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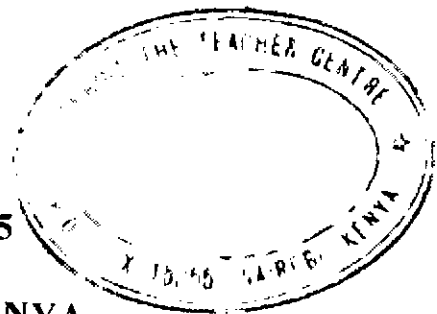
Attitudes of Students Towards Learning English in Secondary School: A Case Study of St Theresa's Girls' Secondary School and St. Thomas (Mixed) Day Secondary Schools, Manga Division, Nyamira District

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A Research Project Submitted to Christ the Teacher Institute for Education in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of the Bachelor in Education of Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, USA

MAY 2005


NAIROBI, KENYA



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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this research is my original work achieved through personal reading, scientific research and critical reflections. It has never been presented to any other institution of learning for any academic credit. I have cited and acknowledged all sources of information duly.

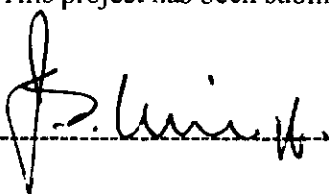


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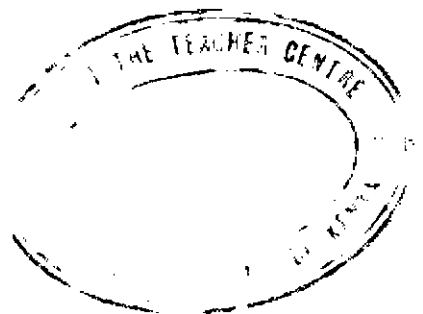
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DEDICATION

To all the departed Sisters in my congregation who have worked in Africa, especially, Sr. Sharon Dei, SSND, Sr. Eunice Silky, SSND, Sr. Carola Redig, SSND, Sr. Dolores Rauch, SSND and Sr. Ara Coelli Stoll, SSND who helped to educate the young girls and seminarians in Africa and whose work has continued to bear fruit today through those that are continuing the work they started.



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ABSTRACT

English has become the most widespread language for communication in recent centuries in spite of it not being the national language in some parts of the world, like Tanzania. Though the official language used in teaching of other subjects in many secondary schools, most students do not perform well in English examinations for one reason or another.

This research evaluated the perceptions of students towards learning English as a subject in secondary school. Particular attention in the study was paid to the students of St. Theresa Secondary School and St Thomas (mixed) Day Secondary School, both in Gekano, Manga Division of Nyamira District of Kenya. Collection of data was through questionnaires that were administered to students, interviews with the teachers of English, and administrators of the schools. Also used were observations of lessons and documents analysis.

The information obtained was analyzed and presented in table form. Questionnaires, interviews with teachers and administrators, and observation were recorded and analyzed in oral form. One finding of the research is that students do not actually have a negative attitude towards learning English in secondary schools. Their poor performance was attributed to other reasons. Students expressed willingness to learn English in secondary school because they have seen how relevant English was to other subjects taught in school.

The study is divided into five chapters. Chapter one has the introduction; Chapter two the literature review; Chapter three is the research design and methodology; Chapter four, presentation and discussion of the research findings; while Chapter five contains the overall summary, conclusions and recommendations for further study arising from the study.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration	ii
Dedication.....	iii
Acknowledgments.....	iv
Abstract.....	v
Table of Contents.....	vi
Lists of Tables.....	ix
Abbreviations.....	x

CHAPTER ONE

1.0	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	Background to the Problem.....	5
1.2	Description of the Area of Study.....	9
1.3	Statement of the Problem.....	10
1.4	Research Questions.....	11
1.5	Significance of the Study.....	11
1.6	The Assumptions.....	12
1.7	Limitations of the Study.....	12
1.7	Conceptual Framework.....	12
1.8	Definition of Terms.....	14

CHAPTER TWO

2.0	LITERATURE REVIEW.....	16
2.1	Introduction.....	17
2.2	Learning other subjects in English Language.....	18
2.3	Related Literature Review.....	18
2.4	Learning English Language.....	19

2.5	Studies on Attitudes and Interest in Education.....	20
2.6	Attitudes of Secondary School Students towards History.....	23
2.7	S0cial Attitudes about Education.....	23
2.8	Attitudes and Motivation of Greek Pupils' for Learning English.....	27
2.9	Conclusion.....	28

CHAPTER THREE

3.0	RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOLOGY.....	30
3.1	Introduction.....	30
3.2	Research Design.....	30
3.3	The Target Population.....	31
3.4	The Study Sample and Sampling Procedures.....	31
3.5	Description of Research Instrument.....	32
3.6	Data Collection Procedures.....	34
3.7	Data Presentation and Interpretation.....	35
3.8	Conclusion.....	35

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0	PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS.....	36
4.1	Introduction.....	36
4.2	Biographical Data of the Respondents.....	36
4.3	The Students' Responses.....	37
4.3.1	Rating of Teachers by the Students.....	39
4.3.2	The Questionnaire and Responses.....	40
4.3.3	Summary of Students' Responses.....	49
4.4	Teachers' Interview.....	49

4.4.1	Summary for Teachers' Response	52
4.5	Interview for the Administrators.....	53
4.5.1	Responses from the Administrators.....	53
4.5.2	Summary of the Administrator's Responses.....	56
4.6	Observation Schedule.....	57
4.7	Document Analysis Guide.....	58
4.8	Summary of Document Guide.....	59
4.9	Conclusion.....	59

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0	SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY.....	51
5.1	Introduction.....	52
5.2	Summary.....	52
5.3	Conclusions.....	54
5.4	Recommendations.....	55
5.4.1	Recommendations for Students.....	56
5.4.2	Recommendations for Teachers	57
5.4.3	Recommendations for Ministry of Education.....	58
5.5	Areas of Further Research.....	58

LISTS OF TABLES

1. Rating of Subjects by students according to the students' favorites for St Theresa's Girls' Secondary School	35
2. Rating of subjects by students according to the students' favorites for St Thomas (Mixed) Day Secondary School.....	36
3. Rating of teachers' performance by students for St Theresa's Girls Secondary School.....	37
4. Rating of teachers' performance by students for St Thomas Mixed (Day) Secondary School.....	38
5. The Attitudes of Students towards Learning English.....	39
6. Reasons for students' positive attitudes for learning English.....	39

REFERENCES.....59

Appendix I: Permission Letter from the Dean of Studies.....	61
Appendix II: Teachers' Teaching Performance	62
Appendix III: Questionnaire for Students.....	65
Appendix IV: Interview for Administrators.....	66
Appendix VI: Observation Schedule for Teaching/ Learning Activities...67	
Appendix VII: Document Analysis Guide.....	67

ABBREVIATIONS

G. C. E.	General Certificate of Education
K.C.S.E.	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
LoI	Language of Instruction
M.O.E.	Ministry of Education
S.S.N.D.	School Sisters of Notre Dame
U.K.	United Kingdom
U.N	United Nations
U.N.D.P	United Nations Development Project
U.N.I.C.E.F.	United Nations International Education Children Fund
W.H.O.	World Health Organization

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of the Study

English language is an important subject and contributes to the learning of other subjects in secondary schools in almost all the African countries. It is the medium of instruction in other levels of learning such as primary education and university. It is the language of instruction in all subjects, except where a local language is taught. In spite of this role, however, the perception in Africa is that some students still perceive English language as a foreign language and would prefer their own mother tongue at all times. This is evident in communications where students feel comfortable to use their language with foreigners who cannot speak or understand their language. As in other African countries like Nigeria, Ghana, other than Kenya, English language, not being the local language is taken as a difficult subject to learn. One could be accused of being pompous in not wanting to use the local language or speaking what is not understood by the people. Due to this perception, certain attitudes are developed towards the language which either enhance or hinder learning the language.

In the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examinations (KCSE), English is very important as it is the language in which almost all the subjects are examined. There is no way therefore, that students would avoid the study of English, as it is encountered in school. The importance of English is not only seen here in Kenya but also in other parts of the world where people do not have ready access to study it. For instance, in China, in the study of English, many people give their views about English.

English language, though taken as a foreign language in our society, has a role that cannot be underestimated by almost everybody in the society. Effective communication with the people outside one's country is only achieved through the use of English language. In the commercial sector, the communication tool is English language. Looking at most of the advertisements, few are done in the local language. English language therefore has become part of us in all we do each day, and should be studied and taken seriously in schools.

Concerning the use of English language, many people have misconceptions, for Walqui (2004) has it that "...a student's ability in everyday oral communication is a valid measure of his or her competence to use language in a wide variety of settings, including demanding academic work." Though the above statement is presumed to be one of the ways that would help students improve in their usage of English language, both spoken and written and which would eventually lead to their good performance in examinations, it is still questioned what the attitudes of the students would be towards making English the language of their days. This means abandoning their native languages to use English. Their disposition to do this would be a guiding motive for it to happen.

On the other hand, the act of making English a daily language as Walqui (2004) says depends on the school demands and social experiences. There are differences in the school-based and home-based value systems, goals, and experiential sources of knowledge. To an extent, the attitude of students towards learning English language depends on the students but mostly from the above mentioned factors. This is because the students are operating from an environment where what other people do would affect them either positively or negatively.

In some cases, it can be seen that the first language, that is mother tongue interferes with the spoken English. Unless controlled by the teacher, some students who experience this are ridiculed by the other students in the class thereby forcing the affected ones not to try the spoken English in the presence of others. This situation would result in the students using the local language which they are sure they would not much mistakes when she is communicating. In the mind of the students, the student feels she does not know the English language well enough to use and probably that is why the other students laughed at her. This would make the student have a negative attitude about the language. It could be seen at this point that more time should be put on the teaching of English language: this is because as said earlier, English has become the language used for setting and writing of all examinations in schools. The attitude of students could depend in their extensive exposure to English. Learners need access and engagement in the language they are learning. It also involves actual understanding or participating in English language event, being attentive and emotionally involved with learning the language.

Conversely, it could also be understood that learning the first and second language (English) intensely at the same time is good for learners of any language. Students need the understanding of the first language to think and translate into the target language (English). This does not affect the learning of English but facilitates it; the students will have much motivation to learn the two languages.

It should be noticed also that the learning of English would not be at the same pace with all learners and so also the motivation to learn becomes an issue. Some could learn faster while some could be slower. The time used depends on personal histories and educational context as Walqui (2004) says. No matter the pace of an individual, the most important is the attitude an

individual has as s/he approaches the learning of English. The attitude could enhance or bar the learning.

Learners, being from different norms, values, beliefs and expectations conveyed through spoken and unspoken messages that teachers deliver in class everyday. This is why teachers are also recognized as one of the role models in the attitude students have towards learning. How are students' capabilities and possibilities for success handled in class? If in the class students have positive responses to questions they will be motivated to learn more.

On Improving the Primary School Pupils' Literacy in English in Kenya (October, 2001), it was noted that the language of instruction is in the mother tongue. In some West African countries like Nigeria, the initial lesson was in the mother tongue or where English was used, teachers were to interchange to allow the learners understand the lesson. On the other hand, English is seen as the gateway to social and economic upward mobility and recognized as part of the current reality. It is further noted that English should be taught as subject with mother tongue or the language commonly spoken in a school's catchments as a language of instruction in other subjects. At this early stage of learning, students will begin to develop sharp attitude for the language.

In the usage and being conversant with the use of English from primary schools, it could be seen that only children who have attended kindergartens who are using English as the language of instruction and who enroll in elite schools that instruct in English are able to attend this reality. More so, primary education system does not place much emphasis on the instructional material development, teaching-learning and other things that would motivate the

learners. It could be seen that there is little or no classroom practice by the learners which would also be of help for the learners.

Another aspect that would help to build up the attitude of the primary school children to develop fully in their secondary education is that there are weaknesses in the development of teachers' education in the skills of imparting literacy and in the actual practice in schools and classroom. Since the head teachers do not see the literacy as important that would need much development and plan to execute, they do not allocate sufficient resources to the school libraries.

Each African country has its own official language of communication. However, crossing the boundaries of each country presents a problem as the means of communication differ. The English language has become one of the languages widely used across in the world. All the users of English languages are not native speakers but have learned and use it for communication and many other purposes. Quirk (1993) states 'most people who speak English are not English and were not born in England...' (Yambani, 2001).

The English language has taken root in some African countries such as Nigeria, Malawi, Kenya and Ghana among others. Due to contacts with many foreigners people of these countries incorporate the English with their native languages to allow communications between them and the foreigners. Many missionaries who came to Africa in the early years did not speak the native language of the people they worked with, yet they needed to communicate. It became pertinent for foreigners to teach the people a language that would be common for all to understand. Hence, the learning and teaching of English languages came

into place. In many of the schools started by the missionaries, the teaching and learning of English language was therefore important.

The English language is an effective means of communication, especially where there are people from different nationalities. However, it has been questioned why it must be studied in schools. With a question like this, students have developed certain attitudes towards studying English. This is the reason for this study, to investigate what the attitudes of students are. For some countries that have a common means of communication, could that language not be used instead of studying English language as an additional language? To answer these questions and even some questions that are not voiced concerning why English language should be learnt in school, it is very evident in the affirmative the answer is 'yes'. This is because English language is needed everywhere and should be a key subject in secondary school. Adolphe (1981) reasons that in many parts of the world today there is a great demand for English as a language of international communication, commerce and of higher education. He gives as example of the conferences which are organized that would consist of international bodies like the United Nations (UN), United Nation Development Project (UNDP), and World Health Organization (WHO) in which different countries communicate solely by the use of English language, (Yambani 2001).

Still in connection with learning English in secondary school, Branson & Goodwyn (2005) states:

All subjects have their debates and passions but English seems to have the most, and they Are very often unusually public and attract plenty of media attention. As media attention is Almost inevitably negative, the public perception of English nationally can be that children Cannot spell, produce a decent paragraph or even conduct a reasonable conversation... At the same time parents...will tell you that their children have received excellent English Teaching in school.

As far as continuation in studies from primary to secondary school is concerned, it will be important then to lay a sound foundation in the learning of English language from primary school before the pupils finally go into secondary schools. In the bid to improve English language learning in primary school some key variables identified that impact the development of a nation. These are educational quality and relevance literacy in proficiency in the use of language as in listening, speaking and writing. The language of instruction from at least standard 4 upward is English however; most children in Kenya are instructed in mother tongue. It is true that English has been seen as the gateway to social and economic upward mobility.

It has been laid down as policy that in the first 3 years of primary school education in Kenya, English should be taught as a subject with mother tongue and from standard 4 English should become the language of instruction (LoI). The assumption is that by the end of standard 3, children must have attained enough English literacy to enable them use this as learning tool. In most cases, only children who have attended kindergartens are the ones using English as LoI and are enrolled in elite schools that have this opportunity from standard 1.

What seems to be the problem is that there is insufficient articulation of English literacy norms. This touches the curriculum development, teacher education, instructional materials development, teaching- learning and evaluation. The teaching-learning exercise should allow much time for the children to have classroom practice, internal and external measurement (Author Unknown).

This is actually how the children will begin to build their attitude as they go into secondary school. Their good foundation in English in primary school can help them to sail through

secondary education easily as the students would not see English as strange in their learning system.

Adolphe (1981) further points out that in cases of business and commerce between Anglophone and Francophone countries, the means of communication regarding their business is English language. He observes too that in business, most books are printed in English language and most of the words originate from English language.

The importance of English as a means of communication cannot be underrated in our world and especially in schools when almost everywhere we see writing in English as well as in goods for sale and other advertisements. Perhaps this is the reason why some parents use English language with their children even before they begin school. Beginning early to use the English language they see as appropriate creating an attitude in the minds of the young ones even before they actually know they have another language of their own. There is however a disadvantage on the part of the young ones who would grow up not knowing their own native language because of using English but the advantage of using English language is that English language will eventually be used more in school for almost everything, most especially in setting by teachers and the government and writing examinations on the part of the children.

In most schools in Kenya and Ghana, among others, ranging from kindergarten to university, the means of communication is English. As stated earlier, parents from different language backgrounds also find it easier to reach a common ground of understanding between their children, themselves and house helps through the use of English in the home. So right from the home and even before children begin school, they have already used English to communicate. For children like these, their attitude towards English might be different from those who use

English only in school. Whatever the situation, those who do not have the same opportunity to learn or use English from home should be encouraged to learn it.

From the point of view that English plays a significant role in everybody's life today, students should be encouraged to develop positive attitudes towards learning English in secondary schools, especially where and when they do not have common languages for their communication. The government and head teachers have the duty of seeing what measures should be taken to enable students learn English adequately in secondary schools.

1.1 Description of the Area of Study

The study was undertaken in Gekano in Manga Division in Nyamira District of Kenya. Nyamira District is located in the Western part of Kenya, far from Nairobi where life is different. Most children here are exposed to English earlier than those in the rural area. In Nairobi there are many settlers from different parts of the country as well as foreigners. The influence of this is that most people can use English to communicate, even at home with the children. In Nyamira area, parents tend to use the local language more than English language. Though there could be some educated people in this area, there is the tendency to meet many who do not use much English in communication at homes or outside their area.

In this area, people send their children to school as long as they have the capability to do so. There is however a drop in the school enrolments, as in St Theresa's Gekano, either because of inability to pay school fees for the children or some other reasons. Due to this, parents who really desire to educate their children send them to nearby schools where the students would operate from home as day scholars or the children are sent to some schools where the fees are low and performance consequently is not as good as other schools in big towns. Change of

schools affects the students as they would have different environment from where they were before. The teaching method in the new school is not the same and the attitudes to the whole school system are affected negatively. This in turn affects the performance of the child in examinations.

In Nyamira District, most of the residents are permanent settlers in the area. Therefore, there is high enrolment in primary and secondary schools. Most of the people settle to work in their tea farms, take care of their cattle and attend to domestic chores. Some students living in the area have the opportunity to go to school from their parents' houses and some rent a place near the school to live, but go home every weekend to be with their parents.

Living between the family house and the rented place with school mates has helped parents to monitor the behavior of their children. However, there is the tendency of students using the local language throughout as there is no one to restrict them on the language to use when they are not in school with the teachers. The students feel more comfortable communicating in the local language at all times. The use of English in this situation would not be of much meaning to them, hence English would be like an imposition on them to use when they can comfortably use their local language for all communication.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

If students have negative attitudes towards the study of English, what are their reasons and what should be done by parents, teachers and the Kenyan Ministry of Education (MOE) to help students develop positive attitudes towards the subject? English is an important means for communication in the world, yet it is controversial that students do not always have positive attitudes towards learning it as a subject in school.

Depending on either the learning situation or the background of the learners, the attitudes of children could be positive or negative. This attitude would adversely affect their KCSE performance. This is because English is a subject that runs across the school curriculum. that is, English is a subject that has relationship with all the other subjects the students study. English not being the first language of the learners here Kenya. what might have been the difficulties that lead to the negative attitude toward learning English language? If the problem originates from the methods of teaching, what could be done to help the teachers improve the teaching methods so that students do not take studying English as a burden because they have many other means of communication.

1.3 Research Questions

This study was being guided by these questions;

- What attitudes do students have towards learning English language in secondary school?
- What are the reasons for the students' positive attitudes towards learning English in secondary schools?
- How do their attitudes (positive or negative) affect their performance in KCSE?
- What steps should be taken by MOE, teachers of English, parents and the students to correct the negative attitudes by the students and how could English be made an interesting subject for the students?

1.4 Significance of the Study

It is hoped that this study will make significant contribution in the following ways; first, it will help bring awareness to the Ministry of Education (MOE) about the important role

English language play in the study life of the students in school, and even after their studies. It may also bring understanding and awareness to students about the need to learn English language as it would lead to their general good performance in KCSE. The experience students will have had in schools of their examinations set and written in English language will help them understand that English is a world wide language in the 21st century. It is needed for communication not only within an individual's area, but all over the world. And they will see why they should support their children in whatever ways possible to learn English language and encourage them to speak it when possible.

1.5 The Assumptions

This study made the following assumptions:

1. Those secondary students who have a good understanding of their local languages are more comfortable communicating in their local language.
2. English language being a widely used world language it is important to learn English in school to enhance success in all other subjects.
3. English is a difficult language to learn unless there are good materials and qualified teachers to help the students.

1.6 The Limitations

The studies were done in a remote area. At the time of the research, some of the students were still not back to school because of their inability to bring fees which they were to bring at resumption. In the two schools, not all the teachers were back to school so this affected the report which would have been given by the teachers of the two schools. It was therefore difficult to find time to go back for a complete interview with all the teachers. The interview for the language teachers proved that not all of them have had much experience in the

teaching field which would have been of great advantage for the students if they had. However, few of them have taught for at least 3 and 6 years in different classes.

1.7 Conceptual Framework

In the write up *Kenya: A Reading Nation?* Mbae (2004) states it is partially that as Africans are used to the oral tradition way of communicating ideas as were handed down to the present generations. It could also be supported that due to this there is less interest by the present generation to think their thought on papers as this would seem difficult. Branson and Goodwyn (2005) state

most schools still lack the required resources and the framework for English is still very print-based in quite a nineteenth-century mode. As almost all assessments must be handwritten, pupils must learn to write in pen and paper mode. Many find this aspect most demanding and unrewarding (p. 6).

Though this experience was in London it could be applicable here in Kenya regarding the relationship between the oral tradition that the learners of English had and the learning condition in school. Like in school, learning situation would be more demanding than just listening to stories from the teacher. If there is no prior interest in reading and writing there is that possibility of the learners seeing the learning of the language as too demanding for them.

Learning of English language as Branson and Goodwyn (2005) state, does not only mean learning spelling and writing. At times the expectations of parents are met when their children can read and write. With that knowledge, the children can read and understand other subjects taught in school and thereby perform well in other subjects. At the same time, when the children can not do well in grammar it is the fault of the English teacher. What does this mean then? The students' sound performance in school is actually a collaborative effort. Though the parents may not be the teacher of the children in school at this time, they also

contribute to the well being of the children in school. The children need encouragements from all angles to enable them do their studies positively both at home and at school.

Branson and Goodwyn (2005) see how the teachers helped students by encouraging them to write imaginative essays, stories, describe their experiences and the environment. However, they state that most of the time the students are not helped to improve their writing but are told to read. This method does not work for all students because it is not all the students that want to read or have opportunity to read. Reading could be an exercise enjoyed by some students but it develops attitudes in the students because it forces some of them to do what they do not have any interest in.

In an English class where the students are expected to participate by reading or writing, some of them who find this difficult will not like the exercise, thus beginning to see the subject in a negative way. On the other hand, for those who know what to do and are enjoying the exercise, it is a different situation. (Branson and Goodwyn).

1.8 Definition of Terms

Anglophone

According to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 6th Ed (Wehmeier, 2001) this term refers to someone who speaks English, especially in a context where other languages are also spoken. It also means belonging to predominantly English speaking people, countries etc.

Attitude

Kasschau. (1995) defines attitude as a predisposition to respond in particular ways toward specific things. It has to do with belief or opinion about something, feelings about that thing and a tendency to act toward that thing in certain ways. while Baker (1992) states attitude as the direction and persistence of human behavior.

English Language

World Book Dictionary (1994) explains English as the language that is widely spoken in the world. It is used either the primary or the secondary language in many countries. Most of the English speakers are not the native speakers of English but they speak English through association, trade or any other business in the world.

Francophone

English Dictionary with multi-lingual search sees Francophone as the language of a French speaking person. especially in a country where other languages are spoken. It refers to a person who speaks French as a native language or uses French as a second mother tongue.

Harambee

It is a Kiswahili word which means to pull together. a cooperative efforts to bring about development. or peoples' effort to bring about something.

Performance

According to the World Book Dictionary. (Barnhart 1995). this is the act of doing, of carrying out. the power or ability to perform. Performance in this study is used to mean achievement in terms of results after the activity of learning has taken place. After

performing a task, the result could be good, fair or good. In the case of this study, it could be attributed to the positive or negative attitude of the students that has made the performance of the students to be good, fair or poor.

Secondary School

Secondary school according to Oxford Learner's Dictionary. Wehmeier, ed (2001) it is what comes after or derived from primary school. It refers to the people between the ages of 11 to 18 or even 20 for those who started secondary education late. It is a formal school in Kenya where young people go to after completing primary school. Secondary school here is a four year program while in some other country like Nigeria it is a six year program after six years of primary education.

Sheng

This is a language coined from English and Kiswahili, spoken by a particular group of people at a particular time. It is commonly used by peers.

Subject

This refers to each unit of study the students take in secondary school, for example, mathematics, Chemistry or English.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter looks critically at research on the following issues: what effects attitudes have on the study of English in secondary school, and how the teaching methods of teachers have contributed to the attitudes of the learners, how the attitudes of students have affected the performance in English KCSE. It also looks at the studies related to attitudes by other people.

2.2 Learning in English

Aware of the need of English in the lives of students, Fries (1998) in a Linguistics seminar asks what one can study in the contemporary world without any knowledge of English. This seems an obvious question, as far as studies in the African schools are concerned. Students need the knowledge of English for so many things both in and outside the school and when they have left school after their studies. It cannot be avoided. Banister (2003) of Stafford University comments on the importance of English as he sees the lack of linguistic ability as what leads to low academic performance, as well as an unhappy overall experience for students. This shows how important English is for the students though their attitude could enhance or hinder their interest in the study of the subject.

There are studies on the performance of English in different aspects here in Kenya. To mention just a few: the 'Effects of poor pronunciation in English language,' 'Effect of the local language on the spoken English' among others, but not much has been written on the attitudes of students on the study of English in Kisii area of Kenya. This is because there is less material related to this study as it had not been studied before.

2.3 Related Literature Review

As Yambani (2001) stated, in a study carried out by Adolphe (1981) in Democratic Republic of Congo revealed that when students got to forms 1 and 2, they developed attitudes that could be either positive or negative towards learning English. "I do not expect to go to England, why bother to learn English?" Forms 3 and 4 would argue during English courses. This attitude can lead to poor performance. This could be the same problem in Kisii. If the students think they are not going to England or they think they won't have much to use English for after their studies, their aim of studies would not be very positive. Students need to understand that their study of English has gone beyond the use in school only.

According to Adolphe, (1981) an explanation for such reaction is that teachers of English tend to lecture and not teach. Students used 'Kikongo,' 'Lingala,' or other mother tongue languages as a medium of communication when they were at home. Adolphe also gave another reason for students not attending English lessons regularly: due to the irregular attendance of the teacher for the lesson. They developed a negative attitude which eventually affected their performance in examinations. Students had no English teachers in their forms 1 and 2 to teach them. These students developed negative attitudes towards English and often failed in the examinations. This case is not far from what would happen here in Kisii if the students do not have English teachers, even though where the study is carried out is different. But learning environment could either have positive or negative effects on the students.

During the teaching and learning of English, some students did not understand the lessons. This brought about negative attitudes towards the subject. Adolphe (1981) states further that some students lost interest because there was lack of discipline in the classroom. In his report,

he states that the indiscipline was caused by the students who were retained in the same class for one other school year. These were pre-occupied as they compared their English exercise books which contained previous class notes, instead of listening to the teacher. These repeaters always dominated learning and those who were attempting English for the first time developed negative feelings and thus performed poorly in examinations. Furthermore, students complained that most of the teachers taught English grammar in French. This was difficult for students to understand the grammatical rules of English and it led to negative attitude towards English. (Yambani 2001).

2. 4 English Language Learning

Another thing that would make students have negative attitudes towards learning English would be teachers' weakness in pronunciation and stress of English words. This is the reason Branson and Goodwyn (2005) have stressed the good training of teachers. As a result, students imitate this weakness and weaken their attitudes towards the subject. Teachers in this case are poor models and this has a direct impact on students' attitudes towards English. An English centre in Blantyre, Malawi, according to Coe (1964) was established after the MOE detected the dwindling interest of students towards English as a subject. To encourage students to develop positive attitude towards English, the use of English even in radio stations and televisions was introduced. This does not only happen in Blantyre, Malawi but also in other countries or towns who are not the original speakers of English.

2. 5 Studies on Attitudes and Interest in Education

Evans (1965) in his research on *Attitudes and Interest in Education* learned that interest and ability were directly related and that where there was no interest, success on the contrary was unlikely to be achieved. Educational and vocational success on the contrary was related to

intelligence more closely than interest. In the case of the students' attitude towards the learning of English, it could also be that the students do not have the interest in the language and this could lead to the dwindling performance in examinations.

Evans (1965) then suggested that pleasure for succeeding may very well motivate students liking for a specific subject. An example was in a subject like English language, mathematics and Kiswahili and he further says these may be liked by students because they determine one's grade in KCSE. She explained further that interest may not be necessarily accompanied by good attainment but may eventually result in continued effort that would lead to success.

In his research on *Attitudes and Performance* conducted in the U.K., Dale (1974) attempted to find out if pupils' surroundings in a mixed school could give them a greater zeal to learn than when they are in a single-sex school. He further examined whether students' attitudes towards school work changed due to the type of environment. From his result, boys in single-sex schools had lower average performance in 'O' level General Certificate of Education (GCE) than boys in mixed school, and did not make a better progress as compared to their ability. The weakness seen in this study is that Dale (1974) does not give specific results of girls' performance. He only reports that fifty-eight percent of girls in mixed schools said they enjoyed their academic work as compared to forty-two percent of girls in single-sex schools. On the same note, it might be the same here in St Thomas Mixed School and St Theresa Girls, Gekano as the girls would always want to equal with the boys in academic performance. Dale's (1974) final results however indicated that students in a mixed school had more positive attitudes towards school than single-sex school students. The same study could be done in different parts of Kenya to evaluate whether such findings are applicable in Kenyan situation since this was done in Britain.

Somerset (1969) in an investigation carried out on the factors which help to determine educational aspirations, and the effects they have on students' performance in Kenya, showed that students who want to go to University performed better than those with low academic aspirations. He also looked into school characteristics and discovered that the students were from the national high cost schools had higher aspirations than those in local "Harambee" sponsored schools. From the result, he found that students in "Harambee" schools performed less well than students in high cost schools.

In 1987, Thuo investigated the *Relationship between Attitudes of Students Towards Mathematics and Mathematical Attainment*. The result of his finding is that peer groups, resource materials etc, were greatly related to students' performance in mathematics. However, the weakness of this study is that it study focused on mathematics alone. Thus the result or findings may not be applicable to other academic subjects. Though this study was on students' performance in mathematics, it could also be applicable in the learning of English language as these factors are linked to studies of any kind in school.

Makila (1983) also carried out a study on *Co-Education*. Her interest was in finding out what made girls perform as well as boys at primary and not at secondary school level. Her findings revealed that girls were happy in co-educational schools. Girls gained both academically and socially from the free mixing. Furthermore, she found that co-education encouraged a healthy and competitive academic situation. This research only reveals why girls perform better at primary school level and not also in secondary school level.

2.6 Attitudes of Secondary School Students towards History

Another study was carried out on *Attitudes of Secondary School Students towards History* in Kisumu by Obunga (1998). His study showed that the negative attitudes of students towards the subject was not attributed to their disliking history but rather attributed to the way the subject was taught. He emphasized that the negative attitudes among students was caused by the teaching methods like not involving the learners to participate, which made the students passive in class. In teaching English, anything could affect the learners because, in the first place, English is a foreign language and the teacher might not be the original speaker of it. Ranging from pronunciation and the understanding what to teach the learners is important. The teacher would therefore be one who has the mastery to be able to employ effective methods as s/he imparts the idea to the learners.

2.7 Social Attitudes about Education

Education does not have the same value or meaning to everybody depending on the social set up one is from. This shows that, social attitudes towards schooling could influence students' performance. For example, in the northern part of Nigeria where many of the people are Muslims, there is the attitude that the girl child should begin early to prepare herself for marriage by trading. In this situation, the girl has no opportunity to think about school. There is also the belief that if the children (both sexes) begin to mingle with, or school in other schools other than Muslims schools, they may be converted to Catholic or other churches. The school chosen for the children to avoid them mixing with other denominations might not be the best; consequently, the attitudes of the children and their performance would be affected. Here in Kenya, where some parts like the Central (Turkana and Masai) are much concerned about the education towards the initiation of the young people into training their young ones to care for their animals, the academic performance of the child may not be a concern.

In his study on attitudes of nursing tutors toward the audio-visual aid, Simon (1982) saw that the tutors who showed negative attitudes towards an audio-visual aids moved away from the teaching resource and avoided it. For those who would show positive attitude toward the audio-visual aids there was a willingness to use it. This similar situation would surface in the case of learning by students. If they feel a particular subject taught in school is a difficult one, automatically they will develop the negative attitude about the subject and would not have the willingness to study it. The perceptions about their subject, either positive or negative contribute a lot to the performance of the students which would result also in either good or poor performance.

Ngatia (1981) observes that attitudes have a direct influence on the behavior of people whether it is good or bad. This is because the attitude has to do with the feeling of the person toward the particular thing. Hence, attitudes have an indispensable function towards the individual's behavior. In addition, Ngatia (1981) sees attitude as something that motivates both intellectual and emotional feels of the individual. In the same way, attitudes could be what would make students have or not have interest to study English language. This could be through their teachers, how they teach, how they pronounce words to them in class. At times the way the teacher handles the mistakes of the students in class could cause a great set back on students. This is why good teacher/ students relationship matters in classroom.

In another study, William (1976) confirms how the home environment can promote positive-self esteem (though not always) which will in turn bring about a good school performance. 'Home environment' as William says refers to the home set up. How parents relate with their

children and the value parents place in the good performance of their children in school. These aspects influence the performance of the students as they have in mind that their parents are interested in their school work.

Mwangi (1987) affirms that there is pressure exerted by their peers. This is also the stage, the adolescence, students are influenced either positively or negatively by their peers in school. At this stage, students spend much time in search of intimacy and sexuality and little or less attention on studies hence the poor performance in academics.

Mwangi (1987) focused his study on Harambee schools: this however does not justify the view that those government secondary schools or private secondary schools are better. Some government schools have the same problems as Harambee schools. The problems differ according to individuals and according to the environment: this is because the schools have different students and different teachers. In my study, the two schools are not same category; one would fall under the same as the Harambee School. The impression about schools like this is that they are not of high standard and the students' performance would not be as good as private or government schools.

2.8 Attitudes and Motivation of Greek Pupils' for Learning English

Nikolaou (2003) in his study on the *Survey of Attitudes and Motivation of Greek Pupils for learning English* quotes Baker (1992) who explained attitude as the direction and persistence of human behavior. Gardner (1985) he defined attitude as "an evaluative reaction to some referent or attitude object, inferred on the basis of the individual's beliefs or opinions about the referent." And for Kasschau (1995) he sees attitude as "a predisposition to respond in particular ways toward specific things. This could be an object, person, institution, or event. It

is clear that attitude cannot be observed or measured directly. An individual's attitudes are dormant and can only be seen in reactions to specific stimuli as beliefs, expressed feelings, or exhibited behaviors.

It appears from the research that attitudes do not influence learning directly but are instrumental in the development of motivation. Regarding learning a language, Gardner (1985) explains that attitudes do not influence learning directly but are instrumental in the development of motivation and he identified two types of attitudes towards learning a language:

- Attitudes towards the thing that is learned, in this case English itself and the reasons for learning the language
- Attitudes towards the target language group and in this case English.

Some people do not like it when they are forced that they learn a language that is not theirs, but in this case as it is a school subject and the language of instruction in schools, learners should be helped to see why they should learn it.

2.9 Conclusion

It is evident from past research that attitudes, whether positive or negative, play a vital role in learning situations and that attitudes could be from diverse sources; from the learners themselves, the teacher and the environment of study or home environment. Whatever the cause of the attitudes, especially the negative ones, it is important for the teachers and parents to try to build on the small interest the learners have to enhance their learning positively. From the different research carried out on attitudes as seen in this chapter, it is evident that attitude though affects learners directly but it also affects learners through the teaching method

by the teacher and incompetent delivery of the subject matter which create doubt in the minds of the learners. The students should be encouraged to make efforts to learn and ask their teachers questions. The teachers on their part should be gentle with them, especially when they make mistakes in their effort to speak English language. In addition to this, parents should challenge their children to learn English and use it in their communication. If students are affected by these reasons in the course of their learning, it is important to see what exactly should be done to help them enjoy the learning of the subject in school. Following this, in the next chapter, the findings from students, teachers and administrators of the schools used for the research were analyzed to find out what affect students' attitudes towards learning English, and what suggestions they had so as to improve the issues.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the research design, the methodology and the procedures of investigation into the attitudes of students towards learning English in secondary school in Manga division, Nyamira District. Focus on this chapter is on the design and methodology. It discusses the selection of the sample and the instruments used. The chapter will finally present the data collection procedures.

3.2 Research Design

To investigate the attitudes of the students towards studying English in secondary school in Kisii, Nyamira District, the survey design was used. This design enables the collection evidence from the primary source which is the students. Evidence has shown that qualitative research has helped researchers understand people, and their social and cultural context because the participants have the opportunity to express their thoughts and feelings through interviews, questionnaires, documents and texts. With the use of survey research, a large group of specific characteristics of persons, objects or institutions could be described.

Qualitative design helps when analyzing and interpreting data. This is because it takes care of everything at the same time, which is one thing leading to the other in the process of analyzing and interpreting. In this way the analyzing and the interpreting of the data are therefore worked out at the same time. According to Tarone (1982) experimental settings that are in a controlled and artificial environment/ settings produce shallow data. This is quite different in

comparison with those data which would be produced in natural settings. This gives a good reason why the experimental method should not be used in this research

3.3 The Target Population

The study focused on 2 schools in Gekano, St Theresa's Girl's Secondary School and St Thomas Mixed (day) Secondary School, that are within Manga division in Nyamira District. St Theresa is a Catholic girls' school that is rated as a private school within the Catholic diocese of Kisii. On the other hand, St Thomas is a Mixed Day school and within the Catholic diocese of Kisii also. All the schools in Nyamira District could not be used for the study as there are about 55 of them. The target population was the students, teachers of English, and the school administration of these two schools in Manga Division secondary schools.

3.4 The Study Sample and Sampling Procedures

The total population was 364 while the study sample was 20 of 3 male and 17 female students. These students were mainly from forms 2, 3, and 4, as the form 1 students were yet to resume in February also because these ones finished primary school about 2,3 or 4 years ago. Teachers of English and Kiswahili from the three schools were also part of the sample. The teachers were included to give their own view about their students in the class. The schools used were St Theresa Girls Secondary School, Gekano and St. Thomas Mixed Day school Gekano. These schools represented the whole schools in Manga Division. This was the sample drawn from three schools:

- There were Boys' schools in the area but none was selected.
- Among the two Girls' schools, one was used.
- There are 6 mixed schools: one was used also.

In each school, one third of each class population was selected through stratified random sampling. This stratified sampling enabled one third of the classes to participate in the study. The subject groups were all included in the study which would have been omitted through other methods like quantitative method. The teachers were small in number so they were all involved, this included the school heads.

The random sampling technique used was very practical and free of bias. According to Kerlinger (1973), the sample drawn at random is unbiased if no member of the population has more chance of being selected than any other member. The subjects picked some papers that had 'yes' and 'No.' All those that picked the 'yes' were selected to participate in the study. In this case, all the students initially had the chance to pick the paper but what determined their final participation was what they picked, that is picking a 'yes.' By the end of the selection, 10 out of 237 girls from St Theresa's Girls, 5 out of 74 girls and 3 out of 63 boys from St Thomas mixed school were used. Based on the subjects the teachers taught, 3 teachers from St Theresa Girls joined in the study and in St Thomas the teacher was had not yet resumed for the term, therefore, only the 3 teachers from Gekano joined in the study.

3.5 Description of Research Instrument

The two main instruments that were used were the questionnaire and the interview guide.

a. Questionnaire

The students' questionnaire consisted of 20 items. The first section was the provision of specific demographic data of students' background. The second section consisted of a checking list and ranking items while the third section covered Likert scale for attitudinal measures. This third section assessed attitudes students had towards the study of English in

secondary school. Therefore the questionnaire determined the students' attitudes towards the learning of English in secondary school. See example in the Appendix 1, section 3.

Using the questionnaire, respondents gave their true feelings or views. They had no fear as they did not have to write their names on the papers. The questionnaire saved time and was cheaper to reach the students. Some of the answers that were given were irrelevant because the students did not understand the question and the general explanation/ clarification that were given.

b. The Likert Scale Response

For the Likert scale response, the respondents were required to indicate by strongly agree (SA), strongly disagree (SD) and undecided (UD). These referred to which response concerned the attitude of the study of English in secondary school. With the use of the questionnaire, information from a wide range of topics was gathered in a shorter period, as opposed to the use of personal interviews.

c. The Teachers' Interview Guide

The teachers' interview guide had eight items, which was designed to assess the teachers' attitudes towards teaching in general, teaching English and secondary school curriculum. Also discussed were their attitudes and those of their students towards the subject. The interview guide provided opportunities for teachers to give any possible suggestions that could enhance students' interest in studying English in secondary school. The administration's interview guide was designed with the aim to find the measures to be taken to enhance positive attitudes of students towards learning English in secondary school. During the interviews, there were some clarifications to articulate the purpose of the research.

d. The Observation Guide

The observation guide covered key areas like teacher-students interaction, creativity in the classroom, student assignment and note books, student to student interaction and the available facilities. While the document analysis guide covered the admission and daily attendance registers, teachers' schemes of work and lesson, the past five years' results to be analyzed.

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

Before the administration of the questionnaire, the administrator of the schools and teachers of English were met then and what was expected was explained to them. The teachers helped the students answer the questions that were to be administered. The questionnaire was given to students and the teachers helped by explaining more for those who had difficulty about what was required of them. The students spent one day with the questionnaires and with the help of an assistant, the questionnaire were collected. On the day of the questionnaire-collection, there were interviews conducted for the teachers. The collection of the questionnaire and the interview of the teachers took each day in a school.

Document analysis guide used to gather information consisted of the past records where the heads of schools provided vital information on their schools performance in KCSE, enrolments and staff positions. The class registers were also used. Observations were made during visits to the schools during the lessons. The observation included sitting in class during teaching/learning and joining students' group discussions. At these times of interaction between the students and teachers, the main observation was the relationship between the teacher and the students within the learning environment.

3.7 Data Presentation and Interpretation

For the analysis of the data both qualitative and quantitative are used. The tables, data, percentages and figures are given in the section entitled quantitative data. It is easier to present the findings in a simpler way to many readers through this method. The analysis was done through the main themes for the research, while the observation and interviews were done quantitatively. This will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with the research design in which sampling materials were used. The samples consisted of two schools; one a girls boarding and the other a mixed (Day) school. Also used were the various teachers of English in the schools. The items that enabled the collection of information were questionnaire for students, teachers and the administrations of the schools. Some documents from the schools were also used which the analysis will be fully discussed in the next chapter. The samples of the questionnaire for students and administration, observation guide for teachers are included in the appendix.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the research findings are discussed under relevant sub headings. The subjects that were used were the students from the 2 secondary School, St Theresa and St Thomas. Also were the English teachers and the administrators of these 2 schools. Discussing the results therefore required discussing the findings into these different groups of subjects that were involved. The research questions were used in the discussion of the findings. Some of their questions were not actually expressed in their responses and thus not reflected in tables but had implied meaning that if the students do not perform well in the subject as pointed out by their teachers and administrators, there must be some reasons for that. In addition, there was observation of the teachers during teaching and learning exercise which was discussed

4.2 Biographical Data of the Respondents

The respondents lay within the age range brackets of 12-20 years; 12-14 (15%), 15-17 (75%), and 18-20 (20%). Majority of the parents of the respondents have attained primary education or no education at all. Specifically, from the 20 respondents, 20% of their parents are peasant farmers while 10% have gone beyond secondary education. The respondents were of age that could make their own personal judgment on how they see things. With that it was easy to get their true feelings.

The teachers and the administrators who responded did not have their ages indicated. Apparently, all have were of age to teach and manage institution. This percentage showed that

most of the respondents' parents are limited in formal education and would therefore be of less advantage to the children as far as understanding the needs of the children.

4.3 Students' Responses

Before the respondents worked on the main questionnaire, they rated the different subjects learned in secondary school according to how they like them. The numbers were from 1-13. The total number of respondents for the students was 20 from the 2 schools. Among the 20 respondents were 10 boarders, 7 day students from mixed school and 3 male students. The questionnaire was given under different items as shown below

4.3.1 How Students Ranked Different Subjects Studied

These tables for St Theresa and St Thomas show how the students ranked the different subjects offered in secondary school in the order they liked each subject.

Table 1: Ranking of subjects from most favorite to the least favorite from St Theresa's Girls' Secondary School

SUBJECTS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	0
Agriculture	1	-	-	1	-	1	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	4
Mathematics	1	-	1	1	1	2	-	2	-	1	-	-	1	-
Biology	1	3	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0
Physics	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	1	-	4
Chemistry	2	-	1	-	1	-	4	1	-	-	1	-	-	-
English	1	1	3	2	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kiswahili	1	1	1	2	2	-	2	-	9	-	-	-	-	-
Business education	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	1	1	1	-	4
Commerce	-	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	2	1	3
CRE	3	-	1	1	-	-	1	2	2	-	-	-	-	-
Geography	-	1	-	-	1	2	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	3
History	-	3	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	1
Social education and ethics	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	2	5

Table 2: Ranking of subjects from most favorite to the least favorite from St Thomas (Mixed) Day Secondary School

SUBJECTS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	0
Agriculture	-	2	-	1	1	2	-	2	-	-	-	2	-	-
Mathematics	2	1	5	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Biology	-	-	2	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	1	-	3	-
Physics	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	-	2	-
Chemistry	5	1	-	2	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
English	3	5	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kiswahili	-	-	-	3	3	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Business education	-	-	-	-	2	1	2	-	2	1	-	2	-	-
Commerce	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	1	1	-	3
Geography	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	1	3	1	1	-	-	-
History	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	2	-	3	3	-	-	-
Social education and ethics	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	2	3	-	3
CRE	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	2	3	3

Though the rating of the subjects reflected all the subjects that the respondents were supposed to take in school, focus was mainly on English. It is noted from the table that the teaching performance of the teacher is rated under excellent and good, therefore the students stand a better chance since their teachers are not very poor in teaching exercise. Hence there should be chance for the students to develop good attitude towards the subject. However, there is still need to find out if there are other reasons why students would have negative attitudes towards the learning of English language in secondary school.

4.3.1 Rating of Teachers' Performance by Students

On these tables, the respondents rated the performance of their teachers in class. This was also considered because there are so many things that could develop or hinder attitude of the learners. The way the teachers teach is included as one the factors.

Table 3: the Response from St Theresa's School on Teachers' Performance

Subjects	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor	None
Agriculture	3	4	--	--	--	3
Biology	7	2	1	--	--	--
Business education	--	3	4	--	--	3
Chemistry	3	5	1	1	--	--
Commerce	1	4	--	--	--	5
CRE	6	3	1	--	--	--
English	5	5	--	--	--	--
Kiswahili	4	6	--	--	--	--
History	2	7	--	--	--	1
geography	3	5	--	--	--	2
Mathematics	3	3	2	--	--	2
Physics	1	--	4	1	1	3
Social ed/ethics	1	--	1	--	--	8

Though the rating of the teachers is reflecting all the subjects, attention is mostly on the rating on the teaching of English. As shown above, the rating does not indicate that the teachers are poor in teaching.

Table 4: Responses from St Thomas Mixed (Day) Secondary School

Subjects	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor	None
Agriculture	1	5	2	--	--	2
Biology	--	4	5	--	--	1
Business ed	--	5	3	--	--	2
Chemistry	6	1	--	--	--	3
Commerce	--	1	4	--	--	5
CRE	1	4	3	--	--	2
English	4	6	--	--	--	--
Kiswahili	1	6	3	--	--	--
History	--	3	3	3	--	1
Geography	--	7	2	--	--	1
Mathematics	3	5	1	--	--	1
Physics	--	2	4	1	--	3
SEE	1	1	1	--	2	5

The rating of the teachers in the two schools did not show that their teachers were poor in their teaching, yet it remains a question to be answered as to what really causes students attitude towards the learning of English that has adversely affected their general poor performance in their examinations.

4.3.2 The Questionnaire and the Responses

In each case, the research questions serve as a guide to the responses the respondents gave.

Table 5

a) The attitudes of students towards learning English in secondary school

Names of schools	SA	SD	UN
St Theresa	9	-	1
St Thomas			
Girls	7	-	-
Boys	3	-	-

From the responses of both the girls from boarding school, girls from Mixed Day School and the boys, there was no difference in their attitude about learning English Language in secondary school. So a great number enjoy learning English in secondary and would like to give in time to help them learn the subject more.

Table 6

b) The reasons for the students having positive attitude for learning English in secondary school

Names of Schools	SA	SD	UN
St Theresa	10	-	-
St Thomas			
Girls	7	-	-
Boys	3	-	-

All the respondents expressed the usefulness of English not only for them to use in school but also outside the school especially for communication with people from other parts of the world who speak other languages.

4.3.3 Summary of Students' Responses

The general views of the respondents from the two schools have shown that majority of the students have a positive attitude towards learning English in secondary school and would like to study it because of its importance, especially in school for understanding of other subjects and outside school for communication. It is obvious to them that everybody needs English, whether it is foreign language or not in the society.

4.4 Teachers' Interview

The interview for teachers revealed also the need for the students to learn English; however, the reasons for the poor performance of the students were seen also. In the 2 schools, 3 teachers took part in the interview and they were from St. Theresa's Girls' Secondary School. St Thomas has only 1 teacher of English and he as at that time had not resumed at school. St Theresa has more than 1 teacher which has made teaching easier for them to handle for the whole school.

The following were the questions and the responses by the teachers from St Theresa

a) How many years have you taught in this school?

For the 3 teachers their responses were as follows:

- 1 has taught for 1 year, another one has taught for 3 years while one has taught for 6 years.

b) What subject(s) do you teach?

- 2 teachers teach English and literature while 1 teaches grammar.

c) *What Forms are you teaching?*

The responses were as explained in the table; the classes taught by each teacher are marked.

Number of teachers	F1	F2	F3	F4
Teacher 1	√	√	√	√
Teacher 2	√		√	√
Teacher 3			√	

In the classes as indicated, some are teaching English literature and some are teaching English grammar.

d) *How has the KCSE performance of your school been in English?*

- 2 teachers responded that the results have been average and one said it has been fair.

e) *What do you think was the reason for such results?*

The following responses were given at least once each:

- Negative attitude towards the subject
- The use of 'sheng' by students: ('sheng' refers to a language coined from English and Kiswahili or any other native language here in Kenya.)
- Lack of enough practice
- Mother tongue interference
- Insufficient materials, like textbooks for the students and the teachers.

For the teacher that said the result was average,

- Determined teachers
- Students' hard work
- Available reading materials

f) *What learning methods do you use in class to aid the students to develop a liking for the subject content you are teaching?*

- Dramatization
- Asking and answering a quiz
- Listening and speaking
- Role play
- Non-verbal cues
- Discussions
- Dictation
- Students' participation and affirming them
- Group discussions
- Story book reading

g) *What main problems do you find common among your students in relation to your subject area?*

- Use of ungrammatical constructions
- Mother tongue influence was from 2 teachers
- 1 teacher said students do not take time to revise everyday.
- Self expression
- Incorrect spelling
- Mixing tenses

h) *What do you think in your opinion, would help the students to develop positive attitude toward English*

- Extensive reading
- Regular debates
- Provision of enough and relevant materials
- Improving teaching materials.
- Developing a positive attitude requires a confidence within the student to speak it and an enjoyment in reading.

i) *Any further suggestions or remark*

- Constant seminars or in- service for English teachers can improve results.
- If the students have good and interesting story books available and are encouraged to read everyday, they can improve in their command of the English language.
- Encourage the students to speak English even if it may be broken as they will improve with time.
- Encourage the use of English at all times

There were supposed to be 2 schools for the study but the second school, St Thomas had no English teacher available and thus there was no response from English teachers at the school.

4.4.1 Summary of the Teachers' Response

Though the students seem eager to learn English language, their teachers have shown through their responses that the students do not perform as well as they would have done because of number of factors. Examples of these are the use of 'sheng', the use of their mother tongue most of the time, lack of students' interest, the use of mother tongue among the teachers with

the students, and laxity at times or 'I don't care' attitude among some teachers. Some other reasons the teachers give that hinders their performance is the students not being serious with their studies even when they have all they need. It was also noted that one of the schools had no library at all for both the students and the teachers' use. On the other hand, the teachers have seen that there is need to update the teachers through some seminars and workshops, to provide more and interesting reading materials for the students' libraries. More so, encouraging the students even when they are not correct will be of help to the students learning English language.

4.5 Interview for the Administration

The administrators also had some items to answer to show the performance of their students. However, for their unsatisfied results, they attributed to some factors as shown in their responses. In St Theresa, as seen from the 1999 English result, they were the 7th position with the average of 4.085 and in 2000 they had the same position but with an average of 4.074 in the private schools category in the district. In their mock examination of 2003, they had the 8th position with an average of 7.6250. In the same year, St Thomas had the 117th position with an average of 1.5417 out of 149 schools in the division. They gave some suggestions on what they think should be done to improve the performance of the students in their different schools as shown below.

4.5.1 Responses from the Administrators

St Theresa

I. How has the KCSE performance of your school been in the past 4 years?

Average mostly, but not good.

II. Are the reasons for the results attributed to lack of teachers or students' interest?

The responses below were from the administrators:

There is lack of students' interest, use of mother tongue among teachers with the students, laxity at times from the teachers and 'I don't care' attitude among them.

III. Do you carry out teaching supervisions or has it been done at all?

Not yet, I am new here. It is one of those activities I wish to implement this year.

IV. Do you think the school is well equipped with what is required for them to perform well in English?

Very much. Plenty of students' books in the library for exercises and vocabulary building.

The responses given by the administrators are contrary to those given by both the students and the teachers.

V. What are the qualifications of your English teachers, and what classes do they teach?

They are University graduates and teach all classes.

VI. What do you think in your would help create positive attitudes towards English?

Positive attitude towards students, towards the subject, etc. practice always makes perfect.

Encourage English speaking.

VII. Further remarks or suggestions regarding English in school

If the students take their work seriously, all will be well. Determination and the inner drive (motivation) will actually bring about great results.

St Thomas

I. How has the KCSE performance of your school been in English the past 4 years?

Dismal (2.1707) in 2003. The administrator could only share the detail he was comfortable with as shown above.

II. Are the reasons for the results attributed to lack of teachers or students' interest?

It is both and also entry behavior. This is the perception by the students even before they are taught by the teachers and what they experience in class.

III. Do you carry out teaching supervisions or has it been done at all?

Yes.

IV. Do you think the school is well equipped with what is required for them to perform well in English?

No, no library.

V. What are the qualifications of your English teachers, and what classes do they teach?

Graduates.

VI. What do you think in your opinion would help create positive attitudes towards English?

Encourage them to practice it and read widely to develop interest.

VII. Further remarks or suggestions regarding English in school

Debating clubs must be stressed and symposia need to be organized.

4.5.2 Summary of the Administrators' Response

The responses from the administrators have shown that there are still some things lacking which if put in order would help the students have positive attitudes towards the learning of

English and would positively change their performance to better than what they are doing presently. Concerning the students, they have noted that the students do not use English language often but prefer their native language. Also, even when there are materials for the students' use, they are not making good use of the library. It is noticed also that the students do not take their work seriously.

Some other thing is that caused poor performance as noted is the attitude of the teachers which shows 'less concern' as it is put by administrator of one of the schools and with this they do not really perform their duties as they would have done in the school. On the same note, one noted that the school does not even have a well equipped library for the students' use. The students also do not have enough books on their own to use in class and after school for their private studies. Though the teachers are graduates and are qualified to teach in secondary schools, it has been suggested by one administrator that there should be symposia organized for the teachers, also the students should be encouraged even when they do not speak the correct English to keep practicing as their daily practice would help them improve.

4.6 Observation Schedule

Teaching and learning activities were actually observed here. This included the observed relationship between the teacher and the students in the learning situation. The participation of the students in the class was also observed at this time.

- *Teacher- student interaction:*

The students were respectful.

- *The teacher's creativity in class:*

The teachers use question and answer methods with this, the students were g greatly involved.

- *The students' notes and assignment books:*

The students' books were checked and marked by the teacher when she gave them some assignments.

- *Student-to-student interaction:*

The students related well by asking their partner some questions about the lesson. However, outside the lesson time, it is obvious that the student prefer to go with the one to use the common language with.

- *Facilities:*

The students are provided with the class text book which they use in the lesson time and after the lesson for their personal studies.

4.7 Document Analysis Guide

Another thing that was looked into was the documents of the schools as seen under the some headings;

- KCSE results of the past four years

St Theresa's School

It was noted that their results as stated by the administrated was an average. In 1999, St Theresa was 7th in position with the average of 4.085. And from their mock result of 2000, out of 149 private schools in the Manga division, St Theresa had the 8th position with the average of 4.000. In the same year, their position in English was 7th with the average of 4.094.

St Thomas School

The results were noted to be dismal.

- *Admission register and daily attendants register.*

These were well kept in the 2 schools and there were not much cases of absenteeism from the students.

- *Teachers' schemes of work and lesson plans*

These are regularly checked by the head teacher and the teachers showed commitment by keeping their records of work done and their lesson plans.

- *Ministry of Education and Nyamira District KSCCE Results Analysis*

St Theresa's School

The results have been mostly average.

St Thomas School

The result was that of 2003 with the average of 2.107.

4.8 The Summary of the Documents Analysis

Examinations, registers, scheme of work and teachers' lesson plans showed that the teachers were doing their work seriously as they took their time to record all they had done. However, it was not understood where their problems was if the teachers on their part are consciously doing their work but the end results do not proof that. From the average results shown, there are some improvements but it is still what should be looked into to find out what causes their poor performance in their examination and what should be done to improve their attitude and results.

4.9 Conclusion

The responses as seen from the students of the two schools have shown that a good number have not indicated negative attitude towards the learning of English language in secondary school, their administrators and teachers however have seen the need and why the results of

the schools should have been better. They have even said why the students have problems and have suggested some improvements to be effected in the schools. In view of this therefore, the next chapter will deal more on the suggestions about what should be done to encourage the learning of English language in secondary school. It will also look into some recommendations for the schools, parents, teachers and administrators.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The major findings from the research are discussed in this chapter as are the conclusions drawn from data collected. As far as the topic of the research is concerned, there were also some recommendations regarding what to do to help students have positive attitudes towards learning English in secondary school. Following this, there are suggestions about things that will help to motivate students in learning English in secondary school. Finally, there are suggestions for further research.

5.2 Summary

The main purpose of this research was to look into what attitudes students have towards the learning of English language in secondary school. In the study, two secondary schools were used in the Manga division of Nyamira District of Kenya. The schools were; St Theresa Girls' Secondary School and St Thomas Mixed (Day) Secondary school all in Gekano. In the study also was how the attitudes of the students towards learning affected their general performance in their examinations.

To be able to the above named issues, there were some guide questions for the students to give focus to what directed to. The students had some Likert questions that showed their attitudes towards the language, whether they like it or not. There were some 20 questions for them to answer and prior to this was for them to rate the teaching performance of their teacher because this could also attribute to how the students feel about a particular subject in school.

Though there were 2 schools for the study, from the respondents, there was no marked difference between them as they rated their teachers between good and fair in their teaching performance. This suggests that the students actually believed they had good teachers for English language in their schools. However, this did not mean that their performance were excellent in examinations. This is why the reason for their poor performance should still be looked into in schools.

In the responses of the students, it was noticed that they like to study English in secondary school despite the fact that it is the 'official' language; it is not the national language of the people of Kenya. This is because the students had seen English language as important not only in school but also outside school set up for communication with people from different areas of the world. In school also they have seen that English is the medium of communication in the teaching and learning process of not only English but all other subjects taught in school. Few of the responses however indicated that the study of English language in school is not pleasant to students and they would not study if not that it is a compulsory subject for the students.

In their general responses of the questionnaire from the boarding and day (mixed) schools, there was no disparity between the two schools, neither was there a marked difference between the boys and the girls in the mixed school. It was noticed that the 2 groups equally like the learning of English, but not does that mean their performance is very good. There are then reasons to as see why the do not do well if they like learning English.

Sampling design was used for the study among the schools. The area has government schools and private schools, boys' schools and girls' schools and they also have mixed schools that are for girls and boys. The sample consisted of 237 girls from St Theresa and 168 from St Thomas

mixed day Secondary School. The final number used for the study was 10 girls from St Theresa, 7 girls from St Thomas and 3 boys from St Thomas Day mixed Schools.

There would have been 4 teachers of English in the 2 schools but only St Theresa had her 3 teachers of English in school while the 1 for St Thomas was not back at school for the term. This pointed to some of the reasons students do not perform well in English examination and the difficulties as pointed by their teachers towards learning English language. It was not indicated how often the teacher stayed away from school but as the only teacher of English in the school, his absence would affect the student in one way or the other. With the absence of the teacher of English in St Thomas, there was no interview guide that was responded to. There was no observation therefore from any teacher of English from the school about the students.

The response from the teachers of St Theresa indicated that though the students like to learn English they would have done better if they were not using their mother tongue and sheng in their daily communication. It also showed from 2 of the teachers that the students do not have the courage to express themselves in English for fear of making mistakes and they do not take time to do their personal readings of story books which would have helped them improve their English usage.

On the other hand, one administrator admitted that the students do not have anything to help them in their studies and specifically referred to lack of school library. Apparently, this meant too that the students do not all have the class textbook to use during lesson and after their lesson for private use. Adversely, one administrator agreed that the fault of the poor performance had nothing to do with the students not having books to use as they had all the

books provided but that the students themselves do not make good use of the books given them. It was noted also that it is not only the students but also the teachers who often used the mother tongue to communicate with the students thus preventing them from the use of English language. On the part of the teachers also, it was noted as the one administrator said that some teachers have 'I don't care' attitude towards the language the students use in school and even what they use with the students. This could be a problem for the young learning as the teachers are supposed to be guide to learners. If it does not matter what language the students use in communication, then to motivate them to use English would not make any impact on the students. The students could feel that they are being forced to use a language the teachers themselves do not see the need to use.

Apart from the teachers and the administrators of the school who reported what they see about the students and learning of English language in secondary school, there was also observation of the students and during the learning and teaching exercise in the classroom. It was noted that the students from St Theresa had their textbooks and followed what the teacher did in the class. They had the opportunity to take part fully as they saw from the text book what and where the teacher read. The teacher used questions and group methods which gave the students the chance to participate fully and report to the teachers.

Another way that helped establish the result of the research was the records from the school which included the lesson plans of the teachers, the scheme of work, the attendants register and the diaries. It was noted that the teachers had good records of all the works they teach the students in the diaries, their lesson notes were up to date and they dully followed what the scheme of work had. For the daily attendants of students in school, it was noted also that the students were always present in school and only absent when there was something that really

needed their presence in their families. For the Day Mixed School, it was equally noted that the students were practically present for their lessons though it was not very easy to control their coming late.

5.3 Conclusions

From the findings about the research, the following conclusions could be drawn:

- There is no marked difference in attitudes towards the learning of English language between the girls' boarding school and the mixed day school.
- The majority of the students like to learn English because they have noted the importance of it not only at school but outside the school environment.
- Though they have indicated their liking to learn English, there are certain things that hinder their better performance, for example; use of mother tongue most of the time, coupled with is the use of 'sheng' among their peers.
- One of the most important things needed in a school is the library for textbooks for the students' use and for the teachers, but one of the schools did not have it.
- The students are afraid of making mistakes and would not to express themselves in English language in and outside the classroom.
- The results are not really good. One school is better than the other.
- The morale of the teachers seems low, for example not using English with the students always and not minding if the students use English in communicating with other students.

5.4 Recommendations

Through this study it has been noted that the students have interest in learning English language in secondary school, whether as a boarder, day student, boy or girl. The above

named reasons could hinder their interest in the learning and therefore there is need for some motivations to help the students learn English language with more enthusiasm in school so as to help them comprehend other subjects better.

5.4.1 Recommendations for Students

- Students should be encouraged to use the opportunity given them through the provision of textbooks in the school both for class and the library, and read them.
- They should be encouraged to use English in and outside the class set up in communication not only between the students but also with the teachers.
- Outside the class, the teachers should give students some reading assignment from some story books which they will read and summarize for the teachers every week in a written form.
- The use of mother tongue and 'sheng' is not condemned completely but students should be reminded that constant use will hinder their better use of English. Since most of their examination are set and written in English and not in their mother tongue or 'sheng,' they should make every effort to use English more than the other languages.
- Making of mistakes will help the students improve in the use of English. So even if they make mistakes, they should be helped and encouraged to continue as they will improve through constant use of English.
- The teachers serve as models to the students; therefore they should use English with the students and show them through this that it is important for them to do the same.

- In the absence of the teacher in school, the students are not going to be able to study on their own; there should be more than one teacher of English in a school so that in case anything happens another can stand in for him or her.
- Some of the students do not actually know they can speak English very well; teachers should encourage them by making them participate in debate clubs or some writing competitions.

5.4.2 Recommendations for Teachers

- Teachers should use varied methods in the teaching and learning situations to encourage the learners.
- Teachers should be seminars and workshops organized for teachers at least yearly to up date themselves.
- Teachers should not only rely on the text books given by schools to use, they should check for other materials that would be of help to the students depending on what they see their needs to be.
- Teachers should constantly check the assignments given to the students, give extra work outside class activity so that the students will develop the attitude of reading more.
- Encourage participation in class by all the students, since all the students are in for learning: there should be team spirit in their study.
- Teachers should affirm the students in their small efforts as they try to use English.

5.4.3 Recommendation for the Ministry of Education

- There should be constant inspection in schools to see the needs and activities and progress of teachers and the students.
- Where there is no library for the students, the ministry should make provision for that to help both the students and the teachers.
- The Ministry of Education should organize workshop and seminars for all teachers of English at least yearly.
- There should be more than one teacher of English sent to a school; this will not only help the students but also the teachers as they will work as a team in their teaching.

5.5 Areas of further studies

After the findings, there are still some areas which further research could be done. These areas could be on why it is difficult for students to use English completely in school without their mother tongue or any coined language. It could also be on the effective use of English in secondary school, the effects on the students and their relationship with their teachers in school regarding communication. Lastly, this similar research should be carried out but in a remote area which will involve the students, teachers and administrators.

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Appendix 1



Saint Mary's University of Minnesota/USA Nairobi Campus

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Nairobi, Kenya

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6th December 2004

To Whom It May Concern:

Enang, Dorothy (0209) is a fourth-year full time student in good standing at Christ the Teacher Institute for Education. In May, she will be graduating with a B.Sc.Ed. As part of her final semester, she is enrolled in a research seminar in education, during which she is to conduct research and gather informational data regarding various issues, leading to the writing of a major paper. Her lecturer for this course, and the person responsible for directing her research, is Ms. Angela Mwenda, one of our lecturers.

Christ the Teacher Institute for Education is an institute in the School of Education of Saint Mary's University of Minnesota / USA. It is also an institute within Tangaza College, one of the constituent colleges of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa.

In order to accomplish her work, I respectfully request that you allow **Enang, Dorothy** the courtesy of having access to your institution for the purpose of gathering data, all of which will be shown to and discussed with you.

Thank you for your kind consideration of this request. Please contact me if I can provide additional information, clarification, or amplification of anything above.

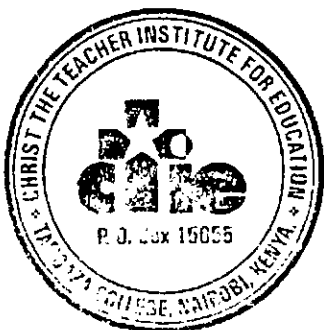
Sincerely

Br. Brendan Foley

Br. Brendan Foley

Dean of Studies

Christ the Teacher Institute for Education



APPENDIX II

St Mary's University Of Minnesota/USA Nairobi Campus
Christ the Teacher Institute for Education
Tangaza College
P.O Box 15055,
P.C. 00509 Langata
Nairobi, Kenya

Researcher's Name: Dorothy Enang

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

Dear student,

The purpose of this questionnaire is not to test you but rather to help us understand the attitudes of students towards learning English in Secondary Schools. Your honest responses will enable the collected information be reliable in facilitating efforts towards taking right direction to change the trend in secondary schools, especially concerning what make students develop negative attitudes towards learning English. The information you give will be treated with greatest confidentiality. It is optional to write your name on the questionnaire.

INSTRUCTIONS

This questionnaire is divided into three sections. read the instructions carefully in each section.

SECTION I

Fill in the spaces provided or put a tick () where appropriate.

I am in: () form 2 () form 3 () form 4

I am a () boarder () day student () girl

Your age bracket () 12- 14 () 15-17 () 18-20 () over 20

Father's occupation _____ Mother's occupation _____

Or guardian's occupation _____

Highest level of education of your father: [] primary. [] secondary. [] college. [] University

Highest level of education of your mother: [] primary. [] secondary. [] college. [] university

Level of education of your guardian: [] primary. [] secondary. [] college. [] university

SECTION 2

Rank subjects below from one to thirteen, in your order of your most favorite to your least favorite.

- Agriculture
- Mathematics
- Biology
- Physics
- Chemistry
- English
- Kiswahili
- Business Education
- Christian Religious Education (CRE)
- History
- Geography

How would you rate your teachers' performance in teaching? Tick, ()

Subject	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor
Agriculture					
Biology					
Business Education					
Chemistry					
Commerce					
Christian Religious Education					
English					
Kiswahili					
History					
Geography					
Mathematics					
Physics					
Social Education and Ethics					

SECTION 3

SA- Strongly Agree, SD - Strongly Disagree, UN- Undecided

Tick the correct box for you. The following initials stand for these:

No	Item	SA	SD	UD
1	I really enjoy studying English			
2	English is a subject all students in Kenya learn so I learn it			
3	English is of benefit to those who will become newscasters			
4	English is a foreign language I don't like it			
5	If I had my choice I would not study English			
6	English is one of the most useful subjects			
7	I will always hate English because it is not my mother tongue			
8	English is my best subject			
9	I prefer Kiswahili to English			
10	I always look forward to Kiswahili exams			
11	Everyone should learn English			
12	I don't have to learn English to be able to communicate.			
13	English won't be useful to any student as we have our language			
14	English is not my best subject			
15	I prefer English to Kiswahili			
16	I always look forward to English examination			
17	Everyone should not learn English			
18	I have to learn English to be able to communicate			
19	I will use my knowledge of English for something in future			
20	I am willing to spend my time to study English			

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this process and thank you for your honest responses.

APPENDIX 111

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

How many years have you taught in this school?	
What subject(s) do you teach?	
What form are you teaching?	
How has the KCSE performance of your school been in English?	
What do you think was the reason for such results?	
What learning methods do you use in your class to aid the students to develop a liking for the subject content you are presenting?	
What main problems do you find common among your students in relation to your subject area?	
What do you think, in your opinion, would help the students to develop positive attitude towards English?	
Any further suggestions or remarks?	

APPENDIX 1V

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION

In the spaces provided, write what is applicable as the answers. Where there is need to write more, write on the back of this page.

How has the KCSE performance of your school been in English the past 4 years?	
Are the reasons for the results attributed to lack of teachers or students' interest?	
Do you carry out teaching supervisions or has it been done at all?	
Do you think the school is well equipped with what is required for them to perform well in English?	
What are the qualifications of your English teachers, and what classes do they teach?	
What do you think in your opinion would help create positive attitudes towards English?	
Further remarks or suggestions regarding English in school	

APPENDIX V

OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

Write your response in the spaces given.

Teacher-student interaction:	
Do students fear / respect / detest the teacher	
Student's note and assignment books:	
Do teachers correct given assignments?	
Student-to-student interaction:	
Facilities:	
Does the school have enough textbooks for student use?	

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS GUIDE

KCSE results of the past 4 years

Admission register and daily attendants register

Teachers' schemes of work and lesson plans

Ministry of Education and Nyamira District KCSE Results Analysis