

**CHOICE OF POEMS, TEACHER STRATEGIES, ATTITUDES AND THEIR  
CONTRIBUTIONS TO PERFORMANCE IN POETRY: A SURVEY OF  
SELECTED SCHOOLS IN KAKAMEGA COUNTY,**

**KENYA**

**BY**

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FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF  
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## DECLARATION

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## DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my adoring children Ian, Dan and Becky, for their unconditional love, untiring support and encouragement and to all my friends and colleagues for their contributions towards the completion of this work.

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I highly appreciate the contribution and support of various institutions and individuals without whom I would have not undertaken this study. Many people helped me in making

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#### **ABSTRACT**

Poetry is a component of the Integrated English Syllabus and it is a compulsory genre in Kenyan Secondary Schools. There is evidence that general performance in this section of the course tends to fall below expectations. Teachers are thought to use very little time teaching poetry. Equally, learners are suspected to hold negative attitudes towards poetry. Nevertheless, what it is about poetry that is resented has partially been documented. Since

poetry is unique in the arrangement of words, perhaps it is the structure and content of poetry that is not liked by both teachers and students. This researcher set out to investigate the effect of poetic language on the attitude of learners and teachers towards poetry. The purpose of the study was to find out the factors teachers consider in selecting poems for teaching, the strategies they use for teaching, and the effect of poetic language on the attitude of learners. Specifically, the study sought to; describe procedures teachers use in the selection of poems; to describe the relationship, if any, between the types of poem based on language and attitude; to describe methods of teaching used; and, to decipher the relationship, if any, between methods of teaching poetry, attitude and achievement by learners. The study was enmeshed in the mixed methods research paradigm: some objectives tended towards the quantitative while other objectives were clearly qualitative. The study adopted the exploratory and descriptive research designs. The researcher selected 10% of the population to attain a residue 500 students and 10 teachers of poetry. The study sample was selected using both stratified sampling and simple random sampling methods. Data was collected using questionnaires for teachers and students, interview guide for teachers, observation schedule for class activities, document analysis guide for records and a performance test for students. Descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were used to analyze the data generated. The data is presented in the form of tables and charts. On the basis of the findings from this study it appears teachers have no specific formula in selecting poems for teaching. The findings of the study reveal that students had higher scores in poems with simple language as opposed to poems with archaic language and difficult phrases. Performance in the written tests by students and answers to the questionnaire by teachers revealed that respondents had positive attitudes towards poems with simple language and negative attitude towards poems with old English. Overall teachers presented less than 30 poems to a class in a year. Teachers tend to teach poetry from the general to the specific, emphasizing form, stylistic devices rather than teaching students to appreciate poetry by themselves. Given the haphazard manner in which teachers select poems for study it is recommended that the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) should consider setting a specific anthology to be studied by all candidates in Kenya. Poetry anthologies of varying difficulty should be presented to the various levels of Form One, Two, Three and Four.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

#### 1.0 An Introduction

Literature is the expression of ideas and the feelings about events, individuals and society in words. Literary expression is presented through the genres of fiction, oral literature, drama and poetry. In all genres, authors use words specially arranged. Learners at secondary school level in Kenya have to read novels, oral narratives, plays and poems. They later sit for the Integrated English examination paper which covers all genres. While individual students and teachers do not show any aversion to fiction, oral literature or drama, a majority of students appear to detest poetry. There is wide research evidence to the effect that teachers and students have negative attitudes towards poetry (Bright and McGregor, 1978; KNEC Reports, 2005, 2006). This aversion to poetry is not just confined to Kenya. In a study on Hong Kong Chinese students Hirvela and Boyle (1988) found that majority of students preferred prose fiction with an equally overwhelming distaste for poetry. However, there is very little that has been documented on the specific aspects of poetry that lead to aversion. A single word does not make a poem. Poetry resides in the alliance between or the arrangement of words. If all genres of Literature are expressed in words and sentences specially arranged what is it about poetry that elicits negative attitudes? It is this question that this study sought to answer.

## 1.1 Background to the Study

English as a subject in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education is critical for the career success of individual candidates. English is the medium of instruction in all subjects. English is also the language of communication in administrative and commercial enterprises. Admission to University courses depends on a candidate's performance in English. The grades in English or Kiswahili and Mathematics are compulsory in any four subject cluster used for admission to university. A poor grade in English would rule out of admission a candidate wishing to enroll for a course at University.

The English subject examination consists of three papers: Paper One deals with functional skills; Paper Two consists of comprehension, literary appreciation and grammar and Paper Three deals with creative essays based on set texts. Poetry appears in two of the Papers. The examination requires integration of skills and knowledge in English and Literature. To emphasize integration between the subjects poetry appears central in Paper One where sound skills are tested and in Paper Two where comprehension skills are tested. Poetry as a genre easily lends itself to the teaching of both Literature and English Language. Poetry is a useful tool in the improvement of a candidate's English. Poetry is the primordial utterance. The utterance is expressed and condensed in words, rhythms and images (Boni, 2005). The beauty of word in poetry comes from not only its form but from, especially its content. Nevertheless, to benefit from the advantages of poetry learners should have a positive disposition to poetry. Students learn what they enjoy. It is required that both the teachers and learners be well equipped to handle the poems effectively. The teachers must be thoroughly knowledgeable in the subject and love it, in order to transfer the same skills to the

learners that they teach. Poetry is usually described as the most difficult genre to understand (Alembi, 1988). The Ministry of Education (1992) contends that many teachers of English in Kenya find that teaching poetry presents them with considerable problems. Moody (1972) argues that “poetry raises, in a concise way, some of the most typical problems in the teaching of Literature” (p9). Moody further asserts that the teaching of poetry in developing countries presents special difficulties and many teachers are inclined to avoid it, as long as they can.

Moody (1972, p 28) notes that poetry is riddled with archaic spelling, some words are used in unexpected contexts, obscure references, unfamiliar comparisons, nonsensical statements, and chiasitic sentences. He adds that, “the field of poetry seems extraordinary complex for there are lyrical poems, epic, narrative and satirical poems, and also technical expressions such as: symbolism, imagery, hyperbole, metre and so on. According to KIE (1987) the teaching of literature places on the teachers of English a more difficult task than ever before.

In the numerous reports prepared by KNEC English papers test a candidate’s ability to comprehend the input, mainly the written word, and their ability to respond to literary aesthetics and to express their response in writing. Reports on performance in English over the years reveal a poor performance generally. The mean scores in all Papers in 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2012 reveal marks gravitating around the median or lower. The KNEC report of 2012 identifies poetry as an area that requires urgent attention within the English paper. The report says that nationally candidates had difficulties in tackling

poetry questions, many students scored zero. These low scores affected students' grades because marks are compounded with those from other literary genres.

Table 1.1 shows KCSE national results.

**Table 1.1 National Results**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Paper</b>	<b>Candidates</b>	<b>Maxim score</b>	<b>Mean score</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>
2009	1		60	30.75 (51.30%)	8.08
	2	335,415	80	26.99 (36.66%)	12.21
	3		60	20.81 (34.75%)	7.97
	Overall		200	78.42 (39.21%)	25.64
2010	1		60	28.12 (46.86%)	9.17
	2	354,935	80	31.07 (38.83%)	11.61
	3		60	18.64 (31.06%)	8.42
	Overall		200	77.36 (38.68%)	26.82
2011	1		60	25.73 (42.88%)	8.41
	2	410,949	80	28.53 (35.66%)	12.46
	3		60	18.60 (31.0%)	7.04
	Overall		200	72.84 (36.42%)	25.14
2012	1		60	28.88 (48.13%)	9.20
	2	434,127	80	28.77 (35.96%)	12.91
	3		60	18.11 (30.1%)	7.61
	Overall		200		27.34

For a crucial subject such as English the scores shown above should be cause for worry.

While an average score of 48% may be comforting what it does not reveal is that a majority of candidates may have scored less than 20%. When the mean is 48% the bottom half of a normal distribution will have performed dismally. Overall performance was impacted by the marginal improvement in Papers1 and 2.

Research on causes of poor performance in English in Kenya reveals that..... In other parts of Africa Namach (1990) gives an example of the teaching of English in Congo and where it was discovered that the major factors affecting performance were books, learning resources, overcrowded classes and attitudes of students. He too found out that methods used by teachers were considered boring by the learners and recommended that teachers be retrained in the teaching of English.

This reflects the 1975 UNESCO International Conference view on education, which noted:

In view of the continuous renovation and development to of general and pedagogic knowledge, and of the constant changes taking place in education systems and the increasing creative characters of pedagogical activities it does not seem possible to equip the student with the knowledge and skills which would be sufficient for his whole professional life ... Hence a comprehensive policy is needed to ensure that teacher education is reorganized as a continuous coordinated process which begins with pre-service preparation and continues throughout the teacher's professional career (Ministry of Education, 1992).

Apart from the study carried out in Congo to unravel the mystery of poor performance in English, Kaikumba (1983) carried out a study in Sierra Leone on the English syllabus of 1974, which had been formulated in order to facilitate the teaching and learning of English in secondary schools. The syllabus was meant to be a base for training and retraining teachers of syllabus did not have any remarkable impact on the teaching of English in Sierra Leone secondary schools, it also revealed that the level of competence in English of secondary school learners was alarmingly low. This study reveals that change of curriculum does not directly translate into effective teaching and learning of



English. This therefore means that to improve performance in English other factors must be looked into.

Due to the knowledge on causes of poor performance in English, the Ministry of Education in Kenya has made several attempts to bring positive change. Some of the attempts included overhauling of the syllabus in 2002 which led to a change in the English syllabus. In the revised syllabus the teaching of English remained integrated. The revised syllabus clearly defined the integrated approach to make the teaching of the languages more effective (KIE, 2002). The high failure rate of students in English language examination in KCSE is worrying. The performance in the literary sections of the English language papers is even more depressing. In the recent times, the mean score has revolved around 36.42 per cent to 38.42 per cent. Poor performances persist. The 2005 Kenya National Examinations Council Report revealed that the performance in the poetry question of the year 2004 was dismal and that very few candidates left certain sections undone, and cited question 5 ( b), 5 (d), 5 (i) and 5 (f). The four questions together contributed a total of eight marks out of twenty. The report goes further to state that examiners observed that poetry presented candidates with problems which were symptomatic of poor teaching or lack of enough attention to poetry by the teachers. The annual KNEC reports also give advice to the teachers. For that particular year the report specifically instructed the teachers to improve their teaching methods and interest candidates more in poetry. The assumption here is that the teachers avoid teaching poetry and this makes the students lack interest in learning poetry.

KNEC reports identify the evidence of problems in schools. They hardly delve into causes of the problems learners of poetry face. This study was designed to investigate teacher and learner characteristics which may affect performance in poetry. Specifically the researcher focused on attitudes towards poetry. Social psychologists perceive “attitude” as a subjective or mental preparation for action. Similarly, attitude means the individuals’ prevailing tendency to respond favourably or unfavourably to an objective (Morris & Maitso, 2005). Attitudes affect the behaviour of the individual. It would be helpful at this point to distinguish between attitudes and values since the two concepts have, more often than not, been used interchangeably. Attitudes affect behaviour at different levels than values. While values represent global beliefs that influence behaviours across all situations, attitudes relate only to behaviour directed at specific objects, persons or situations. Attitude has three main components; affective, cognitive, and behavioural. The affective component of an attitude contains the feelings and emotions one has about a given object or situation. For example, how does one feel about people who frequently smoke in public? If one feels angry with such people, one is expressing a negative affect towards such people. The affective component becomes neutral if one is indifferent about people who smoke in public. The cognitive component of attitude has to do with what one thinks about people, situations or objects. For instance, the way one thinks about a particular kind of behaviour emanates from one’s attitude.

The cognitive component reflects the beliefs or ideas that one has about a particular topic. For example, does one believe that speaking *Sheng* in a Literature class discussion is a healthy practice? The answer to this question constitutes the cognitive component of

one's attitude. The third component of attitude is behavioural. This refers to how the individual tends to act, or is expected, to act towards something or someone (Kreitner and Kinicki, 2004). For instance, how does one respond or act towards people who always use *Sheng* when they are communicating, if one were the recipient? It is believed that one's ultimate behaviour in this situation is the function of all three attitudinal components. In other words, if one does feel angry with people using *Sheng* to communicate, one sees the affective component; if one believes that the use of *Sheng* in communication helps people to express themselves better, (the cognitive); and if one observes that one has no intention of confronting people who use *Sheng* it is behavioural.

The learning of a particular subject and, in this case Poetry depends to some extent on the degree to which a person has a favourable or unfavourable evaluation or appraisal of Poetry. The perceived social pressure to learn or not to learn also determines the attitude one adopts towards learning subject. Thirdly, attitude controls the perceived ease or difficulty of learning a subject and this has some direct link with past experiences as well as anticipated impediments and obstacles. Attitude, according to Daniel Katz, is a hypothetical construct that represents an individual's degree of like or dislike for an item. Attitudes are generally positive or negative views of a person, place, thing, or event—this is often referred to as the attitude object. People can also be conflicted or ambivalent toward an object, meaning that they simultaneously possess both positive and negative attitudes towards the item in question.

Leder (1992) observes that attitudes are learnt and predispose one towards action which may be either favourable or unfavourable with respect to a given object. Formation of

attitudes towards an academic subject is thought to develop through an automation of repeated emotional reactions to the subject and the transference of an existing attitude to a new or related task (McLeod, 1992). The formation of academic attitudes has been identified as a complex process involving socialization, relationships with teachers, teacher attitudes and aspects of the subject matter itself. In this case subject matter is content and form of poetry. Positive teacher attitude leads to the formation of positive student attitudes to the subject taught (Sullivan, 1989). Equally important is the fact that instructional strategies teachers use in the classroom are often influenced by teacher attitudes and beliefs (Carpenter & Lubinski, 1990; Williams, 1988). There was need to describe teacher attitudes and instructional strategies and how they relate to performance in poetry.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

The integration of English Language and Literature made both subjects compulsory for KCSE candidates. Prior to this, Literature was optional for examination candidates. Candidates would choose to avoid Literature and thus avoid poetry. The integration of English was supposed to bring efficiency in the teaching and learning of English. Content from Literature was supposed to make learners see the language used within context. Poetry uses fewer words to represent the most verbally expansive idea, and it has internal rhythm. Since students in Kenya learn English as a Second Language, Literature texts should provide extended usage of language. Prosaic language is direct and concise and defines precisely a situation or an aspect of it. Poetic language goes to the heart of the matter without preamble.

Poor performance in English is attributed to poor performance in poetry. Earlier researches have described the negative attitudes towards poetry as a major cause of low performance (Hirvela & Boyle, 1988; Gardner, 2005; Sullivan, 1989). A person may have the competency to perform a task but they may not have the desire (attitude) to do so ( Bootzin, Loftus and Zanjoc, 1983). What have not been documented sufficiently are the possible reasons behind the negative disposition. All Literature consists of language. Yet students never hold discernible negative attitudes towards prose. What is it about poetry that engenders negative attitudes from among Kenyan students? What is it about poetic language and the teaching of poetry that leads to poor performance? It is on the authority of Kenyan National Examination Council that either, teachers do not teach poetry properly, or, they do not sufficiently interest learners in poetry. However, there is little known research evidence to that effect. In this study therefore, the researcher sought to broaden understanding of how choice of poems, teacher strategies and poetic language affects the attitude of both teachers and learners and how attitude in turn affects performance.

### **1.3 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this mixed methods descriptive study was to attempt to explain the choice of poems, teacher strategies, attitudes on one hand and their contributions to performance in poetry on other hand, at secondary school level. At one level attitude is a dependent variable. At the next level attitude is an independent variable where performance is dependent upon it.

## **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

There were five objectives for this study;

1. To describe the procedure for selection of poems used in secondary schools;
2. To describe the poetic language used in poems presented for examinations in KCSE;
3. To identify and describe methods used by teachers of poetry in the classroom;
4. To identify the teachers' and students' attitude towards poetry arising from poetic language;
5. Discuss the relationship between teachers' and students' attitude and performance on poetry tasks.

This study is both qualitative and quantitative. The researcher therefore prepared questions to cover the qualitative aspect and set hypotheses to cover the quantitative aspect.

### **1.5.1 Research Questions**

The following research questions were compiled to help create a focus for the study;

1. What procedure do teachers use to select poems for teaching in secondary schools?
2. What are the characteristics of the language contained in poems used for examinations in KCSE in the years 2007-2011?

3. Which teacher strategies do teachers of poetry use to present poetry content in secondary school classes?
4. What attitudes do teachers and students hold towards poetry?

### **1.5.2 Hypothesis**

The one hypothesis set to meet Objective Five was;

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference between teachers' and students' attitude towards poetic language and performance in poetry.

### **1.6 Justification of the Study**

Knowledge that a majority of learners hold negative dispositions towards poetry is insufficient. It is also important for researchers to collect evidence on the procedure teachers use when selecting poems to teach. It is important to document what it is candidates find unfavorable poetry section of examinations in order to raise consciousness among teachers in the classroom. The present study was justified because it sought to establish a link between the language of poetry and performance by students.

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

The learners' attitude towards a subject has been linked to students' achievement in poetry and in other subjects as well (Taylor, 1992; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). This study adds to the field of research on the nature of poetry and attitude of teachers and learners. This study, on the effect of poetic language on the attitude of teachers and students, is unique for several reasons. First, it addresses an issue which is timely and has

been of critical concern to successive leaders at the Ministry of Education. Officials often express concern about performance in English of which poetry is an important part. Second, this study was an investigation into what exactly takes place in class when poetry is taught. It is crucial that policy makers understand the processes that teachers engage in as they teach poetry. They can then judge the efficacy of such practices.

### **1.8 Scope of the study**

This study was concerned with the poetic language students encounter in the course of poetry lessons and examinations. It was extended to assess the language contained only in selected poems taught to students. The selected poems are those which were used by teachers in the schools selected for research. The data is that which could be gathered in the period January 2011 and March 2012. Data generated was that which came through questionnaires, observation, and interview and class tests in a cross-section survey. It is possible that other information was available but it was not collected because it fell outside the ambit of what selected tools could collect.

### **1.9 Limitations of the Study**

In educational research it is ideal to conduct a longitudinal study in order to account for all possible variables that may influence performance in a selected area. However time and resources do not allow. Researchers in education are then compelled to conduct short cross-sectional surveys which may ignore many important variables. In this study the use of cross-sectional survey created a limitation. Data collected is therefore limited to what



could be collected when the researcher was in the field. Any developments that may have taken place before or after data collection is not accounted for in this report.

This study was limited to the sampled schools and teachers in the area of data generation. This study was limited to teacher and student attitudes and how they influence the learning of poetry. The other variables that may influence performance such as learner background and language, type of school and other related characteristics were not taken into account.

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

The researcher made the following assumptions in this study;

1. That the schools involved in this study teach poetry and prepare candidates for the KCSE which is the major body mandated to examine and therefore sets standards
2. That respondents possess the knowledge ability and desire to answer poetry questions accurately;
3. That all teachers in selected secondary schools are trained and qualified to teach poetry and have knowledge of the integrated approach;
4. Those schools chosen in various categories have common characteristics influencing performance, with attitude of teachers being the major source of difference in academic achievement in English.

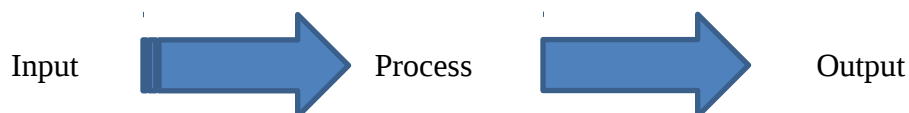
### **1.11 Theoretical Framework**

The researcher approached the research problem from the point that there are certain inputs which contribute to success in teaching and learning poetry. Teacher characteristics such as training experience and attitude, nature of the poem, and classroom processes may affect the extent to which individual learners appreciate and perform in poetry. The researcher therefore adopted a theory that places inputs on one side of the continuum and outputs on the other side. The researcher built on the elements of the Educational Production Function Theory. The EPF is derived from the general production function theory. The EPF theory postulates that educational outcomes are as a result of a variety of inputs. Psacharopoulos and Woodhall (1985) note that the relationship between inputs and outputs of education is highly complex since many factors such as ability, income, home background and other social economic factors as well as school factors all combine to affect educational outcomes. The more and better quality the combined inputs are, the higher the outputs. Education is a production process which uses scarce financial, physical, and human resources to produce educated people to serve society. In this study school type and teacher characteristics are the inputs while attitude and performance on poetry are the output. On the basis of the theoretical perspective outlined here before the conceptual model in figure 1.1 below was developed.

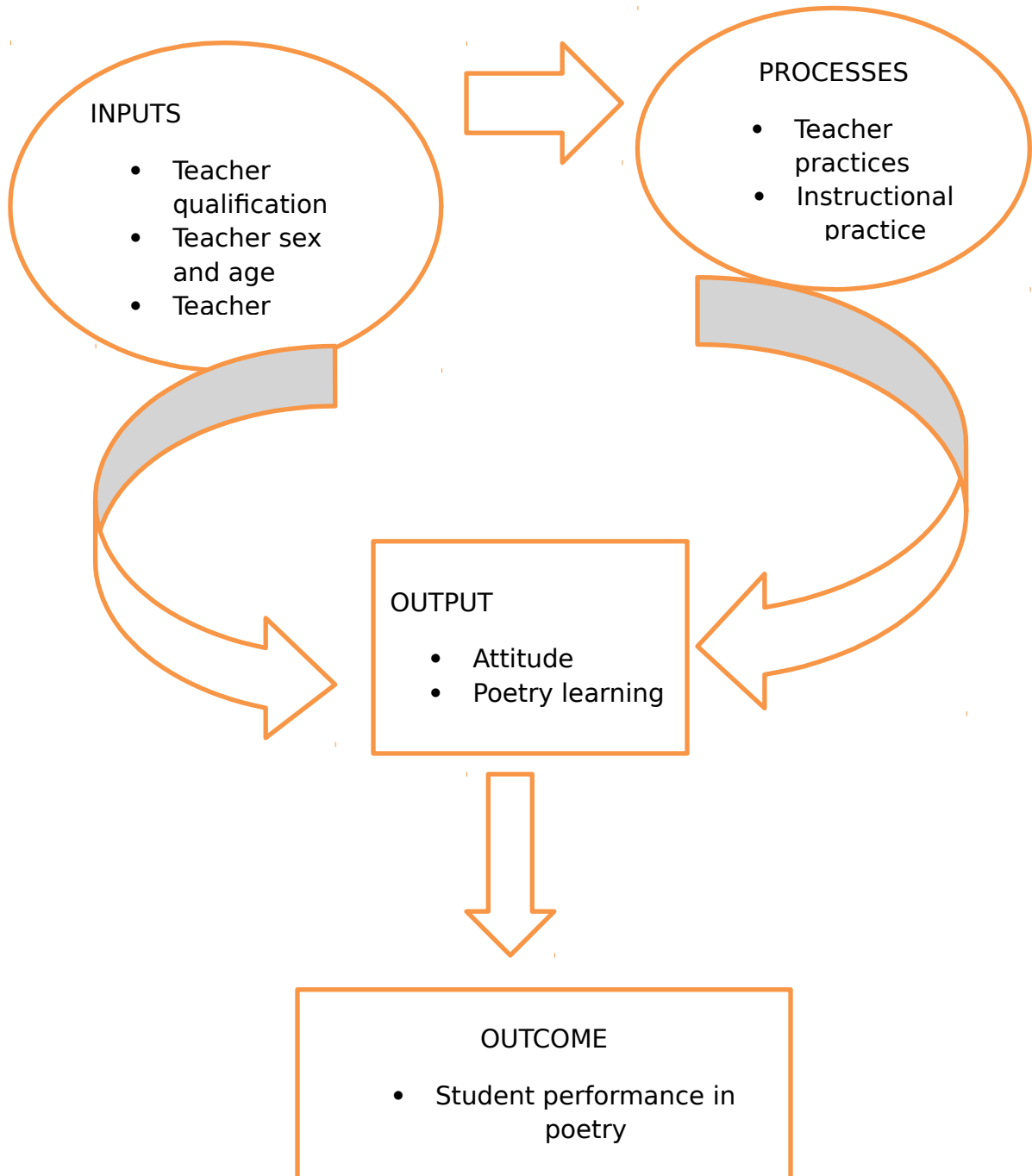
### **1.12 Conceptual Model**

Conceptual model or framework is used to refer to a visual representation of the major variables of a study and how they are connected. The purpose of a conceptual framework is to assist in the selection and development of appropriate methods of investigation, to facilitate links with the relevant literature and to provide a structure for the analysis,

reporting and discussion of the findings of an investigation. According to Ravitch and Riggan (2013) a conceptual framework is an “argument” about why the topic one wishes to study matters and why the means proposed to study it are appropriate and rigorous. For the duo “argument” is a series of sequenced logical propositions the purpose of which is to convince the reader of the study’s importance and rigor. For this study the procedure teachers use to select poems for use in poetry lessons, the characteristics of the poems so selected and the instructional strategies teachers adopt in the classroom were isolated as factors to possibly affect attitude towards poetry itself. In this study it is conceptualized that the nature of poetry as expressed in poetic language has an effect on the attitudes held by teachers and learners of poetry. All literature is expressed in language. Nevertheless researchers never discuss attitude towards the other literature genres. It is poetry as a specific genre that is often discussed in relation to attitude. Teachers and students have attitudes towards poetry and it is possible their attitudes influence performance. Several teacher-related variables were examined. These were such as teacher qualification, teacher experience, teacher practices, and teacher attitudes. In order to understand the multiple influences of the various variables on student performance in poetry the researcher adopted the model as a conceptual framework to guide the selection of variables.



The conceptual framework in this study shows that poetic language, teacher characteristics such sex and experience may affect attitudes of both teachers and learners and the instructional practices used by teachers which in turn affect teacher effectiveness, student learning and student performance. The conceptual model is represented diagrammatically in Figure 1.1 next:



**Figure 1.1: Graphic representation of variables**

In this conceptual model teacher qualifications, subject combinations teacher attitude and experience are seen as inputs. What teachers do in class while teaching poetry are conceived as teacher processes. These all combine to affect learning of poetry. The variable attitude is dichotomous. At one level it is dependent showing how individuals react to poetry and are influenced by poetic language. At another level it is an independent variable able to influence what and how a teacher presents poetry and what learners achieve from poetry lessons.

### 1.13 Operational Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined in the context of their use in this study.

**Attitude:** it is a way of thinking about somebody or something or a way of behaving towards somebody or something (Oxford advanced learners dictionary).

**Competency:** An ability to carry out a task effectively and satisfactorily to the expected required standards

**Effect:** This is change caused by something. In this study it refers to the result brought to a learner by the language of a poem as a result of reading poetry.

**Integration:** This is the presentation of several different disciplines as one whole in a school curriculum. In this case integration refers to the teaching and learning of English language and Literature as one subject

**Strategies:** Refers to methods and classroom activities.

**Learning:** Students ability to read, interpret, explain and get meaning from poems in English.

**Performance:** Specified level of competence in terms of the totals core attained by an individual student in poetry.

**Poetic Language:** This refers to language specially associated with images, metaphor, irony, alliteration and rhyme used as peculiar, acoustic, verbal or written speech. This is a unique style of choosing and using words in speech or writing to give it a style called poetry.

**Qualification:** Something attained by passing an examination or a course of study successfully (Advanced learners dictionary).

**Reading:** It is a language learning skill that involves the development of one's ability to make sense understand meaning from written symbols.

#### **1.14 Chapter Summary**

In this chapter the problem for investigation was identified and placed into its educational context. The purpose and objectives of the study were highlighted. The theoretical perspective for the study was also outlined. The research questions were outlined, justification looked at and significance of the study given. The chapter also suggests scope and limitations of the study. In the next chapter literature review is presented

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter deals with the review of literature to the topic selected for this study. The literature review is closely related to the objectives of the study and it; therefore fell under the following headings.

- The nature of poetry
- Poetic in language
- Attitude in general
- Performance in poetry
- Integrated approach

#### **2.1 The Nature of Poetry**

The word poetry comes from the Greek poem "poesis" which means "creation" (Tarin, 1994). Poetry is language chosen and organized with great care and skill. It represents language at its most perfect and precision (Ongeti, 2015). A poet has little space to articulate their message therefore they must be concise in language use. In poetry language is used in a way distinctly different from its use in every day discourse. The actual forms of the words, their varied and acoustic qualities, the very shape and sound of the poem have an importance which may not be separated from the poem itself. Reeves (1975), writes that in poetry there is compression of language to portray hidden meaning. Poetry is an imaginative expression of human experience. What we get when reading a



poem is an experience. The story that the poet tells is pictorial and has acoustic qualities. Poems are full of suggestions of unrevealed meanings. Edgar Allan Poe writes that poetry is the rhythmic creation of beauty. Poetry is the synthesis of truth and beauty. The beauty of the word comes from not only its form but from especially its content. Poets use form to create musicality. Poets form a pattern and shape to generate meaning. Poetry generally enables a reader to tell what it is like to undergo an experience. It's not possible to do that without taking special meaning of those words. According to Mboya (2000) poetry can be about any subject in the universe. Poems can be observations of phenomena whether natural or man-made they can be explorations of ideas and feelings they can argue tell stories create pictures etc. Edwards (1967) contends that poetry universalizes experience. The meanings will grow out of poems as the reader engages the poem using thought and imagination much in the same way an oat grows out of corn under the influence of moisture and sunlight.

Poems are often self-sufficient. Poems consist of what is said and how it is said. What is said is the subject matter while how it is said is the form of the poem. In the teaching of poetry therefore one has to understand that poetry is a way of presenting human experiences in a fresh and surprising manner. A poem will therefore make a magical impact on the reader, unlike ordinary prose. An example is the poem next;

### **The Face of Hunger**

I counted ribs on his concertina chest  
Bones protruding as if chiseled  
By a sculptor's hand of famine.  
He looked with glazed pupils  
Seeing only a bun on some sky-high shelf.  
The skin was pale and taut  
Like a glove on a doctor's hand.  
His tongue darted in and out  
Like a chameleon's  
Snatching a confetti of flies.  
O! Child,  
Your stomach is a den of lions roaring day and night.

**Oswald Mbuyiseni Mtshali**

This poem is describing the effects of hunger on the body of a child. The child is emaciated so that his chest reveals protruding ribs comparable to a lifeless body created by a sculptor. The poem gets its effect from the use of powerful images and metaphor. It is therefore more memorable than if the author were to describe a famine situation using prose. The poem has rhythm from which a reader or listener draws pleasure. Generally, poetry is characterized by specific elements which make it succinct and enjoyable. The major elements of poetry which make it different from prose are rhythm, rhyme, alliteration, metaphor, imagery symbolism among others. The elements of poetry draw on the human senses of sight, hearing, smelling, touching and tasting. Poetry works by using

words which appeal to human senses. In the poem **The Face of Hunger** we see a hungry person, we feel his taut skin and we hear the stomach rumbling like a den of lions.

### 2.1.2. The structure of poetry

A poem consists of two parts: there is the inner structure and the physical structure of the poem. Richards (1984) describes both the inner structure and the physical structure. Inner structure of the poem is a form of unity of meaning of poetry consisting of subject matter, theme, feeling, tone and the message conveyed by the poet. To understand the inner structure, the reader should try to involve themselves with the nuances of poetry. The feeling and tone of the poet can be expressed through language which is given meaning by the reader. One way to involve the reader in understanding the internal meaning of the poem is to engage readers in deciphering the language code. The inner structure of the poem is made up of the theme, tone, mood, message or intention and so on.

#### 2.1.2. 1 Theme

The theme is the central idea that the poet expresses through his poetry. Themes in poems usually reveal the essential nature of human problems, such as love, fear, happiness, sorrow, misery of life, justice, and truth, divinity, social criticism and protest. The theme is the meaning of the subject matter contained in a poem. Themes can be transformed into a sub-theme or subject matter. Poetry often does not reveal a common theme, but the theme is special and can be classified into sub-themes. The following poem by Okot P' Bitek is based on the theme of love gone sour:

#### **Song of Lawino**

Ocol is no longer in love with the old type;

He is in love with a modern girl.

The name of the beautiful one

Is Clementine.

Brother, when you when Clementine!

The beautiful one aspires

To look like a white woman;

Her lips are red-hot

Like glowing charcoal,

She resembles the wild cat

That has dipped its mouth in blood,

Her mouth is like raw yaws

It looks like an open ulcer,

Like the mouth of a fiend!

Tina dusts powder on her face

And it looks so pale;

She resembles the wizard getting ready for the midnight dance.

She dusts the ash-dirt all over her face

And when little sweat

Begins to appear on her body

She looks like the guinea fowl!

The speaker in this poem is obviously bitter in her love life. Although the theme of the poem is love, it would be more precise to say it is bitterness which results from the

catastrophic failure of love. The speaker, Lawino, suffers a bitterness against Clementine who has apparently snatched her husband from her. Each poem contains subject matter or content poets present to the audience even if in some sense the poem is a bit sketchy.

#### **2.1.2.2. Tone**

The tone is often associated with the atmosphere depicted in a poem. The kind of emotion we get from reading a poem is called tone. Tone may emerge from the poet depending on the language used. However, tone is developed by the reader of the poem. As one reads a poem one develops a feeling towards the subject matter as portrayed by the poet. Let us read the poem **Public Butchery** reproduced below:

#### **Public Butchery**

Some people fear death  
 Others must face it before a crowd  
 Specially invited  
 To witness the ceremony of their last breath.  
 Coups have succeeded elsewhere  
 And heads have rolled  
 And blood has flown  
 Quite indiscriminately.

But oh! Condemned conspirators  
 Your fate is martyred while you watch  
 Heads and hearts held high  
 Dead defiance lurking still  
 In eyeballs bathed in sweat.

As the judge performs the abortion  
 For your baby mother was fully pregnant

Once you were greeted  
 And treated  
 As VIPs  
 Now there is a blank silence as a crowd watches  
 Four ministries  
 Hanging in the air. (Jagju Singh)

The tone of the poet above may be said to be tragic, ironical, sympathetic, or hateful. Government dissidents are executed in public for all to see. Tone is associated with the mood the poet creates but it may also be associated with the “voice” the reader derives from the poem such as: bitter tone, sarcasm, inciting tone, a relaxed tone, or philosophical tone. In a poem normally the poet invites readers to respond in a certain way. For example that public execution of political opponents of whatever persuasion is not justified. Tone in a poem is the poet’s attitude toward his subject matter or the poet’s attitude toward the reader/ audience of his work.

### **2.1.2.3 Mood**

When reading a poem one develops a specific feeling or becomes captured by a certain mood. When two or three people are faced with the same situation they may emerge with very different attitudes or moods. Individuals may be happy, sad, troubled, afraid, restless, yearning, nostalgic, curious, hate, love or revenge. To describe mood in poetry

we use words like happy, angry, bitter, violent, nostalgic, melancholy, quiet, and resigned and so on.

#### **2.1.2.4 Message**

Each poet has a specific intention when writing a poem. Whether intended or not, a poem has a message to convey. Poems may serve the purpose of entertaining or teaching or both. Most poems are written for didactic purposes. Each reader can interpret the message of an individual poem. Readers may interpret the message of a poem differently from other readers. Interpretation of the message by a poetry reader depends on the reader's attitude toward the theme raised by the poet. The poet, a thinker in creating his work, has sharp strong feelings and intuition to depict a secret life and the mystery that exists in people's lives. Therefore poems have hidden meanings that are to be interpreted by the reader.

### **2.2.2 Physical elements of poetry**

#### **2.2.2.1 Diction**

Diction in a poem is the choice of words by the poet. The poet does not specify what will be the “diction” used in the poem. Therefore, a poet writes a poem using carefully chosen

words to generate an atmosphere to match. This is done repeatedly until obtaining proper diction (Leech, 1986).

### 2.2.2.2 Figurative Language

A metaphor is a figure of speech in which a term or phrase is applied to something to which it is not literally applicable in order to suggest a resemblance. Examples,

1. He was drowning in a sea of sorrow
2. Fruit hearts are overwhelmed with poor
3. Beach break waves return
4. All the world is a stage
5. Fred is a pig at table
6. The screaming headlines announced the murder

In modern literary criticism the term metaphor includes similes and personification. Similes are for example;

“The Nile and the Nyanza

Lay like two twins

Azure across the green countryside”. (Rubadiri, 1992).

Personification in poetry is the reference to non-human objects as if they had human qualities. Example

“The stream sighed as it hugged the beach”

Above the river is heard to sigh, tired from carrying the heavy load of sand and debris from the highlands, as if it were a human being.



### 2.2.2.3 Imagery

An image is any expression which produces a sensory effect. An expression conjured as an image communicates to our senses of sight, sound, smell, and taste. The use of images is called imagery. Imagery in a poem is the phrase that causes the reader to visualize something, hear something or feel. Examples of imagery in poems are;

### 2.2.2.4 Sound

When a poem is read the sound produced by the words may determine the meaning of the poem. Sound in the poem comes from rhyme, rhythm and metre. Rhythm is the hallmark of poetry. In poetry rhythm is present whenever anything recurs more or less regularly. Whenever any of the following comes at fixed intervals, then rhythm is said to be present: a particular word or word cluster, an image, a refrain line, a symbol, or a pattern of beats or rhymes. However the most common or systematic sort of rhythm is called metre. Rhythm has the ability to arouse human emotions whether the source of sound is voice or words in a poem.

Rhyme occurs when the poet exploits the sound of words by making the end-words of poems to rhyme or not to rhyme. Alternatively the rhyme could come after every two lines. For example,

Atieno washes dishes,  
Atieno plucks the chicken,  
Atieno gets up early  
Beds her sacks down the kitchen,  
Atieno eight years old

Atieno yo.( McGoye, 1983).

Poetry is example of a more intense use of language. In other words, the association of meanings which language is familiar or conventionally used is not necessarily always to be found in poetry. A poem, therefore, is not an individual experience or a sum of experiences, but only a potential cause of experiences. Thus, the real poem must be conceived as a structure of norms, realized only partially in the actual experience of its many readers. So it is probably true to say that poetry employs a higher concentration of devices or effects than other deviating from the norms of language. But the question that arises is why we use poetry with the language learner? Firstly teachers may feel that the knowledge of correct language is not yet sufficiently well established in students. Secondly, teachers worry that exposing students to more creative uses of language could legitimize the use of deviant language in the classroom. Reeves (1975), argues that “in the teaching of poetry basically there are four factors to be considered. The pupils; the poems to be taught; the methods adopted and the personality of the teacher. But, personality of teacher is not only elements of taste, judgments and training which determine a teachers choice of poems and attitude towards poetry, but also the impact, he makes on the class when handling the subject”.

### **2.3 Poetic language**

Poetry has been characterized as deviating from the norms of language. It has been argued that poetry frequently breaks the rules of language, but by doing so, it communicates with us in afresh original way. The use of language in unusual context is what marks the literature. The language of literature is considered to be special and extra-

ordinary and beyond the grasp of any objective linguistic analysis. Furthermore, literary language involves a much greater degree of imagination than the language common use. It is more so with poetry. The language of poetry transforms and intensifies ordinary language and deviates systematically from every day speech. The Russian formalists of the 1920's were the first to draw attention to this aspect.

Their efforts were concentrated on two main topics: the language of poetry and the structure of narrative discourse. They saw poetry as a special kind of language, set apart from ordinary prose by its use of certain devices metaphor, metonymy, rhyme, alliteration etc., which focused attention on its formal or aesthetic attributes Samreen (2003). Perrine (2002, p560) argues that ordinary language is kind of language that people use to communicate information, and it is only one dimensional. It is directed at only part of the listener, his understanding. It is one dimension is intellectual. Whereas, poetry is kind of language can be used to communicate experience, and it has at least four dimensions. If it is used to communicate experience, it must be directed at the whole man, not just at his understanding, it must involve not only his intelligence but also his senses, emotions, and imagination.

Poetry cannot be only to the intellectual dimension but also be a sensuous dimension, an emotional dimension and imaginative dimension. Abrams (2001, p. 103) argues that there is difference between the literary (or poetical) of language and the ordinary (or practical) of language, he also suggests that central function of ordinary language is to communicate to auditors a message, or information, by references to the world existing outside of language. Whereas the function of literary language can be used, is not to

convey information by making extrinsic references, but to offer the reader a special mode of experience by drawing attention to its own “formal” features, he adds that the linguistic of literature is different from the linguistic of practical discourse because its laws are oriented toward producing the distinctive feature that formalists call literariness. Rezaei (2001, p5) “points out that the language of poetry is used for a special way. Poets choose words not only for their senses, but also for sound, and the word pictures they create. The language of poetry makes sense and sound, rhythm, music, and vision, whereas ordinary language only makes sense”. The nature of poetry however makes it difficult to comprehend by the untrained mind. Moody (1971) holds the view that language used in poetry creates an obstacle to the enjoyment of poetry

### **2.3.1. Deviation of Language**

Nowotny (1962), points out that “poetic language has been called a deviation from the linguistic norm, the norm being the ordinary (spoken) language and the language of prose”. Levin (1962), classifies deviation of language in two types. First there is internal deviation and then there is external deviation in poetry. The first type of deviation takes place against the background of the poem. The norm is the remainder of the poem in which the deviation occurs. The second type of deviation is to be explicated against some norm which lies outside the limits of the poem in which the deviation occurs. Chibber (1987) argues that there are two types of the norms or regularities language. First, those that govern the form of a string are the rules or constraints; second those that characterize the meaning of a string are mere tendencies. For example, verb like ‘permit’ in the transitivity- norm have to take an object, is a rule; on the other hand, requirements like [ + ANIMATE ] subject etc., the rule that verbs like ‘eat’ ‘admire’, ‘love’ etc., take a [ +

ANIMATE ] subject is not a rule in the sense the transitivity- rule is; it is statement of tendencies. Palmer ( 1986 ) argues that there are some sentences that are clearly ungrammatical and are simply to be ruled out or corrected, while others are added in a lexical way and can, with some imagination, be contextualized. But there are others that are half way, he points out that one is not really sure whether this deviance is lexical or grammatical. See the following example of such a border line case:

The dog scattered

The verb “scatter” is normally used only with plural nouns. It would seem, therefore, that a grammatical rule is being broken and that we should amend it to “the dog scattered food”. If far-fetched contextualization for the dog scattered, we have found a possible, the deviation of language can be lexical rather than grammatical. But, in these sentences we are not sure that these sentences are grammatical or lexical, the best decision according to Palmer is that, they are on the border line of grammar and lexicon.

According to Ramsaran (1983) “Phonological deviation” commonly takes the form of marked patterning, the most obvious example being that of rhyme, which is repetition at regular intervals of stressed syllables containing the same vowel and consonant phonemes in the same sequence. (This definition accounts for the difference between ‘feminine rhyme’ (e.g. saying and sewing), where the repeated syllable is unstressed and ‘Para-rhyme’ (e.g. round and hand), where the vowels differ though the consonants are the same.) Rhymes (and other similar types of patterning) introduce the important concept of parallelism (partial correspondence between pieces of text) as seen in:

Where –e’er you walk, cool gales shall fan the glade,

Trees, where you sit, shall crowd into as shade;  
 Where, e'er you tread, the blushing flow'rs shall rise,  
 And all things flourish where you turn your Eyes”.

Widdowson (1975) considers another kind of violation that is extremely common in literary writing. Such violation of known rules makes the comprehension of poetry challenging to learners especially those for whom English is a second language. For example, when following common sense it is expected that certain verbs require their subjects or objects or both to contain nouns of a particular kind. For example, the verb ‘see’ requires that its subject contain a noun which is animate, (e.g. “She saw the car”); the verb ‘hurt’ requires that an animate noun operates in the object, (e.g. “The machine hurt him”); and the verb ‘assault’ requires an animate noun in both subject and object example, “He assaulted his wife”. Following these ‘selection’ restriction rules or collection rules it is not correct to generate sentences such as the following:

“The thistle saw the gardener,  
 The gardener hurt the thistle,  
 The thistle assaulted the cauliflower.”

or both to contain nouns of a particular kind. For example, the verb ‘see’ requires that its subject contain a noun which is animate, the verb ‘hurt’ requires that an animate noun operates in the object and the verb ‘assault’ requires animacy in both subject and object. According ‘selection’ restriction rules or collection rules are available in the language description they prevent the generation of such sentences as the following:

“The thistle saw the gardener,  
 The gardener hurt the thistle,

The thistle assaulted the cauliflower.”

He writes that in studying poetry it is possible that even with the best of intentions by the teacher and students they still face challenges occasioned by difficult language.

Moody (1971) describes the type of language used in the poems above as consisting archaic spelling and unfamiliar words used in unexpected contexts. Obscure references, unfamiliar comparisons, nonsense statements, chaotic sentences are just a few of the features which hinder understanding especially when the student is told that he ought to enjoy this kind of literature and that it is good. Although poetry is read through history not all poems were written for posterity. They have time lines. Poems are also culture specific. Meaning of poetry depends on whether a student is a first language learner or a second language learner. Second language learners would generally face greater challenges with language than first language learners. Widdowson (1975) writes that in studying poetry it is possible that even with the best of intentions by the teacher and students they still face challenges occasioned by difficult language.

#### **2.4. Poetic competence**

One of the main challenges in learning literature are caused by the text itself, such as the language of the text, especially when there is a mismatch between the texts selected and students' language ability. Since poetry is a special art form it requires greater concentration for individuals to follow poetry. Culler (1975) is concerned with the idea of the literary competence of readers. Culler points out that, anyone who has not internalized “the grammar” of literature would be baffled if he encountered a poem, because he would be unable to convert the linguistic sequences into literary structures. He

also admits that it is difficult to find the exact place where linguistic competence ends and literary competence begins, because literature is a second-order semiotic system. Culler, (1975) insists on “the special conventions for reading poetry which the reader has to acquire and to master, such as: 1).

The rule of significance: reading the text as expressing a significant attitude to some problem concerning man and / or his relation to the universe. 2) The rule of metaphorical coherence: assuming a sense of coherence at the levels of both the tenor and the vehicle; 3) Inscribing the text in a poetic tradition: this code provides a set of symbols and types with universal meanings; 4) The convention of genre which provides norms that classify texts to categories; 5) The rule of totality, stipulating coherence at all levels.” Culler argues that effective readers of a literary text possess “literary competence’ in that they have implicit understanding of and familiarity with, certain conventions which allow them to take the words on the page of a play or other literary work and convert them into literary meaning. Struggling readers share the same problems which are weak comprehension, lack of interest and confidence (Arvidson & Blanco, 2004). They spend a lot of time looking up or guessing meanings of words which might result in regressive eye movement, losing sight of the plot or the bigger picture by the time they reach the bottom of the page or the end of the story. To avoid frustration and students’ lack of participation, it is vital to ensure that the language of the text match students’ proficiency level and that there is a match “between the linguistic expectations in the language syllabus with those of the literature component syllabus” (Ganakumaran, 2002) Unfamiliar vocabulary, grammar and sentence structure hamper students’ understanding



of texts. Students tend to misinterpret key words or fail to recognize them and focus instead on the less important part of a text.

When faced with unfamiliar or difficult words, phrases or sentences, students use their lower-level reading skills where they look at a sentence or phrase for clues instead of using higher level skills such as inference or relying on the context to guess a word's meaning (Kaur & Thiyagarajah, 1999). Literary style and structure pose a problem for students in trying to comprehend literary texts (Davis et al 1992). If the writer is from a different background, students need to be aware of the cultural norms in the author's world to be able to identify language deviances.

## **2.5 Teaching poetry in schools**

Literature teachers in Kenya are expected to have studied English and Literature for four years at University. However, poetry courses in universities are often-times optional. What many teachers carry to schools therefore are their own high school poetry experiences. It is sometimes difficult to know what strategies might work well, particularly when a teacher's own experiences of learning poetry in secondary school were less than positive or are now only faintly recalled. Significantly, this raises many pedagogical issues that need to be addressed by all stakeholders. Eggen and Kauchack (2001) highlighted four aspects of effective communication that are highly essential for learning and motivation. They are; precise terminology, connected discourse, transition signals and emphasis. Skillful teachers summarize and link ideas together at the end of

their lesson, review summaries of previous work and help students link what has been learnt to what is coming.

Closure is a form of review occurring at the end of a lesson; in it topics are summarized and interpreted. Essential teaching skills and teaching methods are like two sides of the same coin. Skills are the required characteristics or ingredients for effective teaching while methods can be compared to pattern to be followed in teaching. There are many teaching methods as there are teachers in the world. In teaching seven steps and the required skills may be suggested for effective teaching as follows: Preparation for instruction; Motivation; Presentation of the learning task; Inducement of the trial response; Questioning skill; Closure skill; and Evaluation skill. Even though the enumerated skills are interdependent; one is as effective alone as it is when combined with others. Ironically, interest in the literature teaching methodology only began in 1970s, when the number of students who choose to study literature dwindled as it was considered elitist, irrelevant and impractical (Kramsch & Kramsch, 2000). There are various terms used in connection to teaching methods, namely (a) Methodology – a broad, general term which can be described as “the study of pedagogical practice” (Brown 2000, p.171) or in short, how to teach, (b) Approaches – these are theories, beliefs and assumptions on how languages or other subjects are learned and should be taught, (c) Method – refers to how language specifically, is taught based on one particular approach, it is broadly defined, meaning it is not specific to any particular context, and (d) Techniques – these are items like exercises, activities and devices or strategies used in class and the term is usually, though not necessarily, more concerned with the roles and relationship between teachers and students.

There are three most common teaching approaches in literature. The first is using literature as content which is usually reserved for tertiary level students who are considered to have enough linguistic and experiential knowledge to discuss literary texts. Students read literary texts and criticism as well as wider reading concerning the socio-cultural aspects of the text. The amount of information provided usually depends on the time allocated, whether these information are central to the text and also depending on students' interest (Carter & Long, 1991). The second approach is literature for personal enrichment. In using literature for personal enrichment, students are encouraged to relate the texts to their own experience as well as give their reactions and opinions. The aim is to encourage students to be more involved in the lesson. Techniques based on this approach can promote group work and interaction in the classroom while materials are selected based on the students' interest. Thirdly, language-based approach is used to integrate literature and language syllabus. Their main purposes are to enable students to make informed and meaningful interpretations and evaluations through detailed analysis as well as to make students more sensitive and aware of the language and its linguistic features. Using students' existing grammar, lexical and discourse knowledge, teachers guide students toward making aesthetic judgment of texts. Methods used include concentrating on the stylistic features of the texts and materials are chosen for their stylistic uniqueness as well as their literary advantage (Lazar, 1993).

Eggen and Kauchak (2002) claimed that the interaction and integration of those skills are crucial to teaching and learning. In Kenya, English and Literature were integrated as one subject since the inception of the 8-4-4 system of education. The integration of the two subjects introduced drastic changes to the way they would be taught. Unfortunately from

the manner in which students perform at KCSE English it would appear that integration has been on paper. Do teachers really use integrated skills in teaching? The examiner at KNEC adopts the integrated approach in evaluation. The syllabus anticipates a responsive approach to the teaching of literature. Take, for example, poetry. While the traditional approaches reduced the genre to the drab process of mastering technical devices, the new syllabus anticipates an interactive and enjoyable process where learners engage poetry in a more practical way. The integrated approach requires that students are exposed to the learning of comprehension, summary, grammar, literary interpretation, composition and oral skills while studying the various genres of literature. The responsive approach to studying poetry is the best way of learning the technical concepts associated with the subject. Students have to be taken through the experience of learning poetry through writing it. Learning by doing is an established means of pleasurable acquisition of knowledge.

A good first step in preparing to teach poetry is personal reflection. Do I enjoy poetry? Do I read it for pleasure? Do I go to listen to live poetry performances? A 'yes' answer to any of these questions probably means one approaches the task of teaching poetry with a good measure of confidence that in turn fosters confidence and enthusiasm in some of your students. But if the answers to the questions fore-mentioned are 'no' answers they would be pointing to monstrous challenges. The teacher could pose such questions to their students to gain an understanding of their attitudes towards poetry and to devise routes into poetry for them. Good grasp of content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and understanding students' interests and needs are some of the requirements needed to teach literature competently (Agee, 1998). Students favour teaching techniques that

encourage them to respond personally, give their own opinion, and concentrate on the content of the text as opposed to analyzing details of language structure as well as having class discussions (Davis et al, 1992). Students enjoy imagining themselves as the characters, writing letters as one of the characters and retelling the story from others' point of view.

Students indicate negative attitudes towards activities that require them to memorize facts, answered multiple-choice questions, read aloud, drilling and teacher-centred classes where interpretations are provided only by the teacher (Wan Kamariah, 2009). Studies on teaching methods in Malaysia found conflicting results. Fauziah & Jamaluddin (2009) found that teachers used more students-centred approach in class compared to teacher centred strategies which created a better learning atmosphere and improved students' perception and motivation towards literature. However, Daimah (2001) found the methods used by teachers in literature classes are mostly teacher centred. Teachers agreed that their classes were usually divided into three stages which started with explanation by the teachers, followed by discussions in groups or with the whole class and concluded with some form of exercises. A teacher-centred approach is necessary in order to save time and finish the syllabus in time for examinations. Another reason cited was students' low proficiency level which prevented teachers from using students-centred techniques like group discussion, debates and role plays.

Students' unwillingness and anxiety to speak or answer questions about the text for fear of providing the wrong replies also did not help. Kaur (2003) found that students viewed

teaching strategies used by their teachers as boring, dull and uninspiring as it involved mainly doing written work, especially among students with higher proficiency level.

Students with lower proficiency could not understand the texts and therefore found literature lessons boring. This could be due to teachers who had very little experience and knowledge in teaching literature.

Traditionally poetry is taught by means of loud reading, silent reading, recitation, listening to pre-recorded tapes, whole group discussion, small group discussion, individual work, writing, debating issues relevant to the selected poem, question and answer by the teacher /students, drawing scenes based on the poem and dramatization. But other classroom practices such as choice of poem are also important for the learning of poetry. Classroom practices are a critical factor in promoting students' achievement (Peterson, 1998; Stigler & Hebert, 1999). Students should as much as possible be given opportunities to learn. Opportunities to learn refers to what is embodied in the tasks those students perform. In literature OTL includes the scope of the poetry presented, how the poem is taught, and the match between students' entry skills and the new material. (This idea is adapted from Grouws & Cebulla, 2000).

Opportunity to learn is sometimes related to Time-on-Task: the extent of student exposure to particular literary concepts and skills. A question in this study was "how much do secondary students devote to the study of poetry?" Given the demands of integration teachers are expected to collect materials on poetry and use those to teach both the content of poetry and the requirements of language development. It is now expected that

exposure to poetry would be longer than the usual one lesson a fortnight. The teacher is expected to ask students to reflect widely on poetry by keeping a reading log. The reading log would also help the teacher to understand students' attitudes towards poetry. Given the wider availability of information communication technology facilities it is expected that teachers would now do more to link poetry to film and media studies and the other creative arts so that poetry is no longer seen as a dull art. To meet the demands of the KCSE examinations it is expected that teachers should now do more to connect reading and analyzing poetry to creative writing, English Language and to film and media studies. This can be as straightforward as encouraging students to experiment with how poetry sounds when spoken aloud. Given the availability of electrical power in most schools it would be expected that teachers can now create You Tube shows for use in a live seminar and power point for lecture. It is also possible to attach one's own photos and link them to YouTube videos as well as add geographical information. These could be used with texts/authors or themes the class is working on so that they benefit from a visual perspective.

It is useful to combine reading poetry with writing. Teachers can get students to be 'active readers' by experimenting writing the forms they are studying. One example would be an assignment where students are asked to compose a stanza when they are learning about stanzas. This type of assignment works well as a formative task, thus freeing student and teacher from any anxiety about quality and assessment.

Another active reading task can be designed around asking students to choose a metaphor or simile from a poem and then compose a new poem around it. An example of a

workable simile is: “Her hair was like the wool of a mountain sheep” from Austin Bukenya’s **I Met a Thief**. Such exercises are deemed more effective than just talking about similes. Writing can also lead to so-called ‘deep learning’ envisaged in the Integrated English Syllabus. The approaches suggested here may constitute a radical departure from the normal pedagogical practice. Yet they are critical to teaching poetry for integration. This researcher set out to investigate whether the poems selected and the activities used in teaching poetry make the subject exciting or actually make it unpalatable.

## **2.6 Teachers’ and learners’ attitudes towards poetry**

Mehrens & Lehmann (1984) define attitudes as descriptions of how people feel and typically behave rather than a description of what they know or can do. Attitudes have cognitive and affective components. These can be analyzed in terms of their direction, magnitude intensity, cognitive complexity, flexibility and consciousness (Gardner, 2005). Motivation to learn poetry or any language may depend on attitude. According to Wu (2010) attitude is a major booster for motivation. Gardner (2005) argues that a highly motivated learner would desire to learn a subject such as poetry, take pleasure in learning the subject and endeavor to learn the subject. Hornby (2004) refers to attitude as the way you feel and think about something influences their perception of that particular thing. Students’ attitude is one of the main factors that determine their success in language learning. Attitude could be defined as a consistent tendency to react in a particular way—often positively or negatively—toward any matter. Attitude possesses both cognitive and emotional components. Fazio and Roskes (1994), write, “Attitudes are important to



educational psychology because they strongly influence social thought, the way an individual thinks about and process social information". According to Eggen and Kauchak (2001), positive teachers' attitudes are fundamental to effective teaching. A teacher must be interesting. That is the teacher must work his students into such a state of interest in what the teacher is going to teach him that every other object of attention is banished from his mind. The teacher should also fill the students with devouring curiosity to know what the next steps in connection with the subject are. Eggen and Kauchak (2001) identified a number of teachers' attitudes that will facilitate a caring and supportive classroom environment. They are: enthusiasm, caring, firm, democratic practices to promote students responsibility, use time for lesson effectively, have established efficient routines, and interact freely with students and providing motivation for them. Research findings on teachers' attitudes (Brunning et al., 1999), established the following facts: Teachers characteristics such as personal teaching efficacy, modeling and enthusiasm, caring and high expectation promote learners' motivation. These same characteristics are also associated with increase in students' achievement (academic performance). High levels of learning may occur as well as learners feeling good about themselves and the material they are learning when teachers use instructional time efficiently. Learning takes place with ease and faster under teachers that are well organized.

The way teachers interact with students influences their motivation and attitudes toward school. How students perceive their teachers' attitudes in Nigeria secondary school will be measured based on some of the stated points. To promote order and learning in the classroom every teacher should possess essential teaching skills. No one can teach

something to someone without doing it in some particular way, and that way of teaching has significant effects on the entire teaching and learning situation. Ehindero and Ajibade (2000) posit that: teaching is a process of continuous personal development and professional self-discovery alongside an emerging understanding of the teaching and learning process. If there is an art essential to good teaching, it is that of communication. It is very important because teaching cannot occur without the use of oral or sign language communication. It implies that teachers should monitor their own speech to ensure that their presentation is as clear and logical as possible.

## **2.7 Student Performance in Poetry**

Academic performance could be defined as the display of knowledge attained or skills developed in school subjects designated by test and examination scores or marks assigned by the subjects' teachers. It could also be said to be any expression used to represent students' scholastic standing. For this study, students' academic performance was based on the scores of students on a set test on poetry administered once. The studies available during the literature review showed that performance in poetry is generally poor.

Wanjohi (2000) in a study on the relationship between grammatical ability and poetry interpretation skills among secondary school students in Nyeri District asserts that the Kenya National examination council (KNEC) annual reports have over the years expressed condemn over the poor performance in poetry. These reports have always urged the teachers to take seriously the teaching of poetry and have sometimes gone as far as pointing out circus that needed special attention for example the 1990 KNEC

examination report urged teachers to pay special attention to the choice of words and their arrangement in poetry. Despite these concerns performance in poetry remains poor. This poor performance in poetry noted in the early 1990s has persisted up to date. This can be attested to by the KNEC Reports (2005) which, while referring to the poetry question of the year 2004 KCSE had this to say.

Performance in this question was dismal very few candidates scored high marks some left sections undone examiners observed that poetry continues to present candidates with problems which is symptomatic of poor teaching or lack of enough attention by teachers” (KNEC Report 2005 ). The same report advises teachers to teach and interest candidates’ i.e. poetry for there are easy marks to be earned their. Amateshe (1988) expresses similar sentiments when he asserts that poetry is seen by many people as an exclusive occupation for those who most likely have the talent to read between lines. He thinks that many secondary school students shy away from any discussions relating to written poetry and goes on to say that even at the university the situation is not better. Students have tended to enjoy reading novels and plays but only recite poetry. Student attitude to poetry does harm to an otherwise lively and creative literary field.

Mwandoe (2002) conducted a study on the teaching and learning of poetry in English in secondary schools in Kenya. That study aimed at finding out why the performance of poetry was poor. Its objective was also to find out the teaching learning methods which teachers employ in teaching poetry. The student perception of teaching learning methods adopted vis-à-vis their ability to learn poetry.

The study was ethnographic in design and the subjects were drawn from two schools of Voi Division. Information on learning and teaching was collected by use of questionnaires for students. The information obtained from the questionnaires was analyzed using frequencies and percentages. The findings of Mwandoe's study indicate that poetry was not taught and learnt well. At the same time it was established that teachers and students faced a number of problems during the teaching and learning of poetry. The study recommended that there should be continuous supervision and in service training for all teachers of poetry. The study also recommended collaborative teaching in schools as a means of sharing experiences by teachers

Although the study was to investigate the teaching and study of literature the researcher limited his study to the type of poetry presented in class and not poetic language and how this language affects the attitude of learners and teachers of poetry. The researcher did not also measure performance of learners in poetry.

In the study reported here this researcher set out to address the flaws in Mwandoe's study by looking at poetic language and how it shapes the attitude of learners and teachers in poetry and how this attitude affects performance. The study employed the use of questionnaire and interview method. Apart from using the questionnaire, this present study will also use performance tests.

Zainab Vallarie Jeruto (2009) conducted a study that investigated the factors affecting the teaching and learning of poetry in the integrated English syllabus. The purpose of the study was to find out why the performance of poetry in the Kenya certificate of secondary education (KCSE) has persistently been poor.

The study was carried out in secondary schools in Nandi North district in Kenya. Twenty one secondary schools were selected using stratified and purposive sampling. The focus of this study was on the teachers' attitude towards the teaching of poetry and the learners' attitude towards the teaching of poetry, and the availability of teaching and learning resources.

The methodology that Jeruto used only involved the use of teacher and student questionnaire and observation. The research instruments used to establish these were the teachers' questionnaire, the student questionnaire and observation checklist. The analysis of the data collected was done using descriptive statistics. The findings of the study revealed that the teachers of English lack interest in teaching poetry because of the problems they encounter the main are being the students negative attitude towards poetry. It also emerged that a majority of the teachers mainly used discussion method and question and answer method when teaching poetry.

The researcher recommended that the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) should recommend a poetry anthology for each level of the secondary school system and that the teachers should encourage learners to develop a positive attitude towards poetry by using captivating teaching methods as well as adequate teaching and learning materials. Jeruto did not look at the causes of the negative attitude towards poetry by both learners and teachers. This study set out to investigate the relationship between poetic language and teaching methods and attitudes. Jeruto also failed to look at the impact of attitudes on performance which this study intends to establish.

Paul Lukuin Isayn (2007) also conducted a study that investigated the use of poetry in the teaching of language in secondary schools in Uasin Gishu district. He set out to investigate whether the use of poetry has any significant relationship with the learners' performance in English, whether language teachers have mastery of or use poetry as a medium to teach language, whether teachers have proper skills for eliciting learners participation in poetry lessons and whether teachers evaluate their own abilities in the use of poetry teaching.

In his study he employed the use of the questionnaire and observation methods. He did not test performance directly to find out student abilities to interpret poetry questions. The results established that poetry helps learners to score higher grades and hence enabling teachers to achieve their instructional objectives. He established that the schools that used poetry had a performance index of 7.58, while schools that didn't use poetry had a lower performances index of 3.54. This therefore means that poetry plays a great significance in the teaching of English language in secondary schools. Performance index would even improve if the poems that were used had been liberalized without adhering to strict poetic forms. These poems would generate great interest from learners and teachers.

## **2.8 Summary**

This chapter reviewed the literature related to choice of poems in schools, teaching strategies that are used and the attitudes towards poetry and English in general. Gaps in literature demonstrate a need for a study to show the link between the independent variables set out in this study and performance in poetry as a dependent variable. The

next chapter lays out the methodology and tools used to collect data to address the research objectives appearing in chapter one.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

The purpose of this mixed methods descriptive study was to attempt to explain the effect of language used in poetry on the attitude of teachers and learners on the one hand, and the contribution of attitude to performance in poetry at secondary school level on the other hand. This section presents the research methodology the researcher utilized. It describes the research paradigm, research design, and study area, study population, sampling methods and sample size, tools for data generation, data compilation and analysis.

#### **3.1 Research Paradigm**

A paradigm is a conceptual framework providing a model from which spring coherent traditions of scientific research (Creswell, 2013). A paradigm provides a conceptual framework for seeing and making sense of the social world. To be located in a particular paradigm is to view the world in a particular way. Patton (1990) termed the word paradigm “a world view, a general perspective, a way of breaking down the complexity

of the real world”. Paradigms are never static. They keep shifting. At any one time one paradigm is completely dominant until it is replaced by a new scheme.

The term paradigm encompasses three levels; the philosophical level which deals with basic beliefs about the world we live in; the social level which describes guidelines as to how a researcher should conduct their endeavors; and, the technical level which presents the methods and techniques adopted when conducting research. The research paradigms give rise to research approaches. In educational research the different approaches to research are the quantitative, the qualitative and the mixed methods. Objectives in a research will determine the approach to be adopted by a researcher.

The objectives of this study were;

1. To describe the procedure for selection of poems used in secondary schools;
2. To describe the poetic language used in poems presented for examinations in KCSE;
3. To identify and describe methods used by teachers of poetry in the classroom;
4. To identify the teachers’ and students’ attitude towards poetry arising from poetic language;
5. Discuss the relationship between teachers’ and students’ attitude and performance

On a poetry tasks.

Objectives 1, 2, 3 are qualitative. Objectives 4 and 5 are quantitative. In view of the given objectives the researcher adopted a mixed methods approach. Mixed methods research is an approach to inquiry that combines both qualitative and quantitative forms (Creswell, 2013). Mixed methods research is further subdivided into the sequential, concurrent and



transformational. Since data in this study was generated from different tools simultaneously this design was concurrent. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used in tandem so that the overall strength of the study became greater than if only one of the two approaches had been used (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

### **3.2 Research Design**

Research design refers to the flowing link between objectives, structure of independent variables, if any, in relation to dependent variables, the time required collecting data, and data analysis. Research designs are distinguished on the basis of purpose and intent. The three main types of educational research are; experimental research, quasi-experimental research, and descriptive research. The study reported in these pages was descriptive.

The single criterion which determines if a study falls under this category is the type of independent variable used. The researcher will have no manipulative control over the independent variable because the variable will already have occurred. In this study the researcher dealt with procedures for selection of poems, describing poetic language as it exists in already published poems, methods used in teaching poetry, and attitudes of teachers and students towards poetry. She had no control over the existing variables.

Descriptive designs are subdivided into survey, co relational and causal-comparative. This particular study was both a cross-sectional survey and co relational study. As a cross-sectional survey data in this study was collected at the same time across the samples. As a co relational study data generated was utilized to correlate the attitudes held by teachers and students to academic performance in poetry.

### **3.3 Study Site**

The research problem under investigation is of interest to many counties in Kenya and indeed to many Second Language learning situations in the world. However, owing to constraints of time, personnel and financial resources it was not possible to mount a nationwide study. Data was therefore collected from schools in Lugari Sub-county of Kakamega County. Lugari Sub-county lies between Likuyani Sub-county to the northwest, Uasin Gishu County to the southeast and Matete Sub-county to the south. It is a “settlement scheme” having previously been occupied by colonial settlers. It is now a cosmopolitan community whose inhabitants are Luyia, Luo, Kalenjin, Kisii, and the Kikuyu speaking communities. The main economic activities are animal husbandry, crop farming and small-scale trade.

Lugari Sub-county was selected because, like other rural Sub-counties in Kenya, performance on the English paper where Poetry is tested has been consistently poor. Results obtained on research from Lugari would therefore be representative of a fairly large school population in Kenya.

### **3.4 The study Population**

Population is defined as the place from where the relevant data are generated. A population may be of virtually any size and may cover almost any geographical area. For this study the accessible population consisted of all secondary schools, secondary school students in Form Three and all teachers of English handling Form Three students in Lugari Sub-county at the time of data generation. The list of schools available is that which was obtained from the District Education Office at Lumakanda. The Lugari Sub-county had 47 secondary schools at the time of data generation and 103 English teachers

and 4100 Form Three students. The population frame was also treated as the sampling frame (Mugenda, 2013). The sampling frame accurately represents the target population.

### **3.5 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size**

A sample is a subset of the population. Sampling techniques are used to select the portion of population to be investigated. The sample used should be as representative of the entire population as can be. A sample is representative when it is an accurate proportional representation of the population under study. Sampling is the process of obtaining a proportion of items from the selected population as representative of that population (Orodho, 2008). In this study, the researcher adopted the proportionate stratified random sampling method in order to get the desired representation of various sub-groups in the population. A stratified random sample is a useful blend of randomization and categorization.

The first stage in sampling involved selecting participant schools. In this study the researcher stratified the schools according to their level of performance in the 2009 KCSE. The school with a mean score of 5.0 and above was considered a high performing school and was placed in the High Performing School (HP) category. The school with a mean score of between 4.0 and 4.9 was considered average and placed in the Average Performing School (AP) category. Schools with a mean score of less than 3.9 were considered low performing and placed in the Low Performing School (LP) category. The sub-groups considered were such as Boys' boarding schools, Girls' boarding schools, mixed boarding schools and mixed day schools. Ten schools in all were used. From each category schools were selected proportionately. From each stratum the participating

schools were then randomly selected using the lottery method. The purpose of using this method was to maximize survey precision so that if any of the school types have any unique characteristics the data would be captured in the tools. Gupta (2002) suggests the use of stratified sampling in a population that is not homogenous.

Purposive sampling was used to target the Form Three students in each school. These students were considered ripe for tests on poetry. They should have learned poetry for two complete years and were now preparing to move into the fourth year, the year for KCSE. Only one stream per school was selected for participation in this study. If a selected school had two or three streams the one stream for participation was selected randomly and the teacher concerned with English was automatically incorporated in the study. A total of 50 students from each of the ten schools were selected to participate in the study. Overall, there were 500 student participants. The final sampling frame adopted is shown in Table 3.1 next:

**Table 3.1: Sample Frame**

Category	Total No. of School Sampled					
	Boys	Girls	Mixed	Boys	Girls	Mixed
High performing school	3	3	2	1	1	1
Average performing school	4	6	3	1	2	1
Low performing school	3	2	4	1	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>

### 3.6 Research Instruments

Tools for data generation are dictated by the research objectives. Given the objectives for the study stated in chapter one and also at the beginning of this chapter, the researcher used interview guide, document analysis, observation schedule, a self-report questionnaire carrying an attitude scale and a poetry performance test for students. In each case the most suitable tool for data collection on an objective was utilized.

### **3.6.1 Interview Guide**

An interview guide is an oral administration of pre-planned questions and emergent questions. It involves a face to face interaction between the researcher and respondent. The interview was conducted to collect information on the procedure which teachers use when selecting poems to teach. The interview method was preferred because it encourages in-depth discussion and facilitates clarification of issues which may not be clear. The interview guide helped to gather information for Objective One in this study.

### **3.6.2 Document Analysis Guide**

The second objective sought to describe the language of poems used in examination set by KNEC. A key consideration in this study was, perhaps, a difference in poetic language between poems taught and poems examined. To achieve this objective the researcher collected all the poems used in KCSE papers 1 and 2 in the five years between 2007 and 2011. These poems were analyzed for poetic language so that similarities and differences with the poems teachers use could be determined. The guide focused on language in terms of word choice, rhythm, rhyme, imagery, metaphor, repetition, alliteration and assonance.

### **3.6.3 Lesson Observation Guide**

Examination results reveal a product of the teaching-learning process encounter. While final examination results are important, the process of learning is critical in enabling researchers to understand reasons for the outcome of examinations.

The researcher observed ten poetry lessons in progress and scored against a checklist on the methods of teaching poetry used by teachers. The observation checklist was intended to answer research question Three: which methods do teachers of poetry use to present poetry content in secondary school classes? Lessons observed were selected from across the board: from high performing schools, low performing schools and average performing schools. Gender was factored into the choice of schools so that in the end the observed lessons covered the entire spectrum of sampled schools.

### **3.6.4 Questionnaire**

To generate data for Objective Four a questionnaire was prepared. According to Kombo and Tromp (2006), the questionnaire is an appropriate instrument suitable for obtaining information from a large group of participants who may be far apart. A questionnaire is a tool which bears written questions to be answered by research participants in their own space and time. Data was collected from various schools over a short period of time. According to Kothari (2008), questionnaires are usually free from the weakness of interview bias. On a questionnaire the respondent works in anonymity and will therefore be more honest.

Two sets of similar questionnaires were designed and developed; these were the secondary school student's questionnaire and English teacher's questionnaire. The questionnaire used in this study was designed to gather information on teacher and student attitude towards poetry. The tool had 20 items. One half of the statements were framed to imply a positive attitude and the other half of statements were framed to imply a negative attitude. To each statement respondents were expected to: "strongly agree", "agree", be "undecided", "disagree" or to "strongly disagree". These responses were rated on a Five –Point Likert-type scale. If a statement was positively inclined and a respondent "strongly agreed" a score of 5 was awarded. One point was awarded to a respondent who "strongly disagreed" with a positively inclined statement. If a respondent "strongly agreed" with a negatively inclined statement 1 point was awarded. If the respondent "strongly disagreed with a negatively inclined statement 5 points were awarded. In the end a participant who was positively inclined received close to 100 points. A participant who was negatively inclined received close to 20 points.

### **3.6.5 Poetry Performance Test**

Interval data on student performance on poetry was required to fulfill the requirements of Objective Five. A poetry performance test was designed. The performance test was marked out of 40. A score between 0-10 marks was regarded as poor; scores between 11-20 marks were regarded as average; while scores of between above 21 marks, was regarded good. The standardization of the test was ensured through the use of a model joint exam for the same levels of students from a different district which was centrally marked in collaboration with the Lugari District teachers of English who are Kenya

National Examination Council examiners in the English composition paper.

### **3.7 Pilot Test for Tools**

Piloting is trying out of research instruments on the respondents who will not be used in the main study. Therefore it was necessary to pretest the instruments of the research on a small sample of respondents as preparatory exercise to find out if there was any weakness so that it could be corrected. In this study, a pilot study was done to enhance the questionnaire's validity. The pilot study was conducted on 5 schools in Matete district. The pilot studies schools would not form part of the final study sample. The results of the pilot test were used to identify areas where the questionnaire required adjustments like changing the order of questions and use of shorter sentences to enhance comprehension. The questionnaire was then administered a second time to establish if the adjustments had improved the questionnaire and test on poetry.

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

The instruments used to collect data in this study were the interview guide, the document analysis guide, lesson observation checklist, the poetry performance test and the questionnaire. The questionnaire used in this study was designed to gather information on teacher and student attitude towards. The interview guide, document analysis guide and observation checklist were not subjected to tests of reliability and validity. Instead they were rated on the basis of their trustworthiness. Only the questionnaire was subjected to tests of reliability and validity after the pilot study. For this study the researcher tested the questionnaires for internal consistency. Unlike the test-retest reliability, parallel-forms reliability and inter-rater reliability, testing for internal



consistency only requires the measurement procedure to be completed once. Although it is possible to do it during the actual experiment this researcher opted to do it during pilot study in a neighbouring county.

Reliability as internal consistency can be determined using either the split-half method or Cronbach's alpha. Split-half reliability is mainly used for written/standardized tests, but it is sometimes used in physical/human performance tests. However, it is based on the assumption that the measurement procedure can be split into two matched halves. Split-half reliability is assessed by splitting the items from the measurement procedure in half, and then calculating the scores for each half separately. Before calculating the split-half reliability of the scores, one has to decide how to split the items from the measurement procedure. The split may be based on first half of test versus second half of test, or odd-even basis.

Cronbach's alpha coefficient (also known as the coefficient alpha technique or alpha coefficient of reliability) is a test of reliability as internal consistency (Cronbach, 1951). Cronbach's alpha is also used to measure split-half reliability. However, rather than simply examining two sets of scores; that is, computing the split-half reliability on the measurement procedure only once, Cronbach's alpha does this for each item within a measurement procedure (e.g., every question within a survey). Therefore, Cronbach's alpha examines the scores between each item and the sum of all the other relevant measures/items a researcher is interested in. This provides us with a coefficient of inter-item correlations, where a strong relationship between the measures/items within the measurement procedure suggests high internal consistency. This researcher chose to use

the Cronbach alpha coefficient. This is because the attitude scale had multiple items. It is also a versatile test of reliability as internal consistency because it can be used for attitudinal measurements such as the Likert scale. As a result, alpha is most appropriately used when the items measure different substantive areas within a single construct. The pilot study data was tested and an Alpha coefficient of 0.8 was found. According to Allen & Yen this is an acceptable level.

For the qualitative research tools reliability and validity were discussed in terms of components of trustworthiness.

### **3.10 Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness is defined as ensuring that the research process is truthful, careful and rigorous enough to qualify to make the claims that it does (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). In quantitative research the terms used are validity and reliability. In qualitative research, researchers use the terms credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Jwan and Ong'ondo, 2011). Credibility is the extent to which a study investigates what it claims to investigate and reports what actually occurred in the field (Yin, 2003, Creswell and Miller, 2000). Transferability (or external validity in quantitative research) is the extent to which research findings may be generalized to other cases or contexts (Yin, 2003). Dependability is the extent to which the research procedure is clear to enable other researchers replicate the study and get similar results (Mason, 2002). Finally, confirmability refers to how neutral the researcher is and to what extent they influence the findings recorded (Gillham, 2000). In quantitative studies this is known as objectivity. To strengthen the trustworthiness of this research the researcher used triangulation; that

is, adopting different tools to gather data to ensure higher dependability. Discussions with peers in the postgraduate class and lecturers in my department also helped to increase credibility of questions in the interview and in the observation guides.

### **3.11 Data Collection Procedures**

First, the researcher adhered to all administrative requirements for data collection. Requisite permits and permission were obtained from the University, the National Council for Science, Technology and Innovation and the County Director for Education. Data was collected by the researcher herself. Interviews were conducted on school visits. Taught lessons were observed. Questionnaires were distributed in school, completed and collect by the researcher immediately afterwards. The participation rate was 100%.

### **3.12 Data Analysis Procedures**

Data generated for Objective One was descriptive. It is analyzed descriptively and presented under themes. Data for Objective Two involved content analysis of given poems. It is also presented under themes in Chapter Four. Data for Objective Three involved description of methods used to present poetry. Data is analyzed thematically. Data for Objective Four was statistical in nature. It is presented in tables and analyzed statistically.

### **3.13 Ethical Considerations**

According to the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC, 2005) research ethics refers to the moral principles that guide research from its inception through to its completion and publication of results. It is important to pay attention to ethics mainly

because there is need for democracy, respect for truth and respect for participants in research. Researchers should seek to balance between the demands of research and the need to avoid intruding into the private lives of respondents, threatening their privacy. In this study some of the ethical considerations that were considered important were; confidentiality and anonymity, privacy, informed consent, deception, falsification of data, faking results and plagiarism. The right to confidentiality was considered. According to Burns and Grove (2001), confidentiality is the researcher's management of private information shared by the participant. The researcher undertook to keep confidential all personal matters arising during data generation. This could be in the form of attitude and opinions. The researcher pledged to ensure that the data generated would be available only to the researcher and protected from unauthorized access.

The right to anonymity is another ethical issue which was considered by the researcher. Anonymity occurs when even the researcher cannot link a participant with the data of that person (Burns & Grove, 2001). Although anonymity cannot be completely guaranteed in qualitative research (Streubert & Carpenter, 1999), the researcher would ensure anonymity is maintained by ensuring the respondents do not indicate their names in the questionnaires. Research index numbers were allocated. The participants who, perhaps by mistake, write their names on the questionnaires would not have their names revealed. In the case of this study no teacher or student wrote their name on the questionnaire. Names of teachers interviewed would not be made public. Even the schools used to provide research data would not have their names divulged.

Consent to participate was another ethical issue upheld. Participants were given the right to choose to participate or not to participate. Two previously selected schools were skipped when the teachers became apprehensive about participating in this study.

Interference with the views given by participants is another ethical issue in research. The researcher pledged not to and did not interfere with any participant nor the data collected.

Falsification of data is a common weakness in postgraduate study reports. The researcher made a point of going to the field to generate data upon being permitted by the Moi University and after obtaining the research permit from National Council of Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). The data generated was used to analyze, interpret and make recommendations. The researcher has avoided the temptation to fake data. Plagiarism is another ethical issue in research. Plagiarism occurs when a researcher uses someone's written work without permission or proper citation. The researcher has consistently acknowledged all sources cited in the study. Finally the researcher obtained a research permit for use during data generation.

### **3.14 Chapter Summary**

In this chapter the researcher has presented the procedures selected and utilized for generating data to meet the objectives in this study. The researcher views research as a logical progression where the research paradigm should be reflected in the objectives. The research design emerges from the paradigm. The cross-sectional and co relational study was organized to generate data from Lugari Sub-County of Kakamega County. Five different tools were developed for data collection. The next chapter deals with presentation of results and discussion of the results.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

## DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses data generated by the five tools previously prepared. The purpose of the study was to explain the effect of choice of poems, teacher strategies, attitudes on the one hand and the contribution of attitude to performance in poetry at secondary school level on the other hand. At one level attitude is a dependent level. At the next level attitude is an independent variable where performance is assumed to be dependent upon it. In order to keep the study objectives in focus during data presentation we re-state them thus;

1. To describe the procedure for selection of poems used in secondary schools;
2. To describe the poetic language used in poems presented for examinations in KCSE;
3. To identify and describe methods used by teachers of poetry in the classroom;
4. To identify the teachers' and students' attitude towards poetry arising from poetic language;
5. Discuss the relationship between teachers' and students' attitude and performance on poetry tasks.

Before delving into the presentation of the results in relation to the objectives the researcher here below presents the demographic characteristics of the study participants. An understanding of the population and sample is critical in appreciating their responses to the research questions.

## 4.1 Biographical Data

### 4.1.1 Gender of English teachers

The gender of the teachers in this study varied as shown in table 4.1 next:

**Table 4.1 Gender of English teachers**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Female	6	60
Male	4	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

From the finding shown in the table 4.1 above, the total number of participating teachers was 10. The majority of respondents were females at 60%, and the opposite sex was 40%.

In this study district there are more female English teachers than males.

### 4.1.2 Age of English teachers

The age of English teachers ranged from 22 years to 47 years of age. The age of the respondents varied as summarized in table 4.2 below:

**Table 4.2 Age of English teachers**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
22-28	4	40
29-35	3	30
36-42	2	20
43 and Above	1	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

From the findings in the table 4.2 above, the majority of respondents (40%) had ages of between 22 and 28 years. This is the age which is termed as energetic and productive. Another large slice (30%) was taken by teachers whose age ranged from 29 to 35 years. The teachers of the age between 36-42 years were found to occupy only 20%, while those of 43 years and above were 10%.

#### **4.1.3 Academic Qualifications**

The academic qualifications of the study participants ranged from the Bachelor's degree to Master's degree level. From the findings, 8 of respondents (80%) had degree certificates, while only 2 or 20% held a Masters' degree. These findings should not be surprising. Today in Kenya there are great opportunities for higher education. Apart from Government Sponsored Student Programs there are Privately Sponsored Student Programmes. There is therefore a great output of teachers. The supply sometimes exceeds demand. However, English trained teachers have wider opportunities for employment than teachers of the other subjects. The table 4.3 shown next summarizes the information above.

**Table 4.3 Academic qualification of English teachers**

<b>Academic qualification</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Diploma	0	0
Degree	8	80
Masters'	2	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

#### **4.1.4 Teaching Experience**



Three or 30% of teachers teaching English in public secondary schools in Lugari had teaching experience of less than 5 years. Those with teaching experience of between 5 and 10 years were reported to be 50%. Those with the longest teaching experience of ten years or more were 2 or 20%. Teachers with an experience of ten years and more are few because for the period between 1999 and 2003 there was a freeze on employment of teachers by the Teachers Service Commission. Many teachers are recent recruits as a result of pressure for greater supply of English teachers. Even then there are many schools with untrained or unqualified teachers. The researcher did not use unsuitable teachers. Nevertheless studies by Rivkin, Hanushek and Kain (2005), Lavy (2002), and Glewwe & Kremer (2006) show that many of the standard teacher characteristics such as certification, training and experience do not greatly influence student achievement. The information above has been summarized in table 4.4 next.

**Table 4.4 Teaching experience of English teachers**

<b>Teaching experience</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
0	0	0
1-5	3	30
6-10	5	50
Above 10	2	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

#### **4.1.5 Teaching subject combinations**

Teachers employed by the Teachers' Service Commission to teach in Kenya secondary schools are required to teach at least two subject combinations. The researcher sought to investigate what type of subject combinations the teachers sampled held. It was

discovered that all teachers had the English / Literature combination. They were therefore qualified and competent to teach Integrated English.

#### **4.2 Procedure for Selection of Poems**

Objective One sought to find out the procedure and criteria which teachers use to select poems used in secondary schools. Data for this objective were collected vide the Interview Guide and Document Analysis. Poems may be selected on the basis of availability, access, language, content, or style.

In response to the specific question: “On what basis do you select the poems you use in your poetry class?” the teachers were almost unanimous in their answer. They said they selected poems which had appeared in past examination papers. If a teacher didn’t get used poems from a past paper they used poems found in the Integrated English course book. In discussions over this answer the respondents argued that poems previously used in examinations offered a safe selection because they represent the difficulty level the examination body requires and they also have relevant accompanying questions. Teachers held the view that they had challenges in preparing discussion questions for their classes. A prepared list of questions similar to what appears in the final examination is therefore ready fodder for teaching a poetry lesson. What arises from this position, nevertheless, is the adequacy of poems previously used in examinations. Would there be sufficient poems to be taught in a term, assuming one poetry lesson per week? The procedure for selection of poems is contrary to advice given by Tomlinson (1989) about need to select poems progressively from simple to complex, from those that deal with personal life experiences to those that deal with distant experiences. Moody (1994) recommends the

selection of poems following the spiral approach. Students should only be gradually introduced to how poetry works. This researcher was also interested in the frequency of teaching and learning poetry as expressed in the number of poems taught. It is said that practice makes perfect. In order for students to like poetry and perform well in it they have to be exposed to many and varied poems by their teachers. The data in table 4.5 next show the findings;

**Table 4.5 Frequency of Teaching Poetry**

<b>Number of times per term</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
About two	2	20
About five	5	50.0
More than five	3	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100.00</b>

The study revealed that 2(20%) of the teachers interviewed had taught only three poems, majority 5(50%) of the teachers had only taught about five poems, while 3(30%) of the teachers in the sample had taught more than five poems in the term. This therefore reveals that poetry is not taught frequently.

The researcher ran a correlation test to establish if the number of times poetry is taught in a week had any significant impact on the performance of students on the Poetry Test. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used for this purpose. The computer output is displayed in the table below

**Table 4.6: Correlation between number of times taught and performance**

VARIABLE	R	Significance
Number of times poetry is taught	0.085	0.653

\*Significant at  $P < 0.10$ \*\* Significant at  $P < 0.05$

Although there was a positive relationship between the numbers of times poetry is taught in a week and performance in poetry, that relationship is weak, almost spurious.

To verify the number of lessons of poetry taught, the researcher perused through the teachers' professional documents. Evidence adduced showed that poetry lessons are not frequent in the sampled secondary schools. The schemes of work analyzed showed a paucity of poetry lessons. An inspection of teaches' schemes of work and lesson plans revealed that few teachers planned for poetry lessons. The teaching of poetry was almost always incidental. The poetry lessons planned for in the schemes of work did not indicate the specific poem to be taught. In the column on "topic" many schemes of work simply reported "poetry". The choice of the specific poem to be taught on the assigned day was left in abeyance. Poem selection criteria were not apparent. If poems are mentioned by title in the scheme of work, criteria such as language difficulty, content variety, and stylistic variety would all be considered. Each poem has strength and quality. For example one poem may be strong on rhythm and another on rhyme. One poem may be strong on imagery and another on alliteration. A teacher who prepares a scheme of work would be able to prepare a balanced set of poems that enable him to teach all aspects of poetry (Robins & Hargreaves, 2010).

### 4.3 Poetic Language Used in KCSE Poems

The second objective for this study was to describe the poetic language used in poems presented for examinations in KCSE. Data for this objective was generated by way of document analysis. Examination papers which were presented to candidates in Kenyan secondary schools between 2008 and 2012 were analyzed. An example of poems used in KCSE examinations is presented here below.

#### KCSE 2008 Paper One

POEM:

When, in disgrace with Fortune and men's eyes,  
 I all alone between my outcast state,  
 And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,  
 And look upon myself and curse my fate,  
 Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,  
 Featured like him, like him with friends possessed,  
 Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,  
 With what I most enjoy contented least,  
 Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising;  
 Haply I think on thee, and then my state,  
 (Like to the lark at the break of day arising)  
 From sullen earth sings hymns at heaven's gate,

For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings

That then I scorn to change my state with kings. (William Shakespeare's  
 Sonnet 29)

This is an example of a poem where language hinders comprehension. Words used by Shakespeare in the **Sonnet 29** may no longer be in use in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Examples of words which may put off readers are such as: haply, lark, deaf heaven, contented least, and thee. Although the poet is comparing himself to another man who he thinks has lived a happier life, this situation is not clear to the average student. There is alternate rhyme except in the refrain where couplets appear. For example the word eyes rhymes with cries, the word state is made to rhyme with fate etc. to achieve rhyme scheme often times the poet looks for farfetched words which may not be easily comprehended by average learners. At the beginning of the second stanza there is word reversal in order to achieve rhyme. Poetic language is specialized and it requires teachers to increase the time used to teach poetry in order to improve comprehension.

### **KCSE 2008 Paper Two**

#### POEM

#### **“Song of the Wagon driver”**

My first love was a ten-ton truck  
 They gave me when I started,  
 And though she played the bitch with me  
 I grieved when we parted.  
 Since then I've had a dozen more,  
 The wound was quick to heal,  
 And now it's easier to say  
 I'm married to my wheel.  
 I've trunked it north, I've trunked it south,  
 On wagons good and bad,  
 But none was ever really like

The first I ever had.  
 The life is hard, the hours are long,  
 Sometimes I cease to feel,  
 But I go on, for it seems to me  
 I'm married to my wheel...  
 Often I think of my home and kids,  
 Out on the road at night,  
 And think of taking a local job  
 Provided the money is right.  
 Two nights a week I see my wife,  
 And eat a decent meal,  
 But otherwise, for all my life,  
 I am married to my wheel. B.S. Johnson

B.S Johnson's poem is easier to comprehend by the average learner. It is written in free verse. It is written very much in the tradition of African songs. It is therefore at once appealing to Kenyan students. The persona is a truck driver who spends plenty of time on the road doing what he is employed to do. He regrets that he cannot spend much time with his family. Examination candidates are likely to perform better on this kind of poem.

### **KCSE 2013 Paper Two**

#### **POEM**

#### **Outcast**

They met by accident  
 He proposed the idea  
 She gave her consent

All the way to the altar

The casualty was male

And his pigment was pale

Unlike his alleged sire

Who was black with ire

The recourse was legitimate

He disclaimed responsibility

So they had to separate

The boy remains illegitimate

Last month, not long ago

They both took their go

Coincidentally by accident

No will, no estate

Nothing to inherit

The poor boy is hardly ten

And knows no next-of-kin

He roams the streets of town

Like a wind-sown out-cast (BY G. Gathemia)

Written by an African this is a poem that candidate may easily relate to. It is written in simple verse with alternate rhyme. A relationship between two people of different pigmentation goes sour and they have to part. Nevertheless their union has a product that



is rejected and becomes an outcast. This is a story that candidates may follow easily. However, they often face the challenge of identifying the persona, audience and tone

Teachers would do better to expose students to many different poems in order to facilitate easier understanding of unseen poems.

#### 4.4 Methods and Classroom Activities Used in Teaching Poetry

The third objective was to investigate the teaching strategies instructors use to present poetry lessons. The Observation Schedule was used to collect data for this objective. The researcher sat through poetry lessons presented by teachers. Ten lessons were observed in total. The observer was keen on whether the teacher had prepared a lesson plan for use; whether the lesson plan was based on an existing scheme of work; how the teacher introduced the lesson; whether or not the lesson was given a context; the activities teachers used to generate and maintain interest in poetry; and, how teachers demystified poetry. The content of the Lesson Observation Checklist is summarized and findings are summarized in the table next:

**Table 4.7 Nature of activities teachers use in poetry classes, where n=12**

Item	Statement of what is observed	Mean	SD
1	Does teacher have a scheme of work? Yes=1; No=2	1.56	0.51
2	Does teacher have a lesson plan? Yes=1; No=2	1.75	0.45
3	Is poem taught as planned? Yes=1; No=2	1.5	0.52
4	What introductory activities does teacher use? Q/A=1, Revision=2; Discussion=3; Straight into poem=4	2.33	1.23
5	When does the teacher lead students into the poem? After prelim=1; Straight into poem=2	1.42	0.51
6	How many times do students read the poem? Once=1; twice=2; thrice=3; four times=4; five times=5	2.58	1.24
7	Are there prepared questions on the poem? Yes=1; No=2	1.35	0.49
8	Does teacher present poem from general to particular? Yes=1;	1.25	0.45

	Particular to general? Yes=2;		
9	Does teacher pay attention to words used in the poem? Yes=1; No=2	1.42	0.51
10	Does the teacher relate poem content to society concerns? Yes=1; No=2	1.67	0.49

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Classroom practices are a critical factor in effective teaching. They promote student achievement (Peterson, 1998; Stigler & Herbert, 1999). However, this researcher did not encounter teachers who were always fully prepared for the tasks ahead. From data collected teachers were found to have prepared schemes of work 41% of the time. Teachers had prepared lesson plans only 25% of the time. The majority of teachers did not have lesson plans in class and they did not have lesson plans in their offices either. They taught without those. They said lesson plans in Literature are not crucial because the text book has the content required. Those who used poetry anthologies argued that there was no need to prepare lesson plans when the anthologies carried all the material required. Indeed some anthologies had not only the poems for discussion, but the questions as well. For these teachers writing a lesson plan was duplicating documents that already existed. This is contrary to the literature. According to Kafu (2008) planning for instruction cannot be substituted with anything else. Kafu holds the view that a teacher who does not prepare fully sets themselves up for failure in class.

Out of the 12 lessons which were observed in session only 6(50%) followed their lesson plans as planned. The other half of the sampled teachers did not use the lesson plan fully or not at all. The researcher did a document analysis of the lesson plans prepared. The lesson plans prepared were between fair and poor. An example of a poor lesson plan encountered is reproduced next:

**TOPIC:** Stylistic Devices: “Repetition and Rhyme”

**OBJECTIVE:** By the end of the lesson learner should be able to define rhyme and repetition. Identify them in a poem (sic).

**LEARNING AIDS:** Manila paper, felt pen, cello tape

**REFERENCE:** *A Poetry Course for KCSE and East African Poetry* (Anthology).

STAGE	TIME	TEACHERS' ACTIVITIES	LEARNERS' ACTIVITIES
1	5 mins.	Introduction by defining Repetition and rhyme	Listening and taking down Notes
2	10 mins.	Discussing repetition referring to a poem	Listening
3	10 mins.	Discussing rhyme referring to the poem.	Listening and answering a few questions.
4		Giving the uses/importance of styles.	Taking down notes.
5	5 mins.	Conclusion	

Although the lesson plan above does not mention the title of the poem, the one taught on the occasion was “Henry King” by Hilaire Belloc found on page 14 of *A Poetry Course for KCSE*. A major weakness of the lesson plan is the lack of title of the poem to be taught. When a poem is not specified there is room to speculate that the teacher is not well prepared and focused on a particular poem. The second weakness is the topic cited: “Stylistic Devices: Repetition and Rhyme”. It is a general topic. It implies that the teacher is going to discuss stylistic devices used in poetry in general, with specific reference to repetition and rhyme. In the lesson observed the teacher mentioned the title of the poem after the lesson commenced.

The third weakness is to be found in the lesson activities. For example, the teacher starts the lesson by defining the concepts of repetition and rhyme. The pupils are asked to “listen and take down notes”. Since the one objective presented requires pupils to be able to define repetition and rhyme the actual lesson ends when pupils have “taken down” notes on repetition and rhyme. The activities in stages 2 and 3 appear superfluous. They are teacher centered. It is the teacher who “discusses”. Pupils “listen and take down notes”. This mode of teaching poetry makes the subject mechanical and uninteresting.

A fourth weakness of the lesson plan is the emphasis on stylistic devices as if that is all that should be taught. Stylistic devices should emerge naturally from the poem when content is discussed. The emphasis on Repetition and Rhyme creates an impression that the entire poem is made up of repetition and rhyme. The content of the poem is not foregrounded. Indeed in the entire lesson plan there is no mention of reading by the pupils. During the lesson observed pupils read through the poem only once. The entire lesson lasted a mere 15 minutes. The rest of the time was used by the teacher to harangue pupils to ask questions. She then threatened, “If you do not ask me questions I shall ask you”. The background to the poem had not been given. The content of the poem had not been sufficiently analyzed. Apart from mentioning cases of rhyme as it appears in the poem it did not appear as if pupils understood the poem at all. A question from the teacher for instructional purposes is treated as if it were a punishment: ask me or else I ask you!

Teachers used question and answer, discussion or revision of the previous lesson as preliminaries before embarking on poem analysis. Teachers were observed to read poems with their classes either twice or three times only in the 40 minute sessions. Only once

did the researcher meet a teacher who got students to read the poem 5 times during the 40 minute lesson. In that case the students looked relaxed and were able to answer all questions asked by the teacher. Sixty six per cent of the teachers had prepared questions on poems taught. The minority did not have any questions prepared and simply developed questions as the lesson progressed. Questions asked on a selected poem were presented extemporal. Common questions asked were;

What is this poem talking about?

Who is talking in the poem and to whom?

Can you see any symbol?

There is an image in this poem: where is it?

What is metaphor?

It was noted that since the questions were extempore there were instances when they were not valid for the specific poem in question. An example of a poem taught out of context is the one which appears below:

**If We Must Die-** by Claude McKay

If we must die- let it not be like hogs  
 Haunted and penned in an inglorious spot,  
 While round us bark the mad and hungry dogs,  
 Making their mock at our accursed lot,  
 If we must die – oh let us nobly die  
 So that our precious blood may not be shed  
 In vain; then even the monsters we defy  
 Shall be constrained to honour us though dead!  
 Oh kinsmen! We must meet the common foe;

Though outnumbered, let us show us brave  
 And for their thousand blows deal one deathblow  
 What though before us lies the open grave?  
 Like men we'll face the murderous, cowardly pack  
 Pressed to the wall, dying, but fighting back!

This is a poem with very strong alternate line rhyme scheme. The word “hogs” rhymes with “dogs” just as “spot” rhymes with “lot”. It is the kind of poem where the teacher would want to discuss the uses of rhyme to create rhythm and enjoyment. The teacher could use this poem to teach the meanings of the various similar sounding words. However, in the lesson observed the teacher spent plenty of time asking pupils to identify the persona in the poem. Students did not have an idea. The teacher was also keen to hear “who was being spoken to?” Pupils could not answer these questions. That took plenty of time although the poem is not best appointed to teach such aspects.

Poetry is best taught from the specific to the general (Bright & McGregor, 1984). A specific poem is introduced to the class. It is read for what it is worth. The qualities of the selected poem are identified. They are discussed. They may then be generalized to similar poems in the future. Seventy five per cent of lessons observed were those where the teachers set to teach topics like “imagery”. The students were made to read a poem looking for “imagery” or such other stylistic devices. It was also observed that teachers hardly take students through specific stages of reading. Bright & McGregor (1984) recommend a minimum of four readings of a poem in a forty minute lesson. Teachers may read through the poem loudly to interest learners in the content of the poem, follow it up with student loud reading in turns, individual silent reading, ask specific questions

for students to ponder over, before the final silent reading to complete comprehension. It has already been stated that few teachers prepare for poetry lessons. Now it must be underlined that few teachers demonstrated the poetry teaching skills. Few teachers motivated learning by, for example, talking about the background of the poem. A poem like “Henry King” is based at the historical time when syphilis was like what AIDS is in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. When King Henry the Eighth therefore contracted syphilis from philandering he could not be treated. One would expect a teacher of this poem to delve into such background for a better understanding of what otherwise looks like a dry poem. That motivates learners. Few teachers were also observed clearly explaining and laying out the learning tasks for the students. In poetry teaching it is crucial for learners to know what it is they are expected to do in the course of the lesson. Teachers also showed inability to articulate language issues in a poem. Eggen and Kauchack (2001) highlighted specific aspects of effective communication that are highly essential for learning and motivation such as use of precise terminology, connected discourse, transition signals and emphasis. Questioning skills are also crucial in improved learning. Questions are either high order or lower order (Bloom et al, 1956). High order questions seek for ability to apply, to analyze, to synthesize and to evaluate. The researcher here noted that teachers use mostly lower order questions which ask for recall and comprehension. Although the integrated approach requires that students are exposed to the learning of comprehension, summary, grammar, literary interpretation, composition and oral skills while studying the various genres of literature there was little evidence from the observed lessons that teachers seek to use poetry to teach other aspects of language.

Ninety per cent of lessons observed did not utilize learning aids of any kind. Learning aids are important for stimulating interest in the content of the poem. Teachers went to class armed only with the copy of the poem. In sixty percent of the time students shared the poem between three. Only in 40% of the observed instances did the students have individual poems. Non-availability of poems reduces a student's opportunity to learn. When they listen to poems read without seeing them or straining to see them reduces the chance to determine rhyme and alliteration in a poem.

Opportunity to learn is sometimes related to Time-on-Task: the extent of student exposure to particular literary concepts and skills. Without a hard copy of the poem students are denied the first instance of the opportunity to learn. A question in this study was "how much do secondary students devote to the study of poetry?" The specific general answer to that question would be "very little time indeed". Few poems are taught in a term. When they are taught 60% of the students do not have direct access to the poems under study. Given the wider availability of information communication technology facilities it is expected that teachers would now do more to link poetry to film and media studies and the other creative arts so that poetry is no longer seen as a dull art. To meet the demands of the KCSE examinations it is expected that teachers should now do more to connect reading and analyzing poetry to creative writing, English Language and to film and media studies. This can be as straightforward as encouraging students to experiment with how poetry sounds when spoken aloud. Audio recording could be played to students in class. Given the availability of electrical power in most schools it would be expected that teachers can now create You Tube shows for use in a live seminar and power point for lecture. It is also possible to attach one's own photos and link them to



YouTube. Such exciting new ventures were not observed during data generation for this study.

To end poetry lessons teachers are encouraged to re-read the poems once more and give follow up activities. Skillful teachers summarize and link ideas together at the end of their lesson, review summaries of previous work and help students link what has been learnt to what is coming. Poetry should be seen to be part of the real world experiences. A poem such as “Building the Nation” by Henry Barlow which describes greed and corruption and how it leads to wide gaps between the rich and poor, the haves and have-nots may be studied and linked to modern day corruption. Students may be asked to write a composition on how they might have been treated by a relative who is privileged. Closure is a form of review occurring at the end of a lesson; in it topics are summarized and interpreted. Seventy per cent of teachers observed did not attempt to link poems studied to everyday life. Lessons ended abruptly.

The researcher then attempted to relate teacher classroom activities and student performance on poetry test. Do classroom practices discussed in this section have a significant impact on student performance? The Pearson Product Moment Correlation was utilized for this test. The computer output is shown below:

**Table 4.8: Correlation between classroom practices and performance in poetry**

Item	Classroom Practices used by teachers and assessed	Coefficient R	Significant
1	Does the teacher have a scheme of work?	-0.064	0.47
2	Does teacher have a lesson plan?	-0.237	0.67
3	Does the teacher pay attention to words used in the poem?	0.415	0.097**
4	Is the poem taught today planned for?	-0.0352	0.56
5	What introductory activities does the teacher use?	0.309	0.84
6	When does the teacher lead students into the poem?	-0.294	0.35
7	How many times do students read the poem?	-0.28	0.74
8	Are there prepared questions on the poem?	0.37	0.091**
9	Does the teacher present poem from particular to general?	0.188	0.025*
10	Does the teacher relate poem content to everyday life?	0.24	0.095**

\*\* Significant at  $P < 0.05$ \*Significant at  $P < 0.10$

Four activities above show a significant relationship between classroom activities and student performance. Whether or not a teacher pays special attention on words in a poem has an impact on performance on poetry. Teachers who use prepared questions for their lessons also have a positive impact on student performance in poetry. Students appear to perform better when teachers use the inductive approach to present poems.

#### 4.5 Teachers' and students' attitudes

Objective Four set out to identify the teachers' and students' attitude towards poetry arising from poetic language. Twenty- item questionnaire was set to collect data from teachers. The participants were expected to respond by checking at SA, A, UD, D, or SD. The responses were scored on a scale of 1 to 5 depending on whether the statement was

positively or negatively inclined. While scoring the questionnaires the highest possible score for each item on the attitude scale was 5.0 points and the lowest was 1.0. The highest possible mean score for a respondent was 5.0 and the lowest was 1.0. The midpoint was taken to be 3.0 and this was used to categorize teachers and pupils as either “positive” or “negative”. For each item a mean and standard deviation were calculated.

**Table 4.9: Summary of attitude of teachers towards poetry, where n= 10**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Statement to which participants respond</b>	<b>Mea n</b>	<b>S.D</b>
1	I enjoy teaching poetry more than any other genre	2.3	1.16
2	The greatest challenge in teaching poetry is the difficult language of poems	2.4	1.26
3	Poetry should not be tested in two Papers at KCSE	2.1	0.99
4	I do not like poetry because the content is foreign and irrelevant to me	2.9	1.29

5	Rhyme and rhythm make poetry difficult	2.8	1.03
6	Political poems are boring	3.7	1.16
7	Examination questions based on language of poetry are difficult	2.7	1.16
8	Poetry should not be integrated with English Language	2.0	1.25
9	I have no problem in getting to the deep meaning of poems	3.1	1.2
10	Poems in free verse are the best	4.1	0.88
11	Imagery makes poems difficult to teach	2.4	1.17
12	Poetry should be an optional part of Literature	2.0	1.05
13	I enjoy poetry because metaphor is used	2.2	1.14
14	I like poems which tell love stories	3.1	0.99
15	Alliteration is difficult to teach	2.3	1.16
16	Most African poems have no meaning	3.6	1.07
17	I teach at least one poem every week	4.1	0.74
18	Teachers have no interest in poetry because it uses difficult poetic language	4.3	0.82
19	Poems set for examination should come from specific anthologies	4.5	0.71
20	Scanning to get rhythm is easy	2.9	0.88

The sample had been divided into High Performing Schools, Average Performing Schools and Low Performing Schools. Teachers were therefore categorized into those from HPS, APS and those from LPS. An attempt was made to establish whether or not there was a relationship between a teacher's school and the attitude expressed. A 3×2 contingency table was prepared to facilitate a  $\chi^2$  test. Unfortunately the sample size was small. Chi-square works when each cell in the  $R \times C$  contingency table has at least 5. In the circumstances Fishers Exact Test was used instead. Fishers Exact Test of independence is similar to  $\chi^2$  except that it may be utilized when the sample size is very small. The computer calculation of Fishers Exact Test of independence revealed a significant probability of 8.6, E=02 when P=0.400. It is therefore concluded that the relative proportions of teachers who are "positive" is independent of the attitude.

The average mean score for all teachers on the twenty items global scale was 2.61 showing a negative attitude towards poetry. The attitude of teachers is important in

stimulating student achievement. Positive teacher attitudes contribute to the formation of positive student attitudes (Sullivan, 1989). In this study it is established that the attitude of poetry teachers is low. This could, perhaps, would be an explanation of the prevailing learner underachievement in Lugari sub-county. The researcher sought to highlight specific items in the attitude scale where either the teachers were generally negative and those where the teachers were generally very positive. Items 3, 8, 12 were those where teachers were negative to the extreme. Items 17, 18, 19 were those where the teachers were positive to the other extreme. The teacher's response to Item 2 implies that teachers are happy to have poetry tested in the two papers as it is now. This position is supported by the teachers' response to item 8 where they are negative to the suggestion that Poetry should not be integrated with English Language. In other words teachers support integration. On the suggestion that poetry should be an optional part of literature in item 12, teachers responded by a low 2 score. This is interpreted to mean teachers are opposed to the idea of making poetry optional. It should remain compulsory.

Most teachers agreed that they teach at least one poem every week. This is expressed in their response to item 17. But at item 18 teachers showed that their lack of enthusiasm for poetry is because of the difficult language poetry carries. The item did not seek to distinguish to whom the language was a handicap; teachers or students. Teachers generally believed that the poems examined by KNEC should be prescribed or at least be selected from prescribed anthologies. The tendency to use unseen poems works against those students who are weak at English language.

The attitude of students was also recorded. Selected students in the sampled schools were also required to respond to the student attitude scale. The Likert-type scale given to them had twenty items as shown in the table below:

**Table 4.10: Summary of student Attitude towards Poetry where n=500**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Statement to which participants respond</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D</b>
1	I enjoy learning poetry more than any other genre	2.3	1.24
2	The greatest challenge in learning poetry is the difficult language of poems	2.4	1.33
3	Poetry should not be tested in two Papers at KCSE	2.45	1.25
4	I do not like poetry because the content is foreign and irrelevant to me	2.54	1.41
5	Rhyme and rhythm make poetry difficult	2.84	1.51
6	Political poems are boring	3.5	1.47
7	Examination questions based on language of poetry are difficult	3.4	1.25
8	Poetry should not be integrated with English Language	2.5	1.47
9	I have no problem in getting to the deep meaning of poems	2.55	1.37
10	Poems in free verse are the best	4.24	1.14
11	Imagery makes poems difficult to understand	2.1	1.18
12	Most African poems have no meaning	3.45	1.44
13	I am taught at least one poem every week	4.16	1.12
14	Students have no interest in poetry because it uses difficult language	2.25	1.34
15	I enjoy poetry because metaphor is used	2.6	1.4
16	Alliteration is difficult to comprehend	2.2	1.33
17	I like poems which tell love stories	3.9	1.39
18	Poetry should be an optional part of Literature	2.4	1.29
19	To get rhythm scanning is easy	2.4	1.29
20	Poems set for examination should come from specific set books	3.0	1.46

The overall student attitude score on the global score is 2.729. Since the scale is similar to the teacher attitude scale except for the wording, one may conclude that although both teachers and students are negative towards poetry, the students are in an insignificant higher up position. The sampled schools had been divided into High Performing Schools, Average Performing Schools and Low Performing Schools. Students were therefore categorized into those from HPS, APS and those from LPS. An attempt was made to establish whether or not there was a relationship between the school a student attends and the attitude expressed. A 3×2 contingency table was prepared to facilitate a  $\chi^2$  test. Unlike the case of the teachers, the student sample was large enough to facilitate chi-square test of independence. The number of observed students who were either positive or negative was entered into the computer 3×2 chi-square calculator. The result was a chi square statistic of 27.6436 where the p-value is <0.00001. This result is therefore significant at  $P < 0.05$ . There is a relationship between the type of school students attend and the attitude to poetry they hold.

The researcher sought to highlight specific items in the attitude scale where either the students were generally negative and those where the students were generally very positive. Items 11, 14, and 16 are those where the students were negative. Items 10, 12 and 17 were those where the students were positive. Students were negative on items which addressed issues of language. For example item 11 is concerned with imagery. Item 14 refers to “difficult” language of poetry. Item 16 also refers to alliteration as a source of difficulty in poetry. From these findings one may conclude that the biggest challenges students face in poetry emanate from the nature of poetic language. Item 10 refers to the form of poems. Students expressed a liking for poems written in free verse.

They therefore detest poems with strict rhyme schemes. Item 12 is concerned with the subject matter of poetry. Their strong reaction is in support of African poems. They did not think that “African poems have no meaning”. Item 17 is concerned with the content of poetry. Students enjoy poems which have exciting content. Perhaps when such poems are presented to them they would develop greater interest in poetry.

#### **4.6 Performance Test in Poetry**

Objective Five was designed to establish and discuss the relationship between teachers’ and students’ attitude and performance. The teachers and students attitude has been discussed above. In this section the researcher wishes to present the findings on student performance on poetry test. The poetry test shown in Appendix IV was administered to 500 students in ten schools divided into HPS (3), APS (4) and LPS (3). Fifty students from each school had been selected to participate. The test was marked out of 40 as it would be done in KCSE but the mark was converted to percent for ease of calculation and reporting. Results are summarized in Table 4.11 below:

**Table 4.11: Distribution of Student performance scores on poetry test**

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<b>TYPE OF SCHOOL AND FREQUENCIES</b>				
<b>MARK RANGE</b>	<b>HPS N=150</b>	<b>APS N=200</b>	<b>LPS N=150</b>	<b>MEDIAN MARK</b>
<b>0-10</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>11-20</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>21-30</b>	-	-	<b>10</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>31-40</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>41-50</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>47</b>



51-60	70	60	17	54.5
61-70	25	19	3	63
71-100	5	1	-	72
<b>Sums within</b>	<b>7950</b>	<b>9600</b>	<b>6450</b>	
<b>n</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>150</b>	
<b>S d</b>	<b>9.235</b>	<b>10.559</b>	<b>11.722</b>	

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In the above table the marks are grouped in class sizes. The median mark for each class is shown. The mean score for each school type is also shown at the bottom of each column. The independent variable is one category of type of school. Therefore to establish whether or not there is a difference in performance on poetry between schools the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed. A machine ANOVA F- test was performed using the “One Way Completely Randomized Application”

The computer output is shown in the table 4.12 below:

**Table 4.12: Analysis of variance between type of school and performance on poetry**

SOURCE	df	SS	MS	F	P-Value
Treatment	2	488.850	244.425	2.194	0.1170
Error	97	10805.900	111.401		
	99	11294.750			

---

The critical F value at  $P > 0.05$  is the intersection between degrees of freedom 2 and 97 on the F table which is 3.07. The F - ratio reported in the above table is 2.194. The critical

value (3.07) is greater than the F- ratio (2.194). We therefore accept the null hypothesis and state that there is no significant difference in performance between students in HPS, APS and LPS on the poetry test.

#### 4.7 Teacher Attitude and Performance on Poetry

Teachers were grouped as either Positive or Negative in attitude. The performance test scripts of the students they taught were then arranged accordingly. The purpose was to determine whether there was a relationship between teacher attitude and the performance of the students they taught. No students were assigned to teachers who were ambivalent, neither positive nor negative. Therefore to establish whether or not there is a difference in performance on poetry between students taught by “Positive” teachers and those taught by “Negative” teachers the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed. A machine ANOVA F- test was performed using the “One Way Completely Randomized Application”. The computer output is shown in the table below:

**Table 4.13: Correlation between teacher attitude and student poetry performance**

<b>SOURCE</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>SS</b>	<b>MS</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>P-value</b>
Treatment	1	2143.690	2143.690	22.0266	0.1960
Err	98				
or					
total	99	9537.620	97.323		

The critical F value at  $P > 0.05$  is the intersection between degrees of freedom 1 and 98 on the F table which is 3.92. The F - ratio reported in the table above is 22.0266. The critical value (3.92) is less than the F- ratio (22.0266). The researcher therefore rejects the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in performance on the poetry test between students taught by “positive” teachers and those taught by “negative” teachers.

#### 4.10 Student Attitude and Performance on Poetry

Students were also divided into two groups: “Positive” students and “Negative” students. Students who appeared ambivalent were excluded. Their scores on the Poetry test were then aligned to the groups. The F –test was performed to determine whether or not there was a relationship between student attitude and performance on poetry. A machine ANOVA F- test was performed using the “One Way Completely Randomized Application”. The computer output is shown in the table below:

**Table 4.14: Correlation between student attitude and poetry performance**

Source	df	SS	MS	F	P-value
Treatments	1	9235.210	9235.210	152.6383	0.1959
error	98	5929.380	60.504		
Total	99	15164.590			

The critical F value at  $P > 0.05$  is the intersection between degrees of freedom 1 and 98 on the F table which is 3.92. The F – ratio reported in the table above is 152.6383. The critical value (3.92) is less than the F- ratio (152.6383). The researcher therefore rejects

the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in performance on the poetry test between “positive” students and “negative” students.

#### **4.9 Chapter Summary**

In this chapter four data collected vide selected tools has been presented and analyzed. The data was quantitative and qualitative. Qualitative data was analyzed through content analysis. Quantitative data was analyzed by use of descriptive and inferential statistics. In the next chapter five the results of the study are summarized and conclusions made on the basis of the findings.

## **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this mixed methods descriptive study was to attempt to explain the choice of poems, teacher strategies and attitudes on one hand, and the contribution of attitude to performance in poetry at secondary school level on the other hand. Literature reviewed showed a need to investigate challenges that face teachers and learners of poetry and from such knowledge develop a better understanding of poetry teaching and learning. There were five objectives for this study;

1. To describe the procedure for selection of poems used in secondary schools;
2. To describe the poetic language used in poems presented for examinations in KCSE;
3. To identify and describe methods used by teachers of poetry in the classroom;
4. To identify the teachers' and students' attitude towards poetry arising from poetic language;
5. Discuss the relationship between teachers' and students' attitude and performance on poetry tasks.

Given these objectives data were collected using Observation Guide, Interview Guide, and Document Analysis Guide, Attitude Test based on the Likert Scale, and performance test for students on poetry. Results obtained were previously discussed in Chapter Four and are now summarized here below.

### **5.2 Summary of Results**

The first objective set out to describe the procedure and criteria used for selection of poems used in secondary schools. Literature reveals criteria such as language suitability, content relevance, accessibility and style. These criteria notwithstanding, teachers reported to select poems on the basis of what was accessible to them. Previously used examination poems were the most likely to be selected for teaching in class. In response to the specific question: “On what basis do you select the poems you use in your poetry class?” the teachers were almost unanimous in answer. They said they selected poems which had appeared in past examination papers. If a teacher didn’t get used poems from a past paper they used poems found in the Integrated English course book. Teachers were further interrogated on this answer and they defended their choice arguing that poems previously used in examinations offered a safe selection because they represent the difficulty level the examination body requires and they also have relevant accompanying questions.

Students were exposed to a limited number of questions a week. While poetry takes up about one third of third of the final score in KCSE many teachers give poetry about 15% teaching time in a fortnight. To verify the number of lessons of poetry taught, the researcher perused through the teachers’ professional documents. Evidence adduced showed that poetry lessons are not frequent in the sampled secondary schools. The schemes of work analyzed showed a paucity of poetry lessons. Few teachers planned for poetry lessons. The teaching of poetry was almost always incidental. The poetry lessons planned for in the schemes of work did not indicate the specific poem to be taught. In the column on “topic” many schemes of work simply reported “poetry”. The choice of the specific poem to be taught on the assigned day was left in abeyance. Poem selection

criteria were not apparent. If poems are mentioned by title in the scheme of work, criteria such as language difficulty, content variety, and stylistic variety would all be considered.

The second objective of this study was to describe the poetic language used in poems presented for examinations in KCSE. Content analysis showed that the language used by examiners in poems is not consistent. Sometimes poems with difficult language are selected. Other times the language in the examinations questions is accessible to the candidates.

The third objective for this study sought to identify and describe methods and classroom activities used by teachers of poetry in the classroom. From the findings it is clear that although teachers prepare schemes of work, they hardly prepare lesson plans. Even when they prepare schemes of work with poetry as the topic, within the scheme of work they do not identify the specific poem to be taught on the occasion. Lesson plans prepared are often sketchy. Teachers do not lay out all teacher/learner activities that they require to present during the poetry lesson. Four activities which show a significant relationship with student performance are: whether or not a teacher pays special attention on words in a poem has an impact on performance on poetry whether or not a teacher prepares questions, and whether or not the teacher uses the inductive approach. Teachers who use prepared questions for their lessons also have a positive impact on student performance in poetry. Students appear to perform better when teachers use the inductive approach to present poems.

In the classroom teachers require students to read a poem an average of two times only. This reduces the students' opportunity to learn. Teacher activities tend to revolve around question and answer. In many instances the researcher found that teachers did not prepare a variety of questions. Questions were extempore and therefore tended to cover only the lower cognitive levels. This is against the recommendations of Bloom *et al.* (1956).

In this study it was found that teachers hardly use any teaching aids to assist better understanding of poetry. Given the wider availability of information communication technology facilities it is expected that teachers would now do more to link poetry to film and media studies and the other creative arts so that poetry is no longer seen as a dull art. Audio recording could be played to students in class. Given the availability of electrical power in most schools it would be expected that teachers can now create You Tube shows for use in live seminars and power point for lectures. It is also possible to attach one's own photos and link them to YouTube. Such exciting new ventures were not observed during data generation for this study.

The fourth objective was designed to identify the teachers' and students' attitude towards poetry arising from poetic language. Generally both teachers and students were negative towards poetry. Students were more negative towards the language and stylistic aspects of poetry than the content of poetry. Students expressed a liking for African poems and those poems whose subject matter they can relate to. On their part teachers are happy to have poetry tested in the two papers as it is now. They also feel that poetry should not be integrated with English Language. In other words teachers support integration. Teachers are opposed to the idea of making poetry optional. They opined that it should remain compulsory.



Most teachers agreed that they teach at least one poem every week. Teachers lack enthusiasm for poetry because of the difficult language poetry carries. Teachers generally believed that the poems examined by KNEC should be prescribed or at least be selected from prescribed anthologies. The tendency to use unseen poems works against those students who are weak at English language.

The last objective five set to analyze and discuss the relationship, if any between teachers' and students' attitude and performance in poetry. First, an attempt was made to compare performance scores of students from the different categories of schools HPS, APS and LPS. It was discovered that the type of school a student attends does not influence their performance in poetry. This study also established that the attitude a teacher holds towards poetry has no significant influence on the performance of the students he teaches given a poetry task. An ANOVA test using the F statistic showed that there is no significant difference in performance on the poetry test between students taught by "positive" teachers and those taught by "negative" teachers.

Students who participated in this study were generally negative in disposition. However, it was possible to divide the participants into "positive" and "negative" groups. An ANOVA test of difference using the F statistic was administered to find out whether or not there was a difference in performance in the poetry test between "positive" students and "negative" students. It was established that indeed there is a significant difference in performance between the two groups. The mean score for the "positive" group was significantly higher than the mean score for the "negative" group.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

Given the findings summarized above the researcher concludes this study thus; teachers use limited criteria in selecting poems for use in the classroom. They limit themselves to past paper poems. Although there has been an improvement by the KNEC on choice of examination poems, there are still instances where poems selected are obviously beyond the language capability of candidates. The choice of Shakespeare's sonnet in recent years is a case in point. Teachers use traditional methods of teaching poetry. There is little use and application of modern techniques in information communication technology. Both teachers and students are generally negative towards poetry. They are generally negative with regard to poetic language. However, students were positive with regard to subject matter and style of poetry. Teachers were positive with regard to integration and embedding poetry in Literature and English Language in general. Finally, this study established that there is no relationship between the attitudes teachers hold about poetry and the performance of the students they teach. But there is a significant difference in performance between students who have a positive attitude towards poetry and those with a negative attitude.

### **5.4 Recommendations**

This study has established that the attitudes teachers hold towards poetry have no impact on student performance. Nevertheless teachers are the ones who select poems for teaching and learning. Teachers should have wider access to different kinds of poems so that students are trained to handle unseen poems more confidently. Teachers should adopt

modern methods of communication using ICT. Young people always engage in poetry activities such as singing and writing songs. When poetry is made exciting students will develop more positive attitudes and perhaps perform better. There does not appear to be a need to change the language of poetry. However, from the student responses there are need to select poems on themes which students can easily relate to. When the subject matter is familiar, language may not matter.

### **AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

1. There is need to investigate how teachers are prepared at the university to teach poetry. It could be inadequate training of teachers that lead to students not performing well in poetry.
2. Further research should be done to determine if integration of language and literature affect performance in poetry.
3. Further research should be done to establish whether environmental influence, like rural and urban schools may influence a student's performance in poetry, given the mother-tongue influence in rural schools.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX I: LETTER TO THE RESPONDENTS**

I am a student at Moi University undertaking a master of philosophy degree in literature education. As part of the requirements of an award of the master's degree, I am carrying out a research on CHOICE OF POEMS, TEACHER STRATEGIES, ATTITUDES AND THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO PERFORMANCE IN POETRY: A SURVEY OF SELECTED SCHOOLS IN LUGARI DISTRICT KAKAMEGA COUNTY, KENYA.

I kindly request you to assist me in answering the questionnaire provided just for academic purposes. This information will be confidential.

Thank you in advance and God bless you.

**ROSE ORIKO**

**APPENDIX I1: INTERVIEW GUIDE**

Please answer the following questions:

1. For how long have you taught English?
2. What is your opinion about Integrated English?
3. Do you think poetry helps learners to improve their language?
4. Which procedure do you use to select poems for use in your classes?
5. Which anthologies do you have in your school available to select poems for your classes?

**APPENDIX III: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS GUIDE**

Documents analyzed were poems, schemes of work, and lesson plans.

The researcher looked for:

- Are poems selected for the lesson included in the scheme of work?
- Do lesson plans have poems planned for?
- How many poems are taught in a week?
- What is the content of poems taught?
- What is included in style of poems taught?

#### **APPENDIX IV: LESSON OBSERVATION CHECKLIST**

The researcher observed the following:

- 1) Does the teacher have a scheme of work?
- 2) Does teacher have a lesson plan?
- 3) Is the poem taught today planned for?
- 4) What introductory activities does the teacher use?
- 5) When does the teacher lead students into the poem?
- 6) How many times do students read the poem?
- 7) Are there prepared questions on the poem?
- 8) Does the teacher present poem from
  - (a) General to particular?
  - (b) particular to general?
- 9) Does the teacher pay attention to words used in the poem?
- 10) Does the teacher relate poem content to everyday life?

#### **APPENDIX V: STUDENT POETRY PERFORMANCE TEST**

My research index number..... My school.....

My stream..... Number of streams in my school.....

**Fill in the spaces provided with appropriate answers. Tick where appropriate or else write a written explanation.**

1) Read the poems below and answer the questions that follow:

Lapobo,

Tall but not too tall,

Short but not too short,

She is of medium size.

Lopobo,

Her teeth are not as ash •

Nor the colour of maize flour,

Her teeth are white as fresh milk.

The whiteness of her teeth

When I think of her makes food drop from my hand.

Lapobo,

Black but not too black,

Brown but not too brown,

Her skin colour is just between black and brown

Lapobo,

Her heels have no cracks,

Her palms are smooth and tender to touch,

Her eyes - Ho they can destroy anybody.

### Questions

i) Who is the persona?

---



---



---

(2 Marks)

ii) Explain what the poem is about

---

(4 Marks)

9) Explain the stylistic device that you can identify

---



---



---

(4marks).

10. Read the poems below and answer the questions that follow:-

You've seen that heap of rags  
 That pollutes the air  
 conditioned City Centre,  
 That louse that creeps about  
 In the clean core of sophistication;  
 You've seen him waylay his  
 betters  
 And make them start-



Especially when they have no  
change.

You recall the day you came upon him

And were startled by his silent presence  
Intruding into your preoccupation:

You hurled a coin

Which missed the mark

And rolled into the gutter

Where he groped for it

With a chilling grotesque gratitude

That followed you down the street.

You dived into the nearest shop

To escape the stare

Of the scandalized crowd

That found you guilty

Of recalling attention

To the impenetrable patience

They had learnt not to see.

### Questions

1. Who is the persona?

---

---

---

---

(2 marks)

2. Explain what the poem is about.

---

---

---

---

(4marks)

3 Explain the stylistic device that you can identify.

---

---

---

---

(4mks)

### APPENDIX VI: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

KINDLY COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE TO THE BEST OF YOUR ABILITY.

My age.....(years)                      Period which I have taught..... (years)

My school.....Number of streams.....

Subject I teach..... My other teaching subject(s).....

Below are twenty statements. Show your reaction on each one of them. You may agree or disagree with each one of them. Show your degree of agreement or disagreement by at any of the five available choices which best represents your true feelings.

Item	Statement	S A	A D	U D	D D	S D	SCOR E
1	I enjoy teaching poetry more than any other genre						
2	The greatest challenge in teaching poetry is the difficult language of poems						

3	Poetry should not be tested in two Papers at KCSE						
4	I do not like poetry because the content is foreign and irrelevant to me						
5	Rhyme and rhythm make poetry difficult						
6	Political poems are boring						
7	Examination questions based on language of poetry are difficult						
8	Poetry should not be integrated with English Language						
9	I have no problem in getting to the deep meaning of poems						
10	Poems in free verse are the best						
11	Imagery makes poems difficult to teach						
12	Poetry should be an optional part of Literature						
13	I enjoy poetry because metaphor is used						
14	I like poems which tell love stories						
15	Alliteration is difficult to teach						
16	Most African poems have no meaning						
17	I teach at least one poem every week						
18	Teachers have no interest in poetry because it uses difficult poetic						

	language						
19	Poems set for examination should come from specific anthologies						
20	Scanning to get rhythm is easy						

### APPENDIX VII: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

My research index number..... My school.....

Type of school.....Girls/ Boys/ Mixed? .....

Number of streams in Form Three.....

Below are twenty statements. Show your reaction on each one of them. You may agree or disagree with each one of them. Show your degree of agreement or disagreement by at any of the five available choices which best represents your true feelings.

Item	Statement	SA	A	UD	D	SD	SCORE
1	I enjoy learning poetry more than any other genre						
2	The greatest challenge in learning poetry is the difficult language of						

	poems						
3	Poetry should not be tested in two Papers at KCSE						
4	I do not like poetry because the content is foreign and irrelevant to me						
5	Rhyme and rhythm make poetry difficult						
6	Political poems are boring						
7	Examination questions based on language of poetry are difficult						
8	Poetry should not be integrated with English Language						
9	I have no problem in getting to the deep meaning of poems						
10	Poems in free verse are the best						
11	Imagery makes poems difficult to understand						
12	Most African poems have no meaning.						
13	I am taught at least one poem every week						
14	Students have no interest in poetry because it uses difficult language						
15	I enjoy poetry because metaphor is used						

16	Alliteration is difficult to comprehend						
17	I like poems which tell love stories						
18	Poetry should be an optional part of Literature						
19	To get rhythm scanning is easy.						
20	Poems set for examination should come from specific set books						

**APPENDIX VIII: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION FROM DEO****MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**

Telephone: 254-053-2060894  
When replying please quote  
Ref: LUG/TSC/335923/47  
And date September 14, 2010



**DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICE,  
LUGARI DISTRICT,  
P. O. BOX 305,  
TURBO**

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

**RE: AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

The bearer of this letter Ms Rose Oriko TSC No. 335923 is one of our teachers in the District. She has been authorized to conduct a research study on "*Effects of poetic language on the attitude of learners and teachers and its contribution to performance in poetry*" in Lugari District for a period ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010.

Kindly accord him the necessary assistance.

Thank you.

  
FOR DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICER  
LUGARI DISTRICT  
**E. O. WERE**  
FOR: DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICER  
LUGARI DISTRICT



## APPENDIX IX: PERMIT FROM NACOSTI

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



## NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Telegrams: "SCIENCETECH", Nairobi  
 Telephone: 254-020-241349, 2213102  
 254-020-310571, 2213123.  
 Fax: 254-020-2213215, 318245, 318249  
 When replying please quote

P.O. Box 30623-00100  
 NAIROBI-KENYA  
 Website: www.ncst.go.ke

Our Ref:

NCST/RR1/12/1/SS/774/3

Date:

26<sup>th</sup> August 2010

Ms. Rose Oriko  
 Moi University  
 P. O. Box 3900  
 ELDORET

Dear Madam,

**RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION**

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "*Effects of poetic language on the attitude of learners and teachers and its contribution to performance in poetry*" I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Lugari District** for a period ending **31<sup>st</sup> December 2010**.

You are advised to report to **the District Commissioner and the District Education Officer, Lugari District** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **two** copies of the research report/thesis to our office.

  
**P. N. NYAKUNDI**  
**FOR: SECRETARY/CEO**

Copy to:

The District Commissioner  
 Lugari District

The District Education Officer  
 Lugari District