

**Analysis of the Influence of Mother Tongue on Students' Performance in English in KCSE
in Public Day Secondary Schools in Gatundu District, Kiambu County, Kenya**

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for examination in any other university.

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DEDICATION

This research thesis is dedicated to my wife Esther Angoli, my daughters Vanessa Angoli and Alicia-Irene Angoli, my mother Esther Ayako, my sister Hildah Atetwe, my brothers Felix Opati and Francis Nyasili for encouragement and inspiration they gave me throughout the process of writing this thesis. May it be an inspiration to love, hard work, and to their attainment of great success in life and academic heights for the betterment of the society.

ABSTRACT

This study sought to find out the influence of use of mother tongue on students' performance of English in KCSE in Gatundu District, Kiambu County, Kenya. Literature from across the globe, regionally and locally was reviewed to provide various perspectives regarding the use of mother tongue in school and its influence on performance in English. The literature reviewed highlights how first language affects second language. It discusses both content in favour of use of mother tongue and content against the use of mother tongue among other issues. In this study, the target populations were students and English teachers from public day secondary schools in Gatundu. Five Schools were sampled using simple random sampling while 191 students were sampled using stratified sampling and systematic random sampling respectively. Eight Teachers were sampled using purposive sampling technique. The study used cross-sectional survey design. Questionnaires were used to collect data from students and teachers, while an interview guide was used to collect data from the teachers. Quantitative data was summarized using descriptive statistics and presented using tables and bar graphs while qualitative data was put under themes and presented in narratives. The study found out that use of mother tongue had a negative influence in performance of English in public day secondary schools of Gatundu. It emerged from the study that use of mother tongue influences the way students write and pronounce in English, hence negatively influencing the performance of English in KCSE. Among other recommendations, the study recommended that teachers should come up with teaching methods that are interactive in the English curriculum so as to ensure that students are given an opportunity to interact with each other in English. Finally, the study suggests that this research should be replicated in other districts where students do not perform well in English to corroborate findings on how mother tongue influences performance of English.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

D.E.O	District Education Officer
K.C.P.E	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
K.C.S.E	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
KNEC	Kenya National Examination Council
M.O.E	Ministry of Education
M.T.E	Mother Tongue Education
N.C.S.T	National Council for Science and Technology
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UPC	Unified Primary Curriculum

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Problem

Kenya is a linguistically heterogeneous and diverse country with many indigenous (mother tongues) and exogenous languages. Basically, Kenya has at least 42 indigenous languages. English is one of the exogenous languages. Other exogenous languages include: Arabic, French, German, Hindu, and Chinese while some of the indigenous languages include are Kalenjin, Dholuo, Kikuyu, Luhya, and Kisii among others.

Use of English has a long history in Kenya. When Kenya attained self-rule in 1963, English was declared the official language (Republic of Kenya, 1964). It was to be used in all important government sectors including education. This policy re-emphasized what was already in place as a result of colonial language policy. At this particular point in time, the Ministry of Education took steps in line with language policy. In 1964, the Kenya Education Commission mounted a survey to establish the interests of the citizens with regard to language use. The findings revealed that most people wanted a trilingual approach to education (Ministry of Education, 2012). During this period, mother tongue was preferred for verbal communication especially in rural areas, while English and Kiswahili were preferred for education from lower primary to the university. Kiswahili was especially favored in education for purposes of national and regional unity. However, unlike English, mother tongue languages were not anchored into the school curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2012).

1.1 1 Policy Documents that Influence Language in Kenyan Education System

Various policy documents have influenced language policy in Kenyan education system. Among these documents is The Kenya Education Commission Report also referred to as Ominde

Report. This report stipulated English as a medium of Instruction (Republic of Kenya, 1964). Another policy document is The Report of the National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies (The Gachathi Report) in which mother tongue was the medium of instruction from grade 1-3 while English was the medium of instruction in grades 4-8 (Republic of Kenya, 1976). Likewise, in The Presidential Working Party on the Second University in Kenya (The Mackay Report), mother tongue was the medium of instruction in grade 1-3 and English was the medium of instruction in grades 4-8. Besides, Kiswahili was compulsory in grade 1-8 (Republic of Kenya, 1981).

Another policy document that influenced language in Kenyan education was The Report of the Presidential Working Party on Education and Manpower Training for the Next Decade and Beyond (Kamunge Report) where mother tongue was the medium of instruction from grade 1-3, while English was the medium of instruction from grade 4-8. Kiswahili was compulsory from grade 1-8 in this report (Republic of Kenya, 1988).

In addition, Totally Integrated Quality Education and Training: Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the System of Kenya (Koech Report) is a policy document that has contributed to language development in Kenyan system of education. In this document, mother tongue was a medium of instruction from grade 1-3. The Koech Report advocated for English as medium of instruction from grade 4-8 and made Kiswahili compulsory from grade 1-8 (Republic of Kenya, 1999). Furthermore, The English National Syllabus 2006 indicates that mother tongue is the medium of instruction from grade 1-3 and English is the medium of instruction from grade 4-8 (Kenya Institute of Education, 2006). Essentially, these documents influencing language policy in Kenya give an account on how English as a subject has been considered over time in Kenya. The prominence given to English in the documents is obviously noted, making it

inevitable for teachers and learners to focus on English.

The Constitution of Kenya (2010) clearly highlights the position of languages in chapter 2 article 7. In article 7 (1) it states that the national language of the Republic is Kiswahili while in article 7 (2) it states that the official languages of the Republic are Kiswahili and English. Furthermore, in article 7 (3) the constitution states that “the State shall promote and protect the diversity of language of the people of Kenya and promote the development and use of indigenous languages, Kenyan sign language, Braille and other communication formats and technologies accessible to persons with disability” (Kenya Law Report, 2010, p. 14).

Besides, schools have been known to come up with internal language policies that aim at helping the students to be proficient both in spoken and written English and improve their performance in English (Ministry of Education, 2012). These policies are implemented by teachers who believe that if students speak in English, their written English will improve and thus their performance in English. Apparently, teachers and some parents believe that early exposure of learners to English will enhance the learning process since English is the medium of instruction in Kenyan schools; thus speaking in English is encouraged while use of mother tongue is discouraged (Kimani, 2012).

1.12 Performance of English

Appendix 4 shows that the performance of English in day secondary schools in Gatundu District is dismal as compared to boarding secondary school. This should raise a lot of concerns to stakeholders because English is an important subject in terms of its utilitarian value, therefore there was need to consider whether use of mother tongue influences performance in English. Gatundu District is in Kiambu County, Central region of Kenya. The dominant mother tongue is Kikuyu.

In a study done on factors influencing students' performance in English in KCSE in secondary schools in Meru North District, Kenya, Mwangi (2009) identified the problem that arises from having 100% of enrolment of students in their native district as is in the case of day district schools. This according to Mwangi (2009) contributes to poor performance in English as such students use their mother tongue during conversation. Mwangi (2009) recommends that parents should encourage their children to speak English while at home and school. Additionally, Mwangi (2009) cites mother tongue as one of the challenges that influences performance of English.

Gacheche (2010) emphasizes the importance of English language acquisition as a stepping-stone for proficiency in other school subjects in the Kenyan education system and argues that use of mother tongue in secondary schools is a challenge in performance of English. In addition, Ouma (2010) researched on factors that affect performance of English in Gucha District, Kenya and found out that low proficiency and performance in English was associated to limited resources and students' use of mother tongue. He discourages the use of mother tongue in schools.

Moreover, it is a requirement for students to pass in English language before entering the university since English is considered in various clusters that are a requirement for entry to various courses (Kimani, 2012). For instance, for one to qualify to do a course in Law or Medicine at University of Nairobi, one has to attain a minimum of a B- in English (University of Nairobi, 2012).

In both appendixes 3 and 4, schools have been given letters because of ethical considerations. Appendix 4 shows that the performance of English is low in public day secondary schools of Gatundu District while Appendix 3 shows a considerable high performance

of English in public boarding secondary schools of Gatundu District. The researcher therefore sought to find out whether use of mother tongue in day secondary schools of Gatundu contributes to the difference in the performance in English. At a workshop for English, organized by Oxford Publishers in collaboration with Ministry of Education, with the theme, 'Enhancing Performance of English', which was held in Gatundu at Gatundu Education Hall on 21st September 2011, teachers of English raised concerns on the influence of mother tongue on written English and specifically, on the issue of direct translation. They resolved to discourage students not only from using mother tongue in school but also impress upon them to refrain from listening to FM radio stations that air their programs in mother tongue. At this workshop, the underpinning view was that use of mother tongue influences performance in English (Ministry of Education, 2012).

Bartoo (2004) investigated on the acquisition of English syntax by Keiyo mother tongue speakers. In her study, she looked at the syntactic errors that result from First Language (L1) transfer in the process of acquiring English as a Second language (L2) by Keiyo speakers of English. She equally looked at the effects of the errors on performance of students. In her investigation, she found out that syntactic errors found in first language inhibit acquisition of English skills and thus performance of learners in English. This was important to this research since the researcher endeavored to analyze the influence of L1 (mother tongue) on L2 (English).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Secondary school level is important as it is the transitional stage, during which the youth of ages 14-18 years are prepared to join higher education, training and thereafter the world of work. The value attached to this level of education is reflected in the attention it receives from the government, parents and the general public. According to Public Expenditure Review, in

2011, Kenya spent KSH146 Billion on education of which 50% went to primary education and 25% to secondary education (Ministry of Education, 2012). With this heavy investment at secondary level of education by the government, parents and the community, there is expectation of good results from individual students and schools in general (Kamano, 2011). Students' achievement at this level is measured using the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examinations results. English is a core subject and is considered during the selection of courses in colleges and universities, so it needs to be given a lot of attention.

There is a surge in expansion of secondary schools in the country (Kamano, 2011). Most of the emerging secondary schools are in the rural areas where learners prevalently use mother tongue at home and school; Gatundu district is not an exception. This prevalence of use of mother tongue especially in day secondary schools is an issue of concern since it is a challenge that influences the performance of English (Mwangi, 2009). Thus, there was need to analyze the influence of mother tongue on performance of learners in English in public day secondary schools of Gatundu District.

The performance of English in the country has been declining and the results in Gatundu reflect this decline. For instance, English was the subject with the highest decline in 2011 KCSE, with a national mean score of 3.42 in 2011 as compared to 3.90 in 2010 (Ministry of Education, 2012). The highest possible mean is 12.0 which represent an A grade, while the lowest is 1.0, which represent an E. Other grades and corresponding mean scores include: A- 11, B+ 10, B 9, B- 8, C+ 7, C 6, C- 5, D+ 4, D 3, and D-2. Appendix 4 shows the performance of English in public day schools in Gatundu District, while Appendix 3 shows performance of English in public boarding secondary schools in Gatundu District.

The previous studies have only highlighted mother tongue as a factor affecting performance of English but they have not made an analysis of use of mother tongue and its influence on performance of English. Therefore, in this study the researcher endeavored to investigate the influence of mother tongue on performance of English.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What is the prevalence of the use of mother tongue in Gatundu public day Secondary Schools?
2. What is the perception of teachers and students on the influence of mother tongue on performance of English?
3. What are the measures taken to curb the use of mother tongue in schools?
4. What challenges does mother tongue bring about to students in the process of learning English?
5. What strategies should be used to improve the performance of English?

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study provides useful information to all education stakeholders who include the government, Kenya National Examination Council, Kenya Institute of Education, teachers, students, parents and community at large. The information about the influence of use of mother tongue in secondary schools will not only be useful in Gatundu District but also in Kenya at large.

Specifically, the school administration will be able to garner information that will be helpful in their endeavor to address school's language policy issues in terms of focus on use of mother tongue in school and how it influences performance in English and by extension

academic performance. Consequently, school principals can utilize the information, findings and recommendations to look for ways and means of coming up with informed language policies.

The findings also benefit teachers by providing them with information to re-examine their personal and professional practices in terms of use of language, with an aim of improving students' performance in English. Parents or guardians, on the other hand, can use the research recommendations to help them to contribute positively to their children performance in English. Students also benefit from the findings by identifying personal characteristics in terms of their interaction patterns with colleagues and thus pick the right practices that can enhance their performance in English.

Finally, the research contributes to the existing knowledge on the use of mother tongue and how it influences performance of English. It also helps future researchers in identifying priority areas in which to carry out more research in terms of use of language in the context of secondary schools. The findings may also serve as useful feedback to language policy makers, curriculum developers and implementers.

1.5 Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The study focused on how use of mother tongue by teachers and students in school influences performance of English in public day secondary schools in Gatundu District. The study was delimited to public day secondary school students and teachers in Gatundu District of Kiambu County. Teachers of English were selected since they were presumed to be the teachers with first hand teaching experience in English and therefore could adequately represent other teachers and school principals' views. Therefore the study was hopefully a representative of other schools in similar contexts.

In addition, the study was also delimited in terms of the time available. It was not

practical for the researcher to visit all the schools in the district and at the same time carry a quality research. Gatundu District was chosen because its public day secondary schools registered poor performance in English in KCSE examination as Appendix 4 illustrates. Furthermore, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, no other similar study has ever been conducted in the District. In addition, the study focused on English performance only, leaving out all other subjects at secondary school level.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

This study was based on Acculturation Theory. This is an environmental-oriented theory proposed by John Schumann in 1978. It was used in 1980 in the field of Linguistics, precisely, Second Language Acquisition. It states that Second Language Acquisition is the result of acculturation, which he defines as “the social and psychological integration of the learner with the target language (TL) group” (Schumann, 1978, p. 29). The major claim of the theory is that acculturation, which is a cluster of social-psychological factors, is the major cause of Second Language Acquisition (Schumann, 1990). Schumann states that any learner can be placed along a continuum ranging from social-psychological distance to social-psychological proximity with the speakers of the target language. The degree of language acquisition, then, would correlate with the degree of the learner's proximity to the target group. Thus, the acculturation theory argues that learners will be successful in Second Language Acquisition if there are fewer social and psychological distances between them and the speakers of the second language. Some of the factors that account for the acquisition of second language according to the theory include: motivation and attitude of the learner, limited integration of cultural groups and how tight-knit the group is.

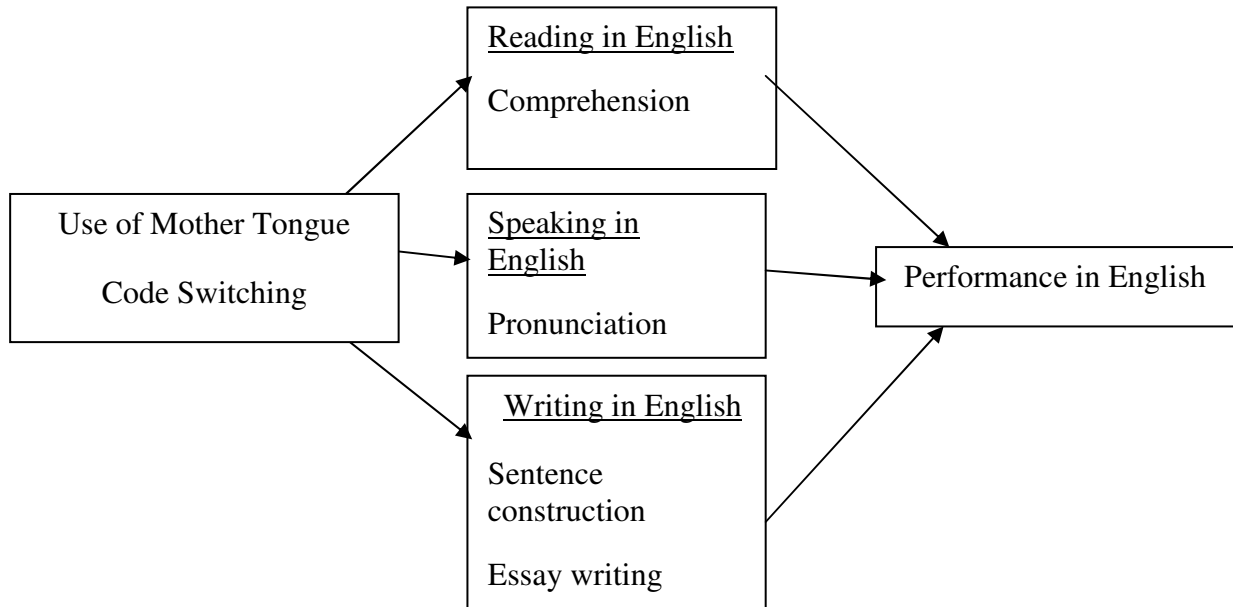
This theory applied to this study because this study endeavored to find out how use of a

language in a social context influences second language acquisition. The theory also indicates that learners will be successful in Second Language Acquisition if there are fewer social and psychological distances between them and the speakers of the second language. This study sought to establish the influence of use of mother tongue (which is a social factor) and the attitude towards use of mother tongue (a psychological factor) and how the distance created by use of mother tongue (Kikuyu) influences acquisition and thus performance in second language (English). Acculturation theory's strength lies in the fact that it considers motivation to be instrumental and integrative. The motive for learning second language is important, however, the theory assumes that there will always be a group which is familiar with the second language; this is not always the case.

1.7 Conceptual Framework

In this research, the relationship between the use of mother tongue and acquisition of English skills of writing, speaking and reading, hence performance of English was considered. The independent variable was use of mother tongue while performance of English was the dependent variable. Precisely, the output was measured in terms of performance in English.

Figure 1: Relationship Between Use of Mother Tongue and Performance of English



Basically, Figure 1 shows that the study highlights how mother tongue influences the acquisition of skills in English and thus performance of English. The conceptual framework indicates that the input of mother tongue influences the acquisition of reading skills through comprehension of texts, writing skills through sentence construction and essay writing, and speaking skills through pronunciation. The influence of mother tongue on these skills eventually influences the performance of English.

1.8 Operational Definition of Terms

Code-Switching: Code switching is when a teacher or student speaks in English for a while and then switches to mother tongue for a while and back to English during the teaching-learning process.

Code-mixing: Code mixing is when a teacher or student mix languages during their conversation. Words from the two languages are mixed during conversation.

English Teacher: An individual who teaches, instructs and facilitates the learning of English language.

Exogenous Language: A language that is foreign to people of a certain country.

First Language: The first language an individual acquires at an early age.

Mother Tongue Education: Mother tongue education is the education which uses a person's mother tongue as its medium of instruction.

Mother Tongue: Mother tongue is a language which a person acquires in early years and which normally becomes their instrument of thought. In this paper, I am going to consider mother tongue as the language of the catchment area since in the context under study, the vernacular used is also the mother tongue.

Second Language: A language that an individual learns or acquires after acquiring the first language.

Target Language: A language that is aimed or targeted to be learned.

Vernacular: Vernacular is the language a child is expected to learn as a result of social interaction or the language of the catchment area.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews international, regional and local literature. It discusses arguments in support of use of mother tongue and those against use of mother tongue. It further discusses literature on the effect of mother tongue (first language) on English (second language) and thus performance of English. In addition, the issue of code switching and code mixing in classroom is discussed. Perception of how mother tongue influences performance of English and the concept of contrastive analysis are equally discussed. The literature is critiqued and gaps of knowledge identified. Finally, a summary of the reviewed literature is done.

2.2 Global Perspectives on First Language Influence on Second Language

Various scholars have discussed the concept of first language influence on second language. Literature herein has brought out various issues regarding the influence of first language on second language discussed from a global point of view. This literature helped the researcher to be grounded with information that would assist him in interpreting the findings.

How First Language Affects Second Language: Transfer or Interference

The term transfer in language learning is defined by Odlin (1989) as “the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously acquired” (p. 27). Transfer is a psychological term that is used to describe a situation where one learned event influences the learning of a subsequent learning event. The influence in this case has two facets; commonly known as interference or negative transfer and positive transfer. Positive transfer or facilitation entails transfer of skill or part of the native language which facilitates the learning of the target language. On the other hand,

negative command of transfer or interference is transfer of a skill which impedes the learning or has negative influence on the command of a skill in the target language. This study endeavors to find out whether use of mother tongue in the context under study influences (interferes or transfers) acquisition of skills in English and thus performance of English in Gatundu.

According to (Wardhaugh, 1970) transfer is a tool used to account for or explain the errors which actually occur. He further argues that transfer is the basis for predicting which patterns in second language (L2) will be learnt more readily and which will prove more troublesome. The assumptions held under this point of view are: the chance of second language learning problems occurring will increase proportionally to the linguistic differences between first language (L1) and L2- linguistic differences give rise to negative transfer or interference; the second assumption is that the chance of L2 learning problems occurring decreases proportionally to the absence of linguistic differences between L1 and L2- absence of linguistic differences give rise to positive transfer or facilitation. Thus this is important to this study because the researcher endeavored to find out whether the difference in mother tongue influences the performance in English.

Corder (1981) observes that when people are learning a second language, they already have a first language (L1). He also realized that the rules they have learned and understood in first language are used in second language (L2). As a result people form habits of using the rules of first language in the second language and therefore make errors. These findings are important to this study because the researcher need to figure out the influence of mother tongue (first language) on acquisition of English (second language) skills and thus performance of English.

Researches that have been done in the area of native language show there is interference of native language on the target language. Various scholars have addressed the issue of

interference: Dulay and Burt (1982) consider interference as the automatic transfer, due to habit, of the surface structure of the first language onto the surface of the target language. Lott (1983) defines interference as 'errors in the learner's use of the foreign language that can be traced back to the mother tongue' (p. 256). Ellis (2001) refers to interference "as transfer which he says is 'the influence that the learner's L1 exerts over the acquisition of an L2'" (p. 51). He argues that transfer is governed by learners' perceptions about what is transferable in L2 learning. According to Ellis (2001) in learning a target language, learners construct their own interim rules with the use of their L1 knowledge, but only when they believe it will help them in the learning task or when they have become sufficiently proficient in the L2 for transfer to be possible. This study sought to find out the influence of mother tongue (L1) on acquisition of English (L2) thus performance. Perception of teachers and students on the influence of mother tongue on English were sought in terms of whether they thought mother tongue influenced the performance of English.

According to Corder (1981) errors are deviations from correct usage because a learner does not know the relevant language rule yet. Furthermore, a distinction between mistake and error is made. Both McLaughlin (1990) and Lott (1983) reveal a criterion that helps us to do so: it is the self-correctability criterion. A mistake can be self-corrected, but an error cannot. Errors are systematic, that is, likely to occur repeatedly and not recognized by the learner. Hence, only the teacher or researcher would locate them, the learner would not (McLaughlin, 1990). This is important for this study since it investigated the influence of mother tongue on written English. Thus, it essentially endeavored to find out whether the transfers or errors emanating from using mother tongue influenced the performance of English. It was noted that teachers identified direct translation as an error that went unnoticed by the learners.

McLaughlin (1990) notes that there is an influence between the first and second languages because acquiring one's first language gives one a certain "routine" or experience, strategies and metacognitive skills, which can be generalized to subsequent languages, but there are also language-specific constraints in L2 perception and comprehension. Thus this study strived to find out the extent to which mother tongue influence the performance of English. The study wanted to find out the extent in terms of perceptions from teachers and students, to which the first language affects the second language.

Pro Mother Tongue Use Advocacy

There is a divergent view by scholars about use of mother tongue in education. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) report of 1953 articulated the significance of using mother tongue as language of instruction in early schooling. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (1953) observes:

It is axiomatic that the best medium for teaching a child is his [her] mother tongue. Psychologically, it is the system of meaningful signs that in his [her] mind works automatically for the expression and understanding. Sociologically, it is a means of identification among members of the community to which he [she] learns more quickly through it than through an unfamiliar linguistic medium. (p. 11).

According to the observation above learning using mother tongue hastens the process of learning since the learners are considered to be familiar with the language of instruction. However, in the context under study, English is the medium of instruction; consequently mother tongue has no place in the teaching-learning process. Therefore, does mother tongue have an influence in the performance of English when it is used in the context under study?

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (1968) maintain that literacy acquisition and second language proficiency depend on well-developed first language proficiency; that is, proficiency in mother tongues. However, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (1968) cautions that a mother tongue need necessarily not be the language which a child's parents use or need it be the first language a child speaks. Mother tongue is the language, which a person acquires in early years and which becomes his or her natural instrument of thought and communication (UNESCO, 1953). However, mother tongue in most cases will be the language spoken by the parents because the parents are normally the first people to be in contact with the child and hence their language. In addition, the question of whether proficiency in mother tongue leads to proficiency in acquisition of the second language is not well explained, in that, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (1953) does not take into consideration the use of the second language as the medium of instruction and how the previous and current use of the mother tongue affect later performance in English.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 1968) advocate for the use of mother tongue on psychological, sociological and educational grounds. Mother tongue education is supported by educationists due to its applicability to the cognitive development of a child. Learners have difficulties in developing cognitive skills when taught through the medium of a second language especially if it is not related to the learners' mother tongue (McNab, 1989). UNESCO advances the point of view that pupil's mother tongue is the best for expressional and understanding of concepts. This is compared to exogenous languages like English, which the pupil has to learn the subject before being instructed in the language. Educationists support the view that learners best learn from simple to complex, known to

unknown. The known language that a child encounters in his/her life is mother tongue. Cummings (1964) thus proclaims succinctly:

Elementary schooling in a language other than the child's mother tongue represents a serious departure from the fundamental educational rule that one should move from known to unknown. Only the mother tongue with its links to the child's environment and experiences can introduce the child to the world of abstract experiences and high culture (p. 180).

Essentially, the above argument shows that use of mother tongue is favorable for learners especially at the elementary level. It implies that when English is used at elementary level, it becomes a challenge in terms of making sense out of the abstract ideas. Therefore, I am of the opinion that for sustainability of consistency in thought, learners should be introduced to English at a tender age though this contradicts the proponents of those who believe in the use of mother tongue. Early introduction to English will remove interference/barrier brought about by mother tongue leading to enhanced performance in English.

Language Use in Diverse Contexts

According to Asher (1986) it is important to check how students use language both written and spoken to make sense of their own lives and what they learn in school. This can therefore insinuate that teachers need to check out the kind of language student's use in school. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (2006) argue that the best medium to teach a child is through their mother tongue. However it is not possible to teach in schools (especially secondary schools) using mother tongue in Kenyan context because of the many mother tongues available.

A misconception lies in the belief that many bilingual students appear to experience

restricted educational success, with bilingualism the attribute of liability (Schumann, 1990). This statement provides the substance of my study; to what extent does bilingual students who use mother tongue in an educational context that emphasize the use English as the language of instruction perform well in English? Is use of mother tongue a liability or an asset? The answer to this question provides us with the opportunity to evaluate the influence of mother tongue on performance of English; whether positive or negative; transfer or interference. Therefore, this puts us in a situation that raises the query as to what is the influence of use of mother tongue or first language on academic performance.

Stubbs (1996) claims that reading problems in second language emanate from inadequate knowledge in second language since the reader may lack adequate proficiency to pick cues that will enable him to make correct predictions or guesses. It is equally argued that individuals proficient in first language will also be proficient in second language (Stubbs, 1996). This argument tends to simplify the proficiency in mother tongue and assume that this proficiency will automatically lead to proficiency in the second language. The argument does not consider the effort made by individuals in acquiring the second language through reading, writing, listening and speaking. It does not consider orthographic and phonological processing which require sets of knowledge and strategies. In as much as the researcher has tried to show a correlation between proficiency between first and second language, there is a gap that is left in terms of how direct translation from mother tongue to second language influences communication. Does this influence the performance of students in English?

Use of mother tongue can affect both reading and writing and thus performance of English since the more the students' dialect departs from the Standard English, the great the students show problems in learning in printed words both in reading and writing (Asher, 1986).

It is therefore important for teachers to know as much as they can from the students' dialect for them to optimally teach them. Mother tongue interference retards the progress for reading, speaking and writing since patterns of mother tongue do not correspond with those of English. This study endeavored to find out whether indeed use of mother tongue in the context under study influenced the performance of English in terms of the pronunciation and when students are writing in English.

According to Cummins (2000) students need to have control of formal English in order to do well in English exams. They also argue that language develop through authentic language use. This is a clear indication that, if students frequently use mother tongue, their written English will be greatly influenced. In addition, students need more than social language skills to be successful in school, they need academic language skills which involve using both receptive and productive language, thinking and reasoning in all content area. According to Cummins (2000) schools have a responsibility to provide a wide "range of experiences that will facilitate language development for social interaction, performing highly in English as well as language for academic purposes" (p.29). This explains why schools have mechanisms to curb mother tongue speaking. In this study, the researcher wanted to find out some of the mechanisms that were put in place by schools to curb the use of mother tongues and whether these mechanisms worked.

Direct Translation as a Product of First Language

Corder (1981) investigated the phenomenon and questions the term transfer. He suggests that mother tongue influence as a neutral and broader term to refer to what has most commonly been called transfer. Corder says that since most studies of error were made on the basis of the performance of learners in English in formal situations where it appears that errors related to mother tongue are more frequent, it was natural that an explanation of the phenomenon was of

considerable concern to a linguist. In a way Corder (1981) acknowledges errors in second language are a result of mother tongue. Thus this investigation aimed to find out whether indeed this was true; does mother tongue influence the performance of English in the context under study?

Corder (1981) shows that when a second language learner is under pressure, “the learner will borrow or substitute words from the mother tongue” (p. 26). He further says that borrowing occurs because communication is the learner's primary goal, rather than obedience to grammar rules. — Borrowers retrieve words and structures from mother tongue to help their developing sense of the second language (Corder, 1981). In both cases, however, being understood is the primary goal. According to Cummins (2000) there are two independent systems of second language performance: “the acquired system' and 'the learned system'. The 'acquired system' or 'acquisition' is the product of a subconscious process very similar to the process children undergo when they acquire their first language. It requires meaningful Language in interaction in the target language - natural communication - in which speakers are concentrated not in the form of their utterances, but in the communicative act” (p. 68). The 'learned system' or 'learning' is the product of formal instruction and it comprises a conscious process which results in conscious knowledge about the language, for example knowledge of grammar rules. This is important to this study since the researcher wants to know whether the unconscious system learnt by learners in their mother tongue influences their construction in the conscious system through learning English in school.

Language and Gender

According to Lado (1995) men and women use language in different way during their conversations. In the studies of language and gender Lado (1995) identified dominance in speech as a trait manifested by female. Women talk too much and speak in private contexts while men

speak in public, negotiate status or avoid failure and speak one at a time. Unlike men, women are more likely to initiate conversation than men, but less likely to make the conversation succeed. This affects females' rate of learning and acquiring a language (Lado, 1995). This study considered the genders due to their differences as a result of strength or weakness in dominance in speech.

Communication styles are always a product of context, and as such, gender differences tend to be most pronounced in single-gender groups (Corder, 1981). One explanation for this is that people accommodate their language towards the style of the person they are interacting with. Therefore, in a mixed-gender group, for instance a mixed secondary school, gender differences tend to be less pronounced. A similarly important observation is that this accommodation is usually towards the language style, not the gender of the person (Corder, 1981). That is, a polite and empathic male will tend to be accommodated to on the basis of their being polite and empathic, rather than their being male. This study ensured that there was an even representation of genders so that both the attributes of male and female were captured.

The Concept of Contrastive Analysis

Lado (1995) is of the view that grammatical structure opens the way to a comparison of the grammatical structure of the foreign language with that of the native language to discover the problems of the students in learning the foreign language. It is from this premise that Lado (1995) argues that the result of such a comparison tells teachers what they should test and what they should not test. Thus comparison of grammatical structures is important in this research since the researcher endeavors to analyze the influence of mother tongue on performance of English. The challenge of direct translation is identified as result of comparing the grammatical disposition of mother tongue and English. In addition, Lado (1995) argues that the teacher who

has made a comparison of the foreign language with the native language of the students will know better what the problems are and can provide for them while teaching. This is important to this research since it is from this point of view that the researcher finds out whether use of mother tongue influences both writing and pronunciation of learners.

According to Dulay and Burt (1977) second language learning difficulty was the result of interference from old habits in the learning of new habits. Therefore the old habits are those of first language while the learnt habits are those of the second language. The greater the differences between the two languages the greater the difficulty and more errors will be made. The findings of Dulay and Burt (1977) raised doubts about negative transfer as a major factor in the process of second language acquisition. This is important for this study since this study sought to establish whether these differences between mother tongue and second language, consciously or unconsciously influences the performance of English in the context under study.

Thus, in Contrastive Analysis (CA), it is assumed that learning a second language is facilitated whenever there are similarities between that language and mother tongue. Learning may be interfered with when there are marked contrasts between the mother tongue and second language (Lado, 1995). The CA analysis emphasizes the influence of mother tongue in learning a second language at phonological, morphological and syntactic levels. An examination of the differences between the first and the second language helps to predict the possible errors that can be made by L2 learners (Lado, 1995). This study sought to find out whether mother tongue in the area under study influences the learning of English and thus its performance.

According to Krashen (1985) language teaching practice often assumes that most of the difficulties that learners face in the study of English are a consequence of the degree to which their native language differs from English (a contrastive analysis approach). However it must be

emphasized that not all similarities result in ease of learning and differences in difficulties. Therefore this study sought to find out whether the performance of English is influenced by use of mother tongue in writing and pronunciation. By finding out this, this was bound to provide language policy makers with sound knowledge of whether to encourage or discourage the use of mother tongue in school.

Language learners often produce errors of syntax and pronunciation thought to result from the influence of their L1, “such as mapping its grammatical patterns inappropriately onto the L2, pronouncing certain sounds incorrectly or with difficulty, and confusing items of vocabulary known as false friends” (Krashen, 1985, p. 58). In this study the questions regarding the influence of mother tongue to writing and pronunciation intend to establish influence of mother tongue on grammatical patterns and eventually performance of English.

Reward and Punishment versus Second Language Learning

According to Krashen (1985) affective variables play a facilitative but non-causal role in second language acquisition. These variables include motivation, self-confidence and anxiety. Krashen (1985) claims that learners with high motivation, self-confidence, a good self-image, and a low level of anxiety are better equipped for success in second language acquisition. Low motivation, low self-esteem, and debilitating anxiety can combine to form a mental block that prevents comprehensible input from being used for acquisition. In addition, Krashen (1985) emphasis seems to be that classroom learning does not lead to fluent, native-like speech. This is important in this study since the researcher asked whether students who used mother tongue were punished and whether those who used English were rewarded. Furthermore, the researcher wanted to know whether the punishment deterred the students from using mother tongue.

According to Krashen (1985), the study of the structure of the language can have general

educational advantages and values that high schools and colleges may want to include in their language programs. However, he argues that examining irregularity, formulating rules and teaching complex facts about the target language is not language teaching. The only instance in which the teaching of grammar can result in language acquisition (and proficiency) is when the students are interested in the subject and the target language is used as a medium of instruction. It can be insinuated that when the students are not motivated to learn English in the context under study then learning will be thwarted and thus eventual influence on the performance of English.

Consequently, both teachers and students are convinced that the study of formal grammar is essential for second language acquisition, and the teacher should be skillful enough to present explanations in the target language (thus discourages Codeswitching) so that the students understand. In other words, the teacher's talk meets the requirements for comprehensible input and perhaps with the students' participation classroom becomes an environment suitable for acquisition (Krashen, 1985). This is important in this study since the investigation considers the existence of a language policy and the consequences of failing to follow the policy. Thus by insisting on the language policy the teacher encourages the learners to take risks for making mistakes during their conversation and correcting them later, this eventually aims to improve their performance in English. This study therefore strives to find out whether the existence of a language policy deters students from using mother tongue in their communication.

Acquisition and Learning Distinction

Krashen (1985) considers language acquisition to be a subconscious process; language acquirers are not aware they are acquiring language. This is shown when children acquire their first language. Generally the acquirers are not aware of the rules of the language. This essentially

is informal learning of language. The second way to develop competence in a second language is by language 'learning' (Krashen, 1985). The term 'learning' in this context is used "to mean conscious knowledge of second language knowing the rules, being aware of them and being able to talk about them" (p. 10). This literature was important to this study since the study endeavored to find out the unconscious influence of mother tongue to writing and pronunciation. On the other hand the formality that is used in teaching English as a subject to students has to be taken into consideration.

Krashen (1985) further identifies that error correction has little or no effect on subconscious acquisition, but is thought to be useful for conscious learning. Error correction supposedly helps the learner to induce or figure out" the right forms of a rule. If for example, a student of English as second language says "I goes to school every day", and the teacher corrects him or her by repeating the utterance correctly, the learner is supposed to realize that the /s/ ending goes with the third person and not first person and alter his or her conscious mental representation of the rule.

Asher (1986) says that as a child develops control of his native language many aspects of perception and production becomes more and more fixed, he loses much of the flexibility he had to produce sounds that are not in the language around him; he soon tends to hear all sounds in terms of the phonological system of his own language. This was important in this study since it endeavored to find out whether mother tongue influenced pronunciation of words and thus performance of English especially the 'Oral Skills Section' tested in Paper 1, Functional Skills

2.3 Regional Perspectives on Mother Tongue Influence on Learning English

Literature from the region has been discussed. This is important since it provided the study with perceptions about mother tongue and its influence on English. Studies conducted

across the region provide this study with comparative methodologies which assisted this study to be done in a better way. Studies on code switching provided an understanding on how code switching abets prevalence of use of mother tongue.

Negative Conception of Mother Tongue Use

Adebayo (2008) uses a survey design to examine the influence of mother tongue on performance of English language in Junior School Certificate Examination in Western Nigeria. He found that mother tongue influences the students' performance in English language in Junior School Certificate Examination in Western Nigeria. He recommends that English language should be used as a medium of communication within and outside the classroom and both teachers and students should endeavor to improve their proficiency level of the language which will eventually lead to improved performance. Adebayo's study does not explicitly indicate to what extent mother tongue influence the performance; this sought to establish what Adebayo (2008) failed to capture in his study by analyzing the extent to which mother tongue influences performance of English.

Kolawole (2002) also confirmed that students' performance in English language in secondary schools of Nigeria was very poor. He stressed further that the standard was poor due to a number reasons such as the use of mother tongue; some students do not understand the grammar because their teachers themselves do not know it and in most cases English language teachers in the senior primary and junior secondary schools resort to the use of mother tongue to teach (code switching); they use mother tongue to explain concepts. This might be true to Kenyan case especially in day schools where learners are drawn from a local context of a familiar native language. The researcher sought to find out whether teachers indeed code switch or use mother tongue in Gatundu and how this had an influence in performance of English.

Ayodele (1988), Falayajo (1997) and Kolawole (2002) recommend that pupils should have exposure to the English language quite early in primary school irrespective of the perceived advantages of mother tongue. These scholars emphasize on firm foundation in English language for better performance in the subject in future and argue that a solid foundation in English essentially provides students with fundamental skills of English language.

Code-Switching and Code-Mixing in the Classroom

Kamisah (2009) in her study on code switching and code mixing in the classroom discourse in Ethiopia, where English is the medium of instruction in high school, found that code Switching or code Mixing served some functions such as signaling topic change, giving and clarifying explanation, enacting social relationships and aggravating and mitigating messages. She argues that code Switching or code Mixing affected the performance of English since learners tended to directly translate connectors from their mother tongues.

An investigation on code switching and other language practices in Mathematics, Science and English language classrooms was done in South Africa and found out that despite the pedagogical validity of code switching and code mixing, there was a dilemma among teachers between “access to meaning and access to English” (Setati, et al., 2002, p. 140). This is because although they could reformulate the concepts in the students’ mother tongue, students needed to receive and produce the content in English as it is the language that they will be assessed. The practice of code switching or code mixing in class might jeopardize students’ ability to answer examination questions in pure English thus affecting their performance in English.

Merrit et al. (1992) in research on determinants of Codeswitching in Kenyan Primary Classrooms found that code switching and code mixing between English and the mother tongue in three Kenyan primary schools occurred when teachers wanted to reformulate information,

bring new content information, attract students' attention and substitute words, this affects learners understanding of concept in English and thus their performance in English.

Code Switching as a Countenance of Language Interference

Kamisah (2009) suggests that code switching occurs when an individual who is bilingual alternates between two languages during his/her classroom presentation with another bilingual person. A person who is bilingual may be said to be one who is able to communicate, to varying extents, in a second language. This type of alteration, or code switching, between languages occurs commonly amongst bilinguals and may take a number of different forms, including alteration of sentences, phrases from both languages succeeding each other and switching in a long narrative. In this study the researcher endeavored to find out the prevalence of code switching by both teachers and students in context under study.

There are a number of possible reasons for the switching from one language to another. Kamisah (2009) identifies one of the reasons is that a speaker may not be able to express him/herself in one language so switches to the other to compensate for the deficiency. As a result, the speaker may be triggered into speaking in the other language for a while. This type of code switching tends to occur when the speaker is upset, tired or distracted in some manner. Secondly, switching commonly occurs when an individual wishes to express solidarity with a particular social group. Rapport is established between the speaker and the listener when the listener responds with a similar switch. Thus the study endeavored to find out whether the teachers and students code-switched for whatever reason and whether this influences their performance in English.

2.4 Local Perspectives on Mother Tongue Influence on Performance of English

Local perceptions on the use of mother tongue and its influence on performance of English has been highlighted in the literature herein. Since the study sought to find perceptions of teachers and students, this literature was of importance in terms of drawing comparison. Furthermore, local literature helped the researcher to identify research gap.

Mother Tongue Influence on Performance of English

Njoroge (1987) studied the acquisition of Six Morphosyntactic Structures of English by Kenyan School Children and looked at how First Language (L1) of students from different mother tongues in Kenya interfered and affected learning of English. He found out that children's First Language (L1) usually interferes with acquisition of Second Language (L2) skills. Njoroge's study is important to this research in that it is looking at errors that are as a result of mother tongue influence on the performance of English.

Wagikondi (2004) did an investigation into factors contributing to poor achievement in English in Kirinyaga District, Kenya and identified that when language of communication at home and school is mother tongue, then acquisition of English skills is inhibited and thus the performance of English is affected. Wagikondi (2004) also recommends that there is need to carry out a research to investigate the influence of mother tongue on student's performance in English.

Hasindu (2011) conducted a study on teachers' instructional strategies on students' performance in English in KCSE in Samia District, Kenya and found out that classroom talk was encouraged in English because the policy in majority of the schools in the district is that students must communicate in English. He therefore suggested that further studies should be carried out on the use of mother tongue in schools as a factor that influences performance of English.

Kenya Institute of Education Handbook (2009) indicates that the English secondary school teacher is instructed and expected to provide students with pronunciation skills. English vowels are confusing and this confusion occurs with practically all mother tongues. Most teachers are faced with this challenge and leave out the pronunciation drill exercise to the disadvantage of the student thus teachers' inadequacy in pronunciation due to confusion brought about by their mother tongue influence hinders acquisition of pronunciation skills thus affecting performance of English especially English Paper 1(Functional Skills) in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (Kenya Institute of Education, 2009).

Ochieng (2006) in his research on students' attitude towards and performance in integrated English syllabus in secondary schools in Rongo Division, Migori, points out infiltration of languages other than English like 'Sheng' and uncontrolled use of 'mother tongue' in some of the schools as factor that challenges not only teaching of integrated English, but also influences performance of English.

Contextual Use of Language

Most supporters of mother tongue-based learning agree that a child's home language can effectively be used as a language of instruction in the early years of their schooling as a bridge to learning a foreign language however it becomes an impediment in learning English and thus performance of English in secondary school (Gacheche, 2010). This study explores the use of mother tongue and code switching in an effort to establish the extent to which use of mother tongue influences the performance of English.

A system where instruction is carried out in a language children do not speak (or if they do, they speak a language that is broken and incoherent) is referred to "as submersion, as it is comparable to forcibly holding a child under water" (Skutnabb-Kangas 2000, p. 105). On the

other hand immersion has to do with using of the revered language, probably mother tongue to teach, for instance, code switching to Kikuyu language as a medium of instruction in a context that predominantly use English as a language of instruction. Hence this study strives to find out the prevalence of code switching in the context under study.

According to Ochieng (2006) it is checking how students use language both written and spoken in school and at home is important. He emphasizes that teachers and parents ought to help learners to use a language that will help them to understand concepts in the process of learning. Mother tongue is not use as a medium of instruction and therefore if frequently used it will be counterproductive. Therefore, when mother tongue is used, it will in a sense influences the acquisition of skills in English thus the performance of English. He further suggests that a research be done on the influence of mother tongue on performance of English.

Perception of Stakeholders towards Mother Tongue and Performance of English

A study conducted by Kamano (2011) on the influence of instructional language choice on secondary school students on performance in English in Kikuyu District, Kenya and found out that speaking skills using language of instruction have an impact on classroom participation and thus performance of English. Those students who can orally express themselves in English enjoy participation in classroom activities such as discussions and storytelling while those who cannot prefer to keep quiet. This state of affairs is an advantage to few learners who grasp the academic content at the expense of many who are linguistically disadvantaged. This translates in difference in performance of English in favour of learners with capabilities in speaking in English.

Overdependence on foreign colonial languages like English and French coupled with negative attitudes of Africans towards their mother tongues may lead to a situation one may call

‘linguistic imperialism’ (Webb & Kembo-Sure, 2000, p. 53). As a matter of fact, in some schools in Kenya, pupils were (are) punished for speaking their mother tongue. Ngugi wa Thiong’o (1986) succinctly writes:

The language of our evening teach-ins, and the language of our immediate and wider community, and the language of our work in the fields were one. And then I went to school, a colonial school, and this harmony was broken. The language of my education was no longer the language of my culture. English became the language of my formal education. In Kenya, English became more than a language: it was *the* language, and all the others had to bow before it in deference. Thus one of the most humiliating experiences was to be caught speaking Gikuyu in the vicinity of the school. The culprit was given corporal punishment or was made to carry a metal plate around the neck with inscriptions such as I AM STUPID or I AM A DONKEY (p. 11).

This sets a bad example that indigenous language is inferior compared to other languages like English. When a teacher punishes a pupil for speaking his/her mother tongue, a strong message is communicated that he/she should “renounce any allegiance to their language and culture” (Webb & Kembo-Sure, 2000, p. 31).

The issue of attitude should not be given a center stage but rather the focus should be on mother tongue’s influence on performance of English. Gacheche (2010) notes that when children do not speak the language of instruction, teachers are forced to use traditional techniques such as chorus teaching, repetition, memorization, recall, code-switching and safe talk. In this context authentic teaching and learning cannot take place. Such situation accounts largely for low performance of students in English. .

Ouma (2010) conducted a research on factors affecting performance in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examination, English examinations in Nyamache Division, Gucha District, Kenya and found out the use of mother tongue was one of the factors which affected students' performance in English. Ouma (2010) found that 58.8% of the teachers said that mother tongue was the most frequently used language in the school, while many students, 39.4 % said they used mother tongue at school, this they believed had unconstructive influence in the performance of English.

In Kenya, most parents prefer their children to be taught in English and not mother tongue even at lower primary because of the value attached to English (Mwangi, 2009). Parents' attitudes towards mother tongue education in Africa is best captured by Kamano (2011) who highlights the idea that a child will benefit if his or her initial education is given in the first language is disputed by many so-called educated parent; parents who prefer an English medium education sometimes do so because they see the products of an English-medium getting rewards in terms of lucrative jobs and upward social mobility.

The major argument advanced by Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000) is that English is the language of a wider communication and the world. The international status that English enjoys makes parents feel that it is the language of the future for their children. Consequently, parents discourage their children from using mother tongue in favour of English hoping that this will improve their performance in English.

Gacheche (2010) affirms that indeed poor performance in English and general academic performance was attributed to the use of mother tongue as a language of instruction in the 1950s and this was reflected by the dismal performance of African and Asian children in exams-which

were written in English- compared to European pupils.

2.5 Summary of Reviewed Literature

The literature reviewed shows that use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction at a lower level or preparatory level of education may be advantageous to the students since students at that age easily associate with a familiar language and mother tongue is their instrument of thought. However, the linguistic differences between first language (L1) and second language (L2) - may either transfer or interfere with L2 acquisition. It can be deduced that indeed there is interference or transfer (negative or positive influence) of mother tongue to English. The gap that emanate from these findings is that they do not explicitly bring out an analysis of mother tongue and its influence on performance of English in the context under study.

In addition, the literature review addresses the issue of contrastive analysis which dwells on comparing various aspects of first language and second language. The literature on contrastive analysis is important since it puts the researcher into questioning whether the differences and similarities of mother tongue in the context of study influences performance of English positively or negatively. Furthermore, the literature reviewed addresses the issue of reward and punishment. Some of the scholars like Kamano (2011) and Bamgbose (2000) have highlighted the importance of motivation self-confidence, a good self-image as an approach to teaching English.

Various scholars have shown that there is a relationship between the use of mother tongue and learning of English skills. However, they do not analyze mother tongue and its influence on performance of English. Therefore, there is need to analyze the use of mother tongue and its influences the acquisition of English skills. Moreover, there is need to find not only the prevalence of use of mother tongue but whether use of mother tongue has an influence

in the performance of English in Gatundu.

The literature reviewed has also discussed the issue of code switching, code mixing and the attitude of stakeholders towards use of mother tongue. It has also been noted that teachers have gone ahead and punished learners for speaking mother tongue in the school premises. Most schools in Kenya have internal language policies that ban the use of mother tongues in the school compound with an aim of improving the performance of English. This study sought to find out whether there was an influence of use of mother tongue on performance of English. So, in what ways does the use of mother tongue influence the learners' performance in English? The inadequacies and weakness from other studies have led to various scholars for instance, Hasindu (2011) and Ochieng (2006) to recommend that a study be done on the influence of mother tongue on performance of English. Consequently, the researcher endeavored to find out whether there is an influence of use of mother tongue in public day secondary schools of Gatundu District on students' performance in English.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology that guided the study. Specifically, the chapter gives information about research design, study location, target population, sampling procedures, and research instruments. In addition, it discusses validity and reliability of instruments, data collection and data analysis procedures. Finally, the chapter discusses ethical considerations of the study.

3.2 Research Design

The researcher used largely quantitative research approach as well as qualitative research approach. A survey of selected public day secondary schools in Gatundu District were used to study how and the extent to which the use of mother tongue influences performance in English. Survey research could be descriptive, exploratory or involve advanced statistical analysis. Besides, interviews were used. Interviewing is a qualitative research technique that involves conducting individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program, or situation (Mertens, 1998).

Precisely, the researcher used a cross sectional survey design. The researcher identified essential components of a population and randomly selected a cross-section of research subjects from which the required data were collected. Interviews are useful when you want detailed information about a person's thoughts and behaviors or want to explore new issues (Mertens, 1998). Therefore, the researcher used interviews in order to get detailed information from English teachers.

3.3 Target Population

The target populations were students and English teachers in public day secondary schools in Gatundu District. There are 32 public secondary schools with a total population of 7969 students (see appendix 1). Of the 32 schools, 4 are purely boys schools, 5 purely girls schools while 23 are mixed schools; twenty (20) are public day secondary schools (see appendix 2). The study was confined to public day secondary schools since these are the schools that showed dismal performance in English as illustrated by appendix 4.

3.4 Description of the Sample and Sampling Procedures

The participants for this study were students and teachers of English in public day secondary schools in Gatundu District. The sampling was through probability and non-probability sampling techniques. Precisely, the study employed simple random sampling, systematic random sampling, stratified sampling and purposive sampling as discussed in the sections that follow.

3.4.1 Sampling of Schools

There are 20 public day secondary schools in Gatundu district with a total population of about 3633 students. All the 20 schools were mixed and were therefore homogeneous. The schools were sampled through simple random sampling. Gay, Mills and Airasian (2009) observe that in sampling, 20-30% of the target population is adequate for a small population. Therefore, 20% of the schools were 4 schools. The researcher took 25% because it was the mid-point for 20-30. Therefore the sample of 5 day secondary schools was 25% of the total schools. This was within the 20-30% margin recommended by (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2009). The researcher assigned numbers 01-20 to the schools, put them in a pool and then drew 5 numbers from the 20 at random.

3.4.2 Sampling of Students

Students from Form 3 and Form 4 were considered in this study. Gay, Mills and Airasian (2009) observe that in sampling, 20% of the target population is adequate for a population size of between 501-1000. Therefore, with a target population of 955, the researcher picked 191 students which were 20% of the sample population. The 20% of the selected students' population was evenly distributed between the two classes. With a sample of 191 students from the 5 schools, 95 students were selected from Form 3, and 96, Form four. Systematic random sampling was used to select participants from each class. A class list for each class was obtained and every nth student was picked. For instance, School A had a class of 39 Form 3 students; every second student was picked from class list to get 18 students from that class. Effort was made to ensure that equal number of girls and boys were sampled separately through stratified sampling since all sampled schools were mixed schools (stratified sampling ensures that different groups of the population are represented in the sample).

3.4.3 Sampling of Teachers

Teachers were selected from the sampled schools using purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is where the choice of units depends on the subjective judgment of the researcher (Mertens, 1998). This means the researcher selects the subject based on his/her views that such person has the relevant information which is important to the study. All English teachers were selected from the schools that were selected to make a total of 8 English teachers. English teachers were selected because they were considered to have relevant information about the influence of mother tongue in performance of English.

Table 1: Summary of Sampling Matrix

Target Group	Target Population	Sample Population	Sampling Procedure	Number Sample	Percentage (%)
Schools	20	5	Simple random sampling	5	25%
Teachers	37	8	Purposive sampling	8	100%
Students	3,633	955	Stratified, systematic sampling	191	20%

Table 1 above presents a summary of the target group, target population, sample population, sampling procedures, sample number and the sample percentage.

3.5 Description of Research Instruments

Research instruments are tools that are used to collect data. The research instruments that were used to collect data in this study are described herein.

a) Questionnaire for Students

The items in the questionnaires comprised of close-ended and open-ended questions. The questionnaire contained section A to F. Section A collected background information of the students, section B tackled items on prevalence of use of mother tongue, section C had items on perception of students on the influence of mother tongue on performance of English, section D dealt with measures taken to curb the use of mother tongue, section E considered challenges brought about by use of mother tongue and section F dealt with strategies to improve English. The items in the questionnaires were developed through researcher's experience, input from supervisors and the relevant literature review. Questionnaire for students is appended as appendix 5.

b) Questionnaire for Teachers of English

The items in the questionnaires comprised of close-ended and open-ended questions. The questionnaire contained section A and F. Section A collected background information of English

teachers. Section B tackled items on prevalence of use of mother tongue, section C had items on perception of teachers on the influence of mother tongue on performance of English, section D dealt with measures taken to curb use of mother tongue, section E had items on challenges brought about by use of mother tongue and section F had items on strategies to improve English. The items in the questionnaires were developed through researcher's experience, input from supervisors and the relevant literature review. Questionnaire for teachers is appended as appendix 6.

c) Interview Guide for Teachers of English

Interview is a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program, or situation (Mertens, 1998). Interviews are useful when you want detailed information about a person's thoughts and behaviors or want to explore new issues in depth. The interviews enabled the researcher to capture what the students' and teachers' questionnaires would have failed to capture. The interview guide was used to find out how the existence of language policies in schools helped to curb the use of mother tongue, observations made by teachers on students who used mother tongue and those who did not in relation to their performance in English, the challenges brought about by use of mother tongue in the process of learning English and suggestions for strategies for improvement. The items in the interview guide were developed through researcher's experience and assistance by the supervisors. The interview guide for teachers is attached as appendix 7.

3.5.1 Pilot Study

Before the actual data were collected, the researcher conducted a pilot study in a public day secondary school which was not included in the final study sample population. Ten students

and three teachers were picked from the school. The questionnaires were administered to them with an aim to find out the time each will take to fill and the clarity of the items. The purpose of the pilot study was to enable the researcher to ascertain the reliability and validity of the instruments, and to familiarize himself with the administration of the questionnaires therefore improve the instruments and procedures.

3.6 Validity and Reliability of the Instruments

Validity and reliability of instruments are important since they focus on accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences. The research instruments have to realize the true value of what is being measured and also measure the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results.

3.6.1 Validity

In this study, the three types of validity that were considered are face validity, content validity and construct validity. Gay, Mills and Airasian (2009) point out that content validity is the degree to which the sample of items represents the content the test is designed to measure. The researcher ascertained the content validity in this study from research experts such as supervisors and language experts. The instrument was given to two groups of peers; one was requested to assess what concept the instrument is trying to measure while the other was asked to determine whether the set of items accurately represents the concept under study. Construct validity can be defined as the extent to which an instrument measures a hypothetical construct (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). One of the variables that were studied in this research was the influence of mother tongue and the other was the performance in English. The influence of mother tongue is a constructed variable and therefore construct validity was important to ensure that the findings gave a reflection of the respondents stand. To achieve this, the instruments were

pretested. The items measuring the extent of influence on performance were assigned numerical values and this was used to arrive at scores per item.

Face validity considered whether the instruments looked like a measure of desired construct to a member of the target population. Face validity was ascertained by seeking the review of peers to establish whether or not the instruments were ethical, and whether or not they actually measured what they meant to measure.

3.6.2 Reliability

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), explain that reliability is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trials. In this study, data collection tools were tested and retested with a population similar to the target population but was not involved in the final study to ensure that the instruments produce results that are consistent with the research questions. Thus, the tools were tested and re-tested in a public day school in Gatundu District but the school was not involved in the actual sample. The questionnaires were administered to 10 students in the school and coded manually since the sample was small. The same questionnaires were administered after two weeks to the same students and again coded manually. Moreover, the questionnaire for teachers was administered to three English teachers. The same questionnaires were administered after two weeks to the same teachers. A strong positive correlation coefficient would ascertain the reliability of the instruments. According to Macmillan (1992) an instrument with a reliability index of a minimum of 0.5 can be used for collecting data. Supposing the correlation was a weak one the questionnaire would be reconstructed.

The students' questionnaire were administered to 10 students in the school on 3rd June 2013 and coded manually. The same questionnaires were administered on 17th June 2013

to the same students and again coded manually. The items that were tested and retested were: Section C c) i, ii, iii, iv, d) i, ii, iii, Section D e) i, ii, iii, Section E i) i, ii, ii, that tested perception of students on influence of mother tongue, measure to curb use of mother tongue and challenges brought about by use of mother tongue. Pearson's correlation coefficient of 0.87 was obtained.

The teachers' questionnaire was administered to three teachers in the school on 3rd June 2013 and coded manually. It was again administered on 17th June 2013. The items that were tested and retested were: Section C c) i, ii, iii, iv, Section E f) i, ii, iii that tested perception of teachers on the influence of mother tongue and challenges brought about by use of mother tongue. Pearson's correlation coefficient of 0.79 was obtained.

According to Macmillan (1992), instrument with a reliability index of a minimum of 0.5 can be used for collecting data. Therefore, the questionnaires with a correlation coefficient of 0.87 for students and 0.79 for teachers were used. Testing and re-testing helped to improve the reliability of the questionnaires by ensuring that the questionnaires give consistent results. For the items that were not scaled, clarity of the questionnaire items was assessed and those items found to be inadequate or vague were either removed or modified in order to improve the quality of the questionnaires thus increasing its reliability.

3.7 Data Collection Procedures

Before collecting data, the researcher acquired an introduction letter from Catholic University on 27th May 2013 and a permit from The National Council for Science and Technology (NCST) which was issued on 3rd June 2013. He further got authorization letters from the Deputy County Commissioner and the District Education Officer. He further requested for permission in writing to access the schools sampled for the purpose of this study through the principals. According to Cohen (2000), researchers will need to ensure not only that access is

permitted, but is, in fact, practicable. Therefore, the researcher ensured that access to the sampled schools was practical.

The researcher booked appointments with the sampled schools through the principals and visited the schools. Class teachers assisted the researcher to get the participants in the sampled classes. Before administering the questionnaires, the researcher met the participants and explained to them the purpose of the study and their importance in the study. The researcher required informed consent and assent from the participants. The researcher then administered the questionnaires himself to the sampled students. The participants took 30 minutes to fill in the questionnaires after which the researcher collected them and thanked them for participating in the study. For easier identification and analysis, the researcher labeled the sampled schools from A to E. He also numbered all the questionnaires to help him in following up of the questionnaires.

Interviews were conducted with the sampled teachers of English with the help of the constructed interview guide. The interviews took about 40 minutes at the interviewees' convenience. The interviewer took notes to capture all the important points. Immediately after each interview, the researcher expounded on the points discussed, so as to have comprehensive data.

3.8 Data Analysis Procedures

Analysis of data was based on the research questions. Quantitative information was organized, coded and summarized using SPSS, version 17.0. After collecting the raw data, the questionnaires were coded into numerical values which were then keyed into the computer. The open ended items were categorized into themes. The analyzed data was summarized using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages and presented using tables and bar

graphs. According to Gay (1996), when making the results known to a variety of readers, simple descriptive statistics such as percentages have a considerable advantage over more complex statistics.

Likert summated rating scale was used to analyze questions Section C c) i, ii, iii, iv, d) i, ii, iii, Section D e) i, ii, iii, Section E i) i, ii, iii, which measured the extent of influence of mother tongue on performance of English. Since the items in these questions were positively stated, the response SA meant that the item had a lot of influence on performance of English while the response SD meant that the item had less influence on performance of English. The responses were scored as SA=5, A=4, U=3, D=2, SD=1 for each of the questions above. The extent of influence scores were grouped into three categories which were: most influential, influential and less influential. The three categories were replicated in each of the above questions depending on the highest score and the lowest score on each question. Perception of students on influence of mother tongue items were 7 and each item would score 5 as the highest score and 1 as the lowest score. So, the highest total score for these items was 35, while the lowest possible score was 7. Therefore, perception of students on influence of mother tongue on English scores were summed up and grouped into three categories which were: 7-15 (less influential), 16-25 (influential) and (26-35) most influential.

Items on measures taken to curb use of mother tongue were 3 and each item would score 5 as the highest score and 1 as the lowest score. So the highest total score for these items was 15, while the lowest possible score was 3. Thus, scores on measures taken to curb use of mother tongue items were summed up and grouped into the three categories: 3-6 (less influential), 7-10 (influential) and (11-15) most influential.

Furthermore, items on challenges brought out by use of mother tongue were 3 and each

item would score 5 as the highest score and 1 as the lowest score. So the highest total score for these items was 15, while the lowest possible score was 3. The scores summed up and put into the three categories as follows: 3-6 (less influential), 7-10 (influential) and (11-15) most influential.

Responses from the interviews and open ended items were carefully coded and written down into narratives used to support findings of the quantitative data. Coding involved critically analyzing the data and identifying themes and topics which represented categories in which numerous pieces of data could be classified (Gay, 1996). Data were coded under relevant themes, presented in narratives showing excerpts from participants.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Respect and consideration to the participants is an important aspect of research. Research ethics calls for responsible conduct of research. This research took into consideration the following three areas: consent, privacy and assent.

Informed Consent

This involves the participants choosing whether to participate or not to participate in the study. According to Cohen (2000), at all times, the welfare of subjects should be kept in mind by the researcher. In this study, the researcher asked for the consent of the participants and did not force anybody to take part in the research. The researcher also endeavored to explain to the participants the purpose of the study and their role in the study.

Assent

According to Cohen (2000), assent is a term used to express willingness to participate in research by persons who are too young to give informed consent but who are old enough to

understand the proposed research in general. Assent from students was sought alongside with informed consent from teachers.

Privacy

Information obtained from the respondents form the basis for a research. In order for the information to be reliable, the respondents should be assured the confidentiality of the information they provide (Cohen 2000). In this study, confidentiality was taken care of by advising the participants not to write their names on the questionnaire.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents, interprets and discusses the findings in relation to research questions under the following themes: questionnaire return rates, background information of participants and prevalence of use of mother tongue. It also discusses the findings on perception of teachers and students on the influence of mother tongue on performance of English, measures taken to curb use of mother tongue and challenges brought about by use of mother tongue. The chapter finally presents findings on strategies to improve performance of English in public day secondary schools of Gatundu District.

4.1 Questionnaire Return Rate

The researcher administered a total of 191 questionnaires in 5 public day secondary schools in Gatundu District on diverse dates of June 2013. All the questionnaires were returned which translated into a return rate of 100 percent which was very appropriate for this study. This high return rate could be due to the fact that the researcher administered the questionnaires himself and waited for students and teachers to fill and then collected them on the same day. According to Hertman and Hedborn (1979) 70 % or higher questionnaire return rate is very good. Hence, the researcher analyzed a total of 191 questionnaires. Interviews were conducted in the 5 sampled schools. The interviews focused on the 8 English teachers in the 5 sampled schools. This enabled the researcher to ask specific questions which led to answering the research questions.

4.2 Background Information of the Participants

This section delves into the background of the participants in terms of gender and age of

the participants. It also considers class of the students and length of teaching experience.

Gender Distribution of the Students' Participants

Out of the 191 participants who were involved in filling in the questionnaire 95 (49.7%) were male while 96 (50.3%) were female and therefore both genders were well represented. It was important to find out the gender of the participants for further analysis of the responses; for example, finding the number of boys or girls who felt that use of mother tongue influences the performance of English. Besides, the schools sampled were all mixed schools so it was essential to consider fair distribution of the students' gender. According to Lado (1995) when doing a study on a language both genders have to be considered since they show different characteristics in terms of use of language.

Age Distribution of the Students Participants

The age distribution of participants was considered in an effort to confirm whether the participants are of secondary school age. Table 2 summarizes the findings.

Table 2: Responses on Age Distribution of the Students Participants

Students' Age	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
15-16	19	9.9
17-18	141	73.8
19-20	26	13.6
21 and above	5	2.6
Total	191	100.0

n=191

Table 2 shows that a majority of the participants (141) 73.8% were in the age between 17-18 years while (26) 13.6% were in the age 19-20 years. A few participants, (19) 9.9%, were of age 15-16, while only (5) 2.6% were 21 years and above. The findings indicate that majority of the participants are within the secondary school going age of Form 3s and Form 4s of between

17-18 years and hence their views can be taken to represent other secondary school students in Kenya under similar context. Data on the age of the participants was important to ensure that students were within the age of secondary school students, precisely Form 3s and Form 4s which was the target population.

Class of the Students Participants

Forms 3s and 4s were considered since they are senior members of students' fraternity and therefore are believed to have relevant information. Table 3 below summarizes the data.

Table 3: Class of the Students Participants

Class	Frequency (f)	Percentage %
Form three	95	49.7
Form four	96	50.3
Total	191	100.0

n =191

Table 3 shows that (96) 50.3 % were Form 4s while (95) 49.7% were Form 3s. These findings show that the distribution of the students was even between form 3s and 4s.

Gender Distribution of English Teachers

The respondents were the total population of the English teachers from the sampled schools. It was important to ensure balanced views from the two genders. Table 4 summarizes gender distribution of English teachers.

Table 4: Responses on Gender Distribution of the Teachers of English

Teachers' Gender	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Male	3	37.5
Female	5	62.5

n=8

Table 4 shows that a majority the English teachers who participated in this study were females (5) 62.5% while 3 (37.5%) were male. Thus the two genders are adequately represented.

Length of Teaching Experience

Teaching experience was important because the researcher purposively sampled English teachers on the premise that they are rich of information. Table 5 shows the length of teaching experience for the English teachers.

Table 5: Responses on Length of Teaching Experience

Years of Teaching Experience	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1-5	2	25.0
6-10	3	37.5
11-15	3	37.5

n=8

Table 5 shows that (3) 37.5% of English teachers had taught between 11-15 years. A similar number of 3 teachers representing 37.5% had taught between 6-10 years and only 2 teachers (25.0%) had taught between 1-5 years. Therefore, a total of 75% of the teachers had taught between 6-15 years indicating that they had adequate teaching experience, thus they could give informed views about how use of mother tongue influences performance of English.

Research Question 1

4.3 Prevalence of Use of Mother Tongue in Gatundu District

This section seeks to answer research question one. Research question one sought to find out the prevalence of use of mother tongue in public day secondary schools in Gatundu District. The prevalence of use of mother tongue was investigated through various items of the questionnaire. Both teachers and students were asked whether they used mother tongue and code

switched. They were also asked the frequency in which they used mother tongue and code switched.

4.3.1 Students' Response on Prevalence of Use of Mother Tongue

In finding out the prevalence of use of mother tongue, students were asked questions that sought to find out whether students and English teachers switched languages (code-switched).

Table 6 shows a summary of the findings.

Table 6: Students' Responses on Prevalence of Use of Mother Tongue

Responses	Yes		No	
	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)
a) English teachers switch languages during presentations in class.	128	67.0%	63	33.0%
b) Students switch languages during conversations in school.	167	87.4%	24	12.6%

Table 6 shows that 67% of the students agreed that their English teachers code-switched while 33% responded by indicating that their teachers did not code-switch. The findings indicate that 67% of English teachers in public day secondary schools of Gatundu District switch languages in the process of teaching. This indicates a high prevalence of code switching by English teachers. The switching of language by the teachers means that they shift to a language that is more familiar to students, that is, mother tongue. Since code switching encourages tolerance of use of mother tongue as Kamisah (2009) puts it, a 67% prevalence of code switching by English teachers thus indicates a high prevalence of use of mother tongue.

Besides, students were asked whether they switched languages during conversations in school. Table 6 shows that (167) 87.4% of students agreed that they code-switch during conversations while (24) 12.6% indicated that they do not code-switch during their conversations

in school. This shows a very high prevalence of code switching by students in public day secondary schools of Gatundu District. Since according to Kamisah (2009) code switching leads to tolerance in use of mother tongue, then the findings herein shows that there is a high prevalence of use of mother tongue by students of public day secondary schools of Gatundu. In addition, the study sought to find out from students the frequency in which teachers code switch. Figure 2 summarizes the findings.

Figure 2: Students Responses on the Frequency Teachers Switch Languages

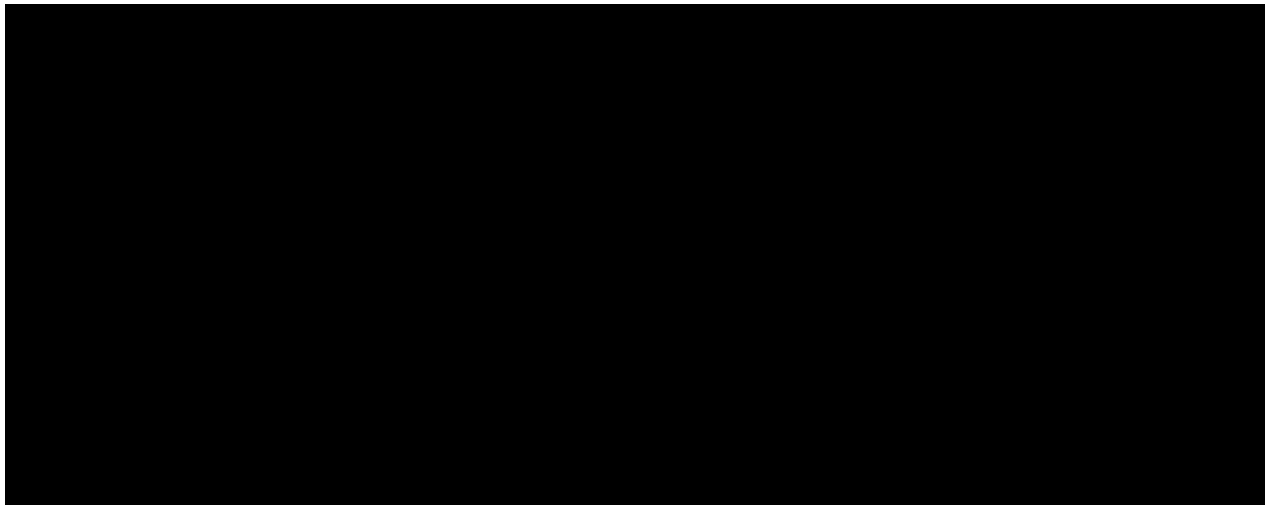


Figure 2 shows that 44% of respondents indicated that their English teachers do not code switch. Thirty percent indicated that their English teachers rarely code switched and 24% indicated that their English teachers often code switch. Only 3% of English teachers code switched very often. Although 44% of teachers do not code switch, a total of those who code switch very often, often and rarely is 56%. This shows a high prevalence of code switching which translates to high prevalence of use of mother tongue since the language the English teachers switch to is mother tongue.

In addition, students were asked the frequency in which they switched languages. Figure 3 summarizes the findings.

Figure 3: Students' Responses on the Frequency Students Switch Languages

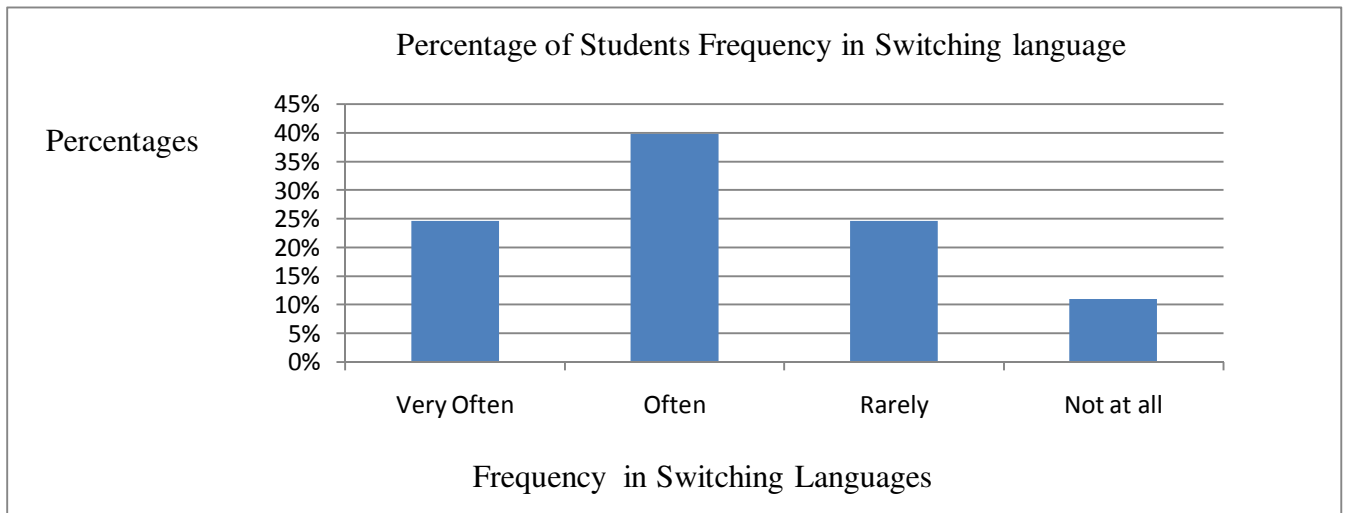


Figure 3 shows that a majority of students, 40%, often code switch while 25% code switch very often and 25% code switch rarely. Only 10% of the students indicated that they do not code switch at all. A total of students who very often code switch, often code switch and rarely code switch is 90%. This indicates a high frequency of code switching and thus points to a high prevalence of use of mother tongue.

Furthermore, in an effort to establish the prevalence of use of mother tongue and thus answer research question one, the study sought to find out the frequency students use mother tongue in school. This has been summarized in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Students' Responses on the Frequency Students use Mother Tongue

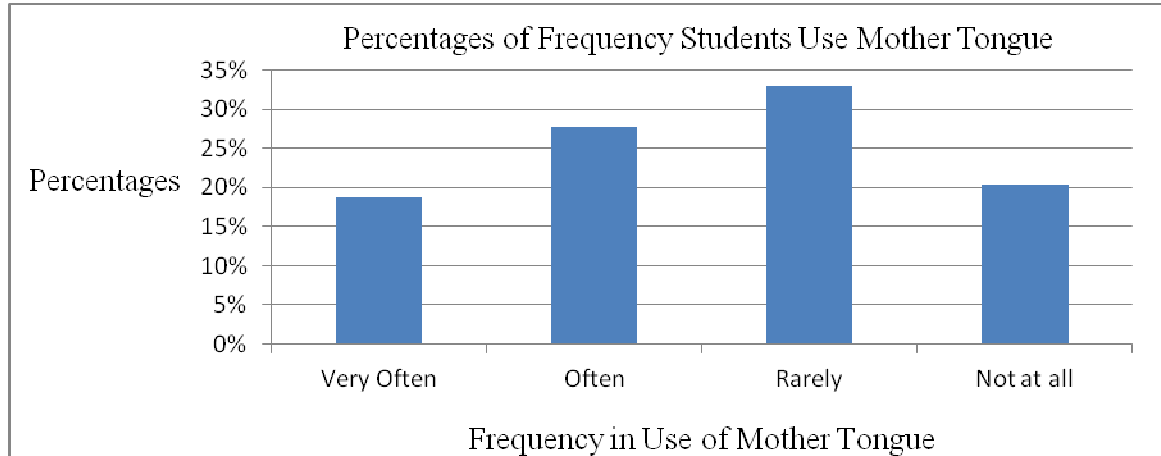


Figure 4 shows that most students, 33%, indicated that they rarely use mother tongue while 28% admitted that they often use mother tongue. A further 19% of the students indicated that they very often use mother tongue. Only 20% of the students indicated that they did not use mother tongue at all. Therefore, a total of those who very often use mother tongue, often use mother tongue and rarely use mother tongue is 80%. This shows a high prevalence of use of mother tongue in public day secondary schools of Gatundu District. With such a high prevalence of use of mother tongue, there is a high likelihood for mother tongue to interfere with performance of English as Njoroge (1987) indicates that high prevalence of use of mother tongue influences the performance of English.

4.3.1 Teachers' Responses on Prevalence of Use of Mother Tongue

The study sought to find out whether teachers use mother tongue and code switch in class. Teachers were required to respond to the question on how often they speak mother tongue in class and how often they switch languages. They were also asked how often students speak in mother tongue. Table 7 summarizes the responses to these questions.

Table 7: Teachers' Responses on Prevalence of Mother Tongue

Questions	Very Often	Often	Rarely	Not at All
a) How often do you speak in mother tongue in class?	-	-	-	(8) 100%
b) How often do you switch languages during teaching?	-	(3) 37.5%	(5) 62.5%	-
c) How often do students speak mother tongue in school?	(5) 62.5%	-	(2) 25.0%	(1) 12.5%

Table 7 shows that (8) 100% of teachers indicated that they did not speak in mother tongue in class. However, a majority of teachers, (5) 62.5%, confirmed that they rarely switched language while (5) 37.5% confirmed that they often switched language. None of the teachers either code switched very often or never code switched. Therefore, according to the findings, all teachers code switched languages. Since all English teachers agreed that they code switched, this indicates a high prevalence of use of mother tongue since code switching permits the use of mother tongue. This has an eventual influence in performance of English.

A majority of teachers, (5) 62.5%, pointed out that students used mother tongue very often while (2) 25.0% indicated that students used mother tongue rarely. Only (1) 12.5% indicated that students never used mother tongue. Therefore, a total of 87.5% of the teachers indicated that students used mother tongue very often and students used mother tongue rarely. These findings confirm that the prevalence of use of mother tongue in public day secondary schools in Gatundu is very high.

During the interviews, teachers highlighted some of the circumstances that lead to code-switching. One teacher from school B explained, “We code switch when illustrating complex situations especially when teaching literature genres like oral poetry, riddles and tongue twisters. Switching languages helps us to explain and emphasize concepts (School B English

Teacher, June 21, 2013).” This agrees with Merrit et al. (1992) who researched on determinants of code switching and found one of them to be helping learners understand concepts. Therefore, these findings show that although there is a low prevalence of teachers using mother tongue in class there is relatively high prevalence of English teachers code switching. This has a negative effect in eventual performance of English. Furthermore, the study sought to find out from teachers whether students speak in mother tongue. Table 8 summarizes the collected data.

Table 8: Teachers’ Responses on Whether Students Speak in Mother Tongue

Teachers’ Response	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Yes	7	87.5
No	1	12.5
Total	8	100.0

n =8

Table 8 shows that (7) 87.5% of the teachers agreed that students use mother tongue while (1) 12.5% did not agree. These findings indicate that there is high prevalence of use of mother tongue by students in public day secondary schools of Gatundu District. Teachers’ response on whether students use mother tongue was important since it is the teachers who monitor students’ use of language in the process of implementing the school language policy.

Research Question2

4.4 Perception of Teachers and Students on the Influence of Mother Tongue on Performance of English

This section seeks to answer research question two. Research question two sought to find out the perception of students and teachers about the influence of mother tongue on performance of English. The respondents were asked questions that aimed to get their

perceptions on the influence of mother tongue on performance of English.

4.4.1 Perception of Students on the Influence of Mother Tongue on Performance of English

The study sought to find out from students their perception on whether the language used by teachers to converse influences their performance in English. The study also sought to find out from students the perception of whether use of mother tongue influenced performance in English. Table 9 summarizes the findings.

Table 9 : Students' Responses on Influence of Mother Tongue on Performance

Responses	Yes		No	
	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)
a) Language used by teachers in conversations influence performance of English.	111	58.0%	80	41.9%
b) Use of mother tongue influences performance in English.	147	77.0%	44	23.0%

Table 9 shows that 111 (58.1%) respondents indicated that the language their teachers used influenced their performance of English while 80 (41.9%) respondents indicated that the language their teachers used did not influence their performance in English. These findings show that language used by teachers influenced students' performance in English. Therefore, since the prevalence of switching language is high as indicated earlier, then this influences performance of English in public day secondary schools of Gatundu. Kolawole (2002) has a similar view when he talks about the language that teachers use and argues that some students do not understand grammar because their teachers themselves do not know it and in most cases English language teachers in the senior primary and junior secondary schools resort to the use of mother tongue to teach (code switching); this leads to poor performance of English. Therefore, the findings imply that language used by teachers in classroom influences the performance of English.

A majority of students, (147) 77% of students agreed that use of mother tongue influences performance of English while (44) 23% disagreed. Therefore, majority of students perceive that use of mother tongue has an influence in performance of English in public day secondary schools of Gatundu District. This concurs with Dulay and Burt (1982) who studied the area of native language and found that majority of students believed that there is interference of mother tongue on the target language. They further considered interference as the automatic transfer, due to habit, of the surface structure of the first language onto the surface of the target language. These findings therefore demonstrate that use of mother tongue influences performance of English.

Furthermore, the study asked various questions to find out the perception of students on the influence of mother tongue on performance of English. Table 10 summarizes the findings.

Table 10: Students' Responses on Perception of the Influence of Mother Tongue on Performance of English

Responses	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) Teachers use of mother tongue influences students performance in English.	(91) 47.6%	(34) 17.8%	(18) 9.4%	(25) 13.1%	(23) 12.0%
b) Teachers who use English in conversation with students influence their performance in English.	(84) 44.0%	(33) 17.3%	(7) 3.7%	(32) 16.8%	(35) 18.3%
c) Teachers always discourage students to converse in mother tongue.	(86) 45.0%	(50) 26.2%	(8) 4.2%	(24) 12.6%	(23) 12.0%
d) Teachers' switching of languages in classroom help in understanding concepts.	(94) 49.2%	(58) 30.4%	(12) 6.3%	(9) 4.7%	(18) 9.4%
e) Students who use mother tongue perform poorly in English.	(74) 38.7%	(57) 29.8%	(8) 4.3%	(30) 15.7%	(22) 11.5%
f) Students who use English perform better in English.	(70) 36.6%	(71) 37.2%	(10) 5.2%	(23) 12.0%	(17) 8.9%
g) Use of mother tongue does not influence performance in English.	(25) 13.1%	(28) 14.7%	(14) 7.3%	(53) 27.7%	(71) 37.2%

Table 10 shows that (91) 47.6% of students strongly agreed that teachers use of mother tongue influences their performance in English while (34) 17.8% agreed. On the other hand, (23) 12% strongly disagreed while (25) 13.1% disagreed that use of mother tongue by teachers

influences their performance in English. Only (18) 9.4% of students were undecided. A total of 65.4% strongly agreed and agreed that teachers' use of mother tongue influences performance of English. These findings show that performance of English is influenced when teachers use mother tongue. This agrees with Setati et al (2002) who argues that when a teacher uses mother tongue or code switches in class the student may understand or access meaning at the expense of linguistic grammatical concepts, thus influencing performance of English. Teachers' use of mother tongue leads to persistence of errors that come from first language (mother tongue) shown through direct translation; this has adverse influences performance of English.

Besides, (84) 44% of students strongly agree and (33) 17.3% agreed that teachers use of English in conversation influences performance in English. On the other hand, (35) 18.3% strongly disagreed and (32) 16.8% disagreed that teachers use of English in conversation influences performance in English. Only (7) 3.7% of the students were undecided. A total of (117) 57.3% of the students strongly agree and agree. It can therefore be concluded that students perceive that use of English in conversations by teachers eventually influences the performance in English. Kamano (2011) studied the influence of instructional language choice on secondary school students on performance in English in Kikuyu District, Kenya and concurs that speaking skills using language of instruction both by teachers and students have an impact on classroom participation and thus performance of English.

In addition, (86) 45% of the students strongly agree that teachers discourage them from using mother tongue in conversation while (50) 26.2% agree. On the other hand, (23) 12% of the students strongly disagree that teachers discourage them from conversing in mother tongue while (24) 12.6% disagree. Only (8) 4.2% were undecided. A total of 71.2% of the students strongly agreed and agreed that teachers discourage them from conversing in mother tongue. Thus, these

findings show that teachers in public day secondary schools of Gatundu discourage students from using mother tongue since they believe that mother tongue influences negatively the performance of English. This concurs with Hasindu (2011) who found out that classroom talk was encouraged in English because the policy in majority of the schools in Samia District, Kenya is that students must communicate in English. This is so because teachers believe that when students use English in communication their performance of English will improve.

Moreover, (94) 49.2% of the students strongly agree that teachers switching of language help them to understand concepts while (58) 30.4% agree. However, (18) 9.4% strongly disagree that teachers switching of language help them in understanding concepts while (9) 4.7% disagree. Twelve students representing 6.3% were undecided. Although majority of students agree that code switching enable them to understand meaning of contents, it distorts learners understanding of grammar. Students highlighted that teachers ought to avoid switching languages since when they do, students fail to grasp grammatical elements of English. These findings concurs with Merrit etal (1992) who argues that code switching influences learner understanding of content, however they understand meaning in expense of grammar and thus this influence their performance in English.

Likewise, (74) 38.7% of students strongly agreed and (57) 29.8% agreed that use of mother tongue lead to poor performance of English. On the other hand, (22) 11.5% of the students strongly disagreed that use of mother tongue lead to poor performance in English whereas (30) 15.7% disagreed. Only (8) 4% of the students were undecided. Therefore a total of 68.6% strongly agreed and agreed that use of mother tongue lead to poor performance of English. Thus use of mother tongue influences performance of English in public day secondary schools of Gatundu District. These findings concurs with Njoroge (1987) who argue that use of

mother tongue lead to poor performance of English due to errors created as a result of using mother tongue. Thus use of mother tongue negatively influences the performance of English in public day secondary schools of Gatundu District.

Table 10 also indicates that (71) 37.2% of students agreed that students who use English in their conversation perform better in English while (70) 36.6% strongly agreed. On the contrary, (17) 8.9% of the students strongly disagreed that students who use English in conversation perform better while (23) 12.0% disagreed. Only (10) 5.2% of the students were undecided. Therefore, a total of 74% of the students strongly agreed and agreed that students who converse in English perform better in English. These findings imply that use of English in conversation enhance performance of English. These findings agree with Mwangi (2009) who argues that children who use English in conversation perform better in English as a subject. He also urges parents to encourage their children to speak in English while at home and school since students who use English perform better in English. Having found out in research question one that the prevalence of use of mother tongue is high in public day secondary schools of Gatundu, this explains why students perform poorly in English in public day secondary schools of Gatundu. Thus, use of mother tongue influences performance of English adversely.

Finally, (71) 37.2% strongly disagreed to the question that use of mother tongue does not influence performance of English while (53) 27.7% disagreed. On the contrary, (28) 14.7% agreed that use of mother tongue does not influence their performance in English while (25) 13.1% agreed. Only (14) 7.3% were undecided. Therefore, a total of 64.9% of students strongly disagreed and disagreed to the question that use of mother does not influence performance of English. This implies that use of mother tongue influences performance of English in public day secondary schools of Gatundu District.

4.4.2 Perception of Teachers on the influence of Mother Tongue on Performance in English

When teachers were asked their perception on whether use of mother tongue influences the performance of English, 100% indicated ‘yes’ to denote that indeed use of mother tongue influences the performance of English. The teachers interviewed gave various reasons as how mother tongue influences the performance of English. They identified that students were often unable to express themselves efficiently and thus made many grammatical mistakes. Teachers also highlighted during the interview that students were affected with the problem of direct translation and had limited vocabularies thus this limited their ability to communicate effectively. An English teacher from School C succinctly said:

“It is obvious that mother tongue influence performance of English from all facets; writing, pronunciation, reading and listening. In writing students always direct translate mother tongue to English. In pronunciation, they find it difficult to articulate English sounds, while in reading and listening they find difficulty in comprehending what they read or hear (School C English Teacher, June 25, 2013)”

Another teacher showed her concerns about use of mother tongue by students. She said, “Our students are so much used to mother tongue. They always converse in mother tongue. This affects their written English in that their sentences are a complete mess! (School D English Teacher, June27,2013)”

In addition, there was a general agreement from teachers interviewed that use of mother tongue affected students grammatical construction of sentences as a result of mother tongue interference, as one teacher noted, “ Construction of sentences is influenced by use of mother tongue. The structures are completely mixed up! (School D English Teacher, June27, 2013)” This concurs with Odlin (1989) who considers interference as transfer of skills that impedes the

learning of target language. Furthermore, use of mother tongue affected their spellings as mother tongue interfered with pronunciation of /l/ and /r/ thus their spellings.

Teachers further responded to questions that required their response on perception of influence of mother tongue on performance of English. Table 11 summarizes the findings.

Table 11: Teachers’ Responses On Perception of the Influence of Mother Tongue on Performance of English

Responses	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) Students who use mother tongue perform poorly in English.	(4) 50%	(3) 37.5%	-	(1) 12.5%	-
b) Students who use English perform better in English.	(3) 37.5%	(5) 62.5%	-	-	-
c) Use of mother tongue influences performance of English.	(2) 25.0%	(6) 75.0%	-	-	-

Table 11 shows that (4) 50.0% of the teachers strongly agree that students who use mother tongue perform poorly in English whereas (3) 37.5% agree. On the contrary, (1) 12.5% of the teachers disagreed that students who use mother tongue perform poorly in English. None of the teachers either strongly disagreed or was undecided. Therefore, a total of 87.5% of the teachers agreed and strongly agreed that students who use mother tongue in school perform poorly in English. These findings imply that use of mother tongue has a negative influence on performance of English. This also agrees with Hasindu (2011) who argues that poor performance in English is as a result of students’ use of mother tongue during conversation. Thus, the poor performance of English in public day secondary schools of Gatundu can be attributed to high prevalence of use of mother tongue.

Furthermore, a majority of teachers, (5) 62.5% agreed that students who use English in conversation perform better in English while (3) 37.5% strongly agreed. This shows that a total

of 100% of teachers strongly agreed and agreed that students who converse in English perform better in English. These findings confirm that use of English in conversations enhance performance of English while use of mother tongue in conversations negatively influences performance of English in public day secondary schools of Gatundu. These findings concur with Mwangi (2009) who argues that poor performance in English is as a result of students using their mother tongue during conversations; he discourages use of mother tongue and encourages use of English in conversations. Thus public day secondary schools of Gatundu have to encourage the use of English in their schools.

Table 11 also shows that (6) 75.0% of teachers agree that use of mother tongue influences performance of English while (2) 25.0% strongly agree. None of the teachers strongly disagreed, disagreed or was undecided. These findings confirm that indeed use of mother tongue influences the performance of English. This also concurs with Gacheche (2010) who affirms that indeed poor performance in English was attributed to the use of mother tongue as a language of communication in school. Thus this indicates that poor performance of English by Gatundu public day secondary school students was attributed to use of mother tongue.

During the interviews, teachers said that use of mother tongue by students affected how they teach. One of the teachers from School E expressed this by saying, “It takes too long to describe issues, events and occurrences simply because students aren’t familiar with English and are more familiar with mother tongue, for instance, we read a passage at least twice for students to understand (School E English Teacher, June 28, 2013)” Cummins agrees with this view (2000) and argues that students need to have control of formal English in order to participate in English classes with confidence.

Sometimes teachers found it difficult to explain concepts due to limited vocabularies of

the learners. Another issue identified by teachers is that students used direct translation to respond to questions in classroom thus hindering communication between teachers and students especially when the teacher does not share a mother tongue with the students. A teacher from School D said:

“As a result of use of mother tongue by students, they can hardly read and understand the set texts; this really affects the pace of covering the syllabus of English. We find difficulty in explaining concepts since our students have limited vocabulary (School D English Teacher, June 25, 2013)”

Research Question 3

4.5 Measures to be Taken to Curb Use of Mother Tongue

This section seeks to answer research question three in which the study sought to find out the measures taken to curb the use of mother tongue in schools. Therefore, questions that were asked provided the investigation with information regarding measures taken to curb use of mother tongue. In retrospect, identification of measures taken to curb use of mother tongue confirms that use of mother tongue is a challenge in the context under study.

Some questions that assisted the researcher to find out the measures taken to curb use of mother tongue were asked. Their responses are summarized in Table 12.

Table 12: Students’ Responses on Measures Taken to Curb Use of Mother Tongue

Responses	Yes		No	
	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)
a) Your school has a language policy.	183	95.8	8	4.2
b) The language policy prohibit students from speaking mother tongue.	158	82.7	33	17.3
c) You are punished for speaking mother tongue.	176	92.2	15	7.8
d) Students who speak in English are rewarded in some form.	22	11.5	169	88.5

Table 12 shows that (183) 95.8% of students responded by indicating that their schools had a language policy while (8) 4.2% of the respondents indicated that their school did not have a language policy. This shows that public day secondary schools in Gatundu have a language policy. Teachers indicated during the interviews that their schools use language policy as a document to help them curb use of mother tongue. Availability of a language policy is one of the measures taken by schools to curb the high prevalence of use of mother tongue in public day secondary schools of Gatundu.

The study further wanted to find out whether a Language Policy prohibits students from speaking in mother tongue. Table 12 shows that (158) 82.7% of the students agreed that indeed their school language policy stopped them from using mother tongue in conversations while (33) 17.3% disagreed, that is, language policy did not prohibit them from using mother tongue in conversations. This shows that a language policy plays an important role in prohibiting students from speaking in mother tongue.

Furthermore, (176) 92.2% of the students admitted that they were punished whenever they used mother tongue in school while 7.3% indicated that they were not punished. On the other hand, 88.5% of the students indicated that they were not rewarded for conversing in English while 11.5% said that they were rewarded for conversing in English. These findings indicate that students are punished often and rarely rewarded.

Moreover, teachers responded to questions that required them to bring out measures that should be taken to curb use of mother tongue. Table 13 summarizes the findings.

Table 13: Teachers' Responses on Measures Taken to Curb Use of Mother Tongue

Responses	Yes		No	
	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)
a) Your school has a language policy.	8	100	-	-
b) The language policy prohibit students from speaking mother tongue.	5	62.5	3	29.3
c) Students are punished for speaking mother tongue.	8	100	-	-
d) Students who speak in English are rewarded in some form.	-	-	8	100

Table 13 shows that when teachers were asked whether there was a language policy in their school, (8) 100% of them acknowledged the availability of a language policy. Furthermore, (5) 62.5% agreed that the language policy in their school stopped students from conversing in English while (3) 37.5% indicated that the language policy did not stop students from conversing in mother tongue. These findings indicate that indeed a language policy stops students from using mother tongue in the school. Thus, public day secondary schools of Gatundu District have language policies that help to deter students from speaking mother tongue.

In addition, the table shows that (8) 100% of the teachers indicated that students were punished for conversing in mother tongue while (8) 100% of the teachers agreed that students were not rewarded for conversing in English. Reward and punishment is important in learning a second language as Krashen (2009) argues. Therefore the imbalance that appears to come out from the findings needs to be taken into account. These findings concur with Bamgbose (2000) who acknowledges that teachers tend to focus on punishing those who use mother tongue than rewarding those who do not. Punishment and rewards are important in second language acquisition as Krashen (1985) claims that learners with high motivation, self-confidence and a good self-image are better equipped for success in second language acquisition. It is therefore

important for teachers to punish students who use mother tongue and reward those who use English in their conversation.

Another measure to curb use of mother tongue identified during the interviews with English teachers is that students found speaking in mother tongue were compelled to write grammatically correct apology letters. Teachers also considered coming up with debating clubs in an effort to encourage students to speak in English. In addition, teachers also identified punishment that caused discomfort to students by making them, for instance, put on a sack as a form of punishment. Moreover, students were asked to buy story books, and then read them and narrate the story to the rest of the school.

Research Question 4

4.6 Challenges Brought About by Use of Mother Tongue

This section seeks to answer research question four which sought to figure out challenges brought about by use of mother tongue. Among challenges addressed in this section include; challenges in writing arising in use of mother tongue and challenges in pronunciation. It is important to identify challenges that arise in writing since English subject is tested through its written form. Table 14 summarizes responses on challenges brought about by use of mother tongue.

Table 14: Students' Responses on Challenges Brought About by Use of Mother Tongue

Responses	Yes		No	
	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)
a) Use of mother tongue influences the way you write in English.	152	79.6	39	79.6
b) Use of mother tongue influences the way you pronounce in English.	135	70.7	56	29.3
c) The language you think in influence the way you write in English.	108	56.5	83	43.4

Table 14 shows that (152) 79.6% of the students indicated that indeed use of mother tongue influenced the way they write in English while (39) 20.4% indicated that use of mother tongue does not influence the way they write in English. Thus, a majority of students indicate that use of mother tongue influence how they write. Therefore it can be deduced that use of mother tongue influence the performance of written English in public day secondary schools in Gatundu. This concurs with Corder (1981) who argues that writing errors in second language are as a result of use of mother tongue

A majority of students, (135)70.7% , indicated that use of mother tongue influenced the way they pronounce in English while (56) 29.3% indicated that use of mother tongue does not influence the way they pronounce English words. These findings shows that use of mother tongue in public day secondary schools of Gatundu influence the way students pronounce words in English. Students indicated that use of mother tongue influenced their pronunciation; thus use of mother tongue affected articulation of words and sounds in English e.g. pray for play, /r/ for /l/ since /l/ sound was not found in Kikuyu language. These findings tend to agree with Asher (1986) who argues that students tend to hear and produce all speech sounds in terms of phonological system of their own language. Basically, when students use mother tongue they become unfamiliar with pronunciation of English words and sounds in English.

Furthermore, Table 14 shows that (108) 56.5% of students indicated that the language students think in influence how they write while (83) 43.4% indicated that the language they think in does not influence how they write. The students felt that if one thinks in English they were prone to write clearly in English unlike when they think in mother tongue. When English teachers were asked whether use of mother tongue influence the way students write in English, 100% agreed that use of mother tongue influenced the way students wrote in English. They

further explained how use of mother tongue influence performance in English. They highlighted that students use ungrammatically structured sentences as a result of frequent use of mother tongue and this adversely affected their performance in English. Besides making many grammatical errors, students do direct translation of their mother tongue to English thus distorting the intended meaning. The issue of direct translation recurred severally during the interviews that a teacher from school B said; “It’s as if a student is writing Kikuyu in English- the words are in English but the meaning is Kikuyu (School B English Teacher, June21, 2013)”

When teachers were asked whether use of mother tongue influence the way students pronounce words in English, 100% agreed that use of mother tongue influenced the way students articulate their words in English. Teachers explained that use of mother tongue contributed to low self-esteem especially in forums that required use of the English language e.g. debates. They also identified that use of mother tongue affected pronunciation and thus performance of oral skills section thus influencing performance of English. A teacher from school E said:

“Students get difficulties in oral skills since they do not distinguish between letters (spellings) and pronunciation of independent sounds due to use of mother tongue. This negatively affected performance of students in English Paper 1, Functional Skills, in the Oral Skills Section (School E English Teacher, June 28, 2013)”

Furthermore, all the interviewed English teachers identified poor spelling formation as a result of students using mother tongue.

Some of the challenges that were highlighted by students who agreed that use of mother tongue influenced their writing in English were that it becomes difficult to put an idea in English since one is used to mother tongue and thinks in mother tongue. Another challenge identified is that of direct translation. This entails translation of mother tongue to English. This eventually

influences the intended meaning not only in spoken form of English but also in written form. Corder (1981) acknowledges that errors in second language are as a result of mother tongue. In addition, students said mother tongue limits the vocabulary one knows in English. They felt that their vocabulary in English was limited by their frequent use of mother tongue. They also pointed out the challenge of putting across ideas thought in mother tongue in English and acknowledged that this resulted into direct translation and thus poor performance in written English. Furthermore, students were asked the language they think in and responded as illustrated in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Students' Responses on Students Language of Thought

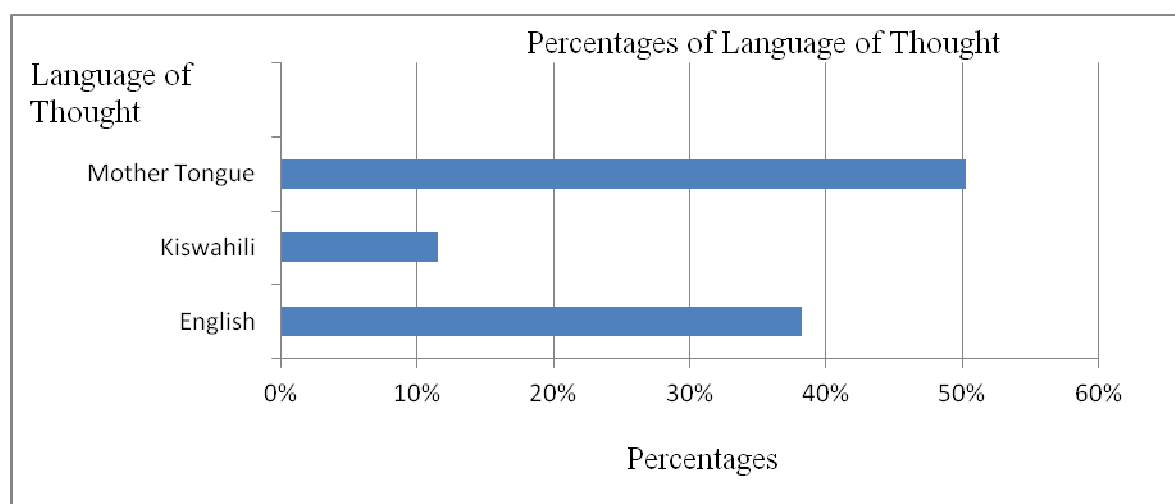


Figure 5 shows that 50 % of the students think in mother tongue while 38% of students indicated that they think in English and 12% think in Kiswahili. Cummings (1964) argues that the learners' language of thought dictates their expression in writing. Therefore, if language of thought dictates expression in writing, then this indicates that the poor performance of English in public day secondary schools in Gatundu might be attributed to the 50% of students who think in mother tongue.

Among other challenges identified by students is that use of mother tongue leads to

inability to pronounce words. Use of mother tongue also leads to lack of confidence hence inhibit interaction. Students too noted that they were unable to understand questions written in English. Another challenge identified is that students had a problem expressing themselves and had poor public speaking skills. This also contributed to lack of self-confidence. Furthermore, students lacked understanding of contextual use of English language.

On the other hand, teachers highlighted various challenges during the interviews. They said that use of mother tongue hinders critical as well as creative thinking in English. They identified use of mother tongue as an inhibitor to fluency in speaking. Teachers said that use of mother tongue thwarted students' interpretation of questions correctly during classroom sessions forcing teachers to switch languages. All teachers agreed that use of mother tongue posed adverse challenge in teaching and learning process.

Research Question 5

4.7 Strategies to Improve Performance in English

This section seeks to answer research question five which sought to find strategies to improve performance of English. The section addresses what needs to be done to improve performance of English, what is done and the importance of resource materials in teaching and learning of English. Table 15 summarizes students' responses.

Table 15: Responses of Students on Strategies to Improve Performance in English

Responses	Yes		No	
	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)
a) Encouraging students to read story books help them improve performance in English.	184	96.3	7	3.7
b) Learning resources for English available in school influence performance in English.	135	70.7	56	29.3

Table 15 shows that (184) 96.3% of students indicated that encouraging students to read

story books helped them improve in performance of English while (7) 3.7% were of the contrary opinion. Moreover, (135) 70.7% of the students indicated that the availability of English learning resources influence performance in English, while (56) 29.3% were of the opinion that availability of learning resources does not influence performance in English. These findings show that encouraging students to read story books and availing learning resources to students helps them to improve their performance in English. These are strategies that can be used to improve the performance of English. Furthermore, teachers were asked questions regarding strategies to improve performance. Table 16 summarizes their finding.

Table 16: Teachers’ Responses on Strategies to Improve Performance in English Responses

Responses	Yes		No	
	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)
a) Punishing students for speaking in tongue help them improve performance in English.	5	62.5	3	37.5
b) Learning resources contribute to improvement of English.	8	100	-	-

Table 16 shows that (5) 62.5% of the teachers agreed that when students are punished for using mother tongue, they improve in their performance of English while (3) 37.5% of the teachers were of the opinion that punishing students does not help them improve in performance of English. The findings mean that if students are punished for conversing in mother tongue, they stop using mother tongue and thus improve in their performance of English. The findings herein imply that use of mother tongue influences negatively the performance of English.

Table 16 shows that 100% of the teachers indicated that learning resources contribute to the improvement of English. These findings show that availability of learning resources contribute to improved performance in English. Therefore, apart from stopping usage of mother

tongue, schools should endeavor to provide sufficient learning resources for them to realize an improvement in performance of English.

Generally there was a view that making a language policy that would be strictly followed was important. Some students felt that teachers should avoid mixing up languages (code-switching). They felt that code-switching was not helpful. There was also a call for provision of sufficient learning resources which is in agreement with Ouma (2010) who identified inadequate resources as one of the factors that influence the performance of English. Students were of the opinion that they needed to be encouraged to speak in English and be complimented verbally. In addition, students wanted their schools to buy adequate story books, newspapers and interesting magazines for the learners. There was need for rewarding those who speak in English. Students also felt that building of libraries was important in providing students with an opportunity to develop a reading culture. There was a general feeling from students that students who perform well in English should be rewarded. Finally, introduction of programs that help students to socialize in English e.g. debate with other schools was thought to be helpful.

Similarly, teachers had sentiments that reflected those of the students during the interviews. They emphasized that students should be encouraged to speak in English, read English story books and give reviews. Teachers generally felt that adequate learning resources should be availed in schools for them to realize better performance in English. They suggested more forums that would give students opportunities to speak in English apart from debate club should be established. Teachers also identified their obligation to develop a more student oriented method of teaching e.g. encouraging students to research more and giving students more assignments as strategies that would improve performance of English.

In addition, students indicated that they were given novels and were encouraged to read

them. They also pointed out that they were given revision past papers which helped them to improve their performance in English. Furthermore, students noted that there was effort to prohibit students from speaking mother tongue. They also felt that it was important to deter students from using mother tongue by punishing them and also encouraging students to think and write in English. Students also observed that teaching and non-teaching staff were encouraged to use English while communicating in both formal and non-formal contexts within the school.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher presents the summary and conclusions drawn from the findings of this study. The chapter also presents recommendations and suggestions for further research.

5.2 Summary of the Study

This study is an analysis of the influence of mother tongue on students' performance in English in K.C.S.E in public day secondary schools of Gatundu district. It provided a background on the influence of mother tongue on performance of English in public day secondary schools of Gatundu District. It also highlighted the performance of English in day secondary schools as compared to public boarding secondary schools as illustrated in appendix 3 and 4.

In the background to the problem, the researcher has pointed from other studies that consider factors that influence performance of English that use of mother tongue as a factor that influence performance of English has been identified by various scholars. This study precisely analyzed the influence of mother tongue on performance of English in public day secondary schools of Gatundu District. The researcher used five research questions to guide the study and came up with data on the influence of mother tongue on performance of English in public day secondary schools of Gatundu District.

The significance of the study is that it would provide useful information to all education stakeholders on how to improve performance of English in public day secondary schools. For example the Secondary school principals would use the findings to come up with feasible and informed language policies. The study was conducted in public day secondary schools in

Gatundu District and was delimited to students and English teachers.

Review of the related literature was done on influence of mother tongue on performance of English. It addressed the issue of code switching, transfer or interference, perception of mother tongue and influence on performance of English. However, literature review did not show an analysis of use of mother tongue and its influence on the performance of English. Thus this study analyzed the use of mother tongue and its influence on performance of English.

The researcher used a survey design. Public day secondary schools in Gatundu District were studied. English teachers and students were sampled to participate in this study. Information was obtained from students through questionnaires while information from English teachers was obtained through a questionnaire and interview guide. Both quantitative and qualitative data were obtained. Research experts from the Department of Post Graduate studies were consulted which ensured content validity of the instruments. Reliability was also ensured through test-retesting of the instrument where Pearson product moment correlation co-efficient (r) was calculated and a value of 0.87 was obtained for the students' questionnaires while a value of 0.79 was obtained for the teachers' questionnaires.

Quantitative data were analyzed with help of SPSS version 17.0 while qualitative data was analyzed through arranging responses into themes and summarized using descriptive reports. Analyzed data was presented in frequency tables and bar graphs.

5.3 Study Findings

The study findings revealed that a large number of students (73.8%) who participated in this study were between age 17-18. This meant that the results of the findings can be generalized to a large extent to cover the entire students' population in public day secondary schools in Kenya under similar context since they generally fall within secondary school students' age

bracket.

The study research question number one aimed at finding out the prevalence of use of mother tongue in public day secondary schools in Gatundu District. The study found out that 79.6% of students use mother tongue. The study also found out that 100% of the teachers agreed that they code-switch and that 87.4% students agreed that they code-switch.

The second research question aimed at finding out the perception of teachers and students on the influence of mother tongue on performance of English in Gatundu District. The study found out that use of mother tongue influences performance of English; 77.0% of students agreed that indeed use of mother tongue influences the performance of English while 100% of teachers indicated that indeed use of mother tongue influences the performance of English.

The third research question aimed at finding out the measures taken to curb the use of mother tongue in public day secondary schools in Gatundu District. The study found out that some of the measures taken to curb use of mother tongue include: availability of a language policy, punishing of students who use mother tongue, establishing debating clubs and encouraging students to read story books.

The fourth research question aimed at finding out challenges mother tongue bring about to students in the process of learning English. The study found out that use of mother tongue posed challenges in written English and pronunciation. Seventy-nine percent of students indicated that indeed use of mother tongue influenced the way they write in English while 100% of teachers said that use of mother tongue influenced the way students write in English. Seventy-one percent of students indicated that, use of mother tongue influenced the way they pronounce English words. Other challenges included poor public speaking skills, lack of confidence in communication and students' lack of understanding of content in English

language.

The fifth research question sought to find out strategies used to improve the performance of English in public day secondary schools in Gatundu District. The study found out that making a language policy that would be strictly followed was worthwhile. It was found out that teachers should avoid switching language. Both teachers and students generally felt that adequate learning resources should be availed in schools. In addition, teachers and students identified the need for more forums that give students an opportunity to socialize in English. Punishing students was identified as a strategy since it helped in improvement in performance of English as indicated by 62.5% of students who agreed that when students are punished they improve their performance in English. Another strategy identified was that of encouraging students to read story books, 96.3% agreed that encouraging students to read story books helped them improve in their performance.

5.4 Conclusions

The study established students' use of mother tongue is prevalent among students of public day secondary schools of Gatundu District. Students and teachers code switched for various reasons. Use of mother tongue is prevalent among students in public day secondary schools of Gatundu District. Thus it was concluded that the prevalent use of mother tongue adversely influenced performance of English.

The perception of teachers and students regarding influence of mother tongue on performance of English is equally important. Teachers and students hold the perception that use of mother tongue has a negative influence on performance of English. The perception that use of mother tongue influence negatively performance of English was the general conclusion drawn from both the English teachers and students.

To curb use of mother tongue, proper measures need to be put in place. Language policies can reduce the use of mother tongue if they are implemented in the right way. An established mechanism that ensures students are rewarded and punished in equal measure can help to deter use of mother tongue and encourage use of English. It was thus concluded that teachers reward for students who use English and punishment for those who use mother tongue is important to encourage students to converse in English and deter those who intend to converse in mother tongue.

Challenges that are as a result of use of mother tongue are varied. Use of mother tongue brings about challenge in pronunciation and writing in English. Students also exhibit a challenge of lack of confidence and poor communication skills as a result of use of mother tongue. The challenges that can arise can be eliminated by provision of a conducive environment for learners to use English. Therefore, it was deduced that use of mother tongue influences writing and pronunciation of English words and thus performance of English.

Finally, strategies to be used to improve the performance of English are of importance. Consequently, the general conclusion was that teachers have to provide students with an environment to cultivate their reading skills and spoken English. It was also deduced that using English as the language of interaction through debates and discussions in class was important.

5.5 Recommendations

In order to improve performance of English in Gatundu District, the study made the following recommendations;

1. Students of public day secondary schools of Gatundu should be discouraged from conversing in mother tongues. Moreover, stringent language policies that are feasible should be developed.

2. Teachers should cultivate a positive perception towards the use of English in school. They should be role models to the students and encourage them to converse in English.
3. Schools should come up with a reward-punishment system to encourage use of English and discourage use of mother tongue.
4. Teachers should come up with teaching methods that are interactive to ensure that students are given an opportunity to interact with each other in English so that students can have good communication skills.
5. Schools should revamp their debating clubs. They should reward the winning teams so that they can nurture a competitive environment that will propagate the use of English

Suggested Areas for Further Study

1. Further research should be conducted on how mother tongue influences syntactic and phonological elements of English in the area under study.
2. A study should be carried out to establish the relationship between language of thought and performance of English.
3. This research should be replicated in other districts which do not perform well to corroborate findings on how mother tongue influences performance in English.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: A List of Public Secondary Schools in Gatundu South District.

Boys Schools

SERIAL NO.	SCHOOL NAME	POPULATION
1	MUHOHO	837
2	ITURU	493
3	MURURIA	571
4	KIMUNYU	354

Girls Schools

1	MUTHIGA	464
2	KARINGA	429
3	GATITU	365
4	UCEKE-INI	380
5	KIBIRU	422

Mixed Schools

1	KAHUGU-INI	398
2	NG'ENDA	395
3	ICACIRI	360
4	GACHIKA	226
5	GITARE	190
6	KIGANJO	183
7	GATHIRU	173
8	NDUNDU	308
9	NEMBU	445
10	GIKURE	265
11	KAMUTUA	308
12	MUTUNGURU	123
13	KIAMWANGI	372
14	GATHURI	156
15	NDARUGU	175
16	GITHARURU	184
17	KAGIO	215
18	WAMWANGI	210
19	KIAMORIA	205
20	MUNYU-INI	152
21	RUBURI	177
22	MUTHURUMBI	135
23	HANDEGE	54
TOTAL		7965

Source: Gatundu District Education Officer, 2012

APPENDIX 2: A List of Public Day Secondary Schools in Gatundu South District.

	SCHOOL	No. of Students	No. of Teachers of English
1	NG'ENDA	395	3
2	GACHIKA	226	2
3	GITARE	190	2
4	KIGANJO	183	2
5	GATHIRU	173	1
6	NDUNDU	308	3
7	GIKURE	265	2
8	KAMUTUA	308	3
9	MUTUNGURU	123	1
10	KIAMWANGI	372	2
11	GATHURI	156	2
12	NDARUGU	175	2
13	GITHARURU	184	2
14	KAGIO	215	2
15	WAMWANGI	210	1
16	KIAMORIA	205	2
17	MUNYU-INI	152	2
18	RUBURI	177	1
19	MUTHURUMBI	135	1
20	HANDEGE	54	1
TOTAL		3,633	37

Source: Gatundu District Education Officer, 2012

APPENDIX 3: KCSE English Performance: Gatundu Public Boarding Secondary Schools

School	2011	2010	2009
	Mean Score	Mean Score	Mean Score
A	8.902	8.368	7.917
B	9.262	8.706	6.913
C	7.993	8.536	7.719
D	7.711	8.013	7.702
E	7.602	8.100	8.021
F	6.321	7.010	6.450
G	7.148	7.667	7.269
H	4.879	5.557	5.590

Source: Gatundu South District Education Officer (2012).

APPENDIX 4: KCSE English Performance: Gatundu Public Day Secondary Schools

School	2011	2010	2009
	Mean Score	Mean Score	Mean Score
A	7.584	7.063	6.130
B	4.860	5.000	4.524
C	4.400	3.500	NEW
D	4.328	4.173	4.074
E	4.217	4.079	4.532
F	4.011	4.699	4.182
G	3.875	4.500	3.722
H	3.745	3.955	3.603
I	3.655	3.143	2.613
J	3.525	3.263	NEW
K	3.494	3.986	3.179
L	3.242	4.089	3.205
M	3.067	2.372	2.833
N	2.197	3.139	3.292
O	2.680	2.947	2.429
P	2.625	2.895	2.840
Q	2.600	2.452	NEW

Source: Gatundu South District Education Officer (2012)

APPENDIX 5: Students' Questionnaire

Julius Angoli Atetwe

Catholic University of Eastern Africa

P.O BOX 62157-00200 Nairobi

TEL: 0726744563

DATE

Introduction

Dear Students,

My name is Julius Angoli Atetwe from The Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Department of Post Graduate Studies in Education. I am conducting a research on the *analysis of the influence of mother tongue on students' performance in English in public day secondary schools of Gatundu south district, Kiambu County, Kenya*. This questionnaire is designed to gather information to assist in carrying out this research which is part of my academic requirements for master degree in education. Kindly respond honestly by ticking the appropriate responses to the questions or information needed. Your responses and information in the questionnaire will be confidential and anonymous. So please do not write your name or the name of your school anywhere in the questionnaire.

Thank you very much

Students' Questionnaire

Section A: Personal Information

Please respond to the following questions

1. Your gender (tick), Male () Female ()
2. Your age (tick), 15-16 () 17 – 18 () 19 – 20 () 21 and above ()
3. Indicate your class (tick), form one () form two () form three () Form four ()

Section B: Prevalence of Use of Mother Tongue

- a) Which language does your teacher of English use in class?

English () Kiswahili () Mother Tongue ()

- b) Do teachers of English switch languages during presentation in the class?

Yes () No ()

- c) If yes, how often?

Very Often () Often () Rarely () Not at all ()

- d) Do you switch languages during communication in school?

Yes () No ()

- e) If yes, how often?

Very Often () Often () Rarely () Not at all ()

- f) How often do you speak in mother tongue when in school? Tick appropriately

Very Often () Often () Rarely () Not at all ()

Section C: Perception of Students on the Influence of Mother Tongue on Performance of English

- a) Does the language used by teachers when interacting with students influence performance in English?

Yes () No ()

b) If yes, briefly explain how.

(c) In your own opinion, does use of mother tongue influence performance in English?

Yes () No ()

(d) If yes, explain how use of mother tongue influence performance in English.

c) To what extent do you agree with the following statements? Tick appropriately

Statement	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Undecided 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
i) Teachers' use of mother tongue affects students performance in English					
ii) Teachers who use English in conversation with students influence their performance in English.					
iii) Teachers always discourage students to converse in mother tongue					
iv) Teachers' switching of languages in classroom help in understanding of concepts					

d) To what extent do you agree with the following statements? Tick appropriately

Statement	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Undecided 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
i) Students who use mother tongue perform poorly in English					
ii) Students who use English perform better in English					
iii) Use of mother tongue does not influence performance in English					

Section D: Measures Taken to Curb Use Of Mother Tongue

- a) Does your school have a language policy?
Yes () No ()
- b) Does the Language Policy prohibit you from speaking in mother tongue?
Yes () No ()
- c) Are you punished for speaking in mother tongue?
Yes () No ()
- d) Are students who speak in English rewarded in any form?
Yes () No ()

Section E: Challenges Brought About by Use of Mother Tongue

- a) In your own opinion, does use of mother tongue influence the way you write in English?
Yes () No ()
- b) If yes, briefly explain how use of mother tongue influence the way you write in English.
- c) In your own opinion, does use of mother tongue influence the way you pronounce in English?
Yes () No ()
- d) If yes, briefly explain how use of mother tongue influence the way you pronounce in English.

- e) Which language do you think in?
 English () Kiswahili () Mother Tongue ()
- f) Does the language you think in influences the way you write in English?
 Yes () No ()
- g) If yes in f above, briefly explain how the language you think in influences the way you write in English.
- h) What other challenges are brought about by use of mother tongue?
- i) To what extent do you agree with the following statements? Tick appropriately

Statement	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Undecided 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
i) Language you think in influence your writing in English					
ii) Your pronunciation is influenced by use of mother tongue					
iii) Use of mother tongue influences the way you write					

Section F: Strategies to Improve English

- a. What should be done to improve performance in English?
- b. What is being done to improve performance in English in your school?
- c. Does encouraging student to read story books help them improve in performance of English?
 Yes () No ()
- d. Do the learning resources for English available in school influence performance in English?
 Yes () No ()

APPENDIX 6: Teachers' Questionnaire

Julius Angoli Atetwe
Catholic University of Eastern Africa
P.O BOX 62157-00200 Nairobi
TEL: 0726744563

DATE

Introduction

Dear Teachers,

My name is Julius Angoli Atetwe from The Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Department of Post Graduate Studies in Education. I am conducting a research on the *analysis of the influence of mother tongue on students' performance in English in public day secondary schools of Gatundu south district, Kiambu County, Kenya*. This questionnaire is designed to gather information to assist in carrying out this research which is part of my academic requirements for master degree in education. Kindly respond honestly by ticking the appropriate responses to the questions or information needed. Your responses and information in the questionnaire will be confidential and anonymous. So please do not write your name or the name of your school anywhere in the questionnaire.

Thank you very much

Teachers' Questionnaire

Section A: Personal Information

Please respond to the following questions

1. Your gender (tick), Male () Female ()
2. Duration of teaching, 1-5 () 6-10 () 11-15 () 16-20 () 21-25 ()
25 and above ()

Section B: Prevalence of Use of Mother Tongue

- a) Do you speak in mother tongue in class?
Yes () No ()
- b) If yes, often do you speak in mother tongue in class? Tick appropriately
Very Often () Often () Rarely () Not at all ()
- c) Do you switch languages during the teaching-learning process?
Yes () No ()
- d) If yes, how often do you switch languages during the teaching-learning process?
Very Often () Often () Rarely () Not at all ()
- e) Do students speak in mother tongue in your school?
Yes () No ()
- f) If yes, how often do students speak in mother tongue in school?
Very Often () Often () Rarely () Not at all ()

Section C: Perception of Teachers on the Influence of Mother Tongue on Performance of English

- a) In your own opinion, does use of mother tongue influence performance in English?
Yes () No ()
- b) If yes, explain how use of mother tongue influence performance in English.

c) To what extent do you agree with the following statements? Tick appropriately

Statement	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Undecided 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
Students who use mother tongue perform poorly in English					
Students who use English perform better in English					
Use of mother tongue does not influence performance in English					
Use of mother tongue influences performance in English					

Section D: Measures to be Taken to Curb Use Of Mother Tongue

- a) Does your school have a language policy?
Yes () No ()
- b) If yes, does the Language Policy prohibit students from speaking in mother tongue?
Yes () No ()
- c) Are students who speak mother tongue punished?
Yes () No ()
- d) Are students who speak in English rewarded?
Yes () No ()
- e) What are other measures taken to curb use of mother tongue in your school?

Section E: Challenges Brought About by Use of Mother Tongue

- a) Does use of mother tongue influence the way students write in English?
Yes () No ()
- b) If yes, briefly explain how use of mother tongue influence the way students write in English.
- c) Does use of mother tongue influence the way students pronounce in English?
Yes () No ()
- d) In your opinion, what other challenges does use of mother tongue bring about?
- e) What other challenges are brought about by use of mother tongue?

f) To what extent do you agree with the following statements? Tick appropriately

Statement	Strongly agree 5	Agree 4	Undecided 3	Disagree 2	Strongly disagree 1
Use of mother tongue influence the way students write in English					
Use of mother tongue influence the way students pronounce in English					
Use of mother tongue influence students confidence in communication in English					

Section F: Strategies to Improve English

- a) Does punishing of students for speaking in mother tongues help in improvement in performance of English?
 Yes () No ()
- a) Does availability of learning resources contribute to the improvement of English?
 Yes () No ()
- b) In your opinion, what should be done to improve the performance of English?

APPENDIX 7: Interview Guide for Teachers

Introduction

I want to thank you for taking the time to meet with me today. My name is Julius *Angoli Atetwe* and I would like to talk to you about your experiences regarding the influence of use of mother tongue on performance of English. Specifically, I would like to find out the challenges that use of mother tongue bring about and various strategies that should be used to improve the performance of English. The interview should take less than an hour. I will be taking notes because I don't want to miss any of your comments. All responses will be kept confidential. This means that your interview responses will only be used for the purpose of the Masters program and I will ensure that any information I include in our report does not identify you as the respondent. Remember, you don't have to talk about anything you don't want to and you may end the interview at any time.

Are there any questions about what I have just explained?

Are you willing to participate in this interview?

- a) Which language do your students use as a medium of communication?
- b) Describe situations when you switch languages during teaching-learning.
- c) How does use of mother tongue by students affect the way you teach English?
- d) How does using of mother tongue in school influence performance in English?
- e) Does your school have a language policy? If no, do you intend to come up with one?
 - a. What is the purpose of the language policy?
 - b. Describe how the policy influences performance of English?
- f) Describe how students who use mother tongue are affected in their performance in English?
- g) What challenges are brought about by use of mother tongue in the process of learning English?
- h) What should be done to improve the performance of English?