

# Effects of Cooperative Learning Approach on the Students' Achievement and Attitude toward Oral Literature Genres in Selected Secondary Schools in Kisii, Kenya

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background to the Study

According to Kenya National Examination Council KNEC (2006), English language papers test the candidates' ability to comprehend language input of the written word, their mastery of grammar and other tokens of communication. This is done in three distinct but related papers namely: paper 101/1 - Testing creative and functional writing, Paper 101/2 - Testing summary writing, comprehension and grammar usage, paper 101/3 - Testing literary knowledge, skills and the ability to present clearly argued points in response to questions asked.

According to Karene (1995), professional literature often overlooks joke and riddle books. Nandwa and Bukenya (1983), Oral literature genres involve word puzzles which an object or situation is referred to in unusual figurative terms, dependent on the metaphor, symbolism and analogy which one is expected to discover or decipher in literal terms of what is proposed.

Oral literature genres are spoken words used in an artistic way for entertainment, enlightenment and pedagogy. According to Lusweti (1990), Oral literature genres are art forms with metaphoric and poetic qualities. The dismal performance of English especially in oral literature as evidenced by the Kenya National Examination 2006 report

**Source: Kisii Central K.C.S.E 2002-2006 results summary**

According to Chemwei (2003), the results of his study using CLA on Poetry, showed that the findings were greatly influenced by the rewards given to the best groups in the Poetry tests. Kisii District has had mean grades of 3.476, 3.78, 3.8, 3.6 and 3.2 in KCSE as from the years 2002 to 2006, consequently there was need to fill the gap through this research study. Therefore, this study employed cooperative learning approach in the teaching of Oral literature genres and sought to find out whether it would influence learners achievement and attitude in the subject positively. Table 2 shows the performance of students in English National Examination in the three papers offered in the years 2000-2005. The data shows that the mean score for literature paper 3 has been low over the years, thus, low performance in the English paper in terms of score and

may be attributed to the conventional teaching methods, lack of adequate vocabulary and instructional resources

According to Wachanga (2002) cooperative learning tasks in small groups embrace students' academic achievement, self-esteem in relationships among students of different ethnic backgrounds and positive attitudes towards school. Literary schools such as Secondary school Students' in Kisii District performed poorly in English. The English paper has three components; functional skills, grammar and oral literature. The oral literature paper constituted poetry, oral narratives and the short forms (genre). Central to this study was the low performance in oral literature genre, which the research study investigated among the secondary school students in Kisii Central District. This may have been attributed to the inappropriate teaching methods and lack of adequate teaching resources. Table 1, gives the enrolment and performance of students in KCSE in Kisii Central and their grades in English for the year 2002 - 2006. The data in this table indicated that, English subject was performed poorly as shown by the mean score of students.

**Table 1:** Candidate's performance in English for the years 2002 – 2006 in Kisii central

Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Eng. (Mean Standard Score)	3.476	3.78	3.8	3.6	3.2
Maximum (Mean Standard Score)	12	12	12	12	12

grades among secondary school students.

**Table 2:** Candidates' Overall Performance in English National Examination between the years 2000-2005

Year	Paper	Candidature	Maximum score	Mean score	Standard deviation
2000	1	181,966	40	14.94	3.83
	2		80	42.23	11.07
	3		80	17.43	8.49
	Overall		200	74.34	20.81
2001	1	193,826	40	16.79	3.37
	2		80	33.87	10.34
	3		80	18.26	8.84
	Overall		200	68.84	20.00
2002	1	197,090	40	14.46	4.07
	2		80	29.21	10.77
	3		80	15.75	8.70
	Overall		200	58.16	21.23

2003	1	207,929	40	15.00	3.53
	2		80	29.22	10.12
	3		80	21.05	9.25
	Overall		200	65.26	20.89
2004	1	221,321	40	16.36	3.00
	2		80	31.40	10.25
	3		80	21.77	9.94
	Overall		200	69.51	20.00
2005	1	259,306	40	16.38	3.24
	2		80	46.06	11.89
	3		80	23.35	9.59
	Overall		200	85.78	22.00

**Source: Adapted from Kenya National Examination Council 2006**

It is against this background that this research study was conducted, with the students' interactions not dependent on rewards, and to increase the generalizability of the CLA findings to Literature Education as a whole.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

The English paper in K.C.S.E has three components; functional skills, grammar and oral literature. This translates to 50% in the National Examination, thus the need to devise better methods of teaching it. The importance of Oral literature short forms is critical because they are mental exercises, which offer training of the mind to commit to memory and teach students how to reason. Secondary schools Students' in Kisii District perform poorly in English with an equivalent of a mean grade D. Thus, central to this study is the low performance in oral literature genre, which the study investigated among the secondary school students in Kisii district. This could be attributed to the inappropriate teaching methods and lack of adequate teaching resources. Co-operative learning approach as an instructional methodology can therefore be a starting point because it provides better opportunities for students to develop skills in group interactions and in working with others that are needed in today's world. Co-operative learning is capable of providing students with better opportunities to analyze, synthesize and evaluate ideas. Therefore this study sought to investigate the effects of cooperative learning approach on the students' achievement in Oral literature genres in secondary schools in Kisii District.

## 1.3 The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of cooperative learning approach on the students' achievement and attitude toward Oral literature genres in selected secondary schools.

## 1.4 The Objectives of the Study

This study was guided by the following objectives:

- 1) To determine if there was any significant difference in students' achievement in oral literature genres between those exposed to CLA and those not exposed to it.

## 1.5 Hypotheses of the Study

The following null hypotheses were tested:

HO<sub>1</sub>: There is no statistically significant difference in

students' achievement in oral literature genres between those exposed to CLA and those not exposed to CLA.

## 1.6 Significance of the Study

This study is significant because previous studies have focused on the effects of co-operative learning in other subjects, poetry and not in oral literature genres (Dumas, 2000; Johnson & Johnson 1991; Kibos, 1997; Chemwei 2003).

However, the researcher is not aware of any study that has been done to investigate the effects of co-operative learning approach towards the teaching of oral literature genres in Kenya. It is hoped that the findings of this study would help the teachers to evaluate their teaching methods. Also, it would also be beneficial to English curriculum developers to make appropriate amendments on the selection of content, objectives and evaluation approaches. The information is useful to the Ministry of Education (MOE) in the making of policies pertaining to the Production of Literature teaching materials that embrace student-centred approach such as Co-operative Learning.

Lastly, the findings would stimulate further research on the appropriate methodologies of teaching Oral literature genres and Literature Education in general.

## 1.7 Scope of the Study

The study was conducted in four public district secondary schools in Kisii; only form 3 students participated in the research study. It involved a total sample size of 160 students. The oral literature content was limited to proverbs, riddles and narratives as per the 8.4.4 syllabus (KIE 2000).

## 1.8 Limitations of the Study

This research was carried out using the identified variables and the form three students of the four sampled schools of Kisii District. The research could have benefited enormously if a larger population would have been involved. The study was also based on limited literature, experience of the researcher as a literature teacher and teacher trainer. The research design used did not adequately control the intervening variables. Accessibility of some schools proved difficult, the road network, the terrain of the area and means of transport were some of the shortcomings experienced.

## 1.9 Assumptions of the Study

The study was based on the following assumptions

- 1) Co-operative learning approach was not being used in Kisii District Schools.
- 2) Teachers in the selected schools were trained and experienced in teaching of literature
- 3) The school administrators, teachers and students in the selected schools would co-operate with the researcher during the period of study.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Introduction

This section focused on literature related to the studies carried out to determine the effects of cooperative learning on students' academic performance. This chapter also, reviewed various studies dealing with the aims of Oral literature genres in the English curriculum, conventional methods and their effects on learning. More so, it reviewed cooperative learning and its effect on teaching, and on students' achievements.

## 2.2 Aims of Teaching and Learning Oral Literature Genres in Secondary Schools

Oral literature genres are taught like any other genres of Literature Education such as Poetry, Drama, Novel and Short Story. The introduction of the 8-4-4 system of Education in Kenya failed to address the preparation and production of instructional materials in oral communication and other genres of literature adequately (Abagi, 1997; Waihenya, 2001). Rita (1996) asserted that learners were drawn to riddles because they offered an opportunity to experiment with language in unexpected or unusual way. Rita (1996) acknowledged that riddles and proverbs had a great potential in developing higher thinking skills, enhancing language and literacy skills in specific areas as well as interest in other cultures. Moreover, they assisted in developing cognitive skills which used to gather, interpret data, make inferences, and draw conclusions.

According to Appleman et.al (1991) and Chemwei (2003), teaching of literature can be an invitation to response rather than a mandate to memorize or rehearse previously constructed interpretations. But the traditional approach adopted by most teachers when teaching poetry had not only undermined poetry, but also the enthusiasm that the students could have towards the subject (Amisi, 2001; Auta, 2002; Kabaji, 2001; Chemwei, 2003).

According to Kaniu (2003), speech was improved by deliberate training and Practice of the Learners. Ayot and Patel (1987) observed that school students suffered from inadequate vocabulary, poor pronunciation, incorrect grammar and lack of smooth flow in discourse. Moreover, Brumfit, (1992) asserted that teaching methods, assessment procedures, teaching facilities and equipment used in secondary schools were not significantly different from those utilized in colleges. This may be resolved through cooperative methods which all students work together, discuss, consider alternative points of view and reach a working consensus with other students (Klemm, 1994; Panitz, 2000 and Chemwei, 2003).

## 2.3 Conventional and Cooperative Classrooms

The conventional classroom was usually perceived as a single social system. Its structure maximised the isolation of students from one another by seating arrangements such as individual desks in rows. The teacher was the centre of the activity. He or she controlled all communication networks and presented knowledge to students. The learning task was structured as individualistic or competitive (Bossert, 1979). In such a classroom, students were expected to listen and respond to the teacher only when called to do so. Student to student interactions were minimal, and each student looked after himself or herself. Hertz-lazarowitz (1992) gave six

dimensions that characterise classroom setting. They included physical organisation of the classroom, the learning task, teacher's instructional behaviours, teacher's communicative behaviour, student's academic behaviour and student's social behaviour.

### 2.3.1 Conventional Methods of Teaching Oral Literature Genres

Conventional methods can be defined as instructional methods which the amount of verbal interaction between the teacher and students is maximum (Chemwei, 2003). According to Hayes (1998), these methods resembled a one person show with knowledge as a fixed entity that students must come to know. They viewed learners as recipients of knowledge, transmitted by the teacher who acted as a pipeline through which his or her thoughts and meanings found way into the students' minds. Klemm (1994) asserted that effective teaching strategies required the students, and not the teacher, to do the conceptualizing, organizing and theorizing about the subject matter. The present study focused on ways in which learners could actively participate in the study of Oral literature and understand the context with great ease. The conventional teaching methods in use included the following: Lecture, Discussion and Demonstration.

#### 2.3.2 Lecture Method

Lecture method is an oral presentation of organized thoughts and ideas by a speaker. The teacher in this case assumed that by a process of speech, thought was initiated, problems were identified and pupils were made active. Haller, et.al (2002) argued that students understood a small percentage of the lecture content. According to Daly, et al (1990), lecturing tended to be on the one end of the continuum with most teacher control, least student input, most expository form and most deductive mode of instruction. People learnt better when they are using as many senses as were appropriate. In addition to this, lectures conveyed large amounts of information and permitted maximum teacher control of the Learning Process. Bridley (1989) asserted that the method was less effective than other methods when students were average in academic preparation or intelligence.

The weaknesses of the lecture approach according to Slavin, (1995), is that lecture lacks feedback to the instructor about the students learning, and that the students are passive than the teachers. Okere (1996) asserted that the teacher manages to cover a wide content in a given time. However, does not take into consideration the learning-taking place. There is usually minimal student understanding of concepts discussed in lectures. However, with the shift from transmission to transactional paradigms in Education, much focus ought to be on how much learners are able to learn from themselves and with a minimal role from the instructor. Okere (1996). Consequently this study sought to address the effects of CLA towards teaching of Oral literature genres of literature in English.

#### 2.3.3 Discussion Method

In a discussion mode, the instructor is neither the sole information provider nor organizational determiner because group members share these functions. Classroom discussions involve mutual influence among all group members with

members directing remarks to the entire group. Additionally, discussion strategies assist students' acceptance and belonging and they create higher levels of classroom cohesion (Duke 1990).

According to Hall (1989), classroom discussions are preferred methods of instruction for promoting critical thinking, problem solving ability, higher levels of cognitive learning, attitude change, moral development and communication skill development. On the other hand, all the learners do not have a chance to contribute if not arranged properly. The focus of this study is to determine the effects of CLA toward the study of Oral literature genres.

### 2.3.4 Demonstration Method

This involves the demonstration of a technique or a lesson to learners by the instructor or another learner. The real problem with demonstrations is that learners almost inevitably view them as a model and hence are tempted to imitate without fully thinking through the worth of the activity or the soundness of the technique. In spite of the limitations noted, conventional methods of instruction continue to be embraced by most teachers of literature.

### 2.4 Cooperative Learning Approach (CLA) towards the Studying of Oral Literature

Cooperative learning approach is a standard educational practice in almost every elementary, secondary school as well as colleges and universities in United States, Canada and a variety of other developed countries (Panitz, 2000 and Chemwei, 2003). In cooperative learning program, Students work in small groups of four to six and receive rewards based on group, rather than individual performance. The learning goal structure is co-operative and students are to work collaboratively as they gather information, discuss this information and reach a group consensus. Good and Brophy (1995), points out gains in achievement were greatest if students were actively involved in the learning process. According to Slavin (1995), people learn better when they are actively involved than when they simply hear information. Feldman (1997) suggested that small groups in large classes provided "energy and interaction". Hence, co-operative learning is effective in helping students' retain information beyond the termination of a course.

The goals of this Co-operative Learning Approach is to raise the academic performance of individual students', teach students to be cooperative rather than competitive, improve the learning of both high and low achievers and improve race and ethnic relations in the classroom. Clark and Cottle (1990); Kohn (1986), asserted that competition interfered with learning and that cooperative learning approach yielded far more superior results regardless of subject matter or age group. According to Johnson and Johnson (1998), students' interpersonal attraction improved when they worked cooperatively; and had a higher regard for the subject, teacher, school, greater self-confidence and improved both cognitive and affective outcome.

The approach of students tutoring one another is likely to acquire greater mastery of the material than in the common individual study cum recitation pattern. Moreover, the

shared responsibility and interaction are likely to generate better inter-group relations and results in better self-images for students with histories of poor achievement (Joyce & Weil, 1980; Wachanga, 2002). Moreover, attention to the nature and impact of student to student interaction on classroom learning has been virtually ignored in much of the classroom based educational research. However, Johnson and Johnson (1990) faulted much of this research as being "adult centrism" which implies that real learning occurred only between teacher and students and that the student to student interaction represented off-task behaviour, discouraged achievement and led to classroom disruptions.

### 2.5 Effects of Cooperative Learning on Students Achievement and Knowledge Retention

Several studies have been conducted to compare the effects of co-operative learning to those of traditional or control groups on measures of the same objectives pursued in all classes (Slavin, 1994). Feldman (1997) found out that group investigation method of cooperative learning was effective in increasing student's achievement in higher order skills in social studies.

A study by Kiboss (1997) involving 118 form One Physics students using a computer based instruction programme found that cooperative group out-performed the individual group across the board in gender and ability grouping. More so, according to Chemwei (2003), it became evident that cooperative learning is an effective method of instruction in Literature Education especially in Poetry.

Feldman (1997) in his study in Israel found out that group investigation method of cooperative learning was effective in increasing student achievement. Although this method seemed to be academically appropriate for Kenyan situation, it contrasts the current scenario which emphasizes content memorization and individual student performance through competition that discouraged interaction. Stahl (1994) after examining the effects of co-operative learning found that it enhances both the academic and social development of primary and secondary school student.

Foote (1997) found similar results in her research, which was drawn from her experience in community colleges. She argued that collaborative learning encourages active learning and self-reliance. This implies that her research found academic and social benefits. Rick (2002) argues that if learners are directly involved in the setting of aims for the learning outcomes, this would not only increase interest in the learning process but also foster skills of collaborative group work and independent action.

Careen (1997), in a study of co-operative learning in grade 6 French language class, found that, although all groups showed improvements in oral performance and comprehension, co-operative learning benefited weaker and average ability students more than higher ability students. The study compared co-operative learning and traditional classroom methods.

Hence this study sought to employ a CLA which solely depended on students, interaction and teacher guidance in



the teaching of Oral literature short forms.

### 2.5.1 Barriers of effective Co-operative Learning

Simply placing individuals in groups and telling them to work together does not in itself create effective cooperation that results in increased achievement. Less able members in a group sometimes leave those perceived to be more able to complete the groups tasks, thus creating a free-rider effect where group members expend decreasing amounts of effort and just go through team work motions. At the same time, the more able group members may expend less effort in an attempt to avoid sucker effect of doing all work (Kerr & Bruun, 1983).

High ability group members take over the important leadership in ways that benefit them at the expense of the other group members bringing about the rich-get-richer effect. In a learning group for example, a more able group member may give all the explanations of what is being learnt. Because the amount of time spent explaining correlated highly with the amount learnt, the more able member learnt a great deal while the less able members become a captive audience (Johnson & Johnson, 1992).

### 2.6 Students Achievement in Learning of Oral Literature Genres

Karene and Diane (1993), enumerated the benefits derived from riddling which involved techniques of laughter and play to be enormous as they encouraged learning. They found the following as being the major benefits;

- (i) Riddles maintained a high attention level
- (ii) They relieved physical and mental stress
- (iii) They built a good rapport among the learners
- (iv) They increased retention
- (v) Promoted divergent thinking
- (vi) Brought new insights and allowed for pleasurable learning and increased a feeling of hope to learners.

This research study used CLA in an attempt to change the dismal performance in test items of Oral literature in the English subject. This study also hopes that by employing a CL approach, learners would develop positive attitudes towards short forms of literature.

### 2.7 Co-operative Teaching Approach

An instructional model such as cooperative learning is a comprehensive approach to teaching that derives from a theory of education and encompasses key assumptions about what students should learn and how they learn (Duke, 1990; Wachanga, 2002). In this study, the cooperative learning layout is incorporated in the teaching of Oral literature genres. It is a form of learner activation that is of particular value in the practice of oral literature (Chemwei, 2003). Learners in a class are divided into 5 groups to get five times as many opportunities to talk as in full class organization. According to Johnson and Johnson (1979), if student to student interaction was to be a successful instructional strategy, teachers must control how learning goals were structured and how conflicts among students are managed. Moreover, student – student interaction induced cognitive conflict, which in turn resulted in cognitive restructuring and

growth, (Johnson and Johnson, 1984). According to Hayes (1998), the first rule for a teacher to observe in his/her classroom talking is to keep the normal rhythm of his or her and learners speaking. Figure 1 is a class layout of CLA which shows how students sit in groups as the teacher walks around moderating the collaborative exchanges.

### Class layout for cooperative learning (Adapted from Hayes, 1998)

According to Brumfit (1992), placing of students in small groups assisted individualization, for each group, being limited by its own appropriate level of working more precisely than a class working in lock-step, with its larger numbers.

### 2.7.1 Student Team Learning (STL)

Student team learning (STL) emphasizes the use of team goals and team success. Three concepts are essential to all Student Team Learning (STL) methods: “team reward,” “individual accountability” and “equal opportunity for success.” Teams received certificates or team rewards if they achieved at or above a designated standard (Slavin, 1994). Slavin asserted that individual accountability implied that the team’s success depended on the individual learning of all team members. Equal opportunity for success meant students contributed to their teams by improving over their own past performance. This enables high, average and low achievers to be equally challenged to do their best to contribute to the team. Team rewards and individual accountability were necessary elements for enhancing cooperative learning. Slavin (1990) suggested that if students are rewarded for doing better than they have in the past, they would be more motivated to achieve than if rewarded based on their performance in comparison to others since rewards for improvement makes success neither too difficult nor too easy for students to achieve. Students Team-Achievement Divisions (STAD) and Teams-Games Tournament (TGT) are examples of the STL methods, which are reviewed in 2.7.2 and 2.7.3.

### 2.7.2 Student-Team-Achievement Division (STAD)

Students are assigned 4- member learning and groups are mixed in performance level, gender and ethnicity. A teacher presented a lesson and students ensured that all team members had mastered the lesson through peer tutoring. At last all students took individual quizzes on the material at which time they would not help one another. Points are given depending on the degree to which students could meet or exceed their own earlier performance. The points were summed up to get team scores and a team, which attained certain standards, earned certificates or other rewards (Kaplan, 1990; Slavin 1994).

### 2.7.3 Teams –Games –Tournament (TGT)

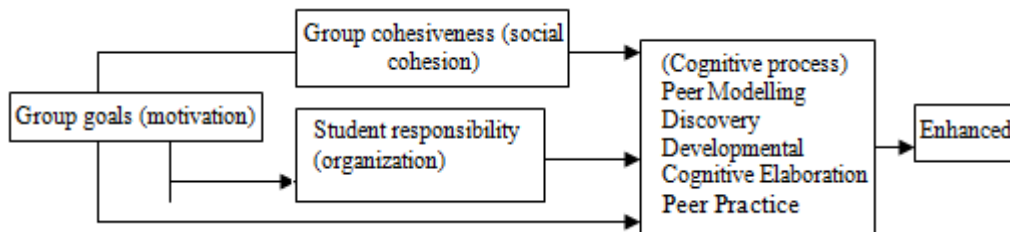
Teams – Games – Tournament (TGT) used the same teacher presentation and teamwork as STAD but replaced the quizzes with weekly tournaments where students compete with members of other teams to contribute marks to their team scores. They competed at three – person “tournament tables” against others of the same past records. Winners at each table brought the same numbers of points to their teams. (Slavin, 1994).

### 2.7.4 Team Assisted Individualisation (TAI)

Whereas STAD and TGT used a single place of instruction for the class, TAI combined cooperative learning with individualised instruction. Teams received certificates based on the number of units completed and the accuracy of all team members' assignments (Kaplan, 1990). Team mates checked each other's work against answer sheets and helped one another with any problems (Slavin, 1994).

### 2.8 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework used in this study was based on an integrative theory adapted from Slavin (1995); according to whom there are six theoretical perspectives related to co-operative learning that have well established rationales and supporting evidence Hertz-Lazarowitz and Miller (1995) observe that those perspectives are complementary to one another. A mode of the relationships among these perspectives is diagrammatically shown below:

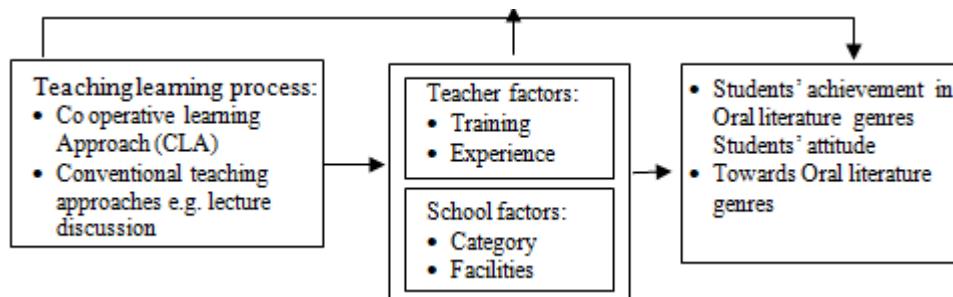


**Figure 1:** Adapted from Slavin (1995) Research on co-operative learning. John Hopkin University Publishers

### 2.9 Conceptual Framework

The best results are achieved when suitable materials are fed into the teaching-learning system in the best way possible. This study assumes cooperative learning is effective in increasing student achievement, (Feldman, 1997; Chemwei,

2003). The conceptual framework for the effects of using cooperative learning on students' achievement and attitude towards studying of Oral literature genres has three variables as represented diagrammatically.



**Figure 2:** A Conceptual framework (CLA) showing the interaction of variables

School facilities and category determines the approaches and resources teachers use in the teaching of Oral literature genres. The approach used influences the students' achievement and attitudes in Oral literature and English as a subject. The teachers training and experience influenced the choice and use of teaching approach. In order to control moderator variables the study used trained teachers with similar experience and District schools with almost similar characteristics in terms of facilities.

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter focused on a number of logically related aspects of research methodology which were used in the research study. Research design, location and population of the study, the sampling procedures, sample size, instrumentation, data collection procedures and data analysis procedures are explained.

### 3.2 Research design

The design used a quasi-experimental Solomon four group

design. It used the non – equivalent design that was considered appropriate because the classes involved were intact as such school administrators do not allow their classes to be broken up for research purposes (Borg and Gall 1989). The design enabled the researcher to assess the effect of the experimental treatment relative to the control, to assess the effect of the pre-test and to assess the interaction between pre-test and treatment condition. It also provided adequate control on moderator variables that would affect the internal and external validity of the study. The design is illustrated below;

**Table 3:** Solomon Four Group Quasi Experimental Design

Group	Pre-Test	Treatment	Post – Test
E1	0 <sub>1</sub>	X	0 <sub>2</sub>
C1	0 <sub>3</sub>	X	0 <sub>4</sub>
E2	-	X	0 <sub>5</sub>
C2	-	-	0 <sub>6</sub>

Source: Ary et al (1972: 247)

Key: E1 – Experimental group one- No treatment

E2 – Experimental group two

C1 – Control Group One

C2 – Control group two

01, 03 – Pre-test  
02, 04, 05, 06 – Post Test  
X – Treatment

### 3.3 Population

The population of the study were Form 3 secondary school students in Kisii District Nyanza province, Kenya. The district was purposively selected because it performs poorly in English at the National Examinations. Form three students were used because detailed learning of oral literature genres starts at form 3 levels and matures to level 4. Also they are deemed suitable because at that level they have acquired enough vocabulary to be able to understand and use oral literature genres.

### 3.4 Sampling Procedure

There were 125 Secondary Schools in Kisii District. The schools were stratified by school categories, out of which 10 were Provincial, 12 Private, 101 were District Secondary Schools. Purpose sampling was used to identify the Secondary category and the class level to use in the study sample. This was appropriate in situations where the researcher was interested in certain specified characteristics like school category and facilities available. (Andima, 2004). This sampling procedure was used to draw the required four schools from the 110 district secondary schools. This technique gave all the schools in that category an equal chance to be included in the study.

#### 3.4.1 Sample Size

Wachanga (2002), recommended at least 40 subjects per treatment. The four schools were sampled and one stream from each school included in the study sample. Enrolment in each school differed hence; E1 E2, C1, and C2 had different numbers of students, making a total sample size of 160 students. The four classes in the four schools were randomly assigned to experiment groups (E1 and E2) and control groups (C1 and C2).

### 3.5 Instrumentation

Two instruments were used to collect data to meet the objectives of this study based on the triangulation method of data collection; which involved using two or more instruments to collect data. The instruments were:-  
i) Oral Literature Genres Achievement Test (OLGAT)

#### 3.5.1 Oral Literature Genres Achievement Test

It consisted of 25 structured items which were administered to the subjects to assess their performance before and after treatment.

### 3.6 Validation of instruments

The test instruments were constructed by the researcher and were given to two Egerton University Language and Literature experts in order to check on both the concurrent and content validity. Validity refers to the extent to which a test is consistent in giving the same results any time it is applied; (Stanley & Hopkins 1992). Reliability of the test instrument was estimated at 0.893 by using Kuder-

Richardson formula 21(K-R21). This method was chosen because of its simplicity to understand as compared to K-R20 (Ebel&Frisbie, 1991).

$$r_{KR21} = \frac{KS^2 - M(K - M)}{(K - 1) S^2}$$

Where  $r_{KR21}$  =Kuder Richardson formula 21 reliability coefficient

K =Total number of steps (maturity stages) where marks had been awarded in the test.

M=Mean of set of test scores

s = Standard deviation of the set of test scores

Students Attitude Questionnaire was used to assess the Students' attitude towards oral literature genres after being treated with CLA and the conventional methods of teaching. The items were constructed on a five point Likert scale. The SAQ which had reliability co-efficient of 0.893 using KR-21 formula was adapted from the items developed by Kiboss (1997). Both OLGAT and SAQ were piloted tested in one district secondary school in Gucha District to determine their reliability. The reliability of SAQ was obtained using co-efficient alpha method. (Ebel&Frisbie, 1991). The co-efficient alpha method was suitable because the items were constructed on a five point scale.

**Table 4:** Summary of methods used to test hypotheses

Hypotheses	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Statistical Tests
HO1: There is no statistically significant difference in students' achievement of oral literature genres between those exposed to CLA and those who are not exposed to it.	Co-operative learning approach (CLA)	Post-test scores in oral literature genres; achievement test (OLGAT)	t-Test One way ANOVA

The co-efficient alpha formula is

$$\alpha = \left[ \frac{K}{K-1} - \frac{1}{\sum \frac{S_i^2}{S^2}} \right]$$

Where;

K = Number of items on the test

$SX^2$  = Variance of the total test

$\sum S_i^2$  = Sum of variance of the individual items

### 3.7 Data collection procedure

Before commencement of data collection an introductory letter was sought from the Graduate School, Egerton University and henceforth sought permission from Ministry of Education Science and Technology's office in Nairobi through the National Council for Science and Technology to carry out the study in Kisii District. Consequently the researcher got in touch with the school administrators who introduced him to the English language teachers. Both were handed introductory letter and an elaboration of the purpose of the study.

The English teachers were in-serviced by the researcher on the course because they were involved in administration of the instruments to the students on behalf of the researcher. A

pre-test of OLGAT was administered to students in experimental and control group E1 and C1. The experimental group E1 and E2 were exposed to a series of 20 lessons for reliability on Oral literature genres using the CLA while the control group C1 and C2 were exposed to the same using conventional teaching methods. After all the students had completed the lessons, OLGAT was administered to E1, E2, C1 and C2 groups. SAQ was also administered to the four groups before and at the end of the experiment. Lastly the researcher scored and coded the collected data for statistical analysis.

### 3.8 Data analysis procedures

Data collected from this study were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Through descriptive analysis raw data were summarized using means, standard deviation, frequencies and percentages. Both hypotheses were subjected to a T-test and ANOVA for statistical test of significance at  $\alpha=0.05$ . A t-test was used to determine whether the differences are significant. When dealing with the two means, a t-test is used because it's of superior power in detecting the differences between two means. The analyses which were subjected to statistical analysis determined whether there were significant differences between two or more groups or samples at a selected probability (Mugenda&Mugenda, 1999). The statistical analyses used to test the two hypotheses are outlined in Table 4 below.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the general findings of the research, hypotheses results, interpretations and discussions on the effects of co-operative learning approach (CLA) on students' achievement in oral literature genres in selected secondary schools in Kisii District, Kenya. The chapter presents the findings of the significant difference in students' achievement in oral literature genres exposed to CLA and those not exposed to it.

### 4.2 Students Achievement in Oral Literature Genres

The objective of the research study was to determine if there was any significant effect in the students' achievement in Oral Literature genre of students exposed to CLA and those not exposed to it. The study grouped the students into experimental groups E1 and E2 and control groups C1 and C2. The experimental groups were treated with CLA and control groups C1 and C2 were exposed to the conventional teaching methods. The experimental group E1 and Control group C1 were both exposed to a pretest and post-test. However a post-test was administered to all the four groups.

### 4.3 The Pre-Test Analysis

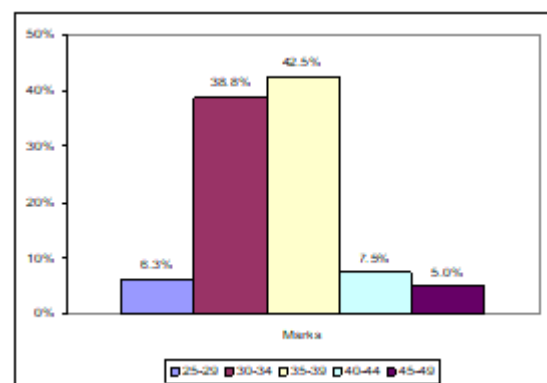
A pretest was administered to all the subjects prior to the treatment using two dependent measures: (i) Oral Literature Genre Achievement Test (OLGAT) As required by Solomon four – group design, the pre-tests of OLGAT and SAQ were administered to one experimental group E<sub>1</sub>, and the control

group C<sub>1</sub>, before the onset of the study.

**Table 5:** Pre-Test and Post-Test administration across the groups

	Pre-test Administered			
	N	%	N	%
Total	80	50%	160	100.0%
Experimental Group one (E1)	40	25%	40	25.0%
Experimental Group two (E2)	0	0.0%	40	25.0%
Control Group one (C1)	40	25%	40	25.0%
Control Group two (C2)	0	0.0%	40	25.0%

The control and experimental groups pre-test scores were used to analyze the entry level of the Learners using the test instruments. The results from Figure 4 below clearly showed that 42.5% of the students scored between 35-39 marks while 38.8% of the students scored between 30-34 marks.



**Figure 4:** Pre-test scores

Table 6 below showed that the OLGAT pre-test scores from the experimental and control groups were not diverse hence implying that on entry the learners did not have a wide disparity in their achievement scores.

**Table 6:** Comparison of pre-test scores among E1 and C1 groups

Range of Marks	Experimental Group one		Control Group one	
	No. of Students	%	No. of Students	%
25-29	2	5.0%	3	7.5%
30-34	11	27.5%	20	50.0%
35-39	19	47.5%	15	37.5%
40-44	5	12.5%	1	2.5%
45-49	3	7.5%	1	2.5%
	40	100.0%	40	100.0%

From the research analysis the histogram in Figure 5 below shows a normal distribution curve for the mean response form for the experimental group (E1, E2) and control group (C1, C2) is 3.66 with a standard deviation of 0.899. The histogram is fairly distributed implying that the marks for the study formed a normal curve. The same deviation indicates that the scores for the groups are clustered around the mean and that there are no extreme scores



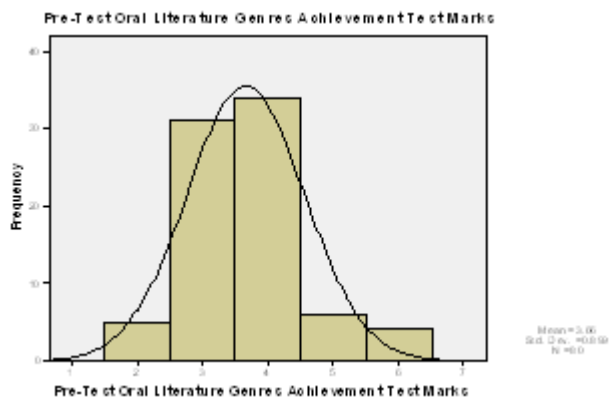


Figure 5: Histogram with a normal Distribution for the Experimental and control groups

## OLGAT scores

### 4.4 The OLGAT Post-Test Analysis

A post-test was administered to the Experimental and control groups. A comparison was made between the pre-test and post-test scores for the experimental group. The data in Figure 6 below showed that OLGAT pre-test scores from the experimental group had 25-49 marks with a majority of the students 75% scoring 30-39 marks. In the post scores from the same experimental group 100% of the students scored 70 and above marks. This analysis indicated that the experimental group which was treated twice with CLA in the teaching of OLGAT showed a marked improvement on their performance.

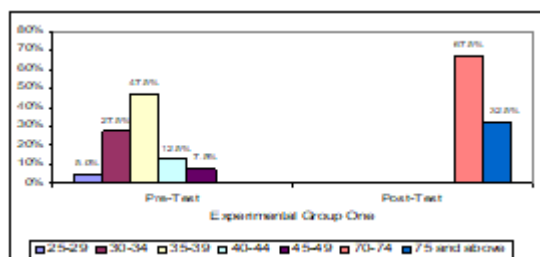


Figure 6: A Comparison of Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores for the Experimental Groups

A comparison of the pre-test and post-test scores for the control groups was done. The analysis from Figure 7 showed 87.5% of the pre-test students scored between 30-39% marks while 40-49% marks were scored in the post-test. The control group showed a slight improvement in their post-test scores. The slight improvement was attributed to the OLGAT test instrument having been administered to the control group prior to the post-test as shown in Figure 7.

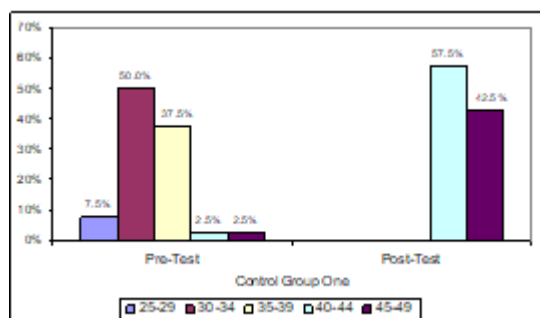


Figure 7: A Comparison of Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores for the Control Groups

for the Control Groups

### A comparison of pre test and post – test scores for the experimental groups

A comparison of the post-test scores for the experimental group (E1 & E2) was done as shown in Figure 8. The research analysis indicated that both groups performed very well. In the E1 group 67.5% of the students scored between a range of 70-74 marks and 32.5% of the remaining students scored a range of 60-64 marks. Group E1 had 7.5% students score marks range of 60-64 whereas 82.5% of students scored between 65-69 marks while 10% score between 70-74 marks. The research findings indicated that experimental group E1 performed better than E2 which was attributable to its pre-exposure to the CLA treatment. The OLGAT post-test scores for the experimental groups E1 & E2 were high, hence implying that CLA gave impressive results towards the learning of oral literature genres.

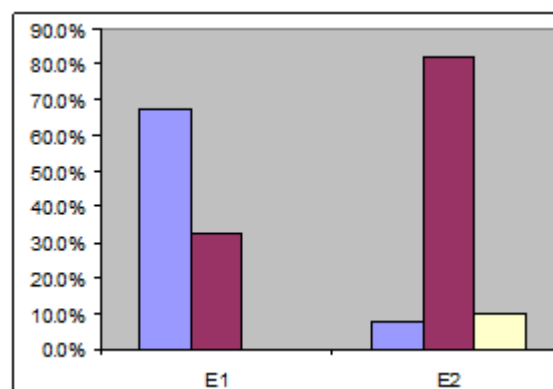
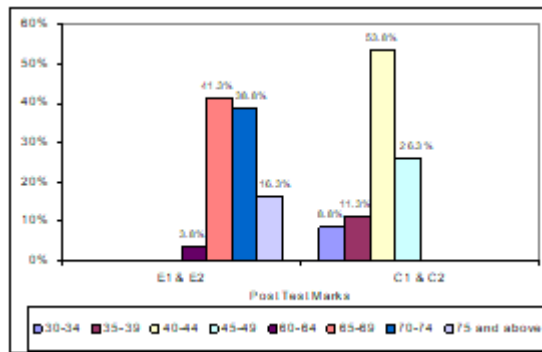


Figure 8: Post-test achievement marks for Experimental groups

The research study findings compared the post-test scores for experimental group (E1, E2) and control groups (C1, C2) as shown in Figure 9. The experimental groups had CLA treatment administered to them while the control groups were exposed to the conventional teaching methods in the learning of oral literature genres. The research findings indicated that students exposed to CLA performed better with 3.8% of the students scoring 60-64 marks, 41.3% scoring 65-69 marks and 38.8% scoring 70-75 marks and the remaining 16.3% scoring 75 marks and above. The learners in the control group had 8.8% scoring in 30-34 marks, 11.35% scoring 35-39 marks, 53.8% scoring 40-44 marks and 26.3% scoring 45-49 marks in their post-test. This clearly showed that the two different methodologies were significantly different in terms of their effectiveness in delivery of results. The co-operative learning approach proved superior in its approach than the conventional methods. This was because CLA encouraged learners' interactiveness, learners tutoring themselves due to its participative nature. The method also ensured that learners were actively involved in the learning process and was thus student centred. The findings indicated that co-operative learning approach had a significant effect on the students' achievement and attitude toward and literature genres.



**Figure 9:** A comparison of post – test scores between the Experimental groups and Control groups

#### 4.5 Effects of co-operative learning approach on the Students' Attitude towards Oral Literature genres

The second objective of the research study sought to determine if there was any significant effect in the student's attitude towards oral literature genres among those exposed

to CLA and those not exposed to CLA. The research study administered SAQ instruments to the experimental and control groups prior to the treat and after the treatment during the oral literature genres lesson.

#### 4.6 Effects of co-operative learning and students achievement in oral literature genre

HO<sub>1</sub>: To test the Hypothesis there is no significant difference in students' achievement towards the study of oral literature genres between those exposed to CLA and those not exposed to CLA. The researcher looked at the variables of this hypothesis which were the oral literature test scores for both the experimental group and the control group. A T-test was used to establish the difference in the means of the OLGAT marks for both the control and experimental groups as shown in Table 11.

**Table 11:** Descriptive Statistics of the Marks from both the Groups

Post Test Oral Literature Genres Achievement Test Marks								
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
1 Experimental Group	80	70.53	4.514	.505	69.52	71.53	62	88
2 Control Groups	80	42.23	3.990	.446	41.34	43.11	34	49
Total	160	56.38	14.816	1.171	54.06	58.69	34	88

An analysis of the results shown in Table 11 above indicated that the mean score and standard deviation (S.D) for the experimental and control groups on OLGAT and SAQ were slightly different.

The study established that those students exposed to CLA

(experimental groups) had a high mean score 70.53% as compared to the control group who were not exposed to CLA who had a mean score of 42.23%. However an ANOVA test was undertaken to ascertain whether the difference was statistically significant or not. This is shown in Table 12 below.

**Table 12:** ANOVA Results

Post Test Oral Literature Genres Achievement Test Marks					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	32035.600	1	32035.600	1764.924	.000
Within Groups	2867.900	158	18.151		
Total	34903.500	159			

The one-way ANOVA results (Table 12) reveal that there is a statistically significant difference between the performance of the experimental group and of the control group. It is therefore a clear suggestion that subjects exposed to the treatment performed better than their counterparts who were exposed to the conventional teaching methods.

Since the ANOVA table gave a significance level of 0.000, the null hypothesis was rejected. The researcher concluded that there was a significant difference in the OLGAT scores of the learners exposed to the two methods.

On testing the pre- test attitude scores for both groups, the study established that students in the experimental group had 76.9% a general negative attitude as opposed to 23.1% from

the control groups who had a negative attitude.

#### 4.8 Discussion of the Results

This study was designed to determine the effects of co-operating learning approach on students' achievement in Secondary schools. To achieve this, two groups of students were taught using co-operative learning while two other groups (Control groups) were taught using conventional methods. From each category, one group was pre-tested while the other received a post-test only.

From the results of this study it was observed that;

- 1) The students who were in the experimental group and received a treatment of CLA outperformed those who

were in the control group who were exposed to the conventional teaching methods.

- 2) The students under the treatment of CLA in the learning of oral literature genres had a positive attitude as compared to those exposed in the conventional teaching methods who had a 70% negative attitude.
- 3) The findings of the study further indicated that learners in the experimental group improved tremendously in the oral communication and socialization skills. During the learning process the weak and the bright interacted. This was also concurred with Johnson & Johnson, (1998) study where the interpersonal interaction increased productivity.

These observations were in agreement with similar studies carried out earlier. While studying the effects of co-operative learning in Chemistry Class Experiments (CCE), Wachanga (2000) found that students in the co-operative class experiment groups in Nakuru District Secondary Schools in Kenya achieved higher scores than their counterparts in the control groups.

In a similar study, Gitau (2007) research study on the effects of co-operative learning module on students' achievement and attitude towards classification of organisms in Biology, the experimental group (CLM), outperformed those exposed to the conventional teaching.

Chemwei (2003) in his co-operative learning module on its effects towards the learning of poetry, concluded that students learning poetry using CLA in Baringo Secondary Schools in Kenya achieved higher score and developed a positive attitude as opposed to those taught using the conventional methods.

Conventional teaching methods are teacher centred. Bridley (1989) noted that the methods were less effective and especially when students were average in academic preparation. In a co-operative learning, students interaction, and interpersonal attraction improved and has a higher regard for the subject, teacher and school which improve both cognitive and affective outcome.

## 5. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendation

### 5.1 Introduction

The present study entailed the investigation of the effects of co-operative learning approach on students attitude and achievement towards the study of oral literature genres in selected Secondary schools in Kisii District, Kenya. The study used two measurement instruments to collect quantitative data, that is (i) The Oral Literature Achievement test (OLGAT) This chapter therefore outline the objectives of the study, summary of the findings, conclusions, implications and recommendations and areas that need further research.

#### The objectives of the study

The research study was guided by the following objectives

- 1) To investigate if there was any effects in students' achievement in Oral Literature genres between those exposed to CLA and those not exposed to it.

### 5.2 Summary of Findings

The study established a number of important findings:

- 1) That the students exposed to co-operative learning Approach in the learning of oral literature genres performed better as compared to their counterparts who were exposed to the conventional teaching methods.
- 2) That the co-operative learning approach provided a dramatic learning shift experience from teacher-centred to student-centred. The students felt involved in the learning process rather than being spectators.
- 3) That active participation of students in the co-operative learning groups improved their oral communication and socialization skills.
- 4) That the co-operative learning approach provides an environment which is conducive for bright learners to assist the less competent ones.

### 5.3 Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that;

- a) Co-operative learning approach was the starting point in improving the learners' performance and attitude towards the study of oral literature genres.
- b) Co-operative learning approach when properly implemented provided better learning opportunities for students to develop skills in group interactions and working with others in analyzing, synthesizing and discussing of tasks.
- c) Co-operative learning approach changed the classroom teaching environment from that of instructor monologue to student-centred learning.

### 5.4 Implications

The findings of this study revealed several implications that:

- 1) Co-operative learning approach improved the students' performance in oral literature genres among those who were exposed to it as compared to those exposed to the conventional teaching methods.
- 2) The approach enabled the teachers to have ample time with the learners in solving their literature problems. The study also indicated that usage of CLA promoted cognitive and the affective skills of the learners, hence the poor performance of learners in the national teams especially in English and literature genres and be stopped.

### 5.5 Recommendations

The findings of the study indicated that CLA was an effective method in the teaching of oral literature genres. The approach was also in tandem with recent studies by Johnson and Johnson (1998), Slavin (2000) and Chemwei (2003), that co-operative learning strategy is effective in enhancing students' achievement, attitude, motivation and self-esteem. The following recommendations were made;

- 1) That the method should be mainstreamed through different agencies of the Ministry of Education in order all the literature teachers to be familiarized with it. This would open up the scope of the use of the method to most schools in Kenya.
- 2) That the teacher training institution should incorporate

co-operative learning approach in both pre-service and in-service teacher education curriculum in Kenya. This will enable English and Literature teachers to adopt group activities and make use of co-operative learning approach during learner instruction.

- 3) The Kenya Institute of Education should include this new method in the curriculum
- 4) That the curriculum developers in Kenya should design the teaching aids that would enhance the new approach of teaching oral literature.

### 5.6 Recommendations for further research

- 1) A long term study involving the use of co-operative learning in different school category should be undertaken in order to determine the results on the effectiveness of co-operative learning approach.
- 2) Additional research should be conducted to increase the generalizability of its findings in literature education as a whole especially in set books and literary appreciation.
- 3) The present study used a Quasi-experimental design, which may not have controlled other intervening variables between the independent and dependent variables. A research should be undertaken using other research designs which would control the intervening variables.

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