectives were accurately captured (Alhojailan, 2012).

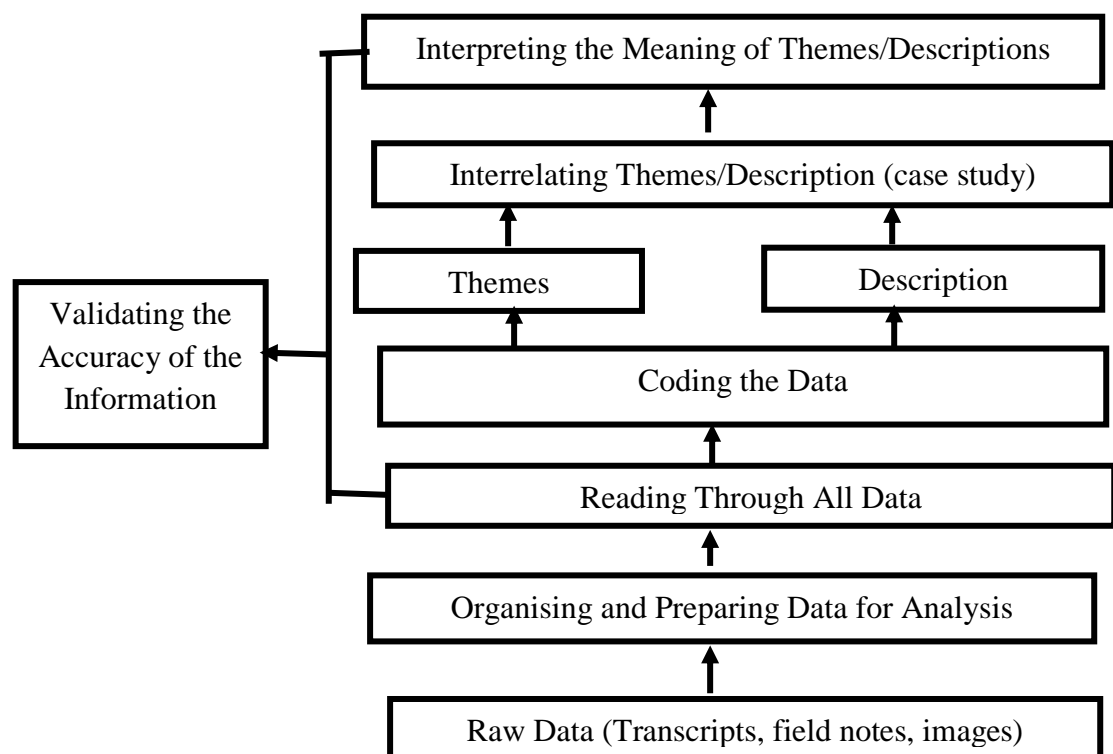
This phase had a threefold benefit to the current study, just as Jwan and Ong'ondo cited some authors, that: i) it removes redundancies and overlaps; ii) creates hierarchies of codes; and iii) as stated earlier 'winnows' data (Creswell, 2014). To conclude this phase, re-reading the new version of data under the categories, codes, and appropriate chunks under them were done in preparation for the third phase.

### ***Phase Three Coding***

Before embarking on this phase, the researcher engaged further in a broad reading of the literature reviewed and more literature based on the main research question and research objectives. Consultation with peers and mentors took place as this phase developed. Since this was a mixed methods research, the categories were regrouped into themes to correspond to the study's objectives. Creswell & Creswell (2018) describes this as selective coding (interconnection of categories). Emerging data that had not been conceptualised at the start of the study and could not correspond to the objectives were still captured. To ascertain the trustworthiness of findings, an external coder checked the interview transcript. Also, the final data were triangulated through comparison with the literature review. The themes, categories, and codes arrived at in this phase, which was now considered stable, was used to code data from the focus

group discussion, lesson observation, and documents. The majority of the data from these databases fitted well into these themes, categories and codes. However, the data from the focus group discussion revealed new themes that were consequently added. For instance, learner experiences on what they thought brought low competencies in writing was a sub-theme that had not been generated from interviews.

In concluding this phase, all the codes were regrouped again under new categories within the four main themes that align with the independent variables of this study. It was done to accommodate the changes brought in by the analysis of the other databases, which is depicted in the outline shown in Appendix O. An overview of the data analysis process adapted from Creswell & Creswell, (2018) is presented in **Figure 3.2** below.



**Figure 3.2: Overview of the Data Analysis Process**

**Source:** Creswell & Creswell, 2018 (p.317).

In the conclusion of this subsection, a summary is presented, showing how data was organised and analysed for each data gathering tool. This summary is provided in **Table 3.5** below. Thereafter, a presentation of trustworthiness in mixed research follows next.

**Table 3.5: Summary of Data Analysis Approaches**

<b>Data Tools</b>	<b>Data organisation</b>	<b>Data Analysis Tools</b>
Questionnaire	Tables, percentages, frequencies Independent variables	Parametric, SPSS version 20, One –way ANOVA Multiple linear regression
Documents Analysis	Tables, Percentages	Descriptive analysis
Lesson observation	Tables	Descriptive analysis
Teachers’ interview	Thematic, categories, and patterns	Descriptive analysis
Focus Group Discussion	Thematic, categories, and patterns	Descriptive analysis

**Source:** Researcher

### **3.10 Trustworthiness in Mixed Research**

This study addressed trustworthiness separately for each of the quantitative and qualitative phases, as is done in mixed research (Mena & Russell, 2017). Trustworthiness may be described as ensuring that the research process is truthful, careful and rigorous enough to qualify to make the claims that it does (Jwan & Ong’ondo, 2011). This allows for the triangulation of data and research methods to improve the reliability and trustworthiness of conclusions (Anney, 2015; Zohrabi, 2013).

The four factors put into consideration in quantitative research to ensure the trustworthiness of findings, on the one hand, are validity (internal and external validity), reliability, and objectivity (Anney, 2015). On the other hand, qualitative researchers consider dependability, credibility, transferability, and confirmability to ensure the rigour of findings (Jwan & Ong’ondo, 2011; Obuya & Ong’ondo, 2020). According to Mason (2002; cited in Jwan & Ong’ondo, 2011), the differences in terminology are partly due to the relationship between the terminologies and the respective paradigms.

This indicates that both quantitative and qualitative researchers attend similar issues (Gudu, 2016). In this study, these considerations were discussed, as presented below, beginning with the quantitative phase's trustworthiness.

### **3.10.1 Trustworthiness in Quantitative Phase.**

For this study to be reliable and make valid inferences about the effect of the IV on the DV, potential confounding variables were controlled in advance. Johnson and Christensen (2017) contend that a study is reliable if the results can be replicated and valid if the inferences made are correct. A confounding variable may be defined as any other (extra) variables other than the independent variable, that also have a hidden effect on the dependent variable (Pourhoseingholi, Bangestani & Vahedi, 2012).

Johnson and Christensen (2017) signal that every study has some extraneous variables with the potential to vary with the independent variable (IV), thereby confounding the results. Some of the measures used in controlling confounding variables at the study design and before the data gathering process are randomisation, restriction, and matching (Pourhoseingholi, Bangestani & Vahedi, 2012). Therefore, to enhance trustworthiness at the first phase of this study, measures were put in place to ascertain reliability, internal and external validity, and objectivity as explained below.

Reliability is the repeatability achieved when a measure provides the same result all the time. Therefore, it is a measure of relevance, stability, and consistency of data collection procedures (Bryman, 2012; Pourhoseingholi, Bangestani & Vahedi, 2012; Zohrabi, 2013). In this study, internal consistency reliability, which is a measure of consistency between different items of the same construct (Bhattacharjee, 2012), was employed. The split-half technique (Maboko, 2018) was used to measure the reliability of the questionnaire (the main instrument of this study). Questions and statements intended to

measure the same aspects were divided into two halves to correlate one-half of the items with the other half (Mwendwa, 2018).

Cronbach alpha (which factors in scale size in reliability estimation) was computed for each of the four leading independent variables on data obtained from the pilot study. Cronbach alpha r values between forms for each of the variables as presented in **Table 3.6** below were: Planning (0.825); Instructional techniques (0.866); Materials (0.883); and Assessment (0.956). Since the r values were greater than 0.8, they were considered to be at acceptable levels as agreed upon by several researchers who contend that a range between .7 and .9 is acceptable (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Kumar, 2011; Maboko, 2018; Malingu, 2018; Oga-Baldwin, & Fryer, 2020).

**Table 3.6: Reliability of the Questionnaire**

			Planning	Instructional techniques	Materials	Assessment
Cronbach's Alpha	Part 1	Value	.946	.877	.845	.855
		N of Items	8 <sup>a</sup>	14 <sup>a</sup>	7 <sup>a</sup>	4 <sup>a</sup>
	Part 2	Value	.842	.885	.940	.931
		N of Items	7 <sup>b</sup>	14 <sup>b</sup>	7 <sup>b</sup>	4 <sup>b</sup>
	Total N of Items		15	28	14	8
	Correlation Between Forms			.825	.866	.883

According to Johnson and Christensen (2017), internal validity is the validity in which inference can be made that a causal relationship (descriptive or explanatory) exists between two variables. Causality, in this case, is directional, where the changes observed in the DV (effect) are associated with the effect of the IV (the cause). Therefore, internal validity is the degree to which results are attributable to the independent variables and not some other contrary explanations. Stumpfegger (2017) adds that internal validity refers to how well the study is run in terms of research design, operational definitions, measurement of variables, and what is not measured.

The trustworthiness of internal validity entails how well the threats to internal validity were controlled, and ascertain the validity of instruments and measurements used in a study (Malakoff, 2012). Some of the commonly discussed threats to internal validity are ambiguous temporal precedence, history, maturation, testing, instrumentation, regression artefact, differential selection, additive or interactive effects, and differential attrition (Johnson & Christensen, 2017; Stumpfegger, 2017).

In this study, internal validity was made trustworthy in several ways. The collection of data using questionnaires was done for the shortest period to maximise the interest of participants. The same instrument collected data from all the 588 teachers. One-time testing was employed to avoid possible contamination by the use of pre-test/ post-tests. Data was analysed uniformly through the use of statistical test measures that include One-way ANOVA for the Questionnaire databases, and multiple regression for the hypotheses testing. Quantitative data from the teachers' questionnaire, having been obtained from 196 public primary schools in Bomet County, was the main source for analysis.

Another way to ascertain internal validity was by piloting the questionnaire, which was the primary research instrument. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2018) assert that piloting research instruments is of paramount importance in increasing the instruments' validity. A pilot study was carried out in 5 schools (2.5% of 196 schools) to determine if the instruments measured what they were intended to. Besides, it was to establish whether the respondents would find the tools clear, precise, and comprehensive enough from the researcher's point of view and to ascertain whether they would capture all the required data. Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) and Orodho (2012) recommend a minimum of 1 to 10 per cent of the actual sample size for a pilot study.



Participants were purposively selected from 5 schools in Kericho County, which had similar characteristics to the study area in terms of the level of academic performance in KCPE examination. From the five schools, participants included one teacher of English from either class 5, 6, or 7 who responded to the questionnaire. Data obtained helped make necessary adjustments that led to the fine copy used in the main study (see Appendix B).

External validity is achieved when we can generalise findings of a study to a larger target population in other settings, other points in time, across different outcomes, and various treatment variations (Johnson & Christensen, 2017). Therefore, threats arise when research draw incorrect inferences from the sample data to other settings, other persons, and past or future situations (Creswell, 2014).

Probability sampling was employed to make the study findings generalisable to the target population and to give an equal chance of participation to every member (Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011). Other sampling methods that ascertained the representation of the target population were stratified and simple random techniques. Further, the choice of explanatory sequential method in this study for data collection, interpretation, and analysis helped to enrich external validity. It enabled quantitative data to get fused with the qualitative data. Participants filling the questionnaire were also given humble time and not subjected to any form of pressure (Mohajan, 2017).

Objectivity requires researchers to remain at a distance so that findings will be based on what was studied and not influenced by the researcher's personality, beliefs, or values (Stumpfegger, 2017). In addition, Johnson and Christensen (2017) contend that researchers try to remain neutral and bias-free in observing the existence and characteristics of reality.

Objectivity in this study was achieved by creating a distance between the researcher and participants to lessen bias. Objectivity was used through the methodology of measurements, data collection, and data analysis (Malakoff, 2012) performed through procedures such as instrumentation and randomisation, as discussed elsewhere in this study. For instance, the main focus was on the facts collected using a standardised questionnaire. It was anticipated that this would, in turn, minimise influence by the participants, and therefore not influence the study. Next is a discussion on trustworthiness in the qualitative phase.

### **3.10.2 Trustworthiness in the Qualitative Phase.**

In this study, qualitative validity was used to assess the accuracy of the information collected using qualitative methods. According to Creswell and Plano Clark, (2018), qualitative validity is done by examining the extent of their credibility (internal validity), transferability (external validity), dependability (reliability), and confirmability (objectivity). Their equivalence in quantitative methods has been indicated in brackets. Out of the several available strategies to determine this validity, Creswell and Plano Clark recommend using at least three, namely: member checking, triangulation, and reporting disconfirming evidence.

In brief, member checking is taking back data (findings) to the participants and asking them to confirm whether they accurately represent their experiences. The most commonly used is triangulation, which uses data sources in data collection to search for convergence (Johnson & Christensen, 2017). Disconfirming evidence is a contrary perspective reported from the established one (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Korstjens & Moser, 2018). In this study, each of the four validity concerns was examined to ascertain data accuracy.

Credibility is described as the confidence in the truth of research findings and to establish if results represent plausible information obtained from the original data and is correctly interpreted (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Stumpfegger (2017) states that triangulation enhances the richness of data and analysis and therefore promotes credibility. In addition, many researchers agree that triangulation contributes to verification and validation of analysis by checking on the consistency of findings generated by varying research methods and data sources in the same method (Hussein, 2015; Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan, & Hoagwood, 2015; Pandey & Patnaik, 2014; Yilmaz, 2013).

In this study, credibility was addressed using a variety of data generation tools (as described earlier), which obtained the mentors' approval to be relevant and plausible for collection of rich data (Obuya & Ong'ondo, 2020). Data was also collected personally by the researcher to get first-hand information. Prolonged engagement with participants was done for familiarity, and building of trust to obtain rich data. Besides, there was a keen observation of teachers' lessons to identify the main characteristics and elements to focus on in detail. More than one theory underpinning this study likewise supported credibility (Stumpfegger, 2017). These strategies were utilised to enhance the aspect of truth-value (Korstjens & Moser, 2018).

Transferability is described as the extent to which conclusions can be applied to other settings, groups, and times (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). According to Korstjens and Moser, (2018), 'thick description' is used as a strategy to describe behaviours, experiences as well as their contexts to make them meaningful to an outsider. Thick description is explained by Jwan and Ong'ondo (2011) as a process of creating one paying attention to the fine grain of what one is observing and reflecting on, and showing awareness of one's contribution of meanings during the research process.

Gudu (2016) who cited Creswell (2009) indicates that there have been some divergent views on the applicability of qualitative data to generalise findings. However, transferability contexts are affirmed by Jwan and Ong'ondo (2011) as follows:

...even for similarities that might be found in single cases that will make multiple case study, we may not be confident they are facts beyond coincidences; it may not be possible to generalise the particularities and nuances of the individual cases. But it may be possible to transfer some understanding more or less analytically to similar contexts. (p.141)

From the above, Jwan and Ong'ondo (2011) argue that it is a possibility that the research process, context, and findings (as is alluded to) in this study is generalisable to other public schools in Kenya. In this study, it is based on the assumption that the implication of pedagogical strategies used by teachers of English in Bomet County in developing learner competencies in composition writing is applicable and transferable to other similar contexts in the country. The trends depicted in KCPE results by public schools suggest similar contexts and make it possible to generalise Bomet County findings to the whole country (see **Table 2.1** and **Table 2.2**).

Dependability has been defined by Jwan and Ong'ondo (2011) as the extent to which a researcher provides sufficient details and clarity of the research process. Korstjens & Moser (2018) and Anney (2015) opine that dependability is the stability of findings over time and involves evaluation of participants' findings, interpretation, and recommendations that are all supported by data from the field. Stumpfegger (2017), on her part, contends that the criteria used to achieve dependability is through general understandability, the flow of arguments, and logic. Where there is no evidence of dependability, the results of the study may be questionable (Anney, 2015; Olson, McAllister, Grinnell, Gehrke Walters, & Appunn 2016; Wang, 2013).

In this study, the instrument items in terms of language simplicity were taken into account to enhance dependability in this study, based on the extent to which they were suitable to gather the required information during administration. Interpretation and recommendations were devoid of any other influences but limited to data obtained from research findings only (Anney, 2015). Besides, researchers in the field of qualitative research were consulted frequently. In addition, and as done by Obuya and Ong'ondo (2020), a chain of evidence on the steps taken during the research process was maintained and cited in the findings of the study.

Confirmability has been defined by O'Donoghue (2007; cited in Wafula, 2017) as the extent to which research data and interpretations are firmly grounded on the events rather than the researcher's creations. Gudu (2016, citing Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011) added that it is when study findings are not influenced by other forces (internal or external), including the researcher him/herself, participants, or institutions. Anney (2015), on her part, states that it is the extent to which the results of a study could be confirmed or corroborated by other studies. Anney contends that it is the requirement for neutrality in the researcher interpretations so that data interpretation of findings are not figments of the researcher's imaginations.

Being objective and neutral in qualitative research has been contested in terms of influence on findings (Flyvbjerg, 2008; VanWynberghe & Khan, 2007, cited in Jwan & Ong'ondo 2011). These scholars argue that objectivity and neutrality, especially in social sciences, cannot be reassured since a researcher will find one way or another exercise influence some aspects of the study (Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011). Despite this being seen as a limitation, the trustworthiness of findings is, however, not lessened. Bowen, (2009) and Lincoln and Guba (1985; cited in Anney, 2015) suggest the use of audit trail, reflexive journal, and triangulation as strategies employed to achieve

confirmability. In addition, Obuya and Ong'ondo (2020) argue that "... it is normal for researchers to carry their prejudices and experiences into the research process, but the researchers should try to understand these influences on the research process" (p.18).

In this study, confirmability was maintained by conducting an audit of the raw data, personal notes, process notes, and analysis notes (Stumpfegger, 2017). The researcher kept reflecting on and looking at his own background and position to gauge how it would influence the research process. Every step of the research process was explained, giving a rationale for each decision made for the reader to get valuable insight into how themes emerged from the data. The next section discusses ethical considerations adopted in this study.

### **3.11 Ethical Considerations**

In this study, several steps were undertaken for the purposes of ethical standards. before conducting the investigation, during data collection and data analysis, and while reporting, sharing, and data storage. Several authors have defined the term ethics. Fraenkel and Wallen (2012) indicate that ethics refers to a question of right or wrong, whereas Resnik (2015) defines 'ethics' as norms for conduct that distinguishes between acceptable and nonacceptable behaviour. It can thus be concluded that ethics deals with how participants in research are treated and how data is handled after collection (Jackson, 2015).

Fraenkel and Wallen, (2012) and Vanderstoep & Johnston, (2009) advances that the three critical issues that every researcher needs to address are; protection of participants from harm, ensuring the confidentiality of research data, and the matter of deception of subjects. The security of participants from harm is the most critical ethical consideration of all. It is, thus, a fundamental responsibility of every researcher to do what it takes to

ensure that respondents are protected from physical or psychological harm, discomfort, or danger that may arise due to research procedures (Hassen, 2015).

Lichtman (2010) adds a 'do not harm' principle and stresses that there should be a reasonable expectation by those anticipating participating in a research study that they will not be involved in any situation that might get them harmed. In this study, the principles of beneficence, informed consent, anonymity, voluntary participation, honest analysis and reporting, and professional integrity were observed as described below. The first step was to secure authority to undertake the study from the School of Education of Moi University. Thereafter, a research permit from the National Commission of Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) was obtained.

### **3.11.1 The Principle of Beneficence.**

In this study, the principle of beneficence was attained by choosing to research on implications of pedagogical strategies on learner competencies in English composition writing. The principle calls on the researcher to design research that positively contributes to participants' lives and society in general. This could be referred to as 'worthwhile' research (Mdluli, 2015). The Kenyan government prioritises education as the key to developing the country in fast-tracking towards industrialisation and, therefore, the need for the literate and skilled citizenry. As such, researchers in education should undertake research projects relevant to, and that is profitable to the society. Therefore, the current study in writing skills is useful and applicable in multidisciplinary sectors.

Some of the potential benefits likely to emanate from the study include: identifying effective strategies to teach composition writing, selection of appropriate learning materials, and improved learner competence in composition writing. The current

research has potential benefits for participants and readers who may be triggered by the issue investigated.

### **3.11.2 Informed Consent.**

At the beginning of the study, permission was sought and obtained from the County Director of Education and the County Commissioner, Bomet County, to access the targeted schools. Heads of institutions were then visited to disclose to them the purpose of the study. This was followed by an initial interaction with English language subject panel heads of the respective schools to plan for the research tools' actual administration. According to Marczyk, DeMatteo, and Festinger (2005), informed consent is the system for communicating the research study to potential participants.

Informed consent allows the participants to understand the procedures to be employed in the study, the risks, and the demands that may be made upon them (Best & Kahn, 2001). All the required information was divulged to the prospective participants and were given the opportunity to ask questions beforehand. Specifically, Headteachers were fully briefed about the nature of the study and on the demands that it would have on their institutions. Next is a discussion of voluntary participation.

### **3.11.3 Voluntary Participation.**

In this study, potential respondents were allowed to decide whether to be participants. Teachers were not coerced by any party (e.g., the Head Teacher, supervisor, Education officers, or the researcher) to take part, to withdraw, or to remain as participants. That would have infringed upon their human rights, and the data collected through coercion would most likely be unreliable. With this in mind, the researcher obtained the participants' voluntary participation consent verbally.



Babbie (2013) points out that social research often disrupts and interferes with the regularity of the lives of those who consent to participate. Voluntary participation demands that the research participants consent or dissent from participating in the study. In other words, they should not be compelled to participate. Serem, Boit, and Wanyama (2013) affirm that the researcher is responsible for protecting respondents' rights and interests. Anonymity and confidentiality are discussed next.

#### **3.11.4 Anonymity and Confidentiality.**

In this study, the researcher was responsible for ensuring the confidentiality of the information and protecting the privacy and dignity of the participants. Fraenkel and Wallen (2012) have strongly argued that the names of the subjects should not be revealed in the data collection forms. Instead, they assign a number or letter to each participant who can then furnish information anonymously. Confidentiality involved the teachers' and pupils' rights to have control over the use of or access to their data, as well as the right to have the information shared with the researcher to be used anonymously and sources kept confidential (Lichtman, 2010).

Participants were given full assurance that their individual or school names would not be revealed. The questionnaires were completed by respondents anonymously, while interviews were conducted in secure and secluded environments. No one, except the researcher, would be allowed to see the information provided by the participants. Respondents were also assured that any information regarding them would not be released without their permission. Next is the principle of honesty in analysis and reporting.

#### **3.11.5 The Principle of Honest Analysis and Reporting.**

This study-maintained honesty in reporting all findings, whether positive, negative, or unexpected (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Honesty is a crucial ethical issue in research.

Babbie (2013) contends that researchers have an obligation towards their colleagues in the research community to analyse data and honestly report the results rigorously. Babbie adds that researchers need to point out the pitfalls and problems experienced in the course of conducting the study to allow other researchers in similar contexts to learn from their experiences.

In this study, any shortcomings and limitations of the research were pointed out. Surprising or unexpected results were also reported. Finally, the principle of professional integrity is addressed next.

#### **3.11.6 Principle of Professional Integrity.**

This study undertook research that reflected scientific integrity (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The methods of investigation used were sound, and besides, no plagiarism was tolerated since credit was apportioned to the contributions of others. The level of similarity was limited to 19%. Raw data and other materials were kept safely (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Key issues raised in this methodology section are summarised in **Table 3.7** on the next page, followed by the chapter summary.

**Table 3.7: Key Issues Arising from Research Methodology**


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<b>Research paradigm</b>
i. Pragmatist paradigm underpinned the study
<b>Research approach</b>
i. A mixed-methods approach was used
<b>Research design</b>
i. Sequential explanatory mixed methods design was used, adopting QUAN → qual design
<b>Research methods</b>
i. Survey method was used at the quantitative phase and
ii. Multiple case study method for the qualitative phase
<b>Sampling</b>
i. The study was carried out in Bomet County
ii. Probability and non-probability sampling techniques were used
iii. A sample of 588 teachers took part during the quantitative phase
iv. 29 teachers and 130 pupils took part during the qualitative phase
<b>Data generation</b>
i. Data generation tools used were: Questionnaire, test, teachers' interview, lesson observation, document analyses, and pupils' focus group discussions
<b>Data analysis</b>
i. Parametric analysis was used to process quantitatively collected data while qualitatively data was processed thematically
<b>Trustworthiness</b>
i. Trustworthiness during the quantitative and (qualitative phases) observed was: internal validity (credibility), external validity (transferability), reliability (dependability), and objectivity (confirmability).
<b>Ethical considerations</b>
i. Ethical issues considered were: the principle of beneficence, informed consent, voluntary participation, anonymity and confidentiality, principles of honesty analysis and reporting and of professional integrity.

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### 3.12 Summary

The purpose of this methodology section was to generate data useful in making analysis and findings on the current study, which was to shed light on the implication of pedagogical strategies in enhancing desired learner competencies in English composition writing within the context of upper primary classes in Kenya. This is now followed by the Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation of findings from this study.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of findings based on the objectives and hypotheses of the study, as put forward in Chapter One. The reporting of results has been organised to follow a consistent pattern: the presentation of composition test results, quantitative results, analysis of pedagogical strategies, and qualitative findings.

The study was conducted in public primary schools in Bomet County, Kenya. Data was collected from upper primary school teachers of English and class five, six, and seven pupils. During the quantitative phase, a total of 588 teachers took part. However, the response rate was 574 (97.6%) teachers. Among them were 188 teachers from class five, 193 teachers from class six, and 193 teachers from class seven who adequately filled the questionnaires. In total, 274 (47.7%) were male, while 300 (52.3%) were female.

For the qualitative phase, 29 teachers provided professional documents for analysis, while ten teachers from different schools were observed and interviewed. Two pupils from each of the 29 schools where teachers' professional records were checked, were selected to avail their English composition exercise books for analysis, which gave a total of 58 exercise books. A further 72 class seven pupils sampled purposively from nine schools were involved in the FGD in groups of eight. A total of 130 pupils took part in the study.

The intervening variables of teacher and learner attributes were addressed by engaging qualified P1 trained teachers of English and involving class 5, 6, and 7 boys and girls, respectively. Contextual/ environmental factors were controlled by selecting two

streams in each public primary school sampled and common composition writing evaluation test results for each of the three classes. The English language composition writing scores obtained during the first phase of the study was useful in sampling for the qualitative phase and for data analysis based on the group statistics that emerged. These analysed scores are presented first in the next section.

#### 4.2 Data from English Composition Writing Test Scores

In this study, it was important to analyse available composition writing scores from the sampled schools. Ordinarily, these mean scores are used as yardsticks of performance in institutions, and in this case, the level of learner competencies in composition writing. The Term 2 composition test results for the targeted schools were obtained from Bomet County Education office and recorded as a dependent variable. This data was presented at this stage since they were consistently referred to when reporting quantitative findings that were presented next.

Three categories adopted from KCPE composition marking formats were used to summarise the scores from the three classes: Group A (21-30) rated as very good, Group B (16-20) rated as average, and Group C (1-15) rated as below average. No school obtained a mean score of 31-40 and was thus not part of the categorisation. **Table 4.1** below is a summary of the findings.

**Table 4.1: Learner Competency in Composition Writing**

Descriptives								
Learner competency in composition writing								
Marks Range	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
21-30	28	21.2857	.93718	.17711	20.9223	21.6491	18.00	23.00
16-20	481	18.0457	1.25913	.05741	17.9329	18.1585	15.00	20.00
1-15	65	14.5385	1.51118	.18744	14.1640	14.9129	10.00	14.00
Total	574	17.8066	1.86430	.07781	17.6538	17.9595	10.00	23.00

Findings reveal that out of the 574 classes from the sampled 196 schools, 65 classes were in Group C and obtained a mean of 14.5385, 481 classes were in Group B who obtained a mean of 18.0457 and were the majority, while 28 classes were in Group A who obtained a mean of 21.2857, and were the minority. ANOVA results in **Table 4.2** on the next page reveal that there was a statistically significant difference between the three groups on learner competencies in composition writing ( $F(2, 571) = 17.8066$ ,  $p=0.000$ ).

**Table 4.2: Group differences**

ANOVA					
Learner competency in composition writing 1					
Competency	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1060.673	2	530.336	325.314	.000
Within Groups	930.862	571	1.630		
Total	1991.535	573			

Further breakdown of the three groups revealed that in Group C, class 5, 6, and 7 were 26, 17, and 22 in number respectively. Group B in the same classes were 152, 169, and 160 respectively, while Group A were 10, 07, and 11 in that order. **Table 4.3** below presents the summary.

**Table 4.3: Group Distribution of Scores**

GROUP	C (1-15)	B (16-20)	A (21-30)	TOTAL
CLASS 5	26	152	10	188
CLASS 6	17	169	7	193
CLASS 7	22	160	11	193
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>481</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>574</b>

As signalled at the beginning of this section, the data presented above aided in presenting and interpreting the quantitative findings below.

### **4.3 Presentation of Quantitative Data**

This section presents the results of the first phase of the study. Quantitative data was collected through questionnaires for teachers and is presented per objective. A structure was put in place to prepare, code, and enter the data into the SPSS software and was followed by the cleaning up process for data errors. Descriptive statistics were used to present findings regarding the four independent variables while One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to measure group difference based on the dependent variable findings which were the English composition writing evaluation test results. First to be presented are the results of teacher planning.

#### **4.3.1 Implications of Planning on Learner Competencies in Composition Writing**

Analysis of planning for the teaching of composition writing at the upper primary school level entailed an examination of the range of professional documents, issues influencing teacher planning, and frequency of preparation.

##### ***4.3.1.1 Range of Professional documents***

In this study, the range of professional documents analysed were schemes of work, lesson plans, and lesson notes. Other professional documents commonly used by teachers of English and also analysed are the approved KICD syllabus, approved KICD textbooks, supplementary books, and improvised materials. These documents are essential during teaching and serve as a guide on methodology and source of content. The availability of these documents in the study area is addressed under ‘frequency of planning’ (4.3.1.3). Findings on issues that influence teacher planning are presented next.

##### ***4.3.1.2 Issues that influence teacher planning***

In this subsection, it was important to establish whether teachers put into consideration key issues that affect planning. Respondents were asked to use the scale of 5- Strongly

agree (SA), 4- Agree (A), 3-Neutral (N), 2- Disagree (DA) and 1- Strongly Disagree (SD) to weight their level of agreement concerning the most critical issues they considered when planning for English composition lessons. The results are provided in **Table 4.4** below.

Findings reveal that a total of 370 (64.5%) of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that the weightage of English Composition writing in the syllabus was a critical factor that guides planning. A more significant number, 423(74.1%), similarly agreed or strongly agreed that objectives derived from the syllabus are essential for planning composition lessons.

**Table 4.4: Issues affecting the Planning of English Composition Lessons**

Planning issues	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
i)Lesson allocation (weightage) in the syllabus	<b>79</b>	<b>13.8</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>50.7</b>	96	16.7	75	13.1	33	5.7
ii)Objectives in the syllabus	<b>145</b>	<b>25.7</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>48.4</b>	106	18.5	35	6.1	10	1.7
iii)Sequencing of English skills	<b>99</b>	<b>17.2</b>	262	45.6	133	23.2	61	10.6	19	3.3
iv)Learner needs and interests	116	20.2	229	39.9	<b>152</b>	<b>26.5</b>	62	10.8	15	2.6
v) Variety of instructional techniques	157	27.4	246	42.9	92	16.0	63	11.0	16	2.8
vi) Relevance of instructional techniques	161	28.0	250	43.6	97	16.9	48	8.4	18	3.1
vii) Variety of teaching and learning activities	151	26.3	234	40.8	113	19.7	55	9.6	21	3.7
viii) Provision for learner participation	173	30.1	210	36.6	130	22.6	43	7.5	18	3.1
ix) Provision for learner evaluation and Feedback	197	34.3	200	34.8	114	19.9	42	7.3	21	3.7

*Source: Field data (2019)*

However, only 99(17.2%) of the respondents strongly agreed that the sequencing of the four skills in the English language informed planning for composition lessons. This suggests that teachers' systematic development of skills that leads into the enhancement



of writing skills was not put into consideration. Out of all the items asked on the conditions that are critical to planning, the largest number of non-committal respondents 152(26.5%) were surprisingly uncertain on whether learner needs and interest are put into consideration.

Regarding the variety and relevance of teaching and learning activities, slightly above 40% of the respondents considered them vital for planning. However, a near equal number of respondents agreed or strongly agreed on the provision for learner participation, evaluation, and feedback in their schemes of work and lesson plans at an average of 32%. In summary, teachers' responses tended not to agree strongly but chose to agree, while a considerable number opted to remain neutral. The findings indicate that learner needs and interests are least considered during planning thus has implications on composition writing competencies. The next subsection present results on the frequency of preparation.

#### ***4.3.1.3 Frequency of Planning***

Frequency of teacher planning is important since it reflects on the level of lesson attendance on the allocated lessons and as evidence of teacher preparedness. Teachers of English were asked to indicate how frequently they prepared professional documents in readiness for English composition lessons. Responses were elicited on a 4-point scale ranging from 4- Very frequent (VF), 3- Frequent (F), 3- Less frequent (LF), and 1- Never (N). The results are presented in **Table 4.5** on the next page.

**Table 4.5: Preparation of Professional Documents for English Composition Lessons**

Frequency of preparation	Very Frequent		Frequent		Less Frequent		Never	
	n	%	n	%	N	%	n	%
<b>Professional documentation</b>								
i)Preparation and use of Schemes of Work	213	37.1	<b>332</b>	57.8	28	4.9	1	.2
ii)Preparation and use of Lesson Plans	197	34.3	<b>276</b>	48.1	70	12.2	31	5.4
iii)Use of KICD syllabus	222	38.7	<b>281</b>	49	56	9.8	15	2.6
iv)Use of recommended KICD textbooks	237	41.3	<b>248</b>	43.2	68	11.8	21	3.7
v)Use of Supplementary books	76	13.2	<b>307</b>	53.5	161	28	30	5.2
vi)Use of Improvised materials	49	8.5	<b>281</b>	49	194	33.8	50	8.7

Source: Field data (2019)

Findings reveal that most teachers prepare schemes of work, with a majority of teachers doing so frequently 332(57.8%), with a further 213(37.1%) very frequently. This indicates that the preparation of schemes of work is a common practice in schools. A similar trend applies to the preparation of lesson plans where 276(48.1%) stated that they did so frequently. Regarding materials to use in lesson preparation, the KICD syllabus was ‘frequently used’ by 281(49%) teachers with a further 222(38.7%) using it ‘very frequently.’ This suggests that some teachers do not refer to the approved KICD syllabus to prepare their schemes of work. On the other hand, the use of recommended KICD books as resource materials for planning was frequently used by 248(43.2%) teachers and another 237(41.3%) who used those ‘very frequently.’ The majority of teachers 307(53.5%) used supplementary books to plan English composition lessons frequently, with only 281(49%) using improvised materials at the same frequency.

Generally, results indicate that the use of professional documents in planning English composition lessons was used frequently by a higher percentage of teachers, followed by those who used them very frequently. Those who never used or used professional documents less frequently were relatively negligible. Teachers did not state any other

documents used during lesson preparation. The next section reports findings on the implications of instructional techniques on learner competencies in composition writing.

#### 4.3.2 Implications of Instructional Techniques on Learner Competencies in Composition Writing.

In this study, there was a need to investigate the instructional techniques used by teachers in English composition writing. Findings are reported in three subsections; choice of teaching techniques, teaching and learning activities, and issues that influence the choice of instructional techniques in composition writing. Below are results obtained from each, beginning with the choice of teaching techniques.

##### 4.3.2.1 Range of Instructional techniques

Respondents were given six techniques used in teaching and were asked to rate how often each was used during English composition lessons using; Very often (VO), Often (O), Rarely I, and Never (N). **Table 4.6** below is a summary of the results.

**Table 4.6: Teaching techniques for English Composition Writing**

Teaching Techniques	Very Often		Often		Rarely		Never	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
i)Expository Technique	191	33.3	294	51.2	81	14.1	8	1.4
ii)Task-based technique	100	17.4	332	57.8	124	21.6	18	3.1
iii)Questioning technique	36	6.3	214	37.3	200	34.8	12	21.6
iv)Experiential technique	182	31.7	290	50.5	97	16.9	4	0.9
v)Collaborative technique	139	24.2	287	50.0	132	23.0	15	2.6
vi)Problem-solving technique	66	11.5	269	46.9	188	32.8	51	8.9

*Source: Field data (2019)*

From among the six selected techniques, results indicate that the expository technique was reported to be the dominantly used technique by the respondents. 191(33.3%)

teachers used it very often, and a further 294(51.2%) teachers used it often. It was followed by experiential technique, where it was used very often by 182 (31.7%) while 290(50.5%) used it often. The collaborative technique was used very often by 139(24.2%) teachers and 285(50.0%) teachers often. However, 132(23.0%) teachers reported that they used collaborative technique rarely while only 15(2.6%) teachers indicated that they never used the technique. The Task-based technique was ‘most commonly used’ by teachers where more than half 332(57.8%) used it often, in addition to 100(17.4%) who also used it very often.

The questioning technique was used very often by only 36(6.3%) of the teachers, often by 214(37.3%) teachers, rarely by 200(34.8%) teachers and never by 124(21.6%) teachers. There were mixed responses on this technique in all the categories that teachers were asked to select from, except for the few who responded under ‘very often’ and was the lowest among all the techniques. It was also the technique that the majority 124(21.6%) never used in teaching composition writing.

For problem-solving technique, it was the only technique where less than 50% of the teachers used it often by 269(46.9%) teachers. It was also the second-highest technique that was rarely used by 188(32.8%) teachers after the questioning technique. This finding suggests that learners are involved most of the time doing tasks alongside the teachers’ lecture method during English composition lessons (Mao, 2012). It was also noted that when respondents who use selected methods often and very often are put together, the expository technique was the most popular 485(84.5%), followed by experiential technique 472(82.2%).

This study then compared learner performance in composition writing for the most often used technique (expository) and the least used (questioning) technique. Findings are presented in **Table 4.7** below.

**Table 4.7: Comparison of Expository and Questioning Techniques**

TECHNIQUE	GROUP	VERY OFTEN	OFTEN	RARE	NEVER
<b>Expository</b>	C	13(14.5385)	30(14.5667)	20(14.6500)	2(13.0000)
	B	155(18.2452)	248(18.0403)	75(17.6933)	3(17.0000)
	A	14(21.3571)	12(21.1667)	2(21.5000)	-
<b>Questioning</b>	C	18(14.6111)	30(14.5333)	14(14.4286)	3(14.6667)
	B	162(18.2284)	251(17.9801)	64(17.9375)	4(16.5000)
	A	11(21.4545)	13(21.0000)	3(22.0000)	1(21.0000)

Findings reveal mixed results as sampled next. In group C, those who used ‘very often’ under the expository and questioning were 13(14.5385) and 18(14.6111), respectively. The figures in bracket are the mean scores obtained. In the same group, those who reported that they never used the expository and questioning technique were 2(13.0000) and 3(14.6667), respectively. In group B, those who ‘often’ used the expository technique and questioning were 248(18.0403) and 251(17.9801), respectively. In the same group, those who reported that they rarely used the expository and questioning techniques were 75(17.6933) and 64(17.9375), respectively. In group A, those who ‘very often’ used the expository and questioning techniques were 14(21.3571) and 11(21.4545), respectively.

A test was run to establish whether there was any statistically significant difference between the choice of the two-teaching techniques used and learner performance among the three groups A, B, and C. ANOVA results are presented in **Table 4.8** on the next page. F-ratio results reveal that there was no statistical significance in the expository technique ( $F_{2, 571}=17.8066$ ,  $p=.000$ ) whereas there was statistical significance in questioning technique ( $F_{2, 571}, 17.8066$ ,  $p=.062$ ). This finding suggests that teachers who reported that they used expository technique either most often, often, rarely or never used it did not have any significant effect on learner competency in composition

writing. On the contrary, teachers who reported that they used the questioning technique had a significant impact on learner competency depending on how often they used the technique.

**Table 4.8: Expository and Questioning Technique**

ANOVA						
Technique		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Learner competency in composition writing 1	Between Groups	1060.673	2	530.336	325.314	.000
	Within Groups	930.862	571	1.630		
	Total	1991.535	573			
Expository technique	Between Groups	8.589	2	4.295	8.739	.000
	Within Groups	280.611	571	.491		
	Total	289.200	573			
Questioning technique	Between Groups	2.793	2	1.397	2.790	.062
	Within Groups	285.813	571	.501		
	Total	288.606	573			

In this study, teaching and learning activities used in the teaching of composition writing spread across the various instructional techniques (please refer to 2.2.3.3). These activities were also evaluated and were presented in the report of findings below.

#### ***4.3.2.2. Teaching and learning activities.***

In this study, there was a need to investigate the teaching and learning activities in use. A list of teaching and learning activities was made available to the respondents, including drafting, revision, pair work, group work, class discussion, storytelling, individual learner attention, and use of poems. Gakori (2015), together with Teshome et al. (2017), identified these learning activities as relevant strategies that teachers should choose from in teaching English composition writing. These activities were put on a semantic rating scale of least to most, with (1) being least used and (6) being most used in the English composition lessons. Teachers were then asked to put a tick on the

number they considered most applicable to their school contexts in using these activities to enhance learner competencies in composition writing. The findings are presented in **Table 4.9** below.

**Table 4.9: Choice of Teaching and Learning Activities Descriptives**

Activity	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Min	Max	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound			
Drafting	21-30	28	4.4286	1.54988	.29290	3.8276	5.0296	1.00	6.00
	16-20	481	3.6050	1.40457	.06404	3.4792	3.7308	1.00	6.00
	1-15	65	3.1077	1.20056	.14891	2.8102	3.4052	1.00	6.00
	Total	574	3.5889	1.40987	.05885	3.4733	3.7044	1.00	6.00
Revision	21-30	28	5.1429	1.04401	.19730	4.7380	5.5477	3.00	6.00
	16-20	481	4.5613	1.24368	.05671	4.4499	4.6728	1.00	6.00
	1-15	65	4.1538	1.31376	.16295	3.8283	4.4794	2.00	6.00
	Total	574	4.5436	1.25495	.05238	4.4407	4.6464	1.00	6.00
Pair work	21-30	28	4.8214	1.09048	.20608	4.3986	5.2443	2.00	6.00
	16-20	481	3.6071	1.29963	.05926	3.4906	3.7235	1.00	6.00
	1-15	65	3.2615	1.07931	.13387	2.9941	3.5290	1.00	5.00
	Total	574	3.6272	1.29855	.05420	3.5207	3.7336	1.00	6.00
Group work	21-30	28	5.4286	.83571	.15793	5.1045	5.7526	3.00	6.00
	16-20	481	4.2432	1.39981	.06383	4.1178	4.3687	1.00	6.00
	1-15	65	3.7692	1.37806	.17093	3.4278	4.1107	1.00	6.00
	Total	574	4.2474	1.40733	.05874	4.1320	4.3628	1.00	6.00
Class discussion	21-30	28	4.6786	1.24881	.23600	4.1943	5.1628	2.00	6.00
	16-20	481	3.8565	1.37014	.06247	3.7338	3.9793	1.00	6.00
	1-15	65	3.8615	1.37928	.17108	3.5198	4.2033	1.00	6.00
	Total	574	3.8972	1.37475	.05738	3.7845	4.0099	1.00	6.00
Completing sentences	21-30	28	4.9286	1.24510	.23530	4.4458	5.4114	2.00	6.00
	16-20	481	4.0437	1.42309	.06489	3.9162	4.1712	1.00	6.00
	1-15	65	3.8462	1.49197	.18506	3.4765	4.2158	1.00	6.00
	Total	574	4.0645	1.43541	.05991	3.9468	4.1821	1.00	6.00
Individual learner attention	21-30	28	4.2500	1.29458	.24465	3.7480	4.7520	1.00	6.00
	16-20	481	3.2100	1.34613	.06138	3.0894	3.3306	1.00	6.00
	1-15	65	2.8769	1.13891	.14126	2.5947	3.1591	1.00	6.00
	Total	574	3.2230	1.34428	.05611	3.1128	3.3332	1.00	6.00
Writing poems	21-30	28	1.7857	.83254	.15734	1.4629	2.1085	1.00	5.00
	16-20	481	1.7089	.88888	.04053	1.6293	1.7886	1.00	6.00
	1-15	65	1.6615	.73478	.09114	1.4795	1.8436	1.00	4.00
	Total	574	1.7073	.86912	.03628	1.6361	1.7786	1.00	6.00

*Source: Field data (2019)*

Findings on the above table are reported on the ANOVA results in **Table 4.10** on the next page which reveal mixed results. One -Way ANOVA was run to test these eight

items on choice of classroom activities to examine whether there were any statistically significant differences against the factor of group performance on composition writing. Results indicated that there were statistically significant differences in drafting ( $F(2, 571) = 3.5889, p=0.000$ ); revision ( $F(2, 571) = 4.5436, p=0.002$ ); pair work ( $F(2, 571) = 3.6272, p= 0.000$ ); group work ( $F(2, 571) = 4.2474, p=0.000$ ); class discussion ( $F(2, 571) = 3.8972, p= 0.008$ ); completing sentences ( $F(2, 571) = 4.0645, p= 0.003$ ); and individual learner attention ( $F(2, 571) = 3.2230, p= 0.000$ ). However, there was no statistically significant difference in the choice of Poems ( $F(2, 571) = 1.7073, p= 0.815$ ).

**Table 4.10: Analysis of Teaching and Learning Activities**

ANOVA						
Activity		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Drafting	Between Groups	34.917	2	17.459	9.029	.000
	Within Groups	1104.051	571	1.934		
	Total	1138.969	573			
Revision	Between Groups	20.080	2	10.040	6.497	.002
	Within Groups	882.331	571	1.545		
	Total	902.411	573			
Pair work	Between Groups	48.819	2	24.410	15.193	.000
	Within Groups	917.397	571	1.607		
	Total	966.216	573			
Group work	Between Groups	53.935	2	26.967	14.245	.000
	Within Groups	1080.936	571	1.893		
	Total	1134.871	573			
Class discussion	Between Groups	17.973	2	8.986	4.818	.008
	Within Groups	1064.963	571	1.865		
	Total	1082.936	573			
Completing sentences	Between Groups	24.213	2	12.107	5.978	.003
	Within Groups	1156.402	571	2.025		
	Total	1180.615	573			
Individual learner attention	Between Groups	37.399	2	18.699	10.698	.000
	Within Groups	998.057	571	1.748		
	Total	1035.456	573			
Writing poems	Between Groups	.310	2	.155	.204	.815
	Within Groups	432.520	571	.757		
	Total	432.829	573			

*Source: Field data (2019)*

Results reveal further that revision had the highest total mean of 4.5436, followed by Group work, with a mean of 4.2474. The least mean was the use of poems with a combined mean of 1.7073. Under the category of Group A (21-30), which is the group



that scored higher than the rest, the highest mean was again recorded by Group work (5.4286), followed by Revision (5.1429). This result indicates that the use of group work and revision activities are effectively used in enhancing learner competency in composition writing. In addition, teachers do not engage writing of poems as an activity to enhance learners' composition skills. Next is a presentation on the frequency at which teachers develop specific composition skills of upper primary learners.

#### 4.3.2.3. *Issues determining the use of Instructional techniques*

The following issues were identified as determinants on the use of instructional techniques: syllabus guidelines, learner interest, background knowledge, learner abilities, and environmental/ contextual factors. Responses from the three groups A, B and C, were compared. Below are the ANOVA results in **Table 4.11**.

**Table 4.11: Issues determining the use of instructional techniques**  
ANOVA

Determinants		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Syllabus guidelines	Between Groups	2.712	2	1.356	2.293	.102
	Within Groups	337.757	571	.592		
	Total	340.469	573			
Learner interests	Between Groups	19.513	2	9.757	8.891	.000
	Within Groups	626.621	571	1.097		
	Total	646.134	573			
Background knowledge	Between Groups	4.210	2	2.105	6.207	.002
	Within Groups	193.644	571	.339		
	Total	197.854	573			
Learning abilities	Between Groups	2.712	2	1.356	2.293	.102
	Within Groups	337.757	571	.592		
	Total	340.469	573			
Environmental/ contextual factors	Between Groups	2.527	2	1.264	2.512	.082
	Within Groups	287.201	571	.503		
	Total	289.728	573			

Results indicated that there were statistically significant differences between groups on two issues that determine the use of instructional techniques Learning interests ( $F(2, 571) = 2.5488, p=0.000$ ) and Background knowledge ( $F(2, 571) = 1.7561, p=0.002$ ). However, there were no statistically significant difference between groups on the issues of Syllabus guidelines ( $F(2, 571) = 3.3746, p=0.102$ ); Learner abilities ( $F(2, 571) = 3.3746, p=0.102$ ); and Environmental/ contextual factors  $F(2, 571) = 2.0936, p=0.082$ ). Descriptive statistics reveal that group A scores had higher means in all the constructs, indicating that they very often considered all the constructs when determining the use of instructional techniques. The next was group B and then group C.

The implication is that when these determinants are put into consideration when choosing an instructional strategy, learner performance in composition writing is improved. The next is a presentation of findings on teaching and learning materials.

#### **4.3.3 Implications of Teaching and Learning Materials on Learner Competencies in Composition Writing.**

This section presents findings obtained from the questionnaire on the implications of teaching and learning materials on learner competencies in English composition writing. The questions addressed three parameters: the range of commonly used teaching/learning materials, issues on the selection of materials, and frequency of use.

Results obtained from these three components are provided as follows:

##### ***4.3.3.1 Range of learning materials***

In this study, it was important to establish the available learning materials used in teaching English composition writing, beginning with textbooks. Analysed results per groups of learner competency scores are presented in **Table 4.12** on the next page.

**Table 4.12: Range of Textbooks****Descriptive Statistics**

Dependent Variable: Learner competency in composition writing 1

Textbooks	Learner competency in composition writing 2	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
NPE	21-30	21.2692	.96157	26
	16-20	18.0482	1.25016	415
	1-15	14.5091	1.51380	55
	Total	<b>17.8246</b>	1.86826	496
NPPE	21-30	21.5000	.70711	2
	16-20	17.8500	1.33109	40
	1-15	15.2857	1.38013	7
	Total	<b>17.6327</b>	1.77593	49
KNE	16-20	18.3077	1.28901	26
	1-15	13.3333	1.15470	3
	Total	<b>17.7931</b>	1.98889	29
Total	21-30	21.2857	.93718	28
	16-20	18.0457	1.25913	481
	1-15	14.5385	1.51118	65
	Total	17.8066	1.86430	574

*Source: Field data (2019)*

A list of three main titles obtained from the approved KICD books was presented to teachers. These were: New Primary English (NPE), New Progressive Primary English (NPPE), and Keynote English (KNE). Teachers were asked to indicate by ticking the book title(s) preferred/available in their class from the list of textbooks.

The following results present the number of schools per category on a variety of textbooks. In Group A (21-30) schools, textbooks available were: NPE (26), NPPE (2), and KNE (0). In Group B (16-20) schools, texts books available were NPE (415), NPPE (40), and KNE (26). In Group C (1-15) schools, texts books available were NPE (55), NPPE (7), and KNE (3). The textbooks available in the majority of the schools in all the categories were New Primary English (496) schools, followed by New Progressive Primary English (49) schools and finally, Keynote English (29) schools.

Findings also revealed that on learner competency in composition writing, schools that used NPE obtained the highest combined mean of 17.8246, followed by Keynote

English (17.7931) and lastly NPPE (17.6327). However, as indicated above, Group A schools did not have Keynote English in stock. Further, an analysis of individual groups revealed mixed results. Schools in group A and C who used NPPE obtained highest mean of 21.5000 and 15.2857 respectively in the category of textbooks, whereas in Group B, schools where Keynote English was available had the highest mean as well. ANOVA results revealed that there were statistically significant differences in mean scores obtained between the three groups on the choice of textbooks ( $(F_2, 566) = 14.572, p = .000$ ).

Teachers did not indicate the availability of any other titles of books since the same books were mainly used in the teaching of grammar, comprehension passages and all other language skills as well. Therefore, there were no specific titles or supplementary books available for the teaching of English composition writing in virtually all the schools. Other non-textbook materials that were presented to teachers were: real objects, pictures of certain objects, internet, charts, variety of materials (newspapers, magazines and storybooks). These are addressed under the frequency of use of materials (see 4.3.3.3). Next is a presentation of findings on issues that determine the selection of learning materials.

#### ***4.3.3.2 Issues determining selection of learning materials***

To establish the implication of learning materials on learners' composition writing competencies, there was a need to establish issues that influence the selection of materials used by teachers. The main issues investigated were: relevance of the learning materials in composition writing, a need for the use of supplementary materials, and a need for a variety. Others include the effectiveness of the materials, a need for learner involvement, and a need for improvisation.

In this subsection, Respondents were asked to indicate their agreement to statements related to the selection of materials used in the teaching of English composition skills. The scales used were: **1** – Strongly Agree, **2** – Agree, **3** – Neutral, **4** – Disagree, and **5**– Strongly Disagree. The results of the descriptive statistics are shown in **Table 4.13** below.

**Table 4.13: Determinants of Selection of Teaching/Learning Materials**

Selection modalities	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
<b>Frequency</b>										
i)I consider <b>relevant</b> and recommended materials for teaching composition writing	<b>173</b>	<b>30.1</b>	<b>365</b>	<b>63.6</b>	22	3.8	8	1.4	6	1.0
ii)I consider other <b>supplementary</b> books for teaching composition writing	<b>126</b>	<b>22.0</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>61.3</b>	77	13.4	13	2.3	6	1.0
iii)I consider a <b>variety</b> of materials to enhance learner competencies in composition writing skills	150	26.1	309	53.8	93	16.2	21	3.7	1	0.2
iv)I consider the <b>effectiveness</b> of materials to develop learner competencies in composition writing	136	23.7	309	53.8	106	18.5	21	3.7	2	0.3
v)I <b>involve learners</b> to select materials for composition writing	73	12.7	211	36.8	162	28.2	<b>109</b>	19.0	19	3.3
vi)I <b>improve</b> materials for teaching composition writing	106	18.5	299	52.1	118	20.6	43	7.5	8	1.4

*Source: Field data (2019)*

Beginning with the relevance of recommended learning materials, 173(30.1%) strongly agreed, and another 365(63.6%) agreed that they put this into consideration when selecting learning materials. Similarly, 126(22.0%) teachers strongly agreed, and another 352(61.3%) teachers agreed that they consider supplementary books for teaching composition writing. However, previous results (in 4.3.3.1) indicated that

supplementary books were not part of the variety of materials available. 150(26.1%) teachers strongly agreed and 309(53.8%) teachers agreed that they considered a variety of materials to enhance the skills. However, 93(16.2%) teachers were undecided on this construct, with remaining few who disagreed or strongly disagreed being insignificant.

Teachers' consideration of the effectiveness of materials was strongly agreed by 136(23.7%), and agreed by another 309(53.8%). Those neutral were 106(18.5%) teachers while those who disagreed or strongly disagreed were 21(3.7%) and 2(0.3%) teachers respectively. A minimal number of teachers 73(12.7%) strongly agreed that they considered learner involvement in selecting materials. On the same construct, 211(36.8%) teachers agreed, 162(28.2%) were neutral, 109(19.0%) disagreed, and 19(3.3%) strongly disagreed. This was the highest number of all the constructs among those who were neutral and those that disagreed. It is an indication that teachers select materials without learner involvement. Finally, on improvisation of materials, 106(18.5%) teachers strongly agreed, 299(52.1%) agreed, 118(20.5%) were neutral, 43(7.5%) disagreed, and 8(1.4%) of the teachers strongly disagreed that it was a determinant in selecting materials. It was the second construct to have many teachers who were neutral while in disagreement.

In summary, there was high regard on a variety of relevant and recommended course books and supplementary materials as determinants in the selection of materials for teaching composition writing skills. Most teachers also highly considered their effectiveness in developing learner competencies in composition writing. Next is on the frequency of the use of learning materials.

#### 4.3.3.3 *The frequency of selection and use of learning materials.*

After determining the issues that influence the selection of learning materials as presented in the findings above, there was a need to ascertain their selection for use in the classroom. This was considered important to establish their utilisation. The materials that were investigated were the following: relevant KICD textbooks, relevant supplementary books, real objects, pictures of certain objects, internet use, learner selected materials, improvised materials, and other varieties such as newspapers, magazines, and use of storybooks to teach composition writing. Therefore, teachers were asked to indicate how they frequently used the selected materials based on four parameters, namely, Very often (VO), Often (O), Rarely I, and Never (N). The analysed results per group performance are shown in **Table 4.14** below.

**Table 4.14: Selection of learning materials (1)**

<b>Material selection</b>	<b>GROUP A (21-30)</b>	<b>GROUP B (16-20)</b>	<b>GROUP C (1-15)</b>
Relevant recommended KICD Textbooks	3.4615	3.4345	3.1786
Pictures of certain objects	3.4000	3.3888	3.0714
Variety of materials (Newspapers, magazines, Storybooks)	3.0154	2.8482	2.7500
Improvised materials	2.5385	2.4886	2.3929
Real objects	2.4769	2.3451	2.2500
Relevant supplementary composition Textbooks	2.2615	2.2807	2.2857
Internet	2.2462	2.3077	2.2500
Learner selected materials	1.8615	1.9231	1.8929
<b>Average mean</b>	<b>2.65769</b>	<b>2.62709</b>	<b>2.508939</b>

*Source: Field data (2019)*

Findings reveal that relevant recommended books were at near similar frequency by all the three group categories as reflected by the mean results as follows: Group A (3.4615), Group B (3.4345), and Group C (3.1786). This was the highest mean among all the materials available for selection, indicating that teachers limit their selection majorly to the KICD approved list. Pictures of certain objects was second in terms of

means as follows: Group A (3.4000), Group B (3.3888), and Group C (3.0714). It was noted that a similar trend followed the choice of recommended books. In addition, the difference in mean between the two materials was minimal, thus suggesting that both materials were in use almost concurrently.

Other results were as follows: Choice of a variety of materials was as follows: Group A (3.0154), Group B (2.8482), and Group C (2.7500); Choice of improvised materials: Group A (2.5385), Group B (2.4886), and Group C (2.3929); Choice of real objects: Group A (2.4769), Group B (2.3451), and Group C (2.2500). For all the above objects, Group A schools which attained higher scores compared to the other two groups chose the materials most often.

However, for the rest of the materials, results indicate that Group A schools did not select them most often as compared to the other two groups as suggested by the mean as follows: Relevant supplementary composition books: Group A (2.2615), Group B (2.2807), and Group C (2.2851); choice of the internet: Group A (2.2462), Group B (2.3077), and Group C (2.2500); and choice of learner selected materials: Group A (1.8615), Group B (1.9231), and Group C (1.8929). From these findings, learner selected materials attained the lowest mean, thus confirming what had been reported earlier that teachers did not consider learner selection as a determinant (see 4.3.3.2). A test was run to determine whether the group difference in scores was statistically significant. ANOVA results are presented in **Table 4.15** on the next page.

The following are the results: Real objects ((F2,272) = 2.3554, p =.324); Pictures of certain objects ((F2,272) = 2.2979, p =.788); Internet ((F2,272) = 2.2979, p =.788); Learner selected materials ((F2,272) = 1.9146, p =.102); Relevant supplementary composition books ((F2,272) = 2.2787, p =.982); Relevant recommended KICD



textbooks ((F2,272) = 3.4251, p =.212); Improvised materials ((F2,272) = 2.4895, p =.737); and variety of materials (newspapers, magazines, storybooks ((F2,272) = 2.8624, p =.210). One-way ANOVA results reveal that there was no statistically significant difference in the selection of all the materials by the three groups at alpha level of p = 0.05.

**Table 4.15: Selection of Materials (2)**

		ANOVA				
Learning materials		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Learner competency in composition writing 1	Between Groups	1060.673	2	530.336	325.314	.000
	Within Groups	930.862	571	1.630		
	Total	1991.535	573			
Real objects	Between Groups	1.322	2	.661	1.129	.324
	Within Groups	334.176	571	.585		
	Total	335.498	573			
Internet	Between Groups	.284	2	.142	.239	.788
	Within Groups	339.773	571	.595		
	Total	340.057	573			
Pictures of certain objects	Between Groups	2.712	2	1.356	2.293	.102
	Within Groups	337.757	571	.592		
	Total	340.469	573			
Learner selected materials	Between Groups	.231	2	.115	.177	.838
	Within Groups	372.586	571	.653		
	Total	372.817	573			
Relevant supplementary composition Textbooks	Between Groups	.022	2	.011	.018	.982
	Within Groups	355.378	571	.622		
	Total	355.401	573			
Relevant recommended KICD Textbooks	Between Groups	1.831	2	.915	1.553	.212
	Within Groups	336.448	571	.589		
	Total	338.279	573			
Improvised materials	Between Groups	.418	2	.209	.305	.737
	Within Groups	391.020	571	.685		
	Total	391.437	573			
Variety of materials (Newspapers, magazines, Storybooks)	Between Groups	1.972	2	.986	1.563	.210
	Within Groups	360.156	571	.631		
	Total	362.127	573			

*Source: Field data (2019)*

The next section presents findings on the implications of the assessment procedure on composition writing competencies.

#### 4.3.4 Implications of Assessment procedures on EL Composition writing Competencies

A list of six assessment strategies used in English composition writing lessons for learner competencies was presented to the respondents through the questionnaire. They included:

- i. consideration of the syllabus and lesson objectives in setting composition tests,
- ii. consideration of learner abilities and interests when giving assignments,
- iii. using assessments to target a variety of composition writing skills,
- iv. giving written tests weekly.
- v. learner involvement in peer assessment,
- vi. giving prompt feedback to learners' composition exercises

These strategies were put on a semantic rating scale of Very poor- 1 to Excellent-10. Teachers were then asked to place a mark on the appropriate score within the given range for each statement that applies to their institution in evaluating learner competencies in composition writing. Results were analysed according to group performance, whose summary is presented in **Table 4.16** below.

**Table 4.16: Assessment Procedure to Enhance Learner Competencies (1)**

<b>Assessment Strategy</b>	<b>21-30</b>	<b>16-20</b>	<b>1 to 15</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
i) Consideration of the syllabus and lesson objectives in setting composition tests	8.0000	6.7879	<b>6.0769</b>	<b>6.7666</b>
ii) Consideration of learner abilities and interests when giving assignments	8.2500	6.9127	6.3231	6.9111
iii) Using assessments to target a variety of composition skills	<b>8.5714</b>	7.0395	6.6000	7.0645
iv) Giving written tests weekly	8.2500	<b>7.4158</b>	<b>6.9077</b>	<b>7.3990</b>
v) Learner involvement in peer assessment	7.8929	<b>6.9002</b>	6.6615	6.9216
vi) Giving prompt feedback to learners' composition exercises	<b>7.7500</b>	6.9127	6.5231	6.9094
<b>Learner competency in composition writing</b>	<b>21.2857</b>	<b>18.0457</b>	<b>14.5385</b>	<b>17.8066</b>

*Source: Field data (2019)*

On the consideration of the syllabus and lesson objectives to determine the assessment procedure, Group A (21-30) schools attained a mean of 8.000, Group B (16-20) schools attained a mean of 6.7879, and Group C (1-15) got a mean of 6.7666. This indicates that better-performing schools considered the syllabus and lesson objectives more than those schools who obtain below a mean of 21 in the evaluation tests. The same situation was replicated in all the other considerations, as reflected in the results below.

Consideration of learner abilities and interests: Group A (8.2500), Group B (6.9127), and Group C (6.9111); Use of assessments to target a variety of composition skills: Group A (8.5714), Group B (7.0395), and Group C (6.6000); Giving of weekly written tests: Group A (8.2500), Group B (7.4158), and Group C (7.3990); Learner involvement in peer assessment: Group A (7.8929), Group B (6.9002), and Group C (6.66615); and Giving prompt feedback to learners' composition exercises: Group A (7.7500), Group B (6.9127), and Group C (6.9094). On average, the semantic rating of each category of schools for all the assessment strategies considered was as follows: Group A (8.3571), Group B (7.1227), and Group C (6.6103). Comparatively, results from the County evaluation test show that each of these groups of schools scored a mean of 21.2857, 18.0457, and 14.5385, respectively. Therefore, there was a positive correlation between semantic rating of the assessment strategies and the evaluation test scores per group.

On the total average, results reveal that teachers rated giving written tests weekly highest (7.3990). This suggests that, according to the respondents, giving of written tests frequently contributes the most to learner competency in composition writing. This was followed by the use of assessments to target a variety of composition skills (7.0645). The next was learner involvement in peer assessment (6.9216), consideration of learner abilities and interests (6.9111), prompt feedback to learners' composition

writing exercises (6.9094), and consideration of the syllabus and lesson objectives (6.7666) in that order. It therefore concludes that majority of teachers do not focus on the crucial syllabus guidance when assessing learners' composition exercises.

Further, data obtained was run on a One -Way ANOVA to examine whether there were any statistically significant differences in the average group means reported above. It was based on the hypothesis that there is no statistically significant relationship between the assessment procedures used by teachers and English language composition writing competencies of upper primary learners. The results are in **Table 4.17** below.

**Table 4.17: Assessment Procedure to Enhance Learner Competencies (2)**

		ANOVA				
Assessment Considerations		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Consideration for the syllabus and lesson objectives in setting composition tests	Between Groups	73.732	2	36.866	11.611	.000
	Within Groups	1812.985	571	3.175		
	Total	1886.718	573			
Consideration for learner abilities and interests when giving assignments	Between Groups	72.671	2	36.335	9.732	.000
	Within Groups	2131.798	571	3.733		
	Total	2204.469	573			
Use of assessments to target a variety of composition skills	Between Groups	77.908	2	38.954	12.793	.000
	Within Groups	1738.707	571	3.045		
	Total	1816.615	573			
Giving of composition writing tests weekly	Between Groups	36.103	2	18.052	5.276	.005
	Within Groups	1953.536	571	3.421		
	Total	1989.639	573			
Involvement of learners in peer assessment	Between Groups	31.030	2	15.515	3.947	.020
	Within Groups	2244.442	571	3.931		
	Total	2275.472	573			
Giving prompt feedback to learners' composition exercises	Between Groups	29.491	2	14.746	4.037	.018
	Within Groups	2085.798	571	3.653		
	Total	2115.289	573			
	Total	1989.639	573			

*Source: Field data (2019)*

Analysis of variance revealed that there were statistically significant differences in the scoring of the teachers' categories based on all the six statements at alpha  $p = 0.05$ . The ANOVA results are as follows: Consideration of the syllabus and lesson objectives in setting composition tests ((F2, 571) = 6.7666,  $p = .000$ ); Consideration of learner abilities and interests when giving assignments ((F2, 571) = 6.9111,  $p = .000$ ); Using assessments to target a variety of composition skills ((F2, 571) = 7.0645,  $p = .000$ ); Giving written tests weekly ((F2, 571) = 7.3990,  $p = .005$ ); Learner involvement in peer assessment ((F2, 571) = 6.9216,  $p = .020$ ); and Giving prompt feedback to learners' composition exercises ((F2, 571) = 6.9094,  $p = .018$ ). The results affirm that the differences in scoring were significant. It indicates that the extent at which teachers considered the assessment procedures similarly influenced learner competencies in composition writing. The next section presented a general analysis of learner competencies in composition writing which cuts across all the pedagogical strategies.

#### **4.3.5. Analysis of learner competencies in composition writing**

This study then investigated how often teachers of English focused on developing specific competencies in composition writing. These competencies had been signalled in the conceptual framework in chapter one (see 1.13). The targeted competency areas were: first, formulation of ideas through the pre-writing organisation, note-taking, and character development. Secondly, story organisation skills were depicted from the type of writing, sequencing, clarity of the main idea, and clarity of focus to the reader. Thirdly, the use of language skills in terms of suitability to the reader and the story, mood appropriateness, emphasis, personal style, and descriptive language use. Fourthly was the development of mechanical skills that include strategies for spelling, punctuation, paragraphing, and dialogue. Finally, it was the presentation and

handwriting skills that entail letter formation, shape and size, slant and spacing, aesthetics, and speed.

These competency areas were targeted partly in line with a tenet of the social constructivist theory reviewed in this study, which states that learners construct knowledge based on individual and internal knowledge (Jia, 2010). Besides, learning depends on how one interprets and creates meaning from such experiences (Amineh & Asl, 2015). Teachers were asked to rate the frequency at which they employed these skills to enhance learner competencies by using the rating of; 4- Very often (VO), 3- Often(O), 2- Rarely I, and 1- Never (N). The results are shown in **Table 4.18** on the next page.

Findings reveal that formulation of ideas was developed very often by 111(19.3%) teachers; often by 399(69.5%) teachers who were the majority; rarely by 55(9.6%) teachers; and never by 9(1.6) teachers who were the least. The development of story organisation skills was done very often by 110(19.2%) teachers; often by 362(63.1%) teachers who were the majority; rarely by 93(16.2%) teachers; and never by 9(1.6%) teachers and were the minority. The development of language skills was also done very frequently by 149(26.0%) teachers; often by 336(58.5%) teachers; rarely by 84(14.6%) teachers; and never done by 5(0.9%) teachers, and were the minority.

**Table 4.18: Development of Learner Competency Areas**

Competency Areas	Very Often		Often		Rarely		Never		Mean
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
<b>Formulation of ideas:</b> (Pre-writing organisation, note-taking, character development)	111	19.3	<b>399</b>	<b>69.5</b>	55	9.6	9	1.6	1.94
<b>Story organisation skills:</b> (Type of writing, sequencing, clear main idea, focus clear to the reader)	110	19.2	<b>362</b>	<b>63.1</b>	93	16.2	9	1.6	2.01
<b>Language skills:</b> (suited to the reader, suited to the story, appropriate mood, emphasis, personal style, uses of descriptive language)	149	26.0	<b>336</b>	<b>58.5</b>	84	14.6	5	0.9	1.91
<b>Mechanics skills:</b> (Strategies for spelling, punctuation, paragraphs, dialogue)	<b>162</b>	28.2	<b>343</b>	<b>59.8</b>	56	9.8	13	1.7	2.30
<b>Presentation and handwriting skills:</b> (Formation, shape and size, slant and spacing, aesthetics, speed)	<b>164</b>	28.6	<b>316</b>	<b>55.1</b>	83	14.5	11	1.9	1.90

*Source: Field data (2019)*

Development of mechanics skills was done very often by 162(28.2%) teachers; often by the majority 343(59.8%) teachers; rarely by 56(9.8%) teachers; and 13(1.7%) teachers never developed the skills. On the development of presentation and handwriting, teachers who developed them very often were 164(28.6); often were 316(55.1%); rarely by 83(14.5%) teachers; and never by 11(1.9%) teachers.

Results reveal that the ‘most often’ used skill was presentation and handwriting 164(28.6%), followed closely by writing mechanics 162(28.2%) and then language skills 149(26.0%). The frequency of the rest of the competency areas used very often was below 20%. Very high frequencies were reported under ‘often’ use with the highest being formulation of ideas 399(69.5%), followed by story organisation skills

362(63.1%). The frequency of 'Rarely used' was scored below 20%, with the leading being story organisation 93(16.2%). The scoring of 'never' was negligible.

Findings also revealed that Story organisation had the highest average mean of 2.01, followed by the formulation of ideas (1.94), language skills (1.91), presentation and handwriting skills (1.90), and mechanics skills (1.87) in that descending order. The frequencies on 'Very often' and 'Often' were combined to rate the constructs for teachers to focus.

The following descending order was obtained from the data; formulation of ideas (88.8%), mechanics skills (88%), development of language skills (84.5%), presentation and handwriting skills (83.7%), and story organisation skills (82.3%). This finding reveals that even though the story organisation is one of the most critical aspects to propel effective written communication (Babae, 2015), it was not given prominence. Instead, the emphasis was laid mostly on the pre-writing organisation and note-taking.

A test was run to establish whether there was any statistically significant difference on learner competency scores obtained by learners according to the three groups A, B and C based on the development of composition competency skills. **Table 4.19** on the next page provides the ANOVA results.



**Table 4.19: Learner Competency Skills Group Performance**  
ANOVA

Competency Skills		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
<b>FORMULATION OF IDEAS:</b> (Pre-writing organization, note-taking and character development skills)	Between Groups	6.420	2	3.210	9.494	.000
	Within Groups	193.064	571	.338		
	Total	199.484	573			
<b>STORY ORGANIZATION SKILLS:</b> (Type of writing, sequencing, clear main idea, focus clear to the reader)	Between Groups	11.273	2	5.636	14.133	.000
	Within Groups	227.726	571	.399		
	Total	238.998	573			
<b>LANGUAGE SKILLS:</b> (suited to the reader, suited to the story, appropriate mood, emphasis, personal style, uses of descriptive language)	Between Groups	2.207	2	1.104	2.566	.078
	Within Groups	245.523	571	.430		
	Total	247.730	573			
<b>MECHANICS SKILLS:</b> (Strategies for spelling, punctuation, paragraphs, dialogue)	Between Groups	.166	2	.083	.183	.833
	Within Groups	258.684	571	.453		
	Total	258.850	573			
<b>PRESENTATION, HANDWRITING SKILLS:</b> (Formation, shape and size, slant and spacing, aesthetics, speed)	Between Groups	.777	2	.388	.780	.459
	Within Groups	284.159	571	.498		
	Total	284.936	573			

*Source: Field data (2019)*

The above results depict mixed findings. On the formulation of ideas, there was a statistically significant difference between group means as determined by one-way ANOVA ((F<sub>2</sub>, 571) = 1.9338, p = .000). **Table 4.20** below shows the post-hoc test results to confirm where the differences occurred between the groups in the Welsch range results.

**Table 4.20: Formulation of Ideas**

Post-hoc test	Learner competency in composition writing	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05		
			1	2	3
	21-30	28	1.5714		
Ryan-Einot-Gabriel-Welsch	16-20	481		1.9272	
Range	1-15	65			2.1385
	Sig.		1.000	1.000	1.000

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

Likewise, on story organization, there was a statistically significant difference between group means as determined by one-way ANOVA ((F<sub>2</sub>, 571) = 1.9338, p = .000). This

means that the group means are unequal. Similarly, a post hoc test was run to confirm where the differences occurred between groups for the results that were statistically significant. The Welch range results are provided in **Table 4.21** below.

**Table 4.21: Story Organization Skills**

Post-hoc test	Learner competency in composition writing	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05		
			1	2	3
	21-30	28	1.6071		
Ryan-Einot-Gabriel-	16-20	481		1.9813	
Welsch Range	1-15	65			2.3231
	Sig.		1.000	1.000	1.000

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

The findings confirm that there were distinct differences in scores for the three categories Group A (21-30), Group B (16-20), and Group C (1-15) in the teaching of formulation of ideas and Story organization skills. This is depicted by the three different subsets for alpha =0.05. However, for language skills, mechanics skills, and presentation and handwriting skills, there was no statistically significant differences between the group means as determined by one-way ANOVA ((F2, 571) = 1.9042, p=.078), ((F2, 571) = 1.8606, p= .833), and ((F2, 571) = 1.8972, p= .459) respectively. This means that all group means are equal.

To summarize the reporting of the findings of the quantitative phase, a multiple regression analysis was conducted to identify the factors which matter most from the four independent variables and how they influence each other (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018; Keith, 2014). In addition, regression was done to ascertain the extent to which the model could predict the values of the dependent variable. The findings are presented next.

#### 4.4 Analysis of Pedagogical Strategies on Learner Competencies in EL Composition Writing

The current study endeavoured to unravel the implication of selected pedagogical strategies on learner competencies in English composition writing among learners in upper primary public schools in Kenya. Therefore, it was necessary to run multiple regression models to ascertain each predictor's implication when others remain constant (Keith, 2014). Regression analysis tested for collinearity and correlation among predictor variables and the dependent variable, in addition to ascertaining the level of significance of the selected aspects of pedagogy on learner competencies in English composition writing. Besides, the regression analysis evaluated the accuracy of the model to predict outcomes from the target variables. Raw data on SPSS was transformed to obtain a summary for each predictor variable and, after that, entered into the equation simultaneously. The results are presented in the subheadings next.

##### 4.4.1 Checking for Multiple Regression Assumptions.

This study sought to establish whether the basic assumptions were met. These include; low collinearity among variables, checking for extreme scores, normality of distribution, the similarity of variance, and linear relationship with predictor variables (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018). All the predictor variables were entered into the equation simultaneously. Learner competencies in composition writing were modelled as a function of the selected strategies based on the following equation:

$$Y = a + b_1 X_1 + b_2 X_2 + b_3 X_3 + b_4 X_4 + e$$

Thus,  $Y = 22.541 + -.585 X_1 + .004 X_2 + -.004 X_3 + -.038 X_4 + e$ . Where,

Y = Learner competencies in English composition writing

X<sub>1</sub> = Planning

X<sub>2</sub> = Instructional Techniques

X<sub>3</sub> = Materials

X<sub>4</sub> = Assessment

e = Error term (unexplained variation in the dependent variable from the weighted four independent variables)

#### ***4.4.1.1 Multicollinearity.***

The existence of the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable is achieved when the R values are greater than 0.300 (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018). Results from the Pearson correlations in **Table 4.22** on the next page reveal that planning (-.568) had a high correlation to learner competencies in composition writing while the other three; instructional techniques (.047), materials (-.139), and assessment (.239) had low correlations.

**Table 4.22: Correlations Between Dependent and Independent variables**

Correlation	Learner competencies in composition writing	PLANNING	INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUES	MATERIALS	ASSESSMENT	
Pearson Correlation	Learner competencies in composition writing	1.000	<b>-.568</b>	<b>.047</b>	<b>-.139</b>	<b>.239</b>
	Planning	-.568	1.000	<b>-.089</b>	<b>.246</b>	<b>-.470</b>
	Instructional techniques	.047	-.089	1.000	<b>.189</b>	<b>.013</b>
	Materials	-.139	.246	.189	1.000	<b>-.242</b>
	Assessment	.239	-.470	.013	-.242	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Learner competencies in composition writing	.	.000	.129	.000	.000
	Planning	.000	.	.016	.000	.000
	Instructional techniques	.129	.016	.	.000	.378
	Materials	.000	.000	.000	.	.000
	Assessment	.000	.000	.378	.000	.

*Source: Field data (2019)*

From the same table, findings reveal that inter variables correlations are not more than .700 as follows: Planning vs Instructional Techniques (-.089); Planning vs Materials (.246); Planning vs Assessment (-.470); Instructional Techniques Vs Materials (.189); Instructional Techniques Vs Assessment (.013); and Materials Vs Assessment (-.242). High inter-variables correlations would suggest omitting one of the variables. In this study, the relationships among the independent variables were acceptable.

#### **4.4.1.2 Collinearity diagnostics.**

The study further sought to isolate potential collinearity problems that may not have been picked up by correlations. The collinearity statistics column under the coefficients **Table 4.23** below shows a Tolerance of; Planning (.748), Instructional techniques (.945), Materials (.876), and Assessment (.762). These were all above .100 and thus indicating the absence of collinearity problems. Similarly, the variance inflation factors (VIF), which should be less than 10.0 (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018) were found to be devoid of problems as they were; Instructional techniques (1.338), Approaches (1.058), Materials (1.141) and Assessment (1.313).

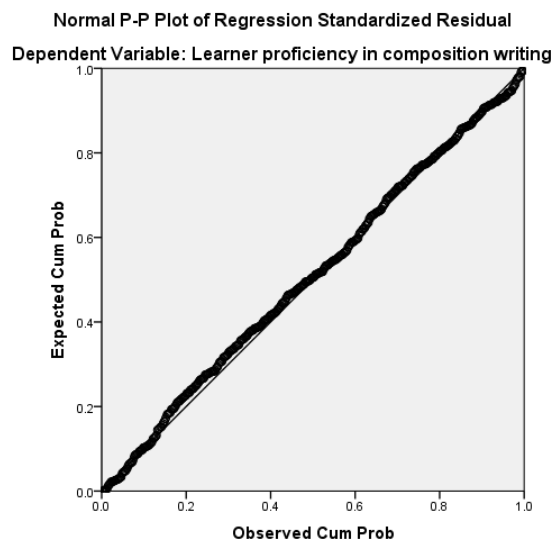
**Table 4.23: Coefficients**

Model	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)		
PLANNING	.748	1.338
1 INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUES	.945	1.058
MATERIALS	.876	1.141
ASSESSMENT	.762	1.313

*Source: Field data (2019)*

#### 4.4.1.3. Checking for normality of data.

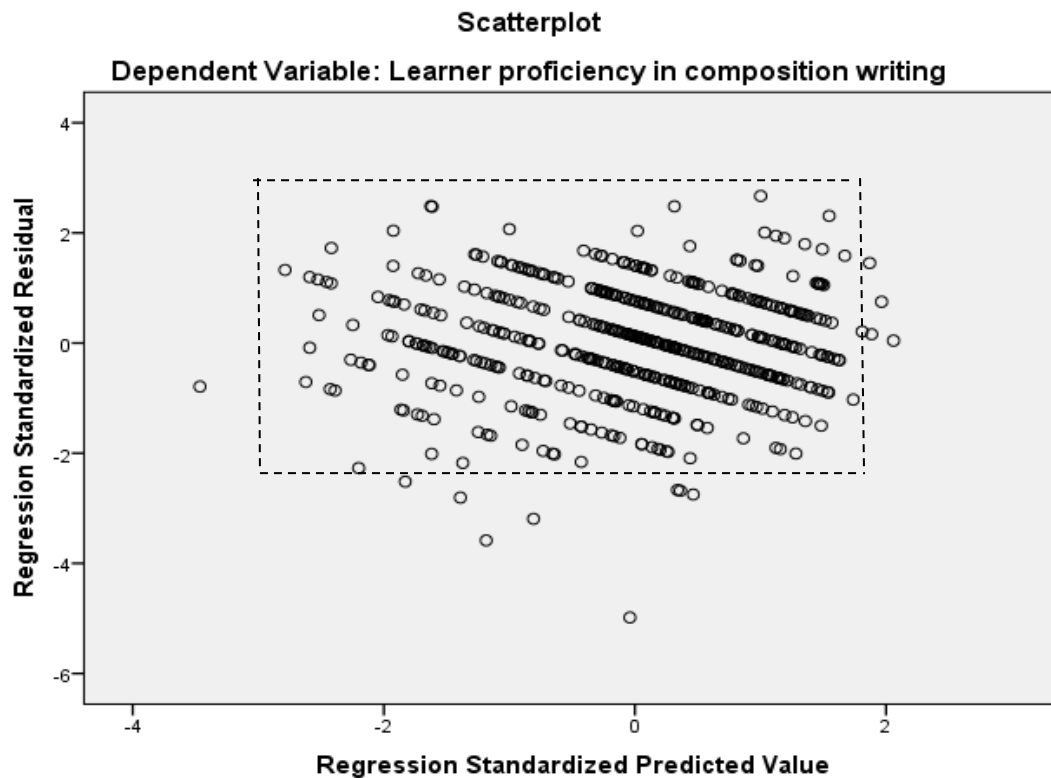
Results from the P-P plot in **Figure 4.1** below suggest that data are almost along the diagonal straight line. This is an indication of the normality of data (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018).



**Figure 4.1: Normality of Data**

#### 4.4.1.4 Linearity of data.

An indication of linearity is reflected in a scatter plot that should form a near rectangle (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018). Results in **Figure 4.2** on the next page affirm that most of the scores concentrated around the centre and form a nearly rectangular shape (in staggered lines), thus meeting the linearity assumption's achievement. (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018)



**Figure 4.2: Linearity of Data**

#### *4.4.1.5 Checking for outliers.*

The scatter plot in **Figure 4.2** above shows that there were some outliers. These are those below -3.3 and those above 3.3 and are outside the drawn imaginary rectangle. Mahalanobis distance was run to establish if these outliers would significantly affect the model (Todeschini, Ballabio, Consonni, Sahigara, & Filzmoser, 2013). Readings from the Residual statistics in **Table 4.24** on the next page affirm that the maximum Mahal. Distance was 17.666. This distance was within the set critical value of Chi-square for four variables of 18.465. This result attests that no values exceed the maximum limit, and therefore, the identified outliers could not skew the results either way.



**Table 4.24: Residual Statistics**

Residual	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	14.0613	19.9595	17.8066	1.06102	574
Std. Predicted Value	-3.530	2.029	.000	1.000	574
Standard Error of Predicted Value	.068	.278	.137	.042	574
Adjusted Predicted Value	14.0958	19.9590	17.8070	1.06105	574
Residual	-7.91104	4.16310	.00000	1.53293	574
Std. Residual	-5.143	2.706	.000	.997	574
Stud. Residual	-5.152	2.714	.000	1.001	574
Deleted Residual	-7.93886	4.18610	-.00038	1.54794	574
Stud. Deleted Residual	-5.272	2.729	-.001	1.004	574
Mahal. Distance	.117	<b>17.666</b>	3.993	3.166	574
Cook's Distance	.000	<b>.062</b>	.002	.004	574
Centred Leverage Value	.000	.031	.007	.006	574

a. Dependent Variable: Learner competencies in composition writing

The study further examined cases above 3.3 and below -3.3 through casewise diagnostics. This examination was to establish the number of cases outside this range. For a normal distribution, only about 1% is outside this range (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018), of which for this study would be about 58 cases. From the casewise diagnostics in **Table 4.25** below, there were only 3 cases.

**Table 4.25: Casewise Diagnostics**

Case Number	Std. Residual	Learner competencies in composition writing	Predicted Value	Residual
6	-3.751	11.00	16.7702	-5.77022
21	-3.008	12.00	16.6265	-4.62650
426	-5.143	10.00	17.9110	-7.91104

a. Dependent Variable: Learner competencies in composition writing

The three cases interrogated further examined if they had undue influence over the model as a whole. Checking at the Cook's distance value under the Residual statistics in **Table 4.24** revealed that it was not more than the 1.000 limit. A Cook's distance

beyond this limit would signal a problem range (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018; Casson & Farmer, 2014). In this case, it was .062 and, therefore, did not affect the model.

#### 4.4.2 Evaluation of the Model in Prediction Accuracy.

The model was interrogated to evaluate its prediction accuracy. This evaluation entailed checking for variance, statistical significance, evaluating each independent variable's contribution, and the standard error of the estimate. The results are presented in the subsections below.

##### 4.4.2.1 Prediction accuracy of the model.

Findings obtained from **Table 4.26** below reveal that the R Square was .324 while the Adjusted R Square was close at .319. When expressed in percentage, about 32% of the dependent variable's variance is explained by the model (Miles, 2014). Thus, about 68% is explained by other factors other than the four predictors (Planning, Instructional Techniques, Materials, and Assessment).

**Table 4.26: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.569 <sup>a</sup>	.324	.319	1.53831

a. Predictors: (Constant), ASSESSMENT, INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUES, MATERIALS, PLANNING

b. Dependent Variable: Learner competencies in composition writing

Results from this model, therefore, suggests that there are other factors other than the four predictor variables that affect learner competencies in composition writing that contribute to the unexplained 68%. Besides, the standard error of the estimate was 1.53831, indicating that there is much variability in the population. Therefore, it estimates how much the prediction may be off.

#### 4.4.2.2. Statistical significance of the results.

The ANOVA **Table 4.27** below presents results that aided in checking for the statistical significance of the model to make accurate predictions. Results show that the Sig.  $p = .000^b$ , which is less than 0.05. It is indicative that the model is a good predictor of the outcome than just by chance.

**Table 4.27: ANOVA Results**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	645.057	4	161.264	68.148	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	1346.478	569	2.366		
	Total	1991.535	573			

a. Dependent Variable: Learner competencies in composition writing

b. Predictors: (Constant), ASSESSMENT, INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUES, MATERIALS, PLANNING

#### 4.4.2.3 Evaluating each independent variable.

The contribution of each independent variable was assessed to determine which one contributed most to the outcome. **Table 4.28** below presents results. The **Beta values** under Standardized coefficients (with the negative signs ignored) reveal that Planning (B= -.585,  $p < 0.05$ ) had the largest Beta contribution and made the strongest contribution in explaining the outcome.

**Table 4.28: Evaluation of Independent Variables**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	Correlations		
	B	Std. Error				Zero-order	Partial	Part order
1	(Constant)	22.541	.899	25.084	.000			
	PLANNING	-2.030	.138	-5.85	.000	-.568	-.524	-.506
	INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUES	-.027	.251	-.004	.914	.047	-.005	-.004
	MATERIALS	-.015	.156	-.004	.921	-.139	-.004	-.003
	ASSESSMENT	-.049	.052	-.038	.951	.342	.239	-.040

The implication of this is that a 1 per cent improvement in planning is likely to improve learner competencies by 0.585 per cent while holding other strategies constant. Planning was followed, albeit distantly by Assessment ( $B = -.038, p > 0.05$ ), indicating that a 1 per cent improvement in assessment is likely to improve learner competencies in composition writing by 0.038 per cent. The lowest Beta contribution was both Instructional techniques and Materials with a tie at ( $B = -.004, p > 0.05$ ). The implication is that when 1 per cent of Assessment and Approaches are increased and holding other parameters constant, only 0.04 per cent of learner competencies will increase.

#### ***4.4.2.4. Statistical significance of each variable's contribution.***

The statistical significance of the contribution of each variable was similarly checked. The t scores from **Table 4.28** on the previous page reveal that Planning ( $t = 14.861$ ) was the only variable that made uniquely statistical significance in predicting the outcome. The rest; Instructional techniques ( $t = -.108$ ), Materials ( $t = -.099$ ), and Assessment ( $t = -.951$ ) were not significant since they were beyond the .05 rejection limit and thus imply that they did not make any statistical significance in predicting the outcome on learner competencies.

The study further recognized the predictor variable, which was impactful if removed from the model. The squared part correlations of each predictor were subtracted from the R square, to obtain what will remain from the R Square. **Table 4.29** below presents results.

**Table 4.29: Correlations**

Correlations	Partial	Part	Correlations Part Squared	Squared part Correlations (%)
(Constant)				
Planning	-.524	-.506	0.253	25%
Instructional techniques	-.005	-.004	0.000016	0%
Materials	-.004	-.003	0.000009	0%
Assessment	-.040	-.033	0.0011	0.1%

Results reveal that removing Planning  $\{.324-.253=.0710\}$  from the model would leave a balance of only .0710 of the R square, reducing it drastically! The rest were inconsequential when similar treatment was administered; thus, Instructional techniques (.323984), Materials (.323991), and Assessment (.3229). In addition to affirming the above results, when the squared part correlations were converted to percentages, the prediction of each variable was reflected as follows: Planning contributed 25%, Instructional techniques (0%), Materials (0%), and Assessment (0.1%). The next subsection presents a summary of the hypotheses results for each independent variable.

#### **4.4.3 Hypotheses Results.**

As reported in 4.4.1, a multiple linear regression was conducted to test the relationship among the four independent variables (teacher planning, instructional techniques, and learning materials, and assessment strategies) on the dependent variable (learner competencies in English language composition writing). **Table 4.30** on the next page presents a summary of the hypothesis results whose findings are reported in **Table 4.28** of this study. Next after that is the presentation of results for the qualitative phase

**Table 4.30: Hypothesis Results**

Hypothesis	Results
Ho <sub>1</sub> There is no statistically significant relationship between teacher planning and learners' competencies in EL composition writing	p = .000 – Rejected
Ho <sub>2</sub> There is no statistically significant relationship between instructional techniques used and learners' competencies in EL composition writing	p = .914 – Accepted
Ho <sub>3</sub> There is no statistically significant relationship between learning materials used by teachers and learners' competencies in EL composition writing	p = .921 – Accepted
Ho <sub>4</sub> There is no statistically significant relationship between the assessment procedure used by teachers and learner competencies in EL composition writing	p = .342 – Accepted

All the above (sections 4.3 and 4.4) have been a presentation of quantitative results of the first phase of the study. The results of the second (qualitative) phase of the study were presented in section 4.5 next.

#### **4.5 Presentation of Qualitative Data**

In this section, the presentation of findings is done in the same pattern as in the first phase. The second phase was used to collect qualitative data from teachers' lesson observations, teachers' interviews, document analysis, and pupils' focused group discussions (see Appendix O for codes of sampled schools). The code names assigned to each school apply to all participants in the respective databases, which help present

descriptions and themes that convey multiple perspectives. However, when citing narrations and content from each of these sources, the terms: Lesson, Teacher, Document, and FGD precede the school codes, respectively. For example, an excerpt from a teacher's interview from school **W72A** is reported and referred to as Teacher **W72A**, whereas lesson observation from the same school is reported as Lesson **W72A**.

Data were analysed thematically (as per emerging issues) to arrive at distinctive patterns and in line with the main research question of the study. This was necessary to allow corroboration of data from various sources, which would, in turn, enhance the validity of study findings. Chapter Three (subsection 3.5.3.2) provides details of how participants were sampled. Findings obtained from the study are presented in a cohesive manner beginning with giving results on teacher planning.

#### **4.5.1 Implications of Planning on Learner Competencies in Composition Writing.**

In this section, four closely related sub-themes came out: range/variety of professional documents, issues affecting planning, frequency of planning, and challenges of planning. The findings were founded on documents and experiences by teachers and pupils, based on a subsidiary research question, which is: What are the implications of planning on learner competencies in English language composition writing at upper primary level? These are presented as sub-headings in the subsequent pages.

##### ***4.5.1.1 Variety of Professional Documents***

This study obtained data from teachers' interviews on the variety of professional documents that they prepared prior to, during, and after lesson attendance. It also included how they sourced the content used during planning. Teachers are the most qualified by training to respond to this inquiry since it is part of their daily duties.

The majority of teachers singled out the schemes of work and lesson plans as the two essential and mandatory documents. A teacher from one school reported, “there are mainly two documents that are necessary for a teacher; schemes of work and lesson plans” (Teacher, **Y161B**). When probed further about the need to prepare lesson notes, the same teacher stated, “it is really not necessary since the lesson plan has sufficient content to conduct any lesson”. A lady teacher in another school explained,

... I have taught for long, and from experience, very few teachers prepare Lesson Notes. What is the use of repeating yourself by duplicating what is in the lesson plan just because you want to satisfy the Administration? For me, I don't find it serving any purpose (Teacher, **W72A**).

In yet another school, similar sentiments were echoed by Teacher **X93C** who argued, “I only need the English schemes of work, lesson plan, my English reference book, textbook, and a syllabus mostly at the beginning of the term. Preparing lesson notes is an extra and unnecessary burden”. No teacher interviewed indicated that lesson notes were part of the essential professional documents.

On other varieties of professional documents, one class seven teacher elaborated on sentiments shared by a majority of the respondents as follows:

... a syllabus is very necessary, followed by a teacher's and pupils' books to get the content from, a record of work to help track learner performance and for future planning, and the usual schemes of work and lesson plans. However, not many of us prepare these documents (Teacher, **V31A**).

It was concluded that the schemes of work, lesson plan, the syllabus, reference books and textbooks are the few varieties of professional documents utilised for planning. The lesson notes and record of work were not commonly utilised. Next is on issues affecting teacher planning.



#### ***4.5.1.2 Issues affecting teacher planning of composition lessons***

A number of issues addressed at the quantitative phase were raised to the respondents to respond to, which included weightage in the syllabus, need for learner participation, lesson objectives, learner needs, and feedback. On these issues, most teachers lamented about the content in the syllabus and textbooks as evident in the following verbatim comments:

... the syllabus is almost silent on composition writing. It only gives general statements like 'learners should be able to write coherently' without guiding on the procedure as done in grammar (Teacher, **V13B**)

... composition lessons can hardly be planned for in a week due to the sequencing in the syllabus which requires that a teacher covers other language skills first, then composition writing comes in if fortunate since there are many other forms under the writing skills that must be practised as well (Teacher, **X93C**)

... KICD has not produced or approved any textbook that addresses English composition writing as an entity. So, we have to depend on the combined coursebook to plan for composition lesson as organised in the syllabus (Teacher, **W72A**)

When asked about how they planned for the varied learner needs and abilities in composition writing, two teachers captured the general teacher trends as follows:

... there is not sufficient time to address individual learner needs considering the large numbers in class and other subjects to teach. We cannot have to prepare separate lesson plans for different learner abilities. Just imagine how hectic it can be! This can only work with few pupils and teacher specialisation (Teacher, **Z190A**)

... composition writing by learners leads to marking tasks to a teacher. As such, handling separate learner abilities means assigning work differently, which is too much workload for teachers (Teacher, **Z165B**)

From the foregoing, it is evident that teachers prepare lessons for a class irrespective of their varied abilities. The main reasons given include work overload, large classes and the commitment associated with marking and feedback. The lack of commitment is made conclusive by a remark made in one school, that "we don't even have an inventory

of weak learners and the specific areas that they have challenges in, so planning to cater for them is difficult” (Teacher, **Y161B**).

Further, teachers were asked whether they involve learners in planning for composition lessons to enable them to participate from the onset. The majority of teachers interviewed looked surprised that pupils could be consulted for planning purposes. A teacher from class 6 in school **V13B** stated that it is rare to involve pupils. Another teacher in the same class was emphatic that she did not expect to ‘be guided by learners’ and indicated that they had little to offer due to the age factor. The teacher quipped,

Pupils do expect guidance from us, so they don’t anticipate us going to them to seek suggestions. They also still young (Teacher, **Y161B**)

Another teacher commented,

It is rare to involve pupils when planning (Teacher, **W46C**)

During focus group discussions, pupils were also to share their experiences on the role they played in preparing for composition writing lessons. This is what some had to say;

- i. The teachers sometimes ask us to read storybooks in advance (FGD, **X102C**)
- ii. They also review previous lessons by asking us questions (FGD, **V12C**)
- iii. The teacher comes to class and tells us to write a composition after giving us a title (FGD **W46C**)
- iv. We are never told in advance when composition lessons will be done. The teacher just comes to class and tells us ‘it is time for composition writing’ (FGD, **Y143C**)

Therefore, it is evident from the above that teachers do not consider communicating to learners as part of prior preparation as a necessity in composition writing lessons. The task of reading storybooks was the only activity that learners in one school (FGD,

V12C) were sometimes engaged in. The next sub-theme is on the frequency of planning.

#### ***4.5.1.3 Frequency of planning.***

This study obtained data on the frequency of teachers' preparation of professional documents (schemes of work, lesson notes, and lesson plans) on composition writing. Schemes of work are prepared before or at the beginning of a term to cover the whole term, while lesson plans and lesson notes are done daily for every lesson. These documents were analysed by use of document analysis to account for composition writing lessons. In addition, teachers were interviewed as well as seeking pupils' experiences to corroborate findings.

Documentary evidence revealed that most teachers' schemes of work and lesson plans for the English subject are frequently prepared. However, composition lessons are rarely slotted weekly in the schemes of work. Lesson plans and lesson notes on composition writing were also scarcely available. Teachers were asked to give reasons for the limited number of English Composition writing content in all the professional documents. A teacher clarified, "The syllabus has very little content on composition writing, so we cannot go against the sequence which guides our planning" (Teacher, W53C). Another teacher from school W72A reported, "I go by the order provided in the syllabus to scheme. That means a composition lesson can feature once in two weeks or so".

The two teachers' comments confirmed that composition writing lessons are not scheduled every week in the English schemes of work. Teachers interviewed confirmed that scheduling the teaching of composition writing is on average towards the end of a

given unit, as contained in the English textbook in use. This, they projected, is done once monthly. A teacher quipped,

We do allocate composition writing lessons once in two weeks or, at times, none (Teacher, **V13B**).

Another teacher signalled the need to cover a wide content in other areas of writing and said,

Composition writing is part of the skills taught under the writing skills of which there are many other aspects such as completing sentences, filling in blanks, among others. Therefore, unless we violate the sequence in the syllabus, it is not practically possible to schedule composition writing once or twice a week (Teacher, **Y161B**)

Pupils similarly confirmed the frequency at which teachers conduct composition writing lessons. They reported that composition lessons range from once a week in very few schools to two weeks and up to one month for the majority. This is depicted in the following comments from different schools;

- ... We are taught once, twice or none in a week (FGD **V12C**)
- ... Once a week or none at all (FGD **W53C**)
- ... once in a month (FGD **W45C**)

From the foregoing, it is indicative that the slotting of composition lessons is hardly on a weekly basis. Teachers have tailored their composition lessons allocation to the pace at which they teach other skills since from the syllabus; the writing skill is taught last in every topic. The next is on challenges teachers face during planning.

#### ***4.5.1.4 Challenges during teacher planning.***

The study obtained data on challenges teachers encountered (if any) when planning for English composition lessons. This would be important for mitigation purposes and in addressing the rampant low learner performance in composition writing. Several teachers cited reasons such as; lack of reference books, shortage of time due to needing to rush for syllabus completion, and being ‘a jack of all trade’ by teaching all other

subjects in the curriculum without specialisation. Some of the statements made below by some teachers affirm these concerns:

... the limited number of books in composition writing is a challenge. I think KICD should develop more composition writing books (Teacher, **W72A**).

... to find time to plan for all the lessons is practically impossible due to the heavy workload for us primary school teachers. We teach up to eight lessons a day, and that it is too tasking to do any further (Teacher, **Z190A**).

... the syllabus must be completed in the time agreed upon by the school, and so we must rush to do so. There is little time to keep writing lesson plans and lesson notes (Teacher, **V13B**).

... we are 'a jack of all trade' and cannot go beyond what is humanly possible. There is too much work. Lesson planning comes in last (Teacher, **W46C**)

One teacher was emphatic and suggestive that composition writing is not given priority when she made the following explanation;

... the pressure to handle other subjects and complete the syllabus in time does not give room to adequately plan composition writing, which is not highly regarded by both teachers and learners (Teacher **V13B**)

When probed further, the teacher indicated that even the syllabus does not give a lot of prominence to composition writing and slots it at the end of a unit that could last about two weeks. This affirmed the remarks made by Teacher **X93C**, who gave similar sentiments and said, "A unit may take as long as two weeks, and that is when teaching of writings skills is done".

In the conclusion of this subsection, it has been made clear that teachers' main concern is the lack of sufficient time to engage deeply in planning for composition writing lessons. This was attributed to demands for syllabus coverage, the teaching of other subjects, and limited access to reference books that address composition writing. Next is a presentation of the results on instructional techniques.

#### **4.5.2 Implications of Instructional techniques on Learner Competencies in Composition Writing.**

In this study, findings came out from three sub-themes: Commonly used teaching techniques, teaching and learning activities employed, and the teachers' and learners' perceptions of low learner competencies. This subsection addresses the subsidiary research question: What are the implications of instructional techniques on learner competencies in composition writing in English language at the upper primary level? Each of these sub-themes is presented under their sub-headings.

##### ***4.5.2.1 Range of Instructional techniques.***

Results from the quantitative phase revealed that the expository technique was dominantly used, whereas questioning technique was hardly in use. Therefore, further inquiry was made through the use of other tools for more insight. This sub-section presents integrated findings obtained from documents, lesson observations, teachers' interview, and focus group discussions. Results obtained from the analysis of 29 teachers' schemes of work and lesson plans reveal that different instructional techniques, which include questioning are planned for in the schemes of work and lesson plans and are indicated as frequently used. Also, learning activities are recorded in the schemes of work and lesson plans and are remarked as 'very frequently used'.

However, from lesson observations, findings reveal that the conventional approaches used were not as anticipated from the schemes of work and lesson plans. Active learner participation was limited to chorus reading and personal writing. Learners were not given tasks that ignite synthesis and analysis. Besides, learner involvement in the process of conceptualising meaning and knowledge construction was not observed. They were, in most cases, treated as a passive audience as teachers dominated lessons

by talking. The majority did not utilise such involvement, which could have been instrumental in learner conceptualisation and construction of knowledge.

When asked about their preference of the instructional techniques in use, a teacher in school **Z165B** explained, “There is very little time to cover the content planned for the lesson, so I have to use the lecturing technique, though it is discouraged”. Another teacher also said, “I know approaches like use of group work and pairing is effective, but it is time consuming and one may not attain the targets set in the lesson objectives within 35 minutes” (Teacher, **W46C**).

Teachers’ use of probing for learner understanding was not attempted at all in the lessons observed. As a consequence, process-oriented learning, where teachers act as facilitators in making learners come up with ideas on how to write suitable compositions and thinking about the process, did not occur in the majority of lessons observed. One teacher in class five argued that learners’ age was a factor for the choice of the teaching techniques in the following statement,

... Class five pupils are still young and are encountering composition writing for the first time. As such, I have to guide them since they have no idea on how to develop a story in writing to share with others (Teacher, **Z190A**).

Another teacher in class seven expressed thoughts that composition writing is challenging to learners and commented as follows,

... Our pupils find composition writing a challenge, so I have to do my best to explain. Children find it hard to be creative, possibly because of the way they have been handled from the lower classes (Teacher, **W53C**).

The teacher from school **W53C** seemed to be aware that teaching techniques used influenced learner performance. It was also noted that most lessons were hardly focused on the targeted composition skills recorded in the schemes of work. Those that were, were not done exhaustively. For example, a teacher in school **Z165B** had planned to

use discussion during the lesson but was not done. When asked, the teacher explained, “I ran short of time and other issues came up during the lesson, so I could not engage them in the discussion”. In school **V31A**, the lesson plan had reflected the use of a music festival set poem, yet the script was not available in class. When asked about the omission, this teacher said, “I needed to use it, but I did not have enough copies, so left it for another day”.

Contrarily, and in most schools where lessons were observed, sequential teaching was done as reflected in the teaching from simple to complex, and from known to the unknown. Towards the end of the lessons, most teachers gave out assignments for learners to do individually. Individual learner attention was, however, not witnessed in any of the schools. Teachers commented,

... The enrolment is too huge to attend to every learner need (Teacher, **Y161B**)

... I will address individual learner needs when marking the composition exercises where I will give comments. It is difficult to do that during the actual teaching within the 35 minutes (Teacher, **W53C**)

Similarly, none of the schools observed gave tasks to learners in groups such as pooling together ideas in pairs to write a joint composition. This was corroborated during focus group discussions where pupils in three schools emphatically gave the following remarks;

- i. We don't do assignments in groups. It is individual work always (FGD **V12C**)
- ii. No, we have never done assignments in groups (FGD, **W45C**)
- iii. It is very rare. When we do so, we learn from the mistakes of others (FGD **W46C**)

It also came out that teachers are at times compelled to explain a concept using the mother tongue. This was expressed by one pupil in a school who stated as follows;

Some pupils don't understand English, so the teacher sometimes explains in the Kipsigis language (FGD, **X93C**)



From the preceding, the use of a variety of instructional techniques has not been achieved. Teachers continue to apply the expository technique even in composition writing, which is meant to be a learner-centred approach. In addition, learners are not given room to discuss with their peers and thus, limiting their application of cognition and expressiveness. This is made worse by the use of mother tongue in teaching composition writing in English language. Next is a presentation of results on teaching and learning activities.

#### ***4.5.2.2. Teaching and learning activities.***

During the quantitative phase, findings revealed that the most commonly used learning activities were group work and revision, whereas, the use of poems in composition writing was minimal. This subsection presents findings obtained from teachers' and learners' experiences in classroom activities in composition writing. As had been indicated earlier, teachers' professional records revealed that though composition writing was not done weekly, the most commonly used learning activities were recorded for use.

When asked about how frequently they employed the group work, drafting and use of poems, a few teachers reported as follows;

... It is rare to engage learners in groups especially in composition writing. However, I sometimes put them in groups to share a story among themselves. From there, I ask each one to write the story. This is however in very few instances (Teacher, **X102C**)

... Congestion in class does not allow me to put pupils in groups, so the best option is to have them in pairs (Teacher, **Z165B**)

... I ask learners to write key points in the form of a few sentences each before they begin the paragraphs. That way, I train them on drafting (Teacher, **X93C**)

... Using poems in composition writing is not easy even though the syllabus indicates that we introduce them by class seven. In the first place, pupils have not grasped how to write complete, coherent sentences. Therefore, I think

poems should be introduced in class eight when their language ability has improved (Teacher, **Y161B**)

Findings revealed some other common activities used to teach composition writing were filling-in blanks and dictation as attested to in some schools thus,

...I employ filling-in blank spaces by the appropriate vocabulary (Teacher **W46C**)

... I sometimes use dictation to develop speed and word accuracy (Teacher **Y161B**)

... I encourage writing of composition after a topic by using new words found (Teacher **W53C**)

During focus group discussions, pupils shared some classroom activities that they are engaged in through their teachers' guidance. Below is a summary of the strategies used as experienced and expressed by learners;

... We are asked to write on new words from storybooks that we read (FGD, **X93C**)

... we are taught on how to handle an introduction, main body, and conclusion (FGD, **W53C**)

... The teacher guides us on how to use new words in a paragraph (FGD, **Y143C**)

... Our teacher encourages us to practice shaping of letters for good handwriting (FGD, **V12C**)

... Correction of spelling mistakes is done most of the time in class (FGD, **W45C**).

One particular boy in a school elaborated on how they use storybooks in composition lessons as follows,

Pupils are asked to tell a story about characters in storybooks and use the new words found. The teacher dictates a paragraph for us to write and after that, checks them for errors (FGD, **Z185C**)

These findings reveal that there are the most common strategies used by teachers. These are; asking learners to write new words from storybooks and being guided on how to use them, writing an introductory, main body and conclusion sections of a composition, and encouraging pupils to communicate in English most of the time. These were, however, not being achieved since pupils found them challenging.

Other techniques obtained include: practising shaping of letters for good handwriting, asking pupils to narrate about characters read from storybooks, teachers dictating paragraphs for pupils to write, and after that, checking for spelling errors. It was also reported that due to learner limitations in comprehending the English language, teachers went to the extent of using vernacular to help learners understand the concepts being taught.

When probed about how beneficial the learning activities were to them, pupils indicated that they gained from them. Some cited the following:

... we get new words from storybooks to use in writing compositions (FGD, **W53C**)

... we benefit by practising on the correct use of proverbs, similes, twin words, and synonyms (FGD, **W45C**).

However, it is only in two schools who confirmed that they have a specific lesson for composition writing (FGD, **Z185C**) while the other stated that their school has set aside tasks for storybooks reading (FGD, **V12C**). All the above indicate that a few teachers have put appropriate teaching and learning activities in place.

Further, findings from teachers' interviews revealed that teachers of English were knowledgeable about the desired composition skills needed to enhance learner competencies. It was also noted that the art of prewriting, character development, appropriate mood, personal style, creativity, and story relevance despite being critical skills in composition writing were not among the key concepts that teachers developed. The highlights from five schools below provide a summary of what the majority of the respondents reported on the skills they develop;

- i. I teach how to structure a composition from the introduction, main body and conclusion (Teacher, **V13B**)
- ii. As for me, I teach how to develop formal and informal letter writing.

- iii. I also concentrate on the use of correct tenses which is a big challenge for our learners (Teacher, **Z190A**)
- iv. We teach pupils on how to develop an exciting story from a given sentence (Teacher, **W53C**)
- v. I try to help learners enrich the stories by using vocabulary, proverbs, similes, and suspense. However, it is a big challenge since it does not come out as natural to pupils (Teacher, **Z165B**)

In contrast, the common practice found in most schools from lesson observation was that pupils were given topical compositions to write without targeting a specific skill or concept. These were evident in Lesson **V31A**, Lesson **Z190A**, Lesson **Z165B**, Lesson **V13B**, and in Lesson **W53C**. Next is a presentation of issues that determine the use of instructional techniques.

#### ***4.5.2.3 Issues that determine the use of instructional techniques***

This study interrogated further issues identified during the quantitative phase that had statistically significant differences among the groups. These were the consideration of pupils' learning interests and the learners' background knowledge. Data was obtained through teachers interview and is briefly reported below.

On the consideration of the two related issues of learner interest and background knowledge, a statement by one teacher provides a summary of the general impression within the study area. The teacher reasoned that "syllabus coverage will not be achieved even up to midway if we go by learner interest since we cannot ask them to suggest topics that they prefer in composition writing. Even monthly exams do not give options" (Teacher, **X93C**). The above comment indicates that teachers did not comprehend fully, what consideration for learner interest means. With further probing, another teacher stated that "it is better to strictly follow the guidelines in the syllabus and approved textbooks because these are the materials that KNEC uses when setting examinations" (Teacher, **Y161B**).

Another teacher agreed that it is important to consider learners' background knowledge "... especially when you are taking over a subject from another teacher so as to gauge learner abilities, then make the appropriate choice of the teaching strategy" (Teacher, **Z165**). However, in one school, the teacher lamented that,

"... with large classes of up to 60 pupils, it is a challenge to establish every learner's background knowledge in composition writing. I, therefore, use an approach that is convenient in covering the content within the allocated time (Teacher, **X102C**).

Further analysis of qualitative data revealed that the majority of teachers interviewed from schools whose learners performed better in composition writing factored in both learner interest and background knowledge when choosing an instructional strategy. Other teachers argued that they only followed the dictates of the syllabus. Next is a presentation of findings on learning materials.

### **4.5.3 Implications of learning materials on learner competencies in EL Composition Writing.**

In this phase, the sub-themes; range/variety of learning materials, issues determining their selection, and frequency of selection and use investigated during the quantitative phase were explored further to affirm or dispute the results. Findings founded on documents and experiences by teachers and pupils were based on a subsidiary research question, which is: What are the implications of learning materials on learner competencies in English language Composition writing at the upper primary level? These sub-themes are presented as sub-headings next.

#### ***4.5.3.1 Range of learning materials***

Findings from document analyses confirmed that available teaching and learning materials were limited to textbooks whose titles include: New Progressive Primary English (NPPE) published by Oxford, New Primary English (NPE) published by Jomo

Kenyatta Foundation, and Keynote English (KNE) published by Longhorn. Other learning materials include real objects, pictures of certain objects, the internet, improvised materials, and a variety of other materials such as newspapers, magazines, and storybooks. The most commonly available textbooks in a majority of the schools were the New Primary English (NPE) books for both teachers and pupils as was reported at the first phase of this study.

#### ***4.5.3.2 Issues determining the selection of materials***

The first phase had revealed that the relevance and effectiveness of materials were considered most when selecting materials, whereas learner involvement was least considered. The other issues put forward were a need for variety, need for supplementary materials, and improvisation of materials. In this phase, teachers were asked to give reasons as to why they preferred specific learning materials. Some of their responses are as presented below:

... New Primary English has good illustrations such that pupils can read on their own and be able to comprehend (Teacher, **Z165B**)

... I prefer New Primary English because of the simple English used. Pupils are able to do the given exercises without much effort (Teacher, **X93C**)

... The New Primary English is available because it was supplied to all schools by the government; therefore, we have to use it. It was also among the earliest titles to be approved by KICD (Teacher, **Y161B**)

... If I was asked, I would go for Keynote English though we are using NPE. Keynote has a good approach to sentence structure construction, which to me is key and leads to developing better writing skills (Teacher, **X102C**)

The above findings suggest that the books in use are founded on what was supplied or approved first by KICD. Majority of schools do not have a variety of titles to compare their content. When asked about the variety of book titles that are available and in use in their schools, a few teachers expressed the following issues:

... We use only one title for English as a subject. There is little time to use more than one book. We are also limited to choose books only in the Orange book (approved list). So, no matter how good you find a book in the market which is not in that list, you cannot use it since it is illegal to do so (Teacher, **W53C**)

... Our school has two different titles, but the English panel decides which one to use in the whole school. We have stuck to NPE, but I think Keynote has rich content (Teacher, **Z190A**)

Asked to describe other issues that determined the selection of materials specifically in composition writing, teachers mentioned school culture, teacher experience, and leadership inclinations. The following excerpts were captured and provide a summary:

... Our school tradition has maintained the use of New Primary English having posted high marks in KCPE in the zone in the year 2016. Teachers attributed it to the use of NPE. So even if you think otherwise, it is hard to convince the panel and the school at large (Teacher, **X102C**)

... The headteacher relies on the teachers who have been in the school for long to determine which books to use in every subject. He believes that they are better informed than us (Teacher, **V31A**).

Finally, on the issue of learner involvement, teachers did not engage learners in the selection of materials. All participants were in agreement that pupils are not involved in the selection of books and other materials. As they put it, their role was to have their parents buy books (if any) demanded by their teachers. Pupil participants from each of the following two schools commented as follows,

... Pupils don't select books. She brings the book by her wish (FGD, **X118C**).  
... We are just told what books to buy (FGD, **X143C**).

When asked to comment on how effective the materials were in enhancing composition skills, some participants agreed that they are useful. Learners in one school, FGD **V12C**, however, were uncertain and remarked, "We are not sure since we don't use them personally." This concludes that pupils are not involved in the selection and collection of materials such as newspapers and magazines, thus suggesting that teachers make all decisions on composition writing lessons. The next subsection presents findings on the frequency of selecting learning materials.

#### *4.5.3.3. The frequency of selecting learning materials.*

In this study, findings from the analysis of English schemes of work, teachers' interviews and focus group discussion on the frequency of materials are presented. As a reminder, the schemes of work derive its content from the syllabus, whereas, the syllabus on its part, as Kimosop (2015) contends, indicates the level of usage at a particular class.

Results from document analysis obtained from the schemes of work and lesson plans revealed that almost all teachers selected the recommended KICD books. Likewise, the use of approved supplementary teaching and learning materials revealed similarity in trend (see Appendix K). It is an indication that teachers aligned their choice of materials to the recommended books by KICD. This was confirmed by one teacher who stated as follows:

... The government has given directives through KICD to limit ourselves to the approved list of books, so we cannot pick any other titles. However, we can select other materials as we please as long as we maintain the main course book (Teacher, **Y161B**)

However, findings from classroom observation did not reflect the content in the schemes of work and lesson plans on other materials. There were hardly any textbooks available in class that addressed composition writing. The use of newspapers, magazines, and storybooks was not evident despite being identified for use in the professional documents. Therefore, learners relied on instructions from the teacher, who, as reported earlier, used the expository technique most of the time during the lessons. This implies that teachers are aware of the appropriate choice of materials that can enhance composition writing, yet they do not utilise them.



Teachers interviewed remarked that they use the approved books and issue them to learners even though they decried the absence of textbooks that address composition writing. Two teachers were specific and reported as follows;

... We use one common coursebook approved by KICD that covers the grammar part and has assignments for essay writing at the end of every unit (Teacher, **X102C**)

... Pupils' textbooks are available and are issued to learners. However, there are no specific English composition textbooks given to learners by the school. (Teacher, **W46C**)

Pupils also corroborated findings from teachers and documents and reported that there are no books on composition writing. Participants in one school (FGD, **V12C**) stated that their teacher has one copy that he uses to teach them. In another school, FGD **W45C**, respondents identified the title of a book, 'Composition Made Easy', that is not issued by the school but bought by the parents for each learner. Pupils in FGD **X102C** lamented that composition books are not brought to class for them to use. One pupil also remarked on supplementary materials and quipped,

'We don't see any supplementary materials used by the teacher' (FGD, **X118C**)

This concludes that composition textbooks and supplementary materials are less frequently available for use in most schools. Next is the presentation of findings on the assessment procedures.

#### **4.5.4 Implications of Assessment on Learner Competencies in Composition Writing.**

In this study, three main sub-themes came out of the qualitative phase: assessment strategies used, issues determining the teachers' use of the assessment procedure, and frequency of giving assessment. According to this study, assessment is operationally defined as careful monitoring of pupils' writing by teachers to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses. It also includes teaching specific skills and strategies in response to

learner needs as well as giving careful feedback that will reinforce newly learned skills and correct recurring problems (Angelo & Cross, 2012).

This section, therefore, presents qualitative findings obtained on the use of the assessment procedure as a pedagogical strategy for learner competencies in English language Composition writing. The subsidiary question that this section sought to respond to was: What are the implications of assessment on learner competencies in EL Composition writing at the upper primary level? Findings are presented below under the emergent themes as subheadings.

#### ***4.5.4.1 Range of Assessment procedures used.***

Data obtained from the key assessment procedures investigated at the quantitative phase were addressed further in this phase. Findings had revealed that teachers pegged learner assessment based on the following considerations in descending order: weekly written tests, targeting a variety of composition skills, learner involvement in peer assessment, learner abilities and interests, prompt learner feedback, syllabus and lesson objectives (refer to 4.3.4).

Findings from teachers' professional records indicate that teachers frequently used several evaluation criteria as recorded in their schemes of work. Some of these include checking for; spelling, handwriting, tenses, length of sentences, paragraphing, and punctuation. Therefore, it is clear that teachers were not making follow-up by evaluating their lessons' successes in a bid to enhance learner competency in composition writing.

However, some other learner competency skills (recorded in the conceptual framework) were not identified as parameters for assessment (see **Figure 1.2**). The desired skills are:

- i. Prewriting organisation
- ii. Thematic choice and development
- iii. Character development
- iv. Sequencing, (Plot)
- v. Coherence & Cohesion
- vi. Fluency (Sentence Structures)
- vii. Choice of Words (Vocabulary)
- viii. Mechanics of Writing (Spellings, Punctuations & Paragraphing)

In addition, only very few teachers filled the remarks column. Besides, the self-evaluation section in the lesson plan book used to inform further intervention was not filled at all by teachers. Filling in of the remarks column and self-evaluation sections are evidence of the teachers' evaluation of lessons taught and an indication that what was planned for was followed. The result further revealed that most teachers never kept continuous progress records of learner performance in composition writing.

Teachers were asked to clarify why they selected specific composition skills during the assessment. Findings revealed that assessment was limited to the few competency areas recorded in the professional documents. Some of the responses were as follows:

... I consider punctuations, spellings and tenses as critical in developing writing skills. I must, therefore assess their good use every time. Other skills can be developed later (Teacher, **W72A**)

... It is not easy to teach on character development in class six, so I focus on tenses and length of sentences. By class eight, we will have handled most of the other skills (Teacher, **Z165B**)

... Since our learner performance in composition writing is currently low, we have agreed to work on mechanics skills of writing and handwriting. Teaching all skills can demotivate them (Teacher, **X93C**)

Data from the analysis of pupils' exercise books, on the other hand, established that teachers had a marking criterion that was based on very few specific skills'

developments in composition writing. Teachers stressed on the correct use of tenses, appropriate formats, and the development of exciting stories during marking. These skills had been recorded in the teachers' schemes of work and lesson plans.

Further analysis revealed that errors were prevalent in pupils' exercise books. Teachers were therefore asked to share their experiences on how they handled common errors made by learners in composition writing. One teacher from School **Z185C** stated that "as an English subject panel, we underline errors in the pupils' written compositions so that they can rectify the mistakes by themselves". The underlining approach was disputed by learners who commented that "... underlining sentences have no specific meaning to most of us. It could only benefit those above average academically" (FGD, **Y143C**).

From document analysis, another strategy that a teacher from school **W72A** used is engaging learners to write down errors made at the bottom of their marked compositions and indicate what should have been the correct forms for each mistake. This strategy was corroborated by learners in another school who stated that,

We only write the errors identified by the teacher below the composition but not the whole story (FGD, **Z185C**)

Teachers from some other schools such as School **X102C**, **W72A**, and **Z165B** indicated that they encouraged learners to buy and read more storybooks and exchanged among pupils in class, thereby improving their composition writing. For example, a teacher and pupils in different schools clarified as follows;

... we display well-written compositions on the class walls for other pupils to benefit (Teacher, **Y161B**).

... good writers are asked to read their compositions in class (FGD, **X143C**)

Teachers also remarked that they single out general errors and discuss them in class. Pupils corroborated this in school, **W46C**. On the contrary, pupils in one of the schools reported that corrections are rarely done as one participant narrated,

... We don't do any corrections after teachers have marked our composition books. That is why some pupils don't re-write because they know teachers will not make a follow-up (Teacher, **W53C**).

From focus group discussions, learners confirmed that they do not correct one another's work. Peer assessment was not practised in the majority of the schools. A pupil in reiterated as follows,

...we assist one another only if a person needs help. This only happens frequently for Insha writing (FGD, **V12C**)

Findings from documents revealed that most teachers do not check learners' re-written work except in only one school (**Z185C**). Checking re-written work could help learners to internalise the corrections, and yet where some did, checking was never done by teachers. From the preceding, follow-up of learners' writing has not been given priority by teachers. A lack of follow-up gives room to learner laxity and thereby lead to a possibility of low competencies in composition writing.

Pupils were similarly asked to express their opinions on how composition writing should be instructed and assessed. The following were their sentiments:

...Teachers should go through our compositions thoroughly after we have done the corrections. Again, teachers should show us exactly where we have gone wrong instead of just underlining (FGD, **Y143C**)

...Teachers should give composition textbooks and storybooks to read to improve composition writing (FGD, **X102C**)

...We should be allowed to visit the library to read storybooks more often.

...Teachers should find time to teach us how to write suitable compositions instead of just giving us assignments.

...Both teachers and pupils should be more committed (FGD, **Z185C**)

...We want to choose our titles. Our school should also allocate lessons to composition writing in the time table.

...We should be allowed to discuss and write in groups (FGD, **X118C**)

Next is a presentation of issues that determine the use of assessment by teachers.

#### ***4.5.4.2 Issues determining teachers' use of assessment***

Arising from the strategies used in the assessment procedure by teachers, this study sought to establish issues that determine the teachers' use of assessment in enhancing learner competencies in composition writing. Some of the issues unveiled by teachers interviewed were teacher training, teaching experience, school culture, and influence of textbooks.

On teacher training, there was an outcry from teachers that there is insufficient training during both pre-service and continuous professional teacher development (CPTD) on how to assess learners in composition writing. Teachers lamented as follows:

... In the primary teacher training colleges, there is no specific training on how to identify right competency skills to develop and then conduct learner assessment. I think colleges have focused on grammar at the expense of composition writing (Teacher, **Z190A**)

... There are very few teacher facilitators of composition writing. Likewise, the employer has not organised school-based training. Seminars are common in science-based subjects, yet English is the key to all subjects (Teacher, **Z165B**)

... The college curriculum needs to be revised to equip trainee teachers on composition skills. Most of us are almost incompetent and could be ruining children by using wrong assessment techniques (Teacher, **W53C**)

On the teaching experience, majority of teachers agreed that more experienced teachers handle learner assessment better than the newly trained or employed teachers. However, findings revealed that the latter evade teaching English in the senior upper primary classes. Teachers expressed their sentiments as follows:

... In most schools, the teaching of English in class five, six and seven is done by either the newly employed or newly trained BOM (Board of Management) teachers. These are the classes where composition writing is grounded and require experienced hands (Teacher, **Z190A**)

The school culture was reported to influence the use of assessment. This entail tradition set over time which includes the language policy, marking criteria and motivation strategies to name but a few. From the respondents' voices, they contributed as follows:

... The school tradition determines how teachers conduct an assessment. For example, in a neighbouring school, composition writing is done and marked every week, whereas, in our school, it is very inconsistent. I think it begins with a shared vision and the composition of teachers (Teacher, **W72A**)

... In our school, we have a marking policy where we have termly maximum marks to award composition scripts. Learners who attain the limit are given recognition. This motivates them even to do better as teachers also struggle to achieve their set targets. The mode of assessment is therefore very keenly supervised (Teacher, **W53C**)

Finally, the textbooks in use have shaped how teachers conduct the assessment.

Teachers elaborated that they have to administer assessment considering the content in the textbooks. Two teachers captured this clearly as follows:

... Since we don't want children to perform poorly, we must align our assessment to the New Primary English Pupils' coursebook (Teacher, **V31A**)

... I have noted that schools that use several books in teaching do better because learners are exposed to a lot of content and thus expand their vocabulary and language base in general (Teacher, **X102C**).

The next is a presentation of results on the frequency of assessment.

#### ***4.5.4.3 Frequency of assessment***

This study investigated the frequency of composition writing and their subsequent marking by teachers by obtaining data from the analysis of pupils' books, teachers' interviews, and pupils discussions. Findings revealed that marking was done promptly. However, there was no consistency in writing assignments weekly. For instance, in some schools, the only composition assignments written in their exercise books were those of end-of-month examination tests, thus averaging only three written

compositions per term. This was against the expected norm of at least one or two composition writings per week.

Results from teachers interviewed confirmed that the common practice in schools was that composition writing assignments were given and evaluated on average once a fortnight or when there is an examination for the whole school. A teacher interviewed in **School V31A** affirmed what others had reported that monthly exams are the norm in most schools, and that is when composition writing is mandatory. One teacher in a school clarified on the frequency of giving out assignments and stated as follows,

... On average, we give out composition assignments once in two weeks or when an exam is given for the whole school (Teacher **W53C**)

Pupils likewise affirmed that they wrote one composition in two weeks and then got feedback in three to four days on average from the day their exercise books are collected for marking. This was attested by a pupil in another school, FGD **W46C**, who said, “we write about one composition in two weeks or when we have exams.” In one school, however, marking was done faster, depending on teacher commitment. This was indicated by one pupil who remarked as follows,

... It takes one day to mark if the teacher is not busy with other classes (FGD, **W45C**)

In yet another school, it took more than one day as was stated by a pupil as follows,

... It takes about three to four days to get back our composition exercise books after marking (FGD, **X118C**)

From the above, findings indicate that the frequency of giving out and marking of assignments is not done uniformly in most schools. The general trend noted was that majority give assignments once a month and give feedback between three days to one week, with a few exceptions. Next is the presentation of findings on learner competencies.



#### 4.5.5 Competencies in composition writing based on Qualitative data.

This subsection presents findings from teachers' interviews and focus group discussions on learner competencies in composition writing. Specific areas of low competency were obtained from learners, while teachers gave possible reasons for the inadequate competencies and suggested on how to mitigate them.

Teachers gave responses as to why developing story organisation in learners was a challenge in their schools. The following provides the gist of the concerns:

... Learners find it hard to sequence a story due to limitations in their vocabulary, maintaining one idea in a paragraph, and a lack of creativity and imagination (Teacher, **X93C**)

... Our learners have a problem with writing clear sentences. Therefore, it is a challenge for them to organise their composition as desired. I don't know where this problem started. Possibly right from the lower primary (Teacher, **W46C**)

... it is difficult for pupils to stick to the main idea of a story. In a number of occasions, pupils deviate and write irrelevancies which lower marks for them. I also know that the biggest problem with our pupils is that they think and reason in mother tongue before translating their thoughts to form sentences in English (Teacher, **W53C**)

Further, teachers were asked to shed light on why learners generally had low competencies in composition writing. Four of these teachers provide a summary of what was obtained from the others. Teacher **X102C** attributed it to school-based staffing and explained, "... The mature teachers do not teach languages and leave this to the newly trained and inexperienced teachers who spend most of their class time on their phones with social media".

Another teacher in School **V13B** pegged it on non-specialisation of primary school teachers and expressed thus, "... The policy of primary school teachers being 'jacks of all trade', which does not allow specialisation is disastrous. We are killing a generation by producing almost illiterate learners".

Still, one teacher attributed the low performance to understaffing in schools and stated that,

... Understaffing is the leading cause of this problem. Handling many subjects and in different classes in a day throughout the week makes teachers seek the easy way out, and that is doing the bare minimum for each (Teacher, **Z190A**).

The fourth teacher attributed it to laxity of teachers and explained that "... You know marking of Composition is demanding so teachers would rather avoid it due to engagements in attending to other subjects and activities" (Teacher, **V31A**)

Finally, teachers were asked to suggest measures that could be put in place to mitigate the low learner competencies in composition writing. They suggested: develop more reference books on Composition writing; have more seminars to induct teachers of English on composition writing; motivate teachers and pupils who do well in Composition writing.

One teacher echoed concerns on specialisation and elaborated as follows,

... Allow specialisation for primary school teachers who will handle their subjects of interest as opposed to now. Many teachers detest teaching English as a subject because of the heavy workload, especially in composition marking (Teacher, **X102C**)

Pupils were, in turn, asked to express the specific areas that they encountered challenges in composition writing. Five schools' responses capture the gist of what learners expressed as significant concerns in the study area. Verbatim responses are presented per school as follows:

- i. We lack creativity
- ii. Most of us have lousy handwriting.
- iii. We do not know how to make short sentences.
- iv. It is a problem building a story that matches with the title.
- v. Our challenge is also on spelling mistakes, for example, writing of letter 'I' in small letters (FGD, **W53C**)
- vi. The shaping of letters for good handwriting is a problem for many of us.
- vii. Running short of words to use when writing a story is another problem.
- viii. We have little knowledge of the correct use of punctuation marks.
- ix. Some pupils have a problem in the mixing of letters.

- x. Tenses and spelling mistakes are many in our class.
- xi. Majority of pupils have a problem writing more than one sentence in a paragraph.
- xii. Lack of enough time leads to hurrying, which results in making lots of mistakes, and a lack of understanding of what is expected of us to write (FGD, **185C**)
- xiii. It is challenging to continue to build a story from a started sentence.
- xiv. Building the main body of a story is a challenge to us.
- xv. Most of us are not creative because of a lack of exposure to many books.
- xvi. Filling in one and a half pages that teachers demand is a problem. So many of us decide to repeat sentences (FGD, **W46C**).
- xvii. The most challenging area in composition writing is the beginning of a story or the ending of a story. You may end up writing something different from what is expected (FGD, **X93C**)
- xviii. It is challenging to write compositions because of spelling mistakes, poor handwriting, use of punctuations, mixing of tenses, and limitation of vocabulary (FGD, **Y143C**)

From the above responses, learners continue to have challenges in almost all composition competency areas. However, majority of learners in Bomet County depicted fair competencies in the mechanical skills that teachers focused on during instruction and assessment. The next section presents the chapter summary, followed by issues arising from this chapter in **Table 4.31** on the next page.

#### **4.6 Summary**

This chapter has presented, analysed and interpreted data. Term Two ELCW test results were presented first, followed by a quantitative data presentation, analysis of pedagogical strategies, then the qualitative phase. The next chapter presents a discussion of findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

**Table 4.31: Key Issues arising from Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation**

IV.	MA	QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS	QUALITATIVE FINDINGS
<b>Teacher Planning</b>	R	<b>-Available:</b> Approved syllabus 222(38.7%), KICD textbooks 237(41.3%), and supplementary books 76(13.2%)	-Limited to the preparation of schemes of work and lesson plan. No records of work
	F	<b>Frequently prepared:</b> -Schemes of work 213(37.9%) -Lesson plans 197(34.3%)	-Two professional documents are frequently prepared but not put to use in class
	I	-Syllabus objectives 423(74.1%) -Weightage 370(64.5%)	Low composition content in the syllabus and in textbooks
<b>Instructional Techniques</b>	R	<b>-Order of preference of techniques in use:</b> i) Expository, ii) experiential, iii) collaborative, iv) task-based, v) problem-solving & vi) questioning, <b>-Teaching and learning activities:</b> Drafting (F2, 571) = 3.5889, p=0.000) Choice of poems (F2, 571) =1.7073, p= 0.815).	-The expository technique is dominant in teaching composition writing. -Story organisation not given prominence -Lack of individual learner attention -Emphasis laid on mechanics of writing
	F	- Very often used: Expository 485(84.5%); Experiential 472(82.2%).	- Expository technique frequently used due to large classes
	I	<b>-Statistically significant (p&lt; .05):</b> Learner interest & background knowledge <b>-Not statistically significant (p&gt;.05):</b> Syllabus guidelines, learning abilities & environmental/ contextual factors	- Consideration of learner interest and background knowledge when choosing an instructional strategy enhances learner performance
<b>Learning Materials</b>	R	<b>Mean scores per Textbook choice:</b> NPE (17.8246), KE (17.7931), & NPPE (17.6327).	-Lack of a variety of composition textbooks in school
	F	-Group means based on the selection of the recommended textbooks: A (3.4615), B (3.4345), & C (3.1786).	- Only teachers select materials -Newspapers, magazines & storybooks not in use
	I	<b>-Strongly agreed:</b> Relevance 173(30.1%), variety 150(26.1%), effectiveness 136(23.7%), supplementary 126(22.0%), improvised materials 106(18.5%) & learner involvement 73(10.7%).	-Textbooks that address composition writing are hardly available -Textbooks commonly in use are those approved earliest by KICD -School culture influenced the choice of materials
<b>Assessment Procedures</b>	R	-Order of assessment strategies: weekly tests (7.3990), targeting a variety of composition skills (7.0645)	-Emphasis on spellings, punctuations, & paragraphing - Syllabus not used to guide learner assessment
	F	<b>-Presentation and handwriting:</b> Very often used by 164(28.6%) teachers <b>-Mechanics skills:</b> Very often used by 162(28.2%) teachers	-On average, one composition exercise is done and marked per fortnight - Learners got feedback from teachers on written compositions in four days
	I	-Consideration of syllabus and lesson objectives least considered in low performing schools (6.0769).	-Teacher training, teaching experience, school culture, and influence of textbooks determine the use of assessment
<b>Testing of Variables through multiple regression</b>		-There was low collinearity among variables: Planning (.748), Techniques (.945), Materials (.876), Assessment (.762). <b>- Model Summary:</b> R Square- .324 (The model explains about 32% of the DV's variance)	

**KEY:** IV- Independent variables; M.A.-Main Area; R- Range; I- Issues; F- Frequency

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Discussion

This section is a discussion of key findings both from databases in relation to the purpose of the study and literature in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT). The main purpose of the study was to investigate the implications of pedagogical strategies on upper primary learners' competencies in English Language composition writing in Bomet County in Kenya. In this study, pedagogical strategies were limited to the selected classroom techniques which included planning, instructional techniques, learning materials, and assessment that teachers of English employed to help learners attain the desired competencies in composition writing.

Composition writing competence was used in this study to refer to the form of sequencing events in an organised and logical manner (KNEC, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018). As described in chapter one, it entails learner ability to apply the eight composition writing skills captured in **Figure 1.2**, which include prewriting organisation, sequencing, coherence and cohesion, among others. The main assumption of this discussion is that with the help of teachers of English language, pupils should complete primary school education having acquired the desired writing skills for communicative competence (Crystal, 2010; Mertens, 2014; Ong'ondo, 2017b; Opoola & Fatiloro, 2014). This is in line with one of the Kenyan goals of the primary school education, which is, to acquire communication skills (Syomwene, Nyandusi & Yungungu, 2017). Similarly, one specific objective contained in the primary English language syllabus is that "... all pupils are expected to have acquired sufficient command of English, in verbal and written forms to enable them to communicate fluently..." (KIE, 2002:2).

This discussion is, therefore mainly interested in establishing whether the pedagogical strategies employed by teachers support the development of the expected learner competencies in English language composition writing. To do this, the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the study are presented as sub-topics next.

### **5.1.1 Teacher Planning**

Within the context of education, planning encompasses the process of setting objectives and shaping the means of achieving them. It entails making prior decisions on what to teach, how to teach, when to teach, who to teach, and the evaluation of recipient (Katitia, 2015). A teacher's preparation to conduct a lesson entails access to relevant approved materials for planning purposes (Taylor, 2013). Teacher preparation ensures that appropriate content, consistent with the curriculum guidelines is systematically disseminated to the learners at every class level and by linking current lessons to those previously learnt (Danielson, 2011; Tomlinson, 2014). Planning is thus not an easy fete since teaching has become demanding and complicated in the current generation as is argued by Merritt (2016):

... teaching is more complex in this decade than ever before as educators adapt to new curricular reforms and assessments, implement social and emotional learning programs, and plan learning for an increasingly diverse student population. Teachers also have access to so much information about effective teaching strategies and interventions. They need time to process and integrate new information from professional development, review student data from multiple sources for decision making, and provide timely, constructive feedback for students on their learning (p.31).

The same author contends that teacher planning requires planning time at two levels: personal planning time to focus on what to do in their own classrooms, and common planning time with subject panel members. Individual planning time, on the one hand, is needed to prepare materials for upcoming lessons, review pupils' work, and interact with other stakeholders such as parents about individual learners. Common planning

time, on the other hand, occurs periodically and is often set aside for meetings with teachers in the same class, panel or department.

Teacher planning within the Kenyan context entails, among other requirements, writing of schemes of work and preparation of lesson plans (Mwangi, Syomwene & Murunga, 2018). A well-prepared teacher is thus equipped for successful curriculum delivery that Syomwene, Nyandusi, and Yungungu, (2017) contend, has four elements that must be put into consideration: aims/ goals/ objectives; content/ subject matter; learning experiences; and evaluation. In this study, teacher planning was considered to have occurred when data obtained indicated availability and use of a range and variety of professional documents, consideration of issues in planning, and a high frequency of their preparation, consistent to the periods (lessons) allocation. These are discussed next.

#### ***5.1.1.1 Teacher preparation of professional documents***

By use of the questionnaire, document analysis and interviews, this study was able to establish the range and variety of professional documents in use by teachers. The documents in use in English composition writing were: the schemes of work, lesson plans, lesson notes, approved KICD syllabus, approved KICD textbooks, supplementary books, and improvised materials. The schemes of work and lesson plans were the documents in use mostly. At the same time, the available textbook titles in preferred order were: New Primary English, New Progressive Primary English, and Keynote English. Lesson notes and records of work were not commonly available.

The main issues affecting teacher planning were minimal weightage and sequencing of composition lessons in the syllabus, learner needs, and low content in the syllabus and textbooks. On the frequency of planning, schemes of work and lesson plans were

prepared most often. However, they were not put to use, while the content did not correspond to the actual teaching. Some of the challenges encountered by teachers during planning were: lack of specific composition writing books, shortage of time caused by the rush for syllabus completion, and teaching of many subjects in the curriculum.

In the context of this study, the above findings were expected. The range of professional documents, the syllabus and the approved KICD textbooks are expected to be in all primary schools since the government of Kenya took up the supply of instructional materials (<https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2017-11-25-schools-will-get-books-directly-from-government-in-2018-matiangi/>). One of the tenets of communicative language theory that concurs with this study is on the instructional system which anticipates a well-structured design of the syllabus and the types of teaching and learning activities (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). KICD and the Ministry of Education have ensured that all the relevant materials are made available. However, this study contends that the variance is on their selection and use by individual schools since the materials are meant to serve as sources of content to prepare for lesson delivery.

On issues that determine teacher planning, this study observed that since teachers depend entirely on textbooks for planning, the order in which it has been predetermined through integration is maintained. In this case, composition writing is scheduled last in the sequencing of the language units which could last three weeks, and thus not provide a leeway for the teacher to slot composition lessons weekly. Therefore, this is a contributing factor to the low performance in composition writing.

This study supports previous research conducted by Pillay and North (2017), who argued that while topics are well-sequenced in the syllabus and textbooks, examinations



are focused on language skills and grammaticality. This creates a perceived conflict between the textbooks, syllabus, and the examination syllabus; putting the teachers in a dilemma. The two authors further argue that there is no clear principle on the sequencing of content and therefore advocate for the integration of grammar with all other skills. However, in the current study, as stated above, composition writing is already integrated with other skills, but the concern is on minimal content.

Another study by Mwangi, Syomwene & Murunga (2018) and Kazungu (2018), both conducted in secondary schools in Kenya, also revealed (just like the current study) that there were no lessons set aside for Kiswahili composition writing in secondary schools in Kenya. Therefore, the weekly allocation of lessons to composition writing has similarly not been achieved in the primary section. Kazungu (2013) concluded that teachers need pedagogical skills and other aspects to apply the competence of planning effectively but did not specify skills. Since there are several competencies in composition writing, the current study addressed and investigated the whole range to establish where the limitations were situated.

On the frequency of preparation of documents, findings revealed that even though professional documents were frequently prepared, they were for administrative purposes only, thus not utilised during teaching. Mwangi et al. (2018) expound that consistency in preparation, and effective use of the key professional documents (schemes of work and lesson plans) increases the likelihood of running smooth lessons for students to receive quality instruction. This is affirmed by the reflective teaching tenets, which allude those learner outcomes are a model and a reflection of teacher preparation since teaching is a thoughtful practice (Wallace, 1996). Therefore, in the

absence of effective preparation, the physical presence of materials may not be impactful on learner performance.

In this study, data obtained from the questionnaire reveal that teacher preparation of schemes of work was done very frequently by 213(37.1%) and frequently by 332(57.8%). Lesson plan preparation followed a similar trend where 197(34.4%) did so most frequently, and 276(48.1%) prepared frequently. The total percentage in the preparation of both records exceeds 80% compliance. Data from documents, however, reflected a lower frequency with teachers who prepared schemes of work and lesson plans under the same parameters were a total of 51.7% and 48.3% respectively.

The findings concur with several studies done in Kenya and beyond. For instance, Teygong (2018) conducted a study in Elgeyo- Marakwet County, which established that schemes of work were prepared by 67.4% of teachers, and lesson plans were prepared by 47.8%, and progress records by 52.2%. Teygong's study affirmed that schemes of work and lesson plans preparation were done more frequently compared to lesson notes. Annety (2013,) who conducted a study on teachers' knowledge and skills in teaching the integrated English curriculum in public secondary schools in Kenya, found out that preparation of schemes of work and lesson plans in secondary schools was done at 100%.

In yet another study by Onsare (2013) conducted in Kisii County, findings established that most teachers of English majorly relied on schemes of work with very minimal use of lesson plans in the teaching of oral communication skills. He attributed poor performance in English to the lack of adequate preparation of professional documents. Likewise, in Uganda, Malunda, Onen, Musaaazi & Oonyu (2016) found out that 778(83.3%) teachers always did schemes of work, while lesson plans were always done

by 367(39.3%) teachers and lesson notes by 660(70.7%) teachers. They concluded that teachers rely heavily on schemes of work and lesson notes in their pedagogical practices. However, in the current study, whereas lesson notes, as stated earlier, were unavailable, the prepared schemes of work and lesson plans were not utilised in class and therefore, not useful.

Similarly, data obtained from schemes of work on planning for sequencing of composition lessons to develop specific constructs was rarely done by 11(37.9%) teachers in addition to 16(55.2%) who never did so. In comparison, the questionnaire findings reported that 262(45.6%) teachers agreed that the development of desired composition skills was appropriately sequenced during the planning stage. Document analyses, therefore, did not concur with the results obtained from the questionnaire on these constructs.

Since documents are considered as situated products, permanent and rich source of data (Gitogo, 2018), they can be reliable. Information obtained from document analyses was concrete in terms of the actual recording of evidence of prepared lesson plans rather than what the teachers reported that they did (from the questionnaires). Therefore, it implies that teachers of English have not accorded lesson planning for composition writing the necessary attention.

Overall, this study concluded that the preparation of these documents was frequently done except for lesson plans that were prepared less often. In contrast, a study by Nesari (2014) in Iran revealed that the majority (79.6%) of the teachers of English had an interest in making lesson plans. Teachers, therefore, need to commit themselves to lesson plan preparation in composition writing just as Tomlinson (2014) states that lesson planning is an essential requirement that teachers must engage in before they

interact with learners. While this concern is valid, lesson planning without utilising them in class as revealed in this study remains futile and is equivalent to not lesson planning.

Another aspect was on the consideration for learner needs. Learners ought to be provided with equal hopes, aspirations, and education despite their dynamism. One of the tenets of communicative language teaching (CLT) that supports planning is equipping the teacher with the capacity to attend to individual learners and address every learner's uniqueness. Savignon (2010), recognises learner diversity as a core tenet of CLT and is accepted as part of language development. It is made possible where there is the existence of teacher-pupil cooperation that CLT advocates. In this study, consideration for learner needs and interests was not evident.

Findings from teachers and pupils' experiences indicated that planning and overall lesson preparation remains the sole prerogative of teachers who do not engage learners.

As reported, one teacher quipped,

“Pupils anticipate guidance from us, so they do not anticipate us going to them to seek suggestions. They are also still young” (Teacher, **Y161B**).

Pupils concurred with the teachers as they clarified that they are never informed of when composition lessons would take place since it is not indicated in the class time table. In very few instances, like in school **Z165B**, learners are asked to read storybooks before the lesson. Consideration of learner interests was one of the constructs addressed in the questionnaire, which established that only 116(20.2%) teachers strongly agreed that they took care of learner interests. Another 152(26.5%) teachers were surprisingly uncertain whether learner needs and interests were considered during planning. Both

databases were in concurrence on this construct. Therefore, it is conclusive that teachers do not take much consideration of learner interests at the planning stage.

On challenges encountered by teachers during planning, this study concurs with Anyiendah (2017), who asserts that teachers in primary schools in Kenya have numerous challenges that include being overloaded, making it difficult for effective instruction, and in this context, effective planning. Anyiendah adds that pressure from education officers to complete the syllabus by May of every year to get time for revision ostensibly makes it worse. It makes the preparation of professional documents an additional task that teachers could want to avoid. A narration brought out by a teacher in one school in this study makes it clear as reported that,

‘... the pressure to handle other subjects and complete the syllabus in time does not give room to plan adequately for composition writing, which is not highly regarded by both teachers and learners’ (Teacher **V13B**).

In addition to this concern, this study went beyond the challenges raised by Anyiendah (2017) and revealed other pertinent issues such as the shortage of composition reference books and lack of subject specialisation by teachers. However, irrespective of the enormous tasks or challenges that they have, teachers cannot surrender the preparation of documents that guide in instruction. According to CBLT, there must be clear expectations of learning outcomes which must be laid down to improve on quality teaching (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Therefore, teachers must plan lessons and stick to the prescribed order, but also customise lessons as per learner needs and contextual factors.

To conclude this subsection, this study made unique contributions not captured by the studies reviewed above. Through the use of several data generation tools and the mixed-methods approach, the study ascertained that though preparation of the few professional

documents in English subject was done frequently, composition writing, specifically, was done minimally. Overall, this study has established that planning had a statistically significant influence on learner competencies in composition writing ( $\beta = -.585$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Compared to the other pedagogical strategies, it had the largest Beta contribution to the outcome of learner competencies in composition writing. It indicates that without proper planning and effective use of professional documents, all that teachers do in the classroom may not yield the desired results. The next section is a discussion of findings on instructional techniques.

### 5.1.2 Instructional Techniques

Within the field of language teaching, the difference between theory and practice, and the teaching procedures have been instrumental. For clarity, the terms approach, method, and techniques were elaborated on by Anthony (1963, cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2014) as the three levels that address conceptualisation and organisation. Further, an approach is regarded as a set of correlated assumptions and address the nature of language teaching and learning, and therefore describes the content. A method is procedural since it is a plan for the organised presentation of materials identified in the approach. On the other hand, a technique is the strategy used to accomplish the targeted objective(s) and is thus implementational. Richards and Rodgers (2014) signal the following as their verdict:

... We see approach and method treated at the level of *design*, that level in which objectives, syllabus, and content are determined, and in which the roles of teachers, learners, and instructional materials are specified. The implementation phase .... We refer to by the slightly more comprehensive term *procedure*. Thus, a method is theoretically related to an approach, is organizationally determined by design, and is practically realised in a procedure (p.20).

Since the study investigated the strategies that teachers use in composition writing, it adopted the term technique as used by Anthony, who clarified that techniques carry out

a method that is aligned to an approach. This section discusses findings that addresses commonly used instructional techniques under the sub-theme: teaching techniques and learning activities. These are presented under the subheading.

#### ***5.1.2.1. Teaching techniques and learning activities.***

Literature has revealed that several considerations determine the choice of a teaching technique- these include time allocation, teaching experiences, professional qualifications, and teacher's attitude and cognition (Pitsoe, 2012; Danielson, 2011; Shawer, 2010). However, Anderson (2013) observed that English teachers prefer an easy form of communication. A variety of techniques investigated in this study were: expository, task-based, questioning, experiential technique, group work and problem-solving.

Quantitative findings revealed that the expository technique was dominantly used 'very often' by 191(33.3%) and often by 294(51.2%) teachers respectively. In contrast, the questioning technique was never used by the highest number of teachers, 124(21.6%). This was confirmed through lesson observation. The findings contradict Wandera's (2012) study, which concluded that the lecture method (expository technique) was rarely adopted in the teaching of the English language in Nairobi County. The same findings revealed that 84(48.3%) teachers very often used question and answer method.

Similarly, another study by Syomwene (2016a), indicated that the questioning method was used by teachers to prompt all learners to take part in the lessons. This was not the case in the current study. Therefore, teachers should desist from the over-use of the expository technique, specifically in composition writing, which requires a process-oriented approach, as discussed in 2.2.2.1.

As for group discussion and experiential technique, nearly half of the respondents in this study often used both techniques. Communicative language teaching theory advocates for group assignments to enhance cooperative relationships in the classroom for effective communication (Desai, 2015). Likewise, the principle of socio-constructivist theory advances the use of cooperative learning through pair work and group work (Fahmy & Lagowsky, 2011) as teachers majorly play the role of guides. Syomwene (2015) adds that group work encourages cooperative learning and makes students independent of the teacher. The same is supported by Richards & Rodgers (2014), who advocate for group work, task-work, information-gap activities, and projects. This interaction will hopefully help to improve on learner competencies in composition writing.

It was similarly evident from these findings that the techniques used in the teaching of English composition writing has not received desired innovativeness and limited itself majorly to expository technique, without the use of small group and class discussions. This is consistent with studies in Europe and America (Taqi & Al-Nouh, 2014) and replicated in African classrooms (Navsaria, Pascoe, & Kathard, 2011). As noted, such techniques should suit the teacher's abilities, knowledge of subject content and interests, suit learner's abilities, suit the type of teaching to be carried out, and suit the subject content at hand (Snoek, 2012).

However, in this study, despite the schemes of work and lesson plans indicating the use of various techniques, data from lesson observation showed contrasting results. For instance, a lesson in school **Z165A** had indicated the use of discussion technique, yet, ended up not applying it. This raises a concern that instructional techniques planned for, are never implemented during actual teaching. The implication is that lessons are



not being conducted to meet set objectives in the schemes of work and by extension in the syllabus, thereby making learners miss out on desired competencies.

On the teaching and learning activities which cut across all instructional techniques, the use of drafting, revision, pair work, group work, class discussion, storytelling, individual learner attention, and use of poems was interrogated. Gakori (2015) and Teshome et al. (2017) identified these activities and found them useful in the teaching of composition writing. Beginning with group work, which was not evident in classrooms in this study, Laal and Ghodsi (2011) underscore the importance of working in groups:

... In all situations where people come together in groups, it suggests a way of dealing with people who respect and highlights individual group members' abilities and contributions. There is a sharing of authority and acceptance of responsibility among group members for the groups' actions. The underlying premise of collaborative learning is based upon consensus building through cooperation by group members, in contrast to competition in which individuals beat other group members (p. 486).

On drafting, Graham, Gillespie, and McKeown (2013) indicate that it is useful in helping learners to create a preliminary version of the intended text which is done through selection of words and construction of sentences that will most likely convey the writer's ideas most accurately. As for revision, Liu and Brown (2015) clarify that it aids in the tracking of individual errors in L2 writing.

In this study, results from document analysis revealed that teachers chose more variety of teaching activities as compared to the techniques. Mwangi, Syomwene & Murunga (2018) assert that a teacher's choice of activities positively impacts the learning process.

The following quote emphasises their assertion:

... A good teacher will always give activity as a means to an end and select with care the activities he uses so that they serve best the process of learning. This

assertion stresses that task-based activities are essential in learning language skills (p. 38).

Data revealed that group work, revision, and drafting are the common activities in the classroom, whereas writing of poems is not used in the teaching of composition writing. Teachers interviewed found the use of poems strenuous. The study findings contradict Finch (2003), who found that the use of poems such as songs leads to meaningful and successful language learning, making English a means of personal expression, creativity, and development. Finch further elaborated that the use of poems in written activities provides effective and collaborative means of language learning and personalised expression. However, Young (2016) found out that the use of poems in the teaching of English language in high schools in America was vanishing and attributed this to the educational culture of standardisation, objective testing, performativity and attention accorded to STEM fields.

On her part, Rose (2018), who conducted a study in Kakamega County, Kenya was concerned that teachers use very little time in poetry lessons and that learners alike, have negative attitudes towards them. Rose ascribed this resentment to the unique structure and content of poems disliked by both teachers and learners. The use of poems, already begrudged in teaching composition writing, could create further constraints in the classrooms. Therefore, this resentment could be explained by teacher cognition which indicates that teaching experience shapes teacher cognition from an accumulation of trial and error encounters (Bernard & Burns, 2012).

This study argues that more experienced teachers who have experimented with various techniques and learning activities over time and isolated those that are more effective should be engaged in teaching composition writing. The current study found that the

use of poems in composition writing is emphasised in the syllabus, yet teachers have disregarded its use.

Other findings from the qualitative databases revealed that learners were treated as a passive audience since there were limited learner involvement and attention. In addition, mother tongue (L1) was sometimes used to explain concepts due to learners' language limitations. CLT theory permits the use of MT once in a while (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). To justify the use of L1, one teacher argued that pupils have the habit of thinking in MT and translating to English (Teacher, **W53C**). However, the effect of thinking/reasoning in MT by second language learners is another subject of discussion. One view is that the use of MT in the English language classroom is helpful. This is advanced by an argument by Chang (2011) thus:

... Duff, unlike the behaviourists, has a positive view of the role of the learner's mother tongue in second language acquisition. He says that our first language forms our way of thinking and, to some extent, shapes our use of the foreign language (choice of words, word order, sentence structure, etc.). Translation helps us understand the influence of one language on the other, e.g., areas of potential errors caused by negative transfer from the first language. Fully aware of the interference, students will try to avoid making such errors when performing in the second language. When errors do occur, the students will be able to explain why and try not to make the same mistakes again (p.16)

Another study conducted by Ridha (2012) on EFL Arabic students concluded that the majority of learners rely on MT to express their ideas. However, the most prevalent errors made by learners were the grammatical and mechanical errors. The study recommended that teachers need to take stock of the written transfer and interference, then help learners to correct them. Likewise, a study done in secondary schools in Mutare district, Manicaland, Zimbabwe, by Oyedele and Chikwateru (2016), established that one of the greatest difficulties that students face in the composition writing at 'O' level, is mother tongue interference.

In contrast, in the current study, teachers were the ones who occasionally used MT to support explanations. Though it may seem contradictory to Larsen-Freeman's principles, it goes against the tenets of communicative language theory (CLT) which advocate for learners to struggle to use the target language at all times (Desai, 2015). This study argues that teachers' use of MT, especially in the classrooms contributes negatively to the development of their competencies in writing skills and specifically in composition writing. It is more critical when there is a variation between structures of the two languages, thus raising conflicts. For example, as discussed previously in chapter one, Dalrymple (2012) established that the Kipsigis language (commonly used in Bomet County) has three language patterns as opposed to English that has two (see 1.2.4).

The current study has made a unique contribution by investigating the range, issues and frequency of use of the selected instructional techniques relevant to composition writing together with the commonly used classroom teaching and learning activities. It established that instructional techniques ( $\beta = -.004$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) had no statistical significance in predicting learner outcomes in composition writing. In addition, the use of the tenets of communicative language theory (CLT) and the more recent concept of competency-based language teaching (CBLT) to underpin the study helped in consolidating useful findings in drawing conclusions and recommendations. Mouri's (2016) study in Bangladesh, though used a mixed-methods approach, was limited to CLT tenets and did not analyse documents. Next is a discussion on the learning materials used in composition writing.

### **5.1.3 Learning Materials**

Using teaching and learning materials enhance the likelihood of the student to learn more, preserve what they learn, and enhance their achievement on the development of

targeted skills (Kiveli, 2013). Kotut (2016) adds that children can understand conceptual ideas, subject to the provision of enough resources and practical experience with the event they are to comprehend. This section presents a discussion on the variety and frequency of selection of materials, and issues determining their selection. These are addressed as subtopics.

#### ***5.1.3.1 Variety and selection of learning materials***

As indicated in 5.1.1.1, the most common materials that contribute to the teaching-learning process both to the teachers and to learners are textbooks (Gak, 2011; Kotut, 2016). For instance, Kotut (2016) adds that textbooks facilitate learners to trail the teachers' order of presentation. The availability of textbooks and other materials in the classroom, according to UNESCO (2010), is a valuable way of improving results. A study conducted in Indonesia on the representation of communicative competence in English language textbooks by Sidik (2018) affirmed the importance of textbooks in the following statement:

English textbooks play a paramount role in the teaching process and are expected to contain appropriate contents that can support students to acquire required competencies for effective communication. The expected contents should contain different aspects of language abilities or competencies well-known as communicative competence (p. 92)

Textbooks are deemed to be a hidden curriculum and a tool for the interpretation of the education policies into practicality (Canale, 2016; Matic, L., & Gracin, 2016; Nguyen, Marlina, & Cao, 2020). Where content in textbooks have been disregarded, they no longer serve as resources but as impediments or restrictors to learning (Sidik, 2018). Ahmed (2017: 181) argues that “A learner can become more independent with the help of a good textbook, in spite of bad or non-existent teaching.”

Mbugua (2017) confirmed that KICD books are authentic and fit well to the requirements as contextualised in the syllabus. She adds that authentic materials reflect closely to the natural usage of language whereby the settings are probable in real-life situations. It implies that the choice of composition themes takes into consideration the socio-cultural orientation of the learners. The communicative language theory underpinning this study advocates that the instructional system is influenced by the use of learning materials (see 1.12). Besides, the theory advances that language learning should be within the social context by allowing learners to engage in everyday activities as they struggle to communicate in the target language (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). A press release by the KICD Director on February 18, 2018, affirms this and I quote:

‘... we don’t take anything for granted, especially when it comes to curriculum and curriculum support materials’

‘... we make all possible efforts to ensure these standards are met in all the books approved for schools’ (Jwan, 2018).

Despite the preceding, the physical presence of these books in classrooms remained in doubt notwithstanding the indication for the use of various titles in the teachers’ schemes of work and lesson plans. There was a limited variety of textbooks, namely; New Primary English (NPE), New Progressive Primary English and Keynote English. Some of the approved composition writing text books were hardly available in schools. Most schools preferred NPE that was approved earliest by KICD, thus suggesting that choice of book titles was based on what got to the market first. A study by Teygong (2018) in Elgeyo Marakwet ascertained that the most common instructional materials available were textbooks and teachers’ reference books. However, Teygong only investigated the availability of instructional materials but did not get to isolating specific book titles and their effectiveness in developing specific concepts as done in

this study. There was a need to establish the contribution of the variety of book titles to enhance competence in composition writing.

Apart from textbooks, Syomwene (2016a), add that ‘real objects’ aid in conceptualising teachers’ explanation of abstract ideas. In addition, the author signifies that pictures are instrumental in eliciting good opportunities in a language. On their part, Jumba, Etyang, and Ondigi (2015) also identified the use of pictures as a resource in composition writing. Classroom observation revealed that materials that guide on composition writing such as textbooks, newspapers, magazines, and storybooks were hardly available, yet they were recorded for use in professional documents. It confirms findings by Kimosop (2015), who reported that 30(66.6%) teachers wrote schemes of work, but the majority 25(55.5%) never referred to them to extract content such as learning materials to use.

A similar finding was reported in Uganda by Malunda, Onen, Musaaazi & Oonyu (2016), who found out that secondary school teachers prepared schemes of work at the beginning of the term but hardly referred to them in selecting the relevant materials to teach. These findings concur with the current study and suggest that teachers documented the use of materials in their schemes of work without necessarily utilising them during the actual teaching.

Teachers interviewed singled out limitations in the availability of specific textbooks that guide on composition writing as directly reported below,

... We use one common coursebook approved by KICD that covers the grammar part and has assignments for essay writing at the end of every unit (Teacher, **Y118C**).

... Pupils’ textbooks are available and issued by learners. However, there are no specific English composition textbooks given to learners by the school (Teacher, **W46C**).

This study argues that though teachers used one integrated coursebook, they were at liberty to select other varieties as supplementary materials. Pupils similarly corroborated teachers' concerns with only one school, **W45C** stating that teachers ask them to buy a specific book for composition writing. Pupils also reported that no other textbooks are brought to class for use as is the case in other subjects. This finding corroborates a study by Cherkut (2011) who reported that resources for teaching composition writing in secondary schools in West Pokot were hardly adequate. This study was more detailed as it presented commonly used textbooks to teachers to ascertain the implications of what was in use in the majority of schools.

On the frequency of selection and use of learning materials, those considered in this study were: the relevant and approved KICD books, pictures of certain objects, variety of materials (newspapers, magazines, storybooks), improvised materials, real objects, supplementary composition books, internet, and learner selected materials. Quantitative data revealed that 173(30.1%) respondents strongly agreed that relevant and recommended books were in use. Out of the 574 teachers who took part, a majority (496) used New Primary English (NPE), 40 teachers used New Progressive Primary English (NPPE), while the minority (26) used Keynote English (KNE). Analysis of quantitative findings revealed that group school performance based on the use of these books in descending order was as follows: NPPE (21.5000), KNE (18.3077) and NPE (18.0482). ANOVA results revealed that there were statistically significant differences in mean scores obtained between the three groups on the choice of textbooks ((F2, 566) = 14.572, p = .000). This indicates that the majority of schools who used NPE also scored lowest in composition writing. Meanwhile, the selection and use of other supplementary books for teaching composition writing were 'strongly agreed' by 126(22.0%) of the respondents.



Qualitative data obtained from documents (schemes of work and lesson plans) fairly corroborated these findings where KICD recommended books were frequently used in schemes of work and lesson plans by 7(24.1%). The choice of supplementary learning materials was 'frequently used' by 5(17.2%) of the teachers. Besides, the use of newspapers, magazines, and storybooks was not evident despite being recorded for use in the professional documents. Learner selected materials were least used, followed by the use of the internet and the use of relevant composition books. This concludes that teachers do not involve learners in classroom activities, yet, the social constructivist theory advances that learning is an active process, which benefits learners when they are participants in the construction of knowledge (Fahmy & Lagowsky, 2011) with the teachers as reflected in the theoretical framework (see **Figure 1.1**).

This finding is partly consistent with a study by Tuimur and Chemwei (2015) who reported that the frequency of use of instructional materials was; textbooks 38(95%), charts 36(90%), newspapers 16(40%), pictures 28(70%), real objects 8(20%) and computers 2(5%) in the teaching of Social Studies. What is unique about the current study is that unlike Tuimur and Chemwei's study, the use of a variety of tools to corroborate what the teachers reported from the questionnaire enhanced the credibility of findings. In addition, learner performance between groups based on the choice of textbooks gave a comparative analysis which is useful for teachers in determining the appropriate choice of learning materials. The next question to ask is, what are the key issues that determine the selection of materials? This is discussed in the next subsection.

### ***5.1.3.2. Issues determining the selection of materials.***

Reichenberg (2014) states that learning materials are selected depending on the content therein. Her study with Swedish teachers revealed that in order of preference, what mattered most to teachers when selecting materials are: the content, readability, and

commercials. She found out that teacher experience reduced their preferences on content, while discussions with colleagues about learning materials increased teacher preference on adherence to the prescribed materials. In selecting learning materials in this study, several issues were addressed. They include relevance, variety, effectiveness, learner involvement, the need for supplementary materials and improvisation.

Quantitative data revealed that over 93.7% of the teachers agreed that they consider relevance during selection, followed by supplementary materials (82.3%). However, only 53.8% agreed that the selected materials effectively enhanced learner competencies in composition writing. The biggest percentage (19.0%) disagreed that they involved learners. Pupils corroborated this finding and stated that their role was limited to occasionally buying books asked by the teachers. The study had anticipated learners to be involved in the collection of materials such as newspapers and magazines for use but did not happen. This finding suggests that learners do not get roles to play in the collection of learning materials, yet teacher cognition tenets advocate for learner participation. This would promote learner interest in composition writing, leading to enhanced competency.

Najeeb (2013) contends that one of the basic principles that promote language learning is learner involvement. Najeeb adds that when learners take responsibility for their learning, it helps them understand the purpose of their learning and participate in the executing of classroom activities. The onus is, therefore, on the part of teachers to assign learner tasks, which was hardly done in this study.

On relevance, variety and effectiveness of materials, qualitative data revealed that the majority of teachers selected books based on those approved earliest by KICD. There

was no evidence of effort made to interrogate the content, and teachers used books, as long as they were approved. Few schools, for instance, **Z190A** hinted on the preference of a specific title but stuck to the school tradition. A study by Adeyemi (2012) in Botswana recommended that for students to improve in writing instruction, schools must be better equipped with relevant textbooks and other materials. This study contends that teachers should be flexible to change and adapt Dewey's strategy on reflective teaching, who described five steps to follow: 1) identify the conflict, 2) make interpretations and inferences, 3) make an analysis of options, 4) make decisions, and 5) arrive at solutions and a plan of action.

Yilmaz and Kilicoglu (2013) clarify that even though change may be brought for positive reasons such as remaining competitive, some members of institutions often react and respond negatively. These authors elucidate further that:

One of the typical responses towards change in school organisations is resistance and many of the problems related to change concern the forces resisting it while maintaining the equilibrium in schools. The major issues concerning resistance to change are driving forces for organisational change, causes of resistance to change and ways of reducing resistance (p.14).

This study suggests that institutions should develop strategies for identifying and managing change when due. This will assist schools in selecting learning materials that conform to learner needs and interests, rather than maintaining a retrogressive tradition.

In concluding this section, learning materials had no statistically significant influence in predicting learner competencies in composition writing ( $\beta = -.004$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). This finding could be attributed to a lack of selection, and the use of textbooks and supplementary books specific to composition writing since one integrated coursebook was in use for teaching all skills in English language.

The uniqueness of this study is that while a majority of the studies reviewed dwelled on the adequacy of teaching and learning materials in schools, the main focus of the current study was on determining the variety, issues, and frequency of available materials. This helped to isolate and concretise the implications of specific learning materials to composition writing. The assessment procedure is discussed next.

#### **5.1.4 Assessment procedures**

Cauley and Mcmillan (2010) distinguish between formative and summative assessment: The former is used to gather evidence of student learning which is then used to modify instruction in response to feedback. For the latter, evidence only records the current student achievement. An assessment has also been described as a bridge between teaching and learning (William, 2013). In this study, the term 'assessment' is considered as formative and adopts the definition of Angelo & Cross (2012). According to Angelo & Cross, assessment is careful monitoring of pupils' writing by teachers to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses, give detailed feedback to reinforce newly learned skills, and correct recurring problems in composition writing.

One of the tenets of social constructivist theory is that language is a tool for assessment. According to this theory, the teacher's role is to consider the nature of the learner, nature of the learning process, and learner motivation. It then calls for teachers to select strategies that are effective in developing learner competencies. Cauley and McMillan (2010) contend that students benefit more through formative assessment. The authors express four reasons:

Frequent and ongoing assessment allows both for fine-tuning of instruction and student focus on progress; ii) Immediate assessment helps ensure meaningful feedback; iii) Specific, rather than global, assessments allow students to see concretely how they can improve; and iv) Formative assessment is consistent with recent constructivist theories of learning and motivation (p.2)

In this section, two sub-themes that came out of the study were the assessment strategies used, and issues determining teachers' use of the assessment procedure. These are discussed below as sub-topics beginning with assessment strategies that teachers use in composition writing.

#### ***5.1.4.1. Assessment strategies used by teachers.***

In this study, the assessment strategies that enhance learner competencies in composition writing investigated were: a consideration of syllabus and lesson objectives in setting composition tests, learner abilities and interests when giving assignments, and targeting a variety of composition writing skills. Others were writing weekly tests, prompt feedback to learners' composition exercises, discussing feedback with learners after marking, and learner involvement in peer assessment.

Quantitative data revealed that giving of written tests weekly scored the highest mean (7.3990), followed by the use of assessments to target a variety of composition skills (7.0645). Consideration of the syllabus and lesson objectives (6.7666) was the lowest-rated by teachers. Therefore, the majority of teachers do not focus on crucial syllabus guidance when assessing learners' composition exercises. A further analysis of variance (ANOVA) revealed that there were statistically significant differences in the scoring of the three teachers' categories based on all the six statements at alpha  $p = 0.050$ . Data showed that the extent at which teachers considered the assessment procedures similarly influenced learner competencies in composition writing. Qualitative data obtained are summarised in **Table 5.1** on the next page.

**Table 5.1: Assessment strategies used**

i.	Composition exercises were done majorly during monthly examinations.
ii.	Teachers were not making follow-up by evaluating their lessons' successes.
iii.	Teachers returned marked books to learners on average, in 3 to 4 days.
iv.	Teachers did not re-check pupils' exercises to ascertain making of corrections.
v.	Single drafts composition writing was common practice.
vi.	Teachers did not tract individual learner performances.
vii.	Marking was done through error identification by underlining problem areas.
viii.	Marking stressed on the correct use of tenses and appropriate formats.
ix.	Assessment limited to mechanics skills of writing and handwriting.
x.	Peer assessment strategy was not used by teachers.
xi.	Teacher feedback was not exhaustive to learners.

From the above summary, the study can conclusively state that due to the absence of teachers' self-evaluation, the concept of reflective teaching was not observed (Richards & Farrell, 2011). Teachers are also expected to practice both reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action (Argyris & Schon, 1978) to evaluate their lesson effectiveness which in turn reflects on learner performances. Also, by not making a follow-up on the correction of exercises, teachers only concerned themselves with the end product but not the process (Mourssi, 2013). Mourssi indicates that product writing leads to poor writers.

The practice of single drafting used in this study relates to findings made by Westbrook et al. (2013). Specifically, Westbrook et al. established that high stake summative assessment compelled teachers to rush towards covering the curriculum by employing teacher-directed methods, considered quicker to implement. It implies that teachers in this study did not create time to re-look into corrected learner exercises. According to the social constructivist theory, learning is both contextual and an active process (Ultanir, 2012). Therefore, through the adoption of process writing, which leads to repeated exposure to the same writing, learners build on prior knowledge and consequently improve their writing competencies.

Similarly, since marking was in principle on error identification, learners did not have the impetus to write compositions to improve their skills. In communicative language teaching, toleration of errors is done to retain learner interests while emphasising on expressiveness. The teachers return later to address the errors with accuracy-based exercises (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). Likewise, teacher cognition anticipates teachers to uphold learner interests based on the maxims such as encouragement, conformity, and empowerment brought into language teaching (Borg, 2005; Kubanyiova, 2015).

The results obtained from this study's questionnaire are comparable to some studies made by Melzer (2009) who underscored the critical role of written assignments, which reveal that classroom artefacts are a rich source of information about the rhetorical contexts of writing across the curriculum. In Kenya, Nthiga (2010) recommended that there is a dire need for teachers to prepare keenly and be prompt in giving feedback to learners' composition writing exercises. Kimanzi, Bwire, and Miima (2019) expounded that teacher feedback helps students gain benefits from continuous writing as they keep improving on their drafts. The authors added that writing is the most challenging task for ESL learners that require not only mastery of grammar rules but also other writing conventions. Therefore, student learning (and competency) is heavily dependent upon teacher feedback strategies employed.

Wali (2017) adds that students' motivation to keep improving their drafts depends on teachers' ability to encourage them through appropriate feedback. The same is alluded to by Syomwene (2016a), who postulates that learner motivation is associated with teaching skills and is central to teaching effectiveness. She adds that motivation is the backbone, particularly in language classrooms. Another remarkable point was made by

Srichanyachon (2012), on teacher written feedback for L2 learners' writing development. The author noted the impact and importance of feedback and how it is presented and made the following statement:

... In order to give effective written feedback, teachers should consider their students' needs for error correction and classroom realities. No matter what method is used, it is important for teachers in ESL and EFL settings to give students a crystal-clear explanation. Also, teachers should include comments of praise and encouragement in their written feedback because positive feedback can boost student motivation to improve their writing skills (p.7)

In the current study, positive feedback was hardly noticeable. Consequently, teachers' use of error identification is expected, as depicted by some empirical studies. A study by Nthiga (2010) reported that teachers heavily relied on error feedback, with most comments dwelling on grammar and mechanics aspects. Besides, there was frequent inadequate feedback from teachers 65(36.1%) reported by Nyasimi (2014). Cherkut (2011) also reported that remedial work given by teachers is not done by pupils for lack of follow up. Findings in this study revealed that the most common identification of mistakes was underlining without indicating the error made.

Despite teachers reporting that they involved learners in peer assessment, pupils gave contrary results. They were emphatic that they never correct one another's work in composition writing lessons. This is affirmed by one pupil who reported,

...we assist one another only if a person needs help. This only happens frequently for Insha writing (FGD, **W53C**).

Unlike the results of the teachers' interview in this study, Nthiga (2010) reported that teachers concentrated on feedback on learners' weaknesses instead of their strong points. Also, like the current study, she highlighted that feedback was made generally to all learners without consideration of individual needs and differences. Dhillon & Wanjiru (2014), in Okari (2016), argued that a teacher's role in marking is to view



himself or herself as having an opportunity to help the child progress rather than sit in judgment. The communicative language theory, as stated before, advocates for the tolerance of errors to avoid inhibiting learning.

This study promotes the use of multiple drafting (Lee, 2014) to develop specific competencies in composition writing as advocated for in CBLT which advances the use of criterion-based assessment to test learner outcomes (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). This is a feature in process writing where learners write many drafts of the same essays from corrections made by the teacher. The purpose is to address errors identified in successive drafts and thereby eliminate them. In the absence of these, learner performance in composition writing remains low as reported by Kiarie (2016) that over 60% of learners in class seven were below average in composition writing tests. After this discussion on the strategies used, next is on issues that determine most, the teachers' use of the assessment procedure.

#### ***5.1.4.2 Issues determining the use of the assessment procedure***

The importance of the assessment procedure in any curriculum is due to the implication it has on set standards (Steiner, 2012). Steiner expounds that both teachers and learners have standards to achieve as prescribed by the specific curriculum and syllabi. For learners, there are clear expectations on the competencies that they need to accomplish at given levels. As discussed earlier, the two primary forms of assessment serve different purposes. Richards and Rodgers (2014), however, raises limitations of assessment and argue that not all skills may be rated in an assessment as follows:

... assessment of students is usually based on norm referencing, that is, students will be graded on a single scale with the expectation either that they are spread across a wide range of scores or that they conform to a pre-set distribution. A student receives a set of marks for his or her performance relative to other students, from which it is very difficult to make any form of judgment about the specific knowledge or skills a student has acquired (p.144)

The authors, thus, advocate for a criterion-based assessment (supported in CBLT) where students are rated according to what they can do with language based on specific competencies. In this study, specific composition writing competencies were reviewed in chapter two (see 2.2.4) whereas the scores on learner competencies were based on general marks awarded by teachers (see **Table 4.3**). With this background, issues raised by teachers interviewed on what determines the use of the assessment procedure presented in subsection 4.5.4.2 were: teacher training, teaching experience, school culture, the influence of textbooks, and the frequency of assessment.

Training of teachers during pre-service and CTPD in composition writing was reported by teachers interviewed as inadequate. Teachers indicated that they graduated from Teacher Training Colleges without being fully equipped to teach composition writing (Teacher, **Z190A**). Samson and Collins (2012), likewise explicate that teachers in English language learning (ELL) classrooms in the United States of America have not been sufficiently trained. Yet, they are held accountable for grades attained by learners.

They state that:

... Many teachers of ELLs are increasingly concerned about being held accountable for their students' progress as measured by standardised tests. Clearly, teachers of ELL students need the appropriate training to be able to meet their students' language and learning needs and to facilitate academic growth, yet most teachers lack this training.... At the various stages of teacher preparation, certification, and evaluation, there is insufficient information on what teachers should know about teaching ELL (p.20).

The study, however, associated the large class sizes as determinants to the lack of insufficient training and as determinants of assessment used by teachers. They argued that teachers might not be able to offer support to learners effectively. It was recommended that the teacher training programs need to be aligned to the school districts who eventually hire the graduates to relate the training to learner needs.

Therefore, as stated earlier, teacher experience, with some acquired through training, shapes their cognition and practice (Hung, 2012) that they ‘carry along’ to the English language classroom.

On the issue of textbooks, teachers in this study noted that they conduct learner assessment based on the content in the course books (Teacher, **V31A**). Use of a variety of books was reported to lead to better learner performance (Teacher, **X102C**). As established in this study, some textbooks led to a better impact on learner competencies. Notably, the question of the quality of books is not a preserve of Kenyan schools. Other studies in England have raised concerns that there has not been enough attention to track the quality of books in use, and for assessment. Oates (2014) raised the following:

... We may take the role of existing learning materials and textbooks for granted, but we have not kept an eye on our ‘direction of travel’. We’ve missed the fact that we have picked up some bad habits, and failed to notice the emergence, in other nations, of extremely well-theorised, well-designed, and carefully-implemented textbooks. We’ve also missed the fact that high-quality textbooks support both teachers and pupils (p.4).

Another remarkable finding was on the influence that school culture, routine and traditions have in determining the assessment procedure. The main elements that came out include language policy, a system of learner assessment, motivation, teacher allocation to classes, and the school vision. Hongbootri and Keawkhong (2014) underscore the influence of school culture on all stakeholders. They affirm that school cultures are unique, distinctive, and influential, having the capacity to shape and re-shape what people in a community think, do and even feel (Hongboontri & Chaokongjakra, 2011; Jurasaitė-Harbinson & Rex, 2010; Kleinsasser, 2013).

The implication of school culture in this study was clearly demonstrated by the stand taken on the choice of textbooks from a variety (where majority-maintained titles approved earlier by KICD) without seeing a need for dynamism. Other situations, to

name but one, included allocating inexperienced teachers to classes 5, 6, and 7 to teach English subject (Teacher, **Z190A**) and ostensibly allocate the experienced ones to the candidate classes. Therefore, from the preceding, the choices schools make on learner assessment strategies are determined from within by their set and established traditions, cultures, and routines.

With regard to the frequency of use of assessment, composition writing exercises were done on average fortnightly up to once a month (Teacher, **W53C**; FGD, **W46C**). Feedback from teachers was reported to be between three days to one week. There was, however, no uniformity among schools on these trends.

On peer assessment, learners in school **W53C** were excited that peer assessment was used in their Kiswahili Insha lessons, but not in composition writing. Overall, the frequency of using peer assessment was not noticeable, yet, social constructivist theory advances that learning is enhanced as a social activity (Bishaw & Ezigiabher, 2013; Smagorinsky, 2013). The promotion of interaction as a means and ultimate goal of learning are also parts of the tenets of communicative language theory (Desai, 2015; Richards & Rodgers, 2001) and should be encouraged.

A study by Nyang'au (2016) in Manga Sub County, Kenya also reported that the frequency of use of peer assessment was adopted by teachers sometimes 2(20%), rarely 1(10%) and never 7(70%). Therefore, the study established that majority did not apply peer assessment as was established in the current study. In the conclusion of this section, and based on the discussion above, the assessment had no statistically significant influence in predicting learner competencies in English composition writing ( $\beta = -.038, p > 0.05$ ).

This study has made a contribution unique from those reviewed in this section. It has not only addressed strategies used by teachers in learner assessment in composition writing but also raised other pertinent issues determining their use. The study has established that among key issues that influence the assessment procedure include: teacher training, choice of textbooks, peer assessment, school culture and traditions. The next section presented how teachers develop the specific learner competencies in composition writing which are cross-cutting all the pedagogical strategies.

#### **5.1.5 Developing learner competencies in EL composition writing**

In Kenya, there are specific composition writing competencies that learners are expected to acquire at different levels. These are the formulation of ideas (prewriting organisation, note-taking and character development skills); story organisation (a type of writing, thematic choice and development, sequencing, clear main idea, focus clear to the reader); language skills (suited to the reader, suited to the story, appropriate mood, emphasis, personal style, uses of descriptive language); mechanics skills (strategies for spelling, punctuation, paragraphs, dialogue); and presentation and handwriting skills (formation, shape and size, slant and spacing, aesthetics, speed) (KICD, 2017a; KNEC 2018; MOE, 2012b).

In this study, quantitative findings revealed that presentation and handwriting skills were very often used by 164(28.6%) teachers, followed by writing mechanics skills 162(28.2%). It concurs with a study by Medwell and Wray (2014), who asserts that handwriting automaticity is crucial for composition writing success. The study reckoned that there is a minimum threshold automaticity performance level, below which learners' competence in composition writing might be at risk. A study by Alfaki (2015) in Sudan revealed that university students still have challenges in mechanics

skills of writing and recommended revision of their work by reading aloud and frequent use of dictionaries.

On language skills development, the literature reviewed revealed the importance of style, which influences how language is presented, 'turned out', and 'dressed' (Ahmed, 2010). This enables pupils to ensure that written texts are robust, purposeful, and appropriate to the target audience (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 2013). Data reflected in this study that spelling, punctuation, paragraphing, and dialogue received the most significant attention by teachers.

However, despite story organisation being one of the most critical aspects to propel effective written communication (Babae, 2015), the emphasis was laid as stated above on the prewriting organisation and note-taking. It concurs with a study by Nyasimi (2014) who established that planning or organising ideas before writing was done most frequently by 66(36.7%) respondents. Nthiga (2010) also established that 50% of learners planned their drafts before writing activities by doing outlines in written form. Nthiga suggested that learners needed further training on prewriting and revising activities. Besides, the study called for a need to improve classroom practices, activities, and resources concerning composition writing.

A study by Gusmuliana and Firti (2016), found that students in Indonesian schools were unable to employ useful grammatical features and vocabulary to express ideas in narrative paragraphs. Besides, Ghabool, Edwina, Mariandass, and Kashef (2012) similarly noted that Malaysian ESL students have significant problems in writing tasks, especially in language use and punctuation. From the findings, as in the current study, most students got confused in using question marks, colon, semicolon, apostrophe, and commas when writing compositions. It indicates that handling of composition writing

is a challenge in many countries. A summary of qualitative data obtained from the current study established a myriad of challenges encountered by learners. These are summarised in **Table 5.2** below.

**Table 5.2: Learner challenges in composition writing**

i.	Lack of creativity
ii.	Inability to write short sentences
iii.	Failure to build a story that matches with the title
iv.	Spelling mistakes e.g. writing of letter 'I' in small letters
v.	The shaping of letters for good handwriting
vi.	Running short of words to use when writing a story
vii.	Little knowledge on the correct use of punctuation marks
viii.	Mixing of letters
ix.	Mistakes in the use of tenses and spelling
x.	Writing coherent sentences in a paragraph
xi.	Lack of enough time, leading to a rush and results to making lots of mistakes
xii.	A lack of understanding of what is expected of pupils to write
xiii.	Continuing to develop a story from the beginning of a sentence
xiv.	Developing the main body of a story
xv.	Lack of creativity due to a lack of exposure to many books.
xvi.	Filling in one and a half pages that teachers demand.

From the summary, learners were categorical that the most challenging area in composition writing was developing a story from a given sentence, either beginning or ending a story, “because you may end up writing something different from what is expected” (FGD, **W45C**). Unfortunately, this is the trend taken by KNEC examiner as per the illustrations given in Chapter One (see 1.2.4). This is an indication that there is a disconnect in the curriculum since the strategies used by teachers have not yielded the desired outcomes in composition writing. A study by Nyasimi (2014) equally highlighted some of the student challenges in essay writing to include; content mastery 8(80%), grammar 7(70%), vocabulary and problems in cohesion and coherence 6(60%), incorrect spelling and illogical sequencing of ideas 6(60%).

Comparatively, data from teachers' interviews revealed that they do not give priority to teaching composition writing. Teachers cited heavy workload and a lack of subject specialisation as possible contributions to the low performance. They added that teaching of composition writing is challenging and is more involving than teaching other subjects. As indicated previously, they argued that the syllabus does not attach much emphasis to composition writing. Further, more data revealed that the majority of teachers handling English subject in classes 5, 6, and 7 were the newly trained or newly employed teachers. On the contrary, reflective teaching demands of teachers to be life-long learners whose teaching approaches need to keep evolving (Richards & Farrell, 2011). The theory contends that a language teacher should consistently observe learner reactions, responds on their behaviours, reflect on their result, adapt or modify the chosen theory.

This study argues that the cited teacher challenges could be as a result of not utilising the strategies of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action explicated by Argyris and Schon (1978). Additionally, communicative language teaching advances that both teacher and learner roles and behaviours are essential to make learning effective (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

In concluding this section, this study argues that teachers should practice the tenets of reflective teaching and review their beliefs on composition writing since their beliefs and perceptions affect their practice (Borg, 2015). Their cognition also shapes their instructional decisions in the teaching of writing skills (Nishimuro & Borg, 2013). Likewise, this study advocates for the use of CBLT in composition writing to help teachers to single out situations where learners have specific needs, then apply the determined precise skills. That should be able to make teachers plan lessons that are



effective and encourage learners to develop an interest in composition writing. Next, therefore, is a summary of the conclusions of the study.

## **5.2 Conclusions**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the implications of pedagogical strategies on upper primary learners' English Language Composition Writing competencies in Bomet County in Kenya. The study targeted upper primary learners in classes 5, 6 and 7 in public schools. This study was occasioned by an outcry from KNEC that communicative competence in writing by learners was lacking and deteriorating yearly (KNEC, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018). Reports revealed that learners are unable to express themselves logically, fluently, and coherently in writing in English language. Yet, communicative competence in writing is a crucial aspect of language development, used in wider international communities, and for academic success among students at every level of the education system (Crystal, 2010; Mertens, 2014; Ong'ondo, 2017b; Opoola & Fatiloro, 2014).

From the literature reviewed, this study was situated within the discipline of English language teaching (ELT) as it focused on the teaching of English as a second language which highlighted the relationships between teacher knowledge and skills and learner language competencies (Freeman, 2016; Freeman, Garcia, Katz, & Burns, 2015). Further, writing remains the most complex skill to grasp (Maolida & Mustika, 2018) due to the cognitive demands it has on the writer (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 2013). Empirical studies in composition writing in Kenya have focused on secondary school level whose findings have reported similar concerns of learner incompetence (Cherkut, 2011). Therefore, the choice to conduct the study in the primary school setup was to hopefully provide data that would alleviate these concerns before they escalate to higher educational levels and to also add to existing knowledge.

Towards this desire, this study adopted a mixed-methods approach to allow collection of rich data and freedom to choose methods, techniques, and procedures of research that best met the current needs and purposes (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Makombe, 2017; Johnson & Christensen, 2014). The study was thus inclined to the pragmatist's philosophical orientation. The sequential explanatory mixed-method design was adopted for data collection, interpretation, and analysis. Specifically, the time-oriented criterion of QUAN → qual design was adopted to explain quantitative data using emergent themes from qualitative data (Johnson & Christensen, 2014; Creswell, 2014).

In this study, teachers' and learners' attributes, as reflected in the conceptual framework, affected pedagogy and, by extension, learner competencies. For instance, teachers avoided using poems to teach composition writing. Besides, a belief (based on their cognition) by a majority of teachers that composition writing is difficult and too involving makes experienced teachers try to evade teaching the subject. Likewise, teachers still hold the notion of being instructors and not facilitators (Richards & Rodgers, 2014), hence do not involve learners in the selection of materials and peer assessment. Learners' social backgrounds, coming from one ethnic community, motivated teachers at times to use mother-tongue to explain certain concepts albeit being acceptable in CLT, such use of MT (more so in teaching composition writing) remains debatable.

To a large extent, this study achieved its core objectives of establishing the implications of the four pedagogical strategies on learner competencies in composition writing. First, it revealed that teacher planning has the greatest influence and statistical significance in contributing to learner competencies in composition writing ( $B = -.585, p < 0.05$ ). However, teacher preparation of schemes of work and lesson plans, though done frequently and using KICD approved syllabus and textbooks, is basically for

administrative purposes since they are hardly referred to during lessons. This study shows that teacher preparation of professional documents does not serve the expected instructional purposes and should be looked into by the stakeholders.

Most teachers rely on the expository technique and seem to assume that more talk means being productive. However, literature revealed that learner involvement by use of techniques such as pair work, group work, task-based teaching, and process-oriented writing is more effective (Bishaw & Ezigiabher, 2013; Maryslessor, Barasa & Omulando, 2014; Nthiga, 2010; Ong'ondo, 2017c; Smagorinsky, 2013). The study findings also suggest that heavy workload, limited time, shortage of appropriate reference books, teacher cognition, and lack of teacher commitment affects teacher preparation and efficacy in developing learner competencies in composition writing.

Another aspect was that teachers mainly focused on the development of mechanics' skills such as spelling, punctuation, and paragraphing at the expense of other writing competency skills. Additionally, teachers do not utilise pictures, newspapers, and magazines during composition writing lessons, yet these are useful (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Finally, during learner assessment, teachers do not target a variety of competencies but confine themselves to handwriting, checking for spelling and tenses, leaving out prewriting, character development, appropriate mood, personal style, creativity, and story relevance. Based on the use of codes and underlining, these assessments done between three to four-week intervals were basically on error identification. These have not been useful to learners who are struggling academically.

From the preceding, this thesis has unveiled several lessons learnt. The study has revealed that teachers should implement the main tenets of communicative language teaching, competency-based language teaching, and the social constructivist theory if

learners are to attain communicative competence in composition writing. Therefore, first, teachers should make the preparation of professional documents that are purposefully geared towards utilisation during instruction and not to meet administrative needs. They should also play the role of facilitators and not instructors in the learning process (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Secondly, there is a need to encourage the use of target language as a vehicle for communication in the classroom. Similarly, using the language outside the classroom for social interactions by learners is likely to consolidate the skills acquired in class (Desai, 2015; Ong'ondo, 2017b). Therefore, the use of mother-tongue should be limited in upper primary classes.

Third, teachers should encourage cooperative relationships between themselves and pupils, and among pupils. This will cultivate the use of collaborative techniques that enhances brainstorming (Otunga et al. 2011) and the sharing of ideas to enrich individual writing (Adera, Kochung, Adoyo, & Matu, 2016). The teacher should only serve as a guide and continually address learner needs and interests (Fahmy & Lagowsky, 2011).

Fourth, there is a need for teachers to select a variety of teaching and learning materials that equitably integrate all language skills. Textbooks, specifically, serve as a resource only when the content does not impede learning (Sidik, 2018). Findings in this study revealed that composition writing content in textbooks in use is minimal (4.5.3.2). Finally, on the teachers' part, the use of process writing through a multi-drafting approach that has been found effective should be adopted for learner instruction and assessment (Clark & Moss, 2011; Faraj, 2015). In the process, the concept of tolerating

errors made by pupils advanced in CLT and focusing on developing expressiveness need to be emphasised in enhancing learner competencies in composition writing.

Other government agencies likewise have a role to play. There is a need for KICD to re-look into the content and methodology on composition writing in the primary English syllabus and textbooks to mitigate on the continued poor performance (KNEC, 2018, 2017, 2016, 2015). The Teachers Service Commission also need to prioritise continuous teacher professional development (CTPD) training on composition writing methodology reported in this study as insufficient (see 5.1.4.2). Next is a final statement concerning this thesis.

### **5.3 Thesis Statement**

This study investigated the implications of four pedagogical strategies on upper primary learners' English Language Composition Writing competencies in Bomet County in Kenya. The study has revealed that teacher planning, which contributed the most in predicting the outcome has the greatest implication on English language competencies in composition writing of upper public primary school learners; followed by assessment procedure; instructional techniques; and learning materials in that order. The overall thesis of this study is therefore that Planning is a critical foundational strategy for enhancing learners' English Language Composition Writing (ELCW); upon which other strategies need to be anchored. This implies the need for that considerable capacity building of teacher competencies in Planning that should encompass (planning for) infusion of the other strategies in ELCW. Consequently, this study has made some contributions which are highlighted next.

### **5.4 Contributions of the Study**

Having reviewed literature and analysed data within this research context, the findings of this study contribute to knowledge in English Language Teaching (ELT) in several

ways. Majority of the contributions have been alluded to in the discussion section, and therefore, this section presents a summary of key highlights as itemised below:

- i) **New Findings:** Planning has emerged as a key strategy in ELT especially in developing learner competencies in composition writing, which implies in turn that all other strategies such as instructional techniques, use of learning materials, and assessment procedures are ineffective where planning has not been effectively grounded (Danielson, 2013; Tomlinson, 2014). In addition, it emerged that teachers of English graduating out of the two-year P1 pre-service teacher training course do not depict competency in content and methodology to develop learner competencies in composition writing effectively. Majority of newly employed teachers are assigned lessons in upper middle classes (4, 5, and 6) to ostensibly ‘gain experience’ and be scaffolded by the experienced teachers. As a consequence, effective learning is thereby compromised at this level where key concepts are introduced. To a large extent, teachers still hold the notion of being instructors rather than facilitators and use expository techniques in all contexts.
- ii) **Study context:** The selected research topic has extended the scope of English Language Teaching (ELT) research in Africa, and specifically in Kenya, especially in ELT at the primary school level that has comparatively attracted less research in strategies used on learner competencies in composition writing. A search conducted in published online journals and the university libraries accessed on the subject established that most studies have focused on secondary schools and other language skills (Cherkut, 2011; Kazungu, 2018; Kiarie, 2016). Yet, composition writing is introduced in the upper primary curriculum

in class five. The few available studies conducted in the primary section in Kenya focused on only one class.

- iii) **Literature:** The study contributed to a repertoire of literature review in ELT generally and on writing skills in particular, and specifically, composition writing. Eight key competencies in composition writing (see 2.2.4) were demonstrated as critical in developing learner competencies. Additionally, evidence of previous interventions (Barasa, 2016; Cherkut, 2011; Gardner, 2011; Gumpo, 2018; Kemboi, Andiemba & Mbone, 2014; Mugure, 2012; Silby, 2013) signalled that the learner outcomes in composition writing are yet to be achieved. It revealed that there is minimal composition writing content and unclear methodology in the KIE 2002 integrated English language syllabus and the KICD approved textbooks. This research is therefore important in signalling a review of the 18-year-old syllabus as at the time of the study.
- iv) **Methodological contribution:** This study has extended the methodological scope in ELT and specifically in composition writing by employing the mixed-methods approach uniquely. For instance, scores obtained from previous evaluation tests results in composition writing that was done ‘outside’ a research context was adopted and used as a dependent variable in the first quantitative phase. This, therefore, secured authentic data that revealed the true status of learner competency, unlike administering a test which risks being influenced by a Hawthorne effect. Most studies in the West currently use a qualitative approach more prominently while those in Africa/Kenya use a quantitative approach.

In this study, the mixed approach was used for triangulation as a key feature and gave freedom to engage as many tools as possible for data collection and for strengthening trustworthiness (Obuya & Ong'ondo, 2020). Therefore, the use of the explanatory sequential design aided in using qualitative data to explain quantitative data collected from questionnaires and test results. This gave in-depth into both databases. Therefore, any inaccuracies of data obtained from teachers' questionnaires and professional documents (schemes of work and lesson plans) were resolved by other data generation tools. Further, this study has contributed to Knowledge that pupils' exercise books provide authentic and reliable data on learner competencies and are more useful in making determinations compared to questionnaires. Next are the recommendations based on the scope of the study.

### 5.5 Recommendations

From the study findings and conclusions, pedagogical strategies have implications on learner competencies in composition writing. The following recommendations could be implemented to improve learners' communicative competence:

- i) **Professional documents:** Teachers of English should immediately allocate more composition writing lessons every week and prepare lesson notes frequently. They should then be consistent in lesson planning and not deviate from what is planned for during actual teaching. Data from documents revealed that lesson planning was inconsistent, while lesson observation reflected persistent deviation from the content in lesson plans. The workload for teachers of English to give more attention to lesson preparation in readiness for teaching, marking, and providing feedback to learners in composition writing, was reported to be quite tasking.



- ii) **Continuous teacher professional development:** TSC should organise training of practising teachers of English at sub zonal levels on how to address low learner competencies in composition writing. Those reported in this study include lack of creativity, paragraphing; the building of a story; and lousy handwriting. They should be in-serviced further to adopt strategies that are not teacher-centred, such as the use of collaborative techniques, learner participation, problem-based teaching, experiential technique, effective use of target language, and promoting the use of poems.
- iii) **Materials review:** KICD should immediately review the Primary English language syllabus on content and methodology in the approved textbooks and align to the desired competencies in composition writing. In addition, through consultation with teachers of English, KICD should develop content and approve more supplementary books that address these learner competency skills that should also align to KNEC expectations. There were minimal specific books in use, as reported by teachers, which focus on the desired composition writing competencies.
- iv) **Supervision of assessment:** Ministry of Education, through the County Education field officers should compel teachers to track individual learner performance. Teachers in this study failed to maintain pupils' progress records that aid in follow-up and meaningful feedback. The supervision should encompass the need for teachers to increase the frequency of giving and marking of composition exercises weekly. In addition, teachers should; give positive comments as they perform error identification, tolerate errors made by learners, allow pupils to critique one another's work, and engage the use of a multi-drafting process approach to develop

learner competencies in composition writing. Next, are suggestions for further study.

### 5.6 Suggestions for Further Study

Due to this study's scope, there are critical issues that require further interrogation in a bid to scale up learner competencies in English language composition writing at the upper primary level. The upper primary school is the stage where a firm foundation is laid for adequate communicative competence and towards furthering academic, professional, and career advancement. Given this, the following should be considered for further research.

- i) **Non-instructional contexts:** The study established that the obtained R Square was .324, which means that only about 32% of the variance is explained by the model. Therefore, to increase robustness, different contexts (predictor variables) that could contribute towards learner competencies in composition writing, such as supervision, staff morale and motivation, attitude, and school culture, could be explored within and without the study area.
- ii) **Sampling contexts:** This study conducted the investigation in low performing public primary schools in Bomet County with similar conditions to the majority of public schools in Kenya. Further studies should focus on high performing public and private schools in KCPE to establish working systems that facilitate such performance for possible replication of findings to low performing public schools.
- iii) **Methodological contexts:** This study employed a sequential mixed-method design for data collection and analysis. The use of this design meant visiting the same schools for more than once during the two phases. Such repeated visits occasionally created concerns in schools such as interruption of the school

routine, which led to a tendency of reluctance on availability in a few situations and extension to late hours. Due to time constraints, future studies could use convergent parallel mixed methods design to collect data at almost the same visit. The summary concludes this chapter of discussion, conclusions and recommendations.

### **5.7 Summary**

This chapter has presented a discussion of findings, made conclusions, presented the thesis statement, contributions of this study, gave recommendations and suggestions for further study. The reference section follows next, whereas **Table 5.3** on the next page presents a summary of key issues arising from this chapter.

**Table 5.3: Key Issues Arising from Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations**

<p><b>Discussion</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. <b>Planning:</b> Teacher planning has the greatest influence and statistical significance in contributing to learner competencies in composition writing (<math>B = -.585, p &lt; 0.05</math>). However, teacher preparation of schemes of work and lesson plans, though done frequently and using KICD approved syllabus and textbooks, is mainly considered by teachers as an administrative procedure; therefore, not achieving its full potential in enhancing upper primary learners' ELCW.</li> <li>ii. <b>Instructional techniques:</b> Expository techniques were dominant while questioning and use of poems were least used in composition writing. This contradicts the findings of previous studies.</li> <li>iii. <b>Learning materials:</b> There were a limited variety of integrated textbooks in use. The most preferred was New Primary English that got to the market earliest. Approved composition textbooks were hardly available in schools. A need to establish the contribution of textbooks in use to composition writing competence was raised.</li> <li>iv. <b>Assessment:</b> Marking was mainly for error identification and limited to mechanics skills and handwriting competencies, thus not consistent with guidelines by Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011). Also, syllabus guidance did not inform assessment which was mainly product-oriented.</li> </ol> <p><b>Conclusions</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Most empirical studies in composition writing focused on the secondary school level and reported similar learner incompetence that this study addressed</li> <li>ii. Some unproductive teacher attributes identified were: acting as instructors and not facilitators, use of mother tongue in class, and lack of learner involvement.</li> <li>iii. Teacher planning made the strongest contribution to learner competencies in composition writing (<math>B = -.585, p &lt; 0.05</math>) though preparation of professional documents was done by teachers mainly for administrative purposes.</li> <li>iv. There is a need to use the target language in and out of class to consolidate the acquired skills as advocated by Desai (2015) and Ong'ondo (2017b).</li> <li>v. Teachers to focus on the choice of learning materials to mitigate on the minimal composition content in the integrated coursebooks</li> <li>vi. Eight key strategies contribute to learner competencies in composition writing.</li> <li>vii. Data from pupils' books are more authentic compared to teachers' questionnaires.</li> </ol> <p><b>viii. Recommendations</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. KICD should review composition writing content and methodology in the upper primary English syllabus and the approved textbooks</li> <li>ii. TSC to conduct frequent CTPD to address the low learner competencies in composition writing in upper primary classes.</li> <li>iii. MOE, at County level, should supervise learner assessment of composition writing by teachers to adopt effective strategies like multi-drafting.</li> <li>iv. Teachers to allocate more weekly lessons in composition writing.</li> </ol>
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**APPENDIX A: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION**

**MOI UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM INSTRUCTIONAL MEDIA  
P.O. BOX 3900  
ELDORET.**

**THRO'  
THE COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION  
BOMET COUNTY  
P.O. BOX 3 -20400  
BOMET**

Dear Sir,

**RE: IMPLICATION OF PEDAGOGICAL STRATEGIES ON UPPER  
PRIMARY SCHOOL LEARNERS' COMPETENCIES IN ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE COMPOSITION WRITING, IN BOMET COUNTY KENYA**

I am a post graduate student of Moi University pursuing a Doctor of Philosophy degree in English Language Education. I am conducting a study on the above stated topic in the Bomet County- Kenya.

I hereby kindly request you to fill the questionnaire items as honestly as possible and to the best of your knowledge. The responses shall be absolutely confidential and anonymous given that no name shall be required from the respondents.

Thank you in advance.

Yours sincerely

Kurgatt Charles Kimutai

## APPENDIX B: TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Welcome and thank you for sparing time to fill this questionnaire. I am undertaking a Doctor of Philosophy Degree in English Language Education at Moi University. The purpose of this questionnaire is to investigate the implications of pedagogical strategies on upper primary learners' competencies in English language composition writing in Bomet County in Kenya. Please complete each section as instructed. All information provided will be highly confidential.

### SECTION A: Teachers Biographical Data

Please tick your chosen response ( ) where appropriate.

1. Gender: Male  Female

### SECTION B: – Teacher Planning

2. Below are documents which teachers of English prepare for composition writing lessons. Please indicate the situation that applies to your school depending on the frequency of use.

(VF-Very frequent, F- Frequent, LF- Less frequent, N-Never)

Professional documents	VF	F	LF	N
i)Schemes of work				
ii)Lesson plans				
iii)Lesson notes				

3. Please indicate the frequency of use of the following as reference materials to prepare for English composition writing lessons.

Materials	VF	F	LF	N
i)KICD syllabus				
ii)Recommended KICD textbooks				
iii)Supplementary materials				
iv)Improvised materials				

State any other documents used in preparation (if any) and indicate the frequency of use

.....  
 4. What in your views are the most critical issues that you consider when preparing for composition writing lessons? (Use the scale of 1 to 5 by placing a tick (√) to show the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the given statements:

**KEY: 1-** Strongly disagree, **2-** Agree, **3-** Neutral, **4-** Agree, and **5-** Strongly agree

Item	5	4	3	2	1
i)Lesson allocation (weightage) in the syllabus/ textbooks					
ii)Objectives in the syllabus					
iii)Sequencing of English skills					
iv)Learner needs and interests					
v)Variety of instructional techniques					
vi)Relevance of instructional techniques					
vii)Variety of teaching and learning activities					
viii)Provision for learner participation					
ix)Provision for learner evaluation and feedback					

5. Below are some of the challenges that teachers encounter during planning? Place a tick (✓) in the box that corresponds with the response that best describes your agreement.

KEY: **SA** – Strongly Agree, **A** – Agree, **N** – Neutral, **D** – Disagree, **SD**-Strongly Disagree

Item	SA	A	N	D	SD
i)It is time consuming					
ii)Lack of instructional resources					
iii)Lack of writing materials					
iv)Lack of team work					
v)A lot of commitment					

### SECTION C: Instructional techniques that enhance English composition writing

6. The following are some techniques used by teachers of English during composition lessons. Indicate how frequent you use each by placing a tick (✓) in the box that corresponds with the response that best describes your reactions.

KEY: **1**-Very Often (VO), **2**-Often (O), **3**-Rarely I, **4**-Never (N)

Instructional Technique	VO	O	R	N
i) Expository technique				
ii)Task-based technique				
iii)Questioning technique				
iv) Collaborative technique				
v)Experiential technique				
vi)Problem-solving technique				

State any other method(s) used (if any) and indicate how often as applies to your school .....

7. Below are some teaching and learning activities considered in enhancing learner competencies in English composition writing skills. For each activity, please indicate by putting a tick (✓) in the box on a scale of 1 to 6 you perceive applies to your school. (Number 1 being the least considered and number 6 being the most considered).

Activity	Least					Most
	1	2	3	4	5	6
i)Drafting						
ii)Revision						
iii)Pair work						
iv)Group work						
v)Class discussion						
vi) Completing sentences						
vii)Individual learner attention						
viii)Writing Poems						

Please state any other activity utilised (if any) and indicate the frequency of use .....



8. Below are issues that determine the use of instructional techniques. Please tick (✓) in the box that corresponds with the response that best describes agreement.

**KEY:** Very Often (VO), Often (O), Rarely I, Never (N)

Determinants	VO	O	R	N
i) Syllabus guidelines				
ii) Learner interests				
iii) Background knowledge				
iv) Learning abilities				
v) Environmental/ contextual factors				

9. Please use the scale to the right of each item to indicate the frequency in which you guide learners to develop the following skills in composition writing. Place a tick (✓) in the box that corresponds with the response that best describes agreement.

**KEY:** Very Often (VO), Often (O), Rarely I, Never (N)

Competency area	VO	O	R	N
i) <b>FORMULATION OF IDEAS:</b> (Pre-writing organization, note taking and character development skills)				
ii) <b>STORY ORGANIZATION SKILLS:</b> (Type of writing, sequencing, clear main idea, focus clear to reader)				
iii) <b>LANGUAGE SKILLS:</b> (suited to the reader, suited to story, appropriate mood, emphasis, personal style, uses of descriptive language)				
iv) <b>MECHANICS SKILLS:</b> (Strategies for spelling, punctuation, paragraphs)				
v) <b>PRESENTATION, HANDWRITING SKILLS:</b> (Formation, shape and size, slant and spacing, aesthetics, speed)				

#### SECTION D: Learning Materials that Enhance Composition Writing

10. Below are the commonly used titles of English course books. Please tick (✓) the one that is available in your class as the main course book (1<sup>st</sup>) and rank the rest where applicable. (Leave 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, & 4<sup>th</sup> blank if not applicable).

Book Title	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>
i) New Primary English (JKF)				
ii) New Progressive Primary English (Oxford)				
iii) Key Note English (Longhorn)				
iv) Any other (Specify)...				

11. Place a tick (✓) in the box that corresponds with the response that best describes your reactions to the following statements:

**KEY:** SA – Strongly Agree, A – Agree, N – Neutral, D – Disagree, SD – Strongly Disagree

Response	SA	A	N	D	SD
i) I select relevant and recommended materials for teaching composition writing					
ii) I select other supplementary books for teaching composition writing					

iii)I select a variety of materials to enhance learner competencies in composition writing skills					
iv)The selected materials are effective in developing learner competencies in composition writing					
v)I involve learners to select materials for composition writing					
vi)I improvise materials for teaching composition writing					

**12.** Please tick in the box that corresponds with the frequency in which you use the following materials for enhancing composition writing.

**KEY:** Very Often (VO) Often (O) Rarely (R) Never (N)

<b>MATERIAL</b>	<b>VO</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>N</b>
i)Real objects				
ii)Pictures of certain objects				
iii)Internet				
iii)Relevant recommended KICD Text books				
iv)Relevant supplementary composition Text books				
v)Learner selected materials				
vi)Improvised materials				
vi)Variety of materials (Newspapers, magazines, Storybooks)				
vii)Others (specify)...				

State any other material(s) used (if any) and indicate how often used

.....

...

**SECTION E: Assessment Strategies that enhance Composition Writing skills**

**13.** Please give a mark from 1 to 10 for the following statements, with 10 being excellent and 1 being very poor. Please **circle** (O) the appropriate number for each statement.

	<b>Assessment strategies</b>									
	Very poor					Excellent				
i) I consider the syllabus and lesson objectives in setting composition tests	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
ii) I consider learner abilities and interests when giving assignments	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
iii) I use assessments to target a variety of composition skills	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
iv)I give composition writing tests weekly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
v) I involve learners in peer assessment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
vi) I give prompt feedback to learners' composition exercises	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
vii)I discuss feedback with learners after marking	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

**Thank you**

### APPENDIX C: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

SCHOOL.....CLASS.....

TEACHER'S NAME.....

GENDER.....

5= Most frequently, 4= Frequently, 3= Sometimes, 2= Rarely, 1= Never

	<b>Professional documents</b>	5	4	3	2	1	Comments
1	English Schemes of work are prepared						
2	English composition lesson plans are available						
3	English composition lessons are slotted weekly in the schemes of work						
4	Composition lessons are sequenced to develop specific constructs in lesson plans						
5	Different instructional techniques are planned for in schemes of work and lesson plans						
6	Several learning activities are used in schemes of work and lesson plans						
7	KICD recommended books are used in schemes of work and lesson plans						
8	Supplementary learning materials are used in schemes of work and lesson plans						
9	Several evaluation methods are used in schemes of work and lesson plans						
10	The remarks column in the schemes of work is updated as feedback of lessons						
11	Self-evaluation is made in the lesson plan for further intervention						
<b>Pupils' Exercise books</b>							
12	Composition writing assignments are done weekly						
13	Learners rewrite after corrections						
14	Learners' rewritten work is checked						
15	Composition marking done promptly						
16	Marking criteria is based on skills development						
17	Common mistakes are identified when marking						

**APPENDIX D: LESSON OBSERVATION GUIDE**

SCHOOL.....CLASS.....

TEACHER'S NAME..... GENDER.....

NU-Not used at all, FU- Fairly used, EU- Excellently used

	NU	FU	EU	Observer's notes
<b>Teaching strategies</b>				
1.Cooperative learning (Group work, pair work)				
2. Active learner participation				
3. Problem based learning				
4. Probing of learner understanding				
5.Activity-based learning				
6. Process oriented learning (easy to difficult)				
7. Class discussions				
8.Question and answer				
9. Small group discussion				
10. Talk and chalk (expository technique)				
11. Orderly teaching/ learning activities				
12. Attention to individual work				
13. Learner participation				
14. Targeting of specific composition skills				
<b>Learning Materials</b>				
15.Effective use of text books				
16. Sequential use of other teaching materials				
<b>Assessment Procedure</b>				
17. Learner assessment				
18. Learner feedback				

## APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL GUIDE

SCHOOL.....CLASS TAUGHT.....  
TEACHER'S NAME..... GENDER.....

	<b><u>DESCRIPTION</u></b>	<b>RESPONSES</b>	<b>MEMOS</b>
<b>1.0</b>	<b><u>Basic information</u></b>		
1.1	School:		
1.2	Date:		
1.3	<b>Name of Interviewee</b>	<b>Gender</b>	
1.3.1			
1.4	Time:		
1.5	Duration:		
1.6	Audio File Name:		
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Introduction</b>		
2.1	Self-Introduction		
2.2	Purpose of the Study		
2.3	Copy of Consent		
2.4	General Interview Structure		
2.5	Important Terminologies		
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Opening Questions</b>		
3.1	Ice breaking Questions		
	(Talk about yourself)		
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Content Questions</b>		
4.1	What do you consider when <b>planning</b> for English composition lessons? (lessons per week, learner abilities and limitations, challenges encountered)		
4.2	What <b>instructional techniques</b> do you use in your school to help learners develop competencies in composition writing? (effectiveness, low learner performance, suggested remedies)		
4.3	Which <b>learning materials</b> do you use to develop composition writing skills? (reference books, pupils' access and use of text books, other materials used)		
4.4	How do you <b>assess</b> pupils' composition work? (frequency of marking, targeted skills, mitigation of common mistakes)		

---

4.5	Emerging Issues		
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Using Probes</b>		
5.1	Tell me more		
5.2	I need more details		
5.3	Could you please explain your response?		
5.4	What does not much mean?		
5.5	Is there any further information that you would like to share that we have not covered?		
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Closing Instructions</b>		
6.1	Thank the Interviewee		
6.2	Assure of confidentiality		
6.3	Propose follow-up if need be		

**APPENDIX F: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION PROTOCOL GUIDE**

SCHOOL.....

CLASS.....

	<b><u>DESCRIPTION</u></b>	<b>RESPONSES</b>	<b>MEMOS</b>
<b>1.0</b>	<b><u>Basic information</u></b>		
1.1	School:		
1.2	Date:		
1.3	<b>Names of Interviewees</b>	<b>Gender</b>	
1.3.1			
1.3.2			
1.3.3			
1.3.4			
1.3.5			
1.3.6			
1.3.7			
1.3.8			
1.4	Time:		
1.5	Duration:		
1.6	Audio File Name:		
<b>2.0</b>	<b><u>Introduction</u></b>		
2.1	Self-Introduction		
2.2	Purpose of the Study		
2.3	Copy of Consent		
2.4	General Interview Structure		
2.5	Important Terminologies		
<b>3.0</b>	<b><u>Opening Questions</u></b>		
3.1	Ice breaking Questions (Talk about yourself, your school, your hobbies)		
<b>4.0</b>	<b><u>Content Questions</u></b>		
4.1	How frequent are you taught English composition writing? (lessons per week, frequency of assignments)		
4.2	Which strategies do teachers of English use to develop composition skills? (working in groups, group assignments, individual attention, handling of challenging areas)		
4.3	Which composition writing learning materials are in use in your school? (how helpful, learner involvement in selection, preferred support materials?)		
4.4	How frequent do you to write composition assignments? (duration of feedback from teachers, discussion of marked work, peer marking, learner suggestions for improvement)		
4.5	Emerging Issues		

---

<b>5.0</b>	<b>Using Probes</b>		
5.1	Tell me more		
5.2	I need more details		
5.3	Could you please explain your response?		
5.4	What does not much mean?		
5.5	Is there any further information that you would like to share that we have not covered?		
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Closing Instructions</b>		
6.1	Thank the Interviewee		
6.2	Assure of confidentiality		
6.3	Propose follow-up if need be		



**APPENDIX G: LESSON OBSERVATION SESSION**



**APPENDIX H: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION SESSION**



## APPENDIX I: SAMPLE OF MARKED TOPICAL COMPOSITION

Family  
9/7/2019

## MY FAMILY

A family is a called robot is a family its very wonderful in our family - we the are many family its wonderful in my life - Live together its very happy for its family we the live together where its family mothers and fathers we live at time we the family its very happy for its for the family - family

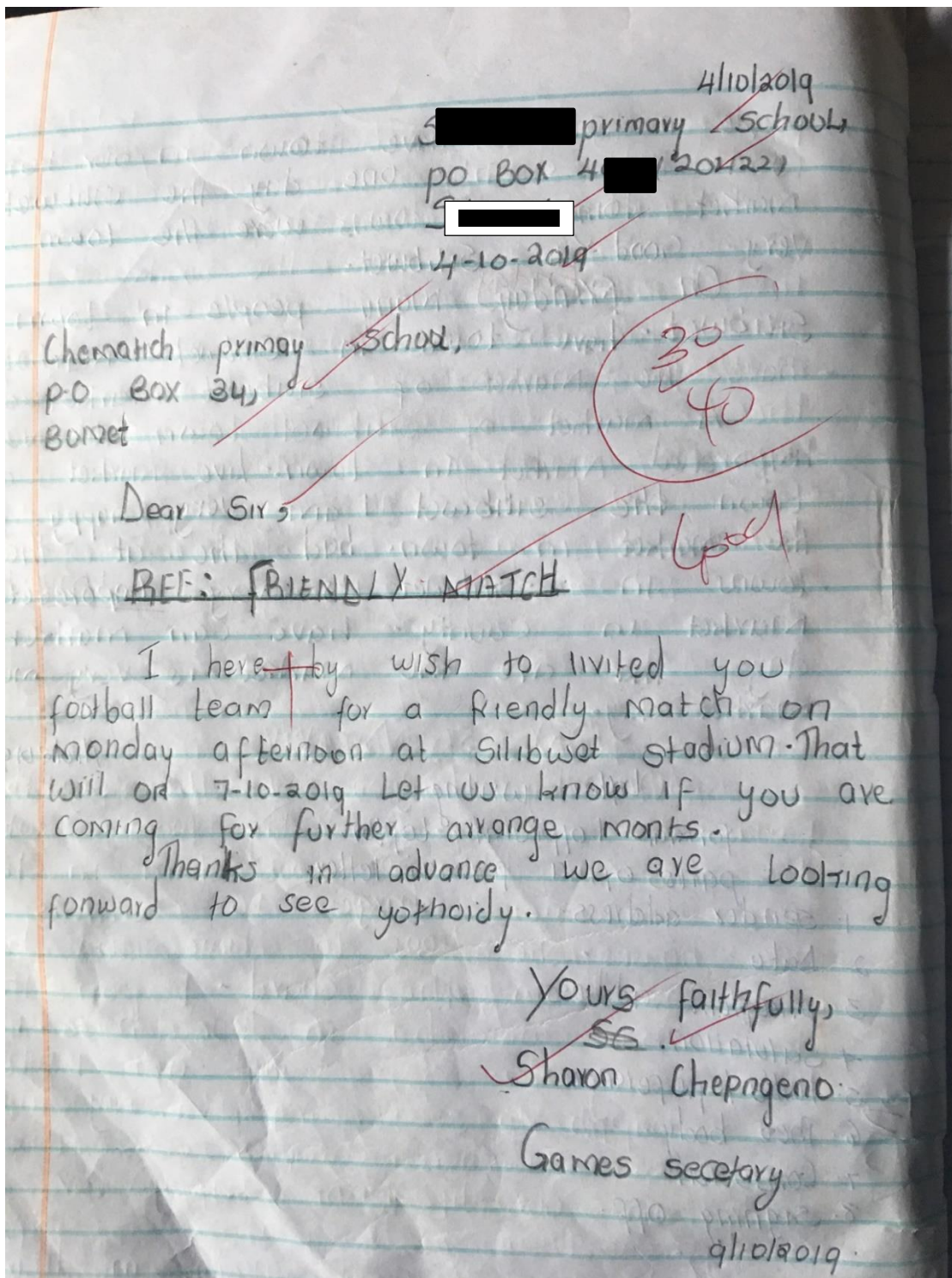
17/70 A Chebet its very happy for the family only me happy next for live at time when my sisters has together in family when is at live together at the families at home she is family important in the families at the home when the family she is very wonderful the family. My family died my sisters called faith chebet group its very important she was the my family its very happy its home - when it is time to song we are rooming in forest family. The first big sister has name its family who mark place of together family group the my family is its very happy for the together home she is together God bless my families.

24/7/2019

## THE WEDDING DAY

The wedding day finally came - we all excited because in it wedding day in its day the day of wedding its very good wedding at home many people at the hand. The wedding

APPENDIX J: SAMPLE OF MARKED LETTER WRITING COMPOSITION



## APPENDIX K: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS RESULTS

5= Very frequently, 4= Frequently, 3= Sometimes, 2= Rarely, 1= Never

	<b>Professional documents</b>	5	4	3	2	1	<b>Comments</b>
1	English Schemes of work are prepared	6 (20.7%)	9 (31.0%)	9 (31.0%)	4 (13.8%)	1 (3.4%)	Frequently prepared
2	English composition lesson plans are available	4 (13.8%)	10 (34.5%)	10 (34.5%)	4 (13.8%)	1 (3.4%)	Frequently available
3	English composition lessons are slotted weekly in schemes of work			3 (10.3%)	11 (37.9%)	15 (51.7%)	Rarely slotted
4	Composition lessons are sequenced to develop specific constructs in lesson plans			2 (6.9%)	11 (37.9%)	16 (55.2%)	Never done
5	Different instructional techniques are planned for in schemes of work and lesson plans	4 (13.8%)	11 (37.9%)	9 (31.0%)	4 (13.8%)	1 (3.4%)	Frequently done
6	Several learning activities are used in schemes of work and lesson plans	14 (48.3%)	7 (24.1%)	5 (17.2%)	2 (6.9%)	1 (3.4%)	Very frequently used
7	KICD recommended books are used in schemes of work and lesson plans	7 (24.1%)	10 (34.5%)	9 (31.0%)	2 (6.9%)	1 (3.4%)	Frequently used
8	Supplementary learning materials are used in schemes of work and lesson plans	5 (17.2%)	13 (44.8%)	7 (24.1%)	3 (10.3%)	1 (3.4%)	Frequently used
9	Several evaluation methods are captured in schemes of work and lesson plans	8 (27.6%)	9 (31.0%)	8 (27.6%)	3 (10.3%)	1 (3.4%)	Frequently done
10	The remarks column in the schemes of work is updated as feedback of lessons	7 (24.1%)	9 (31.0%)	8 (27.6%)	3 (10.3%)	2 (6.9%)	Frequently done
11	Self-evaluation is made in the lesson plan for further intervention	1 (3.4%)	1 (3.4%)	1 (3.4%)	12 (41.4%)	14 (48.3%)	Rarely done
12	Records of work is available	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (3.4%)	28 (96.6%)	Never done
<b>Pupils' Exercise books</b>							
13	Composition writing assignments are done weekly			4 (13.8%)	12 (41.4%)	13 (44.8%)	Never done
14	Learners rewrite after corrections		1 (3.4%)	6 (20.7%)	12 (41.4%)	10 (34.5%)	Rarely done
15	Learners' rewritten work is checked			1 (3.4%)	12 (41.4%)	16 (55.2%)	Never done
16	Composition marking done promptly	12 (41.4%)	12 (41.4%)	3 (10.3%)	1 (3.4%)	1 (3.4%)	Frequently done
17	Marking criteria is based on skills development	8 (27.6%)	14 (48.3%)	4 (13.8%)	2 (6.9%)	1 (3.4%)	Frequently done
18	Common mistakes are identified when marking	6 (20.7%)	13 (44.89%)	7 (24.1%)	2 (6.9%)	1 (3.4%)	Frequently done

**APPENDIX L: TERM 2, 2019 COMPOSITION TEST RESULTS (ELWC)**

SCH	CLASS	MSS	SCH	CLASS	MSS	SCH	CLASS	MSS
V1A	5	19	V14C	7	18	V27B	6	20
V1B	6	19	V15A	5	19	V27C	7	19
V1C	7	18	V15B	6	20	V28A	5	18
V2A	5	16	V15C	7	20	V28B	6	12
V2B	6	16	V16A	5	18	V28C	7	14
V2C	7	17	V16B	6	18	V29A	5	20
V3A	5	14	V16C	7	22	V29B	6	18
V4A	5	18	V17A	5	20	V29C	7	17
V4B	6	18	V17B	6	20	V30A	5	14
V4C	7	20	V17C	7	19	V30B	6	16
V5A	5	17	V18A	5	19	V30C	7	18
V5B	6	17	V18B	6	17	V31A	5	14
V5C	7	17	V18C	7	18	V31B	6	17
V6A	5	19	V19A	5	18	V31C	7	17
V6B	6	17	V19B	6	19	V32A	5	16
V6C	7	17	V19C	7	19	V32B	6	19
V7A	5	17	V20A	5	18	V32C	7	19
V7B	6	17	V20B	6	18	V33A	5	15
V7C	7	18	V20C	7	17	V33B	6	21
V8A	5	19	V21A	5	19	V33C	7	16
V8B	6	18	V21B	6	18	V34A	5	23
V8C	7	19	V21C	7	19	V34B	6	18
V9A	5	18	V22A	5	19	V34C	7	17
V9B	6	19	V22B	6	21	V35A	5	18
V10A	5	20	V22C	7	20	V35B	6	17
V10B	6	20	V23A	5	20	V35C	7	17
V10C	7	18	V23B	6	21	V36A	5	17
V11A	5	19	V23C	7	20	V36B	6	15
V11B	6	19	V24A	5	15	V36C	7	16
V11C	7	18	V24B	6	18	V37A	5	16
V12A	5	20	V24C	7	18	V37B	6	17
V12B	6	19	V25A	5	19	V37C	7	18
V12C	7	18	V25B	6	20	V38A	5	19
V13A	5	17	V25C	7	21	V38B	6	18
V13B	6	19	V26A	5	17	V38C	7	17
V13C	7	15	V26B	6	18	W39A	5	17
V14A	5	18	V26C	7	20	W39B	6	17
V14B	6	18	V27A	5	19	W39C	7	18
W40A	5	18	W53C	7	18	W67B	6	10
W40B	6	19	W54A	5	15	W68A	5	20
W40C	7	20	W54C	7	17	W68B	6	20
W41B	6	18	W55A	5	16	W68C	7	19

W41C	7	20	W55B	6	18	W69A	5	17
W42A	5	16	W55C	7	18	W69C	7	16
W42B	6	16	W56A	5	20	W70A	5	18
W42C	7	17	W56B	6	20	W70B	6	16
W43A	5	20	W56C	7	18	W70C	7	14
W43B	6	19	W57A	5	17	W71A	5	19
W43C	7	14	W57B	6	17	W71B	6	18
W44A	5	20	W57C	7	16	W71C	7	20
W44B	6	18	W58A	5	16	W72A	5	21
W44C	7	20	W58B	6	21	W72B	6	19
W45A	5	14	W58C	7	20	W72C	7	18
W45B	6	18	W59A	5	16	W73A	5	16
W45C	7	17	W59B	6	17	W73B	6	18
W46A	5	17	W59C	7	17	W73C	7	17
W46B	6	20	W60A	5	18	W74A	5	16
W46C	7	19	W60B	6	15	W74B	6	14
W47A	5	17	W60C	7	14	W74C	7	17
W47B	6	13	W61A	5	16	W75A	5	19
W47C	7	23	W61B	6	19	W75B	6	19
W48A	5	13	W61C	7	14	W75C	7	20
W48B	6	14	W62A	5	15	W76A	5	20
W48C	7	15	W62B	6	17	W76B	6	18
W49A	5	14	W62C	7	14	W76C	7	15
W49B	6	20	W63A	5	19	W77A	5	20
W49C	7	18	W63B	6	18	W77B	6	21
W50A	5	18	W63C	7	18	W77C	7	19
W50B	6	19	W64A	5	22	W78A	5	16
W50C	7	16	W64B	6	18	W78B	6	16
W51A	5	19	W64C	7	15	W78C	7	17
W51B	6	20	W65A	5	18	W79A	5	18
W51C	7	20	W65B	6	19	W79B	6	16
W52A	5	20	W65C	7	18	W79C	7	18
W52B	6	17	W66A	5	20	W80A	5	18
W52C	7	18	W66B	6	19	W80B	6	18
W53A	5	15	W66C	7	20	W80C	7	18
W53B	6	18	W67A	5	19	W81B	6	19
W81C	7	19	X95B	6	15	X109C	7	14
W82A	5	16	X95C	7	16	X110B	6	17
W82B	6	20	X96A	5	19	X110C	7	12
W82C	7	19	X96B	6	18	X111A	5	19
W83A	5	20	X96C	7	15	X111B	6	18
W83B	6	17	X97A	5	19	X111C	7	16
W83C	7	17	X97B	6	18	X112A	5	16
W84A	5	19	X97C	7	17	X112B	6	18

W84B	6	17	X98A	5	20	X112C	7	18
W84C	7	18	X98B	6	18	X113A	5	17
W85A	5	16	X98C	7	22	X113B	6	17
W85B	6	18	X99A	5	21	X113C	7	20
W85C	7	16	X99B	6	16	X114A	5	16
W86A	5	18	X9C	7	16	X114B	6	19
W86B	6	17	X100A	5	22	X114C	7	21
W86C	7	20	X100B	6	17	X115A	5	19
W87A	5	17	X100C	7	18	X115B	6	20
W87B	6	18	X101A	5	18	X115C	7	20
W87C	7	18	X101B	6	15	X116A	5	18
W88A	5	18	X101C	7	17	X116B	6	19
W88B	6	19	X102A	5	16	X116C	7	18
W88C	7	19	X102B	6	17	X117A	5	16
W89A	5	17	X102C	7	16	X117B	6	17
W89B	6	19	X103A	5	19	X117C	7	17
W89C	7	18	X103B	6	17	X118A	5	19
W90A	5	19	X103C	7	18	X118B	6	19
W90B	6	17	X104A	5	16	X118C	7	18
W90C	7	16	X104B	6	19	X119A	5	16
W91A	5	19	X104C	7	17	X119B	6	16
W91B	6	18	X105A	5	15	X119C	7	15
W91C	7	17	X106A	5	20	X120A	5	17
X92A	5	18	X106B	6	19	X120B	6	16
X92B	6	17	X106C	7	18	X120C	7	17
X92C	7	17	X107A	5	16	X121A	5	17
X93A	5	15	X107B	6	19	X121B	6	18
X93B	6	16	X017C	7	18	X121C	7	19
X93C	7	11	X108A	5	14	X122A	5	16
X94A	5	19	X108C	7	17	X122B	6	20
X94C	7	20	X109A	5	15	X122C	7	19
X95A	5	17	X109B	6	20	X123A	5	17
X123B	6	16	Y137C	7	17	Y150A	5	19
X123C	7	19	Y138A	5	18	Y150B	6	19
X124A	5	19	Y138B	6	19	Y150C	7	20
X124B	6	20	Y138C	7	16	Y151A	5	16
X124C	7	18	Y139A	5	19	Y151B	6	16
Y126A	5	17	Y139B	6	18	Y151C	7	15
Y126B	6	18	Y139C	7	18	Y152B	6	17
Y126C	7	17	Y140A	5	18	Y152C	7	17
Y127A	5	16	Y140B	6	19	Y153A	5	17
Y127B	6	17	Y140C	7	18	Y153B	6	18
Y127C	7	18	Y141A	5	16	Y153C	7	18
Y128A	5	12	Y141B	6	18	Y154A	5	17



Y128B	6	18	Y141C	7	18	Y154B	6	18
Y128C	7	18	Y142A	5	15	Y154C	7	16
Y129A	5	21	Y142B	6	15	Y155A	5	14
Y129B	6	20	Y142C	7	14	Y155B	6	16
Y129C	7	18	Y143A	5	15	Y155C	7	17
Y130A	5	13	Y143B	6	18	Y156A	5	18
Y130B	6	19	Y143C	7	17	Y156B	6	19
Y130C	7	17	Y144A	5	18	Y156C	7	17
Y131A	5	18	Y144B	6	17	Y157A	5	19
Y131B	6	16	Y144C	7	19	Y157B	6	17
Y131C	7	17	Y145A	5	16	Y157C	7	17
Y132A	5	16	Y145B	6	18	Y158A	5	14
Y132B	6	17	Y145C	7	16	Y158B	6	15
Y132C	7	15	X125A	5	17	Y158C	7	19
Y133A	5	19	X125B	6	17	Y159A	5	19
Y133C	7	18	X125C	7	18	Y159B	6	17
Y133B	6	17	Y146A	5	17	Y159C	7	18
Y134A	5	18	Y146B	6	19	Y160A	5	19
Y134B	6	19	Y146C	7	18	Y160B	6	16
Y134C	7	20	Y147A	5	18	Y160C	7	16
Y135A	5	16	Y147B	6	15	Y161A	5	15
Y135B	6	18	Y147C	7	15	Y161B	6	14
Y135C	7	16	Y148A	5	18	Y161C	7	15
Y136A	5	18	Y148B	6	19	Y162A	5	22
Y136B	6	18	Y148C	7	19	Y162B	6	19
Y136C	7	16	Y149A	5	17	Y162C	7	20
Y137A	5	18	Y149B	6	17	Z163A	5	18
Y137B	6	17	Y149C	7	18	Z163B	6	19
Z163C	7	20	Z177C	7	17	Z193A	5	20
Z164A	5	18	Z178A	5	19	Z193B	6	19
Z164B	6	19	Z178B	6	17	Z193C	7	20
Z164C	7	20	Z178C	7	19	Z194A	5	19
Z165A	5	16	Z180A	5	19	Z194B	6	19
Z165B	6	19	Z180B	6	19	Z194C	7	18
Z165C	7	19	Z180C	7	17	Z195A	5	20
Z166A	5	20	Z181A	5	20	Z195B	6	19
Z166B	6	19	Z181B	6	19	Z195C	7	22
Z166C	7	18	Z181C	7	19	Z196A	5	20
Z167A	5	20	Z182A	5	15	Z196B	6	20
Z168A	5	21	Z182B	6	19	Z196C	7	19
Z168B	6	20	Z182C	7	19			
Z168C	7	17	Z183A	5	19	<b>SUMMARY</b>		
Z169A	5	18	Z183B	6	19	<b>21-30</b>	<b>16-20</b>	<b>1-15</b>
Z169B	6	19	Z183C	7	17	CLASS 5		

Z169C	7	20	Z184A	5	19	10	152	26
Z170A	5	20	Z184B	6	18	CLASS 6		
Z170B	6	18	Z184C	7	15	7	169	17
Z170C	7	17	Z185A	5	17	CLASS 7		
Z171A	5	21	Z185B	6	19	11	160	22
Z171B	6	20	Z185C	7	21	TOTAL		
Z171C	7	19	Z186A	5	19	28	<b>481</b>	<b>65</b>
Z172A	5	16	Z186B	6	18			
Z172B	6	18	Z186C	7	20			
Z172C	7	19	Z187A	5	16			
Z173A	5	18	Z187B	6	18			
Z173B	6	19	Z187C	7	18			
Z173C	7	18	Z188A	5	18			
Z174A	5	21	Z188B	6	17			
Z174B	6	21	Z188C	7	20			
Z174C	7	22	Z190A	5	12			
Z175A	5	21	Z190B	6	16			
Z175B	6	20	Z190C	7	16			
Z175C	7	19	Z191A	5	15			
Z176A	5	20	Z191B	6	19			
Z176B	6	18	Z191C	7	17			
Z176C	7	18	Z192A	5	19			
Z177A	5	17	Z192B	6	20			
Z177B	6	17	Z192C	7	20			

**APPENDIX M: LIST OF SAMPLED SCHOOLS FOR QUALITATIVE PHASE**

S/NO	C/NO	SCHOOL	CLASS	T.2 MSS	TOOLS		
					DOC	LO/ INT	FGD
1	1	W72A	5	21	√	√	
2	2	Z193A	5	20	√		
3	3	W63A	5	19	√		
4	4	W84A	5	19	√		
5	5	Z178A	5	19	√		
6	6	Z192A	5	19	√		
7	7	W79A	5	18	√		
8	8	X95A	5	17	√		
9	9	V31A	5	14	√	√	
10	10	Z190A	5	12	√	√	
11	1	V25B	6	20	√		
12	2	W51B	6	20	√		
13	3	V13B	6	19	√	√	
14	4	Z165B	6	19	√	√	
15	5	X96B	6	18	√		
16	6	Y127B	6	17	√		
17	7	Y133B	6	17	√		
18	8	W78B	6	16	√		
19	9	X99B	6	16	√		
20	10	Y161B	6	14	√	√	
21	1	Z185C	7	21	√		√
22	2	W46C	7	19	√	√	√
23	3	V12C	7	18	√		√
24	4	W53C	7	18	√	√	√
25	5	X118C	7	18	√		√
26	6	W45C	7	17	√		√
27	7	Y143C	7	17	√		√
28	8	X102C	7	16	√	√	√
29	9	X93C	7	11	√	√	√
		TOTAL			29	10	9
		STREAM			B	B	A

**KEY****S/NO** : - SERIAL NUMBER; **C/NO**: - CLASS NUMBER;**T.2 MSS** : -TERM 2 MEAN STANDARD SCORE.**DOC** : - Document Analysis :**LO/ INT** : - Lesson observation/ Interview**FGD** : - Focus group discussion

## APPENDIX N: LESSON OBSERVATION SCHEDULE RESULTS

NU-Not used, FU- Fairly used, EU- Excellently used

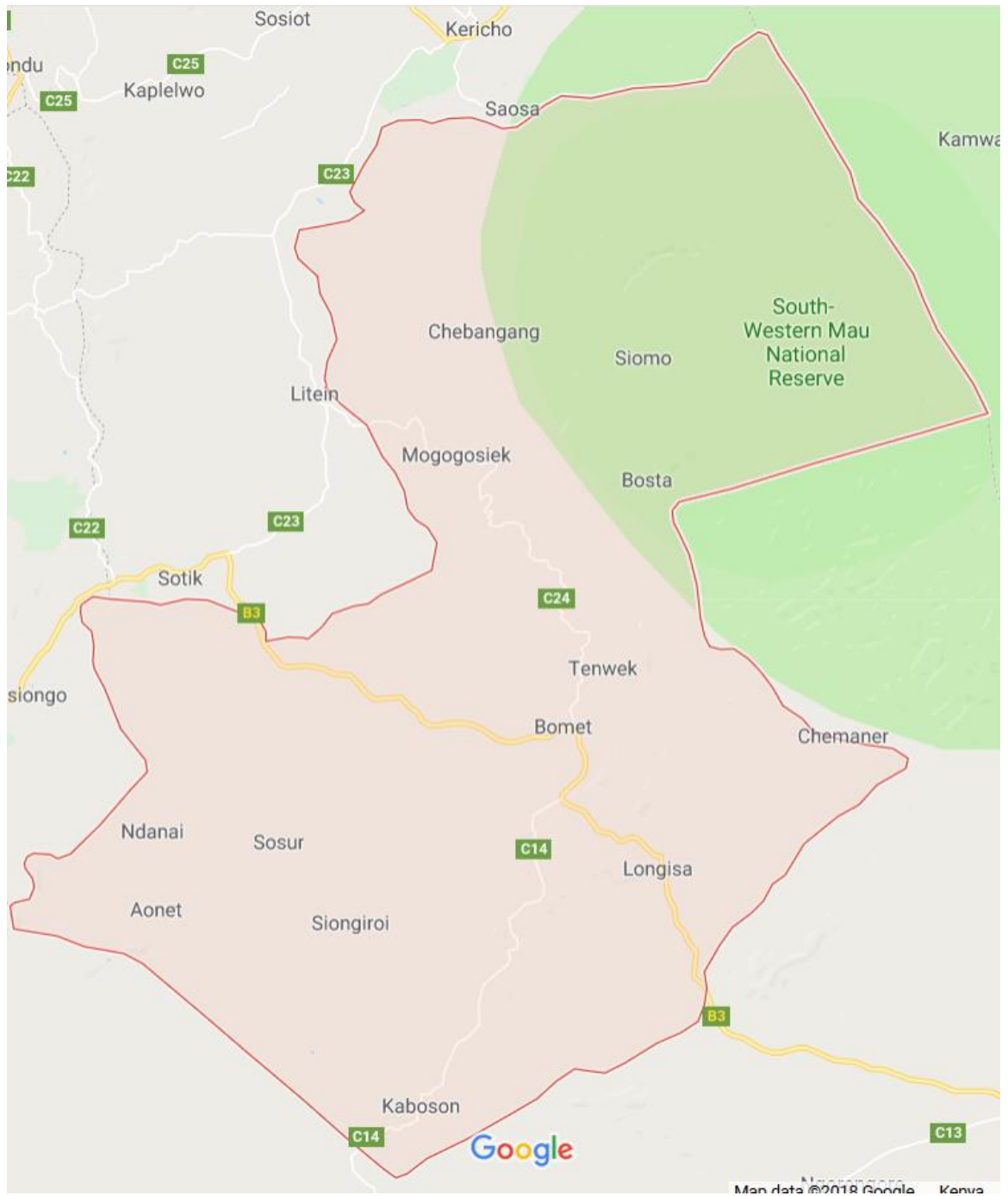
	NU	FU	EU	Observer's notes
<b>Instructional techniques</b>				
1.Cooperative learning (Group work, pair work)	9	1		Pupils were hardly given tasks in group such as writing a composition in pairs or in groups
2. Active learner participation	8	2		Reading and writing strategies were the only ones commonly used
3. Problem based learning	8	2		Learners were not given tasks that ignite synthesis and analysis
4. Experiential technique	10			Learner involvement in the process of conceptualizing meaning and knowledge construction was not observed. They were in most cases treated as passive audience
5.Activity-based learning	2	3	5	Assignments were given towards the end in almost all lessons observed
6. Process oriented learning (easy to difficult)	9	1		Teachers did not act as facilitators in making learners to come up with ideas on how to write good compositions and thinking about the process
7. Class discussions	8	2		Little room was given learners to discuss composition writing skills
8.Questioning	4	2	4	Commonly used by most teachers
9. Small group discussion	10			Learners not given opportunity to work groups
10. Talk and chalk (expository technique)	5	5		A number of teachers spent most of the time allocated in talking without engaging learners
11. Orderly teaching/ learning activities	2	3	5	Sequential teaching was done from simple to complex, known to the unknown
12. Attention to individual work		3	7	Pupils were given assignments individually
13. Learner participation	3	2	5	Pupils took part in answering questions
14. Targeting of specific composition skills	3	5	2	The targeted composition skills were hardly focused on. Those that were, were not exhaustively done
<b>Learning Materials</b>				
15.Effective use of text books	6	4		Text books on composition writing were rarely available. Learners relied on instructions from the teacher
16. Sequential use of other teaching materials	5	5		Very limited use of other materials such as newspapers, magazines, etc
<b>Assessment procedure</b>				
17. Learner evaluation	2	6	2	Pupils were given topical compositions to write
18. Learner feedback	3	5	2	Teachers marked pupils' compositions majorly by underlining where errors were without being specific

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**APPENDIX O: EXAMPLES OF CODES, CATEGORIES AND THEMES  
FROM TEACHERS' INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Teacher Preparation</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Range of professional documents</li><li>• Issues influencing teacher planning</li><li>• Frequency of Planning Composition Lessons</li><li>• Challenges of Teacher Planning</li></ul> |
| <b>Instructional<br/>Techniques</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Range of commonly Used techniques</li><li>• Teaching and Learning Activities Used</li><li>• Issues determining use of Instructional materials</li></ul>                              |
| <b>Teaching and Learning<br/>Materials</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Range/variety of learning materials</li><li>• Issues determining selection of learning materials</li><li>• Frequency of selection and use of learning materials</li></ul>            |
| <b>Assessment procedures</b>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Range of Assessment procedures used</li><li>• Assessment strategies used</li><li>• Issues determining use of assessment strategies</li><li>• Frequency of assessment</li></ul>       |

### APPENDIX P: STUDY AREA MAP



Source: Bomet County Commissioner's office, 2019

**APPENDIX Q: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION- CDE BOMET COUNTY**



**REPUBLIC OF KENYA  
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EARLY LEARNING AND BASIC EDUCATION**

Telegrams: "ELIMU",  
Telephone: 052-22265  
When replying please quote  
**email:cdebometcounty@gmail.com**  
**Ref/CDE/BMT/ED/AUTH/74/VOL.II/6**

COUNTY EDUCATION OFFICE,  
BOMET COUNTY,  
P.O. BOX 3-20400,  
**BOMET.**

**29<sup>TH</sup> JULY, 2019**

**Charles Kimutai Kurgatt**  
University of Kabianga  
P.o Box 2030-20200,  
**KERICHO.**

**RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION.**

Reference is made to yours from NACOSTI Ref: No NACOSTI/P/19/0215/31688 dated 24<sup>th</sup> July, 2019 on the above subject.

Permission is hereby granted to carry out research on "*Influence of Pedagogy on Learner competency in writing skills in English language, a study of upper primary public schools in Kenya*" *Bomet County, Kenya*"; for the period ending 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 2020.

Ensure, you present a copy of the research to County Director of Education-Bomet

This letter should be presented to the principal of the schools visited for the said purpose.

  
COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION  
BOMET  
P. O. BOX 3-20400, BOMET

**INDIATSI MABALE**  
**COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION**  
**BOMET COUNTY.**

**CC**  
**DIRECTOR NACOSTI**

## APPENDIX R: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION- NACOSTI

### THE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION ACT, 2013

The Grant of Research Licenses is guided by the Science, Technology and Innovation (Research Licensing) Regulations, 2014.

#### CONDITIONS

1. The License is valid for the proposed research, location and specified period.
2. The License and any rights thereunder are non-transferable.
3. The Licensee shall inform the County Governor before commencement of the research.
4. Excavation, filming and collection of specimens are subject to further necessary clearance from relevant Government Agencies.
5. The License does not give authority to transfer research materials.
6. NACOSTI may monitor and evaluate the licensed research project.
7. The Licensee shall submit one hard copy and upload a soft copy of their final report within one year of completion of the research.
8. NACOSTI reserves the right to modify the conditions of the License including cancellation without prior notice.

National Commission for Science, Technology and innovation  
 P.O. Box 30623 - 00100, Nairobi, Kenya  
 TEL: 020 400 7000, 0713 788787, 0735 404245  
 Email: dg@nacosti.go.ke, registry@nacosti.go.ke  
 Website: www.nacosti.go.ke



REPUBLIC OF KENYA



**National Commission for Science,  
Technology and Innovation**

### RESEARCH LICENSE

Serial No.A **25980**

CONDITIONS: see back page

**THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:**

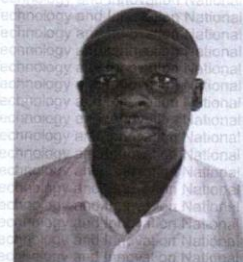
**MR. CHARLES KIMUTAI KURGATT  
 of MOI UNIVERSITY, 0-20200  
 KERICHO, has been permitted to conduct  
 research in *Bomet County***

**on the topic: *INFLUENCE OF PEDAGOGY  
 ON LEARNER COMPETENCY IN WRITING  
 SKILLS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE A STUDY  
 OF UPPER PRIMARY PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN  
 KENYA***

**for the period ending:  
 23rd July, 2020**

.....  
**Applicant's  
 Signature**

**Permit No : NACOSTI/P/19/0215/31688  
 Date Of Issue : 24th July, 2019  
 Fee Received :Ksh 2000**



.....  
  
**Director General  
 National Commission for Science,  
 Technology & Innovation**