

FACTORS AFFECTING THE TEACHING OF ORAL COMMUNICATION
IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF KAKAMEGA
AND VIHIGA DISTRICTS OF KENYA.

BY

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A thesis submitted to the Graduate School in partial fulfilment for the
requirements of the Degree of Master of Education in Curriculum and
Instruction of Egerton University,

NJORO, KENYA.

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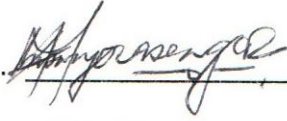
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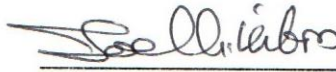
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Musonye P. Atsenga

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my visionary grandfather, John Shikami Anjeso, who having visualised the importance of education, sold his piece of land to educate my father, Francis Musonye and compelled him to educate his children. And to my only two lovely daughters, (i) Eisleen Sharon Khavochi who passed away yearning for my love, care and company while I prepared for my first year's final examinations during this programme and (ii) Mercy Sayo who was laid to rest when I was writing my Thesis.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The writing of this thesis has been made possible because of support, encouragement and invaluable contributions from many significant personalities that space might not allow mention. Nevertheless, I am indebted to my supervisors, Drs. Joel K. Kiboss and Catherine Kitetu of Egerton University; first for their great interest and commitment to my research work. Second, for their patience and sacrifice to keenly read my work and provide critical comments that created and shaped the focus to this thesis. Their scholarly advice made the writing of this thesis a reality.

Also, my profound gratitude goes to Prof. N.J. Kathuri (Registrar AA), Prof. H. Sambili (COD Curriculum and Instruction) and Prof. R. Chimera (Department of Languages and Linguistics) for reading the proposal and providing invaluable and encouraging comments. I further wish to acknowledge the guidance of Prof. J.G. Mwangi, Dean of the Faculty of Education and Human Resources on the choice of the research topic when teaching Research Methods in Education.

This study would not have been successful without the co-operation of the officers at the Western Provincial Education, Vihiga District Education and Kakamega Education offices for providing me with the necessary teachers' statistics and permission to collect the necessary data. Other key contributors to this study include heads of secondary schools, heads of department of English and teachers of English of the sampled schools in Kakamega and Vihiga districts. To all of them I say, thank you. My deep appreciation and profound gratitude go to them all. I thank my employer, the Teachers Service Commission for granting me study leave to pursue a masters degree in Education.

I have also experienced considerable support and encouragement from my family members, friends and colleagues. First, I would like to acknowledge the support, love and prayers from my parents, Mr. Francis Musonye and Mrs. Dymphina Shisiali Musonye and my brothers and sisters throughout my study programme. Second, I wish to single out Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Lusamukhka, Fanuel Kundukubi, Valentine Muramba, Moses Shililu, George Mmbele and family, Everet Shimonyo and Ernest Itenya. Others are

Emanuel Barasa, Kipng'eno Geoffrey, Livingstone Oyando, Paul Nasiali, Juma Oduoli, Ronald Inyangala, Jane Demesi, Muhati Kennedy, and Muronga Kadurenge. I cherish their support, encouragement and for being truly friends in need and deed whenever I needed them. To them all, I say thank you for the individual contribution that made me accomplish my studies on time.

I am particularly thankful to my wife Mrs. Bilha Vusha Atsenga, my roommate, Mr. Mengich Rerimoi and, my brother and sister in-law, Henry and Gladys Masilwa. I do not only recognise them for their company, patience, understanding and care, but also for specifically shouldering most of my financial and family obligations during this trying season. Consequently, they saved me from falling off the programme. I also wish to acknowledge the contribution of Rose Mulote and Josephine Karago, both secretaries in the department of Curriculum and Instruction and Violet Ondili for typing my work. To the many others who immensely contributed to the success of this piece of work in diverse ways yet I have not mentioned their names because of limited space, "MAY THE ALMIGHTY GOD BLESS YOU ABUNDANTLY". Above them all, I thank the loving, inspirational and faithful ALMIGHTY GOD for being my source of strength and hope. He has proved to me that He is ever reliable, trustful, and present in both good and bad times.

ABSTRACT

Oral communication has been included in the compulsory and examinable integrated English secondary school curriculum to help students acquire fluency in English. However, some teachers of English tend to think that this skill can be learned naturally. Therefore, the study evaluated the factors perceived by teachers of English to affect the teaching of oral communication in English language in secondary schools in Kakamega and Vihiga Districts of Kenya. Descriptive survey focusing on the secondary school teachers of English and the Heads of English Departments was used to collect data. One hundred and twenty randomly sampled teachers of English were administered a questionnaire. Thirty of the 120 teachers of English sampled were also administered a checklist. Twenty Heads of the English departments were further sampled for the interview. Descriptive statistics, mainly frequency tables and percentages were used to analyse the data. The results revealed that the teaching of oral communication was mainly affected by lack of assessment of oral skills, lack of variety and relevant instructional resources and teachers' individual speech problems. It was concluded that unless the factors affecting the teaching of oral communication are addressed, secondary school students would continue to experience articulation difficulties in English.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study.

The Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) Secondary School Curriculum emphasises the importance of English language as both compulsory and examinable subject. Furthermore, the secondary school English syllabus postulates that fluency in all aspects of the English language will enable students to perform better in all other subjects whose medium of instruction is English (KIE, 1992). But it appears that the spoken English by many secondary school students and subsequent graduates in Kenya is wanting (Ministry of Education (MOE), 1992). For instance, students experience articulation difficulties that make them mispronounce certain words and clutter in their speech, leading to many distracting interjections when speaking. Both the lack of testing of oral communication and the assumption that the acquisition of this skill can take care of itself (MOE, 1992), are perhaps some of the reasons why it is less emphasised by teachers of English language during instruction. Thus, the particular reasons contributing to students' difficulties in articulation of English language need to be evaluated. Besides, oral communication is an integral skill in English language that its teaching should not be compromised.

Oral communication runs through the KIE (1992) secondary school language syllabus from form one to form four. This depicts its importance in the teaching of English language. The contents to be covered include speech drills, debates, dramatisation, oral presentations, story telling and discussions. Others are language games, conversations,

dialogues, impromptu speech, interviews and poetry reading (KIE, 1992). Perhaps if some of these oral skills are taught objectively, students would overcome their articulation problems in English. However, the reservations registered about students' inabilities in spoken English (MOE, 1992) reflect negatively on the realisation of oral objectives in the syllabus.

The evidence about the resources used in the teaching of oral communication and their communicativeness is scanty (Mwangi, 2000). Yet the teaching of any skill requires special and adequate human and material resources to achieve the laid down objectives (Crystal & Davy, 1995). For example, instructional resources ranging from language laboratories, video tapes, radio cassettes, to available textbooks are vital in the teaching of oral communication (KIE, 1992; Nkosana, 1998). There is also need for adequate and relevant human resource in teaching oral communication (Bishop, 1995). Whereas instructional resources are vital in teaching oral skills in English, the state of the same resources in our secondary schools is largely unknown. Moreover, teachers' perceptions of teaching oral skills without the resources are also unknown. To defuse speculation, there is need to establish the resources used in schools and teachers' perceptions about them.

Writing and speaking have different yet, complementary functions in communication. However, the poor attention given to the teaching of oral communication and the assumption that acquisition of this skill can take care of itself are regrettable (MOE, 1992). Writing cannot substitute for speaking without doing a serious disservice to

speech (Crystal & Davy, 1995; Lyons 1992). Thus, any attitude by teachers that advocates for writing against speaking is likely to affect the teaching of oral communication negatively. Unfortunately, there is lack of sufficient data on this subject. Specific information on teachers' attitudes towards oral communication and their perceptions of those attitudes in teaching oral skills is lacking. Therefore, it would be premature to conclude that teachers' attitudes towards oral communication affect the teaching of oral skills without an evaluation of their perceptions.

Teachers' training background in speech work and their individual speech problems should not be ignored in teaching oral communication. Whereas training is meant to offer a teacher sound theoretical grounding in teaching, contents learned and facilities used seem to determine the quality of training (Bosire, 2001; Oluoch, 1992). In the case of oral communication, practical lessons in teaching oral skills should be stressed during teacher training programmes. However, studies on teachers' training background in oral communication and those on individual speech problems facing teachers of English are limited.

Instructional planning is important in attaining lesson and curriculum objectives during instruction (Ayot & Patel, 1992). Perhaps that is why teachers of English are asked to prepare lesson plans ahead of the English lessons (Moi University (MU), 1994). But majority of the teachers of English seem not to use the lesson plans once they are posted to teach (MOE, 1992). The problem of not using lesson plans, therefore, cannot be authoritatively blamed on the teacher training programmes. The reasons for not using the

lesson plans, specifically in oral skills and teachers' perceptions of the lesson plan are largely unknown.

However, the articulation shortcomings experienced by secondary school students (MOE, 1992) imply the presence of an anomaly in teaching oral skills. Since there is no known particular factor responsible for the problems, the need to evaluate perceptions of various factors is inevitable. Besides, studying teachers' perceptions is necessary because there is no behaviour without perceptions (Appelbaum et al, 1975). In fact, perception is a functional activity that enables the perceiver to carry out his/her purpose and helps him/her to cope with the world by assigning meanings to it (Appelbaum et al, 1975). The main goal of teaching oral skills to students is to improve their fluency in English language and to enable them meet the social, commercial and political challenges after school (KIE, 1992).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Although the instruction of oral communication is meant to improve the acquisition and mastery of vocabulary, the teaching of this skill is less emphasised by the teachers of English language in Kenya (MOE, 1992). Consequently, most secondary school students experience severe oral communication difficulties as is evidenced by their mispronunciation of certain words in English. They are also faced with cluttering or repeated distracting interjections in their speech. This stands in their way of effective communication. Some of the roles of instruction in speech work are to assist students to overcome articulation weaknesses and make them fluent orators (Nkosana, 1998; Nyota, 1997). But given the continued speech articulation problems that students experience,

there exists a need to evaluate factors that are perceived by teachers of English to affect the teaching of oral communication. Teachers' perceptions of those factors might help in determining the trend of their teaching behaviours. The study isolated secondary schools in Kakamega and Vihiga Districts as cases of research because majority of the schools in the two districts are favoured by easy accessibility and close proximity that reduced on transport and subsistence costs.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the key factors perceived by secondary school teachers of English to affect the teaching of oral communication in the integrated English curriculum.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study was to identify the factors inhibiting the teaching of oral skills and teachers' perceptions of how those factors affect their teaching. Consequently, the following specific study objectives were utilized in evaluating factors affecting the teaching of oral communication and seeking teachers' perceptions' of those factors. To determine teachers' perceptions of,

- (a) the nature of instructional planning for oral skills in terms of:-
 - (i) Assessment of oral skills at national level
 - (ii) Instructional resources and
 - (iii) Lesson planning and instruction
- (b) their attitudes towards oral communication

(c) their background in speech work in terms of:-

- (i) Training background in speech work and
- (ii) Individual speech problems

1.5 Research Questions

The study sought to answer the following research questions.

Do teachers' perceptions of,

- (a) the nature of instructional planning for oral skills affect the teaching of oral communication?
- (b) their attitudes towards oral communication affect the teaching of oral skills?
- (c) their background in speech work affect the teaching of oral communication?

1.6 Assumptions of the Study

The following assumptions were made about the study.

- (a) All respondents involved in the study were honest and co-operative in providing the required data.
- (b) Teachers in Kakamega and Vihiga Districts experience problems in teaching oral communication

1.7 Significance of the Study

The teaching of oral communication in Kenya is less emphasised by teachers of English. This leads to English language articulation difficulties by students. Therefore, there was need to investigate the factors that are perceived to affect the teaching of oral skills in

secondary schools. An understanding of such factors would help curriculum implementers and administrators to facilitate decision-making, planning and implementation for improved teaching of the skill. Colleges and Universities that train teachers of English language would also find the results of this study important in reviewing their programmes. In essence, it was hoped that the findings of this study would benefit language curriculum developers, teachers of languages and educational administrators. Besides, parents and students of Kakamega and Vihiga districts in particular, and Kenya in general would find them beneficial. The findings would help them to understand the factors that are perceived to affect the teaching of oral communication in English and the suggested solutions to the existing problem. Since the problem seems to touch more on curriculum implementation technicalities, the roles of teachers and heads of department of English were taken into account. According to Kathuri (1991), it is only possible when one focuses on curriculum implementation that he/she is able to interpret learning outcomes and relate them to the possible determinants.

1.8 Limitations and Delimitation of the Study

- (a) This study did not involve all the teachers of English in Kakamega and Vihiga Districts because of the limited time set for it.
- (b) Accessibility to some areas in Western province, inadequate funds and time allocated for the study also limited a wide spread sampling of teachers of English in the province.

Besides assuming that the objectives set, the research design adopted, the sampling method used and data collection instruments chosen were deemed adequate to provide representative data of the factors affecting the teaching of oral communication in English, the nature of the study calls for caution in the interpretation and generalization of its results. Precisely, caution in the interpretation of results is necessitated by the fact that only survey research instruments: questionnaire, checklist and interview guide were used to obtain the data utilised in the study from English teachers in Vihiga and Kakamega districts alone.

1.9 Definition of Terms

The following terms have been used to give meaning and focus to the study.

Oral Communication: Refers to the ability to use verbal skills in (English) language.

Factors affecting: Refers to factors that inhibit teaching or reasons that stand in the way of teaching oral skills.

Teaching of oral communication: Refers to guiding and directing students to acquire verbal skills in (English) language.

Teachers' characteristics: Taken in this study to mean teachers' attitudes towards written communication, individual speech problems and their training level.

Instructional resources: Refers to both human and material inputs used in the teaching and learning of oral skills in English language (Skager et al, 1978, Walkin, 1994). They include teachers, textbooks, audio and audio-visual teaching aids, radio, television, video decks and language laboratory.

Trained teachers: Involves Bachelor of Education degree holders, Post graduate diploma in education certificate holders and diploma in education certificate teachers who have a bias of English as a teaching subject at secondary school level in Kenya.

Untrained teachers: Refers to the Kenya secondary school Advanced level (KACE) and the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education level (KCSE) certificate holders as well as degree holders who have not been trained as teachers but teach English at secondary school level.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This section reviews literature and research studies related to factors affecting curriculum implementation and how they relate to the teaching of oral communication. These include; (i) An Overview of English language in Kenya, (ii) Constraints encountered in teaching Oral Communication in Kenya and (iii) English Curriculum Implementation.

2.2 An Overview of English Language Education in Kenya

The English medium project was first launched in 1957 so as to introduce English as the medium of instruction throughout the school system in Kenya (Oluoch, 1992). This was because the colonial government at that time felt that the mother tongues were unsuitable as educational media (Oluoch, 1992). Following independence, the Kenya government supported it for almost a decade. However, in March 1976, a ministerial circular was sent out stating that the mother tongue was the most suitable language to use as a medium of instruction in the lower primary classes (Oluoch, 1992). Although this marked the official death of English medium project in lower primary classes, it did not affect English as the medium of instruction in the upper primary classes and secondary schools. To date, English remains the medium of instruction in Kenya's school system.

As a medium of instruction and an official language in Kenya, fluency in both written and oral communication in English is emphasised (Ayot & Patel, 1992; KIE, 1992). In order to achieve fluency, students must be encouraged to habitually use the language

while in and out of school (MOE, 1992). Furthermore, schools need to set a side time for debates and public speaking competitions. These would enable students to (i) practice what they have learned, (ii) assess themselves and (iii) compare their competence in speech. While some schools have attempted to introduce debates and public speaking competitions in English, others have neglected such exercises (MOE, 1992).

Whereas fluency in speech serves vital socio-economic functions to secondary school leavers, the teaching of oral communication in Kenya remains a problem. Perhaps complaints about the language used by secondary school students are testimonies to the existing dilemma in speech instruction (MOE, 1992). Despite the concern about the secondary school graduates' fluency in communication, the government continues to invest heavily in training, employment and sustenance of teachers of English. On its part, the Ministry of Education (MOE) encourages the development of oral communication in schools through activities like the national drama and music festivals (MOE, 1992). But these festivals only provide a narrow space for few students to exercise their competence in speaking English. Although negligence has been noted in excluding certain measures meant to achieve oral communication objectives in English (MOE, 1992), lack of common language policy approach on this issue is unlikely to escape blame.

Individual school language policies require students to use English while in and during all the school functions as a condition for admission (MOE, 1992). But it seems that it is upon the schools through the departments of English to ensure that their students achieve fluency in English language. Besides, speech work is a compulsory topic from form one

to form four (KIE, 1992). However, the increasing number of secondary school students facing speech articulation problems (MOE, 1992), challenges the realisation of speech objectives in English. Consequently, there is need to understand the constraints encountered by teachers of English in teaching oral communication.

2.3 Constraints Encountered in the Teaching of Oral Communication in Kenya

Although the curriculum implementation process is faced with problems unique to individual countries, most of the constraints encountered in teaching particular subjects in the curriculum are similar (Mnkandla 2000, Nkosana 1998; Oluoch 1992). To this end, continuous evaluation of the subject should be done to determine the implementation weaknesses and address them. But many countries, however, do not undertake the process of continuous evaluation of their education curriculum (Oluoch, 1992; Ondiek, 1986).

The absence of continuous evaluation of the curriculum is likely to compromise the realisation of some of the educational goals in respective subject areas. Specifically, the achievement of oral objectives in the English curriculum in Kenyan secondary schools is contested (MOE, 1992). Although guidelines and records showing how far speech objectives have been taught and achieved in French and German exist, such are missing in the English language (KIE, 1992). Therefore, the desire to examine and understand the constraints experienced in teaching oral communication in English is relevant to the study (Mwangi, 2000; Republic of Kenya (ROK), 1999).

2.3.1 Lack of formal Assessment of Oral Skills

The integrated English curriculum was introduced in Kenya in 1985 at the inception of the 8-4-4 system of education (KIE, 1992; Oluoch, 1992). Somehow, the integration of language and literature made the new English curriculum wide and congested. As such, it could not be covered in the four-year secondary school period (Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC), 1997). Following the demand for syllabus coverage, most teachers of English tend to put more emphasis on examinable skills like writing and comprehension at the expense of the unexamined skills like speech and listening (MOE, 1992).

Surprisingly, the Ministry of Education acknowledges that lack of assessment in oral communication has made teachers of English to think that oral skills can be learned naturally (MOE 1992). By the time of this study, the same ministry had done very little to change its examination procedures to address such impediments. Ironically, even the new education curriculum proposed by the Koech commission (ROK, 1999; Mwangi 2000), has not addressed the lack of assessment in oral communication in English. As things stand, the status quo (non-assessment of oral communication) in English might not change. Since both oral and written skills are important forms of communication (KIE, 1992), the former should also be assessed, as is the case in German and French. But assessment should not be seen as an end in itself. Rather, it should be viewed as one of the means to establish the achievement of oral objectives in the syllabus.

2.3.2 The Nature of Instructional Planning

During curriculum development, both time and planning go hand in hand. Instructional planning depends on the time available, while the actual utilization of that time rests on the curriculum plan (Ayot & Patel, 1992; Oluoch, 1992; Ondiek, 1986). For instance, instructional planning involves the use of a syllabus book, schemes of work, lesson plans and record of workbook.

Apparently, it seems that teachers of English have not made full use of these instructional planning items (Ayot & Patel, 1992). According to the Ministry of Education there was inadequate instructional planning in English (MOE; 1992; MOE, 1996). These reports observed that while some teachers had schemes of work, they lacked lesson plans and adequate records. In some schools, the schemes of work had been recycled for more than three years while in other schools there was no trace of the syllabus book (MOE, 1996).

Although there is inadequate planning in the teaching of English, little is revealed about the nature of planning in oral communication. There are no details on the use of lesson plans and records of work in teaching speech work (MOE, 1992; MOE, 1996). However, the importance of teaching oral communication is evident when the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC 1997) cites the effect of first language on English as one of the main factors affecting students' performance in composition writing. Teachers of English are also blamed for neglecting oral skills (MOE, 1992, KNEC 1997). Whereas planning is important, the reasons for lack of effective planning especially, in teaching

oral skills are largely unknown. Besides, planning by itself does not necessarily mean teaching and, therefore, a solution to articulation problems faced by students.

2.3.3 Lack of Variety of Instructional Resources

The selection and preparation of curriculum materials and equipment is one of the most important tasks after designing a new curriculum. During the preparation, the question of relevance, variety and costs of the materials should be considered. Oluoch (1992) argues that common and elective learning activities and core extensive learning activities require the preparation of a variety of curriculum materials.

As important as this may be, the introduction of the 8-4-4 system of education in Kenya failed to address the preparation and production of instructional materials in oral communication adequately (Abagi, 1997; Waihenya, 2001). For example, while the teachers of English were not fully in-serviced to cope with the changes in the new English curriculum, most of the instructional resources were produced when the system was already on track (MOE, 1992). Moreover, it seems that little attention has since been paid to the preparation and production of the instructional resources in the teaching of oral communication.

Although books may be there, there is little evidence of the production of the audio materials for teaching oral communication (MOE, 1992; MOE 1996). Ironically, the ministry expects teachers of English to ensure that secondary school students speak fluent English because of its critical value in society (KIE, 1992). The problem of instructional

resources might have been worsened by the cost sharing system in Kenya. Due to economic hardships, many parents have resorted to purchasing only those critical resources that can help their children pass examinations (Waihenya, 2001). This seems to have adversely affected oral communication because it is not one of the parents' examination priorities. While the need for instructional resources might be important, their absence should not be an excuse for lack of emphasis in teaching oral skills. Instead, a level of commitment to the teaching of oral skills should be viewed through improvisation.

2.3.4 Teachers' Attitudes Towards Oral Communication

The Kenya's 8-4-4 education system seems to put a lot of emphasis on written skills than oral ones in English (KIE, 1992). This is because performance in school examinations tends to rely more on written than oral skills. Evidently, the high demand for passing written examinations has made teachers of English to emphasise teaching more of written than oral communication (KNEC, 1997; MOE, 1992).

Interestingly, English teachers believe that fluency in speech has an influence on fluency in written communication (KIE, 1992; KNEC, 1997). Yet, whereas there are students' progress reports in written skills, the same are absent in oral communication. On the other hand, many schools try to encourage the culture of school debates and public speaking competitions to cover up for speech deficiencies (MOE, 1996). Unfortunately, the frequency with which these activities are carried out and the precision of supervision

that goes into them are contestable. For instance, the ministry (MOE, 1996) revealed that the same activities in most schools lack proper and clear supervision.

Although teachers seem to put a lot of emphasis on written than oral skills, there is no evidence showing that all the students' problems in written communication have been addressed. Report of poor performance in national written examinations in English are a proof of this assertion (KNEC, 1997). Besides, presence of progress reports for written skills in English are not necessary evidence of the realisation of the objectives of the same skills. What are needed in the case of teaching oral skills, are the right perceptions and attitudes towards oral communication. This is because perceptions and attitudes help to provide us with expectations or assumptions about reality (Appelbaum et al, 1975).

2.3.5 The Nature of Training in the Teaching of Speech Work

Secondary school teachers of English should be trained to teach all the skills in the integrated English curriculum while in college. However, the hurdles experienced in teaching oral communication at secondary school level may be linked to learning experiences in the teacher training colleges. For instance, the teaching methods, assessment procedures, teaching facilities and equipment used in secondary schools may not be significantly different from those utilised in colleges (Bosire, 2001). Thus, the problem of teaching oral communication may not be at secondary school level alone. It seems to stretch up to teacher training colleges.

Unless the teaching methods, facilities, equipment and assessment procedures in oral communication at college level are changed the teaching at secondary school level might remain unchanged. Perhaps adequate training should involve practical lessons in oral skills, use of audio and audio-visual resources and a measure of determining the achievement of oral objectives. Just as Oluoch (1992) asserts, teacher educators should be people who have the theoretical grounding relevant to the school curriculum and, should have had ample practical experience in teaching and curriculum development work.

Unfortunately, the relevance of the training given to the teachers of English seems not to embrace practical skills for oral communication. There is absence of audio and audio-visual facilities and equipment (MOE, 1992; Waihenya, 2001). Nevertheless, the handicap of training English teachers to handle oral communication in secondary schools remains a challenge both at diploma and degree levels. While there is need to restructure the training of teachers in teaching oral skills, the expenses involved in such a programme might be enormous. But the need to realise oral communication objectives in the curriculum cannot be underestimated either.

2.3.6 Teachers' Individual Speech Problems

The value of a language is highly dependent on the ability of its speakers to communicate that language well (KIE, 1992; Mohammed & Patel, 1993). However, for communication in English to be realised, good articulation and pronunciation of the English words are necessary. Sometimes teachers experience individual speech problems

that are likely to affect the flow of communication. This is critical because students depend on the same teachers for direction in speech. Incidentally, teachers' mistakes in speech, would be confused by the students for the best articulation and pronunciation ever acquired in the classroom (Bishop, 1995). Often, it would be difficult for the teacher to engage his/her students in a dialogue to identify their weaknesses and assist them to overcome those difficulties if he/she has similar speech problems.

To underscore the importance of fluency in speech, the government of Kenya is committed to the training of all its teachers before they are posted to respective schools (MOE, 1996; Oluoch, 1992; Otiende et al, 1992). Furthermore, the English medium project (1957-1976) and the radio teacher programme are examples of past government efforts to expose students to good speech. Although the government is committed to train its teachers (Oluoch, 1992), the attainment of oral communication objectives in teacher training colleges and universities is questionable. For instance, the speech problems experienced by secondary school students tend to negate the relevance of training given in speech work.

Apparently, the many complaints about secondary school students' inability to communicate fluently in English (Mwangi, 2000; MOE, 1992) might not be unrelated to the teachers' individual speech problems. However, there is no sufficient evidence to suggest that those speech problems are inherited from or caused by the teachers of English. What looks evident is the articulation handicap students seem to find themselves in despite the commitment by the government to train teachers of English.

An evaluation of teachers' individual speech problems would, therefore, assist in making comparisons with students' speech difficulties.

2.4 English Curriculum Implementation

In order to understand the problems the teaching of oral communication in Kenya faces, experiences of the practice of English curriculum implementation from other countries would provide insight into addressing them. This section dwells on the findings and observations from varied curriculum implementation experiences with specific reference to the teaching of oral communication.

2.4.1 Assessment of Oral Skills

The manner in which teaching and learning are carried out represents the implementation of a particular curriculum as mediated by the curriculum planners (Ayot et al, 1992; Bishop, 1995; Peresuh, 1996). Also, a curriculum is said to be working if the objectives set by the planners are being achieved. However, to determine the achievement of curriculum objectives, both formative and summative assessments are necessary. For instance, Nkosana (1998) observed that the non-inclusion of assessment of oral communication in secondary school examinations in Zimbabwe had a negative backwash effect on the teaching of English, particularly the teaching of oral skills. Assessment of students' abilities serves many curriculum functions that should not be ignored in oral communication. These include the establishment of students' entry behaviour, realization of subject objectives and curriculum change.

According to Love (1997), analysis of students' spoken and written mistakes in sciences is an appropriate tool for interactive teaching. Furthermore, assessment helps the teacher to understand the nature and extent of students' difficulties before assisting them (Nkosana, 1998; Nyota, 1997; Love 1997). Whereas the researchers do not reveal the preferred mode of assessment, the Ministry of Education in Kenya recommends the use of both formative and summative forms of evaluation (KNEC, 1997; MOE, 1992). Unfortunately, majority of the teachers seem to emphasise on the terminal (summative) assessments taken at the end of form four in secondary schools (Nation Team (NT), 2001).

Although many people might complain about the expenses in developing oral tests and consulting experts, Nkosana (1998) says the expertise for constructing tests in oral skills in English can be found locally. Since oral skills in French and German are examined in Kenya, the teachers of these subjects would assist in providing the expertise required for constructing oral tests in English. All that the responsible authorities would need to do is to consult them. Although assessment of oral skills helps teachers to get feedback from their students it should not necessarily determine the teaching. Instead, emphasis should be placed on the overall achievement of oral objectives in the curriculum. Furthermore, there appears a need to de-emphasise the role of national examinations in English to ensure oral skills are taught.

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2.4.2 Planning for Teaching

Adequate planning for teaching in oral communication as in any other skills involves the utilization of the syllabus book, schemes of work, lesson plans and the records of work (Ayot & Patel, 1992; Bright, 1992; Nyota, 1997). In his attempt to create focus on the question of planning in teaching, Malamah-Thomas (1991) argues that, lack of a lesson plan during instruction is a risk to both the lesson and lesson objectives. But a lesson plan by itself is meaningless unless, a teacher translates it into action. Only action can determine the success of a lesson plan in accomplishing curriculum objectives during instruction (Malamah-Thomas, 1991; Moi University (MU), 1994). However, most teachers tend to neglect the use of lesson plans immediately they are posted to teach, arguing that their students still pass their examination even though they do not use lesson plans when teaching (MOE, 1992). But teachers tend to forget so fast that such examinations do not test all the objectives in a particular curriculum.

Besides, success in such language examinations is not obviously success in using the language for both written and oral purposes. In essence the need for planning during oral lessons should be perceived beyond passing examinations and the objectives of lesson planning appreciated. According to Ayot & Patel (1992), the record of work is more important than the scheme of work because it states exactly what the teacher has done (self-evaluation) and students' performance. But this does not mean that the scheme of work is not important. Rather, the schemes of work give the teacher direction on what to do and when to do it. Ayot & Patel (1992), asserted that the syllabus book is equally

important because it contains the national goals and subject objectives that define and identify the subjects and topics to be covered.

From the foregoing, it appears that different forms of planning in a subject serve different and varied functions in education. In other words, the forms of planning are dependent on each other. For example, research findings on instructional planning reveal that lack of adequate instructional planning may lead to biased curriculum coverage and achievement of educational objectives (Nyota, 1997; Ezewu, 1995). Although the preceding discussions on planning are general, they are relevant to oral communication in English. However, there is limited evidence as to whether inadequate planning affects the teaching of oral communication in Kenyan schools.

2.4.3 Variety of Instructional Resources

The importance of the preparation and production of curriculum materials and equipment in curriculum development projects cannot be overemphasised (Oluoch, 1992; Peresuh, 1996; Thondhlana, 1998). The materials and equipment are important because they are meant to assist the teacher and the students in articulating the curriculum. As such, they have their unique and significant contributions in curriculum development like other components of the curriculum (Kiboss, 1998). For instance, a tape recorder, radio, television set and sound projectors are the necessary audio and audio-visual resources for teaching oral skills.

As important as this may be, most secondary schools in Kenya still rely on textbooks alone when teaching oral skills in English (KIE, 1991; MOE, 1992). Although this may be due to financial disabilities, certain efforts should be made to provide variety of instructional resources in our schools. Accordingly, variety of instructional materials and approaches in English are necessary to produce graduates who are not only intellectually alert but also able to explore and benefit significantly from what their classroom environments can offer them (Mammino, 1998; Mnkandla 2000; Thondhlana, 1998).

Peresuh (1996) underscores the importance of variety of materials by insisting on their constant evaluation. To him, the evaluation of instructional resources ensures that they are serving the curriculum purpose for which they were recommended. He further suggests that teacher educators who can take a broader view of the use of the materials than the classroom teachers should do the evaluation exercise. But it is ironical that Peresuh (1996) forgets that it is those classroom teachers who are also finally and equally involved in utilising the instructional materials and not only the teacher educators. This does not of course mean that the services of teacher educators in the exercise are not essential. However, the role of the classroom teacher should not be underestimated. Although the studies reviewed above tend to recognise the need for variety of resources in curriculum implementation, they fail to mention the question of adequacy and relevance of the same resources. An evaluation of the relevance and adequate supply of such resources would be an asset as a purpose of this study.

2.4.4 Written and Oral forms of Communication

Teaching as a profession is always concerned with the transmission of knowledge. However, its success largely depends on the way the teachers communicate verbally during instruction (Ayot & Patel, 1992). Of course this does not in any way mean that non-verbal communication is less important. However, the type of communication, which should be allowed in the classroom, is that which promotes learning rather than the one that is just used to get feedback and control when the teacher and pupils exchange ideas and learning experiences (Ayot & Patel, 1992; Freire, 1973; Kiboss, 1998).

Essentially, written and oral forms of communication should not confront each other in search of supremacy when they should be seen to complement each other (Crystal & Davy, 1995; Lyons 1992; Mnkandla, 2000). Distinctively, they should have independent and unique functions in communication. Thus, the feeling that any one medium of communication is better than the other should not arise because speech cannot in any sense be derived from writing (Crystal & Davy, 1995). If anything, all the patterns of our languages are firmly established orally before we learn how to write them.

Although there is limited empirical evidence of teachers' attitudes and perceptions of oral communication in English, their effects on teaching oral skills should not be ignored. According to Applbaum et al (1975), there is always a need to examine and evaluate our beliefs and views of activities especially where things seem not to be working as expected. He further argues that in education and communication we may be assuming

that things are working well while events are leading us to a crisis. This may equally be true of the teaching of oral skills in English.

2.4.5 Selection and Training of Teachers of English

Fluency in speaking English language by the teacher is not only an asset in teaching but also a resourceful linguistic input to his/her students (Brazil, 1997; Cook, 1997; Duke, 1990). This is because the teacher is often viewed as a model by students and should always strive to improve on what he/she has acquired. In advocating for the improved manpower training in Ghana, Opubor (1998) stressed the significant relationship between investment in quality human resource and economic development. To him, the economic development of Ghana and other African countries was dependent on the quality of the human resource to be produced. However, this might not be possible unless the selection procedures are made relevant to the training itself.

According to Ayot & Patel (1992), training occurs when a learner achieves mastery of performing certain acts as a result of the systematically organised programme. But whether this is true or not in Kenya remains to be seen. However, the education of any country is as good as the implementation unit of its curriculum (Bishop, 1995; Bosire, 2001). The requirement for fluency in oral communication is so critical that it should not be confined to the teacher trainees alone. Efforts should also be made to improve on the services of the regular teachers. For instance, it has been established that although some people have studied language and passed their examinations well, they still fail to speak that language fluently (Mohammed & Vuzo, 1993; Mukorera, 2000). This is because

such people might have been subjected to more written than oral examinations that had little to do with fluency in speech. A teachers' competence in a language should, thus, be determined by both written and oral forms of examinations (Mohammed & Vuzo, 1993).

2.4.6 Individual Speech Problems

According to Ayot & Patel (1992), a teacher who is trained should make every attempt to read and consult widely on the subject in order to keep his/her mind up to date with the newest information in it. For example, if a teacher wants to communicate something to the students, he/she must understand what he/she wants to communicate and then be able to communicate it effectively. A teacher who encounters difficulties in speaking a language is likely to experience language transferability problems and may pass the same to his/her students (Brazil, 1997; Mbaabu, 1991; Wilkinson, 1992). Therefore, students should not be solely blamed for speech articulation problems because they remain products of their education systems and living symbols of their teachers (Bishop, 1995, Eshiwani, 1993).

Although this might be relevant to Kenya, the particular speech problems that are likely to be transferred from teachers to students are not mentioned. But, absence of data on this issue is not equivalent to absence of a relationship between speech problems experienced by teachers of English and their students. Also, the purpose of evaluating the speech problems by teachers cannot be compromised by the imagined relationships.

2.5 Theoretical Considerations

This study is based on the modern information theory traced to Shannon and Weaver and, the general systems theory developed by Bertalanffy (Hudson, 1996; Jansen & Steinberg, 1994). The modern information theory emphasises that the information flows within systems must be investigated, assessed and related to other parts of the system under investigation. The general systems theory on the other hand describes a system as a whole, which consists of several interrelated subsystems characteristically independent of the other. The teaching of oral communication is thus viewed as a system.

The selected elements affecting the teaching of oral communication as highlighted in the literature review form the interrelated subsystems in this study. The teaching of oral communication could be realised if all the factors perceived to affect its teaching are understood. This is important because the factors need each other in order to realise the objective of systematic functioning. As such, they have independent but interrelated purposeful characteristics of achieving the objectives of teaching oral communication.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section presents a number of logically related aspects of research methodology, which enabled the researcher to understand the study. These include the research design, the population, sample and sampling procedure. Others are instrumentation, data collection, variables and data analysis.

3.2 The Research Design

The research design for this study was descriptive survey. Descriptive survey research design was adopted to obtain pertinent and precise information concerning the current status of the teaching of oral communication in Kakamega and Vihiga Districts. Since the literature review revealed that the factors studied are known to affect the teaching of oral communication, a descriptive survey was necessary to understand teachers' perceptions of these factors. This was made possible by using a questionnaire that required the respondents' affirmation or negation of the factors sought. A survey study as such, was conducted to collect detailed descriptions of the existing phenomena with the intent of employing data to justify the current conditions and practices and hence make more intelligent plans for improving them (Kathuri & Pals, 1993; Koul, 1992). In this study, the phenomenon studied is the teaching of oral communication in secondary schools of Kakamega and Vihiga Districts.

3.3 Population

There are 394 secondary school teachers of English in Kakamega and Vihiga Districts. From this population, 196 are male and 198 are female. Vihiga District alone has 210 English teachers of whom 114 are male and 96 are female (Vihiga District Education Statistics (VDES), 2000). In Kakamega District there are 184 English teachers of whom 102 are female and 82 are male (Kakamega District Education Statistics (KDES), 2000). The two districts have a total of 199 trained English degree teachers, 149 trained English diploma teachers and 46 untrained both degree graduates and secondary school leavers. In Kakamega District alone there are 159 trained degree and diploma graduate teachers of English and 25 untrained teachers of English while in Vihiga District there are 189 trained degree and diploma graduate teachers of English and 21 untrained teachers of English.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

According to Borg and Gall (1983), a survey research requires a minimum of 100 subjects in the major subgroup and between 20 to 50 respondents in the minor subgroup. As such, the sample size for this study was 120 subjects taken out of the 394 teachers of English in Kakamega and Vihiga Districts in the major subgroup to cater for attrition (Mwangi, 1996). The number of respondents for the first minor sub-group was 60 (50.3%) female teachers of English and a similar number for male teachers in the second minor sub-group representing 49.7% of the total population. According to Leedy (1985), the following factors should be considered when choosing the sample size: (a) the

homogeneity of the sample frame, (b) resources available, (c) manpower, (d) time and, (e) the size of the population.

Therefore, the stratified random sampling method was used to ensure a fair and equal representation and distribution of teachers across the two districts by sex and training. Kathuri and Pals (1993) recommend that this method be used when the population to be sampled is heterogeneous in terms of certain required characteristics. The type of stratified random sampling used in this study was the proportionate random sampling, in which the same sampling fraction was used for all the strata represented in the sample. Precisely, each fraction of 49.7% (Males) and 50.3% (Females) of the 11.7% (46) untrained teachers, 37.8% (149) trained diploma teachers and 50.5% (199) degree teachers were each sampled from the total population of 394 teachers of English in the study.

Teachers in each stratum of the 46 untrained, 149 trained diploma and 199 trained degree teachers formed three sampling frames and were arranged in alphabetical order according to their last names in each sampling frame. In every stratum, a teacher was assigned a serial number and a table of random numbers used to select the subjects in each stratum according to their respective sampling fraction.

Teachers were arranged and listed in terms of their training levels and the required number reflecting their sex sampled from each strata. The 120 respondents sampled from the 394 teachers of English were each given a questionnaire to fill and hand over to the

researcher. The same stratified sampling procedure was employed on the 120 teachers to come up with the 30 teachers of English on whom the checklist was administered. Thus, there were 4 (11.7%) untrained teachers, 15 (50.5%) trained degree and 11 (37.8%) diploma trained teachers with each group having an equal number of male and female subjects. Besides, 20 Heads of English Departments were further sampled for the interview

3.5 Instrumentation

The researcher developed three research instruments. These instruments were: (a) questionnaire for teachers (b) checklist used by the researcher to counter-check the responses made by teachers and (c) Interview guide for heads of English department. The questionnaire consisted of items intended to elicit information from teachers of English on the factors affecting the teaching of oral communication and their suggestions for improvement. It was given to all the 120 respondents selected for the study.

Items in the questionnaire were based on the researcher's experience and the understanding of the teaching of oral communication at the secondary school level. The questions in the questionnaire were designed to evaluate teachers' views about the teaching of oral communication. Since the literature review had indicated that the said factors are perceived to inhibit the teaching of oral skills, teachers' responses were either meant to affirm or negate that position.

The checklist was applied to 30 teachers randomly chosen from a sample of 120 respondents on whom was administered the questionnaire. This checklist contained items that were used to verify observable items that appeared on the teachers' questionnaire. The interview schedule was, however, used to obtain detailed information from heads of English department in Kakamega and Vihiga Districts. The schedule also helped the researcher in exploring all areas in the survey that might have contributed to resolving the research problem. The questionnaire is shown in Appendix A, the checklist appears in Appendix B, and the interview schedule in Appendix C.

3.6 Validation of Instruments

Validation of the three instruments involved piloting the questionnaire and the checklist on 20 teachers of English while the interview guide was used on 6 Heads of English departments in secondary schools outside the study area. This was done in Butere-Mumias district to ensure that the targeted population had no prior knowledge to the study. The formula for KR-21 was used to calculate reliability coefficient. The questionnaire met a reliability coefficient of 0.79 alpha to be accepted.

The checklist was piloted to gauge respondents' honesty, understanding and consistency in interpreting the questionnaire. The interview guide was reviewed to delete any inadequate wording and ambiguity in the sentence structures and ensured it created room for probing the interviewee. Validation of instruments was necessary to ensure their accuracy or consistency in measurement, thus avoiding threats to internal validity (Mwangi, 1996). The pilot study ensured common understanding and interpretation of

the items from the three research instruments. In cases where ambiguity was realised during the study the researcher made necessary clarifications to the respondents.

3.7 Data Collection

Permission to conduct research in Kakamega and Vihiga Districts was sought from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. After the permission was granted, letters of authority to conduct research in the two districts were requested from the Western Provincial Education Office, Vihiga District Education Office, and Kakamega District Education Office. The researcher in person contacted the teachers concerned and their head teachers seeking for their co-operation in the study. A letter of introduction and explanation of the purpose of the study was handed to the teachers of English and their head teachers by the researcher upon visiting the schools concerned.

During this time, the 120 teachers were given the questionnaire by the researcher to solicit their responses. The definition of the term 'affect' to denote inhibiting or hindering the teaching of oral skills in English was explained to teachers as they were given the questionnaire. The 30 teachers whose responses were check-listed were also informed about the purpose of check-listing their responses. Also, the 20 Heads of English Departments purposely sampled for the interview were informed of the intentions of the interview and asked to prepare ahead of time.

The investigator visited the schools again after three weeks to collect the completed questionnaires, to checklist the responses of the 30 teachers and to interview the heads of

English department. The researcher picked the questionnaires in person and went through them to ensure they were dully filled. In cases where respondents had not filled all the sections, the researcher talked to individual respondents to ensure they filled the particular sections after addressing their problems.

3.8 Variables

The study derived its variables from the factors affecting the teaching of oral communication in secondary schools of Kakamega and Vihiga Districts. The following were considered to be the independent variables: Teachers’ perceptions of, (i) the nature of instructional planning for oral skills (ii) their attitudes towards oral communication and (iii) their background in speech work. The teaching of oral communication was viewed as the dependent variable because it is affected by the said factors.

Table 3.1: Variables and Their Analysis

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	DEPENDENT VARIABLES	STATISTICS USED
1. Assessment of oral skills	Teaching oral communication	Percentages and Frequency tables
2. Instructional resources		“
3. Lesson planning and instruction		“
4. Attitudes towards oral communication.		“
5. Training background in speech work.		“
6. Individual speech problems		“

3.9 Data Analysis

After the data was collected, it was critically examined to facilitate answering the research questions. The completed questionnaires were evaluated for errors before subjecting them to analysis. This was to ensure they were complete and clear in answering the respective questions. Responses to each variable were tabulated and grouped accordingly. Tables and percentages were used to summarise the data. These created the vital statistics that were used to describe the data presented and discussed in chapter four.

The checklist and interview data were important in ascertaining and clarifying the responses made by teachers of English. The interview also provided comments and experiences of what was practically happening in the field. The comments and experiences gathered were grouped, compared and reported in respective tables.

In a nutshell, both quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis employing descriptive statistics were used to explain the results. The quantitative method was used to analyse quantifiable responses, while the qualitative method was employed to assess the varied responses.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 RESULTS

This chapter describes the results on factors perceived by Kakamega and Vihiga District English teachers to affect the teaching of oral communication in integrated English. A total of 120 English teachers were sampled for the study and given a questionnaire to fill. Of the 120 questionnaires administered, only 104 fully filled questionnaires were collected. They include 9 (64.3%) from untrained teachers, 36 (80%) from trained diploma teachers, and 59 (96.7%) from trained degree teachers. The remaining 16 questionnaires were either partially filled or not returned by the respondents. The checklist was administered to 24 English teachers. The interviews with 20 heads of English department helped in confirming and elaborating on issues teachers could not communicate in the questionnaire. In the preceding section, the findings are reported in form of frequency tables and percentages.

4.1.1 Lack of Assessment of Oral Skills

The process of assessment in a subject is essentially the process of determining to what extent the program of a curriculum and instruction is actually realizing the educational objectives. Since oral communication in English is not normally assessed at the national level, the realization of the oral objectives in the curriculum may not be feasible. Following this, teachers views on whether lack of assessment of oral communication at national level affect its teaching were sought (Table 4.1)

Table 4.1: Responses on whether Lack of Assessment of Oral Skills Affect the Teaching of Oral Communication

Qualifications	Responses (%)		Total
	It affects	It does not affect	
Degree	72.9	27.1	100.0
Diploma	69.4	30.6	100.0
Untrained	67.7	32.3	100.0

The findings in table 4.1 above on teachers’ perceptions of lack of assessment of oral skills indicate that lack of assessment of oral skills at national level affects its teaching in the classroom. An average of 70% of all the teachers in the study seems to confirm this. For example, 72.9% degree and 69.4% diploma teachers say lack of assessment of oral communication affect its teaching.

Table 4.2: Frequency of Assessing Oral Skills by Teachers

Qualifications	Responses (%)				Total
	Always	Sometimes	Hardly	Never	
Degree	8.5	32.2	44.1	15.2	100.0
Diploma	11.1	30.6	36.1	22.2	100.0
Untrained	00.0	55.6	33.3	11.1	100.0

Table 4.2 reveals that the frequency of assessing oral skills by teachers is low. Less than 50% of both teachers with degree and diploma certificates assess oral skills. Precisely, a combination of responses to hardly or never indicate that about 59% and 57% of the teachers with degree and diploma certificates respectively, do not assess oral skills compared to about 56% of untrained teachers who sometimes assess the oral skills they teach (Table 4.2).

Table 4.3: Suggestions on How to Assess Oral Communication

Qualifications	Suggestions (%)			Total
	National Exams	CATS	BOTH	
Degree	18.6	10.2	71.2	100.0
Diploma	13.9	11.1	75.0	100.0
Untrained	22.2	11.1	66.7	100.0
H.O.Ds	15.0	55.0	30.0	100.0

Results from the suggestions on how to assess oral skills (Table 4.3) reveal that more emphasis should be placed on both national examinations and continuous assessment tests. For instance, while fewer trained degree teachers (19%) support the introduction of national examinations alone in oral communication, majority (71%) of them advocate for both national examination and continuous assessment tests. However, this is unlike the Heads of English Departments who favour the use of continuous assessment tests (55%) to continuous assessment tests and national examinations (30%). Although an interview with the heads of English department revealed that they regularly check students' notebooks and teachers' mark books, a majority of the teachers say they do not assess all the oral skills taught.

4.1.2 Lack of Variety of Instructional Resources

After designing a new curriculum, there is need to prepare and produce curriculum materials and equipment. The major purpose of preparing and producing variety of instructional resources is to assist both teachers and students to correctly interpret and implement the ideas contained in the curriculum plan (Oluoch, 1992). But the reverse is likely to affect the implementation of any curriculum. It is for this reason that attempts were made to establish the teachers' perceptions of the effects of lack of variety of instructional resources in oral communication on the teaching oral skills.

Table 4.4: Responses on the Variety of Instructional Resources in Secondary Schools

Teachers	RESOURCES (%)					Total
	Audio Visual		Total	AudioVisual		
	Present	Absent		Present	Absent	
G. Boarding	39.5	61.0	100.0	26.8	73.2	100.0
B. Boarding	34.5	65.5	100.0	24.1	75.9	100.0
Mixed Day	20.6	79.4	100.0	14.7	85.3	100.0

The findings in Table 4.4 showed that there are very few audio and audio-visual cassettes in all schools. For instance, 73% of teachers in girls' boarding schools, 76% boys' boarding schools and 85% mixed day schools reported the absence of audio-visual equipment (Table 4.4). There were about 61%, 66% and 79% of the teachers from girls' boarding, boys' boarding and mixed day secondary schools respectively who reported absence of variety of instructional resources. The worst affected are teachers in mixed day schools. From the data none of the schools had a language laboratory.

Table 4.5: Relevance of Resources in Schools to Oral Contents in the Syllabus.

Qualifications	State of resources (%)			Total
	Relevant	Irrelevant	Not sure	
Degree	20.3	67.8	11.9	100.0
Diploma	27.8	58.3	13.9	100.0
Untrained	11.1	55.6	33.3	100.0

Findings from interviews with Heads of English Departments revealed that most of the audio and audio-visual cassettes available in schools were irrelevant to the teaching of oral communication since most of them were used to teach poetry and literature in forms three and four. Specifically, 67.8% degree, 58.3% diploma and 55.6% untrained teachers concur that the resources available are not relevant. This is appalling considering that the

lack of relevant and adequate instructional resources can adversely affect the teaching and learning of any subject.

Table 4.6: Responses on Whether Lack of Variety of Instructional Resources Affect the Teaching of Oral Communication.

School category	RESPONSES (%)		TOTAL
	It affects	It does not affect	
Girls' Boarding	78.0	22.0	100.0
Boys' Boarding	82.8	17.2	100.0
Mixed Day	85.3	14.7	100.0

The results in Table 4.6 indicate that lack of variety of instructional resources affect the teaching of oral communication. For example, 85% of the teachers in mixed day schools, and 83% in boys' boarding schools, had a similar impression. Similarly, the difference between responses of teachers in girls' boarding schools is negligible. Results on suggestions of various aspects of variety of instructional resources are given below.

Table 4.7: The Preferred Instructional Resources

Respondents	PREFERRED RESOURCES(%)			TOTAL
	Audio	Audio-Visual	Laboratory	
Degree	22.0	66.1	11.9	100.0
Diploma	27.8	63.9	8.3	100.0
Untrained	22.2	66.7	11.1	100.0
H.O.Ds	30.0	60.0	10.0	100.0

Results of suggestions of the Heads of English Departments and teachers' regarding their preferred resources shown in table 4.7 above indicate that they preferred audio-visual and audio cassettes to language laboratory in the teaching of oral skills. As can be seen, more than 60% of all the teachers prefer audio-visual cassettes compared to less than 12% of all the teachers who prefer language laboratory. In addition, an average of

26% of all the teachers prefer audio cassettes. It was also revealed that many schools used only a single title of the English textbooks, "The Integrated English". Besides, there was a student/book ratio of 4:1 in forms one and two, and 3:1 in forms three and four.

Provision of instructional resources for teaching oral skills is a problem in majority of the schools. According to the heads of English Departments, most of the requisitions that are honoured by school authorities are for resources that supplement the teaching of examinable contents. Perhaps changes in attitudes and perceptions of oral communication by teachers, curriculum designers and administrators are likely to change the attention given to provision of instructional resources for teaching oral skills.

4.1.3 The Nature of Instructional Planning

During planning, curriculum objectives should be stated clearly and precisely so that they can be easily understood and communicated. In other words, they should show the behaviour to be acquired or developed by the student. To realise this, the teacher should make use of a syllabus book, schemes of work, lesson plan and records of workbook. Consequently, each lesson in oral communication should be designed to achieve certain speech objectives (Canham, 1991; Malamah-Thomas, 1991). Following this, the teachers of English are expected to use lesson plans when teaching all skills in English including oral communication. But when English teachers were asked about their perceptions of the effects of lack of lesson plans in teaching oral skills they said it does not affect the teaching of oral communication as is evident in the table below (Table 4.8).

Table 4.8: Teachers' Perceptions of the Effects of Lacking Lesson Plans in Teaching Oral Skills.

Qualifications	RESPONSES (%)		TOTAL
	It affects	Does not affect	
Degree	13.6	86.4	100.0
Diploma	11.1	88.9	100.0
Untrained	22.1	77.8	100.0

As can be seen in table 4.8 above, 86.4% degree holders, 88.9% diploma certificate holders and 77.8% untrained teachers view the absence of lesson plans as inconsequential to the teaching of oral skills. This appears to be confirmed by the teachers' views on whether they teach all the oral skills in the schemes of work (Table 4.9). It is clear from the table that less than half of all the teachers teach all the oral skills in the syllabus. For instance, only 28.8% degree, 30.6% diploma and 33.3% untrained teachers teach all the oral skills.

Table 4.9: Frequency of Teaching Oral Skills in the Schemes of Work.

Qualification	Frequency (%)				TOTAL
	Always	Sometimes	Hardly	Never	
Degree	28.8	33.9	22.0	15.3	100.0
Diploma	30.6	38.9	19.4	11.1	100.0
Untrained	33.3	55.6	11.1	00.0	100.0

Further reactions on how often teachers made use of the syllabus book, schemes of work, lesson plans and record of work-book are also summarised (Table 4.10) below.

Table 4.10: Frequency of using the Syllabus, Schemes, Lesson Plans and Record of WorkBook by Teachers.

Items	Frequency (%)				Total
	Always	Sometimes	Hardly	Never	
Syllabus	31.7	33.7	20.2	14.4	100.0
Schemes	68.3	17.3	8.6	5.8	100.0
Lesson plan	2.9	4.8	20.2	72.1	100.0
Record of work	30.8	42.3	11.5	15.4	100.0

Results in Table 4.10 above indicate that there is inadequate planning in the teaching or oral communication. It shows that many teachers (68%) always use schemes of work in teaching oral communication compared to very few (3%) who make use of lesson plans only. It was also observed from the checklist that, whereas oral communication skills are included in the schemes of work, once a week, not all of them are taught, especially in forms three and four (Table 4.11). For instance, the study sought to establish the level of planning in the previous two weeks from the date of the researcher's visit (Table 4.11).

Table 4.11: Results from the Checklist on Instructional Planning.

Item	FREQUENCY (%)		Total
	Use	Lack of use	
Syllabus Book	62.5	37.5	100.0
Schemes of work	83.3	16.7	100.0
Lesson plan	00.0	100.0	100.0
Record of work	33.3	66.7	100.0
Lesson Notes	79.2	20.8	100.0

Data shown in Table 4.11 reveals that teachers of English rely on schemes of work (83%) and lesson notes (79%) than on lesson plans (0%). Moreover, there is a limited use of the record of workbook. In an interview with the teachers and the Heads of English Departments, it was argued that lesson plans are not that critical in the teaching of oral communication because they feel that other skills could be taught where lesson plans are

not used. A further investigation was carried out to establish why teachers and Heads of Departments feel so. Consequently, Table 4.12 below gives the results of an evaluation of the reasons why teachers do not use lesson plans.

Table 4.12: Reasons for not using Lesson Plans

Respondents	REASONS (%)			TOTAL
	Duplicate of Schemes	Affect syllabus Coverage	I am Experienced	
Degree	57.6	28.8	13.6	100.0
Diploma	58.3	25.0	16.7	100.0
Untrained	33.3	55.6	11.1	100.0
H.O.Ds	40.0	50.0	10.0	100.0

From their comments (Table 4.12) it is evident that an equal number of trained degree (57.6%) and diploma teachers (58.3%) do not use lesson plans because they consider them to be duplicates of schemes of work. But the majority of untrained teachers (55.6%) and the heads of English department (50%) feel syllabus coverage is the main reason that affects the use of lesson plans. This is unlike the 28.8% of the trained degree and 25% of the trained diploma teachers who felt otherwise.

An interview with the heads of English Departments revealed that they rely on internal inspection to ensure that teachers use lesson plans in teaching all skills. However, the issue of lesson plans remains contentious since majority of the regular teachers do not use them regularly. Therefore, the heads of English Departments rely on records of work covered and students' notebooks as evidence of teaching oral skills.

4.1.4 Teachers' Attitudes Towards Oral Communication.

Attitudes in education are studied because of their perceived influence on instruction (Kiboss, 1997; Mnkandla, 2000). Although oral and written communications should be seen as complementary, varied attitudes of English teachers may not be ruled out in an examination-oriented curriculum where the demand for written skills is high.

Table 4.13: Teachers Attitudes Towards Oral Communication.

Qualifications	Teachers' attitudes (%)			Total
	Positive	Negative	Not sure	
Degree	79.7	6.7	13.6	100.0
Diploma	80.6	5.5	13.9	100.0
Untrained	77.8	0.0	22.2	100.0

Teachers' attitudes towards oral communication are largely positive (Table 4.13). However, some teachers have negative attitudes towards oral communication and others are unsure of their attitudes. That is why the effects of the teachers' perceptions of their attitudes towards oral communication on teaching oral skills as shown in table 4.14 below were sought.

Table 4.14: Responses on whether Teachers' Attitudes Towards Oral Communication Affect the Teaching of Oral Skills

Respondents' By Qualifications	RESPONSES		TOTAL
	They affect	They do not affect	
Degree teachers	28.8	71.2	100.0
Diploma teachers	25.0	75.0	100.0
Untrained teachers	22.2	77.8	100.0

The findings in Table 4.14 above show that the perceptions of teachers' attitudes towards oral communication do not affect the teaching of oral Skills. The views by the majority of

the degree teachers (71.2%), diploma teachers (75%) and untrained teachers (77.8%) tend to confirm this position. Following this, teachers were asked how they perceived the relationship between written and oral forms of communication (Table 4.15).

Table 4.15: Teachers' Perceptions of the Relationship between Oral and Written forms of Communication

Responses	RESPONDENTS (%)		
	Degree	Diploma	Untrained
1. Oral is substitute for written	13.5	16.7	22.2
2. Written is substitute for oral	8.5	8.3	11.1
3. Written and oral are complementary	78.0	75.0	66.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

From Table 4.15 above, it is evident that English teachers view both oral and written forms of communication as complementary. However, the suggestions of Heads of English Departments on how oral skills should be learned indicate otherwise (Table 4.16).

Table 4.16: Teachers' Views of Learning Oral Communication in various Classes

Classes	LEARNING METHODS (%)			Total
	By Supervised Opportunities	Learn Naturally	Should be Taught In Class	
Form 1	30.0	10.0	60.0	100.0
Form 2	35.0	10.0	55.0	100.0
Form 3	65.0	25.0	10.0	100.0
Form 4	75.0	15.0	10.0	100.0

The results in Table 4.16 above show that the heads of English department feel that oral communication should only be taught in forms one (60%) and two (55%). They are of

the view that forms three and four students should only be provided with more supervised opportunities to learn the oral skills. An interview on addressing negative attitudes towards oral communication revealed that heads of English Departments ensure that there are common teaching schemes of work prepared by English Subject heads. Also, they carry out routine inspection through records of work covered. Besides, regular departmental meetings are held to review progress made and shortcomings encountered in the course of teaching.

4.1.5 The Nature of Training Background in Speech Work

Kenya is one of the African countries where the importance of teacher education as a component of curriculum implementation is well appreciated (Oluoch, 1992; Otiende et al, 1992). The presence of many primary teacher-training colleges and faculties of education in public universities in Kenya is a testimony to this. However, the question of training teachers to meet the practical classroom challenges on joining the profession remains contentious. It is not surprising that in many cases the training of teachers in subject content is left in the hands of people who are more theory-oriented but lack the necessary classroom practice in what they teach (Oluoch, 1992). Following this, there was need to establish teachers perceptions of the effects of their training background in oral communication on the teaching of oral skills in English (Table 4.17).

4.17: Responses on Whether Teachers' Training/Preparation in Speech Work affect the Teaching of Oral Communication

Respondents	Responses (%)		Total
	It affects	It does not affect	
Trained Degree Teachers	28.8	71.2	100.0
Trained Diploma Teachers	52.8	47.2	100.0
Untrained Teacher	77.8	22.2	100.0

The findings (Table 4.17) indicate that 77.8% of the untrained teachers perceived their preparation background in speech work to affect the teaching of oral communication. Also about half of the diploma trained teachers (53%) view their training background in speech work in the same way. From the teachers' comments, the trained diploma teachers (47.2%) feel they had limited content in speech work compared to trained degree teachers (64.4%). They also felt that the content they covered in speech work at college level was relevant (72.2%) to secondary school English curriculum (Table 4.18).

Table 4.18: Relevance and Adequacy of Speech Contents Covered in Colleges to the Teaching of Oral Communication in Schools

Respondents	RESPONSES (%)					Total
	Relevant	Irrelevant	Total	Adequate	Inadequate	
Degree	50.8	49.2	100.0	64.4	35.6	100.0
Diploma	72.2	27.8	100.0	47.2	52.8	100.0
Untrained	40.0	60.0	100.0	20.0	80.0	100.0

The results also reveal that the untrained degree teachers' view their lack of adequate preparation in speech work as irrelevant (60%) to the teaching of oral communication. Following these shortcomings in teacher preparation/training, the heads of English departments made suggestions on ways to address the issues of adequacy and relevance in training.

Table 4.19: Suggestions Addressing Irrelevant and Inadequate Training in Speech Work

SUGGESTIONS	RESPONSES (%)
1. Increase number of oral units	15.0
2. Introduce oral practical lessons	35.0
3. Relate training curriculum to school Curriculum	40.0
4. Introduce oral Examinations	10.0
TOTAL	100.0

The results tabulated from the suggestions by the Heads of English Departments (Table 4.19) reveal that more emphasis at the teacher training colleges should be placed on relating the curriculum at the training level to that of the secondary schools (40%). Equally, emphasis should also be put on making the training in oral communication more practical (35%). At school level, newly posted teachers and those on transfer are given departmental teaching orientation by the respective heads of English Departments. This involves attending other regular teachers' English lessons and organising class debates.

4.1.6: Teachers' Individual Speech Problems

Whereas competence in speech work has a positive influence on teaching, speech disabilities have devastating effects on instruction (Bishop, 1995; Mukorera, 2000). The situation is even worse if teachers of English who have to generate knowledge from what they speak and how they speak experience these problems.

Table 4.20 :Teachers’ Perceptions of the Effects of Individual Speech Problems On Teaching Oral Skills

Qualifications	RESPONSES (%)		Total
	They affect	Do not affect	
Degree	86.4	13.6	100.0
Diploma	83.3	16.7	100.0
Untrained	77.8	22.2	100.0

The results tabulated from teachers’ perceptions of the effect of individual speech problems on teaching oral skills (Table 4.20), reveal that speech problems affect the teaching of oral skills. A majority 86.4% and 83.3% of the degree and diploma teachers in the study revealed this. According to Suzanne’s (1995) findings on Urban Social dialects in Britain, women used more standard form of language than men. Since both men and women teach English in Kenya, it was necessary to establish whether they experience individual speech problems that may affect the teaching of oral communication. The results of this investigation are shown below (Table 4.21).

Table 4.21: Responses on Whether Teachers Experience Individual Speech Problems

Respondents by Training and Sex	RESPONSES (%)		TOTAL
	YES	NO	
Trained Degree (M)	54.5	45.5	100.0
(F)	38.5	61.5	100.0
Trained Diploma (M)	72.2	27.8	100.0
(F)	66.7	33.3	100.0
Untrained Degree (M)	66.7	33.3	100.0
(F)	00.0	100.0	100.0

The data (Table 4.21) show that majority of the trained male teachers (diploma 72.2% and degree 54.5%) experience individual speech problems than degree and diploma female teachers. This is also evident among the untrained male teachers, in that 67% of

them say they experienced individual speech problems. Besides, the study sought to establish the particular speech problems experienced by the English teachers.

Table 4.22: Individual Speech Problems Experienced by Teachers of English.

Respondents by Training and sex	RESPONSES (%)			TOTAL
	Pronunciation	Cluttering	'Sheng'	
Trained	54.9	37.3	7.8	100.0
Untrained	87.5	12.5	0.0	100.0
Male	59.4	34.4	6.2	100.0
Female	51.9	33.3	14.8	100.0

The results shown above (Table 4.22) reveal that many teachers experience pronunciation problems than cluttering and 'sheng'. For instance, 88% of the untrained teachers and about 55% of the trained teachers experience pronunciation problems. Also, about 59% of the male than almost 52% of all the female teachers have a problem with pronunciation.

Table 4.23: Suggestions by Heads of Departments on Addressing Individual Speech Problems

SUGGESTIONS	RESPONSE (%)
Workshops and seminars	15.0
In service training for regular teachers	35.0
Oral examinations for teacher trainees	20.0
Speech therapy for affected teachers	30.0
TOTAL	100.0

The results shown in Table 4.23 above gives the suggested measures to address the problems experienced in speech. The heads of English department suggest that emphasis should be put on in-service training (35%) for regular teachers and oral examinations for teacher trainees (Table 4.23). Other suggestions are speech therapy (30%) to affected

teachers and attendance of workshops/seminars on the teaching of oral communication by all the teachers of English. To ensure speech problems do not hinder the teaching of oral skills respective English class teachers are encouraged to invite their colleagues to teach for them the particular topics they feel disadvantaged in.

4.2 DISCUSSION

The discussion of this study is based on the findings recorded in the previous section (Tables 4.1 to 4.29). The section contains the comments and suggestions made by teachers and heads of English department. Also discussed are findings of data collected through a checklist.

4.2.1 Lack of Assessment of Oral Skills

The most likely interpretation of the findings on lack of assessment of oral communication (Table 4.1) is the role examinations are known to play in our school curriculum. The admission that lack of assessment of oral skills at national level affects the teaching of oral communication is not surprising. This is because the Kenya education system has been and is largely examination-oriented (NT, 2001). Therefore, the probability that teachers of English are likely to neglect teaching oral skills is not unrelated to the lack of examination of this skill. This supports Nkosana's (1998) argument that the non-inclusion of assessment of oral skills in the secondary school examinations could have a negative effect on the teaching of English and on oral skills in particular.

The findings (Tables 4.1 & 4.3) further suggest that the heads of English department and English teachers concur that the lack of assessment of oral skills at the national level affects the teaching of oral communication. This agrees with MOE's (1992) indication that the perception of most teachers of English is that oral skills may be learned naturally. They also say that the absence of continuous assessment tests affect both the teaching and formative evaluation of oral skills. This is because teachers develop the tendency of disregarding continuous evaluation of the curriculum objectives and concentrate on terminal evaluation of oral skills. These findings seem to corroborate other observations on the impact of examinations on unexamined skills (KNEC, 1997; Love, 1997; Nkosana, 1998).

It is unfortunate that teachers tend to perceive the role of examination in oral skills as more important than the objectives of teaching the same skills. Teachers tend to suggest that no skill should be included in the curriculum unless it is going to be examined. It is true that examinations help teachers to get feedback of whatever they have taught (Nkosana, 1998). But the teaching of oral skills should not be perceived to be taught in isolation with other language skills like reading and writing. Instead, the communication skills used during English language instruction should positively carry the objectives of oral skills. After all, the basic form of communication in our classes is oral communication. Besides, the principle objective of teaching oral skills is effective communication (KIE, 1992). Therefore, the role of examinations in oral communication should be understood as one of the ways used to get feedback but not the reason for teaching oral skills.

4.2.2 Lack of Variety of Instructional Resources

The impact of variety of instructional resources in teaching can be far reaching. As KIE (1992) and Oluoch (1992) observed, the lack of it shall limit the means of interpreting and implementing oral communication objectives in English. The results on the lack of variety of instructional resources (Tables 4.4 & 4.6) are appalling, in that more than 80% of the teachers of English reported their absence in schools. Yet, several authors concur that with a variety of resources, the education system can produce graduates who are intellectually alert, able to explore and benefit from what their education environment offers them (Bishop, 1995; Peresuh, 1996; Thondhlana, 1998). Although this is a general observation, there is no evidence elsewhere showing that the teaching of oral skills does not require variety of resources.

The absence of variety of instructional resources in oral communication is not a new development in Kenya. In English as in any other compulsory subject like mathematics and practical subjects like chemistry and physics, there is lack of adequate and variety of instructional resources (MOE, 1992; KNEC, 1997). The data has shown that language laboratories are not available in our schools for effective teaching of oral skills. Perhaps, the teachers' suggestions of the use of audio-visual cassettes instead of language laboratories (Table 4.7) should be emphasised in teaching oral communication. This also reflects the teachers' understanding of their schools' economic difficulties (Abagi, 1997; Waihenya, 2001).

Although language laboratories are not necessarily the basic resources in our English syllabus, their use at least in teacher training colleges and certain schools in particular regions as centres of reference should not be ignored. However, the absence of language laboratories, audio and audio visual resources should not be taken as the excuse for not teaching the oral skills. In any case, these resources are meant to assist the teacher and learners to realise their objectives in oral communication (KIE, 1992). But they should not necessarily determine the teaching or lack of it.

The realisation that most of the audio and audio-visual cassettes available in schools are used to supplement the teaching of literature (Table 4.5) shows that there is less emphasis on the unexamined skills than the examined ones (Nkosana, 1998). Therefore, audio and audio-visual cassettes for literature set books should be developed to serve dual purposes for both literature and other skills like oral communication. This is likely to help schools cut down on expenses used in acquiring instructional resources.

4.2.3 The Nature of Instructional Planning

The revelation that teachers of English mainly rely on the schemes of work and the syllabus book but not lesson plans in teaching is an indication of inadequate planning which may affect the teaching of oral communication (MOE, 1992). The findings (Table 4.10) seem to negate Malamah –Thomas (1991) observation that a lesson plan is a plan of action that shows a teacher knows what he/she wants to achieve in a given lesson. The findings in the checklist revealed that oral communication was irregularly taught in forms three and four. This contradicts the curriculum requirement that all skills in the schemes should be taught and recorded (Ayot & Patel 1992; MOE, 1992). Perhaps the reason of

the slow pace of syllabus coverage as given by untrained teachers and heads of English department (Table 4.12), clearly explains why most teachers fail to teach oral communication in forms three and four. But, while the Heads of English Departments might be speaking from their experience in curriculum implementation and supervision (Clandinin, 1986), the untrained teachers may be talking from lack of professional knowledge in making and using lesson plans.

However, viewing lesson plans as duplicates of schemes of work by diploma and degree teachers is surprising and unconvincing (Table 4.12). The impression that lesson plans are not an issue in teaching oral communication because other skills are taught without lesson plans cannot be a justification to limit the use of lesson plans in teaching. The impression reveals that the teaching of other skills in English is affected by inadequate planning especially lack of lesson plans and unfilled records of work (MOE, 1992; MOE, 1996). Although teachers include oral skills in the schemes of work, they fail to teach them because of the congested curriculum (Aduda, 2000; Mwangi, 2000). Thus, it is necessary to reassess the contents of the integrated English with a view to decongesting the curriculum. Perhaps, this might ensure adequate planning and teaching within a manageable English syllabus.

4.2.4 Teachers' Attitudes Toward Oral Communication

The realisation that teachers' attitudes towards oral communication do not affect the teaching of oral skills (Table 4.14) does not necessarily mean that oral skills are taught (MOE, 1992). In fact the results on the relationship between oral and written forms of

communication are in line with Crystal and Davy's (1995) assertion that the two are complementary. But the results of the study indicate that there is a feeling among teachers that the teaching of oral communication should stop in form two (Table 4.16). While in form three and four, teachers tend to suggest that students should be given more supervised opportunities to learn oral skills.

The findings (Table 4.16) seem to corroborate Nkosana's (1998) observation that, oral skills should be examined at least in the lower classes. The reason why teachers feel the skills should not be taught in forms three and four are due to the wide English syllabus to be covered and inadequate training in speech work (Bosire, 2001; Waihenya, 2001). At this point, it might be safe to argue that although the teachers' attitudes towards written communication do not affect the teaching of oral skills reasons why the skill should not be taught in forms three and four shows that the skills are neglected in those classes.

Surprisingly, by opting for opportunities outside the classroom to learn oral skills, the teachers seem to be negating their duty. In any case, the essence of learning the skills in the classroom is for effective communication in and out of school (KIE, 1992; MOE, 1992). What teachers should have suggested are means to improve the teaching of oral skills in the classes rather than abdicating their noble responsibility to the forces of nature.

4.2.5 The Nature of Training Background in Speech Work

The differences in the findings (Table 4.18) on whether teacher training/preparation in speech work is adequate or not to teach oral communication may be attributed to the disparities in the levels of training and/or lack of training (Bosire, 2001; Kinyua, 2001). For example, it is evident from the results that majority of all the untrained teachers (77.8%) feel that their lack of training in speech work affects the teaching of oral communication compared to about 29% of the trained degree teachers (Table 4.17). Perhaps, the disparities in responses among trained teachers may be attributed to the shortcomings in the teacher education programmes. For example, lack of facilities and equipment used in training teachers impact negatively on teachers' training. (Kinyua, 2001; Waihenya, 2001).

Although trained teachers of English with degrees and diploma certificates just lament about the relevance and adequacy of their training in speech work, the untrained teachers have more serious disadvantages (Table 4.18). This indicates a need by the government of Kenya to train teachers in specific subjects before they are posted to implement the curriculum (Otiende et al, 1992; Oluoch, 1992). But the training given to teachers might not necessarily be the problem for not teaching oral skills. In fact, the high responses given by trained teachers on the adequacy and relevance of their training (Table 4.18) is a testimony of a level of satisfaction of their training. The reasons as to why they do not give full emphasis to oral skills should, thus be sought outside the margin of training. Besides, majority of the respondents in the study 91.3% are trained teachers.

However, this does not mean that teacher training programmes have no shortcomings that need to be addressed (Table 4.19). To address the problems of inadequate and irrelevant training, Heads of English Departments suggested that the teacher training curriculum be harmonised with the school curriculum and be made more practical than before (Table 4.19). This calls for harmonisation of the curriculum, facilities, equipment, material and human resources at both diploma and university levels. However, this does not necessarily mean that the whole curriculum at the teacher training colleges is not relevant to the school needs. These are teachers' views as per the study. To determine whether or not the curriculum is relevant needs a more comprehensive study on this matter alone.

4.2.6 Teachers' Individual Speech Problems

The most possible interpretation of more trained teachers with diploma certificates compared to trained degree teachers experiencing individual speech problems would be the varied qualifications at each level and the nature of their training (Bosire, 2001; Kinyua, 20001). For example, according to the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC, 1992), the English marks/grades for degree courses is higher than diploma courses. Although the trained teachers of English with certificates diploma did not fail in English, the differences in their entry marks tend to suggest that most of them did not train to teach English because it was their favourite subject. Rather, they had no much choice compared to their degree counterparts. That is, besides having passed highly, degree holders had a wide scope of subjects to make a choice from, of what they were convicted to do and liked.

Furthermore, the finding that more untrained than trained teachers (Table 4.21) experienced individual speech problems shows that the training in speech work has a positive impact on teachers' speech. These findings seem to corroborate Oluoch's (1992) assertion that the training of teachers in English is a vital responsibility. It is also evident from the results (Table 4.21) that more male than female teachers face pronunciation difficulties. This observation seems to agree with Suzanne's (1995) findings on urban social dialects in Britain. She found out that women prefer more standard speech than men do. Although Suzanne did not say why more women than men prefer standard speech, this study shows that more men than women have pronunciation problems (Table 4.22). Thus, the same problems are likely to be transferred to their students (Bishop, 1995; Mohammed & Vuzo 1993).

Since English is a second language to nearly all teachers of English in Kenya, the effects of their first languages to English cannot be avoided easily (Mohammed & Vuzo, 1993). To address individual speech problems, heads of English department recommend for in-service training and provision of speech therapy to teachers of English in oral examinations and workshops on the teaching of oral communication. This is surprising because it is possible to conduct a workshop for all teachers of English, but not easy to attend in-service training because of teachers' commitments outside the classroom (Canham, 1991; Ezewu, 1995). Nevertheless, school authorities should encourage teachers to attend such programmes to boost their teaching skills. In essence, while individual speech problems can be a stumbling block in teaching, they should not be an issue in our secondary schools where most teachers specialize in teaching English.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

5.1 SUMMARY OF THE MAJOR FINDINGS

Kenya, like many other African countries that use English as an official language and medium of instruction is concerned about the ability of its secondary school students to communicate fluently in English (KIE, 1992). The concern is caused by the social, political and economic demands and benefits associated with the fluency in using English language. Consequently, an evaluation of the factors perceived by English teachers to affect the teaching of oral communication was done and the following findings realised.

1. The study established that the teachers of English view the teaching of oral communication as affected by lack of assessment of oral skills at national level. However, there was limited evidence on assessment of oral skills at class level.
2. There is lack of variety of instructional resources required for the teaching of oral communication. Most schools seem to rely on a single type of text book 'The Integrated English' but not audio and audio-visual materials.
3. Although most teachers had schemes of work, they did not make use of lesson plans. Also, the records of work covered were not adequately filled.

4. Whereas teachers' attitudes towards oral communication do not substantially affect the teaching of oral skills, teachers feel that the teaching of this skill should stop in form two. They recommend the provision of supervised opportunities for individualised learning in forms three and four.
5. Although the training of teachers in speech work was not perceived to affect the teaching of oral communication, the preparation /training at diploma level was regarded as inadequate and that at degree level seen as irrelevant to the secondary school curriculum needs.
6. Most of the Individual speech problems experienced by teachers of English are related to pronunciation. These problems are mainly due to the influence of the teachers' first languages to English.
7. To address the problems affecting the teaching of oral communication, the following suggestions were made.
 - (a) The introduction of oral examinations in schools and colleges.
 - (b) Provision of relevant and variety of instructional resources and
 - (c) Making the teacher training programmes practical and relevant to school needs.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS

The central purpose of the present study was to evaluate the factors that are perceived by teachers of English to affect the teaching of oral communication in English language. On the overall, the investigation has to a large extent been successful in the realisation of that goal. However, there are certain shortcomings that still require closer examination. For example, the nature and size of sample, the scope of the content utilized and the number of districts involved in the study.

Although oral communication forms part of the broader English curriculum, the need to sensitise the teachers on the importance of teaching oral skills is a formidable one. As a medium of instruction, fluency in oral communication in English would have an impact on students' understanding and communication in other subjects. It would also contribute to students' participation in social, political and economic development of the country. However, the teaching of oral skills cannot be realised by addressing a single factor.

Thus, the lack of assessment of oral skills at national level and the lack of variety of instructional resources are the major factors affecting the teaching of oral communication. Others are inadequate planning, and the nature of training background of English teachers in speech work. Despite the constraints experienced in teaching oral communication, the study has shown that some proposed measures of success in changing the status quo are possible. However, this calls for determination and good will on the part of all the concerned stakeholders.

5.3 IMPLICATIONS

Although job opportunities have continued to diminish in Kenya, the opportunities that require candidates to be fluent in both written and oral communications seem to be expanding (KNEC, 1992). Unfortunately, the secondary and university graduates who are expected to fill those positions continue to face speech difficulties. Regrettably, this is happening notwithstanding the fact that teachers of English are paid to produce graduates who should communicate fluently in written and spoken English (KIE, 1992). Hence, the purpose of this study was to evaluate the factors perceived by teachers of English to affect the teaching of oral communication and make suggestions as a contribution to alleviate the concern. Therefore, the following implications drawn from the findings of the study are necessary.

5.3.1 Oral Assessment Tests

The findings on lack of assessment of oral skills imply that some teachers neglect the teaching of oral communication. Teachers of English equally seem to neglect other skills in the English curriculum since not all skills are assessed nationally. For example listening. Consequently, the philosophy of incorporating unexamined oral skills in a largely examination oriented curriculum is questionable. Moreover, oral communication objectives in the curriculum may not be achieved because the formal means to evaluate their realisation are absent. Thus, it can be argued that unless oral communication examinations are introduced, the teaching of oral communication might not change.

But the introduction of oral assessment tests, in English would require a try out process of the oral examinations before implementing the programme nationally. The constraints to be met in such a programme would include the financial, logistical and expertise required to develop oral tests to in-service teachers of English in the try out process. Fortunately, there are teachers of French and German in Kenya who are already involved in the assessment of oral communication skills in their respective subjects. These teachers could be approached to offer the expertise required in the development and administration of oral tests in English. This does not imply that teachers of English are orphaned in this field. Rather, their experience in assessing oral skills would be strengthened by that of the teachers of German and French.

5.3.2 Variety and Relevant Instructional Resources

Although there are limited instructional resources in English language subject as a whole, oral communication is the most affected. Thus, the instructional materials and equipment used in English are inadequate. Also, they are not relevant to the teaching of oral communication. For instance, most of the audio and audio-visual materials available in schools are purposely meant to supplement the teaching of literature texts in forms three and four. This implies that while there are some efforts to have audio materials in forms three and four (though irrelevant), their provision in forms one and two is neglected. Ironically, it is in forms one and two where attempts to teach oral communication are made.

However, total absence of audio and audio-visual materials in most secondary schools was also realised. Therefore, it can be deduced from the observations made that, the relevant audio and audio-visual materials for teaching oral communication in English have not been developed. Otherwise, they would be available in schools for use by teachers of English. But if they have been developed then, they are expensive for schools. Nevertheless, it is important to develop relevant and variety of instructional materials for teaching oral skills.

The relevance of instructional materials will depend on the involvement of teachers, students and parents who shall finally purchase and use them. Their involvement shall also ensure that the costs of purchasing those materials are low and affordable to many schools and parents. Besides, the factor of the economies of scale should also be considered in preparing these materials. For example, many of the materials prepared for oral communication should be used to teach other skills as well. After all, the teaching of oral communication should not be divorced from other skills in the curriculum.

5.3.3 Adequate Planning

Adequate planning in this study comprises the use of the syllabus books, schemes of work, lesson plans, lesson notes and records of work in teaching oral communication. While there was evidence of teachers using schemes of work and lesson notes, some schools lacked a single copy of the syllabus book. Also, although most teachers had schemes of work and lesson notes none of them used lesson plans in teaching oral communication. The absence of lesson plans in teaching oral communication may imply

that they (lesson plans) are also missing in the teaching of other skills in English. Furthermore, since lesson plans contain specific lesson objectives and how they should be achieved, their absence may indicate lack of vision in teaching oral communication.

Whereas the heads of English department are meant to supervise and inspect the implementation of English curriculum in schools, they seem to have abdicated that responsibility. The total disregard of the use of lesson plans by trained teachers of English reflects negligence or lack of adequate and practical preparation to use them. Consequently, it may be necessary for professionals in teacher training institutions to re-assess the courses they offer. Specifically, they should evaluate the courses in instructional planning especially in preparation and use of lesson plans. It is hoped that this would ensure the planning skills learned by teacher trainees are practically transferred to the classroom teaching situations.

The Ministry of Education should also ensure that more incentives and in-service training in curriculum supervision and inspection are offered to heads of schools and heads of English departments. This might increase their motivation to work and arm themselves with the necessary and relevant skills in curriculum supervision and inspection. Heads of schools and Heads of English Departments should also ensure that the departments of English in their schools have copies of the syllabus book kept in the departments. As such, all the teachers would consult them. This would ensure that the lesson objectives in the schemes of work are relevant and meaningful to both the teachers and students.

5.3.4 Teachers Attitudes Towards Oral Communication

Teacher's perceptions of their attitudes towards oral communication reveal that speech and writing are complementary. However, the suggestion by Heads of English Departments that oral communication should not be taught in forms three and four tends to contradict that perception. This is further substantiated by the results, which showed that oral communication lessons in forms three and four were substituted by other contents in English. The impression created is that by form three and four, many students can learn on their own because they may have matured physically, mentally and academically.

But this can only be achieved if there are a variety of relevant and adequate instructional resources. That is perhaps the reason why the Heads of English Departments insist that the individual learning of oral skills must be closely supervised. Another implication drawn from teacher's suggestion, not to teach oral skills after form two may be the fear to be challenged by their students, especially in forms three and four. But, if students should learn oral communication on their own, then there should be sufficient means and resources to provide feedback.

5.3.5 Relevant and Adequate Training in Speech Work

While diploma trained teachers complain about the adequacy of their training in speech work, the trained degree teachers lament about the relevance of some of the contents they learned to the teaching of oral communication. Besides, both degree and diploma trained teachers feel that their training was not as practical as the secondary school English

curriculum demands of them. The implication drawn from these observations are discrepancies in the contents by teachers at different training levels. Thus, the oral contents at diploma level may be limited in scope while most of the contents covered at degree level are wanting in terms of relevance to the secondary school English curriculum.

Furthermore, whereas the teaching of oral communication in secondary schools is a practical activity, teachers of English seem to be exposed to only theoretical knowledge in speech work while in college. At this juncture, it can safely be argued that the curriculum objectives for training teachers of English at diploma and degree levels are parallel to those in the secondary school English curriculum. But it might also be possible that some of the teacher trainers and curriculum developers in colleges are not in touch with the realities of teaching oral communication in secondary schools. Moreover, the instructional materials and equipment used in training teachers of English in speech work might be wanting. Consequently, it appears that the institutions for training secondary school' teachers of English would be required to evaluate and update their curricula.

5.3.6 Individual Speech Problems

The speech problems facing secondary school students prompted the evaluation of the factors perceived by teachers of English to affect the teaching of oral communication. Surprisingly, it was evident from the results that the speech problems experienced by teachers are related to those experienced by their students. This might imply that

students have inherited some of the problems from their teachers. Although some of the speech problems experienced by students might be individual in nature, teachers of English might not have offered them adequate speech therapy. This is because some of the teachers themselves suffer from similar or serious speech problems than their students.

The numerous speech deficiencies experienced by teachers of English imply that the selection of teacher trainees based on merit in written examinations is not sufficient to the curriculum needs. It is also possible that the affected teachers have neither been given speech therapy nor attended workshops/seminars in oral communication. Therefore, urgent measures to address the individual speech problems facing them must be sought to provide them with adequate and practical skills and knowledge in teaching oral communication. In addition, methods to determine teacher's fluency in oral communication should be developed and executed. This would ensure that only those teachers who meet a certain measure of success in written and oral communication are trained and allowed to teach.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

Based on the observations revealed in this descriptive survey, several suggestions have been made for further research.

1. The results of this study seem to concur with previous studies (Nkosana, 1998; Love 1997) that teachers tend to ignore subjects or contents that are unexamined. Therefore, there is a need for more studies to ascertain the feasibility of introducing

oral skills' examinations in English in secondary schools. Once these studies are done, the Ministry of Education, would be geared towards making useful changes in English curriculum that can address the evaluation of oral communication in secondary schools.

2. The frequency of lack of lesson plans in teaching oral communication in English may indicate two possible things. First, teachers may not be using lesson plans because of laxity in curriculum supervision and inspection in secondary schools. Second, teachers of English were not adequately and practically prepared to use lesson plans. Therefore, further research should be conducted to understand why most teachers are reluctant to use lesson plans
3. The study's revelation that some teachers experience several speech problems might mean that teachers themselves may be responsible for the speech difficulties their students face. Therefore, further research should be done to establish the relationship between the students' speech problems and those experienced by the teachers.
4. It is evident that the training teachers of English get in speech work is wanting in terms of relevance, adequacy and practicality. Thus, studies should be conducted to compare the curricula used to train teachers at the diploma and university levels with the secondary school English curriculum.

5. Questions concerning the variety and relevance of instructional resources in oral communication in secondary schools have been registered. This calls for comparative investigations on the relevance and variety of instructional resources in English in secondary schools and those used in colleges to train teachers of English.
6. This study has concentrated on the factors perceived by teachers of English to affect the teaching of oral communication. However, there is need for further studies to establish the views of students and other stakeholders in education on the same subject. Such views could assist in collecting comprehensive information needed for curriculum change or review.
7. The study has also limited itself to teachers of English in Vihiga and Kakamega Districts yet, oral communication is taught in all secondary schools in Kenya. Therefore, similar studies should be done elsewhere in Kenya to establish the authenticity of the findings for wider generalization and the credibility of the instruments used in data collection.

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APPENDIX A

THE TEACHING OF ORAL COMMUNICATION (SPEAKING): TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

- (a) We are interested in knowing your honest perspective of the teaching of Oral Communication skills (speaking) which appear in the secondary school syllabus.
- (b) This is not a test and therefore there are no RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS.
- (c) Read the items CAREFULLY before answering them.
- (d) All information given will be treated with CONFIDENCE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

For this section put a tick in the bracket () that corresponds with your particulars.

- | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-----|----------------|-----|
| (a) SEX | Male | () | Female | () |
| (b) DISTRICT: | Vihiga | () | Kakamega | () |
| (c) SCHOOL: | Mixed Day | () | Boys' Boarding | () |
| | Mixed Boarding | () | Girls Boarding | () |
| (d) TEACHING EXPERIENCE | | | | |
| | Less than 2 years | () | 2-5 years | () |
| | 6 - 10 years | () | 11 - 15 years | () |
| | 16-20 years | () | 21 - 25 years | () |
| | 26-30 years | () | above 30 years | () |
| (e) QUALIFICATION: | M.ED | () | UT/M.A. | () |
| | B.Ed | () | UT/B.A. | () |
| | PGDE | () | UT/DIP | () |
| | Dip. Ed | () | UT/A LEVEL | () |
| | P1 | () | UT/O LEVEL | () |

SECTION C

Answer all the questions in this section by ticking in the brackets and filling in the spaces provided

- 1 (a) In your view, does lack of assessment of oral skills at national level affect the teaching of oral skills?

Yes ()

No ()

(b) Do you assess the oral skills you teach?

Yes () No ()

(c) If yes, how often?

Always () Sometimes () Hardly () Never ()

(d) What is your view of the best method to assess oral skills?

CAT only () National examinations only () Both () None ()

2 (a) From your own view, does lack of variety of instructional resources affect the teaching of oral skills?

Yes () No ()

(b) Does your school have relevant instructional resources for teaching oral skills?

Yes () No () Not sure ()

(c) Which resources do you use in teaching oral skills?

(i) (ii) (iii)

(e) What is your view of the basic instructional resources preferred in teaching oral Skills?

(i) (ii) (iii)

3 (a) In your view, does lack of a lesson plan affect the teaching of oral skills?

Yes () No ()

(b) Do you teach all the oral skills in the schemes of work?

Yes () No () Not sure ()

(c) If yes, how often?

Always () Sometimes () Hardly () Never ()

(d) If no why?

(e) How often do you make use of the following in teaching oral skills?

Resource/Frequency	Always	Sometimes	Hardly	Never
Syllabus book				
Schemes of work				
Records of work				
Lesson notes				

4 (a) What is your attitude towards oral communication?

Positive () Negative () Not sure ()

(b) In your view, does your attitude towards oral communication affect the teaching of oral skills?

Yes () No ()

(c) In your view, what is the relationship between written and oral communication?

- (i) Oral communication is a substitute for written communication
 - (ii) Written communication is a substitute for oral communication
 - (iii) Both written and oral are complementary forms of communication
 - (iv) None of the above:- What is your perception?
-
-

(c) What is your perception of the best way of teaching /learning oral skills in secondary schools?

5 (a) In your view, does your training/preparation background in oral communication affect the teaching of oral skills?

Yes () No ()

(b) How do you view your training/preparation background in oral skills in terms of ***adequacy*** and ***relevance*** of the contents covered to secondary school curriculum needs?

- (i)
- (ii)

6 (a) In your view, do individual speech problems affect the teaching of oral skills?

(b) Do you experience some of these problems?

Yes () No ()

(c) If yes, which ones?

(i) (ii) (iii)

(d) How can these problems be addressed?

(i) _____

(ii) _____

(iii) _____

APPENDIX B

CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING ENGLISH TEACHERS ON FACTORS AFFECTING THE TEACHING OF ORAL COMMUNICATION GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS.

- (a) We are interested in knowing your honest perspective the teaching of oral communication skills (speaking) which appear in the secondary school syllabus.
- (b) This is not a test and therefore there are no RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS.
- (c) Read the items CAREFULLY before answering them.
- (d) All information given will be treated with CONFIDENCE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

For this section put a tick in the bracket () that corresponds with the teachers' particulars.

- | | | | | |
|---------------|----------------|-----|----------------|-----|
| (a) SEX | Male | () | Female | () |
| (b) DISTRICT: | Vihiga | () | Kakamega | () |
| (c) SCHOOL | Mixed Day | () | Boy's Boarding | () |
| | Mixed Boarding | () | Girls Boarding | () |

(d) TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----|----------------|-----|
| Less than 2 years | () | 2-5 years | () |
| 6 - 10 years | () | 11 - 15 years | () |
| 16-20 years | () | 21 - 25 years | () |
| 26-30 years | () | above 30 years | () |
| (e) QUALIFICATION: M.ED | () | UT/M.A. | () |
| B.Ed | () | UT/B.A. | () |
| PGDE | () | UT/DIP | () |
| Dip. Ed | () | UT/A LEVEL | () |
| P1 | () | UT/O LEVEL | () |

This section should be filled by the researcher.

1. Number of English lessons on the timetable that are allocated to

- (i) Form 1 _____
- (ii) Form 2 _____
- (iii) Form 3 _____
- (iv) Form 4 _____

2. Presence of oral communication skills in the schemes of work in

- (i) Form 1 _____
- (ii) Form 2 _____
- (iii) Form 3 _____

(iv) Form 4 _____

3. Evidence of teaching oral communication skills in

- (i) Form 1 _____
- (ii) Form 2 _____
- (iii) Form 3 _____
- (iv) Form 4 _____

4. Evidence of assessing oral skills in

- (i) Form 1 _____
- (ii) Form 2 _____
- (iii) Form 3 _____
- (iv) Form 4 _____

5. Evidence of using lesson plans for teaching oral communication skills in

- (i) Form 1 _____
- (ii) Form 2 _____
- (iii) Form 3 _____
- (iv) Form 4 _____

6. Use of lesson notes for teaching oral communication skills in

- (i) Form 1 _____
- (ii) Form 2 _____
- (iii) Form 3 _____
- (iv) Form 4 _____

6. (a) Ratio of students to textbooks available in

- (i) Form 1 _____
- (ii) Form 2 _____
- (iii) Form 3 _____
- (iv) Form 4 _____

(b) Types of text books used in

- (i) Form 1 _____
- (ii) Form 2 _____
- (iii) form 3 _____
- (iv) Form 4 _____

7. (a) Types of audio cassettes available for use in

- (i) Form 1 _____
- (ii) Form 2 _____
- (iii) Form 3 _____
- (iv) Form 4 _____

(b) Types of audio visual cassettes available for use in

- (i) Form 1 _____
- (ii) Form 2 _____
- (iii) Form 3 _____
- (iv) Form 4 _____

- 8. (a) Usable school radio cassettes available in school _____
- (b) Usable school video decks available in school _____
- (c) Usable school television sets available _____
- (d) Student/ teachers ratio _____
- (e) Language laboratories available in school _____

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ENGLISH HEADS OF DEPARTMENT ON THE TEACHING OF ORAL COMMUNICATION.

- (a) We are interested in knowing your honest perspective the teaching or oral communication skills (speaking) which appear in the secondary school syllabus.
- (b) This is not a test and therefore there are no RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS.
- (c) Read the items CAREFULLY before answering them.
- (d) All information given will be treated with CONFIDENCE.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

For this section put a tick in the bracket () that corresponds with H.O.D's particulars.

- | | | | | | |
|-----|----------|----------------|-----|----------------|-----|
| (a) | SEX | Male | () | Female | () |
| (b) | DISTRICT | Vihiga | () | Kakamega | () |
| (c) | SCHOOL | Mixed Day | () | Boy's Boarding | () |
| | | Mixed Boarding | () | Girls Boarding | () |

- 1 (a) How do you ensure that your teachers teach and assess all the oral skills in the syllabus?

- (b) What are your suggestions towards teaching and assessing oral skills?

2. How do you ensure that there are relevant and variety of instructional resources for teaching oral skills in your school and what do you suggest?

3. How do you ensure that your teachers have and use the following in teaching oral skills

and what do you suggest?

(i) Syllabus book

(i) Schemes of work

(ii) Lesson plans

(iii) Lesson notes

(iv) Records of work

4. How do you address the problem of negative attitudes towards teaching oral skills by your teachers and what do you propose?

5. What orientation programmes for teaching oral skills do you have for the newly posted/transferred teachers in your department and what are your suggestions?

6. How do you ensure that teachers with individual speech problems in your department teach all the oral skills in the curriculum and what do you suggest?
