

Abstract

There is a need to help secondary school students to attain better performance in English as a subject. This is because English is not only a language of instruction in most secondary school subjects but also one of the official languages in Kenya. Drama, being a learner centered approach of teaching, is an important way of enhancing the effectiveness of learning, thus contributing to improve performance in the English examinations. The study examined factors affecting dramatized teaching of the English language in public secondary schools in Machakos County, Kenya. It sought to find out the background information on use of drama as a teaching method for English and the factors that influence its integration by the teachers involved. The researcher employed *ex-post facto* research design. The target population was all the 630 teachers of English in public secondary schools in Machakos County as at September, 2013. Stratified Random Sampling, Simple Random Sampling and Purposive Sampling techniques were used to select a sample size of 189 teachers that formed the respondent base. Stratified sampling was used to divide the schools in the county into three major categories on the basis of gender, namely; boys' schools, girls' schools and mixed gender schools. Purposive sampling was used to conveniently select schools from each category that had at least 3 teachers of English. Simple random sampling was used to select three teachers as respondents in schools with more than 3 teachers of English. Data was collected through administration of questionnaires to the respondents. The collected data was then processed and analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics for accuracy and efficiency. A chi-square value of 5.117, which emerged greater than the tabulated chi-square of 5% disqualified the null hypothesis that time, does not affect dramatized teaching of the English Language at confidence level of 95%. Also rejected at confidence level of 95% was the null hypothesis that class size does not influence dramatized teaching of the English language. The study found that the bigger the class, the more reluctant teachers were to use drama as a teaching strategy. However, the teacher factors of both gender and teaching experience played insignificant roles. 48.1% of the sampled teachers with experience of 20 years and above disagreed that the more experienced a teacher is, the more likely they were to use drama as a teaching strategy for English; compared to 51.9% with less than 20 years of teaching experience who disagreed. Although the study discovered that gender was an insignificant factor, more female than male teachers were more likely to shun drama as a teaching strategy for English. The study therefore recommended that since class size was a significant factor in influencing the success or failure of dramatized teaching of English, there was a need for the government to construct more classrooms and employ more teachers of English to address this issue. The study also recommended that there was a need for educational authorities to organize for more refresher courses for the teachers of English, especially those young in the profession, on how best to utilize the resources available, including time, to carry out dramatized teaching of English language.