

# Teaching Styles and Learners' Achievement in Kiswahili Language in Secondary Schools

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### **Abstract**

Effective use of learning strategies can greatly improve learners' achievement. In Hamisi District in Kenya, secondary school students have continued to attain poor results in Kiswahili subject in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (K.C.S.E) examination. From the year 2007 to 2011, the mean scores in Kiswahili language ranged between 5.11 and 5.53 out of the possible 12.00. This poor performance has been blamed on poor teaching styles. However, no empirical study has been done to determine the link between teaching styles and learners' achievement in Kiswahili language. The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of teaching styles on learners' achievement in Kiswahili language in secondary schools in Hamisi District, Kenya. The population of the study consisted of 1,800 Form 4 students and 76 teachers of Kiswahili language. Simple random sampling technique was used to select a sample of 25 teachers of Kiswahili language while Krejcie and Morgan formula was used to select 317 Form 4 students. Descriptive survey and correlational study designs were adopted for the study. Data was collected by use of lesson observation schedule, questionnaire and document analysis guide. The study found a positive relationship between teaching styles and learners' academic achievement in Kiswahili language ( $r = .53, p < 0.01$ ). Achievement was seen to increase with more learner-centered teaching styles. The study therefore recommends that teachers should

be trained to adopt and practice more learner-centered teaching approaches in Kiswahili language classrooms so as to improve learners' academic achievement.

**Keywords:** Teaching Styles, Achievement, Kiswahili Language

## **1. Introduction**

### *1.1 Background to the Study*

Every student learns and responds to information uniquely (Chang, 2010). Teaching and learning styles improves student's achievement (Stitt-Gohdes, 2001; Henson, 2004 & Hou, 2007). Zeeb's (2004) study indicated that aligning learning styles of students with teaching styles of instructors could lead to an improvement in academic achievement. Zeeb used the information obtained from assessing learning and teaching styles to help teachers modify their teaching styles to accommodate varying learning preferences, which resulted in improving students' test scores.

Farkas (2003) investigated the effect of teaching styles on two groups of seventh-grade students. Students in the experimental group preferred similar learning styles and were taught according to their preferences, while the control group was taught with a conventional teaching style. In this study, the students in the experimental group, who received a teaching style that matched their preferred learning styles, outperformed the control group academically. The experimental group also showed more positive attitudes towards learning, more understanding of people's feelings, and an increased ability to transfer what they had learned from one area to another. Researchers have classified teaching style in many ways and have considered certain teaching styles more effective in improving student learning. Curtin (2005) studied a group of English Second Language (ESL) learners and their teachers and categorized teaching styles as didactic and interactive. Didactic teachers make most of the decisions in the classroom, emphasize teaching the content, and put students in a passive role. On the other hand, interactive teachers allow for the diverse learning styles of their students, place much emphasis on the teaching and learning process, and expect students to be active learners. The findings of Curtin's (2005) study suggest that teachers who adopt an interactive teaching style can better meet the unique needs of their ESL students. The interactive instructors utilized more cooperative learning strategies along with numerous activities that worked best with ESL students. Smith, Lee and Newmann (2001) analyzed whether didactic or interactive teaching methods are more effective in teaching elementary school children and found that interactive teaching is associated with higher gains in test scores.

Research conducted by Chang (2002) indicated that constructivist teaching style affected students' perceptions towards physics teaching and learning. Chang explored views of students who were instructed with a constructivist approach and a traditional approach. Students placed more value on having the opportunity to actively participate in group discussions and to examine concepts they learned when they were taught through the constructivist approach

rather than the traditional approach. The study suggested that the constructivist teaching style fosters greater flexibility in teaching, and brings about students' use of deep learning strategies (thinking and discussing) and knowledge construction. In contrast to Chang's study, Kim's (2005) research in Korea indicated that even though students who received a constructivist teaching style had greater use of learning strategies than those who received a traditional teaching style, there was no significant difference between learning strategies used by these two groups.

Flanders (1970) defined teaching as an interactive process. Interaction means participation of teacher and students in the process of teaching. In this process, teacher influences the students, students too interact with the teacher and interaction also takes place among the students themselves. This means, in the process of teaching, everybody interacts with every other person involved in the learning process. The teacher is almost always the source that initiates communication. Between 1955 and 1960 Ned Flanders developed a system of interaction analysis to study what happens in a classroom when a teacher teaches known as Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories (FIAC). As a result of research with his coding instrument, Flanders (1963) uncovered the two-thirds rule which states that; about two-thirds of classroom time is devoted to talking, about two-thirds of this time the person talking is the teacher, and two-thirds of the teacher's talk is direct that is: lecturing, giving directions, and controlling students. The two-thirds rule serves to substantiate that typically teachers verbally dominate the classroom. Teacher verbal domination of the classroom conditions students to become passive and dependent on the teacher. This dependency has adverse effects on students' attitudes toward learning and their performance in school. Flanders found that when teachers are trained in his observation technique and become aware of the importance of language in the classroom, their verbal monopoly decreases. This study adapted Flanders Interaction Categories system which is outlined in Figure 1 as shown:

<b>Teacher-Centered Methods</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Asks questions.</i> Asking a question about content or procedure, based on teacher ideas, with the intent that a pupil will answer.</li> <li>2. <i>Pupil-talk-response.</i> Talk by pupils in response to teacher. Teacher initiates the contact or solicits pupil statement or structures the situation. Freedom to express own ideas is limited.</li> <li>3. <i>Lecturing.</i> Giving facts or opinions about content or procedures; expressing his own ideas, giving his own explanation, or citing an authority other than a pupil.</li> <li>4. <i>Giving directions.</i> Directions, commands, or orders to which a pupil is expected to comply.</li> </ol>
<b>Learner-Centered Methods</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. <i>Pupil-talk-initiation.</i> Talk by pupils which they initiate. Expressing own ideas; initiating a new topic; freedom to develop opinions and a line of thoughtful questions; going beyond the existing structure.</li> </ol>

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6. *Accepts or uses ideas of pupils.* Clarifying, building, or developing ideas suggested by a pupil. Teacher extensions of pupil ideas are included but as the teacher brings more of his own ideas into play, shift to category five.
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**Figure 1:** Interaction Analysis Categories System (adapted from Flanders, 1970)

Initially, Flanders' system had 10 categories. The researchers only focused on six categories in the system that represented teaching styles.

## **2. Statement of the Problem**

There has been poor performance in Kiswahili language in Hamisi District in Kenya over the past five years. Out of the possible mean target of 12.00 points, most secondary schools in the district have posted mean scores ranging between 5.11 and 5.53 between the year 2007 and 2011 respectively. Poor methods of teaching have been blamed for this low academic achievement. However, no known study has been carried out to determine the link between teaching styles and academic achievement. This study thus sought to find out the influence of teaching styles on learners' academic achievement in Kiswahili language in secondary schools in Hamisi District.

## **3. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of teaching styles on learners' academic achievement in Kiswahili language in secondary schools in Hamisi District, Kenya.

## **4. Objectives of the Study**

The specific objectives for this study were to:

1. Establish teaching styles in Kiswahili language classrooms.
2. Establish learners' achievement in Kiswahili language.
3. Determine the relationship between teaching styles and learners' achievement in Kiswahili language.

## **5. Literature Review**

Students' interactive instruction is the most powerful method of teaching (Chika, 2012). Chika (2012) further notes that learning occurs most in collaborative classrooms where students are encouraged to ask questions, define problems and lead conversations. His study used Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories (FIAC) system as an instrument for classroom observation and found that teacher talk dominated most classrooms. Similarly, this study adapted FIAC system of classroom observation and found that teachers did not actively engage learners in the

communicative process of teaching and learning Kiswahili language. Teachers should therefore shift their role primarily from information givers to facilitators.

Anorue (2004) noted that an effective classroom is one in which the teacher uses varied teaching styles for instruction. In a study on approaches to teaching and learning life sciences, Tanner (2009) observed that teachers dominated classroom talk and students talked only when called upon like in the case of answering questions. Callahan (2005) found that the lecture-based format of most secondary school instruction lacked the flexibility necessary to meet the linguistic and academic needs of learners. Roblyer (2006) noted that constructivists believe that knowledge is generated by the learners through experience-based activities rather than directed by instructors. Chika (2012) opined that learners are to be responsible for their own learning. He also feels that they need tasks that are challenging, authentic and multidisciplinary. The current study sought the methods of instruction employed by Kiswahili teachers in Kiswahili language classrooms.

Instructors develop a teaching style based on their beliefs about what constitutes good teaching, personal preferences, their abilities, and the norms of their particular discipline (Watson, 2003). Some believe lessons should be teacher-centered, where the teacher is the expert and the authority in presenting information. Others take a learner-centered approach, viewing their role as more of a facilitator of student learning (Ahmad & Aziz, 2009).

### *5.1 Teacher-Centered Methods*

Ahmad and Aziz (2009) observe that teacher-centered teaching is the traditional teaching method where teachers are at the centre of the class activities: teach, talk and explain all the way. They note that in traditional classrooms, students have a definite and fixed perception and idea of their own roles and those of their teachers. Their experiences show that teachers behave in certain ways and have particular roles in the process. The view seems to regard teachers as “custodians of knowledge.” In their study on students’ perceptions on the teachers teaching of literature, Ahmad and Aziz (2009) noted that in teacher-centered classrooms, participation was at a minimum and was allowed only when teachers recognized it as appropriate. Participation was totally teacher controlled. Their research was only based on students’ perceptions on teaching styles in the teaching and learning of English literature. The current study, in addition to the observation of teaching styles in Kiswahili language classrooms, established both students’ and teachers’ perspectives on teaching styles employed in the teaching and learning of Kiswahili language as an integrated subject inclusive of grammar, composition and literature in relation to learners’ academic achievement.

A study by Tella, Indoshi and Othuon (2010) found that the traditional or teacher-centered methods of teaching resulted in learners not enjoying lessons and missing the benefits of discovering on their own. In the long run pupils were left with no choice but remained passive during the teaching and learning process. Other than using interview schedule and questionnaire to gather information on teaching styles as done by the above mentioned

researchers, the current study incorporated a lesson observation schedule which gave a detailed analysis of the teaching strategies used in Kiswahili language classrooms.

### *5.2 Learner-Centered Methods*

Eken (2000) noted that in a student-centered class, teachers are mere facilitators and students take on the discussion role. Students are seen as being able to assume a more active and participatory role vis-à-vis traditional approaches. This teaching method promotes active participation of students in classroom activities. Teachers facilitate student's discussion and interject only when necessary, allowing students to put the language to use and to explore the aesthetics of the texts (Ahmad & Aziz, 2009). The above mentioned studies only sought students' perceptions of their teachers' communication in classrooms. The current study sought both students' and teachers' perspectives on teaching styles as they are both key participants in the teaching and learning process.

Froyd (2007) notes that the standard features of student-centered pedagogy include collaborative learning, connecting new information to previous knowledge, higher-order thinking and conversations in teacher-directed small groups. Ng'ong'a (2002) observed that Kenyan school leavers continue to perform poorly due to poor teaching strategies. His study was carried out on University students. The importance of employing various teaching techniques is further stressed by Lopez in Ahmad and Aziz (2009). Lopez who is an English language educator concurs that students generally have a poor grasp of a language and part of the problem lies with the conventional teaching methods employed. Dufresne, Gerace, Leonard, Mestre and Wenk (2010) in their research found class talk to be a useful tool not only for engaging students in active learning during the lecture hour but also for enhancing the overall communication within the classroom as compared to traditional lecture. Class talk in this case involved facilitating the presentation of questions for small group work as well as the collection of student answers and the display of histograms showing how the class answered. Students were positive about class talk facilitated instruction and believed that they learned more than they would have during a traditional lecture. This did not involve other student-centered modes of teaching and learning such as incorporation of media, use of examples and the involvement of students in field trips and excursions.

The above authors have tried to discuss extensively the role played by teachers and students in both teacher-centered and learner-centered classrooms and little has been done to establish the influence of teaching styles on learners' achievement in Kiswahili language in particular. This study thus sought to establish the teaching styles employed in Kiswahili language classrooms and their influence on learners' academic achievement.

### *5.3 Teaching Styles and Achievement*

The common lecture teaching method where a teacher is the sole information-giver to passive students appears outdated (Callahan, 2005). In a study carried out by Colburn (2000) on

undergraduates in a large lecture hall setting, it was found that only 20% of the students retained what the instructor discussed after the lecture. In any case, the traditional teacher as information giver and text book guided classroom have failed to bring about the desired outcome of producing thinking students (Young & Collin, 2003). Constructivism supports learner-centered pedagogy which benefits students' achievement (Hsieh & Sun, 2006). Researchers like Bush (2006) and Kumar (2006) note that constructivist-based instruction connects students' world with learning pursuits in the classroom. Sunderman (2006) recommended that teachers should use constructivist instruction model to motivate student learning. Brad (2000) in his research found that when constructivist approaches are employed to learning, students post an improvement in their academic performance. Learner-centered pedagogy raises student achievement, promotes democratic classrooms, complex thinking and meets student's communication goals (Cummins, 2007). Doherty and Hilberg (2007) pointed out that learner-centered pedagogy promoted student achievement. Zekia (2009) found that gesture as a non-verbal teaching technique was an important source of motivation and concentration for students' learning as well as a tool for maintaining attention. The above mentioned researchers give a general picture of the relationship between teaching styles and academic achievement. The influence of teaching styles on academic achievement in Kiswahili language remains unknown. The current study thus sought to establish whether teaching styles influence learners' achievement in Kiswahili language.

## **6. Methodology**

### *6.1 Research Design*

Descriptive survey and correlational study designs were adopted in conducting this research. Descriptive survey design was chosen because it is appropriate for educational fact-finding as it yields a great deal of information, which is accurate. It also enables a researcher to gather data at a particular point in time and use it to describe the nature of the existing conditions (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000). Correlational design was used to show the relationship between teaching styles and learners' achievement.

### *6.2 Area of Study*

The study was conducted in Hamisi District, Vihiga County in Kenya. Hamisi District is a hilly terrain straddling the Equator, from East to West. It lies between Latitude 0° 5' S and 0° 15' N and Longitude 34° 27' E and 35° 0' E. This research was based in Hamisi District because the researchers were interested in establishing causes of poor performance in Kiswahili language in the district. Most secondary schools in Hamisi District have posted poor results in Kiswahili language in the past five years, attaining mean scores of 5.11, 5.24, 5.38, 5.29 and 5.53 in 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011 respectively. This study focused on teaching styles because no known study had been done to find out how teaching styles influence academic achievement in Kiswahili language in Hamisi District while world research has found that the mode of teaching

greatly determines learners' academic achievement. A map showing the location of Hamisi District is attached as Appendix E.

### *6.3 Population, Sample and Sampling Techniques*

The study population consisted of 1,800 Form 4 students and 76 teachers of Kiswahili language in 36 secondary schools. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 25 teachers of Kiswahili language. Krejcie and Morgan formula for sample size (as cited in Kathuri & Pals, 1993) was used to select a sample of 317 students. Krejcie and Morgan have provided the following formula for estimating the sample size (*S*) needed from large populations.

$$S = \frac{\chi^2 NP(1-P)}{d^2(N-1) + \chi^2 P(1-P)}, \text{ in which}$$

*S*= required sample size

*N*= the given population

*P*= population proportion assumed to be .50

*d*= the degree of accuracy set at .05

$\chi^2$ = table value of chi square which is 3.841 for the .95 confidence level

### *6.4 Instruments of Data Collection*

Instruments used to collect data were: lesson observation schedule, questionnaire and document analysis guide.

### *6.5 Lesson Observation Schedule*

Observation schedule was used by the researchers to collect data on teaching styles used in Kiswahili classrooms. Classroom observation schedule adapted Flanders' Interaction Analysis Categories system (Flanders, 1970). Flanders' system was adapted for this study because it analyses classroom interaction with regard to the teaching styles employed. Teaching styles were represented by categories, whereby category 1, 2, 3 and 4 (Asks questions, pupil-talk-response, lecturing and giving directions) represented teacher-centered methods. While category 5 and 6 (Pupil talk initiation and accepts or uses ideas of pupils) represented learner-centered methods (see Figure 1).

The researchers visited 25 Form 4 classrooms and observed the teaching and learning process in normal 40 minute lessons. A total of 25 classrooms and teachers were observed. A blank observation form was coded using Flanders' categories while collecting data. Lesson observation schedule helped the researchers get a complete and detailed understanding of the teaching styles used in Kiswahili language classrooms. The observation form is attached as Appendix A.



### *6.6 Questionnaire*

Teachers' and students' questionnaire was used to collect data concerning perspectives on teaching styles. The Likert scale questionnaire had 5 points ranging from SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, U-Uncertain, D-Disagree to SD-Strongly Disagree. The scaling choice for the questionnaire was the Likert scale because it allowed the researchers to capture and solicit participants' opinions about the teaching styles employed in Kiswahili language classrooms. The teachers' and students' questionnaire is attached as Appendix B.

### *6.7 Document Analysis Guide*

Document analysis guide method focused on analysis of documents that were relevant that is; County Evaluation 2011 results in order to obtain information about students' mean grades in Kiswahili language academic achievements. County Evaluation was used to establish learners' achievement because it was the most objective assessment of learners' achievement at the time of the study. The document analysis guide is attached as Appendix C.

### *6.8 Validity of the Instruments*

Validity is the extent to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). A research instrument is valid if its content is relevant and appropriate to research objectives. Validation of the instruments was done before the commencement of the actual research. The instruments were presented to experts from the Department of Educational Communication, Technology and Curriculum Studies, Maseno University for scrutiny and examination. Their suggestions and recommendations were incorporated thus improved the efficacy of the instruments. This helped determine the accuracy and adequacy of the items.

### *6.9 Reliability of the Instruments*

According to Kombo and Tromp (2006) reliability is a measure of how consistent the results from a test are. To determine reliability of the research, a pilot study was carried out on 4 Kiswahili language teachers and 180 Form 4 students who formed 10% of the population that were not part of the sample (Hopkins, 2000). Reliability of the students' and teachers' questionnaire was determined by the use of Cronbach's alpha formula for the internal consistency of the instruments. Gall, Borg and Gall (2007) assert that Cronbach's coefficient alpha is best used when items are not scored dichotomously; for instance when a test includes items that have several possible answers and each item given a different weight. In this case, alpha formula was the appropriate method because it involved a rating scale with five options. The results yielded an alpha level of 0.77 as the coefficient of reliability for students' questionnaire and 0.80 for teachers' questionnaire. These values were considered high enough to judge the instruments as reliable (Durrheim & Painter, 2006).

For the County Kiswahili language Evaluation and the modified Flanders' Interaction Analysis Categories system, test-retest reliability method was used. The researchers adopted 2010 District mock examination and administered it to the students at an interval of two weeks. The researchers also visited 4 Kiswahili language classrooms and coded communication events as they occurred in normal 40 minute lessons, this was repeated after a duration of two weeks. According to Hinton-Bayre (2010), in test-retest reliability method, the same test is administered to the same sample on two different occasions. The results after correlation yielded a Pearson  $r$  of 0.75 for the District mock examination and 0.83 for the FIAC system of observation which was above the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Lomax, 2007). A reliability coefficient of 0.70 implies that 70 per cent of the measured variance is reliable and 30 per cent is owing to random error thus the lower the reliability coefficient, the less reliable the measure (Bowling, 2002). This enabled the researcher to proceed with the study. The pilot study helped refine the research instruments and thus the researchers made necessary changes on the instruments.

#### *6.10 Data Collection Procedures*

The researchers administered the questionnaires in person and made clarifications when need arose. Guided by Flanders' Interaction Analysis Categories (FIAC) system, the researchers also attended normal Kiswahili language lessons and observed communication process in the classrooms. The classrooms observed were selected through convenience whereby the first Kiswahili language class that appeared on the school teaching timetable on the day of the visit was observed. Subsequently, teachers assigned to teach those particular classes were observed. Where the teacher for the first Kiswahili language class was absent on the day of the visit, the next Kiswahili language class was selected for observation and questionnaire administration. The researchers sat at the back center of the classroom so as to have a wider view of the happenings without obstructing the teacher or the students. Various categories of teaching style on FIAC system that occurred during the teaching and learning process were coded on a blank sheet of paper at an interval of 3 seconds in a normal 40 minute lesson. The researchers did not interfere in any way, nor exercised any control over the teacher, the learner or the lesson content.

Relevant documents such as County examination results were obtained from the heads of institutions one month after observation of Kiswahili language classrooms and administration of the questionnaire was done. Required information from the documents was recorded down. This gave a clear picture of the learners' academic achievement in Kiswahili language in relation to the teaching styles employed during teaching and learning.

#### *6.11 Data Analysis Procedures*

Data was coded and organized for analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) data editor. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics: frequency counts, percentages and means. Inferential statistics ( $t$ -test) and Pearson's product moment correlation ( $r$ ) were also used. The researchers scored the items on classroom communication

process on a 5-points Likert type scale. A total of sixty (60) items were developed to constitute the item pool. A criterion based on the responses obtained from the 5-points Likert scale was developed. In scoring the positively stated items, Strongly Agree (SA) earned 5 points, Agree (A) 4 points, Uncertain (U) 3 points, Disagree (D) 2 points and Strongly Disagree (SD) 1 point. However for the negatively stated items, the scoring was reversed to control for social desirability and the scores assigned as follows: Strongly Agree (SA) = 1; Agree (A) = 2; Uncertain (U) = 3; Disagree (D) = 4; and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 5. The scaling choice for the questionnaire was the Likert scale because it allowed the researchers to capture and solicit participants' opinions about the teaching styles employed in Kiswahili language classrooms. An independent sample *t*-test was used to compare teachers' and students' perspectives on teaching styles.

The relationship between teaching styles and learners' academic achievement was computed using Pearson's product moment correlation (*r*). Qualitative data were organized, categorized, and a report made from the emergent themes. Teachers and students were assigned numbers as teacher 1 to 25 while students were assigned as student 1 to 317. These numbers were used as pseudonyms for confidentiality of the information. In interpreting mean scores, the perspectives on teaching styles were categorized as negative, neutral and positive. A mean score of 2.5 and below denoted a negative perspective, a mean score of between 2.5 and 3.5 denoted a neutral perspective while a mean score of 3.5 and above indicated a positive perspective.

## 7. Results And Discussion

### 7.1 Teaching Styles in Kiswahili Language Classrooms

To establish teaching styles 25 Kiswahili language classrooms were observed, it was evident that teachers dominated most of the lesson time as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Nature of Teaching Style in Kiswahili Language Classrooms

	Category of Teaching Style	Percentage (%)
1.	Asks questions	22.49
2.	Pupil-talk-response	20.30
3.	Lecturing	43.20
4.	Giving directions	3.60
5.	Pupil-talk-initiation	3.67
6.	Accepts or uses ideas of pupils	6.74

Lecturing (category 3) was observed the most (43.20%), followed by (category 1) teachers asking students questions (22.49%) then (category 2) students answering the questions asked by their teachers at 20.30%. The high occurrence of category 3 (lecturing) means that Kiswahili language classrooms are tied to the traditional mode of teaching where teachers view

themselves as sole sources of knowledge. Learners are therefore passive participants who are expected to participate when called upon. This confirms Flanders' two-thirds rule which serves to substantiate that typically teachers verbally dominate the classroom which in turn conditions students to become passive and dependent on the teacher (Flanders, 1970). The lecture method dominance in Kiswahili language classrooms may be due to lack of resources in schools that would enable teachers to engage pupils actively in the learning process. Tanner (2009) similarly found that teacher talk dominated classroom talk and students talked only when they were called upon like in the case of answering questions. Only that his study was on approaches to teaching and learning of life sciences while the current study focused on the teaching and learning of Kiswahili language.

From the observation schedule, categories 4, 5 and 6 on teaching style were not given much consideration. Teachers hardly gave directions to students (category 4) (3.60%). Similarly, students rarely initiated what they were to learn, expressed ideas, initiated a new topic or developed opinions (category 5) (3.67%) and they hardly accepted and used pupils' ideas (category 6) (6.74%). Students were reluctant to contribute their own ideas may be due to lack of confidence and fear of teacher criticism. As teacher 14 stated on the open-ended item in the questionnaire, "Students rarely respond to the questions asked as they fear to pronounce words because of mother tongue influence that would lead to teacher criticism." Besides, teachers may have not given them enough time to do so. It is therefore of paramount importance that teachers involve learners during classroom communication process in the teaching and learning of the Kiswahili language. In addition to the observation schedule, teachers and students were asked to give their perspectives on teaching styles. Their perspectives are illustrated in Table 2.

**Table 2:** Teachers' and Students' Perspectives on Teaching Style

No.	Statement	Mean Scores	
		Teacher (n= 25)	Student (n=317)
1.	Students best understand when lecture method is used	1.84	1.72
2.	Students ask questions during Kiswahili lessons	4.24	1.97
3.	Students do not like Kiswahili radio lessons	3.72	2.82
4.	Students best understand set books when dramatized	4.36	3.62
5.	Teacher does not ask for previous knowledge	4.28	1.82
6.	Teacher does not use gestures when teaching	4.12	1.70
7.	Students always have Kiswahili field trips	1.64	1.82
8.	Students prefer individual work to group work	3.32	2.72
9.	Teacher invites Kiswahili guest speakers	3.64	2.87
10.	Kiswahili teacher uses audio visual media to teach	1.80	1.82
11.	Debates are a waste of time	3.92	2.54
12.	Teacher uses examples while teaching	4.44	3.46

13. Team teaching improves performance	4.12	3.55
14. Students recite poems during Kiswahili poetry lessons	2.32	2.11
15. Activity methods and project work makes Kiswahili enjoyable	4.00	2.79
<b>Overall Perspective</b>	<b>3.45</b>	<b>2.49</b>

As illustrated in Table 2, teachers' and students' perspectives differed on several statements. For example statement No. 2 which read "Students ask questions during Kiswahili lessons," teachers had a positive perspective of a mean score of 4.24 while students had a negative perspective of a mean score of 1.97. This may be because teachers dominated most of the Kiswahili language lessons, always directed students on what to do and left limited time for students to ask questions. Teachers may have been biased in their responses because they understand the importance of active involvement of students in the teaching and learning process which they did not practice and did not want to admit.

Teachers and students also differed on statement No. 6 "Teacher does not use gestures when teaching" with mean scores of 4.12 and 1.70 respectively. Most students agreed that their teachers do not use gestures while teaching (94%), 0.6% students were uncertain and 5.4% disagreed. Teachers felt that they make use of gestures when teaching with 12% agreeing and 88% disagreeing with the statement as shown in Appendix D. This difference in perspective may be because of the less experience learners have in the content they learn because of its abstract nature in that they cannot be able to relate the gestures used by their teachers in class with what they learn. This may also mean that teachers only concentrate on the verbal aspect of communication while assuming non-verbal cues. Zekia (2009) found that gestures were an important source of motivation and concentration for students' learning as well as a tool for maintaining attention. Teachers ought to adopt the use of gestures in support of their verbal statements in Kiswahili language classrooms.

Both teachers and students also expressed positive perspectives on some statements such as No. 4 "Students best understand Kiswahili set books when dramatized in class" with mean scores of 4.36 and 3.62 respectively. The slight difference in these mean scores may be because students rarely dramatize the plays and the narratives they learn in class and so they are not in a position to know the impact that dramatization can make in understanding the texts easily as their teachers do. Teachers and students also agreed that team teaching improves students' performance "Statement No. 13" with mean scores of 4.12 and 3.55 respectively.

Both teachers and students had negative perspectives on statement No. 1 "Students best understand when lecture method is used" with mean scores of 1.84 and 1.72 respectively. A total of 9.4% of the students agreed, 4.7% were uncertain and 85.8% disagreed with the statement. This was in agreement with the teachers' opinions with 12% agreeing, 4% being uncertain and 84% disagreeing as illustrated in Appendix D. This is contrary to what was observed in the classrooms where lecture method dominated most of the lessons. Lecture method may be dominating most classrooms because school administrators do not allow for

regular attendance of teachers in seminars and workshops to keep them abreast of innovation in the teaching and learning of Kiswahili language that can engage learners actively during the lesson time. A negative perspective was also expressed on statement No. 7 “Students always have Kiswahili field trips” with teachers having a mean score of 1.64 and students’ being 1.82. This means that students’ rarely had the opportunity to learn Kiswahili language outside their classrooms.

When asked if audio visual media such as television, films and video shows were used when teaching Kiswahili set books, 12.7% of students agreed, 0.6% was uncertain and 86.7% disagreed that their teachers use audio visual media while teaching Kiswahili language. Teachers were of a similar view; 4% agreed and 96% disagreed as shown in Appendix D. Both teachers and students had a negative perspective on the above statement with mean scores of 1.80 and 1.82 respectively. This indicates that what learners learn in classrooms is more of abstract than concrete. This may also be due to the wide scope of the Kiswahili syllabus in that teachers find the incorporation of media in the teaching process as time consuming and thus resort to the lecture method. Use of media in teaching and learning of Kiswahili language is very important as it helps students easily remember what is taught. Bett, Indoshi and Odera (2008) in their study on classroom interaction similarly found that the teaching and learning of English involved on rare occasions the use of teaching equipment such as the radio, video, film or even such simple teaching aids as substitution tables and any types of pictures. They found that most teachers considered that the use of teaching aids and equipment was time consuming; yet they had a lot to do within a limited period of time. There is need therefore to incorporate the use of media in the teaching of Kiswahili language as this will actively engage students during the teaching and learning of Kiswahili language and thus improve their academic achievement. Teachers and students also had negative perspectives on statement No. 14 “Students always recite poems during poetry lessons” with mean scores of 2.32 and 2.11 respectively. This may be the reason why students hate Kiswahili poetry.

The above results reveal that teacher-centered approach dominated the classroom. The fact that learner-centered approaches were rarely practiced could be one of the reasons for the dismal performance in Kiswahili language. This was also evident in the observation schedule where lecturing had the highest score of 43.20%. These results differ with Ahmad and Aziz (2009) who found that, students perceived their classrooms to be dominated with student-centered teaching approach as compared to the teacher-centered approach. However, teachers still practiced the ‘custodian of knowledge’ role whenever necessary, for example 79.3% of students thought that teachers carried out whole class instruction, 40.8% perceived that teachers read, paused and explained every paragraph and 35.3% witnessed teachers explaining texts throughout the lesson. The authors found that students generally had a poor grasp of a language and this could in part be explained by the conventional teaching methods employed. Their research based only on students’ perceptions on teaching styles in the teaching and learning of English literature. This study focused on both students’ and teachers’ perspectives on teaching styles in learning Kiswahili as an integrated language inclusive of grammar,

composition and literature. The current study found that teachers had a positive perspective while students had a negative perspective on the teaching style used.

Constructivists believe that knowledge is generated by the learners through experience-based activities rather than directed by instructors (Roblyer, 2006). In addition, they believe that knowledge is not transmitted but constructed through hands-on activities or personal experience. This implies that learning occurs through student-centered rather than instructor-led activities. Students must be allowed to exhibit what they have learned in different ways, not just in testing or examinations. Students expressed their liking for group discussions as; student 15 said, "Through discussions, I get a chance to share opinions and through talking I develop fluency in Kiswahili language." While student 208 said, "Discussions help in deeper understanding of a concept and I do not forget easily." This underscores the importance of learning through personal experience.

The researchers further sought the difference between teachers' and students' perspectives on teaching styles. To determine whether there existed any significant difference between teachers' and students' perspectives on teaching styles, a two tailed *t*-test for independent samples was carried out. The results for the test are displayed in Table 3.

**Table 3:** Difference between Teachers' and Students' Perspectives on Teaching Styles

Mean		Sd		df	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i> value
T	S	T	S			
3.45	2.49	.33	.41	340	-11.54	.00

Teachers and students differed in their perspectives on teaching styles. Teachers had a positive perspective with a mean score of 3.45 while students had a negative perspective with a mean score of 2.49. The test yielded a statistically significant difference in perspectives for teachers ( $M= 3.45, SD= .33$ ) and students ( $M= 2.49, SD= .41$ ) on teaching styles;  $t(340) = -11.54, p= .00$ . The difference in perspective between teachers and students implies that teachers do not engage students actively in the classroom activities. The difference could also be attributed to the fact that teachers have undergone training and are more experienced than students, knowing that it is better to have a learner-centered than a teacher-centered lesson may have influenced the teachers' way of response hence were biased. A study by Ahmad and Aziz (2009) found that students felt that they experienced more student-centered teaching compared to teacher-centered teaching. These authors did not get teachers' perspectives on teaching styles. The current study established teachers' and students' perspectives on teaching styles and went further to establish the difference in perspective which turned out to be significant.

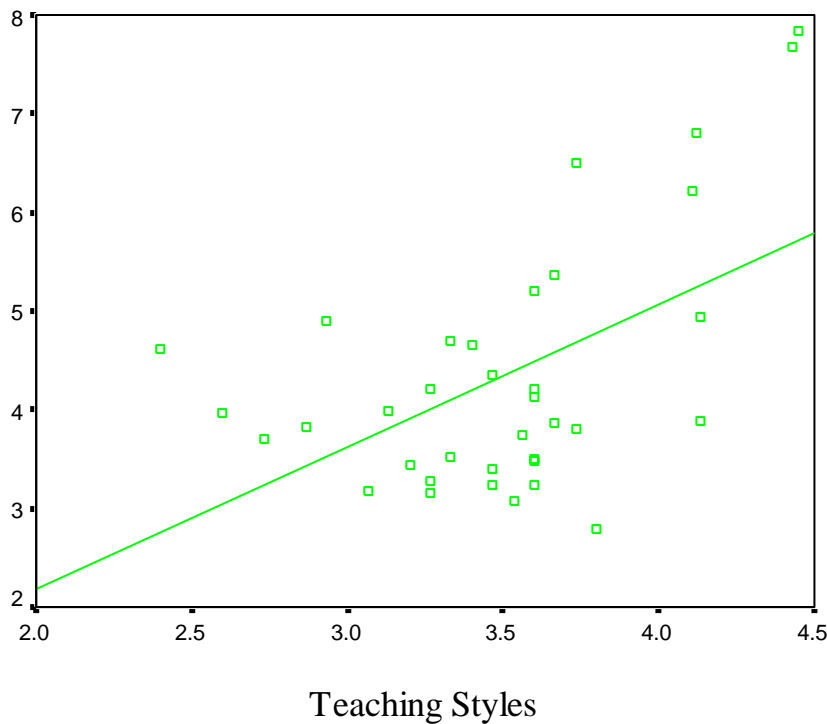
### 7.2 Learners' Achievement

Students had a mean score of 4.12 out of the possible 12.00 points with a standard deviation of 1.07. Students may have scored dismally in Kiswahili language because teachers dominated

Kiswahili classrooms. Low academic achievement has been attributed to poor teaching (Mogambi, 2011). Ahmad and Aziz (2009) found that students generally had a poor grasp of a language and this could in part be explained by the conventional teaching methods employed.

*Relationship between Teaching Styles and Learners’ Achievement in Kiswahili Language*

This study also sought to determine the influence of teaching styles on learners’ academic achievement in Kiswahili language. To verify this, the researchers correlated two variables namely teachers’ and students’ perspectives on teaching styles and academic achievement in Kiswahili language. Pearson Product Moment Correlation ( $r$ ) was used to establish the strength of relationship that existed between the two variables. From the results of Pearson’s product moment coefficient of correlation ( $r = .53, p < 0.01$ ), it was construed that the relationship between teaching styles and learners’ academic achievement was statistically significant. A scatter plot was drawn to show the linearity of the relationship and it indicated a positive relationship between teachers’ and students’ perspectives on teaching styles and academic achievement in Kiswahili examination as shown in Figure 2.



**Figure 2:** Scatter Plot on Teachers’ and Students’ Perspectives on Teaching Styles against Learners’ Achievement in Kiswahili Language

These results concur with existing research which has related students’ academic achievement to teaching styles. Most of these researches relate high academic achievement to learner-centered teaching methods and low academic achievement to teacher-centered methods. For example, Ng’ong’a (2002) observed that Kenyan school leavers continue to perform poorly due



to poor teaching strategies. Callahan (2005) observed that the lecture-based format of most secondary school instruction lacks the flexibility necessary to meet the linguistic and academic needs of learners. However, researchers like Bush (2006) and Kumar (2006) note that constructivist-based instruction connects students' world with learning pursuits in the classroom. Sunderman (2006) recommended that teachers should use constructivist instruction model to motivate student learning. Brad (2000) in his research found that when student-centered approaches are employed to learning, students post an improvement in their academic performance. Learner-centered pedagogy raises student's achievement, promotes democratic classrooms, complex thinking and meets student's communication goals (Cummins, 2007). Doherty and Hilberg (2007) pointed out that learner-centered pedagogy promoted student achievement. In terms of Kiswahili language pedagogy the results of this study imply that teaching styles play a crucial role in determining students' academic achievement.

## **8. Conclusions and Implications**

Teacher dominance in Kiswahili language classrooms may be because most teachers assumed that they were the sole sources of knowledge. They underplayed the importance of active learner participation in the process of teaching and learning Kiswahili which may be one of the reasons of poor performance in Kiswahili language. Teachers had a positive perspective on their methods of instruction as they believed that they always had the perfect control of the classroom processes. They may have also held a positive perspective as they understood the need for active learner involvement in the teaching and learning process of Kiswahili language but they did not practice this. Teachers should therefore be trained to adopt and practice more 'learner involved' communicative approaches in the teaching and learning of Kiswahili language so as to improve students' academic achievement in Kiswahili language since academic achievement in the language is highly dependent on the methods used in its instruction.

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**APPENDIX A: LESSON OBSERVATION SCHEDULE FORM**

No.	Episode	No.	Episode	No.	Episode	No.	Episode
(1)	-----	(26)	-----	(51)	-----	(76)	-----
(2)	-----	(27)	-----	(52)	-----	(77)	-----
(3)	-----	(28)	-----	(53)	-----	(78)	-----
(4)	-----	(29)	-----	(54)	-----	(79)	-----
(5)	-----	(30)	-----	(55)	-----	(80)	-----
(6)	-----	(31)	-----	(56)	-----	(81)	-----
(7)	-----	(32)	-----	(57)	-----	(82)	-----
(8)	-----	(33)	-----	(58)	-----	(83)	-----
(9)	-----	(34)	-----	(59)	-----	(84)	-----
(10)	-----	(35)	-----	(60)	-----	(85)	-----
(11)	-----	(36)	-----	(61)	-----	(86)	-----
(12)	-----	(37)	-----	(62)	-----	(87)	-----
(13)	-----	(38)	-----	(63)	-----	(88)	-----
(14)	-----	(39)	-----	(64)	-----	(89)	-----
(15)	-----	(40)	-----	(65)	-----	(90)	-----
(16)	-----	(41)	-----	(66)	-----	(91)	-----
(17)	-----	(42)	-----	(67)	-----	(92)	-----
(18)	-----	(43)	-----	(68)	-----	(93)	-----
(19)	-----	(44)	-----	(69)	-----	(94)	-----
(20)	-----	(45)	-----	(70)	-----	(95)	-----
(21)	-----	(46)	-----	(71)	-----	(96)	-----
(22)	-----	(47)	-----	(72)	-----	(97)	-----
(23)	-----	(48)	-----	(73)	-----	(98)	-----
(24)	-----	(49)	-----	(74)	-----	(99)	-----
(25)	-----	(50)	-----	(75)	-----	(100)	-----



**APPENDIX B: TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE**

Kindly tick (✓) or write the correct responses in the space(s) provided.

**KEY:** SA-Strongly Agree, A- Agree, U- Uncertain, D-Disagree, SD-Strongly Disagree.

**PERSPECTIVES ON TEACHING STYLES**

NO	STATEMENT	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	Students best understand when lecture method (teacher talk) is used					
2	Students ask questions during Kiswahili lessons					
3	Students do not like Kiswahili radio lessons					
4	Students best understand Kiswahili set books when dramatized in classrooms					
5	Teacher does not ask for previous knowledge before teaching a new topic					
6	Teacher does not use gestures while teaching					
7	Students always have Kiswahili field trips					
8	Students prefer individual work to group work while learning Kiswahili language					
9	Teacher always invites Kiswahili guest speakers					
10	Kiswahili teacher uses audio-visual media (television, films and video shows) to teach Kiswahili set books					
11	Kiswahili language debates and debating sessions are a waste of time					
12	Kiswahili language teacher uses examples while teaching					
13	Team teaching improves performance in Kiswahili language					
14	Students recite poems during Kiswahili poetry lessons					
15	Activity methods as well as project work makes Kiswahili lessons enjoyable					

Do you enjoy Kiswahili group discussions? Yes  or

Give three reasons for your answer above.....

.....  
 .....  
 .....

If your answer above is 'Yes', how many times do you hold group discussions in a week?.....

**APPENDIX C: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS GUIDE**

1. What is the mean score of Form 4 students in the 2011 Kiswahili County Evaluation in Hamisi?
2. What is the distribution of students per grade in the County Evaluation?



**APPENDIX D: TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON TEACHING STYLES**

Statement	SA %		A %		U %		D %		SD %	
	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S
Best understand when lecture method is used	0	5	12	4.4	4	4.7	40	29.3	44	56.5
Ask questions during Kiswahili lessons	40	5.4	52	9.8	0	0.9	8	44.2	0	39.7
Do not like Kiswahili radio lessons	0	24.3	8	23	40	14.8	24	21.8	28	16.1
Understand set books when dramatized	52	37.9	36	27.1	8	5.7	4	17.7	0	11.7
Teacher does not ask for previous knowledge	0	44.2	8	44.5	0	1.3	48	5	44	5
Does not use gestures when teaching	8	43.8	4	50.2	0	0.6	44	3.2	44	2.2
Have field trips	0	3.5	0	9.8	0	4.4	64	29.7	36	52.7
Prefer individual work	4	28.1	24	29.3	16	3.8	48	19.9	8	18.9
Invites guest speakers	24	22.7	48	21.5	4	3.5	16	25.2	8	27.1
Uses audio visual media	0	7.3	4	5.4	0	0.6	68	35.6	28	51.1
Debates are a waste of time	8	32.2	8	33.8	8	2.2	36	12	40	19.9
Teacher uses examples	64	44.8	28	14.2	0	1.3	4	21.8	4	18
Team teaching improves performance	60	35.3	16	27.4	4	6.3	16	18.6	4	12.3
Recite poems	0	2.8	28	18.9	0	0.9	48	41	24	36.3
Project work is enjoyable	28	16.7	56	20.8	4	8.5	12	32.5	0	21.5

**Key:** T- Teacher S- Student SA- Strongly Agree A- Agree U- Uncertain D- Disagree SD- Strongly Disagree

**APPENDIX E: LOCATION OF HAMISI DISTRICT**

