

**EFFECTIVENESS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE BRIDGING COURSES
IN IMPROVING THE COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE OF
LEARNERS IN A PRIVATE UNIVERSITY IN KENYA**

BY

NDINDA ELIZABETH WAYUA

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DECLARATION

Declaration by Student

I declare that this is my original work and has never been presented for the award of a degree in any other learning institution. No part of this Thesis may be reproduced without prior written permission of the author and/ or Moi University.

Signature _____

Date: _____

NDINDA ELIZABETH WAYUA

EDU/PGCM/35/09

Declaration by the Supervisors

This Thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as university supervisors.

Signature _____

Date: _____

Prof. Ongeti Khaemba

Department of Curriculum, Instruction and Educational Media

School of Education,

Moi University

Signature _____

Date: _____

Prof. Charles O. Ong'ondo

Department of Communication Studies,

School of Human Resource Development,

Moi University

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research to my mother Mrs. Tabitha Muya, who has always encouraged me in my education.

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I would like to start by thanking the almighty God for granting me the chance to pursue my education up to this level. I also thank Him for good health.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to study the effectiveness of English language bridging courses in improving the communicative competence of learners. The study was carried out in a private university in Kenya. The specific objectives of the study were: To establish the relationship between the learner's communicative competence in English at the beginning and at the end of the ELBC. Also, the study intended to determine the relationship between the learner's post test score and their views on the effectiveness of ELBC. Finally, the study intended to determine the difference between learners and teachers perceptions on the effectiveness of ELBC in improving learners' communicative competence in English. This study was by guided the Meta cognition theory, particularly the tenet that states that; "evaluation of the learning process should occur before, during and after learning." This study adopted a mixed method approach which combined a pre-test, questionnaire, in-depth interviews, and a post test. The study was conducted in three phases: in the first phase, a pre-test was administered to all the ten learners before they started the ELBC. In the second phase a questionnaire was administered to the learners and in-depth interviews with all five lecturers of ELBC was conducted as well as non- participant observations of some of the lessons being taught. In the third phase a post test was administered to all the ten learners who had undergone the ELBC. Secondary data relating to bridging English programs were obtained and analysed from sources such as libraries, publications and the internet. Data obtained from the pre-test and the post test was analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods, including mean, mode, and percentages. Pearson correlation coefficient, regression method and probability value was calculated to test the hypothesis. On the other hand, data from the interviews was analysed using descriptive methods, thematic analysis and narrative analysis. The researcher involved the whole population in the study since the learners undergoing the ELBC were few and their lecturers were only five. The university where this study was conducted was selected randomly. The findings of the study show that, given the current status of what happens in English language bridging courses in Kenya, there is no significant relationship between the effectiveness of language bridging courses and improving communicative competencies of learners in tertiary institutions. The researcher arrived at a conclusion that, there is a lack of a clear framework of the language bridging courses offered in the country. This study recommends that the relevant institutions through the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology should actively and urgently review the curriculum for these courses that are being offered in the country and develop a suitable curriculum and systems that will ensure the program is delivered within acceptable parameters of content and skills, an evaluation be done at entry, during and after the final exam in the course. And finally a final exam should be administered which matches the KCSE standards to ensure uniformity in the country.

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OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Assessment - The process of gathering and discussing information from multiple and diverse sources in order to develop a deep understanding of what students know, understand, and can do with their knowledge as a result of their educational experiences; the process culminates when assessment results are used to improve subsequent learning.

Communicative Competence – The tacit knowledge of a language and the ability to use it in a socially appropriate manner.

Effectiveness- This refers to a program’s ability to conform to set standards, its adaptability and its ability to have room for continuous improvement.

English Language Bridging Courses – Courses designed to help students designed to equip students with skills needed to cope with language requirements at the university.

Evaluation – This is the systematic measurement of a program’s ability to achieve the objectives for which the program was started.

ABBREVIATIONS

CAT	- Continuous Assessment Test
CHE	- Commission for Higher Education
CPA	- Certified Public Accountant
CPE	- Certificate of Primary Education
ELBC	- English Language Bridging Courses
ELE	- English Language Educators
ELT	- English Language Teaching
ESL	- English as a Second Language
ICT	- Information Communication Technology
KASNEB	- Kenya Accountancy National Examinations Board
KCE	- Kenya Certificate of Education
KCSE	- Kenya Certificate Secondary Examinations
KIE	- Kenya Institute of Education
KIPRA	- Kenya Institute of Public Policy Research and Analysis
KNEC	- Kenya National Examination Council
M.Ed	- Master of Education
MCT	- Meta Cognitive Theory
MOHEST	- Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology
NPA	- New Primary Approach
U.S	- United States
UNESCO	- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

In the 1990s students who did not earn grades to qualify for direct entry to university were required to undertake bridging courses to enhance their English or Mathematics grade to pursue university education. Whether the enhancement courses were ever effective or not had never been tested.

This study set out to assess the effectiveness of English Language Bridging Courses (ELBC) in improving the communicative competence of learners in tertiary institutions in Kenya. The study defines effectiveness as a program's ability to conform to set standards, its adaptability and its ability to have room for continuous improvement. The study was therefore concerned with ELBC ability to raise the Learner's English communicative competence to an equivalent of C+ in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Exam (K.C.S.E). The exam at the end of secondary school focuses on a learner's ability to comprehend a written passage and respond accurately to questions based on it, speech work, writing of compositions, grammatical construction of sentences as well as a mastery of literary texts and poems.

This study was concerned with the effectiveness of ELBC because these courses offer access to University education to students who would otherwise not have attained University education. There has been a concern in the Kenyan education system over the effect that an increase in access has on the quality of education. More information on these issues will be found in the relevant chapters.

Next is a brief background to the study which give insights into the status of English language in Kenya and the ELBC; Highlights issues that some researchers have dealt

with generally in education and what others have dealt with in relation to the effectiveness of ELBC, which was the concern of this study. Gaps in these researches have been identified which form the basis of this study.

1.2 Background to the Study

The desire to improve education is a persistent issue in many countries. According to Holmes (1981) two arguments have been advanced in favour of reform in the educational sector. One argument is based on the belief that education is a basic human right and governments should provide it in response to the wishes and expectations of parents and learners. The second argument is there should be an expansion of education.

According to Wanjohi (2011), Kenya has seen a series of changes in its education system since independence. After independence Kenya saw the introduction of 7-4-2-3 system of education. But soon afterwards the system was viewed to lack the capacity and flexibility to respond to the changing aspirations of individual Kenyans and the labor market needs, in terms of new skills, new technologies and the attitude to work (Owino, 1997). Following this development the 8-4-4 system of education was introduced in 1985 following the Mackay report (1982).

The system adopted 8 years of primary education, 4 years of secondary education and 4 years of university education. With the introduction of the 8-4-4 system Certificate of Primary Education (CPE) became Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) while (Kenya Certificate of Education) KCE became the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE). Since 1985, public education in Kenya has been based on an 8-4-4 system, with eight years of primary education followed by four years of secondary school and four years of college or university.

When a student sits for KCSE examinations the average grade is based on performance in the eight subjects where English is one of them. Where a candidate sits for more than eight subjects, the average grade is based on the best eight subjects. University matriculation is based on the best eight and performance in particular subjects relevant to degree courses.

The average grade is 81 divided by 8, which equals 10.1 (approximately 10.0 points) which is Grade B+ according to the grading system. This student qualifies to join one of the Public Universities for his best score. Training institutions and faculties and departments determine their own minimum entry requirements.

Students who manage a grade of C+ qualify to do a degree course at the University on self sponsor module. Owing to the competition and fewer places at the University, those with B and in a few cases B-, and above are taken for degree courses at the public universities and benefit by paying the government-subsidized fees. The rest join private universities or middle-level colleges. Nonetheless, those who miss out, but attained the minimum university entry mark of C+ or C with a relevant diploma, certificate are admitted through the parallel degree programs (module II) if they can afford the full fees for the course.

English has been cited over the years as a major reason for this persistent fail not only in English paper examinations but also in other subjects which make students not to obtain the needed cluster points to join the university.

English language plays a vital role in the language situation in Kenya. It is the medium of instruction in Kenya from primary four, through secondary education, colleges and universities. This means that English is a service subject across the entire school curriculum. As a result of being the medium of instruction, English language is

also the language of examinations. It is the official language in Kenya and, a language of regional communication, used in East African regional forums. Moreover, English is an international language. It is one of the leading media for communication in international conferences and meetings.

In spite of the important role played by English language in Kenya, there have been persistent complaints about falling standards of both written and spoken English since the late 1950s (Hawes, 1979; Oluoch, 1982; Iyumagomya, 1989). Since 1985, substantial blame at secondary school level is put on the integrated approach to the teaching of English designed and implemented in schools (K.I.E., 2002). According to the integrated approach, the following are pursued as the objectives of English Language Teaching (ELT) for secondary schools in Kenya'. At the end of the secondary school English course, the learner should be able to; listen attentively for comprehension and respond appropriately; use listening skills to infer and interpret meaning correctly from spoken discourse; listen and process information from a variety of sources; speak accurately, fluently, confidently and appropriately in a variety of contexts; use non-verbal cues effectively in speaking; read fluently and efficiently; appreciate the importance of reading for a variety of purposes; develop a life-long interest in reading a wide range of subjects; read and comprehend literary and nonliterary materials; read and analyze literary and non-literary works from Kenya, East Africa, Africa and the rest of the world, and relate to the experiences in these works; appreciate and respect own as well as other people's culture; make an efficient use of a range of sources of information, including libraries, dictionaries, encyclopedias and the internet; use correct spelling, punctuation and paragraphs; use a variety of sentence structures and vocabulary; communicate appropriately in functional and creative writing; write neatly, legibly and effectively; use the correct

grammatical and idiomatic forms of English; think creatively and critically; appreciate the special way literary writers use language; appreciate the universal human values contained in literary works (K.I.E., 2002)

The integrated curriculum organization is rooted in the progressive education movement of the 1930s (Vars, 1987) and is lauded as a move away from the memorization and recitation of isolated facts to a more constructivist view of learning which values in-depth knowledge of subjects. This is seen as a curriculum organization geared towards teaching for transfer and thoughtful learning (Perkins, 1991). Oxford (2001) advocates for an integrated skills approach to language teaching. The advantages of the integrated skills design as contrasted with the purely segregated approach is that it exposes learners to authentic language and challenges them to interact naturally in the language. Learners rapidly gain a picture of the richness and complexity of language as employed for communication. Integrating the language skills also promotes the learning of real content and is highly motivating for learners because that is how language occurs in real life.

As observed by Okwara et al (2009) the implementation of the integrated syllabus in Kenyan secondary schools faces a number of challenges. There lacks a clear consensus between the teachers and implementing body on how best it should be taught. And also teachers are trained on a separate mode between the English and Literature syllabus yet they are supposed to teach the integrated syllabus. Also a number of teachers are trained in other subjects alongside English and literature. Due to these challenges the performance of English in KCSE examinations has declined over the years.

In addition Oladejo (1991 in Barasa, P.L, 1997) observes that: "Problems currently facing the teaching and learning of English Language in developing English-speaking countries are numerous" (1991:195). But "the major threat comes from a lack of professionalism in ESL teaching" (ibid.). He stresses that "the ineffectiveness of ESL teaching and learning activity results from chronic teacher-related factors such as: shortage of well trained teachers, use of unqualified teachers in the language classroom, and lack of in-service training opportunities" (1991:195) According to Oladejo (1991), in Kenya, these general problems affecting the teaching and learning of English have been compounded by the recently introduced "integrated" syllabus of English. This has led to the use of literature teachers to handle a predominant language based syllabus. The situation has not been helped by the lack of an established in-service program for teachers of English.

Due to the gap which has been created in secondary school performance, most students are not able to get the required grades in English to enable them meet the cluster points needed to get a direct admission to university. Universities are rushing to offer English Language Bridging courses to enable such students upgrade their grades to the required university admission cut offs. The majority of learners are willing to join because they hope that the programs offered at university are quality and will be able to fill their communicative competence gap created from secondary level.

The ELBC comprises of two courses: They are the bridging English course which takes one semester of three months to complete and the Pre University program which offers participants a chance to take the English course in addition to other courses for two semesters. The Pre University course takes one academic year to complete. Admission to an English language bridging course requires a participant to have a

K.C.S.E mean grade of C+ and a D+ in English or its equivalent. A Pre University admission requires a mean grade of C plain. There are no specific requirements for English grades at K.C.S E for admission into the Pre University program.

Admission in many degree programs requires an applicant to have at least a C plain or C+. The Bridging English course is undertaken by students who have qualified to do a university degree or any other program, but their English grades are below the prerequisite grades in the program. For instance, one may want to register for Certified Public Accountant (CPA) exams which are offered by KASNEB (Kenya Accountants and Secretaries National Examination Board) yet they have a C plain in English in the KCSE (Kenya Certificate of Secondary Exam) but obtained the minimum aggregate grade of a C+ and above. Such a student can register for the course if they have evidence of having gone through and passed an English language bridging course from a recognized institution. The course attempts to bridge the gap between the learner's knowledge and the requirements of a degree program or any other course.

Institutions which offer Bridging English formulate the content to be covered in the course. Such an institution also administers continuous and summative evaluations for learners who undergo the course. From time to time, institutions of higher learning carry out their own evaluations to judge the effectiveness of their program.

The content of Bridging English encompasses four main parts, namely grammar, writing, speech and reading skills. Speech work is targeted at improving the participant's confidence in oral presentations. The specific contents of the unit include debates, impromptu speeches, interviews and dramatization. The reading skills which are tackled in the unit include skimming, scanning, inference and intensive reading.

In Grammar, the objective is to improve the grammar of the participant and enable him to develop greater flexibility in sentence construction. Specific content which is covered in this unit include parts of speech, clauses, direct and indirect speech, comparatives and superlatives, passive voice, infinitives, question tags phrasal verbs and conditionals.

In writing the unit is intended to improve the participants' effective writing and study skills. Specifically; learners are guided through creative, discursive and functional writing. They are also trained on proper use of punctuation marks. Study skills such as summary writing, note taking and note making is also taught.

Learners taking the ELBC also have a literature unit, learners here they go through poetry and selected literally texts. This research, among other things intends to find out how the English Language bridging course is taught and what measurable benefit it has to the learners who go through it. There are also Bridging Courses for mathematics, but this research will concern itself with ELBC.

The learners who undertake this course attend classes either on weekdays, in the evening or over the weekends. The learners have a face to face contact with their lecturer and with other classmates. The learners who undertake the EBLC are evaluated through class assignments, two continuous assessment tests and internal examinations which are set and moderated by lecturers in the institutions which offer the course.

The effort has been viewed as a way of compromising the quality of education. According to Maina (2014) in an article in the Kenya Daily Nation newspaper on 4th February, the Commission for Higher Education (CHE) secretary Professor David Some revealed that, form four graduates with grades as low as grade D were gaining

express admissions to some local private universities which was a serious breach in university admissions. He reiterated that many institutions of higher learning had devised mechanisms of duping Kenyans that they can offer short pre-university courses for prospective students who scored less than C+. He further noted;

“That is wrong because we will declare the certificates null and void,” he said. “These are just ways of looking for money, but then as a commission, we are guided by the law and as long as that is the case, then all those who did not meet the prerequisite conditions stand to lose.” (Daily Nation, February 4th, 2014).

Prof Some was categorical that the only recognized path for those who did not score the minimum grade of C+ and wanted to pursue degree courses was to first undertake a minimum three-year diploma course, acquire work experience then proceed to undertake a degree course. He also reiterated that;

“Most Kenyans like taking shortcuts, but it is only good that those who know this follow the rightful procedure to avoid future tears when one is seeking a public job.”

CHE chairman Henry Thairu said the agency was facing with a delicate balancing act between ensuring that quality education was available in Kenya without denying people the right to pursue their dreams.

Those who have not managed to score the requisite grade of a C+ or above should not be condemned entirely, but should be afforded the opportunity to access higher education, he said.

“Access and relevance are really the universal benchmarks of a mature education system and as an institution, our intention is really to ensure even the pre-university programs are not diluted only to serve the cause for money,” said Prof Thairu.

In an effort to provide universal education there is still a lot of debate currently on the effectiveness of bridging courses to improve a learner’s grade in the subject area in the Africa. This was complemented by Jude et al (2012) who carried out a research on

the Effectiveness of University Bridging Programs in Preparing Students for University Education, A case study from East Africa. It was revealed that Studying abroad brought several advantages to students, universities, countries, and Academe. However, across countries with incongruent pre university education structures, some students were denied admission to foreign universities, due to gaps in their admissibility. Some institutions offered university bridging programs, to enhance the admissibility of these students to the required level. Nonetheless, the efficacy of these programs, in closing the competence gap between their attendees and conventional enrollees, was the subject of much controversy—albeit neither their proponents nor critics had provided empirical evidence to support their side of the argument. To plug this gap, this study examined the academic performance differentials between students enrolled through the programs and those admitted through conventional routes, taking the case of the Kampala International University. The findings were that, on the whole, there was a significant difference between the two, meaning that the programs were effective in preparing their attendees for university education.

Despite these arguments by different scholars, some universities all over the world are offering the bridging courses and assessing them internally, in an effort to provide a bridge to those who do not meet the required grade for direct admission to a degree program. There are many institutions in Kenya, which offer bridging English Programs. See appendix 1 for a list of the institutions offering this course in Kenya. These institutions are colleges and universities which have been approved to offer this course by the Commission for Higher Education. More specifically for this study, the issue or problem of concern is as stated below.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Many learners who have attained the University entry marks have low marks in English, though they desire to continue with University studies. Some accredited Universities and colleges (see appendix 1) offer ELBC to such learners to improve their communicative competence and also to attract students to a University to pursue further studies there.

While the ELBC intend to raise the level of learner's communicative competence in the English language, the extent to which the program achieves this is not known. This raises the question of whether ELBC is effective in achieving improved communicative competence in English. This research evaluated the extent to which the ELBC raised the learners' communicative competence. Among other things the researcher focused on the educational inputs (in terms of the teachers who teach learners, the characteristics of the learners who go through the program, assessment procedures and other facilities such as relevant books), the adequacy of the curriculum and the outputs (the learner's level of improvement after going through the bridging English program).

This research found out the extent to which ELBC was effective in raising the communicative competence of the learners who went through the courses. To borrow a bit from the researchers two years experience as an ELBC teacher, the researcher realized that the learners gained tremendous improvement in their overall English fluency as a result of smaller class sizes and more focused learners. This is because the learners were aware that they would not pursue a University degree if they failed the Courses. Other colleagues who were teaching the ELBC graduates had challenges with the communicative competence of these learners compared to others who had

attained the required C+ grade at K.C.S.E. Yet the researcher's experience and that of a few colleagues who teach learners who have successfully completed an ELBC is not enough to conclude on how effective ELBC are in raising learners' communicative competence. Based on this problem, the purpose of the study was stated below.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study, was to investigate the effectiveness of English Language Bridging Courses in improving the communicative competence of learners in tertiary institutions in one University in Kenya.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study were to;

1. To establish the relationship between the learners' communicative competence in English language at the beginning and the end of the ELBC.
2. To determine the relationship between the learners' views on the effectiveness of ELBC and their post test scores in improving the learners' communicative competence.
3. To determine the difference between the learners' and teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the ELBC in improving the learner's English Language communicative competence

1.6 Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between the learners' communicative competence in English language at the beginning and the end of ELBC.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between the learners' views of the effectiveness of the ELBC and their post test scores at the end of the ELBC.

Ho3: There is no significant difference between the learners' and teachers' perceptions of the ability of the ELBC in improving the learners' communicative competence.

1.7 Justification of the Study

The quality of education has been a concern for parents and educational stakeholders alike. With the introduction of the free primary education, researchers sought to find out whether access to primary education was increased at the expense of quality. The literature reviewed (in chapter two) revealed that researchers have conducted a thorough investigation on the effects of the quality of learning taking place in overcrowded classrooms and the chances of University admission for learners in schools with few educational materials. Having not seen any studies conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of ELBC in Kenya, The researcher sought out to carry out this research.

1.8. Significance of the Study

The quality of an education program is a very significant issue in any country. Parents and employers have voiced concern over the quality of education in the last several years. The worry is that educational institutions are turning out increasing numbers of students who are weak in basic skills such as writing and reading. Parents have also complained that while education costs are rising the quality of education is sinking.

This study is concerned with the quality of the bridging English programs which afford learners who had not passed their K.C.S.E English exam to pursue post secondary training. These learners end up in the job market yet it is not known whether they actually benefited from the bridging English program or not. It is

noteworthy that English is one of the cluster subjects for most of the degree programs which are offered in the country. The other important cluster subject is mathematics.

Just as the free primary education, the bridging English program increases access for learners to university education. It is therefore important to find out whether in this case access is increased at the expense of quality.

The study also creates a benchmark for measuring the efficiency of the programs being offered by most universities and help in developing standardized policies to develop a national curriculum.

The literature reviewed in this study (Chapter 2) shows that there aren't any studies conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of this program. This study therefore generated useful information which informs policy makers and other researchers in their quest to make deductions on the quality of learning which takes place during Bridging English programs

1.9 Scope of the Study

Based on the objectives stated above, this study was concerned with establishing the extent to which bridging English programs raised the learner's communicative competence in English language at the end of the program. This was measured by comparing the results of the learners' scores after doing the pre and post test.

The study also explored the different views of ELBC lecturers on the relevance of the bridging English program and the evaluation procedures of this program. Finally, it provided an insight into other aspects that affect the effectiveness of the program to raise learners' communicative competence. It focused on the course structure (course duration, content and lessons per week), institutional context (library facilities,

institution management, assessment procedures, lecturer's experience, class size, number of students, teaching methods) and learner's personal factors (political, economical, social-cultural, technological, environmental and legal)

The other aspect of the scope is the methodology. The study was a case study in one university in Eldoret Municipality, in Uasin Gishu County. The study was conducted between May 2013 and August 2013.

The target population was all the participants, who were, going through the Bridging English program and the lecturers who taught this course. After a preliminary survey of the institutions which offer both the bridging English and pre university program, the researcher discovered that the whole population of students in any given institution was few and saw no need to sample the population. The researcher therefore included the whole population of students and their five lecturers in the study.

The study data was generated using a pre test, questionnaire and post test of the ELBC learners and interviews of ELBC lecturers and through non participant observation of lessons. More information on the methodology is in chapter three.

1.10 Limitations of the Study

The first limitation of this study is that its scope is restricted to the effectiveness of the bridging English program in terms of the course structure (content, duration and lessons per week), institutional context (library facilities, institution management, assessment procedures, lecturer's experience, class size, number of students and teaching methods) and learners personal factors (political, economical, social-cultural, technological, environmental and legal). The pre and post test scores administered only measured reading and writing skills. There are other aspects of learner's

competence that would have been interesting to measure in the tests – such as listening and speaking skills. On these competencies the study based its analysis on views collected from the questionnaire and interviews.

Additional aspects of Learner's competence in English language worth exploring include student leadership, external university English training workshops, learner personal characteristics, motivation of instructors, secondary school attended, and completion levels, students sitting position in class among others. These were not covered in this study due to the limited scope of study for a Master of Education (M.Ed) degree as well as constraints in terms of time and other necessary resources. This study was also limited to learner's competence in the English language within the university setting. Other aspects of personal work were not considered.

There are methodological limitations-which are explained in the methodology chapter (see chapter 3), but just to mention, the study area, sample and data generation techniques were limited to the ones identified in view of time and resources. For instance, the study did not find it necessary to administer a personal learner communicative competence scale as suggested by most scholars, but was able to generate significant information about their communicative competence from the responses they gave in the questionnaire. This was due to the limited time available and also to reduce on the volume of data to be analyzed. Also the study was only able to survey one university given that by then other universities and colleges offering the program in the study area did not have students.

In spite of the limitations, this study generated significant information on the effectiveness of the bridging English program in depth. It provided useful information on the effectiveness of the ELBC. As it has become a common trend for many

students to sit for the K.C.S.E exam, but fail to get direct admission into universities because of poor performance in English, this study was able to shed light on the effectiveness of the ELBC in its attempt to raise the level of competence of learners in English.

1.11 Chapter Summary

The chapter was an introduction to the whole study, therefore, it explained the background of the study, stated the problem in the study, the purpose of the study, gave the specific objectives of the study, justification of the study, the significance of the study, and its scope and limitations. In the next chapter the researcher reviews literature related to the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher reviews the literature on issues relating to the current status of English language in Kenya, effectiveness of English language bridging courses, communicative competence, and the relationship between the effectiveness of English language bridging courses and communicative competencies and Meta Cognitive Theory (MCT). The review of the current status of English language in Kenya is vital because it gives a historical perspective of English usage since independence and highlights the gaps that have necessitated the introduction of English language bridging courses in Kenya. The review of literature on effectiveness of English language bridging courses is also important because it shows what has been researched on effectiveness of an education program, that is, the aspects of effectiveness, how to measure whether it achieves the required communicative competence and what progress need to be made to achieve this objective in Kenya. Literature review on learner's communicative competence highlights what has been researched on concerning communicative competence, for instance, the importance of communicative competence in measuring effectiveness of a language, aspects of communicative competence and the factors that the researcher has found to influence communicative competence. The research explored related literature on the relationship between the effectiveness of bridging English language and communicative competence. This is important because it helps to draw connections between these two issues that are quite related. Overall, the literature review helped identify the knowledge gaps in relation to the twin issues of effectiveness of bridging English language program in improving the communicative competencies of learners.

The literature was reviewed from sources such as textbooks, theses, journals, magazines, newspapers and internet. To start with, let's look at review of literature on teachers' workload.

2.2 Historical Perspectives of English Language in Kenya

From the seventeenth century onwards, the English began to extend their language over the world. It is due to so, important factors as the power of the British Empire, the importance in the Industrial revolution taking place in England for the first time or the supremacy of America in all over the world. Moreover, we all know that English has become a global language in the last fifty years, being the official language of the international and multinational companies and industries, and the language of the Internet.

According to Iraki (2010) the disproportionate use of English, during and after colonization, has had some consequences on the development of Kenyan indigenous languages. Indeed, the English language has a lion's share in the school curriculum to the detriment of other languages. As a result, the scenario of the 1920s, where English was the idiom for the privileged minority, seems to persist today. That perception has resulted in persistent failure over the years of students in English in KCSE.

In 1964 also, the Ominde Commission revealed that many Kenyans were in favour of English as the medium of instruction from the beginning class in primary school to the university. The Commission threw its weight behind the English language, arguing that it would expedite learning in all subjects by ensuring smooth transitions from "vernaculars," and owing to its intrinsic resources (Mazrui & Mazrui 1996). English was therefore introduced in beginners' classes in primary schools through the New Primary Approach (NPA), in which its learning was heavily emphasized. The

Task also emphasized the use of mother tongue and Kiswahili in the education system, at different levels and localities. The introduction of other languages as a medium of instruction at the foundation years has resulted in a weak foundation in the mastery of English in later years of schooling.

In 1967, The Kenya Institute of Education (K.I.E) started producing books in various mother tongues, Kiswahili inclusive; for use in primary schools. In the same year, Kiswahili was pronounced the language of Adult Education alongside the mother tongue (Gorman 1974). However, in urban areas, Kiswahili was to be used singularly. Nonetheless, English supremacy in the Kenya educational system was entrenched following the Gachathi Commission in 1976, which recommended that the tongue becomes the language of instruction from the fourth grade in primary school, to the university. Though the Commission also declared Kiswahili an important subject in primary and secondary classes, the language received inferior status when compared with English in the school curriculum. While English was allotted 8-10 periods out of the 40 hours per week, Kiswahili which was allotted 3 hours (Chimerah 1998).

In 1981, the Mackay Commission recommended 8 years of primary school, 4 years of secondary school and 4 years of university education. It passed that English remains the language of instruction, while Kiswahili was made a compulsory subject in both primary and secondary education. This policy was also followed by the production of Kiswahili books to meet the increased demands of both students and teachers. The Mackay Commission further advised that the mother tongue be used in the lower grades of primary schools, in areas where this was possible (Njoroge 1990).

Iraki (2010) asserts that Kenya has 42 ethnic communities with Kiswahili emerging as the most widely accepted languages for national unity. However, the political elites

continue to favor the development of English without due attention to Kiswahili and the indigenous languages. The Sheng language, spoken and popularized by the youth deserves special mention. It is argued it here that it has its place in the linguistic layout of Kenya. The emergency of Sheng as a language of the youth and emphasis of Kiswahili as the language of interaction has led to less emphasis of English in schools. Students struggle to master the English language because they rarely use it in communication on a daily basis since they often use Sheng and Kiswahili.

Kenyatta (1938) and Gatheru (2005) describe the demand for English among emerging African elites. Harry Thuku, an eloquent man in English and also a man of great economic means, was among the Africans who demanded that English be taught to Africans as a way of understanding the thinking of the white man. For him, black consciousness would be enriched by an understanding of English since this idiom symbolized political and economic power. In the same vein, Gal (1989:353) argues that “because linguistic practices provide access to material resources, they become resources in their own right”.

Kenya’s linguistic topography is an important pointer to power politics in the country. The historical reality of civilization via Pax Britannica continues to have relevance as English dominates other languages in all spheres of life. Since independence English language has been viewed as a white man’s language. Most scholars believe it is the vehicle towards civilization; knowing the white man technology for development. Therefore English language has not been accorded the weight it deserves from the people and government policy frameworks. Hence a gap in performance compared to other subjects at all levels of education.

2.3 English Language Teaching in Kenya

In Kenya, students begin English language learning with ear training to identify English sounds (initial listening skills) and instruction in the proper articulation of sounds, words, intonation and stress (initial oral skills). They are also taught to decode through identification of phonemes and words (initial reading skills) and scripting the alphabet, word formation, sentences (initial writing skills). These basic skills are prerequisites for communication in the language, and the first two years of primary school are spent practicing these skills, incrementally, along with vocabulary development. By the third year, Kenyan students are expected to use the skills they gained the previous two years to respond to simple stories read to them, read simple stories, and to write answers to simple questions about the stories they hear and read (KIE, 2002a). By the end of the third year they are expected to be ready to learn the school curriculum in English.

The Kenyan secondary school English syllabus adopts an integrated approach to teaching English, merging the teaching of literature with the teaching of language skills. It also focuses on the four domains. For listening and speaking there is an emphasis on pronunciation drills and listening comprehension exercises, as well as oral literature, with role play, debates and presentation of oral reports and drama. For syntax, the focus is on helping students to understand how language works and is used in different contexts. Literary texts provide the focus for reading while writing is related to helping students develop their ideas clearly and effectively, using the grammar they learn (KIE, 2002b).

While the Kenyan secondary school English language syllabus focuses on providing students with English language skills, one area that is not explicitly addressed is

academic literacy, or literacy in the subject areas in which students use English as the medium of instruction, an area that is highlighted in the TESOL English development standards used in the U.S. This omission in the Kenyan syllabus implies that developing the skills and dispositions delineated in the Kenyan syllabus will automatically equip students with the necessary skills for understanding the language needs in the respective content areas. However, Lyster, (2007) pointed out that English language development should include instruction in the types of academic language students encounter in their content classes.

The English language is a very important subject for students in tertiary institutions because it not only forms the cluster for many degree programs but also is the medium of instruction in tertiary institutions. Barasa, P. L (2005): 2 posit that poor performance in English language has become a matter of concern to the government because it occupies a unique and significant role in the country. He also notes that the poor proficiency in English by students in secondary schools in 1990's and the preceding years has turned the spotlight on the teaching and learning of the English language. Further K.N.E.C (1995) has noted that there is a crisis in the teaching of English language in schools. The level of written and spoken English is dropping each year. The council also observed that in 1995

Candidates who sat for K.C.S.E depicted a very poor mastery of English. Their language competence was low and they were unable to follow instructions. They therefore end up being careless in such basics as punctuations, spelling and sentence construction. (KNEC 1998:16)

Many times language teaching has emphasized mastery of language structures. This has led to language teaching being associated with the teaching of instructional items

that learners can handle. Success or failure both in language teaching and language are interpreted as though the judgment of the learner's ability to manipulate the structures of language and through examination results.

One of the millennium development goals of the Kenyan government is to ensure that it provides quality education for all. With the introduction of the free primary education in 2002, there has been an increase in the number of students who join secondary education.

According to Ministry of Education (2004) the government has put in place many measures to increase access to secondary education. Some of them include subsidizing secondary school education, provision of bursary to needy and scholarships.

Access to university education has been increased with the introduction of evening programs, parallel program and also the introduction of the Bridging English course. According to Sifuna (1998) access to university education has also been increased by the double intake methods of admitting students in these institutions. However, he asserts that access to university education could compromise quality as students learn in overcrowded lecture rooms, the teacher student ratio is not optimum and also the student textbook ratio is far below the required level.

According to a survey of Ranking Web of World Universities, the quality of education in Kenyan universities is wanting. In that survey conducted in 2008, the best ranked Kenyan University was Ranked 25. A Standard Newspaper article titled *Our Universities Performing_Below Par (5th Sept 2008)* states that expansion of access to university education has compromised quality.

The term quality is generally defined as conformance to certain standards in tertiary institutions; the quality of the educational programs is viewed as fitness for purpose. In this study, the ELBC was perceived to offer quality education since it raised the grades of learners who have undergone it to an equivalent of a C+ in K.C.S.E. In this context, the quality of an educational program such as bridging English was examined in several ways; (i) In relation to whether it produces individuals who are competent and skilled in the English language, (ii) Whether the institution providing this program has the necessary inputs to offer the course (Inputs includes curriculum, classrooms, books and qualified lecturers), (iii) The quality of the output. This is the performance of the learners who have completed the Bridging English program in a test set by the researcher. It should be noted that the ways in which educators can record, assess and examine the achievements of learners raise some difficult questions, not least of which is how far what is recorded, assessed and examined reflects accurately what learners have learnt. In this study, learners sat for a test comprising grammar, reading comprehension and writing. The assessment was viewed as the process by which the quality of the responses of learners to the tests was judged.

2.4 Effectiveness of an Education Program

The effectiveness of an educational program is a significant aspect in this study. In this section the researcher looks at how several other scholars have defined effectiveness. The section also gives a detailed review of literature related to effectiveness and how it is measured.

2.4.1 Definition of effectiveness

Effectiveness refers to a measure of the match between the stated goals and their achievement. Fraser (1994, p. 104). It is always possible to achieve ‘easy’, low-standard goals. In other words, the quality of ELBC cannot only be a question of achievements ‘outputs’ but must also involve judgements about the goals (part of ‘inputs’). The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) also defines educational effectiveness as an output of specific review/analyses (*e.g.*, the *WASC Educational Effectiveness Review* or its *Reports on Institutional Effectiveness*) that measure (the quality of) the achievement of a specific educational goal or the degree to which a higher education institution can be expected to achieve specific requirements. It is different from efficiency, which is measured by the volume of output or input used. As a primary measure of success of a program or of a higher education institution, clear indicators, meaningful information, and evidence best reflecting institutional effectiveness with respect to student learning and academic achievement have to be gathered through various procedures (inspection, observation, site visits, etc.). Engaging in the measurement of educational effectiveness creates a value-added process through quality assurance and accreditation review and contributes to building, within the institution, a culture of evidence. (Vlăsceanu *et al.*, 2004, p. 37). This study adopted the both Fraser (1994) and UNESCO definitions.

2.4.2 Effectiveness of an education program

The concern in this study was mainly on the effectiveness of ELBC in improving the communicative competence of learners. The researcher defines the effectiveness of an educational program as the program’s ability to achieve its intended objective. In this case, the extent to which Bridging English programs actually raises the learners’

competence in English. In higher education institutions, a program is regarded as effective if it is fit for its purpose. Although some institutions which offer Bridging English programs clearly state in their brochures that the program is not intended to be an alternative to KCSE English, The reason why the learners register for the Bridging English in the first place is their under performance in KCSE English exams. Education indicators which include - access, retention, completion, transition and quality should become top priorities in management decisions in the education sector. The Kenyan education strategy for the primary sub sector over the last decade has concentrated much more on access/enrolment (the numbers we are able to mobilize/attract into schools), while little has been done towards retention, transition and quality.

Several scholars have tried to carry out research on this factor and most of them view effectiveness as a big issue not only in the teaching profession but also in other professions. The issue of learning effectiveness is not an issue just in Kenya but globally. For instance, in the United States as noted by Stumbo, C., & McWalters, P. (2010) in an article they wrote in the journal, *The effective educator titled, Measuring effectiveness; What will it take?*, Section (2)(ii) of the race to top application (US department of Education, 2009) states to design and implement rigorous, transparent and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that,differentiates effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account data on students growth.....as a significant factor. This fiscal policy was an analogous shift from focusing on teacher quality to effectiveness in the learning. The kind of effectiveness of teaching that the authors reported have many similarities of the kind of focus needed on to determine whether ELBC are effective in improving the communicative competence in Kenya, that this study was able to come up with.

The education sector in Kenya ought to change tact in planning, sourcing and curriculum delivery to give more attention to the overall development of education as opposed to skewed emphasis on access. The Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology (MOHEST) should consistently stress that a good education strategy is one that improves both access and quality in parallel, and commit to fund all strategies that work towards this aim, alongside improving retention, completion and transition rates particularly at primary and secondary levels. While the ELBC increases access to University education, it should also offer quality education. An Effective educational program requires qualified and motivated personnel, adequate equipment and facilities as well as motivated pupils who are willing to learn. In the teaching of English, the teaching materials and facilities are usually in the form of books.

2.4.3 Measuring effectiveness of an education program.

Several studies on this issue of effectiveness reveal that it affects the outcome of learning when an education program is not monitored properly throughout the process both in class and out of class. According to Moore (2005) measuring effectiveness can be split into two distinct areas; Effectiveness of learning content or learning effectiveness and effectiveness of the learning organization or operational excellence. He adds that the ability to maximize learning effectiveness and operational excellence indicates that goals are being met. These two measurements supersets are key learning indicators.

According to Edmund (1970), Education systems have passed the time when the educational effectiveness could be measured simply by the numbers of people enrolled or staying on, or even by observing examination results. The criteria of

educational effectiveness is whether the person learning identifies himself with what has been learned, is encouraged to develop himself further and is more committed to a series of constructive choices after the learning process. In this study, therefore, the ELBC is considered to be effective if there is a marked improvement in the learner's reading, grammar and writing skills.

The evaluation of the Bridging English program like the evaluation of any educational program is concerned with whether the program achieves the objective for which it was set up in the first place and this is to raise the communicative competence of the students who go through it to the level of those who attained C+ in English in K.C.S.E.

The following diagram illustrates the steps in evaluating a program.

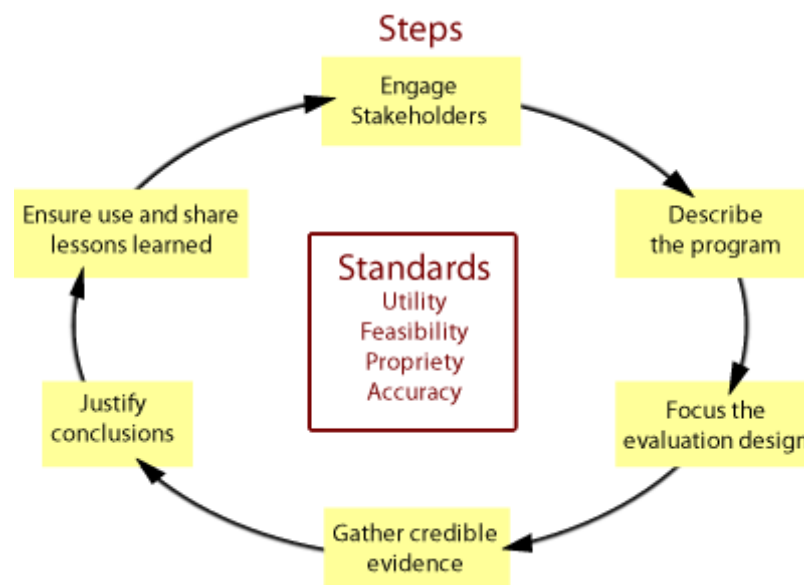


Figure 1: A Framework for Program Evaluation

Source: *Framework for Program Evaluation* (1999) MMWR article,

From this framework, it is evident that various stakeholders in the education sector ought to have agreed on the establishment of the bridging English program. Indeed, it is a laudable program as it increases access to university education. They, like many

other educational programs are normally evaluated on the basis of the performance of learners who have gone through it.

The evaluation of educational programs is a controversial issue. One of the indicators of a successful educational program is the completion rates of learners who go through an educational program. As Bahr (2008), explains, "On one hand, the bridging English program fills an important niche in higher education by providing opportunities to rectify disparities generated in primary education and secondary schooling, and also helps learners to acquire the prerequisite competencies that are crucial for negotiating college-level coursework. On the other hand, critics argue that such programs could diminish academic standards and devalue post-secondary credentials, and that the large number of under prepared students entering colleges and universities demoralizes faculties where the learners are admitted.

According to a UNESCO report; *Trends in Global Higher Education: Tracking an Academic Revolution* (2009) Universities and colleges attempt to respond to demand has led to lowering of academic standards. The ELBC can be viewed as a response to the increasing demand for university education as it makes it possible for learners whose English grades are below the university admission grades to be admitted to the University. It is noteworthy that while the Bridging English program could be viewed as a remedial course, not sufficient research has been conducted to show the extent to which diagnostic tests are conducted in order to resolve the issues which resulted in the learners' inability to get the required English grade for university entrance.

Kioko (2004) establishes that when a learner gets good grades in the K.C. S.E English exam, it does not mean that they have the required competence to negotiate through university education. She further asserts that Universities are aware of this and have a

course (communication skills) to cater for this discrepancy. However, the course duration and content are inadequate to bridge the existing Knowledge and skills gap in these learners. This research further exposes the fact that placement tests ought to be administered to learners who want to join the university. An interesting reality is that there is no evidence that such placement tests are conducted for learners who are admitted to the Bridging English program.

Current research trends have been concerned with the falling standards of English, especially in Kenyan secondary schools. The current trends are concerned with establishing whether the teachers of English language can teach a near standard pronunciation to learners' at this level considering that there is no exposure to native speakers of this language in the teaching fraternity at that level.

The Bridging English program is conducted because of learners' deficiencies in secondary school English learning. It is therefore important for educationalists and policy makers know the extent to which those who go through this program actually benefit from it.

Considering that the Bridging English program can be viewed as a remedial program, it is important to review several aspects of the program which can be influenced by other factors other than the ones which take place in class when a teacher is teaching. For instance, the learners who go through this program are slightly focused than their counterparts who sit for the K.C. S. E exam because the assumption is that they are aware that their grades determine their admission into a degree or certificate course. It is important to note that teaching with the sole objective of raising a learner's grade may not be an appropriate approach to language teaching. Richards (1994) Argues that where teachers teach with a view of enabling learners to excel in national

examinations, they provide learners with insufficient help needed to clearly understand how language activity should be developed in the context of the various elements and how in turn this can be learnt through appropriate language activities. This clearly indicates that the examination approach to teaching is not the ideal for teaching language. The emphasis on teaching for examination success has, however, been motivated by the fallacious practice, especially by society that interprets success narrowly through exam proficiency. Although there are no national examinations at the end of ELBC, the learner's admission to University depends on their performance in the course.

This study is comparative in the sense that it will compare the learner's English grades at K.C.S.E, other factors that affect the effectiveness of the ELBC and their performance before and after the ELBC. According to Holmes (1981), the main features of the research methods which inform comparative educationists include:

1. The collection of data using objective observation.
2. The careful classification of data.
3. The search for an explanation by ascribing to each event an antecedent cause or causes.
4. The formulation of tentative hypothesis.
5. The collection of further confirming evidence and finally
6. The statement of universal laws whose validity can be provided.

This study has some of the features mentioned above, including the collection of data using observation, the careful classification of data and the search for an explanation on the causes of each event.

The evaluation of a program is conducted at the end. The results obtained by learners who have gone through an educational program are often used as a measure of how successful that program is.

Tertiary institutions of learning, especially those with a charter are expected to conduct frequent evaluations of both their staff and the programs they offer. The commission for Higher Education is mandated to evaluate how educational programs are conducted in Universities in Kenya. Among other things CHE evaluates the library facilities of an institution, the classrooms available and the qualification of the staff who teach in these institutions. The commission does not evaluate the benefit learners get after going through an educational program. This is the important gap in existing research which this research intends to contribute to.

2.4.4 Factors that affect the effectiveness of an education program

Several studies on this issue of effectiveness reveal that there are a number of factors that affect, a learning program which has to be considered for it to achieve the desired outcome. According to Ngwaru (2014) who carried out a study with an aim of investigating the challenges in academic writing and speaking, encountered by 42 prospective undergraduates Namibian students undertaking the English as a Second Language(ESL) bridging courses at the Great Zimbabwe University revealed that due to historical, political and pedagogical reasons; Namibia students face a lot of challenges in academic language both writing and speaking which subsequently impact negatively on their learning. It showed that there is a significant gap between their performances due to limited proficiency level in ESL. The study concluded that there is an urgent need to provide these students with a wider range of academic and linguistic support measures in the ESL bridging courses than is currently offered and

the one semester they are given to do the bridging course is not enough to improve their communicative competence to make them ready to embark on the Bachelor of Education (B. Ed) program.

Research studies about the use of second/foreign languages as media of learning in African classrooms have indicated that many of the learners demonstrate low proficiency levels in the language of education, particularly in English because of several reasons including; the quality of teachers, inadequate learning materials and limited opportunities to use English outside the classroom. According to Alidou & Brock-Utne, 2011; Brock-Utne, Desai, & Qorro, 2004; Kyeyune, 2010; Mwinsheike, 2002; Rubagumya, 1997; Rugemalira, 2005; Vavrus, 2002; and Webb, 2002; 2004, in Ngwaru (2014) this situation has in many cases militated against effective student learning resulting in poor academic achievement. Namibian students studying at the Great Zimbabwe University have not been spared in this scenario. This researcher, who was responsible for teaching the ESL bridging course for Namibian students, realized that they encountered a lot of challenges in writing and speaking because of limited proficiency in the language of learning. Marsh Outero and Shikango (2001) and Otaala (2006) in Ngwaru (2014) confirm the above point by saying that, “many black Namibians have little or no exposure to English to enhance their capacity to pursue studies in the medium of English.”

In support of this, Stumbo & McWalters, (2010) in their article argued that measuring teacher effectiveness is likely to face a number of shortcomings. This includes limits of student assessment data, many untested subjects, low quality of evaluators, Individual vs team based accountability, working conditions, lack of holistic ideology of effectiveness and not engaging all stakeholders. These challenges observed by

these researchers reflect the true picture of the status of ELBC being offered in different universities currently in Kenya as discussed below.

2.5 Assessment

2.5.1 Definition of assessment

"Assessment is the systematic collection, review, and use of information about educational programs undertaken for the purpose of improving learning and development. (Palomba, C.A. & Banta, T.W, 1999). The Higher Learning Commission also defines assessment of student learning as a participatory, iterative process that: Provides data/information you need on your students' learning, engages you and others in analyzing and using this data/information to confirm and improve teaching and learning, produces evidence that students are learning the outcomes you intended, guides you in making educational and institutional improvements and evaluates whether changes made improve/impact student learning, and documents the learning and your efforts."

Also the University of Oregon, Teaching Effectiveness Program defines assessment as the process of gathering and discussing information from multiple and diverse sources in order to develop a deep understanding of what students know, understand, and can do with their knowledge as a result of their educational experiences; the process culminates when assessment results are used to improve subsequent learning. This study adopted the three definitions above of (Palomba, C.A. & Banta, T.W, 1999), The Higher Learning Commission and University of Oregon.

2.5.2 An overview of assessments

Assessments form an integral part of the education process as a whole. Kempa (1990) points out that assessments are used for a variety of purposes ranging from

educational ones like measuring the students' attainment at the end of a course and societal ones like the maintenance of educational standards. The teaching process is incomplete without thoughts and plans on how assessments will be done. Some of the guidelines provided by Kempa (1990) that could help the teacher come up with effective assessments are; the teacher should think about the people who will make decisions on the types of assessments (Whether they are teachers, learners or examination officers), he should also consider how the teaching and assessment approaches might affect learning, learning approaches and outcomes. The teacher should try to plan assessment items that will allow learners to show their understanding of the subject matter, rather than show how many facts they can remember. He should also Plan ways of providing regular, meaningful feedback to students. Language educators should consider using peer evaluation or self assessment process to encourage student to become critical of their own work.

The person planning assessments should also consider the approaches students might take on the proposed assessment tasks. Does the assessment encourage learners to understand, extend their learning or relate the subject to the real world situations? In addition, the planner should also consider learners overall workload. He should think of the assessment tasks related to the objectives for students' learning.

Finally, the assessment planner should prepare a detailed statement of assessment procedures, for example timing, type of assessment, criteria for assessment, marking scheme in relation of assessment to the teaching objectives.

Goodman et al (1976) gives two types of academic assessments which are required for remedial programs; these are evaluation for placement and evaluation for instruction.

Evaluation for Placement is concerned with the degree and not the nature of a student's ability in school subjects. It is used to measure to qualify him as a learning disability candidate.

According to Johnson (1963) there are two ways of diagnosing students requiring remedial teaching. These ways are: Readiness tests which are designed to measure the ability of a child in the area of visual discrimination, auditory discrimination, and identification of items, use of context clues and the association of ideas, with words, vocabulary development and information and intelligence test which are designed to obtain much of the same information regarding intellectual abilities of individual children tested in a group situation as individually administered intelligence tests.

According to Jones-Davis (1975) school should provide special service to slow learning students which seeks to meet their needs according to the genesis of their disability and according to the degree of the learning difficulties. Learners who undertake the ELBC may not have any learning disability, but they usually have grades below the required ones for University admission.

The table below attempts illustrates the difference between evaluation and assessment.

Table 1: Differences between assessment and evaluation

<i>Dimension</i>	<i>Assessment</i>	<i>Evaluation</i>
Timing	Formative	Summative
Focus of Measurement	Process-Oriented	Product-Oriented
Relationship Between Administrator and Recipient	Reflective	Prescriptive
Findings and Uses	Diagnostic	Judgmental
Modifiability of Criteria, Measures	Flexible	Fixed
Standards of Measurement	Absolute (Individual)	Comparative
Relation Between Objects of A/E	Cooperative	Competitive

Source: Apple, & Krumsieg. (1998).

Table 1; shows that assessment can be done at various times throughout a program and a comprehensive assessment plan will include formative and summative assessment. The point at which the assessment occurs in a program distinguishes these two categories of assessment.

Formative assessment is often done at the beginning or during a program, thus providing the opportunity for immediate evidence for student learning in a particular course or at a particular point in a program. Classroom assessment is one of the most common formative assessment techniques. The purpose of this technique is to improve quality of student learning and should not be evaluated or involve grading students. This can also lead to curricular modifications when specific courses have not met the student learning outcomes. Classroom assessment can also provide important program information when multiple sections of a course are taught because it enables programs to examine if the learning goals and objectives are met in all sections of the course. It also can improve instructional quality by engaging the faculty in the design and practice of the course goals and objectives and the course impact on the program.

Summative assessment is comprehensive in nature, provides accountability and is used to check the level of learning at the end of the program. For example, if upon completion of a program, students will have the knowledge to pass an accreditation test, taking the test would be summative in nature since it is based on the cumulative learning experience. Program goals and objectives often reflect the cumulative nature of the learning that takes place in a program. Thus the program would conduct a summative assessment at the end of the program to ensure students have met the program goals and objectives. Attention should be given to using various methods and measures in order to have a comprehensive plan. Ultimately, the foundation for an

assessment plan is to collect summative assessment data and this type of data can stand-alone. Formative assessment data, however, can contribute to a comprehensive assessment plan by enabling faculty to identify particular points in a program to assess learning (i.e., entry into a program, before or after an internship experience, the impact of specific courses etc...) and monitor the progress being made towards achieving learning outcomes.

This research is informed by the view that learners ought to be continuously assessed when undertaking an educational program. In addition, an educational program ought to be evaluated.

2.5.3 Challenges in assessment practices

In fulfilling their role as instructors, ELBC lecturers work in different environments and face numerous challenges. Some researchers such as Bingimlas (2009), Mustafa and Cullingford (2008), Opolot-Okurut (2007), and Oyelese (1982) in Gichuru (2014) have described challenges that teachers face in the course of their work in different environments and subjects. In Uganda, teachers face common problems, including pressure to complete the syllabus. Mustafa and Cullingford (2008) in Gichuru (2014) pointed out that “teachers have little control regarding what and when they teach and thus have an impact on how they teach” (p. 87). These conclusions are similar to the nature of ELBC environment. Given that the ELBC takes a short period of time the lecturers do not emphasis fully on all the communicative competencies as required. They are keen to ensure the students are admitted in the degree program of their choice.

Similarly, Oyelese (1982, in Gichuru, 2014) identified problems of teaching statistics in Nigerian schools to include lack of qualified teachers, non-existent elementary

textbooks for teaching in primary and secondary schools, lack of appropriate teaching aids, non-existent curriculum for statistics, and lack of visiting specialist lecturers to generate interest in the teaching of statistics. Meanwhile, Bingimlas (2009, in Gichuru, 2014) identified minimum use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and its associated barriers in teaching statistics, which deny students opportunities to operate effectively in an information age. Similar challenges have been noted in the Kenyan universities and colleges. Some lecturers rotate from one university to another due to lack of enough skilled lecturers. This hinders the ability of the students to consult since the lecturers are not available.

Assessment is an integral part of teaching (Cockcroft, 1982 in Gichuru 2014) that serves several functions like enabling teachers judge students' progress, measuring and diagnosing the effectiveness of the instruction, and reporting student progress to interested clients. Black and William (1998, in Gichuru, 2014) have explained the use of assessment for effective learning, its negative impact and its managerial role, but students value only what is assessed and ignore what they would probably need later in the workplace (Garfield, 1995 in Gichuru 2014). This poses a challenge to the ELBC lectures for the students admitted are keen get the entry grade to join university not to master the communicative competencies to use them in the interaction. Black and William (1998, in Gichuru, 2014) sum up the managerial role of the assessment situation as "the collection of marks to fill in records which is given higher priority than the analysis of pupils' work to discern learning needs; furthermore, some teachers pay no attention to the assessment records of their pupils' previous teachers" (p.142). Feedback from teachers to students as part of formative assessment is a prime requirement for progress in learning. Teachers need to team up and to draw on external sources to collect or develop good questions or worthwhile tasks (NCTM,

1991 in Gichuru 2014) that are not easy to create. Thus, understanding the challenges that teachers face and the assessment practices they employ can contribute to better understanding of teachers' work in classrooms and could contribute to education stakeholders' efforts to work effectively with teachers.

2.6 Teacher Training

ELBC learners need to be taught by experienced lecturers, since the course they undergo takes only three to six months yet they are expected to achieve a higher level of communicative competence. Also there is a gap that has been created from secondary level that needs to be filled before this learner joins undergraduate programs. Several researches show that better training of teachers is paramount to ensure efficient delivery of subject matter. According to Hughes (2011, in Gichuru, 2014), "training is about bridging the gap between what is known (the present) and the level of skills required (the future)" (p. 1). With the fast changing skill demand for growth and development in a highly competitive global economy, teacher classroom practicing skills needs to be frequently updated. According to Walter, Wilkinson and Yarrow (1996, in Gichuru, 2014) "the quality of teaching depends on the quality of teachers which, in turn, depends to some extent on the quality of professional development" (p. 41) of skills necessary for preparing students for future growth opportunities.

Given its importance teachers who are the prime movers of education processes need to be well trained in classroom assessment practices. Lack of a good level of such training handicaps the teacher in any attempt to fulfill his/her roles effectively in the classroom. Trained teachers realize these handicaps when they start teaching. They soon find out that without such skills their effectiveness is limited.

2.7 University Management

The demand for university education in Kenya has significantly increased and continues to swell. Many secondary school graduates and the working class look for opportunities to pursue university education. Universities being accountable to the public as stakeholders need to guarantee that they offer quality teaching, research and community service to its students. With the increasing numbers of students seeking places in public universities, the question of quality is critical and requires urgent attention. According to Gudo. C. O et al (2010) who carried out a study to explore the perceptions on the quality of service delivery in public and private universities and the opportunities for quality university education in Kenya, it was found that public universities did not have the necessary physical facilities to effectively offer service to its current student body. The study recommends that to absorb the large number of students in a double intake and offer quality education required careful investment in physical facilities, teaching and research resources, innovative Information Communication Technology and collaboration with the private universities.

2.8 Communicative Competence

The section gives a definition of communicative competence by various scholars after which literature reviewed on communicative competence is given.

2.8.1 Definition of communicative competence

Communicative competence is a concept introduced by Dell Hymes (1972) and discussed and redefined by many authors. The Hymes' original idea was that speakers of a language have to have more than grammatical competence in order to be able to communicate effectively in a language; they also need to know how language is used by members of a speech community to accomplish their purposes. This should also be

the case for learners who go through the ELBC. Apart from mastering the linguistic aspects (phonology and orthography, grammar, vocabulary and discourse) they need to develop pragmatic aspects (function, variations, interaction skills and cultural framework). Then the program will be deemed to have enabled the learners to achieve communicative competence.

Initially, Spitzberg (1988) defined communication competence as "the ability to interact well with others" (p.68). He explains, "the term 'well' refers to accuracy, clarity, comprehensibility, coherence, expertise, effectiveness and appropriateness" (p. 68). This definition can also be referred to ELBC. It should be objective, not confusing, systematic, have quality, measurable and beneficial to the learners. A much more complete definition is provided by Friedrich (1994) when he suggests that communication competence is best understood as "a situational ability to set realistic and appropriate goals and to maximize their achievement by using knowledge of self, other, context, and communication theory to generate adaptive communication performances."

2.8.2 An overview of communicative competence

The term communicative competence was first introduced by Dell Hymes (1967, 1972). Hymes claimed that Chomsky's linguistic grammatical perspective (1965) was too limited to language competence. Hymes also argued that communicative competence should also be viewed from the social and functional perspectives. Since that time, the notion of communicative competence has been a key component among scholars and has been revisited and revised by them. Canale and Swain (1980) revisited Hymes' concept of communicative competence and proposed their own notion about the concept. According to them, there are three elements in

communicative competence: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence. Canale (1983) later added one more element by distinguishing discourse competence from sociolinguistic competence. Grammatical competence refers to the basic elements of communicative competence, which includes vocabulary knowledge and rules of morphology, syntax, semantics, and phonology (Canale & Swain, 1980). Studying lexical items, word structures and forms, including their derivation and compounding, sentence patterns, meaning in languages, speech sounds, and their roles in languages are part of grammatical competence.

Sociolinguistic competence refers to the social and cultural knowledge. It requires participants' awareness and understanding of the appropriateness of language use in a variety of contexts, including the roles of the participants, the shared information by the participants, and their goals for the interaction.

Discourse competence is concerned with the "mastery of how to combine grammatical forms and meanings to achieve a unified spoken or written text in different genres" (Canale 1983, p. 9). It also includes the concepts of cohesion and coherence. The former indicates grammatical correctness in sentences, whereas the latter refers to the relationship between texts and one's abilities to read between lines in the discourse (Halliday & Hassan, 1976).

The last subcategory of communicative competence is strategic competence. It is defined as "the verbal and non-verbal communicative strategies that may be called into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variations or to insufficient competence" (Canale & Swain, 1980, p. 30). This type of competence is used in order to strengthen communication despite the deficiencies of

the participants' language knowledge. Brown (2000) states that further developments occurred after the model of communicative competence was developed by Canale and Swain. For example, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) viewed the concept of strategic competence in terms of learning. Bachman (1990) focused on testing by expanding the original model of communicative competence. Savignon (2002, p. 8), who revisited her original version of components of communicative competence in 1983, suggested the "inverted pyramid classroom model." This model includes four elements of communicative competence: grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociocultural competence, and strategic competence. Savignon's framework of communicative competence was similar to that of Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983). However, Savignon's model included a broader perspective on sociolinguistic competence, which she called sociocultural competence. This illustrates cultural aspects valued among the language participants. The study focus was on all the four areas of communicative competence; grammatical, sociolinguistics, discourse and strategic competence. Various instruments were used to evaluate the degree to which the learners exhibited mastery in these competencies. For instance, the pre and post tests were used to test the grammatical competence while the questionnaire and class observation was used to test the sociolinguistics, discourse and strategic competence. Although more research is needed in these areas the study was able to generate enough data to make deductions on the effectiveness of ELBC in improving the learners' communicative competence in Kenya.

2.8.3 Importance of communicative competence

Communicative competence refers to a language user's grammatical knowledge of syntax, morphology, phonology as well as social knowledge about how to use

utterances appropriately. This study was carried out against a background of English Language Bridging courses in Kenya. The courses have been designed to upgrade learners, English language communicative competence that will lead to an all-round learner in terms of reading, writing, speaking and listening. This learner is supposed to have a good mastery of the English language for effective communication. Effective communication enables one to convey thoughts, feelings and ideas successfully. Lack of effective communication skills is an impediment to one's personal development (Khaemba, 2014).

According to Marie (1997) many people do not get jobs despite the fact that they are capable, hardworking, talented and even suitable for the job. One of the likely reasons is that one does not have effective communication skills. One is not able to communicate effectively in front of the employer. Besides using appropriate words, effective communication entails the use of para linguistic features such as body language and facial expressions.

In the corporate world, every job entails establishing many relationships that demand for particular communication skills. Therefore, it is very crucial for every individual to understand the importance of effective communication skills and how they affect our lives. Effective communication is an essential skill for successful business and personal relationships. "Man is not an island", communication has the power to destroy or build relationships.

The ability to connect and build rapport with other people is a foundation life skill, and should, ideally be actively developed from an early age. The earlier an individual acquires effective communication skills the better it is.

2.8.4 Criteria for assessing communicative competence

Canary and Cody (2000) provide six criteria for assessing competence which include, but are not limited to, perceived appropriateness and effectiveness. The criteria include adaptability, conversational involvement, conversational management, empathy, effectiveness, and appropriateness. For ELBC to be effective it has to be taught to enable the learners express themselves in all the six criteria.

Flexibility requires the communicator to be able to adapt to situations, so that it changes the behaviours of others in order to meet goals. Adaptability or flexibility may require the person who is communicating with others to be sensitive to the goals itself and the people responsible for achieving the goals. For example, an ELBC learner may motivate their classmates by acknowledging the long hours they have had to put in accomplishing assignments and revising for an exam, but at the same time make sure they pass the exam.

Involvement in the conversation is another skill required to achieve communication competency. This requires the communicator to directly interact with the other party. Interaction includes listening to the needs and concerns of others. It also requires the communicator to be aware of how other people perceive them and to know what to say in response to all of this.

Being able to manage the conversation requires the communicator to regulate how they interact with others. The communicator must also adapt and control the conversation and their social interactions. Conversational management requires the communicator to control the direction the conversation takes, which is another level of attainment.

Empathy is the ability of the communicator to show that they understand where the others are coming from to share their own emotions. It is an emotion where the communicator shows he or she knows where the others are coming from, and that the communicator understands and understands.

Effectiveness is the ability for the communicator to reach the goal of the conversation. The ability to reach the goal of the conversation is the measurement of the level of communication competency. Effectiveness is the ability to meet both the requirements of the communicator and of the other parties involved.

Communication competency criteria also require appropriateness. Appropriateness is the ability to uphold the expectations of the situation at hand. How appropriate the conversation is in achieving goals is one of the primary measurements for attaining communication competency. When all of these criteria are met, the communicator has reached the highest level of communication competency.

2.8.5 Measuring communicative competence

Communicative competence is measured by determining if, and to what degree, the goals of interaction are achieved. As stated earlier, the function of communication is to maximize the achievement of "shared meaning." Parks (1985) emphasizes three interdependent themes: control, responsibility, and foresight; and argues that to be competent, we must "not only 'know' and 'know how,' we must also 'do' and 'know that we did'" (p. 174). He defines communicative competence as "the degree to which individuals perceive they have satisfied their goals in a given social situation without jeopardizing their ability or opportunity to pursue their other subjectively more important goals" (p. 175). This combination of cognitive and behavioural

perspectives is consistent with Wiemann and Backlund's (1980) argument that communication competence is:

The ability of the person interacting to choose among available communicative behaviours in order that he (sic) may successfully accomplish his (sic) own interpersonal goals during an encounter while maintaining the face and the line of his (sic) fellow interacts within the constraints of the situation. (p. 188)

A useful framework for understanding communication competence was designed by Spitzberg & Cupach (1984) and is known as the component model of competence because it is comprised of three specific dimensions: motivation (an individual's approach or avoidance orientation in various social situations), knowledge (plans of action; knowledge of how to act; procedural knowledge), and skill (behaviours actually performed).

The component model asserts that communication competence is mutually defined by the interdependency of the cognitive component (concerned with knowledge and understanding), the behavioural component (concerned with behavioural skills), and the affective component (concerned with attitudes and feelings about the knowledge and behaviours) by people interacting in an interpersonal encounter within a specific context. Rubin (1985) explains that communication competence is "an impression formed about the appropriateness of another's communicative behaviour" and that "one goal of the communication scholar is to understand how impressions about communication competence are formed, and to determine how knowledge, skill and motivation lead to perceptions of competence within various contexts" (p. 173).

When applying the component model to organizational communication contexts, Shockley-Zalabak (1988) divides motivation into two separate (though related) elements: sensitivity (the ability to show concern and respect for others) and commitment (the desire to avoid previous mistakes and find better ways of communicating through the process of self-monitoring). This revised model consisting of four dimensions (knowledge, skill, sensitivity, and commitment) is used by Rothwell (1998) to study communication competence in small group interaction.

Note that communicative competence is dependent on the context in which the interaction takes place (Cody and McLaughlin, 1985; Applegate and Leichty, 1984; Rubin, 1985). Communication which is successful with one group in one situation may not be perceived as competent with a different group in another situation. McCroskey (1982) attempts to clarify the importance of competence when he writes, “The domain of communicative competence includes learning what are the available means (available strategies), how they have been employed in various situations in the past, and being able to determine which ones have the highest probability of success in a given situation (p. 5).

2.9 Theoretical Framework

A theory is a set of properly argued ideas, intended to explain a phenomenon by specifying variables and the laws that relate the variables to each other. According to Oso & Onen (2005), a theoretical framework is an examination of the existing or self-formulated theories in relation to the research objectives. They add that “it is a set of interrelated variables, definitions and propositions that present a systematic view of a phenomenon by specifying relations among variables with the purpose of explaining a phenomenon”.

This study was guided by Flavell's (1979) Meta Cognition theory (MCT), particularly the tenet that states that "evaluation of the learning process should occur before, during and after learning." This is defined by Flavell (1979) as all those conscious cognitive or affective experiences that accompany and pertain to an intellectual enterprise. According to Flavell (1979) the Meta cognitive knowledge is the acquired world knowledge that has to do with cognitive matters. Some of this stored knowledge is both declarative and procedural. Meta cognitive knowledge also includes knowledge or beliefs about what factors and variables interact to affect the course and outcome of cognitive enterprises. The ELBC are undertaken by learners who are conscious of their language inadequacy. The learners are constantly evaluated to improve their language competence to the requirements for university admission. For ELBC to be effective it is expected that the learning process should be effective, the right assessment methods are adopted and all the other factors at play are controlled in favour of the process. Therefore the learners will be able to understand the concepts appropriately and use them in communication.

This theory is relevant to ELBC in that it attempts to explain the steps a learner takes in order to benefit from the learning process. The learner is perceived as constantly monitoring his/ her learning process in order to achieve his goal of learning.

The Bridging English program is undertaken by learners who have successfully completed secondary education, therefore, they may not be learning entirely new concepts in the program but rather building their competencies on accurate use of the language. Basic concepts in English like parts of speech may be completely familiar to these learners. When these learners go to class, they will most likely compare any information they are given in class against what they were taught in secondary school.

These learners may not be perceived as blank slates on which the teacher imparts language knowledge and skills to. Rather, they may be expected to question any knowledge which seems to contradict what they could have been taught.

2.10 Chapter Summary

From the literature review, it is clear that research conducted in higher institutions of learning does not address the issue of effectiveness of ELBC which seeks to increase access to university education to many learners. As per the researchers' knowledge and from the several readings that were undertaken, no similar study on the effectiveness of ELBC in improving the communicative competence has been conducted in Kenya.

This research therefore aims at filling this existing gap in available information on the extent to which learners that has gone through the Bridging English program benefit from it.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter gives a detailed account of the research methodology and research design. More specifically the researcher gives detailed descriptions concerning research design, area of study, target population, sample and sampling procedure, research instruments and the reliability and validity of research instruments.

3.2 Research Design

A research design is the conceptual structure within which research is conducted; it constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data (Kothari, 2004). According to Onen and Oso (2005), a research design refers to the nature of the pattern the research intends to follow, that is, the plan or strategy for conducting research. There are three strategies/paradigms of conducting research; qualitative, quantitative (Oso & Onen, 2005) and the mixed methods approach.

This study used a mixed approach (design) as the researcher used both qualitative and quantitative approaches. In terms of quantitative approach the researcher administered a pre-test in the first phase and post-test in the third phase to all the ten students who underwent the ELBC program from May2013 to August2013. The researcher's intention in these phases of the research was to be able to compare the learners' level of language competence before and after the program.

The survey (first phase and third phase) data were thereafter analyzed using descriptive and inferential data analysis techniques; more specifically for descriptive the researcher employed the use of means, modes, median and percentages and for inferential analysis the researcher used Pearson correlation coefficient, probability

value test and regression method to establish the relationships between the different research variables.

The second phase of the research used both quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis. The research instruments used in this phase were; questionnaires, interview and observation schedules. During this phase the questionnaire was used to sample out the views of the learners to establish whether the program raised their level of communicative competence. The closed questions of the questionnaire were analyzed quantitatively while the open questions were analyzed qualitatively.

The data obtained from the observation schedules were analyzed qualitatively, while the interview guide was analyzed both thematically based on the research objectives and quantitatively on the question that required rating by the respondents.

In this study, data were generated was a critical analysis of available and relevant data on the bridging English course, administering a pre and post test, questionnaire, interviews and observation. These data generation techniques were really appropriate. Interviews enabled the researcher to collect information that she could not observe directly. She was also able to gain control over the line of questioning hence able to probe more information from the respondent. Observation on the other hand allowed the researcher to see for herself what people actually do rather than what they say they do. For confidentiality purposes the researcher was not allowed to audio record the events as they occurred, but was able to generate transcriptions for the interviews. A questionnaire was appropriate in that the researcher collected a lot of information over a short period of time. With all these instruments the researcher was able to obtain first hand information.

3.3 Area of Study

This study was carried out in one of the universities in Uasin Gishu County. The university offers programs in bridging, pre-university, diploma, degree, masters and doctorate. Given the level of competition among universities to attract more students, the university decided to offer bridging courses as a way to provide an easier pathway to degree programs to students who did not meet the required admission grades. Despite this option, the number of admissions to the program has never been beyond thirty students in any intake. Other universities in the same region have not been able to attract any students to the program, although, they already advertised for it in the media. This raises the concern of quality against access to education.

3.4 Target Population

Target population refers to the total number of participants or the total environment of interest to the researcher (Oso & Onen, 2005, p.33). The target population in this study was ELBC students in the university where the study was carried out. The researcher sought responses from all the students who were doing ELBC from May 2013 to August 2013. In addition to the ELBC students, the researcher also had the university ELBC lecturers as part of the target population. All the targeted ten ELBC students and five ELBC lecturers were able to participate in the research. Although the study was carried out in one university the researcher was able to compare views from administrators of the other two neighbouring universities which were trying to implement the same program as control variables. But the researcher did not see the need to analyze data from the two universities because they did not have students and the scope of the current study was big enough to make inferences.

3.5 Sample and Sampling Techniques

A sample is part of the target (or accessible) population that has been procedurally selected to represent it (Oso & Onen, 2005). A sampling technique is a strategy which the researcher uses to select representative respondents from the target population. The researcher involved all the participants in the ELBC in the research. Given that the learners who were undergoing the ELBC were few and their lecturers are five, the researcher involved the whole population in the research. The university where this study was conducted was considered because it was the only university in Uasin Gishu County at that moment that had students undertaking the program under consideration.

3.6 Data Generation

As research instruments pre-test, post-test and a questionnaire were administered to ELBC students and their results analyzed while observations of actual lessons were done and interviews on ELBC lecturers conducted.

3.6.1 Pre and post test

The researcher designed a pre test which was undertaken by the participants before they underwent the ELBC. The purpose of the results of this test was to determine the exact areas of weakness of the participants. After undergoing the course, the researcher administered a post test which included most of the content of the ELBC. This generated data which revealed that there was no significant relationship between ELBC and improving the communicative competence.

3.6.2 Questionnaires

A questionnaire is a type of data collection instrument that has a collection of items which a respondent is expected to react to usually in writing. According to Oso and

Onen (2005), a questionnaire is useful in collecting a lot of information over a short period of time. Questionnaires are especially useful in generating quantitative data from a large and diversified sample. In this study, questionnaires were used in the second phase of the study to generate data. The questionnaire that was used had both open ended and close ended questions. The close ended questions required the respondent to tick against the given choices whereas the open ended questions sought brief explanations, opinions and views concerning some aspects. The questionnaires addressed issues in three sections; in the first section the respondents were required to give the demographic data, the second part required them to give information on their learning environment and finally the respondents gave their views in relation to the effectiveness of the ELBC they were undertaking in improving their communication competence.

3.6.3 Interview schedule

The interview is a method of collecting data that involve the presentation of oral-verbal stimuli and reply in terms of oral-verbal responses (Kothari, 2004). An interview involves the researcher asking questions which the respondent is expected to answer. According to Creswell (1998) an interview is ought to be conducted in a setting where the interviewee is not hesitant to share his or her ideas. The researcher used interviews in the second phase of the study. The researcher used the personal interview technique for the lecturers who taught the bridging English program. The researcher structured the interview questions to include both open and close ended questions. This was an effective method of data generation because non responsiveness was limited. The responses from the interviews were written down in a notebook. The researcher's assumptions were that; the people interviewed will be a

true representation of the entire population and the answers provided in the interviews were sincere.

3.6.4 Observation guide

According to Cohen et al(2007, in Ong'ondo et al, 2011, p.77) observation means 'getting data through critically watching a person or persons as they participate in particular activities with a view of obtaining a deeper understanding about the persons under study'. It is a method to be depended on since first hand information is obtained. Cohen et al (2007,p.305, in Ong'ondo et al. (2011, p.77) argue that in observations, "the researcher is given an opportunity to look at what is taking place *in situ* rather than second hand."

The researcher observed a sample of the lessons of the bridging English program. The researcher observed the lecturers before they went to ELBC classes to assess their level of preparedness. The researcher also observed actual ELBC classes to assess content and content delivery techniques employed by the lecturer. The researcher was keen to observe any attempt made to cater for individual differences as the participants who underwent the ELBC took a short time to complete the course. This helped to generate useful information on the actual activities which took place in an ELBC class. Observations were conducted in the second phase. The researcher designed an observation guide which was used in the process (see appendix 3).

Both interview schedule and observation guide were used in the second phase since the researcher views them as good instruments in research. Many researchers have given credit to the methods. For instance, Ong'ondo, et al. (2009) explains that, both methods have a major contribution to make, in social science in general and in

educational research in particular. To them, none of the methods are superior to the other and the two are best used in complementary.

3.7 Validity and Reliability of Research Instruments

The section below presents the study's efforts to ensure validity and reliability of research instruments.

3.7.1 Validity

Validity refers to the extent to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure and nothing else (Gathumbi & Masembe, 2005). Key (1997) suggests that to determine content validity, a panel of experts in the field to be studied should be used. Therefore, to ensure that the instruments to be used to collect data are valid, the researcher consulted with her supervisors, colleagues and other experts in the department concerning content validity of research instruments the supervisors guided the researcher on how to go about the instruments. The researcher for instance, did away with some question four about rating each student using the communicative competence scale in the interview schedule that were making it bulky. The researcher got the information that was addressed by the deleted questions by use of probes. Content validity is the degree to which test items represent the domain or the universe of the trait or the property being measured (Key, 1997).

To test the construct validity of the research instruments, the researcher gathered data concerning the trait which was measured and compared with data from the questionnaire, pre test, post test and interview being assessed. The data from other sources should be similar or convergent with that of the instrument assessed.

To ensure construct validity of the research instruments, the researcher piloted the instruments in two other Universities which were offering the Bridging English

course, but which did not form part of the sample in the actual study. An interview was also conducted to the language coordinator of the university where the study was being carried out.

3.7.2 Reliability

Reliability means that an instrument must be consistent with measurements (Gathumbi & Masembe, 2005). To test the reliability of research instruments, test-retest method was used. This is whereby the same instrument is re-administered after a lapse of time. If the results I get correspond to the first results, then the instrument will be reliable. The researcher after the first pilot study re-administered the same questionnaire and conducted interviews and observations after two weeks for those who had participated in the first pilot study. The respondents in the first and second pilot study gave similar responses; this showed that the questions both in the interviews and questionnaires made sense. The researcher's observations in both pilot studies, come out clearly and was able to get the information needed, the observation guide was reliable.

According to Ong'ondo et al, this is not only a way of strengthening the trustworthiness in qualitative research, but also a process of gaining a deep understanding of the phenomena under study.

3.8 Pilot Study

A pilot study was carried out prior to the real research. The researcher administered post test to three ELBC students who had cleared in May 2013 selected randomly. The researcher then interviewed two of the lecturers who had taught these groups in the past, but were not currently teaching the program. The respondents in the pilot study had the same characteristics as of the respondents who participated in the actual

study; they were ELBC students and lecturers. The respondents in the pilot study were however not from the group that participated in the actual research. The data collected was analyzed and the results captured the objectives of the study. When compared to the results of the interviews, observations, document analysis and questionnaires addressed the objectives of the study. The interviews, observations and however, gave detailed information, it expounded more on what was gotten from the questionnaires, and this was because the researcher was able to probe the respondents more on the issues.

A pilot study was of great significance since it enabled the researcher to test the reliability and validity of the research instruments. It also assisted the researcher to estimate the time that was spent in interviewing the respondents. The pilot study also highlighted to the researcher those items in the data collection instruments that need adjustments. For instance item 3.3 in the questionnaire requiring the respondents to gauge the program using the criteria of communicative competence, it was discovered from the pilot that the learners did not understand the criteria, therefore it was adjusted such that clarifications were added to each criteria to enable learners understand them better.

3.9 Procedures for Data Collection

The collection of data for this study was done from May 2013 to August 2013. Data collection was done in three phases. In the first phase of the study, the researcher administered pre test for the ten ELBC learners in the university. This was done in May 2013 because it was the period when the university had a new intake for the program. The major aim of the researcher in this first phase was to generally establish their entry level competence before they commenced the program.

From May 2013 to August 2013 the researcher administered a questionnaire to the ten ELBC learners and carried out interviews with the five ELBC lecturers and was able to observe a lesson from each lecturer selected randomly. The researcher probed the respondents in cases where in-depth information was required. The responses for the interview were written down in a notebook. The main aim of the questionnaire and interview was to be able to compare the different views of the learners and lecturers on whether the program improved the learners' communicative competence.

In the third phase a post test was administered to the ELBC learners in August 2013 when they were finishing the program. The main aim was to establish how effective the program was in improving the communicative competence of the learners.

3.10 Data Analysis

Data analysis involves the organization, interpretation and presentation of data collected. According to Oso and Onen (2005, p.42), "data analysis entails separation of data into constituent parts or elements, or an examination of data to distinguish its component parts or elements separately or in relation to the whole".

The researcher analyzed data for this research both quantitatively and qualitatively using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Specifically, data from the pre test and post test in the first and third phase of the study was analyzed quantitatively. The researcher employed the use of descriptive statistics such as mode, median, mean and percentages. And inferential statistics such as correlation, probability value and regression methods were used. This analysis gave the researcher the similarities and differences of the learners with respect to the effectiveness of the learners in improving their communicative competence.

On the other hand, in the second phase of the study, data from the questionnaire and interview was analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively, while observations were analyzed qualitatively. Particularly the researcher used thematic analysis in qualitative analysis. Thus, as observed by Oso and Onen (2005, p.45), is where the researcher presents a detailed and literal description of the observations for the readers to make their opinion.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

The researcher ensured that ethical requirements are upheld in the study. According to Oso and Onen (2005, p.47), ‘the major ethical issues of concern are informed consent, privacy and confidentiality, anonymity and researcher’s responsibility. With regard to informed consent, the researcher informed the participants about the procedures of the study they are to participate in. The participants were provided information on the purpose of the research, the expected duration of participation and the procedure to be followed, any unforeseen risks or discomfort to the participants, and the benefits of participation.

The researcher also ensured the anonymity of the participants. To do this the researcher instructed the participants not to mention their names during the pre and post tests. The researcher did not include a space for the respondents to write their names, she also instructed them not to write their names anywhere in the exam paper and questionnaire. The researcher also took into consideration the researcher’s responsibility. This means that the researcher was sensitive to human dignity and well meaning to his intent. The researcher ensured that the participants’ privacy and confidentiality was maintained. The researcher also did not make an audio record of interviews conducted. This decision was taken by the university due to the sensitivity

of the information collected to its competitors. The researcher assured the respondents and the university that the data would be used for the purpose of this study only.

3.12 Chapter Summary

This chapter is very crucial to shaping the research. The chapter gives the actual undertakings that occurred in the field. These included issue to do research design, area of study, the target population, sample and sampling techniques, data generation instruments, validity and the reliability of the research instruments, pilot study, and procedures for data collection, data analysis and ethical considerations. The next chapter deals with data presentation, analysis, and interpretation

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

The chapter gives presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data obtained using the pre and post test, questionnaires, interviews and non-participant observations discussed in chapter three. The first part of the chapter gives background information about the respondents. This includes the type of ELBC program either pre-university or bridging, their gender, age, and English grade obtained in KCSE. The second part deals with analysis of the questionnaire, pre and post test administered using descriptive and inferential methods of data analysis. The third part deals with discussions on the views of all the ELBC learners and lecturers which were obtained from the interviews conducted. Lastly, we have, testing the hypothesis set at the start of the study. SPSS was used to analyze and present the data. The only relevant background information on ELBC lecturers' analyzed was the program they taught and their gender. Frequency tables with frequencies and percentages, and thematic presentation have been used to summarize and illustrate the findings of the study.

4.2 Background Information of the Respondents

This study obtained information from the ELBC lecturers, and ELBC learners with varying characteristics with regard to the type of ELBC program they went through either pre-university or bridging, their gender, age, and English grade obtained in KCSE.

For the purposes of presentation, analysis and interpretation labels have been assigned to interview transcripts. EL represents responses from English Lecturers. For instance EL 05 represents an English Lecturer who was number 5 to be interviewed. Also L

represents responses from ELBC learners that were extracted from the open questions from the questionnaires administered. For instance L01 represents an ELBC student whose questionnaire was labelled number one.

4.2.1 Distribution of respondents by the type of bridging program

The respondents of the study were 10 ELBC learners and 5 ELBC lecturers. The university offers Pre-university and Bridging English courses.

From the analysis of data from questionnaires issued to the ELBC learners, 4(40%) of the learners were pre-university students and 6(60%) were Bridging English students making a total of 10 ELBC learners as shown in **Table 2** below. And also from the interviews administered, to the ELBC lecturers, 3(60%) were pre-university lecturers while 2(40%) were Bridging English lecturers making a total of 5 ELBC lecturers as shown in **Table 3** below. The information about this distribution of the respondents was really important because it helped the researcher get to know the views on the effectiveness of the ELBC program in each category.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents in the different type of ELBC program (ELBC Learners)

	Program	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Pre-university	4	40.0	40.0	40.0
	Bridging English	6	60.0	60.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Table 3: Distribution of respondents in the different type of ELBC program (ELBC Lecturers)

	Program	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	PRE-UNIVERSITY	3	60.0	60.0	60.0
	BRIDGING ENGLISH	2	40.0	40.0	100.0
	Total	5	100.0	100.0	

4.2.2 Distribution of respondents by gender

Out of 10 ELBC learners who participated in the study, 5 (50%) were males and 5 (50%) were females as shown in **Table 4** below. This distribution enabled the researcher to ascertain the dominant gender of the ELBC learners. The program does not discriminate. This implied that the same level of difficulty was observed from KCSE. From the interviews conducted on ELBC Lecturers, 2(40%) were male lecturers while 3,(60%) were female lecturers as shown in **Table 5** below. From the interviews the researcher was able to observe a fair view of both the genders on the effectiveness of the ELBC program.

Table 4: Distribution of respondents by gender (ELBC learners)

	Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	5	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Female	5	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Table 5: Distribution of respondents by gender (ELBC lecturers)

	Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	MALE	2	40.0	40.0	40.0
	FEMALE	3	60.0	60.0	100.0
	Total	5	100.0	100.0	

4.2.3 Distribution of respondents by age (ELBC Learners)

The respondents in the research showed a great variation with regard to their age. Their ages ranged from under 20 years to those with 30 years and above. **Table 6** shows that 6 (60%) of the respondents were under 20 years, 3 (30%) were within the age bracket of 20-24 years, whereas 1 (10%) of the respondents was 30 years and above. This distribution was important because from it the researcher was able to know the composition of the respondents in terms of age. The distribution also confirmed that most of the learners sampled were in their early years of schooling therefore did not have a huge variation in terms of the knowledge of the language hence were treated equally in the study.

Table 6: Distribution of respondents by age

	Age	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Below 20 years	6	60.0	60.0	60.0
	20-24 years	3	30.0	30.0	90.0
	Above 30 years	1	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

4.2.4 Distribution of Respondents' by English grade obtained in KCSE

The respondents were asked to give their English grade obtained in KCSE. From **Table 7** we can see that, 2 (20%) of the 10 ELBC learners obtained a D plus, 3 (30%) obtained a C plain, whereas 5(50%) obtained a C minus.

Table 7: Distribution of Respondents by English grade obtained in KCSE

	KCSE English grade obtained	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	D plus	2	20.0	20.0	20.0
	C plain	3	30.0	30.0	50.0
	C minus	5	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

4.3 The Nature of Learning Environment in ELBC

4.3.1 The number of teaching lessons

In the questionnaires administered, the respondents gave the number of lessons they attended per week. The number of lessons that they gave was uniform for both programs; pre-university and bridging English (three lessons per week) as shown in **Table 8**. From this analysis, it was evident that despite the difference in time taken to complete the programs they both had the same number of lessons per week. This provided a basis to analyze the level of effectiveness of the programs together.

Table 8: Lessons Taught per Week

Lessons	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
LESSONS_PER_WK	10	0	3	3	3.00	.000
Valid N (listwise)	10					

4.3.2 Ratings of the ELBC effectiveness in terms of the number of lessons per week

The respondents based their ratings of the effectiveness on a scale ranging from “very few” to “too many”. As illustrated in **Table 9** below, 1(10%) respondent rated his/her number of lessons as many, 3 (30%) viewed the lessons as adequate, 4 (40) as few whereas 2(20%) as very few. This indicates that a larger percentage 6 (60%) of the respondents is not really comfortable with the kind of workload posed by the number of lessons. They rate the lessons as either too few (I feel under worked) or few (I could do with more).

Table 9: Ratings of their workload (number of lessons per week)

	Personal Ratings	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Many(a bit heavy)	1	10.0	10.0	10.0
	Adequate(just enough)	3	30.0	30.0	40.0
	Few(I could do with more)	4	40.0	40.0	80.0
	Very few(I feel under worked)	2	20.0	20.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

In-depth analysis of the open question responses in the questionnaire administered to the ELBC learners it was established that most learners wanted the amount of time allocated per week be increased. This will give them more contact hours with the lecturer to assist them cover more content and seek more clarification.

This is evident in the questionnaire extracts of the following participants:

I am registered for bridging English program. That means I only come to the university to learn English. I wish the time table was such that each part of English is given three hours on the timetable. Most of the time, I am idle. The teacher can decide to teach us grammar this week, next time literature and another phonology. (L03)

If the library had books it will make sense because as per now I am very idle. Just three hours a week is less. (L06)

The ELBC lecturers' interview responses on the number of lessons per week reflected views similar to those of the students' responses in the questionnaire. Just as the ELBC learners, they feel that the time allocated is too much. Either it should be reduced or more content added. This is revealed in some of the ELBC lecturers' responses such as:

There is a lot of time wastage and a waste of money. A parent pays for two pre university semesters and then undergraduate learning. It would have been better to combine the semester 1 and 2 into just one semester. (EL05)

There are three hours per unit each week. By the end of the course, they have had a minimum of 38 hours. This time is more than

enough. The content can be covered by the end of one semester. Therefore the academic department should think what to do with the second semester. (EL05)

Observations by the researcher also indicate that the number of lessons allocated per week indeed affected the effectiveness of the program to improve the communicative competence of learners. This was evident in a class observation where the teacher left 30 minutes before the end of the lesson. The effectiveness has been affected since the content given is less compared to the time allocated. There was no need of the teacher to remain in class yet the content could be covered within a short period of time.

4.4 The other aspects that affect the effectiveness of ELBC in improving the learners communicative competence.

The results revealed that apart from the number of teaching lessons per week there existed other aspects of ELBC learning and university context that affected the effectiveness of the program to improve the communicative competence of learners. These aspects include the course duration, course content, lecturer's experience, assessment procedures, university management, library facilities, class size, number of students, teaching methods and learner's personal factors. The explanations and the tables below show the extent of the effects of these aspects of the effectiveness of ELBC in improving communicative competence.

4.4.1 The influence, of course duration of effectiveness of ELBC

The respondents (in the questionnaires administered) rated the extent to which the course duration affected the effectiveness of the program. Their responses on the influence ranged from "very much" to "None".

Table 10 shows that 2(20%) respondents perceive that the course duration had no influence on the effectiveness of the program they undertake, 1(10%) perceived the

influenced to be very little, 3(30%) rated the influence as little, 3(30%) rated it as much, whereas 1(10%) viewed it as very much.

Table 10: Extent to which course duration influenced the effectiveness of ELBC.

Level of influence	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
None	2	20.0	20.0	20.0
Very little	1	10.0	10.0	30.0
Little	3	30.0	30.0	60.0
Much	3	30.0	30.0	90.0
Very much	1	10.0	10.0	100.0
Total	10	100.0	100.0	

4.4.2 The Influence of course content on the effectiveness of ELBC

Table 11 shows that 1(10%) respondent perceives that the course content had very little influence on the effectiveness of the program they undertake on their communicative competence, 5(50%) perceived the influenced to be little, 2(20%) rated the influence as much, whereas 2(20%) viewed it as very much.

Table 11: Extent to which course content affects the effectiveness of ELBC

Level of influence	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
very little	1	10.0	10.0	10.0
little	5	50.0	50.0	60.0
Valid much	2	20.0	20.0	80.0
very much	2	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total	10	100.0	100.0	

The same views were echoed in the ELBC interviews that were conducted. During interviews, the majority of participants noted that the two semesters allocated for pre - university was too much. The content allotted could be covered in one semester. Most of them argued that there's something should be done to ensure the time allocated is

reduced or the content are increased to cover the idle time as indicated by the response of the following participants:

There is a lot of time wastage and a waste of money. A parent pays for two pre university semesters and then undergraduate learning. It would have been better to combine would have been better to combine the semester 1 and 2 into just one semester.(EL02)

I think there is a gap in the academic office to ensure that the time allocated is enough. They need to think to overhaul the whole system to increase the content covered since this will be a sure way to cover enough content given that students are only concentrating in a particular subject. (EL03).

Another lecturer when interviewed gave his/her view that increasing time along was not enough without changing everything about the programs, including have a clear curriculum to guide the systems as noted below;

I do not believe in partial repairs. The authorities concerned needs to drop it and start afresh. Redesign it by looking at the needs to be met and check with all the stakeholders on what to do about it. (EL04)

4.4.3 The influence of lecturer's experience on effectiveness of ELBC

As shown **Table 12** below, 5 (50%) respondents perceive that the lecturers' experience influence the effectiveness of the ELBC in improving communicative competence very much, 2 (20%) respondents view the influence as much, whereas 3 (30%) of the respondents perceive the influence to be little.

Table 12: Respondents' perceptions of how lecturer's experience influence effectiveness of ELBC

Level of influence	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Little	3	30.0	30.0	30.0
Much	2	20.0	20.0	50.0
very much	5	50.0	50.0	100.0
Total	10	100.0	100.0	

The ELBC learners' responses was a clear indication that majority of the respondents (70%) felt that the lecturer's experience was paramount to the success of the program.

This was also noted by the ELBC lecturers during the interview session with the researcher as follows;

Given the current status of the program, the university must ensure quality staff is engaged from the start. This is important since the time for learning is less yes a lot has to be covered. All of all the students' expectations must be met by the end of the program they are doing. (EL03)

We are not saying that one needs to be a lecturer for a century to have the needed experience to teach. A passion of teaching should be there too. For our university the management tries to ensure that all the lecturers who teach these courses have the relevant qualifications. Although, there will always be lagging in any system. (EL02)

Observations by the researcher also indicate that the lecturer's experience indeed affected the effectiveness of ELBC. The quality is affected in a situation whereby a teacher is unable to teach well in class. This was evident with Lecturer 5 where the lecturer went to class and was unable to relate the novel things fall apart in real life as the lecturer uttered:..... *I don't think you need to know this, just focus on the assignments I gave you that is where I will set the exams from.* This was echoed by one of the ELBC learners that it was still a difficult area that needed much concern, but the lecturer did not appreciate that. This was noted by the learner as follows;

I still have a problem with literature. Understanding the set books and apply them to real life context has always been a challenge to me. But they are fun and interesting. (L01)

4.4.4 Influence of assessment procedures on the effectiveness of ELBC

Concerning the influence of the assessment procedures on respondents influence on the effectiveness of the program, there were varied views on how assessment affected communicative competence as shown in **Table 13** below. 1 (10%) respondent felt there was none, 3 (30%) of them view the influence as very little, 1 (10%) rated the

influence as little, 2 (20%) rated the influence as much whereas 3 (30%) rated it as very much.

Table 13: Perceptions on the influence of assessment on the effectiveness of ELBC

Level of influence	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
none	1	10.0	10.0	10.0
very little	3	30.0	30.0	40.0
Valid little	1	10.0	10.0	50.0
much	2	20.0	20.0	70.0
very much	3	30.0	30.0	100.0
Total	10	100.0	100.0	

To further understand the questionnaire responses, the participants in the interview were asked to explain how the assessment procedures affected the effectiveness of the program in improving the communicative competence of learners. The findings of this inquiry revealed that entry exams were never administered according to the lecturer's prerogative. Learners did two CAT's and some assignments upon the lecturer's decision. They would sit for the final exams by the end of the semester for only one paper: English not the various competencies. This revealed a serious flaw in the assessment procedures which presented a great risk of not evaluating the learners properly by the end of the program. This is evident in the following responses of ELBC lecturers:

... I have to decide on which area to give assignments and CAT's to students and still ensures that I set their final exam. It becomes difficult for us to know the academic abilities of these learners from the start to be able to help them. By the time you know them the program is over. Also, because they already have an automatic admission to our university, we still need to ensure they go through the program.(EL02)

It's not easy to determine whether 100% in an exam reflects competence in a subject. Some students are good at cramming. That is why the use of a language in a social context should also be evaluated. I would wish someday the university to evaluate the theory paper in all the areas and still award marks for application. That is story telling, debates, conference, etc. That will gauge the learners' ability to use the theory in real life.(EL04)

When asked to comment on whether various assessment techniques used in the university could fully measure the effectiveness of ELBC, the following responses were recorded from the questionnaire administered to ELBC learners

4.4.4.1 CAT's as a measure of effectiveness of ELBC

Table 14, shows that 2 (20%) respondents view CATs as a technique to measure effectiveness of ELBC to be very much, 3 (30%) to be much, 4 (40%) to be little, whereas 1 (10%) respondent indicated that it cannot be used as a measure of effectiveness of the program.

Table 14:CAT's as a measure of effectiveness of ELBC

	Level of influence	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	none	1	10.0	10.0	10.0
	little	4	40.0	40.0	50.0
	much	3	30.0	30.0	80.0
	very much	2	20.0	20.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

4.4.4.2 Internal final course exams as a measure of effectiveness of ELBC

Table 15, shows that 2 (20%) respondents view internal final course exam as a technique to measure effectiveness of ELBC to be very much, 5 (50%) to be much, whereas 3(30%) to be little. Over 70% of the respondents accepted that internal exams can be used as a technique to measure the effectiveness of the program.

Table 15: Internal final course exams as a measure of effectiveness of ELBC

	Level of influence	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	little	3	30.0	30.0	30.0
	much	5	50.0	50.0	80.0
	very much	2	20.0	20.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

4.4.4.3 Teacher supervision as a measure of effectiveness of ELBC

Concerning the use of teacher supervision as a technique to measure effectiveness of the ELBC, there were varied views from the respondents as shown in **Table 16**. 2 (20%) respondent felt it was very much, 3 (30%) of them view it as much, 3 (30%) rated it as little, whereas 2 (20%) rated it as very little.

Table 16: Teacher supervision as a measure of effectiveness of ELBC

	Level of influence	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very little	2	20.0	20.0	20.0
	little	3	30.0	30.0	50.0
	much	3	30.0	30.0	80.0
	very much	2	20.0	20.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

4.4.4.4 Assignments as a measure of effectiveness of ELBC

Table 17, shows that 4 (40%) respondents viewed assignments as a technique to measure effectiveness of ELBC to be very much, 3 (30%) to be much, whereas 3 (30%) very little.

Table 17: Assignment as a measure of effectiveness of ELBC

	Level of influence	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	little	3	30.0	30.0	30.0
	much	3	30.0	30.0	60.0
	very much	4	40.0	40.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

4.4.5 Influence of University management on effectiveness of ELBC

Out of the 10 respondents, 2 (20%) of them perceive the influence to be very much, 2 (20%) much, 5(50%) little, while 1(10%) see no effect of the university management of the effectiveness of the ELBC improving their communicative competence. **Table 18** illustrates this.

Table 18: Perceptions on the influence of university management on the effectiveness of ELBC

	Level of influence	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	none	1	10.0	10.0	10.0
	little	5	50.0	50.0	60.0
	much	2	20.0	20.0	80.0
	very much	2	20.0	20.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Interviews with the ELBC Lecturers revealed that the management had a positive rating in the country; therefore they felt that in fact the management had helped it to cut a market share in the region. The majority of the lecturers felt that the university should strengthen its student body to give the learners more democratic staff, to enable them to feel part of the management. One of the ELBC lecturers had to say that:

...I am proud of being part of this University. We have a chance to grow. From my own analysis most learners do not have a problem with the management; they are concerned with other issues like library and teaching content. The student population has grown tremendously in the past one year and there is a need to establish a strong student body to provide a democratic space to them. (EL04)

4.4.6 Influence of library facilities on the effectiveness of ELBC

Table 19, shows that 2 (20%) respondents perceive the influence library facilities on the effectiveness of the program to be very much, 4 (40%) to be much, 2 (20%) to be little, whereas 2 (20%) very little.

Table 19: Perceptions of influence of Library facilities on effectiveness of ELBC

Level of influence	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
very little	2	20.0	20.0	20.0
little	2	20.0	20.0	40.0
Valid much	4	40.0	40.0	80.0
very much	2	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Despite that 60% of the learners suggested that library facilities was crucial, upon further investigation some lecturers noted there were more important factors that needed to be addressed apart from the library facilities as noted below;

We do not have a well equipped library, but I still believed with the qualified lecturers we have, they are able to access relevant materials for the students from other universities. Yes, it does affect their ability to exercise, but i till think their mastery of the language is more than just sitting in the library. They need to practice speaking, have debates, and write essays with the assistance of the lecturer. (EL02)

Further interview with the lecturer revealed that indeed that lack of an equipped library affected the ability of the learners to access relevant books in their subject areas. In most occasions the lecturer would give assignments that needed references

and without materials the learners will end up reproducing the same material like their friends which is narrow in scope. One lecturer had the following to say:

...The university is still trying to avail latest books in the library. We have just moved to the region, but we will eventually have a state of the art library. For sure it is impacting on the students' ability to access relevant materials on the various subjects.(EL01)

4.4.7 The influence of classroom size on the effectiveness of ELBC

Table 20, shows that 1 (10%) respondent perceived the influence of classroom size on the effectiveness of the program to be very much, 2 (20%) to be much, 4 (40%) to be little, 1 (10%) to be very little, whereas 2 (20%) saw no influence.

Table 20: Perceptions of influence of Classroom size on effectiveness of ELBC

	Level of influence	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	none	2	20.0	20.0	20.0
	very little	1	10.0	10.0	30.0
	little	4	40.0	40.0	70.0
	much	2	20.0	20.0	90.0
	very much	1	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

80% of the learners saw no significant effect of the classroom size on the effectiveness of the program. But from the interviews conducted on lecturers, some of the respondents noted that it had some effect on the retention ability of the learners as noted below;

If you are learning in a chimney where everyone is squeezed like a loaf of bread I am not sure quality learning will take place. The learning environment gives the learners ample time to interact and feel motivated while learning. It can be seen as a factor that has the ability to directly affect the concentration of a learner.(EL04)

I am not sure how to rate it, but I still believe the environment is important. Since it will affect the retention and concentration of learners (EL01)

Observations by the researcher also indicate that the classroom size motivated the learners. Most of the respondents were comfortable learning in the current institution because it has good learning lecture halls as noted by the following responses;

The halls are clean and we are not many. It is a relief compared to some Universities where learning takes place in balcony areas. (L02)

... May be in the future if the student population increases, they will think of increasing the size of the classes. But currently, they are just enough.(L07)

4.4.8 The influence of number of students on the effectiveness of ELBC

Table 21, shows that 4 (40%) respondents perceive the influence of a number of students on the effectiveness of the program to be much, 2 (20%) to be little, whereas 4 (40%) very little.

Table 21: Perceptions of influence of number of students on the effectiveness of ELBC

	Level of influence	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	very little	4	40.0	40.0	40.0
Valid	little	2	20.0	20.0	60.0
	much	4	40.0	40.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

60% of the learners did not find student numbers a hindrance in the effectiveness of the program. This was attributed to the fact that, the number of students admitted to the program was low therefore it did not impact on what they were learning. Upon further investigation from the interviews conducted on lecturers they emphasized the benefit of fewer students in the program as follows;

It is impossible to have differentiated learning when the learners are too many. Too many I know is relative depending on who is teaching. But for a language like our case, the learner is supposed to

master all the competencies within one or two semesters. It is better when the learners are few. (EL05)

The fewer the number of learners in a class, the easier it is for them to practice. It becomes convenient when doing speech work and even marking their essays.(EL01)

Further investigation from the class observations revealed that, it was easier for the lecturer to have maximum class involvement given that the student population in the class was small. From observation of lecturer 3, a class of 4 students, the lecturer was able to give time to each learner to participate in giving a speech to their classmates within one lesson.

4.4.9 The influence of teaching methods to the effectiveness of ELBC

Table 22, shows that 3 (30%) rated the influence as very much, 4 (40%) to be much, whereas 3 (30%) very little.

Table 22: Perceptions of influence of teaching methods of effectiveness of ELBC

Level of influence	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
little	3	30.0	30.0	30.0
much	4	40.0	40.0	70.0
Valid very much	3	30.0	30.0	100.0
Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Most of the respondents reiterated that the methods of teaching used by the lecturer influenced their ability to understand the content properly. The same emphasis was made by the interview responses that were made from the lecturers as follows;

Content delivery is very important in any subject. Especially in English which needs mastery in various areas; grammar, speech, writing, literature etc. (EL04)

Sometimes it is directly related to lecturer's experience. The class becomes interesting and learners' understanding improves when suitable teaching methods are used. (EL03)

Observations by the researcher in a class observation of lecturer 5, indicated that the teaching methods used greatly affected the effectiveness of the program. For a long time the learners had indicated that they had a problem with literature. The lecturer organized the learners to role play, *Things fall apart*. It was a fantastic lesson. By the end of the lesson one of the learners uttered;

I wish all lessons were this way. I would be an English man. I cannot forget the relevance of this set book. And I now know what some phrases means because I had to understand them before I played my part. (L10)

4.4.10 The influence of learner's personal factors on the effectiveness of ELBC

Table 23, shows that 4 (40%) respondents perceive the influence of learners personal factors on the effectiveness of the program to be very much, 3 (30%) to be much whereas 3 (30%) little.

Table 23: Perceptions of influence of learners' personal factors of effectiveness of ELBC

Level of influence	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
little	3	30.0	30.0	30.0
Valid much	3	30.0	30.0	60.0
very much	4	40.0	40.0	100.0
Total	10	100.0	100.0	

70% of the learners appreciated that personal factors affect their ability of the program to be effective. These are factors apart from course and university related. They include political, economical, social, technological, legal and environmental. They originate with individuals at different degrees. In most cases, they result to stress of learners, inability of learners to pay school fees, lack of socialization, etc. Upon further investigation from interviews carried out with lecturers it was

established that these personal factors contributed greatly to the learners' concentration in class. This was noted in the following responses;

Learning is a process that the learner undergoes. Therefore the status of the mind of these individual contributes greatly to its success. It also depends on how the learner views the experiences they are going through. Some may look at those external factors as motivators, while others will fail exams on the same basis.(EL03)

As a University we have a dean of students. When we identify those extreme behaviors we will always inform the dean to talk to such a learner, since it will affect their concentration in class. (EL04)

From the class observations made by the researcher, it revealed that the learner's personal factors had a negative effect on the learner's ability to understand in class. In a class observation of lecturer 01, of 6 learners two of the students were asleep for most of the lesson. Upon inquiry it the students admitted that they had personal issues that they were going through which destructed their concentration. This was noted in the following responses;

I usually do not take breakfast at home. I am only able to afford lunch and supper sometimes. This is because I have a poor economic background. Due to this most the time I lose concentration in class.(L04)

It's a family problem. My father divorced and married another wife. Things are not easy. (L02)

4.5 Relationship between the various factors that influence the effectiveness of

ELBC to improve learner's communicative competence with post test scores

Table 24 shows that nine out of eleven(81.8%) of the factors analyzed has a positive Pearson correlation coefficient index in relation to the post test scores, while only two factors analyzed(8.2%); classroom size and number of students had a negative correlation with the post test scores.

Table 24: Relationship between the various factors and post test scores

Factor	Pearson correlation coefficient (r)
Number of lessons per week	0.041
Course duration	0.602
Course content	0.334
Lecturer's experience	0.628
Assessment procedures	0.750
University management style	0.510
Library facilities	0.213
Classroom size	-0.204
Number of students	-0.326
Teaching methods	0.397
Learner's personal factors	0.242

From the questionnaire that was administered to the ELBC learners it was established that learners had different views on the degree to which different factors affected the effectiveness of ELBC in improving their communicative competence.

The post test scores were used as a yardstick to measure the effectiveness of the ELBC in improving the learner's communicative competence. This was because the test was administered at the end of the program, therefore it was expected that it reflected the final results of the learners after undergoing the ELBC program. The Pearson correlation coefficient index was used as a measure to establish the nature of the relationship that existed between each factor measured against the post test scores. This analysis was significant because it helped the researcher to establish the real factors that affected the effectiveness of the program.

From the analysis course duration, lecturer's experience and assessment procedures have a high positive correlation coefficient of above 0.6, while university management and teaching methods had a moderate positive relation of above 0.3. The learners noted a positive weak relationship of below 0.3 between the post test scores and number of lessons per week, library facilities and learner's personal factors. The

learners noted a weak negative relationship on classroom size and number of students of above -0.3 with the post test scores. 4.6 Students views on whether ELBC fulfills the criteria for communicative competence

4.5.1 Flexibility

As shown **Table 25** below, 1 (10%) respondent strongly agree that the ELBC fulfills the criteria of flexibility for communicative competence, 7 (70%) respondents agree, whereas 2 (20%) of the respondents were undecided.

Table 25: ELBC learners Perceptions on flexibility

Personal ratings	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Undecided	2	20.0	20.0	20.0
Agree	7	70.0	70.0	90.0
Valid Strongly agree	1	10.0	10.0	100.0
Total	10	100.0	100.0	

80% of the ELBC learners feel that the program is flexible. It has enabled them to adapt to situations, so that it changes the behaviors of others in order to meet goals. This was evident when they are given a group assignment and each learner is given a target to achieve. They are able to work together and assist those who are not conversant with the work to be able to produce quality work.

4.5.2 Conversation involvement

As shown **Table 26** below, 2 (20%) respondents strongly agree that ELBC fulfills the criteria of conversation involvement, 5 (50%) respondents agreed, whereas 3 (30%) of the respondents were undecided.

Table 26: ELBC learners Perceptions on conversation involvement

Personal ratings	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
undecided	3	30.0	30.0	30.0
Agree	5	50.0	50.0	80.0
Valid Strongly agree	2	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total	10	100.0	100.0	

In-depth analysis of the questionnaire administered to the ELBC learners, revealed that the majority of the respondents were given chances to do class presentations and that had greatly helped them to know how to listen to the needs of others and respond objectively. This is evident in the responses of the following participants:

I like the program since it is intensive. We are able to learn too much content in a short period. Now days I use English to interact with others. I am not the same person when I joined the program.(L03)

4.5.3 Conversation management

As shown **Table 27** below, 2(20%) respondents strongly agree that ELBC fulfills conversation management criteria of communicative, 5 (50%) respondents agree, whereas 3 (30%) of the respondents are undecided.

Table 27: ELBC learners Perceptions on conversation management

Personal ratings	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
undecided	3	30.0	30.0	30.0
agree	5	50.0	50.0	80.0
Valid strongly agree	2	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total	10	100.0	100.0	

From the analysis over 70% agree that the program helps the learners to regulate how they interact with others. That is, it gives them the skills to adapt and control the direction the conversation takes. Most respondents noted that debates have largely contributed to developing this skill.

4.5.4 Empathy

As shown **Table 28** below, 2 (20%) respondents perceive that ELBC fulfills the empathy criteria of communicative competence, 4 (40%) respondents agree with the view, whereas 4 (40%) of the respondents were undecided.

Table 28: ELBC learners Perceptions on Empathy

Personal ratings	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
undecided	4	40.0	40.0	40.0
agree	4	40.0	40.0	80.0
Valid strongly agree	2	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total	10	100.0	100.0	

The responses obtained from the analysis on empathy were varied. Unlike the other competencies the respondents were not ready to comment on others emotions. They felt it was a subject beyond the program to be able to understand others emotions and be fair during conversation. But they still felt the program gave them a chance to develop the ability to judge others fairly.

4.5.5 Effectiveness

As shown **Table 29** below, 3 (30%) respondents perceive that the ELBC fulfills the criteria of being effective, 5 (50%) respondents view rated it as agree, whereas 2 (20%) of the respondents are undecided.

Table 29: ELBC learners Perceptions on Effectiveness

Personal ratings	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
undecided	2	20.0	20.0	20.0
agree	5	50.0	50.0	70.0
Valid strongly agree	3	30.0	30.0	100.0
Total	10	100.0	100.0	

80% saw the program as being effective. Effectiveness is the ability for the communicator to reach the goal of the conversation. The ability to reach the goal of the conversation is the measurement of the level of communication competency. Effectiveness is the ability to meet both the requirements of the communicator and of the other parties involved.

4.5.6 Appropriateness

As shown **Table 30** below, 3 (30%) respondents strongly agree that the ELBC fulfills the appropriateness criteria of communicative competence, 2 (20%) respondents agree, 3(30%) undecided, whereas 2 (20%) of the respondents strongly disagree

Table 30: ELBC learners Perceptions on appropriateness

Personal ratings	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
strongly disagree	2	20.0	20.0	20.0
undecided	3	30.0	30.0	50.0
agree	2	20.0	20.0	70.0
strongly agree	3	30.0	30.0	100.0
Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Of the six criteria to measure communicative competence the responses obtained for appropriateness was spread like empathy. It was the only criteria where respondents strongly disagreed that ELBC had the ability to uphold the expectations of the situation at hand. The program was not appropriate in achieving the highest level of communicative competency.

4.6 The Views of ELBC Lecturers on the Effectiveness of ELBC in Improving the Communicative Competence of Learners

The respondents (EL lecturers), through the interviews, gave their views on the effectiveness of the ELBC being offered on improving the learners' communicative competence. Some of the areas mentioned were the course structure, assessment procedures, institutional context and the future status of ELBC in Kenya.

4.6.1 Respondents' views on the course structure

All the five ELBC lecturers interviewed raised various concerns on the course duration, lessons taught per week and course content

Two out of the five viewed the course structure in terms of course duration, lessons taught per week and course content as short given the level of competence that was supposed to be achieved. They viewed this strategy by most universities as flawed given that they were aware the three to six months allocated was not enough to ensure the learners reach an acceptable level of communicative competence to allow them compete with their counterparts who obtained higher grades from Secondary level after four years of learning.

Some of the individual views are as follows:

Sometimes it is not about the communicative competence. It is about raising a grade to be allowed to do a degree program. Learners do not mind as long as they get a grade to allow them make a career of their choice.(EL03)

Despite that one of the respondents agreed with the above view he/she raise a concern about the content. That something needed to be done to ensure the two tallies; that is the course duration and course content as seen below;

There are three hours per unit each week. By the end of the course, they have had a minimum of 38 hours. This time is more than

enough. The content can be covered by the end of one semester. Therefore the academic department should think what to do with the second semester.(EL05)

4.6.2 Respondents' views on the assessment procedures used in ELBC

With regard to the assessment procedures three out of the five respondents interviewed accepted that there was urgency in reviewing how the ELBC was assessed. That, the program should focus on the various competencies not one exam in English. The learner should be able to sit for both theory and practical papers to have a fair evaluation of their communicative competence.

Some of their responses were as follows:

It is not just about giving CAT's and final exams, I still feel in a program like ours, there should be a mechanism to test all the competencies both theoretically and practically. That will give the evaluators the chance to know which area was not well covered and apply precautionary measures.(EL01)

Once the learners are admitted to the program, before they undergo I observe them in class and determine their speech competence. This will determine how I will plan for the speech classes. During the program I administer two C.A.T's within a semester and give class assignments. I use them to know whether there has been improvement after teaching for some time. This affects subsequent teaching. Finally by the end of the course they sit for a final exam, but it's obvious that summative assessments do not affect the quality of teaching. With respect to assessment procedures for teachers I am not allowed to comment because it is done in another forum not this one.(EL05)

4.6.3 Respondents' views on the university context

All the five respondents interviewed agreed that there were very many other factors apart from the learner personal factors and the course structure that affected the effectiveness of the program to improve learners' communicative competence. Among the notable ones included library facilities, lecturer's experience, number of students in a class, university management, teaching methods used and the classroom size. Although the views raised were varied they all agreed that for a learner to

achieve the highest level of communicative competence the university played a major role in controlling some of these factors. Some of their responses were as follows:

The library has books for learners. This makes the lessons better. The students enjoy learning because they have books. The classrooms are big and conducive for learning and the students are few so they are manageable. They can be taught easily because they are few. There are three hours of learning per week, which is ok. I usually use the lecture method which is different from high school teaching. No English is just integrated with literature, I have no other. (EL05)

Learning is a process that the learners' undergoes. Therefore the status of the mind of these individual contributes greatly to its success. It also depends on how the learner views the experiences they are going through. Some may look at those external factors as motivators, while others will fail exams on the same basis.(EL03)

Assessment is the most important part of a learning process. It will tell you whether learning took place. Therefore, how well it is formulated and implemented determines the success of a program.(EL04)

4.7 Testing the Hypothesis

The following represents the hypothesis that was set at the beginning of the study that the study endeavoured to test.

H0₁: There is no significant relationship between the learners' communicative competence in English language at the beginning and the end of ELBC program.

H0₂: There is no significant relationship between the learners' views of the effectiveness of the ELBC and end of course evaluation (post test scores) in improving communicative competence.

H0₃: There is no significant difference between the learners' and teachers' perception of the ability of the ELBC program in improving the learners' communicative competence.

4.7.1 Analysis of the pre test scores

Table 31 represents the pre-test scores obtained from all the 10 respondents that were sampled. 3 (30%) respondents obtained 70% out of 100% each, 2(20%) scored 55%, 1(10%) scored 63%, 1(10%) scored 65, 1(10%) scored 68%, 1(10%) scored 75% whereas 1(10%) scored 78%.

Table 31: Frequency table of Pre-test scores for ELBC learners

Test scores	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
55	2	20.0	20.0	20.0
63	1	10.0	10.0	30.0
65	1	10.0	10.0	40.0
68	1	10.0	10.0	50.0
70	3	30.0	30.0	80.0
75	1	10.0	10.0	90.0
78	1	10.0	10.0	100.0
Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Table 32: Descriptive analysis of Pre-test scores for ELBC learners

Test scores	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
PRE_TEST_SCOR ES	10	23	55	78	66.90	7.608
Valid N (listwise)	10					

Further analysis as shown in **Table 32** revealed that the pre-test score had a maximum score of 78% and a minimum score of 55%. That gave a range of 23%. The mean score was 66.90 while the standard deviation of the scores was 7.608.

4.7.2 Analysis of the post test scores

Table 33 represents the post-test scores obtained from all the 10 respondents that were sampled. 3 (30%) respondents obtained 68% out of 100% each, 2(20%) scored

65%, 1(10%) scored 62%, 1(10%) scored 55, 1(10%) scored 48%, 1(10%) scored 43% whereas 1(10%) scored 30%.

Table 33: Frequency table of Post-test scores for ELBC learners

Test scores	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
30	1	10.0	10.0	10.0
43	1	10.0	10.0	20.0
48	1	10.0	10.0	30.0
55	1	10.0	10.0	40.0
62	1	10.0	10.0	50.0
65	2	20.0	20.0	70.0
68	3	30.0	30.0	100.0
Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Table 34 Descriptive analysis of Post-test scores for ELBC learners

Test scores	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
POST_TEST_SCORES	10	38	30	68	57.20	13.020
Valid N (listwise)	10					

Further analysis as shown in **Table 34** revealed that the post-test score had a maximum score of 68% and a minimum score of 30%. That gave a range of 38%. The mean score was 57.20 while the standard deviation of the scores was 13.020.

4.7.3 Comparison of pre test and post test scores

The pre test and post test scores were compared using the regression analysis method and the following model summary, ANOVA and Coefficient analysis tables were generated and discussed as below.

Table 35. Model summary for ELBC learners

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.201 ^a	.040	-.080	13.529

a. Predictors: (Constant), PRE_TEST_SCORES

Table 35 shows an R Square of 0.04 which means that only 4% of the pre test scores account for the post test scores and 96% is accounted for by other factors during the period which the program is on offer.

Table 36: ANOVA analysis for ELBC learners

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	61.373	1	61.373	.335	.578 ^b
	Residual	1464.227	8	183.028		
	Total	1525.600	9			

a. Dependent Variable: POST_TEST_SCORES

b. Predictors: (Constant), PRE_TEST_SCORES

Table 36 Shows a probability value of 0.578 which is greater than the significance level of 0.05. Using the same hypothesis that was set for the study, there is no significant relationship between pre test scores and post test scores.

Table 37. Coefficient analysis for ELBC learners

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	80.164	39.886		2.010	.079
	PRE_TEST_SCORES	-.343	.593	-.201	-.579	.578

a. Dependent Variable: POST_TEST_SCORES

Table 37 shows a y-intercept (constant) of 80.164 which means that if a student scored a zero in the pre test, then, using the regression line the student will score 80.164 in the post test. The pre test also shows a negative slope of -0.343 when compared with the post test which means that an increase in pre test scores results in a decrease in the post test scores.

4.7.4 The relationship between the learners' competence in English language at the beginning and the end of ELBC program.

In this section the researcher tested the hypothesis; H_{01} : There is no significant relationship between the learners' communicative competence in English language at the beginning and the end of ELBC program. The correlation method was used using the data in **Table 38** to determine the Pearson correlation coefficient and the probability value for testing.

Table 38 shows the scores of pre-test and post –test score.

Respondent serial number	Pre-test score	Post-test scores
1	55	68
2	70	30
3	78	65
4	63	68
5	70	48
6	75	62
7	55	55
8	65	65
9	68	68
10	70	43

Table 39 Show the correlation between pre test scores and post test scores

		PRE_TEST_SCORES	POST_TEST_SCORES
PRE_TEST_SCORES	Pearson Correlation	1	-.201
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.289
	N	10	10
POST_TEST_SCORES	Pearson Correlation	-.201	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.289	
	N	10	10

The pre-test scores range from 55% to 78%, while post-test scores range from 30% to 68%. From the raw scores respondent with serial numbers one and four improved their scores; seven, eight and nine maintained their scores; and two, three, five and six

dropped in their performance. Pearson's correlation coefficient to determine the relationship between the pre-test and post test scores and the p-value was calculated as shown in **Table 39** to test the hypothesis that stated: There is no significant relationship between the learners' competence in English language at the beginning and the end of ELBC program. The Pearson's correlation coefficient(r) was -0.201 which indicated a weak negative relationship between the pre and post scores. The p value was 0.289, which was greater than the significance level of 0.05. Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted, and the researcher concludes that there is no relationship between the learners' competence in English language at the beginning and the end of ELBC.

4.7.5 The learners' views on the effectiveness of the ELBC in improving their English language ability

In this section the researcher tested the hypothesis; H_{02} : There is no significant relationship between the learners' views of the effectiveness of the ELBC and end of course evaluation (post test scores) in improving communicative competence. The correlation method was used using the data in **Table 40** to determine the Pearson correlation coefficient and the probability value for testing.

Table 40: Frequency of students' view of how effective ELBC programs are raising their English ability

Item	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
A	8 (80%)	2 (20%)	-	-	-	10 (100%)
B	8 (80%)	2 (20%)	-	-	-	10 (100%)
C	6 (60%)	4 (40%)	-	-	-	10 (100%)
D	2 (20%)	2 (20%)	-	2 (20%)	-	10 (100%)
E	5 (50%)	3 (30%)	2 (20%)	-	-	10 (100%)
F	5 (50%)	5 (50%)	-	-	-	10 (100%)
G	4 (40%)	6 (60%)	-	-	-	10 (100%)
H	5 (50%)	5 (50%)	-	-	-	10 (100%)
I	5 (50%)	3 (30%)	-	2 (20%)	-	10 (100%)
J	5 (50%)	3 (30%)	2 (20%)	-	-	10 (100%)

From **Table 40** there is an indication that the majority of the students strongly agreed or agreed with the statements that ELBC has the ability to improve their English language. A few of them were undecided or disagreed with the statements.

The students' opinions collected were analyzed by use of the Likert scale, where the responses were weighted as follows: strongly agree (SA) scored five points, agree (A) scored four points, undecided (U) scored three points, disagree (D) scored two points and strongly disagree (SD) scored one point. There were 10 items in that section, hence the total score ranged from 10 to 50 points. These scores were converted to percentage so as to be correlated with post test scores as shown in **Table 41**.

Table 41: Post test score and student opinion scores

Respondent serial number	Post test scores	Students' opinion scores
1	68	56
2	30	60
3	65	74
4	68	56
5	48	74
6	62	56
7	55	60
8	65	74
9	68	56
10	43	74

Table 42: Correlation between students' opinions and post test scores

		POST_TEST_SC ORES	STUDENT_OPI NIONS
POST_TEST_SCORES	Pearson Correlation	1	-.252
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.241
	N	10	10
STUDENT_OPINIONS	Pearson Correlation	-.252	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.241	
	N	10	10

The Pearson's' correlation coefficient index was calculated to determine the relationship between the post-test scores and the students' opinion scores from the Likert scale as shown in **Table 42**. The Pearson's correlation coefficient(r) was -0.252 which indicated a weak negative relationship between the post test scores and the student opinions. The *probability value* was 0.241, which was greater than the significance level of 0.05. Therefore the null hypothesis that stated: There is no significant relationship between the learners' views on the effectiveness of the ELBC and end of course evaluation (post test scores) was accepted. The researcher concludes that there is no significant relationship between the learners' views of the effectiveness of the ELBC and end of course evaluation (post test scores).

4.7.6 The Relationship between the Teachers' and Learners' perception on the ability of ELBC to improve learners' English Language

The lecturers' opinions on the ability of ELBC to improve learners' communicative competence was summarized as shown in **Table 43** from the interview administered where the responses were weighted on a scale of one to ten. These scores were converted to percentage so as to be correlated with the ELBC learners' opinions on whether the program improves communicative competence.

Table 43: ELBC lecturers opinion scores

Respondent	Scale (out of 10)	Percentage (100%)
EL1	7	70
EL2	6	60
EL3	8	80
EL4	6	60
EL5	9	90

An independent two sample t-test was taken to ascertain the difference in views between the ELBC lecturers and learners opinion on whether the program has the ability to improve the communicative competence. This information was used to accept or reject our last hypothesis for the study that stated that;

H₀₃: There is no significant difference between the learners' and teachers' perception of the ability of the ELBC program in improving the learners' communicative competence.

Table 44: Group statistics of ELBC learners and lecturers

	Respondents	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Opinion_scores	ELBC learner	10	64.00	8.743	2.765
	ELBC lecturer	5	72.00	13.038	5.831

Table 44 shows that ELBC learners have a mean score of 64, standard deviation of 8.743 and a standard error mean of 2.765 while the ELBC lecturers have a mean score of 72, standard deviation of 13.038 and a standard error mean of 5.831.

Table 45: Independent samples test for ELBC learners and lecturers

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means	
		F	Sig.	t	df
Opinion_scores	Equal variances assumed	1.333	.269	-1.424	13
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.240	5.869

		t-test for Equality of Means		
		Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Opinion_scores	Equal variances assumed	.178	-8.000	5.619
	Equal variances not assumed	.262	-8.000	6.453

		t-test for Equality of Means	
		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		Lower	Upper
Opinion_scores	Equal variances assumed	-20.138	4.138
	Equal variances not assumed	-23.876	7.876

Table 45 gives the independent sample test for the ELBC learners and lecturers. To determine which row to consider, the researcher looked at the significance level (*probability value*) of the F- test. In this case 0.269 is greater than the significance

level of 0.05, which shows that the variance is assumed to be equal. Therefore the first row is considered. Using a significance level of 0.05, t-test is -1.424 and the probability value for this t-test is 0.178. Because 0.178 is greater than 0.05 the null hypothesis is accepted; that there is no significant difference between the learners' and teachers' perception of the ability of the ELBC program in improving the learners' communicative competence.

4.8 Summary

The results posted by learners at the end of ELBC did not show a significant improvement in language competence after completing the program. This shows that the ELBC does not achieve the objective for which it was intended. The learners' view on whether the ELBC would improve their English competence did not relate significantly with the results they posted at the end of the ELBC. The ELBC lecturer had differing opinions on whether the ELBC was effective in improving the learner's competence, particularly with regard to the time allocated for the program. While some ELBC lecturers were of the opinion that the time allocated for the program was too much, others were of the view that the program still needed to be allocated more time.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the pertinent issues that the study dealt with. The chapter gives a summary of the empirical findings that emerged from the study based on the research objectives, then conclusions which are drawn from the study findings. Thereafter, recommendations are provided that suggest ways of addressing the key challenges that have emerged from this study. Finally, the chapter gives suggestions for further research that could address areas that are relevant to this study, but were beyond the scope of this study.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The findings were summarized as per the research objectives of the study, these were: ELBC learners' views about the program's ability to improve their communicative competence, presentation of the pre test and post scores, the ELBC lecturers' views about the status of the program and a comparison of the learners' and teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the ELBC program in improving the learner's English Language communicative competence.

First, from the results of the study it is evident that the ELBC learners view the program as beneficial since it not only improves their communicative competence, but also helps them to be able to progress to degree programs. The respondents strongly agree that the program has the ability to improve their communicative competence, but some adjustments were needed in terms of the course structure to fully benefit them.

Secondly, the data from the research instruments was analyzed and it revealed the course structure (course duration, content and lessons taught per week) formed the foundation for the ELBC program to effectively improve learners' communicative competence. The data from questionnaires reveal the extent of these effects, whereas the interviews gave exactly how it affects. To begin with the study investigated the effect of the number of lessons that learners attend per week on the effectiveness of the program. From their responses most of learners felt the three hours allocated for the program per week was less given the English competencies they needed to master for the three months in bridging and six months for pre-university. Most of ELBC learners felt that just learning for a single paper which had all the components required to measure their communicative competence was not enough. They were of the view that the institution should separate the various aspects of communicative competence and allocate their time in the timetable. This is evident in the questionnaire results where 60% of the respondents rated the lessons as few. The same view was revealed in the interviews where participants admitted that they lacked enough content to cover in two semesters. From the in depth analysis, it was discovered the lecturers sometimes gave the students' substandard content, that is, they dealt with the topics shallowly since the learners already had direct admissions to the degree programs of their choice. Some put it that their interest had been just to attend all the day's lessons and to finish the syllabus. They did not take into heart what they did or how they did it.

Thirdly, the results analyzed from the questionnaire administered to the learners revealed that apart from the course structure, there were other major factors that needed to be considered to ensure the program was effective in improving the learners' communicative competence. These included the lecturers' experience,

assessment procedures, University management, library facilities, classroom size, number of students, teaching methods and learners' personal factors. The learners rated lecturer's experience, University management and assessment procedures as the key factors that determine the effectiveness of the ELBC. They strongly related the lecturer's experience to the delivery of content in class. They saw that when a lecturer has experience will be able to adopt the best teaching methods to make the lessons understood. And also when good assessment benchmarks are set, the learner abilities are evaluated competently. The learners also felt that all the assessment techniques that were being used (CATs, internal final exams, teacher supervisions and assignments) were effective in measuring their communicative competencies.

The same views were echoed from the interviews conducted on ELBC lecturers. They also emphasized that the relevant institutions should redesign the program to evaluate all the English competencies independently to create a better picture of the learner's level of communicative competence. The University management was also seen as a factor that affects the operations of the program. Learners preferred the current university they were learning in since it had a good management. Given that the number of students admitted for the ELBC was little, learners viewed classroom size and number of students to have little effect in improving the communicative competence.

From the interviews conducted most of the ELBC lecturers did not find a strong connection between availability of library facilities and effectiveness of the program, if the university can have qualified lecturers, although most of the responses generated from them strongly recommended that library facilities helped learners access a wider scope of the course content.

Learner's personal factors were also mentioned as a factor that affects the effectiveness of the learner to concentrate in class. These factors major included political, economical, social-cultural, technological and environmental. Learners felt it was beyond the university to control these factors, but it could help for those who really needed counselling.

From the questionnaire administered to ELBC learners the responses were varied on whether the ELBC fulfilled the criteria for communicative competence. 70% of the learners agreed that ELBC was flexible, effective and it improved the learners' conversation management and involvement. 60% of the learners were not sure whether empathy was fulfilled because they felt it was not easy to manage someone else emotions in communication. Appropriateness was rated the lowest with 50%. Learners were not sure whether the program fulfilled this criterion because the learners went through the program as a procedure for admission not a measure of their communicative competence.

From the interviews administered to the ELBC lecturers most of them felt that the regulating body should put measures to ensure standardization of the program. Majority hailed the program because it was giving access to education to learners who did not pass KCSE. Some of the respondents had their own reservations on different issues about the program. They were not comfortable with the structure of the course and assessment procedures. They recommended the increase in content to cover the required period and saw the need for effective assessment of the learners when they start of the program, during the program (formatively) and at the end of the program (summative).

The analysis of the test scores administered to learners revealed that, the learners performed better on average in the pre-test compared to the post test. This was evident from a mean of 66.93 in the pre test compared to a mean of 57.20 in the post test scores. When comparing the range and standard deviation between the two tests it showed that pre test scores were not spread much compared to post test scores. Pre test has a range of 23 and standard deviation of 7.608 while post test had a range of 38 and a standard deviation of 13.020. This was a confirmation that students in the pre test had more uniform marks with no extreme values given that all of them had just been registered in the program and the content was similar to the KCSE exam. Therefore, they were able to express themselves almost with equal effort. But post test scores revealed a bigger spread because the program had different impact on the learners. And a low mean compared to the pre test exam revealed that the program did not raise the learners' grade as expected. It was clear evidence that something was not right in the program. It was in this effort that this study was conducted to try and establish whether the program was effective in raising the learners' communicative competence.

The pre test scores and post test scores were compared using regression methods to determine whether it was possible to predict the post test scores using the pre test scores. The post test scores were taken as the dependent variable in the study since the results depended significantly on other factors experienced during the program of study, while the pre test scores were taken as the independent variable given that the results had no relationship with the program. The analysis revealed that the R coefficient squared was 4%, which showed that the pre test scores accounted for only 4% of the variations in the post test scores. It meant that 96% the post test scores was accounted for by other factors which, according to this study are the course structure,

university context and learners' personal factors. The coefficient table revealed a negative slope of -0.343 which meant that despite that the constant was big; 80.164 using the regression line, the higher the marks a student obtained in the pre test the lower the post test score one would obtain. This was evidence enough to conclude that there was no significant relationship between the pre and post test scores.

Finally, on testing the hypothesis the findings showed that the entire null hypotheses were accepted. This was in line with what the study was investigating. The study revealed that there is no significant relationship between the learners' communicative competence in English language at the beginning and the end of ELBC program which was concluded by determining the probability value (p-value) of 0.829. The Pearson correlation coefficient index (r) was -0.201 which showed a weak negative correlation between the pre-test and post test.

Secondly, there is no significant relationship between the learners' views of the effectiveness of the ELBC and end of course evaluation (post test scores) in improving the learners' communicative competence. This was concluded by determining the probability value (p-value) of 0.241. The Pearson correlation coefficient index (r) was -0.252 which showed a weak negative correlation between the post-test and the learners' views.

Lastly, there is no significant difference between the learners' and teachers' perception of the ability of the ELBC program in improving the learners' communicative competence. This was determined by calculating the t-test of -1.424 and test its probability value (p-value) of 0.178 and the result revealed that the p-value was greater than the significance level of 0.05 therefore the null hypothesis was

accepted. It showed that the opinions of the teachers and learners did not have a significant mean variance.

5.3 Discussion of Findings

The main findings that were highlighted in 5.2 above are discussed in this section in relation to the literature and previous research. The discussion will be based on the research objectives. First the researcher will discuss the demographic information of the respondents in relation to the findings of the study.

5.3.1 Demographic information on the respondents

The participants in this study were 10 ELBC learners and 5 ELBC lecturers. The ELBC learners who participated were from the two Bridging courses offered; English Bridging course and pre-university. Bridging English course was done for a period of three months (one semester), while pre-university was done for six months (two semesters). The students learnt the same content, but it was spread for pre-university since they had other subjects they were bridging unlike their counterparts. The researcher used all the participants in the study because they were few therefore the whole population was taken as the sample size. From the questionnaire analysis, there is clear evidence that bridging students have a higher entry grade for the program compared to pre- university. This is because students who join bridging are only bridging English, unlike their counterparts who are focusing on improving their aggregate mean by bridging other subjects too.

Upon further analysis, it was established that although they registered for different programs and they all cover the same content hence that disparity does not play a major role in their final results. This was supported by their being a weak negative relationship of -0.169 between the program the learners joined and their final post test

scores. Hence the study did not separate the groups, but analyzed them as a single sample. It is evident that the program the learners joined had a positive correlation coefficient index of 0.431 in relation to the English grade they obtained in KCSE. This was so because 60% of the learners who were sample joined bridging which required a higher entry grade compared to 40% in pre-university. It was a clear indicator that most learners in Kenya obtained the required entry aggregate grade for university entry but did not meet the cluster subject requirements. From the interview analysis it was also established that there were more lecturers for Pre-university compared to Bridging. Although this revelation did not affect the type of data collected it informed the researcher that the emphasis on teaching was put on pre-university learners who had a lower entry mark compared to their counterpart. Therefore providing a uniform ground for analysis given that the Bridging learners were stronger.

In terms of their age the analysis showed that 60% of the respondents were under 20 years, 30% were between 20-24 years and 10% above 30years. This was because most of the students who join the program have just finished their secondary education by 18years. From the analysis age had a negative correlation with the program undertaken. It implied that the program did not discriminate when students joined. In terms of gender the analysis revealed a negative correlation with the program undertaken by the learners. The two observations were significant in the study because the study was keen to examine whether age and gender had any effect on the programs' effectiveness to improve learners' communicative competence. This issue about age and gender is similar to the findings of Kirk and Spector (2006) who concluded that students' age, gender and length of time between taking principles were insignificant to the performance. For the ELBC lecturers there were more

female lecturers compared to male. This information was an indicator in the skewness of English language teacher training in Kenya. It provided vital data to policy makers to emphasis on both genders in admission of teachers to training institutions.

The analysis of the respondents revealed that the KCSE English grade they obtained had a strong positive correlation coefficient of 0.709 on the pre-test scores. But upon further analysis the same data returned a negative relationship with the post test scores. This was something worth noting. From the questionnaire the respondents have indicated that there were other factors at play when they join the program that affects them. These were course structure issues, university context and personal factors. An inquiry through interviews of the ELBC lecturers echoed the same sentiments of the learners. They emphasized that the course structure should be standardized, especially the focus should be put equally in practicing the theory, the university should avail all the necessary support and learners should be encouraged to have a positive learning mindset. They rated them as having different degree of effect on the effectiveness of ELBC.

This was in line with Buameh and Ayagre (2013) on their study of the effect of entry grades on academic performance of University Accounting students which concluded that the performance of students at undergraduate levels has been attributed to several factors, particularly to the University's systems, including facilities, structures and quality of teaching and student services system. Although from several researches, not much has been said about the quality of students admitted to the university. Upon determining the Pearson correlation between the quality of students admitted and their performance, it concludes that there is a relationship between core mathematics and accounting at Pre-university level and performance of undergraduate Accounting

students' performance. No correlation was however found between pre-University English and their University level performance. Further analysis of the study it was established in English Language only writing was tested.

5.3.2 The nature of the ELBC learning environment

The ELBC program being offered currently is regulated by the university. The academic department decides on the course duration, content, staffing and admission requirements while the lecturer decides on the suitable methods of teaching and assessing the learners to meet the criteria set by the university. This was established in an interview with the ELBC lecturers that they determined what the learners went through to a big proportion as seen below;

... I have to decide on which area to give assignments and CAT's to students and still ensure that I set their final exam. It becomes difficult for us to know the academic abilities of these learners from the start to be able to help them. By the time you know them the program is over. Also, because they already have an automatic admission to our university, we still need to ensure they go through the program. (EL02)

There are three hours per unit each week. By the end of the course, they have had a minimum of 38 hours. This time is more than enough. The content can be covered by the end of one semester. Therefore the academic department should think what to do with the second semester. (EL05)

That unmanned learning environment of ELBC has attracted a lot of debate on whether the program will surely benefit the learner. Due to the lack of external regulation of relevant bodies the results are not easily transferable between universities. In an extract of the open questions in the questionnaire administered to the ELBC learners most of the responses indicated that they were critical that the program needed immediate interventions in all its aspects. This was evident in the following response extracted from the learners;

I still do not understand why after doing the ELBC in one university you cannot be allowed to progress with your degree from another university (L05)

It's a chance for some of us to pursue our degree. Thank God. But there is still more to be done to ensure the program is recognized universally (L07)

The study established that there is a lack of uniformity between the course duration allocated and the content to be covered. From the results analyzed, most of the learners viewed the three lessons allocated per week to be less. This was echoed by one learner as follows;

I wish more lessons could be added to the program. But I like it. (L09)

The issue of lack of clear standards for bridging courses is evident not only in Kenya but also in Africa. Ngwaru (2014) carried out a study with an aim of investigating the challenges in academic writing and speaking, encountered by 42 prospective undergraduates Namibian students undertaking the ESL bridging courses at the Great Zimbabwe University revealed that due to historical, political and pedagogical reasons; Namibia students face a lot of challenges in academic language both writing and speaking which subsequently impact negatively on their learning. It showed that there is a significant gap between their performances due to limited proficiency level in ESL. The study concluded that there is an urgent need to provide these students with a wider range of academic and linguistic support measures in the ESL bridging courses than is currently offered and the one semester they are given to do the bridging course is not enough to improve their communicative competence to make them ready to embark on the B. Ed program.

In support of this, Stumbo & McWalters (2010) in their article argued that measuring teacher effectiveness in class is likely to face a number of shortcomings. This includes

limits of student assessment data, many untested subjects, low quality of evaluators, Individual vs team based accountability, working conditions, lack of holistic ideology of effectiveness and not engaging all stakeholders. These challenges observed by these researchers reflect the true picture of the status of ELBC being offered in different universities currently in Kenya.

Kioko (2004) establishes that when a learner gets good grades in the K.C. S.E English exam, it does not mean that they have the required competence to negotiate through university education. She further asserts that Universities are aware of this and have a course (communication skills) to cater for this discrepancy. However, the course duration and content are inadequate to bridge the existing Knowledge and skills gap in these learners.

5.3.3 Factors that affect the effectiveness of ELBC in improving the communicative competence

Apart from course structure (course duration, content and lessons per week) the study established that assessment procedures, university management and lecturer's experience affected the ELBC more compared to the other factors assessed in the study as seen below.

5.3.3.1 Assessment procedures

The ELBC learners viewed assessment procedures as one of the most critical factors that determine the effectiveness of the program. They argued that, when well done it would help to identify their weak points that needed improvement. This was evident from the open question extract administered to the learners as follow by one of the respondents;

I only read when the lecturer announced a test. Especially in our case, we have two CATs and a final exam. Therefore that tells you that, if the lecturer announced a test every day, then I would be reading every day. For assignments, sometimes I copy from friends when I can avoid. (L04)

The same views were echoed by the ELBC lecturers from the interviews conducted. They all agreed in principle that learners should undergo both formative and summative assessments. Currently they gave assignments and CAT's as formative assessments while the final exam was administered internally as formative assessment. This was evident from the response obtained from one respondent as follows;

Once the learners are admitted to the program, before they undergo I observe them in class and determine their speech competence. This will determine how I will plan for the speech classes. During the program I administer two C.A.T's within a semester and give class assignments. I use them to know whether there has been improvement after teaching for some time. This affects subsequent teaching. Finally by the end of the course they sit for a final exam, but it's obvious that summative assessments do not affect the quality of teaching. With respect to assessment procedures for teachers I am not allowed to comment because it is done in another forum not this one. (EL05)

Some of the respondents interviewed acknowledged that many policy makers found it attractive, simple and cost effective to use data from single assessments for multiple purposes which were misleading. Like in their case the learners were only examined in a single paper instead of the various aspects of communicative competence. Hence it did not reveal the real communicative competence of the learners. The Majority of the ELBC lecturers and learners in the study was in harmony that the government should develop a uniform assessment framework to be applied by all university offering the program to provide reliability and validity of the results. They did not propose an external body to assess them, but they called for standards that can be

adopted by the institutions offering the course. The learners noted that currently there was a lack of dependability of the results as seen in the following response;

I still do not understand why after doing the ELBC in one university you cannot be allowed to progress with your degree from another university (L05)

The government can do more on this. The MOHEST should develop a uniform curriculum for it and give it a uniform exam if they can like KCSE if the regulation is a problem. Some of our friends have had difficulties joining universities abroad because ELBC are taken as internal exams that lack credibility. They are forced to re-do the proficiency English course in those foreign universities (L09)

Upon further analysis of the learners rating about whether assessment procedures matter, it was established that it had the highest positive correlation among all the factors analyzed of 0.750. That was a revelation of how much students respected the assessments they undergo to determine their final grade in the program. It also was an eye opener to policy makers on the efforts they need to put to ensure effective assessment policies in learning institutions.

This finding is similar to that of (Goodrum, Hackling, & Rennie, 2001) who said that classroom assessments are an essential component of the teaching and learning process as it helps teachers in classroom decision-making. The same sentiments were echoed by (Watering, Gijbels, Dochy, & Rijt, 2008) that such assessments are not only a means to assign grades and determine whether students achieve objectives but have also become a learning tool.

This finding is similar to that of the research by Jude et al (2012), in their research conducted in East Africa region to establish Effectiveness of University Bridging Programs in Preparing Students for University Education reveal that studying abroad brings several advantages to students, universities, countries, and Academe. However, across countries with incongruent pre-university education structures, some students

are denied admission to foreign universities, due to gaps in their admissibility. Some institutions offer university bridging programs, to enhance the admissibility of these students to the required level. Nonetheless, the efficacy of these programs, in closing the competence gap between their attendees and conventional enrollees, is the subject of much controversy—albeit neither their proponents nor critics have provided empirical evidence to support their side of the argument. To plug this gap, this study examined the academic performance differentials between students enrolled through the programs and those admitted through conventional routes, taking the case of the Kampala International University. The findings were that, on the whole, there is no significant difference between the two, meaning that the programs are effective in preparing their attendees for university education.

Similar findings have been forwarded by Nenty (1992 in Gichuru, 2014), who says that learning is the ultimate dependent variable in education everything done in the name of education impacts positively or negatively on learning. It is through assessment that learning and hence quality of education are defined. Any improvement in these depends ultimately on the quality and improvement in assessment. Just like the physicians cannot have effective practice without good assessment, teachers cannot have effective teaching without skills related to good assessment Nenty (2005 in Gichuru, 2014).

5.3.3.2 University Management

For the ELBC learners' responses majority agrees the university management style affect the effectiveness of the program. They linked university management to the ability to provide required learning materials, set up a favourable learning environment, employ skilled staff and ensure efficient implementation of the program.

The majority of the respondents were comfortable with the current university management. It had an open door policy and was respected because of its effective management systems over the years. But they still were aware that the university needs to develop better facilities, especially improve the library and now that it was offering the programs it has to do something like any other university to ensure dependability of the results. The better they play their role the chances are the program will be more effective in improving the learners' communicative competence. A Pearson correlation coefficient was used to determine the effect of the university management to post test score and it revealed a moderate positive correlation of 0.510 which was consistent with the ratings that were collected from the ELBC learners. This inferential statistics index shows that the students prefer a good management for their program to be effective.

This finding is similar to Buameh and Ayagre (2013) on their study of the effect of entry grades on academic performance of University accounting students which concluded that the performance of students at undergraduate levels has been attributed to several factors, particularly to the University's systems, including facilities, structures and quality of teaching and student services system. The same view has been supported by (Ahmed, et al., September 2010) who conducted a study on the service quality effect on student performance in Pakistan and concluded that, students satisfaction and motivation increase performance level of students; and satisfaction and motivation are influenced by dimensions of service quality.

On the other hand, some of the ELBC lecturers in the interviews raised a concern of universities that were offering the programs but they did not have the resources needed such as the learning facilities and qualified staff. This was a compromise to

the effective management systems needed to ensure effectiveness of the program in raising the learners' communicative competence. This was noted by one of the respondent as follows;

Universities are using it as a money making program. Therefore, first the MOHEST should issue fresh licensing to equipped universities to offer the program. I do not know why they are taking too long to do this while parents and students are coned million of shillings. By the end of the day the University programs become irrelevant due to wrong admission procedures to degree courses.(EL02)

Similar findings have been presented by Oanda & Jowi (2013). In their study, University Expansion and the Challenges for Social Development in Kenya: Dilemmas and Pitfalls. They conclude that the phenomenal expansion of public and private universities in Kenya in recent years has opened access to thousands of knowledge-thirsty students to achieve their ambitions. Public universities in particular have been forced to diversify their programs, establish flexible learning schedules and set up campuses away from their traditional locations. From being ivory towers and national development projects that were solely seen in terms of workforce development, universities throughout Africa have dispersed to the rural areas, both as a strategy to expand access and position themselves as business entities. However, this expansion has not been driven by the public sector. Rather, it has been driven by the private sector, with branch campuses of public universities in rural areas sometimes serving as private income generating units, outside strict public sector oversight.

5.3.3.3 Lecturers' experience

From the analysis of the questionnaire administered to the ELBC learners 70% agreed that the lecturer's experience was paramount to the success of the program. They argued that for effective learning to take place it has to be done by the right person.

They were critical that when a lecturer is given a class one will be able to use his/her experience to gauge the learners' abilities and use the right differentiated teaching styles to meet their needs. This was visible with the Pearson correlation index of 0.628 that shows a strong positive relationship between the students rating of lecturers' experience in the effectiveness of the program with their post test scores. This was also noted by the ELBC lecturers during the interview session with the researcher as follows;

Given the current status of the program, the university must ensure quality staff is engaged from the start. This is important since the time for learning is less yes a lot has to be covered. All of all the students' expectations must be met by the end of the program they are doing. (EL03)

From the observations the study revealed that the lecturer determines in a larger proportion the success of a learning outcome. When these teachers have the relevant skills and experience, then the results become standard and reflective of the learner.

Similar views have been forwarded by Mansell, et al (2009) that the case for teacher judgement contributing the way learners' performance is evaluated has been rehearsed. In principle, it rests on the argument that teachers can sample the range of a learner's work more fully than they can any assessment instruments devised by an agency external to the learning institution. These make the assessment reliable and valid which contribute greatly to the dependability of the results. They further emphasize that it can only be achieved without unfair or biased marking, variations in the standards applied by different teacher and failing to reflect important aspects of understanding skill.

5.3.4 Effects of other factors on effectiveness of ELBC

Apart from the lecturers' experience, the university management and assessment procedures, there were other factors that the researcher analyzed. These were library facilities, classroom size, number of students, teaching methods and learners personal factors. Although they did not register a strong foundation in affecting the effectiveness of the ELBC their contribution were of concern to the participants. This weak correlation was confirmed from analyzing the ELBC learners' ratings of these factors to the post test scores. They had a Pearson correlation of below 0.3. The results indicated that although they were minor they still affected the overall effectiveness of the ELBC hence needed to be addressed.

5.3.4.1 Library facilities

From the analysis of the questionnaire to ELBC learners majority felt that library facilities were crucial, especially to enable them to complete their assignment and provide them with more material for comparison. But some were of the view that as long as the institution had experienced staff, they will still be able to afford quality learning without library facilities. The same views were proposed by the ELBC lecturers in the interviews as shown below;

We do not have a well equipped library, but I still believed with the qualified lecturers we have, they are able to access relevant materials for the students from other universities. Yes, it does affect their ability to exercise, but I till think their mastery of the language is more than just sitting in the library. They need to practice speaking, have debates, and write essays with the assistance of the teacher. (EL02)

5.3.4.2 Learners personal factors

Learners' personal factors were also mentioned to some degree as to affect the effectiveness of the program. The majority of the ELBC learners rated it as "much". Some of the major factors mentioned include political, economic, social-cultural,

technological, legal and environmental. For example, it was discovered that 90% of the learners undergoing the course were not married and were living far from their families. Therefore, they were excited about life and this made them spend most of their time socializing with the opposite sex hence affecting how much effort they put on their academics. Also, some of them their ability to use the internet was limited, therefore, depended on the lecturer for information. The location of the university under study played another major role. The region had in the past experienced post election violence and families were displaced. Therefore political stability was still wanting. Because of this, some of the students lived in fear of the future.

The interviews conducted on lecturers also raised some level of concern because of the status of the learners while in class. This was evident from the following response;

As a University we have a dean of students. When we identify those extreme behaviours we will always inform the dean to talk to such a learner, since it will affect their concentration in class. (EL04)

Some ELBC lecturers argued that some students are able to bounce back from negative events quite effectively, whereas others are caught in a web entangled in their negative streaks. Being able to move on despite the influences of stressors demonstrates resilience. Ahangar (2010) referred to psychological resilience as effective coping and adaptation, although faced with loss, hardship or adversity. Lazarus (1993) cited in Ahangar (2010) as having likened psychological resilience to the metaphor of elasticity in metals. He explained that, cast iron is hard, brittle and breaks easily (non-resilient), whereas wrought iron is soft, malleable and bends without breaking (resilient). The individual behaves differently in similar situations and evaluate conditions differently based on their unique expectations, values, previous experiences and temperaments (DeNeve and Copper. 1998 cited in Ahangar

(2010)). In his findings Ahangar concludes that 62% of students have good resilience while about 38% of students need assistance in building up their resilience ability. He added that, such students need to maintain performance and stamina during periods of high demand and should think clearly and logically under pressure. Students thinking, intuitiveness and systematic nature were highly positively impacting on their resilience.

Similar findings were cited by Engler (2010) in his earlier work which indicated that personal attitudes, motivation and time management skills contribute to the basis of successful learning whether it occurs at school or at university. And, this factor is independent of the subject matter being studied thus making the weak association between subject taken at school and university performance not surprising.

5.3.4.3 Teaching methods

From the research findings, it was established that the majority of the ELBC learners linked teaching methods with lecturer's experience. They argued that those lecturers who had taught for some time had better ways of presenting the content because they have tested it over a period of time. This was also based on the fact that the course was being offered for a short period of time that did not require guessing. But the interviews conducted on ELBC lecturers had a different perspective. Some of them felt that even if a lecturer is fresh from university as long as he/she had relevant qualifications, the guidelines and the passion to teach, will still be able to deliver the content efficiently. This was evident from the following response;

We are not saying that one needs to be a lecturer for a century to have the needed experience to teach, but passion to teach should be there. For our university the management tries to ensure that all the lecturers who teach these courses have the relevant qualifications. Although there will always be lagging in any system.(EL02)

5.3.4.4 Number of students (class size)

The majority of the respondents from the questionnaire did not find a significant relationship of class size to the effectiveness of the program. This deduction was because the university under study did not have many students in the program. Upon further analyzing the relationship between the number of students and their post test scores the results yielded a Pearson correlation coefficient of -0.326. The negativity in the coefficient was stronger than any other factor considered in the study. Although the lecturers viewed a smaller class size as manageable in the current situation. They viewed a large class size as a hindrance to enable learners practice the use of the language through debates and easy marking of their work. This was supported by the response obtained from one ELBC lecturer as follow;

The fewer the number of learners in a class, the easier it is for them to practice. It becomes convenient when doing speaking work and even marking their essays.(EL01)

Similar findings have been established by Gramlich and Greenlee (1993) and Stratton Meyer and King (1994). They found little or no evidence of a relationship between class size and course grades in introductory and intermediate college economics courses. These results are confirmed by Saunders (1980) and Kennedy and Siefried (1997) using a different outcome measure score on the Test of Understanding College Economics (TUCE) exam. But in contrast using the same data as Kennedy and Sigfried (1997), Lopus and Maxwell (1995) find a positive relationship between class size and student performance on the TUCE III exam. In a similar vein, Raimondo, Esposito and Gershenberg (1990) find no relationship between introductory microeconomics class size and subsequent performance in intermediate microeconomics, but do find a negative relationship between introductory macroeconomics class size and subsequent performance in intermediate

macroeconomics. This is due to the fact that the introductory class size may have a differential impact on intermediate performance at the end of the introductory course of interest compared to the long run impact on intermediate or even advanced level performance.

To date only a few studies of College class size and student ratings exist. Among these, McConnell and Sosin (1984), DeCanio (1986) and Siegfried and Walstad (1990) find that students dislike larger classes. However, their results may confound the effects of class size and instructor quality since, for example, the department chair might systematically assign better instructors to larger or smaller classes. Existing estimates may also confound course size and course difficulty, since college administrators may make an effort to assign smaller class sizes when the subject matter is more difficult.

5.3.4.5 Classroom size

80% of the responses from the questionnaire administered to ELBC learners found no significant relationship between the classroom size and the effectiveness of the program. This was attributed to the fact that the current institution where the study was being carried out has clean and spacious halls for lectures. Classroom size ratings were found to have a negative correlation compared to the post test scores. The same sentiments were echoed by one of the lecturer who was interviewed as follows;

The classrooms are big and conducive for learning and the students are few so they are manageable. They can be taught easily because they are few.(EL05)

Studies have also shown that there are few effects of the size of the room on academic performance. But there other issues of the room when studied in conjunction with the size of the room revealed a great effect on performance. These include lighting,

degree of temperature, condition of the classroom floor whether it is carpeted or just concrete, etc. This was supported by (Savage, 1999; Stewart and Evans, 1997) whose study showed that the physical arrangement plays a vital role in teaching learning process. It can affect the performance of both teachers and students.

Similar studies were carried out by to Oni (1992) and Hallak (1990). According to them (Oni (1992) and Hallak (1990)) physical facilities compose a strategic factor in the operation and functioning of an organization as they determine the excellent performance of any social organization or system including education. Physical facilities are one of the stimulating factors that play a fundamental role in improving academic achievement in the school system. These include; school buildings, accommodation, classrooms, libraries, furniture, laboratories, recreational equipments, apparatus and other instructional materials. Furthermore, their availability, relevancy and sufficiency affect academic achievement positively. On the other hand, poor school buildings and overcrowded classrooms affect academic achievement negatively. Taylor and Vlastos (2009) found the relationship between environment and design within the classroom from a theoretical perspective. They found that the physical environment of the classroom acts as “Silent curriculum”. It means that classroom environmental design can facilitate and improve the learning process like the overt curriculum.

5.3.5 Learners’ perception of ELBC ability to improve learners’ English language

In questionnaire, the respondents were asked to comment on the program's ability to improve their ability in the following areas: grammar, speaking, writing and literature. They were also to give general comments about the effectiveness of the program in

improving their level of English. The respondents reported that they do a lot of practice through assignments and therefore have improved in intonation, spelling, tenses and parts of speech. They added that the practice has helped them to express themselves clearly. However, one respondent reported that there is more that needed to be done. The respondents reiterated that new vocabulary and practice on speech improved their communication and they were able to be eloquent. Writing exercises and compositions helped the respondents in spellings, handwriting and writing styles. Reading, literature books and novels have helped them add more knowledge, especially poetry which has enabled them to understand the deeper meaning of words. The majority of the respondents gave the following as the general comment about the effectiveness of ELBC in improving the students' level of English: change of negative attitude toward English; improved communication and interaction; and improve in English has subsequently improved in other fields of their studies.

5.3.6 Learners' views, whether ELBC fulfills the criteria for communicative competence

From the responses that were obtained from the questionnaire administered to the ELBC learners it was concluded that the majority felt that although the program was done for a period of three to six months to some extent the criteria was fulfilled. They suggested a change in the course content to include all the competencies, time allocation per week to be increased to cater for the expanded content and assessment to be done in theory and practical. As per the many researches that have been done for an English language course to achieve communicative competencies before it is measured all the competencies must be taught (grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic) in class and practiced in interactions. It is evident that the learner improved in some areas while other needed emphasis. For example the respondents

reported that they do a lot of practice through assignments (flexibility) and therefore have improved in intonation, spelling, tenses and parts of speech. They added that the practice has helped them to express themselves clearly (conversational involvement). However, one respondent reported that there is more that needed to be done. The respondents reiterated that new vocabulary and practice on speech improved their communication (conversational management) and they were able to be eloquent (effectiveness). Writing exercises and compositions helped the respondents in spellings, handwriting and writing styles. Reading, literature books and novels have helped them add more knowledge, especially poetry which has enabled them to understand the deeper meaning of words (empathy). Hence, in general the ELBC was appropriate, but more needed to be done to make it achieve a higher criteria rating in future.

5.3.7 The views of ELBC lecturers on the effectiveness of ELBC in improving the communicative competence of learners

Two teachers were asked to give their opinion and views on the ability of ELBC in improving learners' English competence in grammar, writing, speech work and reading. The intense class interaction had greatly improved the learners' grammar, while the writing of formal letters and memos has improved the functional writing. In speech work, the small class sizes enhanced plenty of speaking, chances among the learners. The reading of literature had also helped to improve their attitudes towards literature and poetry in particular.

The teachers were asked to comment on the duration of the program and their views were conflicting. One reported that there was plenty of time for the program and suggested that the time scheduled for the program can be squeezed into one semester.

Another teacher reported that time was not sufficient and she was forced to squeeze the content in order to complete the syllabus. Their overall comment was that the ELBC program has benefited the learners in two folds: the program has created a positive change of attitude of the learners and the learners' level of competence has increased tremendously. The majority of the ELBC lecturers viewed the course structure in terms of course duration, lessons taught per week and course content as short given the level of competence that was supposed to be achieved. They viewed this strategy by most universities as flawed given that they were aware the three to six months allocated was not enough to ensure the learners reach an acceptable level of communicative competence to allow them compete with their counterparts who obtained higher grades from Secondary level after four years of learning. Some lecturers were keen to know what efforts the regulating authorities were taking to ensure standardization of the program in the country. They wanted a consultation be done among stakeholders to overhaul the program and make necessary changes.

About the views on the institution, they reported that the university was in the process of equipping the library with books, although the current technology was still lacking. The classroom sizes were big enough and conducive for learning for the few students. For the teacher workload was three hours per week, which was sufficient for lesson preparation. Teachers used lecture methods which were different from the teaching method used in high school. Some ELBC lecturers evaluated the learner at the beginning of the program to assess their entry behaviour in English. In this particular case the teacher identified speech work to be the most wanting areas. The learners were also tested in the course of implementation of the program. The general comment by the teacher was that the ELBC program is good because it give the

learners an opportunity to improve their English competencies and a chance to join the University.

With regard to the assessment procedures, 60% of the respondents interviewed accepted that there was urgency in reviewing how the ELBC was assessed. That, the program should focus on the various competencies not one exam in English. The learner should be able to sit for both theory and practical papers to have a fair evaluation of their communicative competence. They emphasized that once proper modalities have been put on how the assessments are done, and then the results would become reliable and dependable and will enable students to confidently progress to any university of their choice and program. But as it is currently the results were only authentic to the particular university offering the course.

All respondents sampled for interview agreed that there were very many other factors apart from the learner personal factors and the course structure that affected the effectiveness of the program to improve learners' communicative competence. Among the notable ones included library facilities, lecturer's experience, number of students in a class, university management style, teaching methods used and the classroom size. Although the views raised were varied they all agreed that for a learner to achieve the highest level of communicative competence the university played a major role in controlling some of these factors. One of the respondents reiterated that there were known universities that only concerned with raising their revenues and did not care what learners were going through.

5.3.8 Testing the hypotheses

The study revealed that there is no significant relationship between the learners' communicative competence in English language at the beginning and the end of

ELBC program. From the findings it was established to be so because the learners went through a process where there were too many factors at play and when not controlled then the case will be so. Also the deduction presented a flaw in the program that needed further investigation by the relevant university to try and understand why the program did not improve their grades instead made them lower.

Secondly, there is no significant relationship between the learners' views of the effectiveness of the ELBC and end of course evaluation (post test scores) in improving the learners' communicative competence. This was attributed to the fact that the students have surety that they were going to progress to undergraduate; therefore they viewed the program as a bridge to help them achieve their dreams. But on further comparing their opinions with their post test scores it yielded a negative correlation. Which meant that, the learners did not mind about the grade they obtained by the end of the course and whether learning had taken place so long as they progressed to join undergraduate programs of their choice.

Lastly, there is no significant difference between the learners' and teachers' perception of the ability of the ELBC program in improving the learners' communicative competence. Although there were varied views from the two populations, the majority had the same views about the program. On further analysis, it was established that the two populations has a very small, mean-variance which meant they were almost similar. It is viewed that the lecturers like their counterparts were staff in the university, therefore they felt part of the challenges the program was undergoing through, hence supported the program. Secondly, as lecturers in the program they were putting all the effort to ensure reliability and validity of the program.

5.4 Conclusions

Based on the summary of the findings, the study arrived at some conclusions. The problem under study was on the effectiveness of English Language Bridging Courses in improving the learners' communicative competence. The researcher concluded that ELBC has the ability to improve the learners' communicative competence, but its current structure does not fully support that endeavour. To begin with, the findings revealed that more than half of the ELBC learners agree that their mastery in different areas had improved. But on checking with their post test scores little had changed. That is clear evidence that the learner expectations were not met by the program

After analyzing and interpreting data, the researcher concluded that indeed there were other factors that contributed to the effectiveness of ELBC in improving the learners' communicative competence. These factors had different degrees of contributions in that effect. It was notable that apart from the course structure, lecturer experience, university management and assessment procedures used to affect the effectiveness of the program, there were these other less factors that needed checking. These include library facilities, classroom size, and number of students, teaching methods and learners personal factors. The effect was evident when the pre test scores were compared to the pre test scores after the program. The pre test scores were higher than the post test scores.

Based on research findings the researcher arrived at a conclusion that the program fulfills the criteria of communicative competence to some extent. But the main focus of the program should be clear from the start. From the study it was a concern when it was noted that lecturers taught, knowing that the learners were already admitted to the degree program of their choice. Hence the program was viewed as a procedure, not a

way of improving their communicative competence. These raise the issue of content coverage, teaching methodologies and assessment procedures applied in the course. It also questioned the respective university standard operating procedures of the program. The researcher also reached at a conclusion that the relevant government bodies should intervene to ensure uniformity on what was going on in the program in Kenya.

The contribution of this study to English Language Teaching is that it has highlighted on what efforts can be put across to ensure that ELBC become effective in improving the learners' communicative competence. The learners commit their time and parents pay for the program, therefore it is hoped that relevant effort will be put in place to ensure all the parties benefit from the program. Also the universities offering the program should focus on the communicative competence of the learners not just source revenue from the learners. This issue has not featured prominently in previous research in Effectiveness of English language in improving the learners' communicative competence as seen in the literature review carried on (chapter 2). The present study is therefore timely as captured in the following recommendations.

5.5 Recommendations

From the research findings in this particular study, the researcher was able to come up with the following recommendations for the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology and other regulating bodies, Universities Authorized to offer the program and ELBC teaching staff.

1. The Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology should offer fresh licenses to all universities currently offering English Language Bridging courses. It should urgently coordinate a stakeholders meeting to design

uniform standard procedures that will govern the program in respective universities. And a monitoring unit is developed through the county government to ensure constant evaluation of these institutions offering the program.

2. The Universities that are authorized to offer the program should develop an English Language curriculum that teaches all the competencies (grammatical, sociolinguistics, discourse and strategic) and design relevant assessment in all the competencies. This will ensure a shift from linguistic competence to usage of the language in real life. The course duration should be adjusted to a minimum of six months for Bridging English and nine months for pre university English course to ensure efficient coverage of all the areas needed. Lastly, relevant universities should develop a staffing policy towards the program. They should ensure that only qualified English Language staffs are engaged in the program to deliver on the competencies. This will help in the efficient integration of the course content and short period of learning with the expectations of the learners by the end of the program.
3. The ELBC lecturers should adopt a uniform method of assessing learners when learners join the program, during the program and at the end of the course. The initial assessment will help the lecturers to adopt suitable differentiation methods for effective learning. A uniform assessment policy should be set to accept learners' final marks by all learning institutions throughout the country to give them credibility. If possible the marks are authenticated through the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology. This will enable students who are joining institutions abroad to be accepted due to the reliability and validity of the results.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Research

1. A comprehensive Research on effectiveness of other bridging subjects like Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry. This will ensure uniform standard measures are developed for all the subjects.
2. Research on the gap created by the Kenya Education system from primary to university by not testing all the communicative competencies in assessments and its impact on society. This will reveal the loopholes in the implementation of the English integrated syllabus in schools and in turn provide a basis for policy changes in the English Language on training of teachers, teaching and testing of learners in all the competencies in the country.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Colleges and Universities Offering Bridging English in Kenya

Colleges Offering this Course

A.C.K. Language & Orientation School

A.I.C. Kijabe School of Nursing

African International College

Aga Khan University Hospital

Braides School of Business

Buruburu Institute of Fine Arts

Data Networks Institute

Eldoret Aviation College

English Language Training Institute

Graffins College

Hospitality & Hotel Management Institute

Institute of Applied Technology

Kabete Technical Training Institute

Kenya College of Science & Technology

Kenya Institute of Management (KIM)

Kenya Polytechnic

kenya polytechnic university

Kenya Polytechnic University College

Kenya School of Monetary Studies

Kenyatta University Cisco Networking Academy

Kenyatta University Regional Centre for Capacity Development

Kericho Teachers Training College

Kiambu Institute of Science and Technology

Kisii University College (Main Campus)

Kisumu Polytechnic

Moi University

Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development

Unity College of Professional Studies

Universities Offering this Course

Catholic University of East Africa

Daystar University

James Madison University

Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology

Kabarak University

Kenya Methodist University

Kenyatta University

Kimathi University College of Technology

Moi University

Monash University

Mt Kenya University

Nairobi University

Nairobi University, Kenya

Netaji Subhas Open University

St. Paul's University, Limuru

Stellenbosch University

Tshwane University of Technology

University of Nairobi School of Law

University Of Pretoria

Vaal University of Technology

Appendix II: Interview Guide for Teachers of ELBC

1. Please comment on the effectiveness of the ELBC in improving the learner's level of competence in the English language (*Grammar, speech work, writing and literature*) as a teacher of the ELBC. (*Probe: Specific objective of the ELBC in Grammar, speech work, writing and literature and the extent to which this objective is achieved*)
2. What is your view on the effectiveness of the ELBC in terms of duration of the whole course, contact hours per unit, content covered in the course and overall change in the English level of the learners at the end of the course?
3. What is your assessment of how the institutions context (*library facilities, classroom size, number of students, workload per week and teaching methods*) affect the quality of your teaching?
4. What is your view on the assessment procedures in the institution and how do these assessment procedures affect the quality of your teaching. (*probe;Assessment of learners before undergoing the ELBC, while the learners are undergoing the ELBC and after the learners have completed the ELBC. Evaluation procedures for teachers of the ELBC. Assessment of the institution by external quality assurance people*)
5. On a scale of one to ten, how would you rate the ELBC as an effective program in raising the level of competence in the English language in the learners who undergo the program?
6. Comment generally on the nature of the ELBC.

(Thank you very much for your participation in this study).

Appendix III: Observation Guide

Teacher
Venue
Number of students
Physical size of class

OBSERVATION NOTES

Teacher's preparation for the lesson

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Actual classroom teaching

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.....

Teacher's assessment of learners

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.....

.....

Library facilities which are relevant to the ELBC

.....

.....

.....

.....

Appendix IV: Pre Test

Instructions: Attempt all questions

Time: 1 hour 30 minutes

SECTION A: COMPREHENSION

20MKS

Read the passage below and then answer the questions that follow

Moving to a new country can be exciting, even an exhilarating experience. In a new environment, you somehow feel more **alive**: Seeing new sights, eating new food, hearing the foreign sounds of a new language, and feeling a different climate against your skin stimulate your senses as never before. Soon, however, this sensory bombardment becomes sensory overload. Suddenly, new experiences seem stressful; rather than stimulating and delight turns to discomfort. This is the phenomena known as culture chock. Culture shock is more than a jet lag or homesickness, and it affects nearly everyone who enters who enters a new culture- tourists, business travelers, diplomats and students alike. Although not everyone experiences, culture chock in exactly the same way, many experts agree that it has roughly five stages.

In the first stage, you are excited by your new environment. You experience some simple difficulties such as trying to use the telephone or public transportation, but you consider these small challenges that you can quickly overcome. Your feelings about the new culture are positive, so you are eager to make contact with people and try new foods.

Sooner or later, differences in behavior and customs become more noticeable to you. This is the second stage of culture shock. Because you do not know the social customs of the new culture, you may find it difficult to make friends. For instance, you do not understand how making “small talk,” so it is hard to carry on a casual, get acquainted conversation. One day in the school cafeteria, you overhear a conversation. You understand all the words, but you don’t understand their meaning. Why is everyone laughing? Are they laughing at you or at some joke you did not understand? Also, you aren’t always sure how to act while shopping. Is this store self –service or should you wait for a clerk to assist you? If you buy a sweater in the wrong size, can you exchange it? These are not minor challenges, they are major frustrations.

In the third stage, you no longer have positive feelings about the new culture. You feel that you have made a mistake in coming here. Making friends haven’t been easy, so you begin to feel lonely and isolated. Now you want to be with familiar people and eat familiar food. You begin to spend most of your free time with students from your home country, and you eat in restaurants that serve native food. In fact, food becomes an **obsession**, and you spend a lot of time planning, shopping for and cooking food from home.

You know that you are in the fourth stage when you have negative feelings about almost everything. In this stage, you actively reject the new culture. You become critical, suspicious and irritable. You believe that people are unfriendly, that your landlord is trying to cheat you that your teachers do not like you, and that the food is making you sick. In fact, you may actually develop stomachaches, headaches,

sleeplessness, lethargy or other physical symptoms. Finally, you reach the fifth stage. As your language skills improve, you begin to have some success in meeting people and in **negotiating** situations.

You are able to exchange the sweater that is too small, and you can successfully chat about the weather with a stranger on the bus. Your self confidence grows. After realizing that you cannot change your surroundings, you begin to accept the differences and tolerate them. For instance, the food will never be as tasty as the food in your home country, but you are now able to eat the food and sometimes even enjoy many dishes. You may not like how some people dress or behave in public, but you do not regard their clothes and behavior as wrong- just different.

In conclusion, nearly everyone moving to a new country feels some degree of culture shock, symptoms may vary and not all people experience all five stages. Newcomers with as strong support group may feel at home immediately in the new culture, while others may take months to feel comfortable. Staying in touch with friends and family, keeping a positive attitude, and above all, learning the language as soon as possible is ways to overcome the difficulties and frustrations of adapting to a new land.

Questions

1. According to the passage what is the meaning of culture shock?
(2mks)
2. Identify any **three** factors that can cause culture shock.
(3mks)
3. What evidence does the author give to show “You understand all the words, but you do not understand the meaning”?
(2mks)
4. Give any **three** features that characterize a person in the worst state of culture shock (3mks)
5. In note form, give the difficulties experienced in the second stage of culture shock (4mks)
6. Why is making friends helpful in overcoming culture shock?
(2mks)
7. Explain the meaning of the following words as used in the passage
(3mks)
Alive
Obsession
Negotiating
8. Staying in touch with friends and family, keeping a positive attitude, and, above all, learning the language as soon as possible are ways to overcome the difficulties and frustrations of adapting to life in a new land.
(Rewrite the sentence above without changing the meaning. Begin: You....)
(1mk)

SECTION B: Grammar

(20mks)

(a) Rewrite each of the following sentences according to the instructions given after each. Do not change the meaning.

- i) All the students passed the examination. (Begin: None...)

- ii) “Are you taking part in the walk?” My father asked. (Rewrite in the indirect speech)
- iii) He was very sick and so he could not go to work. (Rewrite using too...to)
- iv) Women have not had greater opportunities for the following careers at any time in history than they have now. (Begin: At)
- v) Their proposal was not practicable. (Rewrite using “ proposed”)

(b) Complete the following sentences with the correct form of the word in brackets

- i) Mwala’s remark was aof what Mworio had said.
(repeat)
- ii) He told us astory. (move)
- iii) You will not be allowed in without (identity)
- iv) Mark’s affected everybody (decide)
- v) She was From college after failing three times. (continue)

(c) Replace the underlined phrasal verb with one word that has the same meaning.

- i) Amina was commended for **keeping up** her good performance.
- ii) You need to **cut down on** the expenses.
- iii) Students are advised to **keep out of** trouble.
- iv) His performance did not **measure up to** the expected standard.
- v) It’s not good to **walk out on** one’s family.

(d) Choose the correct alternative from the word(s) given in brackets to complete each of the following sentences.

- i) This is one of those stories that To have no ending (seem, seems)
- ii) He is the longest serving of all Kenya’s(attorney generals, attorneys general)
- iii) A range of issues..... discussed (was, were)
- iv) The chaos.....been quelled by the police. (has, have)
- v) They have remained hopeful in spite of the many they have faced. (crisis, crises)

SECTION C: WRITING**20MKS**

Write a composition beginning: "For some of us it had been a long day and to me in particular, the thought of what lay ahead was frightening."

Appendix V: Post Test

Instructions: Attempt all questions

Time: 1 hour 30 minutes

SECTION A: COMPREHENSION

20MKS

Read the passage below and then answer the questions that follow

You may think that expecting food to change your life is too much to ask. But have you considered that eating the right food at the right time will increase your energy, help you manage weight and ward off major illnesses?

Researchers have found that eating a meal with plenty of protein leaves you feeling more satisfied for longer when compared to a meal loaded with low- quality carbohydrates. Your body takes longer to digest protein, leading to a gradual increase in blood sugar. Higher protein breakfast will therefore carry you through the morning and, more importantly, through your tea break. Many high carbohydrate meals are absorbed quickly and send blood sugar on a roller coaster ride, taking your appetite with it and depleting your energy.

Many foods contain antioxidants, but fruits and vegetables may be the richest source. Behaving like chemical warriors, antioxidants neutralize molecules known as free radicals before they damage arteries and body cells. This protects you from heart diseases, high blood pressure, cancer and diabetes. You can now see why antioxidant foods should be consumed in generous portions. Actually forget pills- anti oxidants work best when consumed in food. In fact, nutritionists recommend that we eat five portions of fruit and vegetables a day. It's less **daunting** than it sounds. A portion equals a piece of fruit, three tablespoons of cooked vegetables or a glass of fresh juice.

And do you desire to relieve yourself of some **baggage**? Calcium is the latest weight-loss star to appear in the scene. Scientists stumbled on its magic by accident. From a study that measured the blood pressure of obese people, It was discovered that those who took one large tub of yogurt a day in their diet lost an average of eleven pounds of body fat in one year, even though they did not eat less. A follow up study found that people on s high calcium diet lost more weight and fat than did people on a low – calcium diet and again, both consumed the same number of calories. Researchers believe calcium encourages fat cells to stop “getting fatter”. Instead the cells burn extra fat without you having to go anywhere near a gymnasium.

It probably sounds strange to say that you can eat more in order to lose weight. Obviously, the question you should ask immediately is “eat more of what?” We are talking about food rich in fibre. They have what is referred to as low energy density; that translates to few calories relative to weight. That means that you can **down a mountain** without fear of calories overload. Fibre also aids weight loss because it is filling. Most fibre high foods take a lot of chewing, triggering your body's fullness sensors. Moreover, you absorb the food more slowly, so you feel full longer.

Will the wonders of food ever cease? Not if researchers in nutrition keep their pace. Let them keep the good news flowing- such as the fact that we don't have to starve ourselves to lose weight and keep diseases at bay.

Questions

1. From the information given in the first paragraph, how can you improve your life? (1mk)

2. In not more than 35 words summarize the effects of eating carbohydrates. (4mks)
3. Explain how free radicals contribute to the occurrence of high blood pressure and cancer. (2mks)
4. In what two forms can antioxidants be consumed? (2mks)
5. "In fact, nutritionists recommend that we eat five portions of fruit and vegetables a day."
Rewrite the sentence above as a question without changing the meaning, beginning: Don't... (1mk)
6. What is the attitude of the author towards calcium as a weight- cutting measure? (3mks)
7. According to the passage, how can you use up excess fat? (2mks)
8. Identify an instance of irony in the passage. (2mks)
9. Explain the meaning of the following expressions as used in the passage. (3mks)

Daunting
Baggage
Down a mountain

SECTION B: Grammar
(20mks)

- a) Rewrite the following sentences according to the instructions. Do not change the meaning
 - i) It is amazing that the couple takes care of so many orphans. (Begin: That...)
 - ii) What we need in Kenya is patriotism. (End: In Kenya.)
 - iii) My students don't drink. My students don't smoke. (Join in to one sentence using "neither....")
 - iv) Wanjiku said to Onyango, "I will join you in a few minutes" (Rewrite in indirect speech)
 - v) Come with me. (Rewrite adding a question tag)
- b) Fill in the blank space with the correct form of the word in brackets.
 - i) The twohugged during the wedding ceremony. (Sister- in - law)

- ii) His speech was good but it was slightly marred by his poor..... of words. (Pronounce)
- iii) Shefor five kilometers before the others caught up with her. (run)
- iv) It was a superb performance. (doubtless)
- v) We wanted the option that would give us the..... trouble. (Little)
- c) Complete each of the following sentences by inserting the appropriate linking expression.
- i) Ondieki is impatient and rather arrogant;he is a brilliant engineer.
- ii) I have no wish to criticize Muturi; I agree with most of his actions and decisions.
- iii) There is considerable evidence that smoking is harmful; It must be discouraged at all costs.
- iv) I voted in favour of the proposal; did Mrs. Wanyonyi.
- v) We would have done much better we had not taken so much for granted.
- d) Fill in the blank spaces with the correct preposition.
- i) Nyawira, get The wet wall immediately!
- ii) My sister and I share this piece of land..... ourselves.
- iii) We wondered if there was need such equipment.
- iv) Mwela dipped the bucket The well.
- v) That little girl is suffering Marasmus.

SECTION C: WRITING

20MKS

Write a composition to illustrate the following saying: "He who is not taught by his mother will eventually be taught by the world."

Appendix VI: Questionnaire for English Language Bridging Courses Learners

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Moi University
School of Education
Department of Curriculum, Instruction and Educational Media,
P.O Box 3900
Eldoret

Dear respondent,

I am a graduate student at the School of Education, Moi University, undertaking a Master of Philosophy Degree in Language Education. As part of the requirements for the degree, I intend to carry out a study on **The Effectiveness of English Language Bridging Courses in improving communicative competence.**

The study will be conducted in one university in Kenya. You have been selected to participate in this study since, as an English Language Bridging course student at the university; you have information that would be useful in achieving the objectives of the study. However, your participation in the study is entirely voluntary and you are also free to withdraw from the study at any stage should you feel uncomfortable responding to the questions asked. The information you give will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Should you choose to participate in this study, you are expected to answer the questions in this questionnaire by ticking against the correct response or, where applicable, giving a brief response to the open-ended questions in the spaces provided. This will take at most twenty minutes of your time.

In the third phase of the study, you might also be requested to take a post test with the researcher at a later date.

This study has been approved by the National Council of Science and Technology, Provincial Administration and the District Education Officer's office.(see attached copy of research permit).

Thank you in advance.

Elizabeth Wayua Ndinda

A.	Type of program undertaken	
	1	Pre-university
	2	Bridging

1.0 DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1.1	Sex of respondent [code by observation]	Male 1	Female 2
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1.2	What is your age? [TICK AGE BRACKET THAT APPLIES TO YOU]	1	Below 20 years	
		2	20-24	
		3	25-29	
		4	Above 30 years	

1.3	What grade did you obtain from KCSE? [ONLY ONE response possible]	1	D plain
		2	D plus
		3	D minus
		4	C plain
		5	C minus
		6	Above C plus

2.0 LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

2.1	How many learning Lessons do you have in a week in English? [ONLY ONE response possible]	3 lessons
		6 lessons

2.2	How do you rate your learning effectiveness in terms of the number of lessons per week?	1	Too many(more than I can handle effectively)
		2	Many(a bit heavy)
		3	Adequate(just enough)
		4	Few(I could do with more)
		4	Very few(I feel under worked)

2.3	Comment briefly on the effectiveness of the ELBC ability to improve your communicative competence in terms of number of lessons per week.
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3.0 COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE

Scale: Strongly agree (SA) – 5, Agree (A) – 4, Undecided (U) – 3, Disagree (D) – 2
 Strongly disagree (SD) – 2

3.1	Do you think ELBC has the ability to improve your English Language communicative competence in the following areas.(Tick appropriately)			SA	A	U	D	AD
		1	Poetry					
		2	Grammar					
		3	Oral literature					
		4	Listening & speaking					
		5	Writing					
		6	Reading					
		7	Study skills					
		8	Written literature					
		9	Interaction skills					
		10	Others?(please explain briefly)					

3.2	Comment briefly on which areas you feel strongly influences your ability to improve your communicative competence after completing your program.
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3.3	Do you think the ELBC fulfills the criteria for assessing communicative competence? (Tick appropriately)		S	A	U	D	A	
			A				D	
		1	Flexible (Help you adapt to situations)					
		2	Conversational involvement (Ability to respond in conversations)					
		3	Conversational management (Control the conversation)					
		4	Empathy(understand others in conversations)					
		5	Effectiveness(Reach your goal while communicating)					
		6	Appropriateness(Meet expectations)					
8	Others?(please explain briefly)							

4.0 EFFECTIVENESS

4.1	Do you think the following aspects contribute to the effectiveness of ELBS in improving your communicative competence? (Tick appropriately)		S	A	U	D	AD	
			A					
		1	Course duration					
		2	Course content					
		3	Lecturer experience					
		4	Assessments					
		5	University Management style					
		6	Library facilities					
		7	Classroom size					
		8	Number of students					
9	Teaching methods							
10	Learner's personal factors							
8	Others?(please explain briefly)							

Appendix VII: Research Permit

PAGE 2 **PAGE 3**

Research Permit No. NCST/RCD/14/013/545
Date of issue 3rd May, 2013
Fee received KSH. 1,000


THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
Prof./Dr./Mr./Mrs./Miss/Institution
Elizabeth Wayua Ndinda
of (Address) Moi University
P.O.Box 3900, Eldoret.
has been permitted to conduct research in

Eldoret	Location
Rift Valley	District
	Province

on the topic: Effectiveness of English language
bridging courses in Tertiary Institutions: A quasi
experimental study of one University in Kenya

for a period ending: 31st December, 2013

Applicant's Signature **Secretary**
National Council for
Science & Technology



Appendix VIII: Sample Interview Transcripts For ELBC Lecturer

Inter: Welcome, madam to this discussion am Elizabeth and doing a research on the effectiveness of English Language Bridging courses in improving communicative competence of learners.

Resp: Thank you too. I am a lecturer of English Language Bridging Course. I have been a lecturer of ELBC in this university for the last three years.

Inter: Please comment on the effectiveness of the ELBC in improving the learner's level of competence in the English language

Resp: In my own understanding communicative competence is the ability of an individual to interact well with others. This has to be in context with his/her grammar, writing, speech work and literature abilities.

Inter: Please can you shed more light in our context, what effort have you made in the past to ensure competence in learners' grammar, writing, speech work and literature.

Resp: For all the learners I have taught not only here but elsewhere, I have always ensured intense class interactions. This helped them to become better in grammar. The learners improved tremendously in writing because they focused mainly on functional writing, e.g. writing formal letters and Memo which the learners were able to write. In all our class sessions the learner is given plenty of time to express themselves on different issues. And this greatly improved their speech work. Lastly, on literature, The learners studied the same books they had done in high school. The books are the River between and Enemy of the People. They were wondering why they had failed in high school yet they have improved after the course. There is also a change of attitude in literature with the realization that literature is actually very simple.

Inter: What is your take on the effectiveness of ELBC in terms of the duration the program takes?

Resp: There is a lot of time wastage and a waste of money. A parent pays for two pre university semesters and then undergraduate learning. It would have been better to combine would have been better to combine the semester 1 and 2 into just one semester.

Inter: Do you think that contact hours and content per unit has an effect on the effectiveness of the program?

Resp: There are three hours per unit each week. By the end of the course, they have had a minimum of 38 hours. This time is more than enough. The content can be covered by the end of one semester. Therefore the academic department should think what to do with the second semester.

Inter: What is your take on the overall change in the English level of learners' at the end of the course.

Resp: There is a positive change in the learner. There is a marked improvement in the learner's level of competence in English. Learners even have a change in attitude in literature. They never knew that literature could be simple.

Inter: What is your view on how institutions context affects the quality of teaching, especially the library facilities, classroom size, number of students, workload per week and teaching method.

Resp: The library has books for learners. This makes the lessons better. The students enjoy learning because they have books. The classrooms are big and conducive for learning and the students are few so they are manageable. They can be taught easily because they are few. There are three hours of learning per week, which is ok. I usually use the lecture method which is different from high school teaching. No English is just integrated with literature, I have no other.

Inter: What is your view on the assessment procedures in the institution and how do these assessment procedures affect the quality of your teaching?

Resp: Once the learners are admitted to the program, before they undergo I observe them in class and determine their speech competence. This will determine how I will plan for the speech classes. During the program I administer two C.A.T's and give class assignments. I use them to know whether there has been improvement after teaching for some time. This affects subsequent teaching. Finally by the end of the course they sit for a final exam, but it's obvious that summative assessments do not affect the quality of teaching. In respect to assessment procedures for teachers I am not allowed to comment because it is done in another forum not this one.

Inter: On a scale of 1-10 how would you rate the ELBC as an effective program in raising the level of competence in the English language in the learners who undergo the program?

Resp: 9 out of 10 which shows its highly effective.

Inter: What are your final comments on ELBC

Resp: ELBC is a good program. It allow learners who need to join University to get that chance. If it wasn't there, they would not attain their dreams

Inter: Thank you very much madam, I have really benefited from this discussion.

Resp: welcome.