



**USE OF MEDIA IN TEACHING
ENGLISH IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS
IN KAKAMEGA EAST SUB-COUNTY, KENYA**

Mark W. Muvango¹ⁱ,

F. C. Indoshi¹,

M. O. Okwara²

¹Department of Educational Communication,
Technology and Curriculum Studies,
Maseno University, Kenya

²Dr., School of Education and Social Sciences
Bondo University, Kenya

Abstract:

Instructional media is one of the important tools that help learner's to master concepts in the teaching-learning process. The use of appropriate instructional media enhances teaching and learning of English. However, Kakamega East Sub-County is one of the most affected regions with declining performance in English at the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examinations. The biggest blame had been attributed to the non use of appropriate instructional media. The purpose of this study was to assess use of instructional media in teaching English in secondary schools in Kakamega East Sub-County, Kenya. Specific objective of the study was to establish: How well teachers prepare on use of media in teaching of English, the extent to which instructional media is used in secondary schools in Kakamega East Sub-County in teaching English subject. The study revealed that the use of appropriate instructional media in teaching English was significant for successful instructional process. The study employed descriptive survey design. The study population consisted of 23 head teachers, 46 teachers of English, and 1500 Form Two students. A sample of 20 head teachers and 40 teachers of English was selected using Saturated sampling technique while Simple random sampling technique was used to select a sample of 500 Form Two students. Piloting of instruments was done on 10% of the population. Research tools included questionnaires, document analysis guide, observation schedule and interview schedule. Quantitative data was collected from the closed questionnaire items which were tallied and presented using frequency counts, percentages and means. Qualitative data was transcribed and organized into categories, sub categories and themes based on the study objectives. The findings of the study revealed low frequency in the use of instructional media in English teaching. The study recommended the inclusion of

ⁱ Correspondence: email markmuvango@gmail.com

programmes in teacher training and their induction in in-service courses for those in the workforce.

Keywords: instructional media, teaching-learning process, secondary schools

1. Introduction

Akinpelu, (1991) revealed that Technological innovations increase the rate of conceptualization in the curriculum. According to Dahama & Dhatnagar (1992) people learned 25% to 30% more when visual aids were used in teaching, because they: held attention, increased permanence of learning, made the job of teaching easier and created interest in the curriculum. In spite of these developments, teachers still tended to teach theoretically without much regard to incorporating media in their teaching process (Runaku, 1996).

A study done in Kenya showed that appropriate use of instructional media enhance teaching and learning of the curriculum (Ambuko, 2008). Despite such conclusions, the Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) reports indicate that candidates have difficulties in writing, a fact that has not changed over the years (KNEC, 2000). In Kakamega East Sub-County students' performance in English in the last five years had shown a downward trend. Specifically, the study: identified teacher preparedness and the extent of use of media in teaching and learning of English. The key question this study aimed to answer was how well are teachers prepared on use of media in teaching English?

2. Methodology

The study employed descriptive survey design. Target population was the 1,500 Form Two students taking English from 23 public secondary schools in Kakamega East Sub-County. The sampling unit was the school; saturated sampling was used to select 20 head teachers and 40 teachers of English. Simple random sampling method was used to select a sample of 500 students from a total of 1500. The sample therefore, consisted of 20 head teachers, 40 teachers of English, and 500 Form Two students. The main data collection instrument was the questionnaire, one administered to students, another to principals and finally to teachers of English. The interview schedule was administered to the teachers of English while lesson observation schedule confirmed the results from the questionnaires. The document analysis guide provided relevant information on acquisition and utilization of instructional media in English teaching and learning. This study used the test-retest (coefficient of stability) method to estimate the degree of reliability of the instruments. The study relied on face validity procedures using three sets of experts. Data analysis was done using descriptive statistics (frequency counts, percentages, and means).

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Teacher Preparedness on Use of Media

This section highlighted following: teachers' professional qualification, teaching experience, in-service training and teacher preparation for classroom instruction in English.

3.2 Professional Qualification

English Teachers' Questionnaire (ETQ) sought to find out the highest level of professional qualification of the teachers. The analysis of the data showed that all the teachers (40) who participated in the study were professionally trained teachers. Thirty five teachers (87.5%) were holders of Bachelor's Degree in Education (B.Ed) while five teachers (12.5%) held Diploma in Education. This meant that they underwent courses on use of media for English teaching and therefore they knew the importance and use of instructional media in teaching.

This was further confirmed by ETQ which sought to find out the extent to which courses in instructional media during pre-service training prepared the teachers for English teaching in secondary schools. Majority (80%) of teachers held the view that instructional media courses prepared them well for English teaching in secondary schools. Eighteen teachers (45%) viewed pre-service course as having prepared them very adequately while fourteen (35%) concurred that the courses prepared them adequately for English teaching. Fairly adequate five teachers (12.5%), inadequate two teachers (5%) were B.Ed graduates and very inadequate one teacher (2.5%) was a diploma in Education graduate. This showed the gap left by pre-service training course. The problem could be solved by a post training course which would prepare teachers on use of media in the curriculum (Indoshi, 1999).

3.3 Teaching Experience

ETQ sought to find out from the teachers of English how long they had taught. The research established that there were only two teachers (05%) who had taught below two years after professional qualification. The study findings indicated that four teachers (10%) had taught English for between two and four years; four teachers (10%) had taught English for between five and six years while thirty teachers (75%) had taught English for six years and above. Majority (95%) of the teachers had a teaching experience coupled with their professional qualifications; the teachers were therefore expected to be knowledgeable of the importance of instructional media during an instructional process. In the present study, a teacher who had taught for three years and above was considered as being experienced while one who had taught for less than two years considered as being inexperienced. According to Myers (2008), experienced teachers know that successful teaching depended on the application of rigorous principles and skills to the task of preparation and presentation of teaching materials.

3.4 In-service Training

The study also sought to find out from teachers of English, the in-service courses attended on use of media for English teaching. The study revealed that only twelve teachers (30%) had attended an in-service course which did not deal with use of media for English teaching. Majority of the teachers, twenty eight (70%) had never attended any in-service course since their professional certification. 70% teachers of English pointed that they had never received an invitation to attend an in-service course. In-service training was justified because of the need to have teachers keep abreast of new developments in knowledge (Shiundu & Omulando, 1992; Indoshi, 1999). In-service training helped to fill the gaps left by college training, to support innovations in the curriculum (Curzon, 2003).

3.4 Teacher Preparation for Classroom Instruction in English

The study revealed that teachers do not incorporate media in schemes of work and lesson plans (Bennaars et al., 1994).

Only ten teachers (25%) had prepared schemes of work. The thirty teachers (75%) who had not prepared schemes of work were all graduate teachers and the researcher was denied reason as to why they did not prepare them. Of the ten teachers who had prepared schemes of work, only three (7.5%) B.Ed teachers and two (5%) Diploma in Education teachers had a column that was filled with a variety of instructional media. This was the early indicator of teachers not incorporating instructional media during preparation of schemes of work.

The study revealed that only five teachers (12.5%) consistently had lesson notes while majority of teachers, thirty five (87.5%) did not prepare lesson plans. They simply picked up the English Course Book and went to class. The lesson notes availed to the researcher only contained lesson objectives and learning activities with no mention of the instructional media to be utilized. Lesson plans involved focusing on task and time during teaching (Raimes, 1983) to meet the given educational aims (Mutua & Namaswa, 1992).

Lastly, ETQ sought to find out from head teachers how often their teachers of English incorporated instructional media in their lessons. Two head teachers (10%) indicated that instructional media was never included in lesson plans at all; thirteen head teachers (65%) indicated rarely often while three head teachers (15%) indicated that teachers often included instructional resources, two head teachers (10%) said fairly often while very often was scored by none. This indicated the laxity of the school administration in ensuring that instructional media were used fully during English lessons.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

All the teachers (100%) who participated in the study were professionally trained and experienced, in practice they were not exhibiting the necessary knowledge, skill and attitude they ought to have been equipped by the pre-service training. They neither planned to teach nor used instructional media in their teaching. Therefore, pre-service and in-service teacher education programs were flawed, especially regarding use of media in instruction. This impacted negatively on teacher preparedness on use of media. Teachers were not incorporating instructional media during English teaching. 10% prepared schemes of work. Of these 10%, only five of them (12.5%) had column filled with variety of media.

4.2 Policy Recommendations

From the findings of the study, it was recommended that: i) Colleges should review their training programmes on use of instructional media. This should be done to ensure adequate course coverage on development and use of media in teaching English. School administrators should emphasize the preparation of professional records and ensure that teachers adequately incorporate various instructional media in their schemes of work and lesson plans. Teachers of English therefore, should be inducted into in-service courses on use of media for English teaching. ii) Ministry of education should integrate media technology in the teacher training programmes. iii) Ministry of Education should allocate funds in their annual budgets to secondary schools for instructional media resources.

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