

**EFFECT OF GUIDED CLASSROOM TALK ON IMAGINATIVE
WRITING SKILLS IN ENGLISH OF PUBLIC BOYS' SECONDARY
SCHOOL STUDENTS IN KIMILILI-BUNGOMA SUB-COUNTY, KENYA**

WAYONG'O JOHN WANJALA

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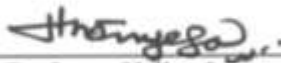
DECLARATION

This Thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University.




Wayong'o John Wanjala

This Thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as University supervisors.



Professor Hellen Inyega
Associate Professor,
Department of Educational Communication and Technology
University of Nairobi



Professor Jane C. Gatumu
Associate Professor,
Department of Educational Communication and Technology
University of Nairobi

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The author can be contacted on:

Wayong'o John Wanjala

P. O. Box 591

Kitale

Kenya

Email: johnwayongo@gmail.com

DEDICATION

In great honour of God, Almighty. To my supervisors, Professor Hellen Inyega and Professor Jane C. Gatumu who worked hard to ensure that I reach this far. To my brothers and sisters who were a great source inspiration. To my family that was the motivation for my studies.

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ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS

ESL	English Second Language
KNEC	Kenya National Examinations Council
KCSE	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
KICD	Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development
DEO	District Education Officer

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of guided classroom talk on imaginative writing skills of public boys' secondary school students. The study was anchored on Output hypothesis. The study was guided by three research objectives namely: determine the effect of amount of time given for guided classroom talk on imaginative writing skills of public boys' secondary school students; determine the effect of content of guided classroom talk on imaginative writing skills of public boys' secondary school students; determine the effect of context of guided classroom talk on imaginative writing skills of public boys' secondary school students. The study used prospective self-control cohort research design. The study was carried out in Kimilili-Bungoma Sub-County. The target population of the study comprised Form Three students of public boys' secondary schools and their English language teachers. The study randomly selected one public boys' secondary school and used purposive sampling to select 400 Form Three students in that school together with 10 English language teachers. Data were collected using teacher questionnaires and individual interviews, classroom observation and document analysis checklists and pre- and post-tests. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics with aid of SPSS. The findings of the study indicated that time has a significant effect on students' imaginative writing skills but content has no effect on students' imaginative writing skills. Further findings indicated that context has a minor effect on students' imaginative writing skills. This meant that guided classroom talk has an effect on students' imaginative writing skills. It is recommended that more time should be given to students' talks or collaborative activities in class, teachers should avoid using phrases that signal lapse of time during classroom talks, topics for writing should be chosen according to learners' age, and teaching writing should be done in a free and friendly environment. Findings of the study should form the basis for policy reviews by the Ministry of Education on teaching imaginative writing in secondary schools in Kenya. Scholars can use these findings to establish effect of guided reading on imaginative writing skills.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

English Language classrooms are characterized by academic discourse (Bakhtin, 1981) between teachers and learners and among learners themselves. Academic discourse is often referred to simply as classroom talk, scaffolded dialogue or dialogic teaching (Mohr and Mohr, 2007). Scaffolding is the process of supporting learning by a teacher, coach or more experienced peer (Vygotsky, 1978). The teacher or coach builds a framework to guide the student's own construction of ideas, skills, concepts and/or processes being learnt (Mercer and Littleton, 2007). Dialogue allows participants to have thoughts they could not have had on their own, yet to recognize these thoughts as developments of their own thinking (Game and Metcalfe, 2009). Classroom talk uses carefully-structured extended exchanges or dialogue to build understanding through accumulation; and throughout children's own words, ideas, speculations and arguments feature much more prominently. That also means that classroom talk is collective, supportive and genuinely reciprocal and the quality and quantity of talk is important.

Classroom talk differs from traditional approaches evident in many classrooms where teachers use question-and-answer technique to invite learner participation (Durkheim, 1978/1979; Cazden, 1988). The procedure begins with the teacher posing the question and students competitively bidding for the opportunity to answer the question. In contrast, classroom talk is characterized by comparatively lengthy interactions between a teacher and a student or group of students in a

context of collaboration and mutual support. These interactions can occur in the context of whole class, small group or one-on-one learning activities and are designed to help the child to build understanding, explore ideas and practice thinking through and expressing concepts. During these interactions teachers deliberately model and explicitly teach strategies for reasoning, enquiry and negotiation, among others (Mohr and Mohr, 2007). Language is not merely seen as a tool for describing what one already knows. It is a pervasive process through which students learn about their world and develop creative and problem solving skills (Smith, 2001). A similar observation (Fisher, 2007) also draws attention to the role of talking in developing relational and emotional skills, as well as those necessary for creativity and problem-solving. Human intelligence is primarily developed through speaking and listening. The quality of our lives depends on the quality of our thinking and on our ability to communicate and discuss what we think with others. Talk is intrinsic to literacy and to our ability to form relationships with others. It is the foundation of both verbal and emotional intelligence.

Vygotsky (1962) argued that language is the medium by which children acquire more than information. By participating in guided interactions (or scaffolded dialogues) with more experienced members children also acquire the 'mental tools' of their culture. Vygotsky observed that tools begin as social products but become the property of individuals by the process of internalization. In the most conspicuous and significant example, language becomes thought. Interaction in the classroom is crucial because it is the necessity for child learning and growth. Interactions with more experienced others are vital for children's acquisition of

the key mental tools of their culture. Language is an aspect of such culture. Aspects like etiquette in conversation are taught through classroom talk. Working with an adult or more accomplished peer allows the child to internalize knowledge, ways of thinking and ways of doing. Guided participation in both learning activities and conversation about these activities help the child not just to acquire information but to learn how to use this information, to transform it and make it a part of his or her own mental toolkit. Classroom talk is a key part of this process of 'handing over' knowledge and skills. It shapes the learner's brain and expands its power, develops their capacity for learning, memory and language itself (Alexander, 2006). It also helps the learner to form their world-view that is often manifested in imaginative writing. Teachers get a glimpse into the learner's world view through their essays.

Writing is a technical skill that cannot be acquired by chance or innate ability (Sure, 1982). It takes techniques, tasks and materials for the learner to acquire the skill (Byrne, 1988). The language teacher has the arduous task of looking for the best instructional approaches to teach writing skills effectively. Based on the power and promise of guided classroom talk as a successful instructional approach to bolster student learning, would it help improve student's imaginative writing skills? Would learners benefit from carefully-structured extended exchanges, dialogues and scaffolded interactions to build their understanding to explore ideas concepts, skills, processes, speculations and arguments and practice thinking through and expressing themselves in imaginative writing? Would content of discussion, length and frequency of interactions between a teacher and a student

or group of students in a context of collaboration and mutual support augment imaginative writing?

Cormack, Wignell, Nichols, Bills and Lucas (1998) argue that by setting the topic for classroom talk and keeping the talk going in the intended direction, key literacy outcomes can be achieved. In Cormack et al study, control by the teacher of classroom talk, topic and direction had a positive effect on student's learning. Cormack et al. assert that effective classroom talk for learning did not just happen. For such talk to be effective there had to be clarity of task setting (e.g. that the students knew what kinds of talk were required) and appropriate selection of topic (e.g. so that it had relevance to students and they had knowledge to bring to the task).

Findings of Cormack *et al.* (1998) study concurred with those of a research study conducted in primary classrooms in five countries (the 'Five Nations Study') that demonstrated the powerful learning effects of skillfully used classroom talk (Alexander (2000). In Cormack et al. study, both teachers and children made substantial and significant contributions through which children's thinking on particular ideas and/or themes was moved forward (Mercer and Littleton, 2007). Godhino and Shrimpton study concluded that for students to engage in classroom talk they need to be familiar with the discussion process, and teachers must enact enabling strategies that support the talk. Godhino and Shrimpton identified three factors upon which exploratory talk is dependent: teacher and student knowledge of what constitutes a discussion, teacher enactment of strategies that support dialogic talk, and classroom pedagogy that embraces collaborative inquiry.

Nuthall (2005) has argued that the amount of time given to classroom talk is important. Adequate time enables the teacher to give immediate and appropriate feedback and to correct misconceptions or misunderstandings that learners had during the classroom talk. Indeed, where children are offered ample opportunities to make substantial contributions to classroom talk and are provided with instruction about relevant skills, they are able to develop and practise a range of important speaking and thinking skills including the ability to: narrate, explain, instruct, ask different kinds of question, receive, act and build upon answers, analyze and solve problems, speculate and imagine, explore and evaluate ideas, discuss, argue, reason and justify and negotiate (Mercer and Littleton, 2007). According to Mercer and Littleton, children also develop four vital abilities for interacting productively with others: listening, being receptive to alternative viewpoints, thinking about what they hear, and giving others time to think. Hill and Flynn (2006) observe that small-group interactions with peers offer several benefits: repetition of key words and phrases, functional, context-relevant speech, rich feedback, and reduced student anxiety.

There are few studies in Kenya that focus on writing. Waititu (1995) states that only a small number of students in secondary schools have the ability in writing a letter of application without errors. Brumfit (1994) revealed that students in developing countries remain deficient in their ability to use language in communication - whether in written or spoken. This is so because majority of teachers of English do not use skills and strategies necessary for effective written communication.

The Kenya National Examinations Council (2008) report on the 2007 K.C.S.E results commented that Paper 1, which tests students on writing, dropped greatly recording a mean of 7.67% points. The report said further that the mean for Paper 3, which tests students on imaginative essays, dropped. The performance remained low even after the confusion reported in the previous year regarding interpretation of requirements for question two and three had been addressed.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Ideally, learning should be social. Classrooms should be collaborative and mutually supportive with peer interactions that help extend understanding of content taught. Students should ask one another about their thinking and build on the responses of others. They should cite evidence, ask for elaborations and clarifications, and extend understandings by using the statements they have heard from their classmates to form new ideas. This situation should apply to writing classrooms as well. The reality, however, is that many teachers are reluctant to turn the class over to collaborative learning, for fear that they will lose control and thus lose valuable instructional time. This is despite the fact that several stakeholders in education have complained about the poor standards of English language both in colleges and schools and that learners are not performing well in language skills, especially in writing; requiring a re-thinking of instructional approaches currently in use.

In 2006, the government of Kenya sought to address this issue by introducing the integrated approach to language teaching. Examination questions, two and three of English Paper 3 on imaginative writing were more closely aligned to literature set

books with the assumption that students would have benefited from classroom discussions, debates, group presentations, among others, in the course of their four-year studies. This assumption may be erroneous if KNEC reports are anything to go by. The KNEC report (2013) on imaginative writing says that the consistent poor performance in English paper three is worrisome and that every effort needs to be made to improve performance in this paper by teaching composition writing in its entirety and developing better approaches to teaching the set books. The report says further that teachers of English have a special role in the teaching of thinking skills not only because of the centrality of language in the curriculum, but also because there is a close relationship between thinking and language.

In Kimilili-Bungoma sub- County for example, secondary schools hardly achieve a mean of 7 (C+) and above in the English Language. Boys in particular, post a mean of 7 and below but excel in other subjects while girls get a mean of 7.5 and above but do poorly in other subjects. The question is, what is the cause of this variation? Poor performance can be reversed by a reform in methodology used by teachers. This research thus sought to determine the effect of guided classroom talk on imaginative writing skills among public boys' secondary school students.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of guided classroom talk on imaginative writing skills among public boys' secondary school students.

1.4 Research Objectives

The objectives of the study were to determine whether:

- i. Time given for guided classroom talk has an effect on imaginative writing skills in English among public boys' secondary school students.
- ii. Content of classroom talk has an effect on imaginative writing in English among public boys' secondary school students.
- iii. Context of guided classroom talk has an effect on imaginative writing skills in English among public boys' secondary school students.

1.5 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

- i. What is the effect of amount of time for guided classroom talk on public boys' secondary school students' imaginative writing skills?
- ii. What is the effect of content of guided classroom talk on public boys' secondary school students' imaginative writing skills?
- iii. What is the effect of context of guided classroom talk on public boys' secondary school students' imaginative writing skills?

1.6 Research Hypotheses

- i. Time allocated for guided classroom talk has no significant effect on students' imaginative writing skills.
- ii. Content for guided classroom talk has no significant effect on students' imaginative writing skills.
- iii. Context of guided classroom talk has no significant effect on students' imaginative writing skills.

1.7 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study would help teachers of English choose the most appropriate approaches to teaching writing skills by integrating all the four language skills. Study findings would also assist in achieving the objective of improving performance in English and other subjects. The findings would also sensitize teacher trainers on the need for regular in-service programs on guided classroom talk in teaching imaginative essays. Besides, they would be useful to teacher trainers and syllabus designers in reviewing the teaching of imaginative writing using integrated approach so that the emphasis that is mainly put on the teacher is also put on the learner (heuristic approach). The students would also benefit by learning the best ways to write effectively in a variety of situations during and after school. Finally, the findings of the study would contribute to the existing knowledge about English language teaching in Kenyan secondary schools.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

The first limitation was that classroom observation as a means of collecting data may make both teachers and students behave differently in the presence of the observer. During interviews with teachers, the researcher sought personal opinion on the effect of guided classroom talk on imaginative writing skills. Their opinions may not have been free from personal bias. The researcher addressed both challenges by corroborating the findings with those from other data sources such as questionnaires and document analyses.

1.9 Delimitation of the Study

This study was delimited to determining effect of guided classroom talk on imaginative writing skills in English even with the realization that there are other language skills and even other languages that could be studied. The study was delimited to Kimilili-Bungoma Sub County which has four boys' schools yet there are many research sites: sub-counties and other types of schools. The study used prospective self-control cohort research design yet there are other designs that could be used. Lastly, the study focused on imaginative writing yet there are other types of writing.

1.10 Basic Assumptions of the Study

The following were the assumptions of the study:

- i. Teachers would review the way they teach imaginative writing skills after exposure to the present study.

- ii. Students would benefit from the study since they would be fully involved.

1.11 Definition of Significant Terms

Content	These were topics of discussion on imaginative writing. These topics were rated from most familiar to the least familiar.
Context	This referred to presence or absence of a teacher or a more informed peer during guided classroom talk.
Guided Classroom Talk	Carefully-structured, collaborative, mutually supportive and reciprocal extended classroom exchanges or dialogues facilitated by the teacher to build understanding of topics on imaginative writing and characterized by quality and quantity of small-group discussions.
Imaginative Writing	Type of writing, creative and narrative in nature, based on assigned and/or agreed upon topic that is preceded by timed guided classroom talk. The quality of the product of such writing will be based a scoring rubric on appropriate sentences, appropriate vocabulary, linking devices and expression of ideas.

Time Referred to length of guided classroom talk set at 10, 15, 20, 25 or 30 minute sessions for different groups and frequency of such talks in a week over the course of the research period.

1.12 Organization of the Study

This study has five chapters. Chapter one has background of study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives, research questions, hypotheses, significance of the study, limitations and delimitations of the study, basic assumptions of the study and organization of the study. Chapter two focuses on review of relevant literature while chapter three deals with research methodology which include; research design, study population, sampling procedure and sample size, research instruments, validity and reliability of research instruments, procedure for data collection and analysis and ethical consideration made in the study. Chapter four deals with findings and discussion. Chapter five provides a summary, conclusions and recommendations from the study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of literature related to the independent variable (guided classroom talk) and the dependent variable (imaginative writing skills). The review begins with a global perspective and ends with studies done in Kenya.

2.1 Guided Classroom Talk

One distinguishing feature of language classrooms is that language is usually both the goal of the lesson and the means by which this goal is achieved (Richards, 1990). The language a learner is exposed to through listening and reading is referred to as input. The language the learner produces by talking and writing is output. When one learner talks, another listens and conceptualizes it in order to respond appropriately. Classroom talk is referred to also as scaffolded dialogue, or dialogic teaching. Classroom talk is guided or scaffolded when the process involves a teacher, coach or more experienced peer building a framework to support students' construction of ideas, skills, concepts and/or processes being learned. Classroom talk uses carefully-structured extended exchanges or dialogues to build understanding through accumulation; and throughout students' own words, ideas, speculations and arguments feature much more prominently (Alexander, 2005). Dialogue allows students to have thoughts they could not have had on their own, yet to recognize these thoughts as developments of their own thinking (Game and Metcalfe, 2009). Classroom talk is thus collaborative,

supportive and genuinely reciprocal and the quality and quantity of talk is foregrounded. Though this should be the case in classrooms, the modern classroom does not have these joint activities. In many language classes, the teacher is the custodian of knowledge and the learner only receives what the teacher gives. In many classrooms today, dialogue among learners is treated as noise making and even senior school managers would quickly call the language teacher and remind them that their classroom control skill is wanting even before they find out what activity is ongoing. This has therefore put the language teacher in an awkward situation.

2.2.1 Context of Guided Classroom Talk

Talking is a two-way interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing information (Brown, 1994) between the speaker(s) and listener(s). Its form and meaning are dependent on the context in which it occurs, including the participants themselves, their collective experiences, the physical environment and the purpose for talking. In talking just as in listening, reading and writing, language users are actively involved in the process of interpreting and negotiating meanings (Gathumbi and Masembe, 2005). The speaker encodes the message to convey, while listeners decode or interpret the message. Talking thus requires the ability to not only produce specific points of language such as grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary (linguistic competence), but also to understand when, why and in what ways to produce language (sociolinguistic competence) (Burns and Joyce, 1997). Talking is an

important prerequisite to writing competently for a variety of purposes (Cecilia, 2007).

A speaker's competence in communication, whether spoken or written, refers to one's knowledge and ability to use target language appropriately in social contexts. Knowledge of constructing sentences in the abstract does not ensure communication. The speaker has to produce and adapt them to circumstances. To do so may have to involve what Bygate (1987) refers to as 'routine skills' and 'improvisation skills', articulation (turning voice into speech), pronunciation (impediments and speech habits), and projection of voice (care of the voice).

Speaking, reading and listening are the language skills through which the learner gets exposed to language in different situations. These situations range from formal to non-formal exposure. Formal exposure means those situations in which language is presented to the learner with the express intention of teaching them the language. For example, in the classroom, the learner is exposed to a certain amount of speech supplied by the teacher as instruction. In addition, the learner gets input in form of speech from fellow learners. This is done both inside and outside the classroom. This way the learner learns how to interact verbally and out of this interaction, syntactic features are developed (Hatch 1978). These syntactic features are indispensable during the writing itself. Krashen (1985) argues that when L2 learners interact focusing on meaningful tasks or exchange of information, then each learner receives: (a) comprehensible input from their speaking partner; (b) a chance to ask for clarification as well as feedback on their output; (c) adjustment of the output to match the level of the learner's

comprehension; and (d) the opportunity to develop new structures and conversational patterns through this process of interaction. Once the learner has had this exposure to the language through such means, they can arguably write effectively. Writing is a process that involves activities that relate to speaking, reading and listening. The present study isolated and zeroed in on the effect of guided classroom talk on students' imaginative writing skills.

In the classroom context, communicative and whole language instructional approaches promote integration of speaking, listening, reading and writing skills in ways that reflect natural language use. However, opportunities for speaking and listening require structure and planning if they are to support language development (Florez, 1999). During speaking, for example, learners manage discrete elements such as turn-taking, rephrasing, providing feedback and redirecting (Burns and Joyce, 1997). Rephrasing skill is critical in summary writing, turn-taking in writing dialogues, feedback in writing argumentative essays and re-directing in writing opinions. These skills are important in imaginative writing.

Bakhtin (1981) argues that students will fail to develop academic language and discourse if they are not provided opportunities to use words. They are hearing words but are not using them. The key is for students to talk with one another, in purposeful ways, using academic language. Durkin's (1978/1979) seminal research on comprehension instruction singled out questioning as a key strategy for classroom interaction. She noted that teachers rely primarily on questioning to check for understanding and, unfortunately, most questioning uses an initiate–

respond–evaluate cycle (Cazden, 1988) in which teachers initiate a question, a student responds, and then the teacher evaluates the answer. Questioning is an important tool that teachers have, but students also need opportunities for dialogue if they are to learn.

Cormack, Wignell, Nichols, Bills and Lucas (1998) conducted a national study in Australia which sought to describe classroom practices that enhance speaking and listening skills across different subject areas. Project results showcased students' ability to use talk for learning and to demonstrate what they had learned. Importantly, the results also showed that teachers can be highly influential in shaping classroom talk so that it aids student learning. This research concluded that by setting the topic for talk and keeping talk going in the intended direction, the teacher enabled key literacy outcomes to be achieved. Control by the teacher of talk, topic and direction had a positive effect on student's learning. Effective talk for learning did not just happen. The collaborative research strand showed that the clarity of task setting (e.g., that the students knew what kinds of talk were required) and appropriate selection of topic (e.g., so that it had relevance to students and they had knowledge to bring to the task) had an impact on students' learning. Cormack *et al.*, (1998) study is relevant to the present study in so far as it outlines qualities of effective classroom talk and the roles of both the teacher and learners. The present study was similar to Cormack *et al.*, but it took the research a notch higher by determining the effect of guided classroom talk on a specific aspect of writing: imaginative writing skills.

Alexander (2000) conducted a study in five countries: England, USA, Russia, France and India. This study compared classroom practice in primary schools, with a special focus on classroom talk. The findings have a good deal in common with those of the Australian study above. They also suggest that while there were many similarities across the different national contexts, French and Russian teachers made considerably more use of dialogic methods (classroom talk), which were associated with benefits for students' learning outcomes, social development and classroom behavior. Alexander's study is informative given it researched diverse geographical contexts on classroom talk in primary schools. The present study uniquely contributes to existing literature by sharing information on guided classroom talk in public boys' secondary schools and its effect on students' imaginative essays.

2.2.2 Content of Guided Classroom Talk

One big goal of talking is to create content that serves both your goals and your audience's needs. An important piece of content in any talk is the main reason you are talking to an audience. Your key message is the biggest, most important, and most true thing that you can say on any given topic. Ideally, it's the thing that your audience will remember and think about long after you've finished talking to them. Content depends on the audience and the purpose of your talk. Stotsky (1987) states that once students understand their key message, the rest of their talk rolls out pretty easily. This review is relevant to this study as the present study was meant to determine how this content affects students' ability to write imaginative essays. This research wanted to answer the question; if students know

the content they are talking about; does this affect the way they write their compositions?

2.2.3 Time of Guided Classroom Talk

Students must reach high levels of proficiency in reading and writing in order to be successful in school, at a university, and in virtually any career they may choose. We know that it takes time to reach those levels. We know also that opportunities for students to talk in class also take time. Howat, Onslow, Packman (2006) argue that fluency of students in talk increases when there is more time for talk but there is more stuttering and other non- verbal cues like eye blinking when time is limited. So, given the little instructional time we have with them, how can we justify devoting a significant amount of that time to talk? We would argue, how can we not provide that time to talk? Telling students what you want them to know is certainly a faster way of addressing standards. But telling does not necessarily equate to learning. If indeed "reading and writing float on a sea of talk (Britton, 1983; pg. 11)," then the time students spend engaged in academic conversations with their classmates is time well spent in developing not only talk but precisely the high level of literacy.

2.3 Imaginative Writing

Writing is a process which requires careful planning and an appropriate approach or technique for the learner to acquire this skill. It is learned through a process of instruction which requires the learner to grasp the written form of language (Byrne, 1988). Writing is also regarded as the acquisition of basic skills which form the spring board for other skills that help one learn (Muliward, 1983).

Kembo Sure (1982) holds the view that imaginative writing is a technical skill that cannot be acquired by chance or innate ability but rather needs instruction methods, teaching strategies and materials that only a trained teacher can handle. Sure agrees that the teaching of imaginative writing skills requires a careful selection of teaching methods, materials and tasks. It is therefore upon language teachers to look for the best method influenced by a particular theory to teach effectively imaginative writing skills. This is so because language writing instruction is well established and follows a particular theory (Asher and Simpson 1994).

The teaching of imaginative essays has been influenced mainly by the traditional approach for a long time. This approach to imaginative writing resulted from the audio-lingual method that was used to teach second language (Brumfit *et al.*, 1994). In the traditional approach of teaching imaginative writing emphasis was put on the form of structures produced so that elements like: correct grammar, correct spelling and correct image played the central role in language learning in the essay (Applebee, 1988). Emphasis was also put on the topic sentence, the discourse markers and the final whole of the paragraph of the essay (Graves, 1983). Errors were corrected immediately. The method originated in the USA during the Second World War and was used to teach US, German, French and Chinese soldiers so that they could fight the enemies (Bright *et. al*, 1970). The method was developed because the USA was under threat of isolation from scientific discoveries that had already started in Russia (Richards and Rodgers, 1986). In response, modern language was studied and teaching materials developed (Asher and Simpson, 1994).

Under this method audio-lingual forms of language (i.e., listening and speaking) were to be given priority before writing (Krashen, 1987). However if writing was to be introduced, learners were asked to write what they said orally. New language items were presented to check the errors produced during talking and writing (Asher and Simpson, 1994). According to Krashen (1987) the method is good because it lays emphasis on a natural approach of language learning, beginning with audio-lingual skills before graphic skills are taught. However, the method has been criticized for being impractical in language and learning theory. The method is also boring (Ellis and Tomlison, 1980) and difficult for learners to apply oral skills to the real communication (Broughton, 1980). In addition, the needs of the modern student have changed and therefore there is need to come up with the best method that would be used to teach imaginative writing. This is the reason why the present research sought to determine effect of guided classroom talk on imaginative essays by secondary school students.

There are many studies around the world on imaginative writing skills. Schonell (1942) studied reproductive, narrative-descriptive, explanatory and imaginative compositions written by children in U.S.A. He found that children with mental ages 6-8years experienced some confusion in writing imaginative composition but that this type of compositions led to greater variety of expression and greater interest on the part of children having mental ages 9-10 years. The greater interest shown led to automatic improvement on mechanical and structural aspects of imaginative writing. Edmund (1959) further established that children choose topics on derived rather than read experience and they show a lot of creativity in writing such imaginative essays.

Brant (1933) studied the development of maturity of expression in children's imaginative writings in France. He found that complexity of sentence structure varies with chronological age when mental age is constant. Brant's findings concurred with those of Bear (1939) who found that the use of complex sentences in writing imaginative essays increases with age. She said, however, that children find difficulty in constructing complex sentences in those essays.

Betzner (1930) studied the value of the method of having young children dictate original stories to the teachers in Kansas, USA. She concluded that hearing their stories read aloud led these children to change their forms of expression so that their imaginative essays were improved. Abboushi (1983) looked into the motivational and attitudinal influences which contribute to achievement in English language among international students studying in America. The study revealed that affective factors play a role in ESL, hence the need for teachers of English to synchronize their ways of teaching and learning. The study concluded that there is need for appropriate approaches to teach writing. The teachers should fully involve learners in writing tasks. The affective factors include context, practice, guidance by the teacher or peers and familiarity of content through time. This was the focus of the present study that guided classroom discussion would supply affective factors that would influence students' writing of good essays.

Perven (1969) identified three types of problems when investigating the experiences in education through second language in Africa. These problems are: pedagogical, training and supply of teachers and administrative problems. One of his findings was that second language learners have to be handled by trained

teachers of English. However, he only recommended for methods of teacher training but did not provide the method or the type of training the teachers require in handling ESL learners. The present study therefore sought to provide such an approach and how teachers should use such an approach to teach imaginative writing.

Omwadho (1984) in his research sought to analyze and interpret methods and materials used in the teaching of imaginative essays in upper primary classes. His research concluded that enough practice can help develop learners' imaginative writing skills. His study is relevant to the current study because of its emphasis on the critical role of practice in improving writing skills. However, the research focused on primary schools whereas the present study focused on secondary schools.

Kembo Sure (1982) investigated factors that influence achievement in written composition in primary schools in Thika and Nairobi. He concluded that good staffing, teacher experience and familiarity of content have a direct polarity to performance. On imaginative writing, he found out that lack of materials impacted negatively on learners' attitude towards writing and consequently, learners wrote poor compositions. Although Kembo Sure's research sought to explain the state of English in the country and the cause of poor performance in imaginative essays, it made no significant address to the best approach to teach this writing so this study sought to provide a good method of teaching imaginative writing.

Magut (2003) sought to investigate the use of process approach by teachers of English for effective teaching of writing skills in Kenyan secondary schools in

Uasin Gishu Sub-County. Magut concluded that there is little interaction between teachers and learners this is because teachers do not allow learners enough time to plan and write their work. Magut's study is relevant to this study because it looks at an approach to teaching writing. However, while Magut's study looked at the process approach to writing, the current study investigated the effect of guided classroom talk on students' imaginative writing skills. Another point of convergent between Magut's and the present study is that both looked at imaginative writing skills.

2.4 Relationship between Guided Classroom Talk and Imaginative Writing

This section reviews literature on the relationship between guided classroom talk and imaginative writing. It is true that some speakers are better than others and some writers are more effective than others (Bettinghaus and Cody, 1987). You may have been in a situation where you listened to two people deliver speeches on exactly the same topic, and were more impressed by one speaker than the other. Most receivers are aware of the differences in communicators they attend to, although usually they do not try to specify why they are more impressed by one speaker than another. Would this difference be evident in classroom talk and student writing?

Many schools of thought (e.g., Horowitz, 1986a, 1986c; Kieras, 1978; MacDonald and Herle, 1984; Morgan and Sellner, 1980); van Dijk, 1977) attest to the general relationship which exists between speaking and writing skills in both academic and socio-economic spheres of an individual's life. Stotsky (1987) argues that writing is derived from speech and that writing is simply a representation of talk.

Students should therefore be encouraged to draw on the strengths of their talk when they engage in writing compositions. The teacher has to prepare learners to write by drawing on their ability to talk well and by providing activities in which the forms and functions of writing are made similar to those of talking. The focus on secondary students notwithstanding, speaking and writing are crucial service skills. This view does not point out the level of proficiency required of successful speaking and writing. While Horowitz considers academic speaking and writing from the point of view of what professors at the university require, Kieras discusses verbal behavior. Horowitz discusses the need for students to be more careful with how they process discourses in discourse community. Closely related to this view, van Dijk, Morgan and Sellner, and MacDonald and Herle explore the theory of discourse, especially the role of context on a text. Readers Digest (1991) refers to them as skills that determine one's chances of success in all spheres of life. The present study draws from this literature review the fact that speaking and writing are two complementary modes of language use which help the user to exhibit his/her language knowledge.

A study of the experiences of 1,000 elementary students across the United States found that they spent 91 percent of their days in either whole-group or independent seatwork, with only 4.8 percent engaged with peers in a learning activity (Pianta, Belsky, Houts, and Morrison, 2007). It isn't for lack of teacher knowledge, either, as 90 percent of the teachers held a credential, and 44 percent possessed a master's degree.

Current trends in speaking and writing are moving away from that approach and emphasizing task-based teaching methodology. A key reason for this is that much of what we intend students to learn is knowledge of an abstract type that lends itself to 'telling' rather than 'showing' and so more needs to be done to go beyond the telling. In any case, writing is an important springboard from which other basic skills for learning are acquired (Muliward, 1983) and thus provides a good jump-off point for improvement in learning. This view is shared by Bygate (1987), Gremmo *et al.*, (1978), Barrow (1988) and Afolayan (1983).

Candling (in Mackay and Mountford, 1978) argue that understanding discourse in the classroom is key in coming up with the best teaching strategies. Abbot and Wingard (1981) call for the styles of speaking and writing which are friendly, appealing, flexible, satisfy curiosity and provoke appropriate response. Murphy and Snell (1991) argue that the goal of writing is to communicate effectively and precisely and in the most appropriate language. In writing, therefore, the author has to keep in view the context, the content, and the purpose of such writing. This concurs with Turk *et al.*, (1989) view that diversified and effective writing skills can be sought and determined by the content and context of writing.

Writers must devise strategies that take account of all the factors that impinge on the total context to increase the efficiency of communication. Oduol (1991) concludes that if a student learns how to write well s/he definitely improves his or her academic performance because s/he achieves a better understanding (deeper insight) of the subject in question. Since good writing skills also suggest logical mind and an ability to interact with the outside public, a student on completion of

studies will be able to create and maintain a marketable image of themselves in the eyes of both potential and current employers. This means that one's ability to communicate effectively whether in spoken or written form has economic ramifications.

Oduol, Murphy and Snell (1991) concur on target writing tasks. It is practice for perfection that most people, especially students, lack. This view is an important memoir for a student. The message here is that effective writing is correct writing. There is obvious question –how do we know whether our writing is correct or not? This study has attempted to respond to this question by explaining what we know by observing whether or not we have followed the rules for correct writing in the standard form of that target language. Murphy and Snell (1991) argue that writing consists of string of words, broken up by punctuation marks, and arranged in chunks of several lines each. It conforms to a writing pattern that readers will understand with ease. Murphy and Snell, in view of this study, emphasize the need to write correctly and appropriately. This perspective is similar to that held by Readers' Digest (1991) and Maccoby (1982). This means therefore, that the role of writing in communicative competence has to enhance correct and appropriate styles of language use in context.

Clearly, classroom talk has several benefits. Talk leads to increased skill in reading and writing as users of the language became increasingly proficient (Wilkinson, 1965). Indeed, reading and writing are dependent on talk (Britton, 1983). Therefore talk is the foundation of literacy. Even young children listen and speak well before they can read or write. Children learn to manipulate their

environment with spoken words well before they learn to do so with written words. This pattern is developmental in nature and that our brains are wired for language. Young children learn that language is power and that they can use words to express their needs, wants, and desires. English language learners thus need access to instruction that recognizes the symbiotic relationship among the four domains of language: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, hence the focus of the present study on guided classroom talk preceding imaginative writing.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

The study was based on the Output Theory (Swain, 1985). Output was used to mean the outcome or product of the language acquisition device (LAD). It also meant what the learner has learned and is able to demonstrate. This theory states that the act of producing language (speaking or writing) constitutes, under certain circumstances, part of the process of second language learning. Swain identifies three key functions of output in second language; the noticing/triggering function, the hypothesis testing function and the meta-linguistic (reflective) function. Swain's Output Theory was a reaction to Krashen's (1984) Input Hypothesis theory which states that comprehensible input was the only true cause of second language acquisition.

Swain (1985), after several observations of student learning French through immersion programs, observed that students did not talk as much in the French portion of the day (in French) as they did in the English portion of the day. Swain argued further that some of Krashen's comprehensible input is ungrammatical and has deviant forms and socio-linguistically inappropriate language.

Swain (1985) argued that negotiating meaning as suggested by Krashen (1984) needs to be extended beyond the usual sense of simply getting one's message across. Negotiating meaning needs to incorporate the notion of being pushed towards the delivery of a message that is not only conveyed, but that is conveyed precisely, coherently and appropriately. This is equal to comprehensible output hypothesis. Being pushed for the learner to produce output simply means stimulating the learners' to recall. This stimulation to recall could come through reading, listening and speaking in order for the learner to write.

Comprehensible output is seen as a process although the output hypothesis itself was about what learners did when pushed- what processes they engaged in (Swain, 1985). Several studies carried out on the output hypothesis reveal that learners often responded to negotiation moves such as requests for clarification with modified output. This theory therefore suggested that second language learning takes place through processes. These processes then result to output. Writing according to the output hypothesis is an output. The teacher should therefore take the learners through these processes for them to be able to write. They should also allow learners enough time to interact among themselves before asking them to write. The theory is relevant for this study since guided classroom talk is a process learners go through before writing imaginative essays.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework outlines the relationship between the independent variable (guided classroom talk) and the dependent variable (imaginative writing skills) of the present study.

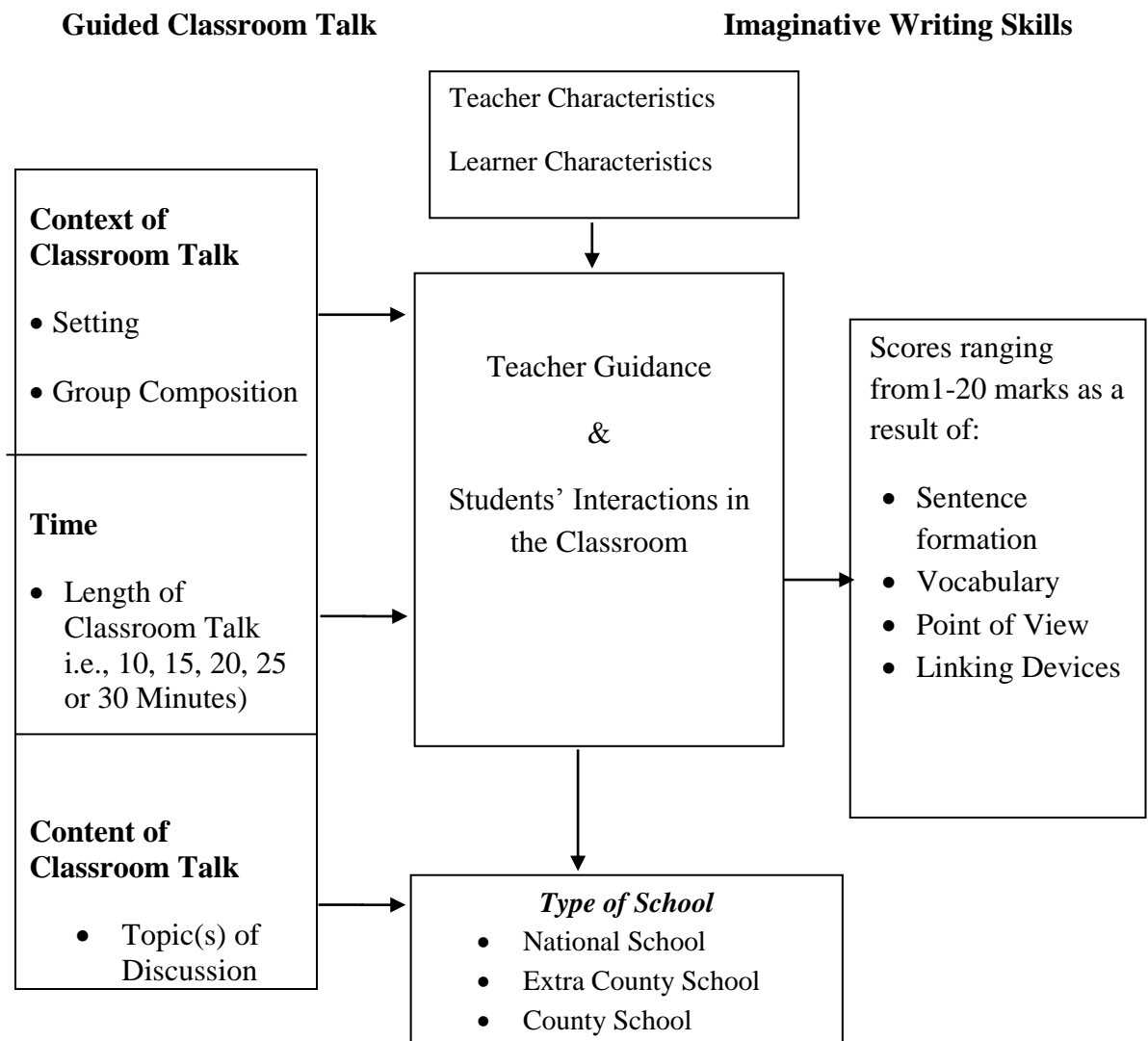


Figure 1: Relationship between Guided Classroom Talk and Performance in Imaginative Writing Skills

From the conceptual framework, the content of discussion during guided classroom talk and the contexts in which the guided classroom talk happen as well as the amount of time set aside for discussion have an influence on imaginative writing skills. That implies that appropriate and relevant topics discussed in conducive contexts for a substantial period of time can stimulate and promote imaginative writing skills where students express themselves in proper sentences,

use appropriate vocabulary, and showcase their point of view and use of appropriate linking devices in both sentences and paragraphs when writing imaginative essays. The independent variable therefore has three levels: The context of guided classroom talk or the environment or occasion where the talk happens; the amount of time taken during guided classroom talk about a given topic; and the content or the topic of classroom talk. A positive correlation between guided classroom talk (context, time and content) is assumed. There are also intervening variables that may affect students' ability to write imaginative writing. They include, among others, teacher characteristics, learner characteristics and the type of school.

2.7 Summary

This section reviewed literature related to the independent variable (guided classroom talk) and dependent variable (imaginative writing) of the study taking both a global and local perspective. It also discussed the theoretical framework on which the study is built. Collectively, these studies surfaced the critical role of the amount of time set aside for guided classroom talk, as well as the context and content of guided classroom talk for effective learning. Missing from the literature is the specific focus on imaginative writing and use of guided talk in secondary schools, hence the present study. Several questions arise from this review including the following: how much classroom talk time accounts for competent imaginative writing among secondary school students? What is the effect of content and context on secondary school students' imaginative writing skills? The present study hopes to elevate and extend insight gained in this literature review

on guided classroom talk and imaginative writing skills by building on the symbiotic relationship between the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. The study holds that careful orchestration of content, context and amount of time for guided classroom talk is a necessary prerequisite to imaginative writing.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section consists of the research design, study population, sampling techniques and sample size, research instruments, validity and reliability of the research instruments, procedure for data collection, data analysis and ethical considerations made in the present study.

3.2 Research Design

The study employed a prospective self-control cohort research design. A cohort is a group of people who have a common characteristic and are observed over time. This design was used by Manson et al (1976) in the USA (Nurses' Health Study) to determine the effect of intervention given at specified intervals and the effects recorded. A group of established students (cohort) was identified and intervention given at specified intervals. In prospective cohort studies, the researcher conceives and designs the study, recruits the subjects and collects the baseline data on all of them before they are exposed to any intervention. During the collection of baseline data, the researcher uses the exact data collection tools with the same questions as those to be used in prospective stages. This helps the researcher establish accurate information about the students before treatment. The use of exact tools when collecting baseline data reduces biases. The students are then followed into the future longitudinally in order to record the development of any of the outcomes of interest. This outcome is conducted through interviews,

questionnaires and examinations. Data analysis is not done immediately until enough events or outcomes have occurred over time. During the analysis, the researcher looks at the events that have occurred during the period of time from the beginning to the end of the study. This analysis is done retrospectively because a span of time has to elapse before you compare the incidence.

This design was relevant for this study given it was dealing with an already established Form three Class (cohort) which was exposed to guided classroom talk (intervention) and then the effect of this guided classroom talk on students' imaginative writing skills measured before and after a period of three months. In this case, the cohort of participants to be studied was selected because they were an already established group (Form Threes in five different streams) and all of them took English subject. The study was considered prospective because it answered the question, "*What will happen to students' imaginative writing skills if guided (classroom talk) intervention is implemented with Form Three students?*" and thus the direction of study was longitudinal, looking ahead to the effect of the proposed intervention on imaginative writing skills.

3.3 Target Population

The target population was four public boys' secondary schools in Kimilili-Bungoma Sub-County, Form Three students and Form Three teachers of English. The sub-county has 32 secondary schools: Four Boys' Schools, six Girls' Schools and 22 Mixed Schools. One is a national school, 3 are extra-county schools and 28 are county schools. There are 48 Form Three teachers of English and 1000 Form Three students. This information is captured in table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Target Population

School	National	Extra- County	County	Total
Boys	1	2	1	4
Girls	0	1	5	6
Mixed	0	0	22	22
Total	1	3	28	32

3.4 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

Purposive sampling was used to select four Boys Schools to participate in the study based on their low performance in English language. One of four boys' schools was selected through simple random sampling. Once the school was selected, all Form Three students and their English language teachers were purposively selected to participate in the study. The Form Three class was considered ideal for the research because the students had stayed in school for at least two years and were assumed to be more proficient in speaking and writing than those in the earlier levels. Obanya (1982) provides another justification for using the Form Three class saying it is also the year of study when teachers consolidate the language grammar learnt in Form 1 and 2 in preparation for the KCSE examination in Form Four. The Form four class was excluded because it was an examination class so the teachers were mainly taking the class through a scheduled revision program and joint exams with other schools. The sampled school had an average of 7.5 as a mean score in English at KCSE level since 2010 to 2015. This information is captured in table 3.2.

Table 3.2: School KCSE Means

Year	School KCSE Mean in English
2010	7.870
2011	7.116
2012	8.166
2013	7.2
2014	7.4
2015	7.4
The Average Mean for 6 Years	7.5

3.5 Instruments

The study used the following five instruments for data collection: questionnaire, interview guide, observation checklist, document analysis schedule and pre-test and post-tests. The five tools were used for Triangulation of findings. The study relied on and benefited from these five data sources.

3.5.1 Questionnaire

Questionnaires are ideal for collecting data from large samples. Large sample sizes increase dependability and accuracy of results (Kothari, 2011). The questionnaire used in the present study was for teachers and contained three sections. Section A captured the teachers' demographic details. Section B sought information on how the teachers made use of guided classroom talk during imaginative writing sessions with Form Three students. Section C sought

information on how teachers taught writing skills and how they used guided classroom talk. In both Sections A and B, open- and closed-ended questions were used. Open-ended questions solicited personal views while close-ended questions were useful in getting factual information on guided classroom talk from the teachers of English.

3.5.2 Interview Guide

Interviews involve presentation of oral or verbal questions and elicitation of oral or verbal responses (Kothari, 2011). Interviews are ideal for in-depth data collection. This study used a structured-interview guide and face-to-face interviews to enable the researcher probe respondents further. The interview guide had two sections. Section A sought information on how teachers made use of classroom talk in teaching while Section B sought information on how teachers taught imaginative writing skills and how classroom talk affected students' written compositions.

3.5.3 Observation Schedule

In the observation method, the researcher searches for information by directly observing phenomena using set criteria. Under this method subjective bias is eliminated (Kothari, 2011). In this study, structured observation schedules were used to collect data on guided classroom talks. Specifically, the researcher observed five teachers as they taught imaginative writing skills in English to Form 3 students. This observation was done at regular intervals when imaginative writing was conducted. The observation checklist was designed in such a way that the researcher was able to observe occurrence of guided classroom talk and

imaginative writing skill. The observation checklist had two sections. Section A contained aspects of guided classroom talk (e.g., group discussions, group presentations and debates) and scoring criteria of their occurrence against time, occasion and classroom context. Section B scored students' written tasks as a result of guided classroom talk. Classroom observations of five of the ten teachers were done when the teachers were conducting guided classroom talk. Each teacher and group was observed 5 times within a period of 3 months as shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Time Intervals for Guided Classroom Talks

Group	Amount of Time of Guided Classroom Talks	Frequency
1	10 Minutes	5
2	15 Minutes	5
3	20 Minutes	5
4	25 Minutes	5
5	30 Minutes	5

Observations, using a guided classroom talk checklist, focused on how learners participated in the discussions. A target set of behavior was scored and coded. For example, wait time after a question had been posed, students' responses, another students' modified response, teacher's response with or without modified structures, word choice, what students emphasized and what they left out, non-verbal responses like voice inflection, facial expressions and body movements accompanying the verbal responses and any eagerness to write the essay.

The first observation of the five teachers was done before the intervention. The purpose of the observation was to determine teachers' entry behavior where guided classroom talk was concerned. The first thing the researcher noted was that the teachers had not planned for the guided classroom talks. Later when asked, the teachers wondered how someone can plan a classroom discussion.

3.5.4. Document Analysis

The researcher analyzed KCSE results of English from 2010- 2014 for the selected school. He also analyzed students' written compositions from Form One to Form Three for the selected classes using a scoring rubric. The researcher also evaluated students' written pieces using an agreed upon scoring rubric in appendix v. This analysis helped the researcher establish the baseline data on the cohort of students while keeping in view the school's performance in English national examinations.

3.5.5 Pre-test and Post-test

Before commencement of the intervention, a pre-test was given to the Form Three students. The pre-test involved writing an imaginative essay on an assigned topic. After the intervention period, a post-test was given. The post-test involved another imaginative essay based on an assigned topic of similar difficulty with the baseline. The post-test was to determine impact of the process writing intervention on students' imaginative writing skills.

3.6 Procedure for Data Collection

After getting permission from the University of Nairobi and securing a research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI), the researcher approached the Bungoma County Director and the Kimilili-Bungoma Sub-County Director of Education and informed them about the intention to conduct research in the selected school within their jurisdiction. The researcher then went to the selected school and also informed the principal about the intended research.

After getting permission to conduct research within the school, the researcher administered questionnaires to sampled teachers after explaining to them the purpose of the study. The researcher also conducted face-to-face interviews with the teachers after they had filled the questionnaires. The researcher also observed the way teachers taught imaginative writing. The researcher used information gathered from teachers to prepare a training manual on classroom talk and imaginative writing skills.

The researcher then administered a pre-test on Form three students. In the pre-test, participants wrote an imaginative essay on an assigned topic. The essays were scored against the scoring rubric. Participants were then exposed to the intervention that was staggered based on classroom talk time. Group 1 discussed for 10 minutes before writing their essays on assigned topics. Groups 2, 3, 4 and 5 discussed for 15, 20, 25 and 30 minutes respectively, before writing on assigned topics. These discussions were done in their classroom. The five groups then undertook the process, writing activities once a month for three months. Each

group had written on five different topics by the end of the research period: Pre-test, three essays and a post-test. Their essays were collected and marked using the scoring rubric. Their scores were compared within and between subjects to determine impact of intervention on imaginative writing.

3.7 Validity of Research Instruments

Validity is the degree to which an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure (Kothari 2011). Validity of the research instruments was determined by piloting the instruments in a selected Form Three boys' school with similar characteristics as those in the sampled school in Trans-Nzoia West sub-county. A panel of experts selected from a pool of English teachers and the researchers' supervisors were also used to judge the validity of the instruments by looking at the questions in the instruments and discussing possible responses so that those questions that were ambiguous were reframed. Feedback from the experts and pilot was incorporated to ensure instrument validity. These experts finally agreed that the instruments were good for collecting the required data.

3.8 Reliability of Research Instruments

Reliability is the ability of a measuring instrument to give consistent results at different points in time (Kothari, 2011). To test the reliability of research instruments used in the present study, a test re-test approach was used. A school with similar characteristics as the one used in the study was used in the pilot study. Piloting was done in the neighboring Trans-Nzoia West sub-county to establish the reliability of each instrument. A Form Three class was used and the students were divided into five groups named 1-5. The groups discussed for 10,

15, 20, 25 and 30 minutes respectively before writing an imaginative essay based on an assigned topic. Questionnaires were distributed to 5 teachers and then collected after they had been filled. Data from questionnaires were coded and ranked in ascending order from 1-12. This rank was based on how well the results of the questions indicated the following: the effect of context of classroom talk on students' imaginative writing skills, the effect of content of guided classroom talk on students' imaginative writing skills and the effect of time given for guided classroom discussion on students' imaginative writing skills. Teacher responses on every question in the questionnaire were ranked from 1-10 and then the mean of every questionnaire response was calculated. The following were the means from the first round: 8.3, 8.9, 10, 8.56, and 9.3. The second round gave the following means: 8.65, 10.05, 10.5, 9 and 9.75. The means were then ranked and the correlation co-efficient was calculated using the Spearman Rank formula as follows:

X	Y	R_x	R_y	d	d²
8.3	8.65	5	5	0	0
8.9	10.05	3	2	1	1
10	10.5	1	1	0	0
8.56	9	4	4	0	0
9.3	9.75	2	3	-1	1

$$R = 1 - \frac{6 \sum d^2}{n(n^2-1)} = 1 - \frac{6 \times 2}{5(5^2-1)}$$

$$= \frac{1 - 12}{5 \times 24} = \frac{1 - 1}{10} = 1 - 0.1$$

Therefore $r = \underline{\underline{0.9}}$

Similarly, the interview schedule was subjected to the same reliability test as follows:

X	Y	R_x	R_y	d	d²
8.4	8.635	5	0		0
8.8	10.013	2	1	1	1
10	10.4	1	1	0	0
8.50	9	4	4	0	0
9.2	9.6	2	3	-1	1

$$R = Y = 1 - \frac{6\sum d^2}{n(n^2 - 1)} = 1 - \frac{6 \times 2}{5 \times 24} = 1 - \frac{12}{120}$$

$$= 1 - \frac{1}{10} = 1 - 0.1$$

Therefore $r = \underline{\underline{0.9}}$

Finally, the observation schedule was also tested for reliability. In the observation, the main items that were to be observed during the lesson were: goals for writing, discussion tasks, teacher's assessment of students' reasoning/ errors/ misconceptions, identification of the topic of discussion and how the teacher sequenced the discussion, teachers' facilitation of students' connections of ideas, analyzing students' opinions and developing new insights. Five teachers were observed and observed items from each teacher's observation checklist scored and their means calculated and ranked as follows:

X	Y	R_x	R_y	d	d²
10.05	10.5	4	4 ½	- ½	0.25
10.321	10.89	3	3	0	0
10.433	10.9	1	2	-1	1
9.14	10.5	5	4 ½	½	0.25
10.38	10.99	2	1	1	1

$t = 2$ i.e. the number of identical / tied entries /scores

$$r = Y = 1 - \frac{\frac{t^3 - t}{6} + \sum d^2}{n(n^2 - 1)}$$

2³ -2

$$\begin{aligned}
&= \frac{1 - 6(2.50 + 12)}{5(5^2 - 1)} \\
&= \frac{8-2}{5(25-1)} \\
&= \frac{6}{5 \times 24} \\
&= 1 - \frac{6(2.5 + 0.5)}{5 \times 24} = 1 - \frac{6 \times 3}{5 \times 4} \\
&= \frac{1 - 18}{120} = 1 - 0.15
\end{aligned}$$

Therefore $r = \underline{\underline{0.85}}$

On average the three research instruments had the average correlation coefficient as;

Arrange correlation co-efficient between consecutive interventions

$$\begin{aligned}
&= r_1 + r_2 + r_3 = \Sigma^3 r \\
&= \frac{0.9+0.9+0.85}{3} \\
&= \frac{2.65}{3} \\
&= 0.88
\end{aligned}$$

Therefore $r > 0.7$

A correlation co-efficient of 0.7 and above implied the tools were reliable.

Spearman Rank Method was preferred because it is used as an approximation for product method. It is also simple and can be used for both qualitative and quantitative data. This research used both qualitative and quantitative data.

This formula is as follows;

$$r = \phi = 1 - \frac{6 \Sigma d^2}{n(n^2 - 1)}$$

Where d is the difference in ranks

i.e. $d = R_x - R_y$

3.9 Data Analysis

After data collection, all data were cleaned and checked for any outliers. Once this was done, the data were then coded so that the various responses were reduced to a small number of classes for efficient analysis. Interview and questionnaire data were used to determine effect of context of classroom talk on imaginative writing skills. Pre- and post-tests were administered to students, marked and scored. Results from the pre- and post-tests were compared by calculating the difference between first and second tests. For the effect of time of classroom talks on imaginative writing, the students were put in groups of one to five. The groups then held classroom talk for, 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30 minutes, respectively. Then the mean for each group was calculated. The researcher then used the t-test formula to calculate any difference in the means to answer the question: *does amount of time given for classroom talk have any significant difference on students' imaginative writing skills.*

For the effect of context of guided classroom talk on imaginative writing, the scores were recorded and the means calculated. One way ANOVA was used to determine whether there was any significant difference in the means obtained. ANOVA was used because the study involved five groups whose means were to be calculated for any difference so this was the best method to get these differences between groups. This answered the question; does context of guided classroom talk have any significant difference on students' imaginative writing skills?

On the effect of content of guided classroom talk on imaginative writing, the scores for the five groups were recorded and their mean calculated. Data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics involved frequencies, percentages and means. To find out whether there were any significant differences in the means, one-way ANOVA was performed.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

The study operated under the principle of confidentiality and respect of respondents' privacy. Consent to participate in the study; including being interviewed was sought upfront. Respondents were not required to give their personal identification details when giving their responses and/or when being interviewed or when under observation. The researcher told them that the information provided would be used for the purpose of the study only. Specifically, their responses, including students' written assignments, would not be used for any other purpose other than the academic purpose enshrined in this research. Pseudonyms were used, where applicable. Furthermore any information that the researcher came across and was not relevant to this study was treated with confidence. This way, rapport was created between the researcher and respondents and consequently there was cooperation from both the teachers and students.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with findings and discussions. Specifically, it contains a discussion on findings based on the three objectives of the study. The findings were obtained from both quantitative and qualitative data. Findings are presented descriptively using frequency tables and in narrative form based on the research objectives to answer the following research questions: 1) What is the effect of amount of time for guided classroom talk on public boys' secondary school students' imaginative writing skills? 2) What is the effect of content of guided classroom talk on public boys' secondary school students' imaginative writing skills? 3) What is the effect of context of guided classroom talk on public boys' secondary school students' imaginative writing skills? The findings are discussed as follows.

It was necessary that findings on background information about the teachers who were involved in this study and the selected school are discussed since use of guided classroom talk as a strategy in teaching imaginative writing required teacher experience.

4.2. Background Information on Teachers and the Sampled School

The study purposively sampled 10 teachers who taught English language to Form Three students. The 10 teachers were all holders of a Bachelor of Education degree. From their academic backgrounds, the teachers had requisite

qualifications to teach in secondary school. The teachers had varying levels of teaching experience based on the number of years they had taught as shown in Table 4.0.

Table 4.0: English Teachers' Working Experience in Years

Experience in Years	Frequency
0-4	00
5-10	9
10 and above	1

Findings showed that all teachers save one had taught between 5 and 10 years. The many years of teaching experience indicated that the teachers had seen students go through at least one cycle of secondary school education. This implies also that the teachers had the knowledge required of a language teacher. It would not be far-fetched therefore to state that these teachers had the competence to teach imaginative writing skills. From the way they conducted the guided classroom talk, it was important to note that they were experienced in teaching English. Findings also showed that the teacher who had taught for over ten years was not quick in reminding students about time even when they knew that students' time for talk was running out. When it came to marked essays as revealed in document analysis, this teacher made comments that were very specific to a particular item in the essay. The teacher also made use of symbols adopted from the KNEC marking guidelines.

The same teacher reminded students that their time for talk was running out at least a few minutes before the stoppage time. On the other hand, the five teachers who had taught for five years were quick to stop the talk by the students once their time elapsed. They also looked a bit anxious as they kept looking at their mobile phones for time. This anxiety could also be felt among students. Though time is a factor in these talks among students, experience should help the teacher guide the talks confidently by redirecting the focus of the discussion to key areas of the topic and achieve the goal of teaching writing over a specified period of time. This means that even in the face of time, experience is necessary. The teacher requires this experience to know how to balance time and the goal for teaching writing. Indeed, there is a positive correlation between the number of years and competence in teaching. That means experience, over time, enhances a teacher's knowledge, skills and productivity levels (Rice, 2010).

According to Rice, the underlying assumption is that experience promotes effectiveness. Rice hastens to add that the impact of experience is strongest during the first few years of teaching; after that marginal returns diminish. She cautions that more (in this case number of years of teaching) is not necessarily better. However, and on average, brand new teachers are less effective than those with some experience under their belt (Ladd, 2008). Teachers with more than 20 years of experience are more effective than teachers with no experience, but are not much more effective than those with 5 years of experience. In the present study, the teachers' number of years of experience was that within the most productive age. It stands to reason that they would be skillful in using a particular strategy to teach imaginative writing such as guided classroom talk, if shown how to do so.

Rice's argument resonates with that of Kembo Sure (1982) who holds the view that imaginative writing is a technical skill that cannot be acquired by chance or innate ability but rather needs instruction methods, teaching strategies and materials that only an experienced teacher can handle.

Findings also revealed that the school was an extra-county with all 390 form three students who joined the school with 300 KCPE marks and above. Specifically, 2/3 of this class had 60 and above marks in English. This meant that the students could express themselves in English fluently if KCPE marks in English are anything to go by. Findings showed that many of them could express themselves in English fairly well. Their writings were quite legible as well as their general presentation of their written work. Students' entry behavior was important to this study as it may determine the time the student takes to express themselves whether in written or spoken. In this study, time for talk was important in determining how the student expressed himself in writing. Therefore, though time is a major factor in students' writing of imaginative essays, entry behavior in English for the student is also important. The school had 5 streams for the Form Three class purposively selected to participate in the study. There were 75 students per Form Three stream. The Form Three class was selected because they were thought to have acquired sufficient levels of knowledge in English language that they would apply logically and explicitly during language lessons. Obanya (1982) provides another justification for using the Form Three class saying it is also the year of study when teachers consolidate the language grammar learnt in Form 1 and 2 in preparation for the KCSE examination in Form Four.

4.3 Relationship between Amount of Time for Guided Classroom Talk and Students' Imaginative Writing Skills

The first objective of the study was to establish whether time given for group discussion had any significant effect on students' imaginative essays. To do this there was need first to establish the baseline data on students' ability in writing imaginative essays so as to later establish any differences after the interventions. The five (1-5 that participated in the study) groups took different amount of time for the discussion after intervention. There were five interventions for the five different groups. The scores for the baseline data and those of the five groups after each intervention are presented in Tables 4.1 to 4.6.

In these tables, the y axis represents the time taken by the groups for discussion while the x axis represents the total number of students against a particular score. The marks are awarded out of the maximum 20 marks.

Table 4.1: Group 1-5 Baseline Data on Imaginative Writing Essays

		Baseline Information					Total
		4.00	5.00	6.00	7.00	8.00	
Time taken for discussion	10 minutes	12	8	28	28	4	80
	15 minutes	12	8	28	28	4	80
	20 minutes	12	8	28	28	4	80
	25 minutes	12	8	28	28	4	80
	30 minutes	12	8	28	28	4	80
TOTAL		60	40	140	140	20	400

From this table all students used in the study were scoring between 4-8 marks: where 60 students scored 4 marks, 40 students scored 5 marks, 140 students scored 6 marks, another 140 students scored 7 marks and only 20 scored 8 marks.

The majority students (280 students) scored between 7 and 8 marks. This state, however, changed after the five interventions as discussed, presented in the tables 4.2 to 4.6. The results from each table are presented and a brief discussion is given after each table.

There was need to establish the achievement of students in imaginative writing skills based on the time taken for guided classroom talk. Results for the different groups of students who participated in the study are as shown in table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Group 1-5 Scores on First Imaginative Writing Essay

	Scores on the First Imaginative Writing Activity										Total
	5.00	6.00	7.00	8.00	9.00	10.00	11.00	12.00	13.00		
Time taken for Discussion 10 minutes	12	16	20	28	4	0	0	0	0	0	80
15 minutes	0	0	24	28	20	8	0	0	0	0	80
20 minutes	0	4	0	0	4	28	36	8	0	0	80
25 minutes	0	0	0	0	8	0	16	36	20	0	80
30 minutes	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	36	36	0	80
TOTAL	12	20	44	56	36	40	56	80	56	0	400

As indicated in table 4.2, the group of students who took 10 minutes for discussion had 12 students who scored 5 marks, 16 students scored 6 marks, 20 students scored 7 marks, 28 students scored 8 marks as only 4 students scored 9 marks. In this group therefore the majority (28 students) scored 8 marks. For the group that discussed for 15 minutes, no student scored between 5-6 marks, 24 students scored 7 marks, 28 students scored 8 marks, 20 students scored 9 marks

as 8 students scored 10 marks. Again, in this group, the majority (28 students) scored 8 marks. Similarly, the group that took 20 minutes had no students scoring 5, 7 and 8 marks, while 4 students scored 6 marks, no student scored 7 and 8 marks, 4 students scored 9 marks, 28 students scored 10 marks, 36 students scored 11 marks as 8 students scored 12 marks. The next group discussed for 25 minutes and the scores were that no student scored 5, 6, 7 and 8 marks, 8 students scored 9 marks, 0 students scored 10 marks, 16 students scored 11 marks, 36 students scored 12 marks while 20 students scored 13 marks. Finally, the group that discussed for 30 minutes had the following scores; no students scored between 5-9 marks, 4 students scored 10 marks, 4 students scored 11marks, 36 students scored 12 marks and 36 students again scored 13 marks. From these results of the first scores after first writing, it can be argued that more time given to the groups meant better marks for the particular group. As seen in table 4.2, the group that took only 10 minutes for discussion had the majority of students (28 students) scoring 8 marks while for the group that discussed for 30 minutes had the majority (36 students) scoring 13 marks.

There was need to establish the scores of the five groups during the second writing. The results are as shown in table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Group 1-5 Scores on Second Imaginative Writing Essay

		Scores on Second Imaginative Writing Activity									Total
		6.00	7.00	8.00	9.00	10.00	11.00	12.00	13.00	14.00	
Time taken for discussion	10 minutes	12	16	20	28	4	0	0	0	0	80
	15 minutes	0	0	24	28	20	8	0	0	0	80
	20 minutes	0	0	0	4	4	28	36	8	0	80
	25 minutes	0	0	0	0	8	0	16	36	20	80
	30 minutes	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	36	36	80
TOTAL		12	16	44	60	36	40	56	80	56	400

As indicated in table 4.3, during the second writing, the group of students who took 10 minutes for discussion, had no students who scored 5 marks or below, 12 students scored 6 marks, 16 students scored 7 marks, 20 students scored 8 marks, 28 students scored 9 marks as only 4 students scored 10 marks. For the group that discussed for 15 minutes, no student scored 7 marks and below, 24 students scored 8 marks, 28 students scored 9 marks, 20 students scored 10 marks and 8 students scored 11 marks. Similarly, the group that took 20 minutes had no students who scored 8 marks and below, 4 students scored 9 marks while 4 students again scored 10 marks, 28 students scored 11 marks, 36 students scored 12 marks and 8 students scored 13 marks. The next group discussed for 25 minutes and the scores were; no student scored 9 marks and below, 8 students scored 10 marks, 16 students scored 12 marks, 36 students scored 13 marks while 20 students scored 14 marks. Finally, the group that discussed for 30 minutes had the following scores; no students scored 10 marks and below, 4 students scored 11 marks, again 4

students scored 12 marks, 36 students scored 13 marks and 36 students again scored 14marks. The results after the second intervention are consistent with the results after the first intervention where more time for discussion meant better marks for the written essays. The marks move towards the maximum mark, 20, as the time for discussion is increased.

There was still need for more writing and therefore a third writing was given and the scores recorded and discussed in table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Group 1-5 Scores on Third Imaginative Writing Essay

		Scores on the Third Imaginative Writing Activity								Total	
		7.00	8.00	9.00	10.00	11.00	12.00	13.00	14.00		15.00
Time taken for discussion	10 minutes	12	16	20	28	4	0	0	0	0	80
	15 minutes	0	0	24	28	20	8	0	0	0	80
	20 minutes	0	0	0	4	4	28	36	8	0	80
	25 minutes	0	0	0	0	8	0	16	36	20	80
	30 minutes	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	36	36	80
TOTAL		12	16	44	60	36	40	56	80	56	400

As indicated in table 4.4, during the third writing, the group of students who took 10 minutes for discussion, 12 students scored 7 marks, 16 students scored 8marks, 20 students scored 9marks, 28 students scored 10marks as only 4 students scored 11marks. For the group that discussed for 15 minutes, 24 students scored 9marks, 28 students scored 10marks, 20 students scored 11marks as only 8 students scored 12marks. The group that took 20minutes had no students scoring between 9marks and below, 4 scored 10marks while

4 students again scored 11 marks, 28 scored 12 marks, 36 scored 13 marks and 8 scored 14 marks, Similarly, the group that took 25 minutes had no students scoring between 10 marks and below, 8 students scored 11marks while 16 students scored 13 marks, 36 scored 14marks, as 20 students scored 15 marks. Finally, the group that discussed for 30 minutes had the following scores; no students scored between 11 marks and below, 4 students scored 12 marks, 4 students scored 13 marks, 36 students scored 14 marks while 36 again scored 15 marks. These results again are consistent with those of the first and second writing where increase in time for discussion increased the students' marks in the essays. Still, the fourth writing task was given and the results are discussed in table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Group 1-5 Scores on Fourth Imaginative Writing Essay

		Scores on the Fourth Imaginative Writing Activity									
		8.00	9.00	10.00	11.00	12.00	13.00	14.00	15.00	16.00	Total
Time taken for discussion	10 minutes	12	16	20	28	4	0	0	0	0	80
	15 minutes	0	0	24	28	20	8	0	0	0	80
	20 minutes	0	0	0	4	4	28	36	8	0	80
	25 minutes	0	0	0	0	8	0	16	36	20	80
	30 minutes	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	36	36	80
TOTAL		12	16	44	60	36	40	56	80	56	400

As indicated in table 4.5, during the fourth writing, the group of students who took 10 minutes for discussion, there were no students who scored 8 marks and below, 12

students scored 8 marks, 16 students scored 9 marks, 20 students scored 10 marks, 28 students scored 11 marks and 4 students scored 12 marks. For the group that discussed for 15 minutes, no students scored 9 marks and below, 24 students scored 10 marks, 28 students scored 11marks, 20 students scored 12marks as 8 students scored 13 marks. Similarly, the group that took 20 minutes for the discussion had no students scoring 10 marks and below, while 4 students scored 11 marks, another 4 students scored 12 marks, 28 students scored 13marks, 36 students scored 14 marks and 8 scored 15 marks, The next group discussed for 25 minutes and the scores were; no student scored 11marks and below, 8 students scored 12marks, 16 students scored 14 marks, 36 students scored 15 marks while 20 students scored 16 marks. Finally, the group that discussed for 25 minutes had the following scores; no students scored 12marks and below, 4 students scored 13marks, 4 students again scored 14marks, 36 students scored 15marks and 36 students again scored 16marks. Again, the results show a similar trend as those after the first, second and third writing. The fifth writing task was given and the results are presented in table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Group 1-5 Scores on Fifth Imaginative Writing Essay

		Scores on the Fifth Imaginative Writing Activity									
		9.00	10.00	11.00	12.00	13.00	14.00	15.00	16.00	17.00	Total
Time taken for discussion	10 minutes	12	16	20	28	4	0	0	0	0	80
	15 minutes	0	0	24	28	20	8	0	0	0	80
	20 minutes	0	0	0	4	4	24	40	8	0	80
	25 minutes	0	0	0	0	8	0	16	36	20	80
	30 minutes	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	36	36	80
TOTAL		12	16	44	60	36	36	60	80	56	400

As indicated in table 4.6, during the fifth writing, the group of students who took 10 minutes for discussion, no student scored 8 marks and below, 12 students scored 9 marks, 16 students scored 10 marks, 20 students scored 11 marks, 28 students scored 12 marks as only 4 students scored 13 marks. For the group that discussed for 15 minutes, no students scored 10 marks and below, 24 students scored 11 marks, 28 students scored 12 marks, 20 students scored 13 marks as 8 students scored 14 marks. Similarly, the group that took 20 minutes had no students scoring 11 marks and below, while 4 students scored 12 marks, another 4 students scored 13 marks, 24 students scored 14 marks, 40 students scored 15 marks and 8 scored 16 marks. The next group discussed for 25 minutes and the scores were; no student scored 12 marks and below, 8 students scored 13 marks, 16 students scored 15 marks, 36 students scored 16 marks while 20 students scored 17 marks. Finally, the group that discussed for 30 minutes had the following scores; no students scored 13 marks and below, 4 students scored 14 marks, 4 students again scored 15 marks, 36 students scored 16 marks and 36 students again scored 17 marks. These results show a similar trend as those after the first, second, third and even fourth interventions where increase in the time for group discussion increased the marks towards the maximum 20 marks.

The implication for this trend after the five interventions is that time taken for guided classroom discussion has an effect on students' imaginative essays. More time for discussion means more marks in the written essays. To determine whether Group 1-5 mean differences were statistically significant, one-way analysis of variance was used. This analysis was meant also to answer the first research question which was to find out whether time given for guided classroom talk has

an effect on students' imaginative writing skills. One way ANOVA results in Table 4.7 show the amount of time and the quality of students' imaginative writing skills.

Table 4.7: Amount of Time and quality of Students' Imaginative Writing

Skills					
	Sum of	Df	Mean	F	Sig.
	Squares		Square		
Between Groups	43357.760	4	10839.440	433.850	.000
Within Groups	9868.800	395	24.984		
Total	53226.560	399			

Significant at 0.05 level, critical value $433.850 > .000$

One-way ANOVA results show a large F statistic value (433.850) and a small significance level (.000), $P < .05$. It was highly unlikely that the variables of interest (amount of time and quality of writing skills) were independent of each other. There was, therefore, a statistically significant difference in the mean scores of the students in the different groups and therefore existence of a relationship between time given for guided classroom talk and students' imaginative writing skills in English. This also means that the more time the students were given to talk about the topics, the superior their imaginative writing skills in English became (as reflected by the increase in scores).

To establish whether time given for guided classroom talk was a major predictor in the acquisition of students' imaginative writing skills in English, regression analysis was performed. Results are presented in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Quantity of Variance of Predictor Variable: Amount of Time for Guided Classroom Discussion and Students' Imaginative Writing Skills

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.883a	.779	.779	5.43453

a. Predictors: (Constant), Time taken for discussion

Table 4.8 includes information about the quantity of variance that is explained by the predictor variable: time given for guided classroom talk. The first statistic, R, is the multiple correlations co-efficient between the entire predictor variable and the dependent variable: students' imaginative writing skills in English. In this model, the value is .883, which indicates that there is a great deal of variance shared by the independent and dependent variables. The next value, R Square, squared value of R describes the goodness-of-fit or the amount of variance explained by a given set of predictor variables. In this example, the value is .779, which indicates that 77.9% of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variable in the model. Further analyses were conducted and results presented in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Overall Variance Accounted for by Amount of Time for Guided Classroom Discussion and Students' Imaginative Writing Skills

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	41472.000	1	41472.000	1404.209	.000b
Residual	11754.560	398	29.534		
Total	53226.560	399			

a. Dependent Variable: students' imaginative writing Skills

b. Predictors: (Constant), Time taken for guided classroom talk

Table 4.9 describes the overall variance accounted for. The F statistic represents a test of the null hypothesis that the expected values of the regression coefficients are equal to each other and that they equal zero. If the null hypothesis were true, then that would indicate that there is not a regression relationship between the dependent and predictor variable: time given for guided classroom talk. But, instead, it appears that the predictor variable in the present case is not all equal to each other and could be used to predict the dependent variable, acquisition of writing skills in English, as is indicated by a large F value (1404.209) and a small significance level (.000). Further analyses were performed. Results are presented in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Value of Increase between Time of Guided Classroom Talk and Students' Imaginative Writing Skills

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std Error	Beta		
(Constant)	37.960	.637		59.568	.000
1 Time taken for discussion	7.200	.192	.883	34.783	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Students' Imaginative Writing Skills

The unstandardized coefficients indicate the increase in the value of the dependent variable for each unit increase in the predictor variable. As shown in Table 4.10, the unstandardized coefficient for the time given for discussion in this case is 7.200, which indicate that a student's predicted acquisition of writing skills will increase by 7.200 respectively. Examining the Beta coefficients for the time given for guided classroom talk, we can see that time given for guided classroom talk is a better predictor of students' acquisition of writing skills in English.

Examining the t statistics for the variable, it can be seen that they are associated with a high significance value of 37.473, indicating that the null hypothesis that states that this variable's regression coefficient is zero when all other predictor coefficients are fixed to zero, can be rejected. Therefore the time given for discussion is a better predictor of students' acquisition of writing skills in English. These findings were also supported by findings from observation of students' written essays.

Findings from observation revealed that the groups which discussed for 20, 25 and 30 minutes before they wrote the essays exhibited more creativity, originality, maturity and felicity in their essays. These groups used all the types of sentences: simple, complex and compound complex. There were ticks of merit for one word and whole sentence. There were also margin ticks for these essays. The essays communicated pleasantly and the subject was fully developed in all the essays. The findings show that students had enough time during the guided talk which was a way of preparing themselves for a higher task: writing. The availability of more time to the students meant that they got exposure not only to different sentence structures but also learnt different viewpoints from their peers and the teacher. This exposure was the source of originality and creativity exhibited in these essays. On the other hand, the group that discussed for only ten minutes had many of the essays written plainly. Many of the sentences were simple while the group that discussed for 15 minutes wrote plainly but often a tick of merit would be given at a word or a line and this increased the scores.

These findings were consistent with the findings from the teachers' interview. Teachers agreed that during group discussions, adequate time is crucial in stimulating free discussion. Adequate time will create a free environment which will make learners ask questions for clarity during the talk. At the same time those making presentations do it extensively; putting into practice all types of arguments when they are aware that they have enough time to do so. This finding is consistent with Krashen (1982) when he argues that enough time for discussions guided by the teacher or more experienced peers are a source of comprehensible input: new vocabulary, well-constructed sentences and phrases and new ways of

expressing an idea. This input is the foundation on which quality essays are written.

During interviews, teachers disclosed that they held debates once a fortnight on a range of topics. During these debates, the teachers said they gave students enough time to interact with information presented by others. They agreed that after such debates, learners would write good essays when asked to do so even after some period of time in school. Asked why debates were held only once a fortnight, they argued that time was a limiting factor. They said that organizing for debates just like debates themselves is time consuming activity. However, they agreed that debates are good in teaching speaking skills as well an opportunity for students to learn from their peers before they write essays. Teachers were asked to comment on the relationship between guided classroom discussion time and quality of students’ imaginative writing skills. Findings are summarized in table 4.11.

Table 4.11: Relationship between Discussion Time and Quality of Imaginative Writing Skills.

Question	Adequate discussion time leads to good written imaginative essays.		
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Total
Frequency	7	3	10
	7	3	10

All the ten teachers agreed, with seven agreeing strongly that when adequate time is given for students to engage in classroom discussion, they write superior imaginative essays (with scores of between 16 and 20 marks). This is in line with other research done earlier.

Long *et al* (1994) suggest that learners engaging in a classroom discussion should be given more time so that teachers and learners can respond adequately to questions or clarification requests. Learners should also be given more time to think and digest ideas given. Friere (1983) acknowledges that teachers are always pressed for time that sometimes they even lose patience when conducting classroom discussions. He maintains that this should not be the case. Instead teachers should give students enough time to think and say what is on their minds. This implies that guided classroom talk should be as exhaustive as possible in terms of ideas under discussion so that when learners are asked to write essays, they do so armed with requisite information.

Several benefits accrue from adequate time being given for guided classroom discussion. Learners are able to consolidate information being shared by thinking and digesting it. They are also able to externalize their thinking when they say what is on their minds. Externalizing thinking helps the teacher determine how well learners are progressing in their concept development in relation to the topics of discussion.

Findings from observation schedules revealed that guided classroom talks consisted of roughly three steps: Teacher initiation, learner response and teacher follow-up. These steps were simple and straight as one teacher said such an approach saved time. In the initiation step, the teachers initiated the classroom talk with questions like, *“How many of us have ever found themselves in a dilemma?”* Students carried their hands up and responded when chosen. Teachers responded by saying, *“good”* or *“right”* then they would ask the same student to *“briefly*

explain the answer.” After the student’s explanation, the teacher would say “*correct*” when the response was right or “*not really*” or “*you are close to the answer*” when the response was wrong. In case of a wrong response or a response that was not fully developed, the teachers quickly redirected the question to another student or asked another student to help that one who had given the wrong response. Findings revealed that teachers understood the academic abilities of their students and they quickly chose those students who correctly gave the answer quickly within the shortest time possible. This was seen in all the teachers who were observed. However, this recognition of students’ academic abilities by teachers was mainly used to help the teacher save time during the lesson; not so much of the recognition of importance of peer teaching in guided classroom talk. Indeed the teacher would start nodding even before such students completed giving their answers. In one of the lessons observed, the teacher picked on a student who they knew was able to give an accurate answer while some other students had their hands raised. Immediately the student started talking, the teacher was observed nodding and the rest put their hands down not responding again when teacher asked them if any of them had a different opinion from what the other student had given.

As a result of this pressure on time, teachers did not give students much time to fully exhaust their contributions and/or viewpoints. No wonder in all the discussions observed being conducted by the teachers; they followed the one way order of, Teacher Initiation, Teacher Follow Up and Learner Response crowned by teacher’s final remarks which occasionally paraphrased the learners’ sentences. This also explains the reason why all students had an average mean of 7.9 marks

as captured in the baseline data. Teachers kept telling learners to give their responses to a question or suggestion as quickly as possible to save time using phrases such as “*Save time, summarize your argument because of time, let us give the last point because of time or because of time write that suggestion from your friend and find out the answer later.*” Excerpt 1 illustrates this finding further.

Excerpt 1: Guided Classroom Talk before Intervention

Student	I was invited to the wedding of my friend but this invitation was for my father but he asked me to accompany him so when I read the invitation card.....
Teacher	Simon because of time, please summarize what you want to say, ok?
Student	So I decided that I go to attend the wedding though I knew what would happen after.
Teacher	So in summary, you are saying it was your father who was invited to the wedding.
Student	Yes sir.
Teacher	Ok, can we have two more people reacting to Peter’s suggestion then I will give my final remarks (<i>Students closing their books while some looking out through the window and the class timetable</i>).

In Excerpt 1, the teacher was definitely pressed for time. He was not patient with Simon’s responses and at some point the teacher cut him short. Furthermore, he announced he would give his final remarks. With this pronouncement, the teacher sealed his stamp of authority. It was not surprising to see students closing their books (perhaps in anticipation of the final remarks). Some students even looked out through the window (perhaps in resignation about their personal contributions to the classroom talk). Those students who looked at a copy of the class timetable on the wall may have wondered when the lesson was going to end or they did so in anticipation of the next lesson.

In another class, the teacher asked students to look at the cover of the set book, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, because he wished to initiate a guided classroom talk on the text. Excerpt 2 below reveals this conversation between the teacher and the students.

Excerpt 2: Guided Classroom 2 before the Intervention

Teacher	What do you see on the cover page?
Student 1	People enclosed in a circle.
Teacher	Right! So what does that tell you about the book?
Student 2	It talks about how different people live differently at one place.
Teacher	Right! Good! So what does that mean about what life is like there? Anybody? (<i>five seconds</i>) Student 3?
Student 3	(<i>No response</i>).
Teacher	(<i>two seconds</i>) Anyone else?
Student 4	Maybe the people are united.
Teacher	Yes, but I was wondering about the way people live there, Student 4, not their unity.

In Excerpt 2, the teacher questions learners and evaluates their responses (as being right in this case). He tells Student 4, “Yes, but...” a comment that can easily send a wrong message to the learner and further limit their participation. Such judgments, however, work against a climate in which new and innovative ideas flourish. Students, such as Student 3 may fear being judged or penalized, and will rarely if ever, participate. There is the risk, therefore, of a small group of students who are confident that they know what the teacher wants to hear ending up dominating the classroom talk while the rest of the class tunes out. Findings from this excerpt are that though the teachers redirected questions to a number of learners in class, there was definitely the pressure on time. This is manifested in the wait time (five seconds) the teacher pauses in anticipation of student responses. The teacher hinted at the possible answer he expected from the students

too early as he feared time for the talk was running out not that learners had exhausted their opinion in relation to the question asked.

Several key issues emerged from classroom observations prior to the intervention. Teacher responses during the classroom talks were good but not helpful enough to generate in-depth discussions among learners. The teachers also dominated the guided classroom talks and gave responses they themselves thought were correct. This inhibited students' active participation with some choosing to remain quiet whenever there was an issue they did not agree on/with during the talk. Teacher dominance during classroom talks made students to think they did not know much about the topic and as such over-relied on the teacher for answers. This was evident from their gestures as many paused to look at their teacher to either agree or disagree with what they had said after giving their point.

When teachers talk too much, give too much information, express their personal opinions too frequently, or tell students what to think, all these seemingly innocuous responses seriously curtail opportunities for students to exercise their own brain power and stifle risk-taking behavior that spawns or encourages originality and experimentation of thought. The researcher was thus not surprised with the dismal performance from the first imaginative essays written by the students. Many simply regurgitated what the teacher had shared with them in class and, as a result, the activity was undertaken mechanically. The students lacked the confidence required to write authentic essays.

Secondly, the pressure on time seemed to stymie students' ideas even before they had had an opportunity to explore them fully. These findings are in agreement with existing research. Barnes (1994) argues that the race with the clock often forces teachers to speed up lessons and makes them lose patience with students who need more time to say what is on their minds. Friere (1983) supports this view and argues further that the quality of thinking and speed are anathema to each other. In conducting effective classroom talks in which we ask students to offer their ideas, waiting for students to think must supersede the rush to finish. Brookes and Marshall (2004) argue that in order for students to write creatively, there should be no form of restrictions put to their thoughts during the writing process. Richards (1990) agrees that if students are restrained during any writing process, their originality will not be maintained and their creativity will be compromised. This means that teachers have to choose which goal is more important. These arguments underscore also the need for more time during classroom talks if we want students to fully develop their ideas so that they can apply them down in other academic areas such as imaginative writing.

Third, teachers put value on learners' responses by saying "good" and "right." If the teacher sheds off the critic's mantle and replace their "Right!" and "Good!" value judgement with responses such as "I see," "Tell me more," or "Thanks, Student 4, for sharing your ideas with us," students get a chance to expand their thinking and comment on their ideas fearlessly. They feel safe to continue to examine and to go further in their thinking without really worrying about time. Sometimes, this early judgment from the teachers is the result of pressure of time where the teacher feels the student should have just given the right response. This

was confirmed during post-observation reflections with teachers who explained that they tell students their responses are right or close to the answer to quickly direct them to the correct answer and to move to the next student; thereby saving time.

Findings also revealed that teachers' capacity to conduct guided classroom talks even within limited time frames is important. This is so because after teachers had been taken through a brief capacity building session on how to effectively conduct a guided classroom talk, there was frequent use of phrases such as "*Tell me more,*" "*I am wondering how you figured that out?*" or "*Perhaps you have some evidence to support your idea*" to invite students to further examine their thinking. However, further findings revealed that these phrases were frequently used by those teachers who were in charge of groups three, four and five that discussed for 20, 25 and 30 minutes respectively. The learners in these groups appeared more relaxed and when the teacher redirected such phrases to them they appeared calm and frequently cited local examples to convince the teacher and the other students. The fact that they appear nonchalant came from the fact that they were aware they had some little more time to discuss. Even the teacher responses themselves as shown in the phrases above create a calm atmosphere where pressure of time creates no worry. The responses also emphasized on clarity of thinking, on reflection about a position, and on examples and evidence to support an idea (Barnes 1994). Barnes posits that ensuing classroom talks are conducted in ways that build deeper understanding.

Findings from the five teachers of English language who were assigned randomly to conduct guided classroom talk after intervention for either 10, 15, 20, 25 or 30 minutes are also discussed in the snapshot below. The timeframes corresponded with groups: Group 1 (10 Minutes); Group 2 (15 Minutes); Group 3 (20 Minutes); Group 4 (25 Minutes; and Group 5 (30 Minutes). The teachers were then observed the second to fifth times. Students were given several topics during the guided classroom talk such as the following scenario: *“Apparently, my parents had cancelled their journey to Nairobi, but I had already invited Maurine to our home and she had agreed to be there by 10a.m.”* Snapshots for each group are presented in the following sections beginning with Group 1.

Group 1 Classroom Observations after the Intervention

Group 1 was asked to engage in guided classroom talk for ten minutes before writing an imaginative essay. At first, the classroom talk was dull. Students were in a hurry to write down what the others said. There was little flaring of emotions and many students looked like they were interested in individual thinking. Though there was sharing of ideas, this did not happen so much since many of them kept glancing at the wall clock, possibly to check on time. When they were asked to end the talk, they quickly picked the writing material in readiness to write, possibly aware that time restrictions would apply as well to the task of writing given to them. The eagerness to write could have originated from the fact that learners knew that composition writing was more of a personal affair than a shared activity. This was made worse by the limited time that had been allocated for the classroom talk. The average mark Group 1 got in their essays was 7 out of

a possible 20 marks. This translated to Grade C according to KNEC guidelines. The performance would be considered below average.

It is therefore true to conclude that time for guided classroom talk has an effect on students' imaginative writing skills. This finding is in agreement with Howat, Onslow, Packman (2006) who argue that fluency of students in talk increases when there is more time for talk but there is more stuttering and other non-verbal cues like eye blinking when time is limited. They argue further that the teachers must provide adequate time for classroom talk. Their perspective is also consistent with other existing research. If indeed "reading and writing float on a sea of talk (Britton, 1983; pg. 11)," then the time students spend engaged in academic conversations with their classmates is time well spent in developing not only talk but precisely the high level of literacy.

4.4: Effect of Content of Guided Classroom Talk on Imaginative Writing

Skills

The second objective of the study was to determine effect of content of guided classroom talk and students' imaginative writing skills. Content was viewed as the topics students are given to talk about. Content ranged from the least familiar to the most familiar. To investigate the effect of content of guided classroom talk on students' imaginative writing skills, one-way analysis of variance was conducted for the five groups. Results are in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12: Effect of content of Guided Classroom Talk on students' imaginative writing skills.

	Sum Squares	of Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	51.724	2	25.862	.193	.824
Within Groups	53174.836	397	133.942		
Total	53226.560	399			

Not Significant at 0.05 levels, critical value $.193 < .824$

From Table 4.12 the F-ratio is not statistically significant. The critical value (.824) far exceeded the F-value (.193). The null hypothesis was thus retained. This means that the two variables (content and imaginative writing skills) are independent of each other. There is thus statistically significant relationship between the content of guided classroom talk and students' imaginative writing skills in English.

There was need to determine whether the independent variable (content of guided classroom talk) is a predictor in students' acquisition of imaginative writing skills in English. Regression analysis was performed and results are shown in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13: Analysis of Content of Guided Classroom Talk as a Predictor of Students' Writing Skills

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.029a	.001	-.002	11.55939

a. Predictors: (Constant), Content of guided classroom talk

Table 4.13 includes information about the quantity of variance that is explained by the predictor variable. In this model, the value is .029, which indicates that there is minimal variance shared by the independent variable (content of guided classroom talk) and the dependent variable (students' imaginative writing skills in English). In this case, the squared value of R is .001, which indicates that 1% of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variables in the model. Further tests of significance were undertaken. The results are shown in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14: Analysis of Variance of Content of Guided Classroom Talk and Students' Writing Skills

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	45.968	1	45.968	.344	.558b
1Residual	53180.592	398	133.620		
Total	53226.560	399			

a. Dependent Variable: Students' Imaginative Writing Skills

b. Predictors: (Constant), Content of guided classroom talk

From Table 4.14 the predictor variable (content of guided classroom talk) in the present study could be used to predict the dependent variable (students' acquisition of imaginative writing skills in English) to some extent. Further analyses were conducted to determine the correspondence between the change in content of classroom talk and students' imaginative writing skills. Results are presented in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15: Analysis of Increase in Value of Content of Guided Classroom Discussion and Students' Writing Skills

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std Error	Beta		
(Constant)	54.614	8.453		6.461	.000
Average scores content	.118	.202	.029	.587	.558

a. Dependent Variable: Students' Imaginative Writing Skills

The unstandardized coefficients indicate the increase in the value of the dependent variable for each unit increase in the predictor variable. In this case, the unstandardized coefficients for the content of guided classroom talk is (.118), which indicates that for each of the content of guided classroom talk, predicted acquisition of students' imaginative writing skills in English will increase by 0.118. Examining the Beta coefficient for the content of guided classroom talk, we can see that this variable is to some extent a predictor of the students' imaginative writing skills in English. Examining the t statistic for the variable, content of guided classroom talk, it can be seen that it is associated with a significance value

of (.558) indicating that the null hypothesis, that states that this variable's regression coefficient is zero when all other predictor coefficients are fixed to zero, can be rejected. This shows that the content of guided classroom talk is a predictor of students' imaginative writing skills in English. Thus it can be concluded that content of guided classroom talk is a factor in students' imaginative writing skills in English.

These findings were compared with the findings from the teacher interviews and the teachers had similar opinion to this finding where all the ten teachers (100%) agreed that there is a relationship between the content and the quality of students' imaginative writing skills. They stated further that familiar topics encouraged more creativity among students when writing imaginative essays. The teachers also agreed that guided classroom talks on given topics before writing were very important before learners were asked to write. Their perspective was consistent with other research. Classroom talks unite cognitive and "social aspects" of the classroom (Cazden, 1988). Cazden observed that during discussions, discussants will ask questions if the content is not clear hence it is very easy for them to understand the content.

During interviews, teachers disclosed that they held debates once a fortnight on a range of topics. Some of the topics touched on social issues like gender, education and family. The same topics were closely related to the themes in the set books which students were reading. The reason for choosing topics related to what the students were doing in the set books, the teachers argued, was to familiarize them with the content or themes in the set books so that when they are asked in their

final exams to write essays on themes brought out in the set books, it would be easy for them to write about. In essence the debates served as a way of familiarizing students with content in the texts as well as giving them an opportunity to learn new language structures from their peers and teachers.

Findings also revealed that during guided classroom talks, teachers used questioning to improve understanding of content covered. They argued that they purposely asked students questions that touched on mastery of content while at the same time encouraged interaction and discussion among students. Engle and Ochoa (1988) suggest that the following types of questions should be evident during classroom discussions: definitional questions (“What does that mean?”), evidential questions (“What reasons can you give for your belief?”), speculative questions (“What if that hadn’t happened?”), and policy questions (“What should be done?”). These types of questions are needed to stimulate student thinking and guide classroom discussions. For discussions to educate students, there should be serious interactions where students “support their ideas with evidence, where their opinions are subject to challenge by their peers as well as the teacher, and where the teacher’s ideas are equally open to criticism” (Engle and Ochoa, 1988, p. 47). The purpose of probing questions and discrepant viewpoints is to encourage interactions and to encourage students to respond with the most powerful evidence available to them. During the discussion, students familiarize themselves with the content under discussion so that they write good essays.

Findings from interview data of teachers about effect of content on students’ imaginative writing skills revealed that essays written on topics which students

were familiar with or those that allowed students to manipulate them to suit their thinking scored high marks because they displayed a lot of creativity, originality and pleasantness. In these essays learners showed that they were in control of both language and what they were writing about. Many students were most familiar with topics about love as shown by the high marks scored in their essays ending with this sentence: *“Apparently, my parents had cancelled their journey to Nairobi, but I had already invited Maurine to our home and she had agreed to be there by 10am.”* The teachers admitted that they enjoyed reading these essays.

Creativity was seen in the way students used authentic everyday examples from their environment and depicted these scenarios in their imaginative essays in genuine, original and believable ways. Consider the essay where one student expressed his situation as that of one *“caught between a rock and a hard surface.”* He also added that he *“quickly decided to take the bull by its horns by introducing the girlfriend to the mother who coincidentally had cancelled the journey.”* He asserted further that *“this was so because of visitors and the coming of the girlfriend was a big blessing as she joined him and the mother in cooking.”*

The students were very lively when talking about topics on love because love was a familiar content to them. The students took full control of the discussion on this topic. This finding is consistent with other research. Stotsky (1987) states that once students understand their key content, the rest of their talk rolls out pretty easily. Cormack, *et al.*, (1998) argue that appropriate selection of content (e.g., so that it had relevance to students and they had knowledge to bring to the task) had an impact on students’ learning. However, the same would not be said about

topics on career choices after school. Though students were aware of the careers they wanted to pursue, they did not have finer details about careers and when it came to writing, the essays had little creativity and originality. Many of these essays were plain - the type that scores a maximum of 11 marks based on the KNEC marking guide. Some were merely philosophical discussions. It can be surmised that familiar content was the mother of creativity, originality, maturity and pleasantness in the students' imaginative essay writing activities.

After this observation, the researcher had another session with the teacher and shared with him on how to improve his guidance during the next lesson. When the teacher held the next guided classroom talk, he asked Group 1 members to start the discussion. He announced the new topic: *“Why do you think some people involve themselves in acts which make them regret later then say they wish they had another chance to reverse that?”*

Upon posing and writing the topic on the whiteboard, the teacher asked the learners to start the discussion again. Quickly, the learners raised their hands to give their opinions. Part of the guided classroom talk is captured in Excerpt 3.

Excerpt 3: Group 1 Guided Classroom Talk after the Intervention

Teacher Why do you think people should regret after getting involved in such acts?
Ben They never think before acting.
Teacher Ok. Another reason?
Ken Peer pressure.
Teacher Yes, their peers.
Chris Sometimes stress makes people act in such a way.
Teacher Thank you, Chris, one last person then we close our discussion for something else. Some of you are already writing in their exercise books before I even tell them what to write about. Hey! James, what are you writing?
James Sir, am just noting down important points raised so far in the discussion so that I don't forget them during writing.
Teacher But it is better to listen and understand first. Ok, now let us end the discussion at that point since it is time to do something different.

In Excerpt 3, unlike in previous guided classroom talks, the learners seemed more eager to share their opinions with others. This could be attributed to the similarity between the topic they were discussing and the previous one. The students latched easily on the topic and made connections between the topic and their everyday lives. The only challenge seemed to be many mouths willing to talk at the same time. One student expressed his frustration when he said that he had not been given more chances to air his most important idea, some out of experience. When another student interjected and said he had had more response-turns, he said he had been slow in thinking until his time was out. These comments reflect learners' need to share their experiences more when content is familiar.

After the guided classroom talk, students wrote an essay that ended with the sentence: *"If I had a second chance, I would be wiser."* In general, the students communicated with some clarity and indeed the essays were reflective of shared work whether at sentence, phrase, vocabulary or use of connector level in the

essays. Many essays were fully developed. This implied that students were developing ideas as shared in the class talks.

During the third classroom observation of Group 1, the topic changed to this career-related one: *“Imagine you are a managing director of a big company in Kenya.”* Findings showed that students looked taken a back. It took five minutes for the first student to give his opinion. Even when giving the opinion, he did not look sure of what to say. Generally, students’ facial expressions reflected their depth of thoughts. This went on up to the eighth minute when two more students gave their opinions in simple sentences. It is highly probable that the topic chosen was not directly related to students’ daily experiences. Though career choices are critical issues for secondary school students, the experience is far removed from them. It lacks authenticity. It was found out that students are freer to share their opinions with others on topics that they are not only familiar with them but also on topics that appeal to issues that affect them directly at their age. Therefore content may be familiar to the students but this familiarity of content does not really appeal to the learner at that particular time. Consequently, familiarity of content should be in relation to the learners’ experiences. Although content did not reflect an impact on students’ essays, it sparked lively discussion hence collaborative learning. Chaney (2002) observes that language develops when students engage in discourse on topics of current concern and interest to them. Fourth and fifth classroom observations of Group 1 engaging in guided classroom talk revealed similar findings. Clarity in communication improved over time though at a small rate.

Group 2 Classroom Observations after the Intervention

Group 2 held their guided classroom on the same topic. The first thing they did in their first classroom talk was to request the name of the main character in topic (*Maurine*) assigned to be changed. Group members gave alternative names such as Michelle, Laura, Sasia and Scophia. The teacher intervened and through a popular vote, the group settled for the name Laura. When asked to give reasons for the name change, the students said that their sisters or friends or people they knew had the same names and were very successful. So the name Laura resonated with them; and was something that teachers said contributed to their originality of thought. In other words, familiarity with content right from characters in the story, the setting of the story and even the phrases and words used in the compositions was beneficial to learners in terms of their level of engagement with the content. It was not surprising therefore that particular guided classroom talk was lively. This finding is in line with existing research. Graham and Perin (2007) argue that students' interest to write is more when they write on a real person than an imaginary one. By the time the students were being asked to write the essay, they eagerly asked whether the title was required and how long the essay would be. They seemed ready to write! However, this familiar content improved student' fluency more than it improved accuracy as revealed in their written essays.

In subsequent classroom observations using questions similar to those of Group 1, guided classroom talks were livelier than before. Students who sought to respond to another's opinion or ask a question or seek clarification faced each other, pointing at unseen objects and occasionally writing down. However, and

just like in Group 1, when the students were given a career-related task they did not have as much enthusiasm during the guided classroom talk. The teacher himself had to persistently coax the students to give their opinions, with little success. Consistent with Oxford (2000), students require authentic topics to talk about such as speeches, conversations and interviews. In agreement, Brown (2000) notes that communicative goals are best achieved by giving attention to language use and not just usage, to fluency and not just accuracy, to authentic context and to students' eventual need to apply classroom learning to unrehearsed contexts in the real world.

Group 3 Classroom Observation after the Intervention

Group 3 discussed the same topic. At first, and just like Group 2, when the same topic was written on the board for them to discuss, they first suggested that the name *Maurine* be changed at the writing stage. There were several suggestions of possible names of the character in the essay coming through. The group settled for the name *Michelle*. The reasons for the change in name were similar to those given in Group 2: familiarity. Group 3 guided classroom talks were very lively. There was frequent use of connectors of sequence and emphasis in the guided talks. The students used new words in the talks which were reflected in their imaginative essay as well. They wrote their ideas on the whiteboard and drew sketches to illustrate their points. Excerpt 4 shares some of the guided classroom talk highlights.

Excerpt 4: Group 3 Classroom Discussion after the Intervention

- Student A** Well, I didn't expect that from her but somehow I had thought of it as a possibility.
- Student B** You are pessimistic because as a man you should stay put in all situations.
- Student A** I think the highway to our kitchen is so exposed that even when you want to hide from someone, you will still be seen.
- Student C** What do you mean by saying a highway in your home? Are there highways in people's homes really?
- Student A** Oh sorry, I meant to say the lawn.
- Student D** It is not even a lawn. Sir, let's look up the meaning of these words in the dictionary.
- Teacher:** That is ok. Please let everyone look up the meaning and usage of the words highway and lawn in their dictionaries.

Students in Group 3 used terms such as *pessimistic*, *highway* and *lawn*. When student C challenged Student A on the use of the word *highway*, Student A introduced yet another term, *lawn*. This inadvertently led to students discovering the difference between the two words. The students not only played with words but also knew when the words were used incorrectly. In Excerpt 4 also, the teacher intervened and re-directed learners' thinking towards finding the answer. This seemed to be a more effective approach to value judgment provided to students before the intervention. The teacher's action allowed students to make their own choices without interference. Noteworthy is the fact that the teacher only came in when student D invited him.

The teacher's action in this excerpt is consistent with Gregory and Chapman's (2002) view that teachers who withhold their judgment during guided classroom talks give students different options during class time. Similarly, students have the opportunity to select from a range of options for evaluation. In addition, teachers increase the relevance of material by providing students with real choices about

what they will learn and how they will demonstrate mastery. In Excerpt 4, students chose the dictionary as a way of evaluating the usage of the words *highway* and *lawn* even when the teacher and the whole oral presentation were other viable options. This approach built on students' strengths and interests. From the guided classroom talk in Excerpt 4, students analyzed the language used by their friends in explaining an idea. Consequently, they acquired new language structures in the process of discussing.

This is a common phenomenon in learning English language where learners are faced with learning a second language at the same time that they are learning the content. Therefore, teachers need to think about students' language goals (Bresser, Melanese and Sphar, (2009). Teachers can do this by identifying vocabulary that they are unfamiliar with and find ways to build discussion based on what students know. This strategy is useful for helping all students communicate around difficult vocabulary until they have firmly grasped the new concept. Once they conceptually understand the topic, integrating the vocabulary will give students greater communication abilities in writing and help them meet set standards. These claims provide a basis for having students work together and eventually students are expected to engage in solo mental functioning, and that solo mental functioning has its source in joint activities.

During the guided classroom talk, students used gestures, facial expressions, body movements and tonal variations. They presented their opinions in friendly tones. The guided classroom talk became much more an opportunity to learn than merely

presenting a point of view to others. It involved being receptive to others' comments and having a willingness to refine ones' current level of understanding.

In the third observation of Group 3 more gestures, facial expressions, tonal variations and demonstrations by students were used. This group was equally uncomfortable with the career topic not familiar with their experiences. Many of them kept staring at the roof, looking at the teacher and occasionally murmuring among themselves. It took them six minutes before they started presenting their opinions to the class. They were not as eager to make the presentations. The researcher observed that the students were deep in thought trying to unravel the reality about the career topic. However, over time, they began giving their opinions albeit with difficulties.

Group 4 Classroom Observation after the Intervention

Group 4 was also observed during the discussion before they wrote their imaginative essays. A snapshot of the goings-on during Group 4's guided classroom talk is captured in Excerpt 5.

Excerpt 5: Group 4 Classroom Observation after the Intervention

Teacher	So what really made you regret?
Student E	You know, Sir, I had never had such an exchange with my mother.
Student F	Well, Sir, we should know whether what he is saying is out of experience?
Student E	Certainly, it is, that is why I am boldly saying I regret.
Student G	But sir, I think E went overboard. I meant that was overstepping.
Student H	Perhaps E should say he acted out of anger.
Teacher	Can you react to that E?
Student E	I should think so, Sir.
Student I	Why do you think your aunt intervened, E?

During classroom talk on the first question, students did not ask for a name change. However, the talk was quite lively. Many students volunteered to write their ideas on the whiteboard. Some challenged their friends' ideas and wondered whether they were talking from first-hand experiences. When the teacher asked them to say why they thought so, they said that some of their friends' experiences were "too authentic." Many students in this group experimented using new words in their classroom talks.

Group 5 Classroom Observation after the Intervention

Group 5 was also observed during the discussion they wrote. The same question triggered a lot of excitement within this group. Spontaneously, the students requested that the name of the character in the essay be changed according to each member's wish at the writing stage. Their request was granted by the teacher. They said they felt good and motivated writing about the name of someone they knew and could easily identify with. Excerpt 6 provides a snapshot of part of that guided classroom talk.

Excerpt 6: Group 5 Classroom Observation after the Intervention

Student 1	I would like us to change the name Michelle to Sherlyne.
Teacher	Can you tell us why you think the name should change?
Student 1	I think the name sounds better and even modern. Ladies called by this name are so beautiful.
Student 2	I also think the name should change but to Yvonne.
Teacher	Why should the focus be on names instead of the real topic? Shakespeare said that a rose flower by any other name still smells as sweet.
Student 3	No, Sir. The name makes you feel you are part of that story.
Teacher	So what do we agree on?
Student 4	Sir, we can discuss the topic with this character's name but when we start writing, let everybody choose the name for his character.
Teacher	Is that ok with the rest?
All students	Yes, Sir.

Excerpt 6 is extracted at that point after the teacher had written Topic 1 on the whiteboard, explained it and asked students to think about it. Student 1 suggested that the name of the character in the topic be changed. The teacher sought other students' opinion and they all agreed to change the name when they were writing individual essays.

The teacher's response after Student's 1 comments was important in several ways. By seeking other students' opinion, the teacher was communicating to the group that not only should they be listening to other students' suggestions, but they should also be reflecting if those suggestions make sense. Students are expected to reflect on what they see and hear with their own thinking processes. In essence, the teacher allowed students to share their thinking and reflect on their own suggestions. A student had to defend their position by explaining why they wanted a different name from the one given. The guided classroom talk environment was such that a student could change their viewpoint after being convinced by other students' explanations. The teacher restated what the student said and asked for clarification. The teacher encouraged students to change their answers based on the new insights gained. Misconceptions and errors were addressed through guided classroom talks such as those in Excerpt 6. The guided classroom talk gave students opportunities to discuss why something did or did not make sense.

Now consider another scenario in which the teacher calls on Student 5 to present his views on the topic '*friendship and love.*' The student comes up to the interactive board to present his views. He writes on the board what friendship and love should entail. The teacher asks, "Does anyone have any questions for him

about his views on friendship and love?" (*Several students raise hands.*) The teacher asks Student 5 to take a couple of questions from the peers who do not understand his thinking clearly. Student 6 asks him to explain what he meant by true friendship is fulfilling. Student 5 explains that true friendship and love is fulfilling in the sense that one looks at the friend as a source of happiness in his life. At this point, another student quickly interjects by asking him what he meant by one being a source of happiness. Student 5 explains that happiness is derived from the realization that someone somewhere cares about you.

In the scenario above, Student 6 and 7 ask Student 5 to clarify his thinking. Student 5 explains his thinking by pointing out other words that are closer in meaning to the word *fulfilling*. By the end of the guided classroom talk, many students had raised their hands and were eager to give their opinions or to help Student 5 answer some questions. In Group 5, curiosity and motivation to discuss remained very high throughout the discussion. Findings showed that familiar topics and a free environment where there are no particular restrictions like time but only teacher guidance and peer interaction are a great source of motivation for discussion. Familiar content is a great source of motivation. Content was made familiar to the learners through classroom talk. These talks were joint activities that promoted social learning. It is after such joint activities that learners were asked to write the essays. By the time they wrote, the learners had familiarized themselves with ideas and expressions needed to write on that content. This is in agreement with (Cecilia, 2007) when she argues that teaching imaginative writing skills through classroom talk/discussions as a medium helps students organize ideas while allowing them to express these ideas in complete sentences. The

students are trained to put ideas logically and organize thought patterns and make writing more interesting for both themselves and the teachers. This technique allows the learners to write freely, and give them a feeling that they have an investment on the topic to be able to produce really dynamic writing. It is true to argue that a familiar content motivated students during the discussion as each one is eager to share their views. This finding is also in line with other existing research.

This motivation is very important in language learning. Learners with high motivation, self-confidence, a good self- image and a low level of self-anxiety are better equipped for success in second language acquisition (Krashen, 1987). Krashen argues further that positive effect is necessary for acquisition to take place. These elements were provided in Group 5's guided classroom talk because the members responded with completely different structures from those they had heard from their peers. This is in agreement with Swain (1985) who argues that in classroom discussions, students are pushed by their peers to respond to particular moves including questions or negotiations and often such responses are more modified than those they are responding to.

In Group 5, there was extensive use of gestures of all kinds and other non-verbal cues. These non-verbal cues were part of this dialogue that played a big role in the guided classroom talk. Consistent with Knap (2005), face and hand movements serve dialogic functions to illustrate, comment, refer, and dramatize. Knap argues further that speech-dependent gestures also contribute to fluent speech by facilitating word retrieval since speakers lose fluency and complexity if they are

constrained from gesturing while speaking. Non-verbal cues also arise from cognitive activity, as when hard thinking produces furrowed brow or averted gaze.

It can be argued that of the three variables, time content and context, time is a major factor that affects students' imaginative writing skills. However, content is the major source of creativity in a discussion, whereas context is the source of register in students' imaginative writing skills. In this study, these three were aspects of guided classroom talk and we can therefore argue that guided classroom talk is beneficial in teaching imaginative writing skills to students. This argument is consistent with other research.

Classroom discussion is an important teaching strategy because of its relation to the development of participatory learning, critical thinking, and classroom community (Engel and Ochoa, 1988; Parker, 1996; Weikel, 1994). Discussion nurtures critical thinking and moral reasoning (Gall and Gall, 1990; Newmann, 1988; Power, Higgins, and Kohlberg, 1989), helps students understand the topic being discussed (Dillon, 1994; Miller, 1992; Tharp and Gallimore, 1988) and teaches the skills of discussion itself (Bridges, 1979; Dillon, 1994; Wilen, 1990). Critical and moral reasoning are evident in the maturity of essays displayed by the students.

Classroom discussion serves several educational purposes because it is a unique form of classroom talk, and a very special group dynamic. Discussion requires students and teacher to talk back-and-forth at a high cognitive and affective level, both with one another and the subject matter being discussed. Dillon explained this by stating, "What they talk about is an issue, some topic that is in question for

them. Their talk consists of advancing and examining different proposals over the issue” (1994, p. 7). Discussion is thought to be a useful teaching technique for developing higher order thinking skills that enable students to interpret, analyze, and manipulate information. Students explain their ideas and thoughts, rather than merely recount, or recite, memorized facts and details. During discussion, learners are not passive recipients of information that is transmitted from a teacher. Rather, learners are active participants. Discussion, when combined with probing, open-ended questions, requires students to organize available information for the purpose of arriving at their own defensible answers. This was evident in the essays written by the students.

For teachers of English who may think that engaging students in guided classroom talk before they write is a waste of time, they may need to re-consider their standpoints. They must be aware, however that guided classroom talk does take time. It is demanding and requires teacher commitment. In line with Byrne (1988), imaginative writing is a process, which requires careful planning, and an appropriate approach or technique for the learner to acquire this skill. As a matter of fact, when students develop conceptual understanding of ideas, they retain what they learn and develop greater skills. If students forget how to solve a problem, they can figure it out if they understand the concepts behind the problem. On the other hand, when students simply memorize problem-solving procedures without understanding how or why they work, they are more likely to have difficulty remembering how to do problems (Kilpatrick, Swafford and Bradford, 2001). Helping students understand concepts allows them to make connections and successfully solve problems using efficient strategies. Researchers have found that

focusing on different reasoning strategies leads to higher insights (Stein, Engle, Smith and Hughes, 2008; Leinhardt and Steele, 2005). For students to understand such concepts, therefore, they should be given enough time to discuss before they write the essays. When students have the opportunity to speak for a few minutes, they connect the words to visual representations and make vocabulary connections (Wiest, 2008). This research established that time has more impact on students' imaginative writing skills than both content and context.

4.5: Effect of Context of Guided Classroom Talk on Imaginative Writing

Skills

The third objective of the present study was to determine the effect of context of guided classroom talk on students' imaginative writing skills. To determine effect of the independent variable (context of guided classroom talk) on the dependent variable (students' imaginative writing skills in English), one-way analysis of variance was performed. Results are presented in Table 4.16.

Table 4.16: Effect of Context of Guided Classroom Talk on Imaginative

Writing Skills

	Sum of Df	Mean	F	Sig.
	Squares	Square		
Between Groups	1353.173	451.058	3.443	.017
Within Groups	51873.387	130.993		
Total	53226.560			

Significant at 0.05 level, critical value 3.443 > .017

From Table 4.16 ANOVA results on the effect of context of guided classroom talk on students' imaginative writing skills in English was statistically significant given the F-value (3.443) and the significance level of 0.017 ($p < .05$) There is therefore a relationship between the independent variable (context of guided classroom talk and dependent variable (students' imaginative writing skills in English).

To further establish whether the context of guided classroom talk is a major predictor of students' imaginative writing skills in English, regression analysis was performed. Results are presented in Table 4.17.

Table 4.17: Quantity of Variance between Context of Guided Classroom Talk and Students' Imaginative Writing Skills

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.025a	.001	-.002		11.56066

a. Predictors: (Constant), Context of guided classroom talk

Table 4.18 includes information about the quantity of variance that is explained by the predictor variable: context of guided classroom talk. The first statistic, R, is the multiple correlation co-efficient between the entire predictor variable and the dependent variable: students' imaginative writing skills in English. In this model, the value is .025, which indicates that there is a great deal of variance shared by the independent variable and the dependent variable. The next value, the squared value of R describes the goodness-of-fit or the amount of variance explained by a given set of predictor variable. In this example, the value is .001, which indicates

that 1% of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variables in the model. Further analyses were conducted to determine predictability of context of classroom talk on students' writing skills. Results are presented in Table 4.18.

Table 4.18: Predictability of Context of Guided Classroom Talk on Students' imaginative Writing Skills

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	34.284	1	34.284	.257	.613b
1Residual	53192.276	398	133.649		
Total	53226.560	399			

a. Dependent Variable: Student's Imaginative Writing Skills

b. Predictors: (Constant), Context of guided classroom talk

From Table 4.18 it appears that the predictor variable: context of guided classroom talk in the present study could not be used to predict the dependent variable: students' imaginative writing skills in English, as indicated by a small F value (.257) and a large significance level (.613). Further analyses were conducted. Results are presented in Table 4.19.

Table 4.19: Increase in Value between Students' Imaginative Writing Skills and Context of Guided Classroom Talk

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std Error	Beta		
(Constant)	56.465	6.137		9.200	.000
Context	.081	.160	.025	.506	.613

a. Dependent Variable: Students' Imaginative Writing Skills

From Table 4.19, the unstandardized coefficients indicate the increase in the value of the dependent variable for each unit increase in the predictor variable. In this case, the unstandardized coefficients for the context of guided classroom talk is (.081), which indicates that the context of guided classroom talk, predicted students' imaginative writing skills in English increase by .081. Examining the Beta coefficient for the context of guided classroom talk, we can see that this variable is not predictor of students' imaginative writing skills in English. Examining the t statistic for the variable, the context of guided classroom talk, it can be seen that it is associated with a high significance value of (.613) indicating that the null hypothesis, that states that this variable's regression coefficient is zero when all other predictor coefficients are fixed to zero, can be retained. This shows that context of guided classroom talk is not a better predictor of student's imaginative writing skills in English. It can be concluded therefore that despite the significant relationship between the variables, context of guided classroom talk is not a major factor in the students' imaginative writing skills in English. The study

went further to investigate the effect of context of guided classroom talk on students' imaginative writing skills by giving teachers a questionnaire to answer and the results are discussed.

Results from teacher questionnaires on the effect of context on students' imaginative writing skills are presented in Table 4.20.

Table 4.20: Effect of context of discussion on imaginative writing skills

Question	To write good imaginative essays, students must form groups and hold discussions on the topic before writing.		
	SA	A	Total
Frequency	4	6	10
	4	6	10

From Table 4.20, teachers were aware that for students to write good imaginative essays, they must form groups and hold discussions on assigned topics. The group discussions were created in the context of teacher guidance as well as students guiding each other. The teachers said that group discussions was a way of creating context that is free and friendly for students to learn different view- points as well as appreciate them. This finding was similar to the one found through teacher interviews. During the interviews, teachers agreed that students write authentic essays when they are taken through guided classroom talks. This view was held by 9 teachers (90%). The teachers also used other speaking activities such as debates, hot seating and group discussions to teach writing though not so frequently. These activities according to the teachers created a real context for students to learn from others. Guided classroom talks are very important in bringing contexts that are

otherwise far removed from student to a very remote context of the student. These talks must be well planned to achieve the imaginative writing goals.

Orchestrating an effective guided classroom talk involved planning the talk, identifying a topic and a problem for discussion, allowing students to share reasoning, and using guided questions to facilitate the talk. The guided classroom talk was planned with larger imaginative writing goals. The talks had three phases shown in Table 4.25 as: (1) making thinking explicit, (2) analyzing each other’s opinions, and (3) developing new insights. Planning happened at three levels:

1. Planning prior to the guided classroom talk.
2. Planning during the lesson.
3. Whole class guided talk.

Table 4.21: Planning Guided Classroom Talk

Planning Prior to the Guided Classroom Talk	Identifying long-term and short-term goals of writing, consider discussion tasks, and anticipate student reasoning.
Planning During the Lesson	Assess student reasoning/errors/misconceptions. Identify topic for discussion/problem to talk and think about how to sequence classroom talk.
Guided Whole Class Talk:	Pose questions/issues to start the discussion.
Facilitating Connections of Ideas	Phase 1: Making thinking explicit Phase 2: Analyzing opinions Phase 3: Developing new insights. The teacher facilitates the talk through questioning.

Each guided classroom talk focused on one concept or goal of writing; however, it was also part of a larger conversation that took place over time. When students saw connections within a lesson and across lessons, they developed deeper reasoning. Therefore, planning began with setting a clear goal and purpose that fit in with the larger purpose of writing. During the planning process the teacher identified the topic/concepts and skills that students needed to develop and selected tasks related to the topic for students to engage in during the guided classroom talk. In addition, the teacher anticipated student reasoning, errors, and misconceptions that could emerge during the lesson.

This problem-solving approach to teaching was necessary for the guided classroom talk. The teacher started the lesson by posing a problem, giving students more time to think about the problem, then meeting with partners or small groups to further explore the problem. During this small group time, the teacher monitored student understanding by asking probing questions and evaluating work. In this phase of the lesson, the teacher made a quick decision about what to talk about during the guided classroom talk based on student reasoning. As students worked with partners and small groups, the teachers walked around, observing what the students were doing and posing questions. During this stage the teacher also identified the concepts and skills that students needed to develop and selected tasks for students to engage in. In addition, the teacher anticipated student reasoning, errors, and misconceptions that could emerge during the guided classroom talk.

After students had individually thought about a problem and shared ideas with partners or a small group, a whole class discussion took place. This stage had three phases: Phase 1 focused on making thinking explicit by students who explained how they arrived at their views. Phase 2 was on analyzing each other's opinion. Here students shared their views and explained how they were similar to and/or different from those of their friends. Phase 3 emphasized development of new insights. A discussion had to lead to development of "big writing ideas" and skills that students could transfer to the paper. Therefore, at the end of the guided classroom talk, the teacher and students had to summarize what they learned. In addition, they also reported how to be successful in writing essays.

Results from analysis of variance indicate that context didn't display much difference in the written essays between the groups. Though the difference was there, it was not big as compared to the difference that was caused by time. The presence of a teacher at a guided classroom talk helped mainly in guiding the talk but did not affect how group members expressed their opinions or how they wrote. To establish further the effect of guided classroom talk on students' imaginative writing skills with a view to establishing which variable of the three variables which has the most effect, it was important that a multiple regression of the three variables; time, content and context is done and the findings are presented in tables 4.22-4.39 .

4.6: Multiple Regression Analysis

There was need for a multiple regression of three variables to establish which of the three variables has more effect on students' imaginative writing skills.

Regression analysis was done on all the scores for the writing skills of the 5 groups used in this study after every writing task. The results are presented in tables 4.23-4.40. Tables 4.22 and 4.24 show the regression analysis of the first scores of imaginative writing for the three variables.

Table 4.22: Model Summary of first regression analysis.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.872 ^a	.761	.759	1.14055

a. Predictors: (Constant), Context scores, Time taken for discussion, Content scores

Regression analysis was performed on the first writing scores to establish whether the variables; time given for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context of guided classroom were major factors in students' imaginative writing skills after the first intervention. The results, as shown in table (4.22), includes information about the quantity of variance that is explained by the predictor variables time given for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk. In this model, the *R* value is .872^a, which indicates that there is a great deal of variance shared by the predictor variables and students' imaginative writing skills on the first writing scores. The *R* square value is .761, which indicates that 76.1% of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variables in the model.

Table 4.23: Regression ANOVA for the first scores on writing

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1637.625	3	545.875	419.631	.000 ^b
	Residual	515.135	396	1.301		
Total		2152.760	399			

a. Dependent Variable: Scores on first writing

b. Predictors: (Constant), Context scores, Time taken for discussion, Content scores

c.

The *F* statistic as shown in table (4.23) represents a test of the hypothesis whether the R square proportion of variance in the dependent variable accounted for by the predictors is zero. It appears that the three predictor variables in the present study are not all equal to each other and could be used to predict the dependent variable, students' imaginative writing skills on the first writing scores, as is indicated by a large *F* value (419.631) and a small significance level (.000). This indicates that for students to write their imaginative essays well, time for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk have a role to play.

Table 4.24: Regression: Coefficients on 1st scores on writing

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	
B	Std. Error	Beta				
(Constant)		5.209	.695	7.493	.000	
Time taken for discussion		1.312	.111	.800	11.841	.000
Content scores		.119	.104	.078	1.145	.253
Context scores		-.030	.082	-.010	-.372	.710

a. Dependent Variable: Scores on first writing

Table (4.24) provides information about the effects of the variables: time for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk on students' imaginative writing skills. As shown in the table, the unstandardized coefficients for time for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk are: .111, .104 and .082, which indicates to us that for the predictor variables, students' imaginative writing skills will be affected by, .111, .104 and .082, respectively. Examining the Beta coefficients for time for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk, it can be noted that these three variables are obviously the better predictors of students' imaginative writing skills.

Examining the *t* statistic for the variables, it can be seen that they are associated with significance values of 11.841, 1.145 and -.372, indicating that the null hypothesis, that states that this variable's regression coefficient is zero when all other predictor coefficients are fixed to zero, can be rejected. This shows that students' imaginative writing skills can be predicted by time given for guided classroom talk and content for guided classroom talk. However, time has more effect than content.

In other words, it appears that there is a statistically significant relationship between independent and dependent variables. Therefore it can be concluded that students' imaginative writing skills are dependent on time and content of guided classroom talk but time has more effect than content. The multiple regression of the three variables show that time has more effect on students' imaginative writing

skills in the first writing skills. Regression was further done on students' imaginative scores after second writing.

Regression on 2nd writing scores

Tables 4.25 and 4.26 show the regression analysis of the second scores of imaginative writing for the three variables.

Table 4.25: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.882 ^a	.777	.776	1.08849

b. Predictors: (Constant), Context scores, Time taken for discussion, Content scores

Regression analysis was performed on the second writing scores to establish whether the variables; time given for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context of guided classroom are major factors in students' imaginative writing skills scores. The results, as shown in table (4.25) includes information about the quantity of variance that is explained by the predictor variables time given for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk. In this model, the *R* value is .882^a which indicates that there is a great deal of variance shared by the predictor variables and students' imaginative writing skills even on the second writing scores. The *R* square value is .777, which indicates that 77.7% of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variables in the model.

Table 4.26: Regression ANOVA second writing scores

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1636.857	3	545.619	460.514	.000 ^b
	Residual	469.183	396	1.185		
Total		2106.040	399			

a. Dependent Variable: Scores on second writing

a. Predictors: (Constant), Context scores, Time taken for discussion, Content scores

The *F* statistic as shown in table (4.26) represents a test of the hypothesis whether the R square proportion of variance in the dependent variable accounted for by the predictors is zero. It appears that the three predictor variables in the present study are not all equal to each other and could be used to predict the dependent variable, students' imaginative writing skills, as is indicated by a large *F* value (460.514) and a small significance level (.000). This indicates that for students to write their imaginative essays well, time for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk have a role to play.

Table 4.27: Regression: Coefficients on 2nd scores on writing

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized T Coefficients	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	
(Constant)	6.241	.663	9.408	.000
1 Time taken for discussion	1.344	.106	.828	.000
Content scores	.086	.099	.057	.385
Context scores	-.009	.078	-.003	.911

a. Dependent Variable: Scores on second writing

Table (4.27) provides information about the effects of the variables: time for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk on students' imaginative writing skills. As shown in the table, the unstandardized coefficients for time for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk are;1.344, .086 and -.009, which indicates to us that for the predictor variables, students' imaginative writing skills will be affected by,1.017, .086 and .009, respectively. Examining the Beta coefficients for time for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk, it can be noted that these three variables are obviously the better predictors of students' imaginative writing skills.

Examining the *t* statistic for the variables, it can be seen that they are associated with significance values of 12.712, .869 and -.0112, indicating that the null hypothesis, that states that this variable's regression coefficient is zero when all other predictor coefficients are fixed to zero, can be rejected. This shows that students' imaginative writing skills can be predicted by time given for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk. This trend is consistent with that of the first regression. However, time has more effect than content while the effect of context diminishes with time.

In other words, it appears that there is a statistically significant relationship between independent and dependent variables. Therefore it can be concluded that students' imaginative writing skills are dependent on time and content of guided classroom talk but time has more effect than content. The multiple regression of

the three variables after the second intervention show that time has more impact on students' imaginative writing skills.

Table (4.27) provides information about the effects of the variables: time for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk on students' imaginative writing skills. As shown in the table, the unstandardized coefficients for time for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk are; 1.344, .086 and -.009, which indicates to us that for the predictor variables, students' imaginative writing skills will be affected by, 1.017, .086 and .009, respectively. Examining the Beta coefficients for time for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk, it can be noted that these three variables are obviously the better predictors of students' imaginative writing skills.

Examining the *t* statistic for the variables, it can be seen that they are associated with significance values of 12.712, .869 and -.0112, indicating that the null hypothesis, that states that this variable's regression coefficient is zero when all other predictor coefficients are fixed to zero, can be rejected. This shows that students' imaginative writing skills can be predicted by time given for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk. This trend is consistent with that of the first regression. However, time has more effect than content while the effect of context diminishes with time.

In other words, it appears that there is a statistically significant relationship between independent and dependent variables. Therefore it can be concluded that students' imaginative writing skills are dependent on time and content of guided

classroom talk but time has more effect than content. The multiple regression of the three variables after the second intervention show that time has more impact on students' imaginative writing skills.

Regression on 3rd writing

Tables 4.28 to 4.30 show the regression analysis of the third scores of imaginative writing for the three variables.

Table 4.28: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.882 ^a	.778	.776	1.08754

a. Predictors: (Constant), Context scores, Time taken for discussion, Content scores

Regression analysis was performed on the third writing scores to establish whether the variables; time given for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context of guided classroom are major factors in students' imaginative writing skills. The results, as shown in table (4.28) includes information about the quantity of variance that is explained by the predictor variables time given for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk. In this model, the *R* value is .882^a, which indicates that there is a great deal of variance shared by the predictor variables and students' imaginative writing skills on the fifth writing scores. The *R* square value is .778, which indicates that 77.8% of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variables in the model.

Table 4.29: Regression ANOVA 3rd scores on writing

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1637.678	3	545.893	461.552	.000 ^b
	Residual	468.362	396	1.183		
Total		2106.040	399			

a. Dependent Variable: Scores on third writing

b. Predictors: (Constant), Context scores, Time taken for discussion, Content scores

The *F* statistic as shown in table (4.29) represents a test of the hypothesis whether the R square proportion of variance in the dependent variable accounted for by the predictors is zero. It appears that the three predictor variables in the present study are not all equal to each other and could be used to predict the dependent variable, students' imaginative writing skills, as is indicated by a large *F* value (461.552) and a small significance level (.000). This indicates that for students to write their imaginative essays well, time for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk have a role to play.

Table 4.30: Regression: Coefficients on 3rd scores on imaginative writing.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	7.128	.663		10.754	.000
1 Time taken for discussion	1.311	.106	.808	12.412	.000
Content scores	.119	.099	.079	1.204	.229
Context scores	-.017	.078	-.006	-.223	.823

a. Dependent Variable: Scores on third writing

Table (4.30) provides information about the effects of the variables: time for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk on students' imaginative writing skills. As shown in the table, the unstandardized coefficients for time for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk are;1.311, .119 and -.017, which indicates to us that for the predictor variables, students' imaginative writing skills will be affected by,1.311, .119 and -.017, respectively. Examining the Beta coefficients for time for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk, it can be noted that these three variables are still obviously the better predictors of students' imaginative writing skills even after the third intervention.

Examining the *t* statistic for the variables, it can be seen that they are associated with significance values of 12.412, 1.204 and .223, indicating that the null hypothesis, that states that this variable's regression coefficient is zero when all other predictor coefficients are fixed to zero, can be rejected. This shows that students' imaginative writing skills can be predicted by time given for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk.

In other words, it appears that there is a statistically significant relationship between independent and dependent variables. Therefore it can be concluded that students' imaginative writing skills are dependent on time and content of guided classroom talk but time has more effect than content. The multiple regression of the three variables show that time has more effect on students' imaginative writing skills after the third intervention.

Regression on 4th writing

Tables 4.31 to 4.33 show the regression analysis for the fourth scores of imaginative writing for the three variables. This includes the model summary table, the ANOVA table and the coefficients table. The model summary table shows information about the quantity of variance that is explained by the predictor variables.

Table 4.31: Model Summary

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.882 ^a	.777	.776	1.08849

c. Predictors: (Constant), Context scores, Time taken for discussion, Content scores

Regression analysis was further performed on the fourth writing scores to establish whether the variables; time given for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context of guided classroom are major factors in students' imaginative writing skills. The results, as shown in table (4.31) includes information about the quantity of variance that is explained by the predictor variables time given for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk. In this model, the *R* value is .882^a, which indicates that there is a great deal of variance shared by the predictor variables and students' imaginative writing skills on the fifth writing scores. The *R* square value is .777, which indicates that 77.7% of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variables in the model.

Table 4.32: Regression ANOVA 4th scores on writing

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1636.857	3	545.619	460.514	.000 ^b
	Residual	469.183	396	1.185		
	Total	2106.040	399			

a. Dependent Variable: Scores on fourth writing

b. Predictors: (Constant), Context scores, Time taken for discussion, Content scores

The *F* statistic as shown in table (4.32) represents a test of the hypothesis whether the R square proportion of variance in the dependent variable accounted for by the predictors is zero. It appears that the three predictor variables in the present study are not all equal to each other and could be used to predict the dependent variable, students' imaginative writing skills, as is indicated by a large *F* value (460.514) and a small significance level (.000). This indicates that for students to write their imaginative essays well, time for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk have a role to play.

Table 4.33: Regression: Coefficients on 4th scores on writing

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	8.241	.663		12.422	.000
1 Time taken for discussion	1.344	.106	.828	12.712	.000
Content scores	.086	.099	.057	.869	.385
Context scores	-.009	.078	-.003	-.112	.911

a. Dependent Variable: Scores on fourth writing

Table (4.33) provides information about the effects of the variables: time for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context for this talk. As shown in the table, the unstandardized coefficients for time for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk are;1.344, .086 and -.009, which indicates to us that for the predictor variables, students' imaginative writing skills will be affected by,1.017, .952 and .749, respectively. Examining the Beta coefficients for time for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk, it can be noted that these three variables are obviously the better predictors of students' imaginative writing skills.

Examining the *t* statistic for the variables, it can be seen that they are associated with significance values of 12.712, .869 and -.112, indicating that the null hypothesis, that states that this variable's regression coefficient is zero when all

other predictor coefficients are fixed to zero, can be rejected. This shows that students' imaginative writing skills can be predicted by time given for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk.

In other words, it appears that there is a statistically significant relationship between independent and dependent variables. Therefore it can be concluded that students' imaginative writing skills are dependent on time and content of guided classroom talk but time has more effect than content. The multiple regression of the three variables show that time has more effect on students' imaginative writing skills.

Regression on 5th writing

Tables 4.34 and 4.36 show the regression analysis of the fifth scores of imaginative writing for the three variables.

Table 4.34: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.880 ^a	.775	.774	1.09451

d. Predictors: (Constant), Context scores, Time taken for discussion, Content scores

Regression analysis was performed on the fifth writing to establish whether the variables; time given for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context of guided classroom are major factors in students' imaginative writing skills. The results, as shown in table (4.34)includes information about the quantity of variance that is explained by the predictor variables time given for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk. In this model, the *R* value is .880^a, which indicates that there is a

great deal of variance shared by the predictor variables and students' imaginative writing skills on the fifth writing scores. The *R* square value is .775, which indicates that 77.5% of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variables in the model.

Table 4.35: Regression ANOVA 5th scores on writing

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Sig.
1	Regression	1636.169	3	545.390	455.266	.00	.000 ^b
	Residual	474.391	396	1.198			
Total		2110.560	399				

a. Dependent Variable: Scores on fifth writing

a. Predictors: (Constant), Context scores, Time taken for discussion, Content scores

The *F* statistic as shown in table (4.35) represents a test of the hypothesis whether the *R* square proportion of variance in the dependent variable accounted for by the predictors is zero. It appears that the three predictor variables in the present study are not all equal to each other and could be used to predict the dependent variable, students' imaginative writing skills, as is indicated by a large *F* value (455.266) and a small significance level (.000). This indicates that for students to write their imaginative essays well, time for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk have a role to play.

Table 4.36: Regression: Coefficients on 5th scores on writing

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	9.479	.667		14.209	.000
Time taken for 1 discussion	1.385	.106	.853	13.026	.000
Content scores	.045	.100	.030	.455	.649
Context scores	-.010	.078	-.003	-.124	.902

a. Dependent Variable: Scores on fifth writing

As shown in the table 4.36, the unstandardized coefficients for time for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk are;1.385, .045 and -.010, which indicates to us that for the predictor variables, students' imaginative writing skills will be affected by,1.385, .045 and -.010, respectively. Examining the Beta coefficients for time for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk, it can be noted that these three variables are obviously the better predictors of students' imaginative writing skills.

Examining the *t* statistic for the variables, it can be seen that they are associated with significance values of 13.026, .455 and -.124, indicating that the null hypothesis, that states that this variable's regression coefficient is zero when all other predictor coefficients are fixed to zero, can be rejected. This shows that students' imaginative writing skills can be predicted by time given for guided classroom talk and content for guided classroom talk.

In other words, it appears that there is a statistically significant relationship between independent and dependent variables. Therefore it can be concluded that students' imaginative writing skills are dependent on time and content of guided classroom talk but time has more effect than content. Context on the other hand has no effect on students' imaginative writing skills. This agrees with existing research. Graham and Perin (2007) argue that knowledge of context has little impact on writing skills unless a student is familiar with content. The multiple regression of the three variables show that time has more effect on students' imaginative writing skills.

4.6.1 Multiple Regressions of independent variables: time, content and context.

Table 4.37: Multiple Regression model summary

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.444 ^a	.197	.191	10.46669

a. Predictors: (Constant), Context scores, Time taken for

discussion, Content scores

Regression analysis was performed on the fifth writing to establish whether the variables; time given for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context of guided classroom are major factors in students' imaginative writing skills. The results, as shown in table (4.37) includes information about the quantity of variance that is explained by the predictor variables time given for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk. In this model, the *R* value is .444^a, which indicates that there is a

great deal of variance shared by the predictor variables and students' imaginative writing skills on the fifth writing scores. The R square value is .197, which indicates that 19.7% of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variables in the model.

Table 4.38: Multiple Regression ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	10661.567	3	3553.856	32.440	.000 ^b
	Residual	43382.393	396	109.551		
Total		54043.960	399			

a. Dependent Variable: writing skills average scores

b. Predictors: (Constant), Context scores, Time taken for discussion, Content scores

The F statistic as shown in table (4.38) represents a test of the hypothesis whether the R square proportion of variance in the dependent variable accounted for by the predictors is zero. It appears that the three predictor variables in the present study are not all equal to each other and could be used to predict the dependent variable, students' imaginative writing skills, as is indicated by a large F value (32.440) and a small significance level (.000). This indicates that for students to write their imaginative essays well, time for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk for guided classroom talk have a role to play.

Table 4.39: Multiple Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Sig.
	Coefficients				
	B	Std. Error	Beta	Sig	
(Constant)	44.909	6.380		7.039 .000	.000
1 Time taken for discussion	2.521	1.017	.307	2.479 .014	.014
Content scores	1.110	.952	.146	1.166 .244	.244
Context scores	-.302	.749	-.019	-.403 .687	.687

a. Dependent Variable: writing skills average scores

Table (4.39) provides information about the effects of the variables: time for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk on students' imaginative writing skills. As shown in the table, the unstandardized coefficients for time for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk are;1.017, .952 and .749, which indicates to us that for the predictor variables, students' imaginative writing skills will be affected by,1.017, .952 and .749, respectively. Examining the Beta coefficients for time for guided classroom talk, content for guided classroom talk and context for guided classroom talk, it can be noted that these three variables are obviously the better predictors of students' imaginative writing skills.

Examining the *t* statistic for the variables, it can be seen that they are associated with significance values of 2.479, 1.166 and .403, indicating that the null hypothesis, that states that this variable's regression coefficient is zero when all other predictor coefficients are fixed to zero, can be rejected. This shows that

students' imaginative writing skills can be predicted by time given for guided classroom talk and content for guided classroom talk. However, time has more effect than content.

In other words, it appears that there is a statistically significant relationship between independent and dependent variables. Therefore it can be concluded that students' imaginative writing skills are dependent on time and content of guided classroom talk but time has more effect than content. The multiple regression of the three variables show that time has more effect on students' imaginative writing skills. In other words, students' scores improved with increase in time for classroom talk before writing. This finding is in line with existing research. Corona, Spangenberg, & Venet, (1998) argue that providing ample time for students to fully experience the writing process should be key in the teaching of writing. They argue further that when substantial time is devoted to the process of writing, then in depth creative writing skills will develop in the students. Harris (1993) argues that writing is a process that requires students to be given more time to think and do some processes inside before they write. Graham & Perin, (2007b) argue that a good rule of thumb is that students should spend at least one hour or more each day in the process of writing—planning, revising, authoring, or brainstorming.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary, conclusions and recommendations from the study.

5.2 Summary of the Study

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the effect of guided classroom talk on secondary school students' imaginative writing skills. The study was guided by three objectives: 1) to determine whether amount of time given for guided classroom talk has an effect on public boys' secondary school students' imaginative writing; 2) to determine whether content of guided classroom talk has an effect on public boys' secondary school students' imaginative writing; and 3) to determine whether context of guided classroom talk has an effect on public boys' secondary school students' imaginative writing. The objectives of the study corresponded with these three research questions: 1) What is the effect of amount of time for guided classroom talk on public boys' secondary school students' imaginative writing skills? 2) What is the effect of content of guided classroom talk on public boys' secondary school students' imaginative writing skills? 3) What is the effect of context of guided classroom talk on public boys' secondary school students' imaginative writing skills? To achieve objectives of the study and answer the three research questions, the study tested these three hypotheses: 1) Time allocated for guided classroom talk has no significant effect on students'

imaginative writing skills. 2) Content for guided classroom talk has no significant effect on students' imaginative writing skills. 3) Context of guided classroom talk has no significant effect on students' imaginative writing skills.

The study used prospective self-control cohort research design and targeted Form Three students of public boys' secondary schools and their English language teachers. The study randomly selected one public boys' secondary school in Kimilili-Bungoma Sub-County and purposively selected Form Three students in that school together with their English language teachers to participate in the study. Data were collected using teacher questionnaires and individual interviews, classroom observation and documentary analysis checklists and pre- and post-tests. Validity and reliability of the research instruments were determined through piloting, expert guidance and test-retest approaches. Data were collected using analysis of variance and regression analyses and reported using tables and percentages. Key findings were reported using objectives of the study.

The first objective was to determine the effect of amount of time of guided classroom talk on students' imaginative writing skills. All the 10 teachers (100%) agreed through interviews and questionnaire that enough time for classroom talk will translate into good written essays. Their argument was that when learners exhaustively go over a topic with their peers, they are exposed to different viewpoints. They also hear their peers construct sentences and use new vocabulary which they borrow and use in their own writing. In other words discussions are an avenue where students put to test the language they intend to use in writing the essays. This language in practice is modified or reorganized and refined for better

writing. There was a significant difference in the means between groups relative to the time given for guided classroom talk. In the essays where learners discussed for 20 minutes to 30 minutes the essays not only communicated but did so pleasantly. These essays showed a lot of maturity, felicity in expressions and good general organization. The essays also looked fully developed. On the other hand the essays where students discussed for 10 minutes looked underdeveloped; some had premature endings. This is attributed to the fact that the students did not exhaust the topic during the guided classroom talk and, therefore, they spent a lot of time trying to imagine how their essays should be organized. This could be seen in their gestures as they spent their time staring at the roof of the classroom with others having their pens in the mouths. Some words, though used in the discussion, were found in such essays but they really did not connect to the subject matter well.

The second objective was to determine the effect of content of guided classroom talk on student's imaginative writing skills. Results indicated that content has no effect on imaginative essays in spite of familiar content spawning originality and creativity in students' essays. In teacher interviews and questionnaires all ten teachers concurred with this opinion. Their argument was that familiar topics encourage learners to adventure through writing. This was not the case with the written tasks. In real life, students will never come across only familiar content. From the present study, it was determined that given time, the teacher can make unfamiliar content familiar to students by engaging them in guided classroom talk.

The third objective of the present study was to determine the effect of context of guided classroom talk on students' imaginative writing skills. The findings indicate that instructional use of guided classroom talk is beneficial in writing imaginative essays. It holds promise for helping teachers describe their thinking about topics such as how they will teach, what content is most important, how to assess learning, and how to encourage students to be participatory in learning English. As students interact verbally in a face- to-face guided classroom talk, their explanations and descriptions are obviously different. These explanations are transferred to the essays they are asked to write on the topic. Though the interactions are different, classroom talks provide unique opportunities for students to learn and interact with each other. They borrow not only ideas but also sentence structures and vocabulary which they use in their written essays.

Based on the findings of the study, the amount of time for guided classroom talk has an effect on public boys' secondary school students' imaginative writing skills. However, context and content does not seem to have a significant effect. The study rejected hypothesis 1 which stated that time allocated for guided classroom talk has no significant effect on students' imaginative writing skills. This is because amount of time set aside to exhaustively talk about topics does improve the quality of students' writing. The study retained these two hypotheses: 1) Content for guided classroom talk has no significant effect on students' imaginative writing skills; and 2) Context of guided classroom talk has no significant effect on students' imaginative writing skills.

5.3 Conclusions

The purpose of the study was to establish effect of guided classroom talk on imaginative writing skills of public boys' secondary school students in Kimilili-Bungoma sub-county. The objectives of the study were context of guided classroom talk has a minor effect on imaginative writing skills in English among public boys' secondary school students; Time given for guided classroom talk has an effect on imaginative writing skills in English among public boys' secondary school students; Content of classroom talk has no effect on imaginative writing in English among public boys' secondary school students. Based on these objectives, the following were the major conclusions: Context of guided classroom talk has a minor significant effect on students' imaginative essays. Time given for guided classroom talk has a significant effect on students' imaginative essays. More time meant more questions, a lot time to clarify ambiguous statements and more practice in using language in spoken form.

This translated to mature essays, good expressions and creativity in organization and in writing the essays. Therefore time as a factor in imaginative writing should be used appropriately. When a teacher does not use time well, they kill students' ability to write well. For instance a teacher's frequent use of phrases/words that point to running out of time completely confuses students' brain power during classroom discussions and writing. Such phrases like; save time, because of time, try to summarize your argument, there is little time remaining among others inhibits learning. In essence, time given for learning can prevent good learning from taking place or can necessitate good learning. The idea is that the teacher is

custodian of time and he should be the only element worried about time but not the students. In this regard a teacher should plan their imaginative writing tasks well in advance and have a rehearsal session with other teachers before they go to teach. This session would help the teacher to evaluate their guidance during classroom discussion and then make fair judgment of their teaching. Content has no significant effect on students' imaginative essay. Familiar content encouraged creativity and originality in the essays but did change the students' scores in essays. A familiar content is an avenue for students to experience catharsis which is useful in managing students' emotional behavior. Many essays under this category were well developed. On the other hand an unfamiliar content kills the students' creativity and motivation to write. Content is key in creating fluency in learning though not accuracy. Familiarity of content is tied to the learners' experiences and their age not necessarily what is said to be common knowledge. Motivation is key to writing fully developed essays.

5.4 Recommendations from the Study

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations were made:

- Teachers should give students more time for guided classroom talks before they write imaginative essays.
- Teachers should avoid using phrases that point to running out of time when contacting guided classroom talk to students for purposes of good imaginative writing.

- The teachers should choose a topic for learners to write on while keeping in view the learners' age and experience.
- Teachers should teach imaginative essays to learners in a free and friendly environment.
- Teachers of language should allow for social learning through debates, hot seating and class discussions.
- There is need for teachers of English to be sensitized on the value of debates and other collaborative activities with a view to helping them see the value of such activities.
- Teachers should provide students with “guided intervention.” Whole class guided classroom talks provide teachers with the opportunity for “guided intervention.”
- Teachers should use questions to guide students to think about concepts and problems in addition to the questions students raise themselves when teaching imaginative writing.
- Whole class discussions must engage students in critical thinking. If students think that the teacher is the only one with the correct answer, they are not likely to be mentally engaged. The teacher therefore has to allow students more time to engage in critical thinking.
- There is need for workshops so that English language teachers are equipped with this approach to teach imaginative writing skills. The

Ministry of Education should organize such workshops with focus on re-training and re-tooling teachers on teaching imaginative writing essays.

- Policy and advocacy should focus on allocating more time per week on guided classroom talks than it is now so that teachers have enough time to engage learners fully and meaningfully before they write imaginative and/or any other essays.

5.5 Recommendations for further Research

- Future research should investigate effect of guided reading on imaginative writing skills among girls and students in mixed schools in the current and other contexts.
- Further research may focus also on effect of guided reading on other types of writing.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Dear Respondent,

I am a postgraduate student at The University of Nairobi. In fulfillment of this course, I am conducting a research on the effect of guided classroom talk on imaginative writing skills of public boys' secondary schools in Kimilili-Bungoma Sub- County.

As one of the key stakeholders in this sector, you have been selected to provide information regarding the same. I kindly request you to assist by completing the attached questionnaire. The information you will give is purely for academic purposes only.

Yours faithfully,

Wayong'o John Wanjala
E80/50142/2015
PhD student,
UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

APPENDIX II: TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

EFFECT OF GUIDED CLASSROOM TALK ON IMAGINATIVE WRITING SKILLS IN ENGLISH

Dear Respondent,

This is a questionnaire whose aim is to get your views on the effect of guided classroom talk on imaginative writing skills in English. As a respondent, your views will be very useful in providing information on the same. The information you give will be treated with confidentiality.

Kindly, give your response following the order below.

1. Strongly Agree (SA)
2. Agree (A)
3. Undecided (U)
4. Disagree (D)
5. Strongly Disagree (SD)

Please respond by ticking (√) the rating of each item that best describes your views about integrated writing skills.

NAME OF YOUR SCHOOL: _____

SECTION 1: BIO DATA

1. What is your highest qualification?
 - a) Masters ()
 - b) Bachelors Education ()
 - c) Bachelors Arts ()
 - d) Postgraduate Diploma ()
2. Your teaching experience
 - a) 0-4 years ()
 - b) 5-9 Years ()
 - c) 10 years and above ()

SECTION 2:

Answer the following by ticking appropriately.

Ability to speak well improves students' ability to write an essay.	YES	NO
The context in which students talk affects their imaginative writing on a given topic.		
When students hold discussions frequently on a topic, then they write good imaginative essays		
The time given to students to hold a discussion or presentations on a topic before they write improves their imaginative writing.		

TEACHING OF IMAGINATIVE WRITING SKILLS

Tick () against the description that best represents your opinion on each of the following statements. Indicate whether you strongly Agree (SD), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D), or Strongly (SD).

STATEMENT	SA	A	U	D	SD
Writing requires students to prepare adequately before writing.					
Adequate classroom talk sessions lead to good written imaginative essays.					
To write good imaginative essays, students must form groups and hold discussions on the topic before writing. Students should make presentations in class on the topic before they write an imaginative essay.					
Students are allowed to ask questions for clarity when listening to presentations.					
Students write good imaginative essays after they have been taken through the above activities.					

Thank you for your responses

APPENDIX III: TEACHERS INTERVIEW GUIDE

- 1) Briefly explain how you teach your students how to write imaginative essays in your class?

- 2) Do you guide your students during classroom group discussions before you ask them to write an imaginative essay on a given topic? Please rate such essays.

- 3) Briefly explain how you use other speaking activities to teach writing skills.

- 4) Do you find students responses i.e vocabulary, sentences or phrases similar to those that were in the talks in the group presentations and discussions? Please explain briefly.

Do you think enough time given for group discussions and presentations help the students write good imaginative essays? Yes/No. Give reasons for your answer.

Reason _____

- 5) Do you think the topic students write the imaginative essay on affects their scores? Yes/No. Explain.

- 6) What recommendations would you like to make as far as the use of guided classroom talk is concerned in teaching imaginative writing.

7)

Thank you for your responses.

APPENDIX IV: OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

Student Activities in Class	Ratings	Comments
Ability to speak well: use of gestures, body movements, eye contacts, use of all types of sentences, duration of talk and recognition of other's point of view.		
Context of classroom talk: recognition of other's point of view, reaction to teacher's/peer's point of view and group composition.		
Time given to classroom talk: 10, 15, 25 and 30 minutes.		
Content of classroom talk: type of topic and its relevance to learners.		

APPENDIX V: TEACHERS' TRAINING MANUAL.

Teachers' training manual on how to award scores on written tasks by students

These written tasks are intended to test the students' ability to communicate in writing. Communication is established at different levels of intelligibility, correctness (sentence patterns), accuracy (vocabulary), fluency (use of linking devices), pleasantness and originality. These written tasks will be marked and put in various classes depending on communication. The essays will be put in from categories A, B, C or D. It is important to determine how each essay communicates and in which category A, B, C or D.

IMAGINATIVE ESSAY SCORING RUBRIC

CATEGORY (MARKS)	REMARKS	
D CLASS 0-5	The student either does not communicate at all or his language ability is so minimal that the examiner practically has to guess what the student wants to say. The student fails to fit the English words he knows into meaningful sentences. The subject is glanced at or distorted. Practically, there is no valid punctuation. All kinds of errors ("Broken English").	
	D- 01-02	Chaotic little meaning whatsoever.
	D- 03	Flow of thought almost impossible to follow. The errors are continuous.
	D+ 04-05	Although the English is always broken and the essay is full of errors of all types, we can at least guess what the student wants to say.
C CLASS 06-10	The student communicates understandably but only more or less clearly. He is not confident with his language. The subject is often undeveloped. There may be some digressions. Unnecessary repetitions are frequent. The arrangement is weak and jerky. There is no economy of language; mother tongue influence is felt.	
	C- 06-07	The student obviously finds it difficult to communicate his/her ideas. He/she is seriously hampered by his/her limited knowledge structure and vocabulary. This results in many gross errors of agreement, spelling, misuse of prepositions, tenses, verb agreement and sentence construction.

	C 08	The student communicates but not with consistent clarity. His/her linguistic abilities being very limited, he/she cannot avoid frequent errors in sentence structure. There is little variety or originality. Very bookish English, links are weak, incorrect, repeated at times.
	C+ 09-10	The student communicates clearly but in a flat and uncertain manner. Simple concepts sentence forms are often strained. There may be an overuse of clichés, unstable idioms. Proverbs are misquoted or misinterpreted. The flow is still jerky. There are some errors of agreement, tenses and spelling.
B CLASS		This is characterized by greater fluency and ease of expression. The student demonstrates that he/she can use English as a normal way of expressing himself/herself. Sentences are varied and well-constructed. Some students become ambitious and even over ambitious. There may be items of merit of the one word or one expression type. Many essays in this category may be just clean and unassuming but they still show that the student is at ease with the language. There may a tendency to under mark such essays. Give credit for tone.
	B- 11-12	The student communicates fairly and with some fluency. There may be little variety in sentence structure. Gross errors are still found occasionally, but this must not be over punished by the examiner.
	B 13	The sentences are varied but rather simple and straight forward. The student does not strain himself in an effort to impress. There is a fair range of vocabulary and idiom. Natural and effortless. Some items of merit, economy of language.
	B+ 14-15	The student communicates his ideas pleasantly and without strain. There are errors and slips. Tenses, spelling and punctuation are quite good. A number of items of merit of the whole sentence or the whole expression type.
A CLASS		The student communicates not only fluently but attractively with originality and fluency. He/she has the ability to make us share his deep feeling, emotions, and enthusiasms. He/she expresses himself freely and without any visible constraint. Many ticks of merit which indicate that the student has complete command of language. There is no strain just pleasantness, clever arrangement, felicity of expression.
	A- 16-17	The student shows competence and fluency in using the language. He may lack imagination and originality which usually provide the ‘spark’ in such essays. Vocabulary, idioms, sentence structure, links, variety are impressive. Gross errors are very rare.

	A18	Positive ability. A few errors that are felt to be slips. The story or argument has a definite impact. No grammar problem, variety of structures. A definite spark. Many margin ticks.
	A+ 19-20	The student communicates not only information and meaning, but also especially the student's whole self; his/her feelings, tastes, points of view, youth, culture. This ability to communicate may express itself in a wide range of effective vocabulary, original approach, vivid and sustained accounting the case of narrative, well developed and ordered argument in the case of debate or discussion. Errors and slips should not deprive the student of the full marks he deserves. A very definite spark.

Source: Adapted from KNEC (2014)

**APPENDIX VI
DOCUMENT ANALYSIS FORM**

Student's Code.....

Teacher's Code.....

Item	Teacher Comments	Observable Marks On Student's Script	Actual Score Given By The Teacher	Researcher's Remarks
Topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Irrelevant -Follow instructions in the question -Remain focused to the question/topic -Avoid digressions -A good moral lesson -A mature essay 	//irr		
Ability to communicate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Vagueness -Mother tongue influence -Avoid repetitions -Redundancy -Overuse of clichés -Check on your spellings -Good expressions -Good use of vocabulary -Good organization 	— C — W.O R		
Length of the essay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Too short -Too long -Plan your essay -Premature ending -Quite good but not fully developed -Good choice of setting -Good use of suspense 	- 2A.D(Automatic deduction)		
Structure of the essay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Follow the given format -Begin with the given topic -Essay not related to the topic -Use of words appropriate -Good choice of language -A very mature essay 			

APPENDIX VII

RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION LETTER



NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Telephone: +254-20-2213471,
2241349, 3310571, 2219420
Fax: +254-20-318245, 318249
Email: dg@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke
When replying Please quote

9th Floor, Utalii House
Uhuru Highway
P. O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref: No.

Date:

NACOSTI/P/16/34538/13857

28th September, 2016

John Wanjala Wayongo
University of Nairobi
P.O. Box 30197-00100
NAIROBI.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "*Effect of guided classroom talk on imaginative writing skills of public boys secondary school students in Kimilili, Bungoma Sub County,*" I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Bungoma County** for the period ending **28th September, 2017.**

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Bungoma County** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf** of the research report/thesis to our office.


BONIFACE WANYAMA
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO


Copy to:

The County Commissioner
Bungoma County,

The County Director of Education
Bungoma County.

National Commission for Science, Technology And Innovation Is ISO 9001:2008 Certified

APPENDIX VIII
RESEARCH PERMIT

<p>THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT: MR. JOHN WANJALA WAYONGO of UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI, 591-30200 Kitale, has been permitted to conduct research in Bungoma County</p> <p>on the topic: EFFECT OF GUIDED CLASSROOM TALK ON IMAGINATIVE WRITING SKILLS OF PUBLIC BOYS SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN KIMILILI BUNGOMA SUB COUNTY</p> <p>for the period ending: 28th September, 2017</p> <p>..... Applicant's Signature</p>	<p>Permit No : NACOSTI/P/16/34538/13857 Date Of issue : 28th September, 2016 Fee Recieved : ksh 2000</p>  <p><i>[Handwritten Signature]</i> Director General National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation</p>
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