Exploring the Role of Oral Literature in Enhancing Learners' Language Proficiency: A Case of Three Selected Secondary Schools in Rwanda

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ABSTRACT

Studies conducted on the relevance of literature in boosting language demonstrate that it is an invaluable tool to enhance language skills. However, the role of oral literature in enhancing language performance in secondary schools has not received much investigation. This study investigates the role that teaching oral literature in English plays in learners' language performance. Adopting a quasi-mixed-methods approach, the study was conducted in three selected secondary schools from one district in Rwanda. This study was guided by input and output theory by Krashen Steven. The focused population was 15 participants (12 teachers and 3 deputy headteachers in charge of academic duties) from 3 selected secondary schools. Respondents were selected by a universal and stratified sampling procedure. Using a simple random sample, the study used both a questionnaire and an interview with school staff, with a particular focus on teachers of literature in English. Findings revealed that folk dramas and tales, myths, proverbs, sayings, and tongue twisters were the most focused components of oral literature by English teachers in the sampled schools. It was found that there is a significant positive effect between oral literature and learners' language performance ($r = 746$, $p < 0.01$). The study recommends that efforts be made to enhance the teaching of oral literature as it exposes learners to English language skills.

Key words: English, Language Performance, Learner, Oral Literature, Secondary Schools, Teaching
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I. INTRODUCTION

Research has demonstrated that the interrelationship between literature and language is not in doubt. Ordinarily, literature is a tool to enhance language proficiency. In particular, English literature is regarded as a significant factor that enhances the development of English language skills. English, as a global lingua franca, is a language of business, technology, tourism, education, and an excellent means of communication. It is no longer just a language but an essential skill for success in today's globalized world (Smokotin et al., 2014; Grigoryeva, 2022; Zeng et al., 2024). Numerous efforts are underway among various speech communities to enhance language, given its significant role. One of the means to this end is using literature in secondary school. Literature is an effective source of language learning for English language learners, according to Brahmadevara (2013). Indeed, through English literature, learners must develop language skills to help them communicate proficiently and collaboratively, so as to transform their lives and society in general (Bazimaziki, 2022). According to Nandwa and Bukenya (1990), oral literature consists of live performance observation, bright imagination, and creative expression. Oral literature plays a significant role in our society. Therefore, it is crucial for teachers of literature to understand their significant role in the lives of their students, as Mohammad and Muhammed (2021) posit that literature not only enriches English language teaching but also fosters the language learning of EFL students.

The role of teaching oral literature as the main teaching material was crucial in the early 20th century, as it was in ancient times. Proponents of the communicative approach have marginalized it for decades (Rahimpour, 2020). In the field of applied linguistics, the application of literature to language education has recently received a lot of attention and consideration. The inability to develop language and communication skills first raised the issue of

teaching language through literature at an educational conference at King's College, Cambridge, in 1963. In addition to the traditional approach, Bobkina and Dominguez (2014) emphasized the importance of literary texts as a useful tool in the language education and learning process.

Literature provides a language model for those who hear and read it. They learn correct sentence patterns and standard narrative structures and develop their writing skills (Wooten et al., 2018; Stan, 2015). Thus, learning oral literature allows a person to speak effectively and receive and respond to information appropriately (Gorjian & Asaadinezhad, 2015). In addition to language, oral literature provides students with important tools for understanding and analysis. Through literature, students learn to identify and analyze conflicts, themes, problems, and characters. Good writing, whether classical or modern, contains universal themes that apply to students' present and future lives. Literature is also a gateway to another culture. In addition, literature helps students understand and appreciate cultures and ideologies that differ from their own cultures and ideologies in time and space, as well as become aware of ideological traditions, emotions, and artistic forms in the heritage that these cultures provide (Carter & Long, 2011).

Teaching oral literature emphasizes its relevance to African society. Oral literature is an experience that most students of African descent grow up with and live out in their daily lives (Akivaga & Odaga, 2004). Parents, grandparents, siblings, relatives, and neighbors tell and sing stories, proverbs, riddles, and songs to children from an early age. When they are old enough, they begin to tell their own stories at home or at school. They often listen to songs and other types of performances at ceremonies, celebrations, and other public or private occasions. Proverbs, sayings, and imaginative language uses, known as oral literature learning, heavily influence normal, everyday conversation, particularly among older members of society (Wang, 2013).

Oluka and Opolot-Okulut (2011) discovered that the absence of a reading culture for oral literature genres such as riddles, whirlwinds, love languages, folk songs, autobiographical novels, etc., as well as legends, proverbs, and drama, significantly impacted students' foreign language proficiency in comparison to other regions. In Rwanda, the aim of teaching oral literature is not only to equip learners with literary skills but also to improve and develop individual language skills, namely writing, speaking, listening, and reading, in secondary schools (Ministry of Education [MINEDUC], 2010).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

English has become a global lingua franca that enables people to stay connected. Many parts of the world not only teach English as a subject from primary to tertiary education, but also adopt it as a medium of instruction in the education system. In Rwanda, the school system utilizes this language as a central and strategic tool for teaching most subjects. Lungu (2006) suggests that most secondary schools still need to explore their language teaching methodologies for success. In Rwanda, particular attention must be put into teaching English, given that there are still gaps perceived on the learners' side. Indeed, MINEDUC (2020) reports that insufficient teacher competencies in subject content, pedagogy, and languages of instruction (English) significantly affect curriculum delivery, jeopardizing students' performance. For instance, in Burera district, despite numerous efforts to enhance the English language using literature as a teaching tool, evidence (58.09% of learners) showed students' low English proficiency as they respond hardly to literary questions such as novels, plays, short stories, poetry, songs, etc., according to the National High School Exam Results 2018-2020 (MINEDUC, 2024).

In response to this situation, this paper aims to investigate how oral literature instruction improves students' language skills, specifically focusing on three schools from the Burera district in Rwanda. Studies (Knell, 2018; Sharma et al., 2022) have demonstrated the significant role oral language plays in developing L2 literacy skills and deepening cultural understanding. Therefore, this paper needs careful attention to the enhancement of English skills among Rwandans through literature.

1.2 Aims and Scope of the Study

The aim of this study is to delve into the role of Oral Literature holds for learners' language proficiency. The study was conducted in three secondary schools of Burera District located in Northern Province of Rwanda. Specifically, the study purposed to:
(i) Identify the forms of oral literature taught in secondary school in Burera District;
(ii) Explore the relationship between forms of oral literature with secondary school learners' language performance.

1.3 Research Hypotheses

H_0: Oral forms of literature do not significantly affect learners' language performance
H_1: Oral forms of literature significantly affect learners' language performance

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The input-output theory (Krashen, 1985) guides this research. The choice of this theoretical framework is dictated by the fact that this paper focuses on forms of oral literature in English as input and learners' language as output brought by teaching oral literature in English. This paper sought to reveal the relationship between the two variables: input, or forms of oral literature, and output, viz., learners' language performance. Krashen's input-output theory is considered appropriate to guide this study because it emphasizes that effective teaching of oral literature in English takes place when there is adequate interaction between learners and teachers. The learners acquire the second language material (L2), such as oral literature in English, by actively focusing on the teacher's words, thereby improving their language performance in tests and exams (Langer & Ngnoumen, 2018).

2.2 Empirical Review
2.2.1 Components of Oral Literature in English taught at Secondary

Secondary schools teach oral literature in English in a variety of ways. For instance, teachers can employ various methods and techniques when teaching drama. These methods can include, but are not limited to, the following techniques: the following teaching methods: Collaborative learning in group discussion: Drama instruction necessitates active participation in group discussions while teaching and learning. Teachers emphasize students' engagement in shared experiences, events, and situations, using literature as a working language. Working under the close supervision and guidance of a teacher, students are able to absorb information and engage in various forms of group communication. Thus, it promotes fluency through practice. In that vein, when learners interact by expressing their ideas and emotions using gestures and facial expressions, they develop their communicative competences (Syukri et al., 2022; Uysal & Yavuz, 2018).

Another technique is role-playing, which involves teachers assigning roles for learners to play in small groups or pairs. It provides a variety of opportunities for practicing communication. Role-playing is a literary element or form that helps students create and carry out events that improve communication skills. This allows students to better perform English aspects such as speaking and writing activities. The point made here is consistent with Mardiani and Hanifah (2023), who argue that collaborative drama activities improve learners' English language skills. As highlighted in Alasmari and Alshae'e's (2020), role play has outstanding potential to help learners experience knowledge in five different but complementary aspects, such as spatial, psychological, mental, social, and personal. It is believed that an effective combination of these enables learners to acquire the skills necessary to learn a language. It is critical to closely monitor prose instruction. According to Alasmari and Alshae'e (2020), script writing not only reinforces students' writing ability but also helps integrate other language skills. Indeed, teaching oral literature aims to facilitate a change of attitude in learners, broaden their awareness of literary heritage, sharpen their sensitivity, and build up their lexis. The teacher can achieve this by explaining and processing the plot, characters, themes, style, and setting, and connecting them to the objective of enhancing students' English achievement. Additionally, for learners to meaningfully seek out literary usefulness and develop their reading skills, they must be able to read, recite, and script literary works. It sharpens students' spoken English.

According to Deepa and Ilankumaran (2018), poetry serves not only as a literary model but also as a model for teaching language skills such as reading and writing. Poetry, as an effective method of teaching languages, helps to foster cultural understanding and language proficiency. As a result, teaching poetry also plays an important role in students' language performance. Poetry incorporates language teaching methods that focus on specific poems, thereby making lessons more practical. We accomplish this by employing rhythm, also known as saying, which refers to a series of words or phrases characterized by distinct connections between long and short syllables. Actually, we can use rhythm efficiently to teach English sounds and enhance learners' fluency in the language through speaking practice. Similarly, the use of choral reading in teaching oral literature leads to reading poems jointly in class, in rows, or in pairs. This style of oral literature instruction allows learners to develop the ability to read aloud, which helps boost their speaking skills in the short and long term.

Khatib et al. (2011) found that oral literature improves and develops individual language skills, namely listening, writing, speaking, and reading. Scholars suggest that oral literature serves as a composite structure that facilitates the acquisition of a target language, thereby enhancing the user's proficiency in that language. Mainland research shows that oral literature classes help students find their voices. So having students speak in another language and helping them express themselves have a lot in common (Mainland, 2013).

Finally, Murat (2015) believes that the role of a novel or a poem is to guide learners towards more linguistic expressions based on the real, situational, and authentic experiences that characters have in literary works. Likewise,

reading works of different literary genres allows students to become familiar with a variety of language forms, functions, and communicative meanings. Written texts like novels, short stories, poems, and plays provide words that aid learners in understanding how communication occurs in this country, particularly when presenting situations involving characters from diverse backgrounds, societies, and regions. Overall, literature and language are both interdependent. Oral literary forms are effective means to nurture language understanding and its use in human day-to-day communication. Those genres embody essential lexico-semantic and literary aspects, taken as a pool from which language learners can draw to enhance not only language proficiency (Bazimaziki, 2023).

Oral literature can help develop language proficiency because it fosters the creation of quality literature (Brahmadevara, 2013).

2.3 Conceptual Framework

Below is an illustrative presentation of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables of this study (Burhanuddn, 2018). The conceptual framework was developed by speculating on the relationship between teaching oral literature and learners' language performance in secondary school.

The dependent variable is the language performance of the learners, which is measured by their scores in national exams and district tests. Meanwhile, the independent variables include oral literature, which includes songs, folk drama, myths, legends, epics, tall tales, ballads, historical recitation, proverbs, rhymes, sayings, idioms, narratives, and tales such as fables, dilemmas, etiologies, tricksters, and monsters. Finally, the extraneous variable is students' behavior. The figure below provides a further diagrammatic explanation:
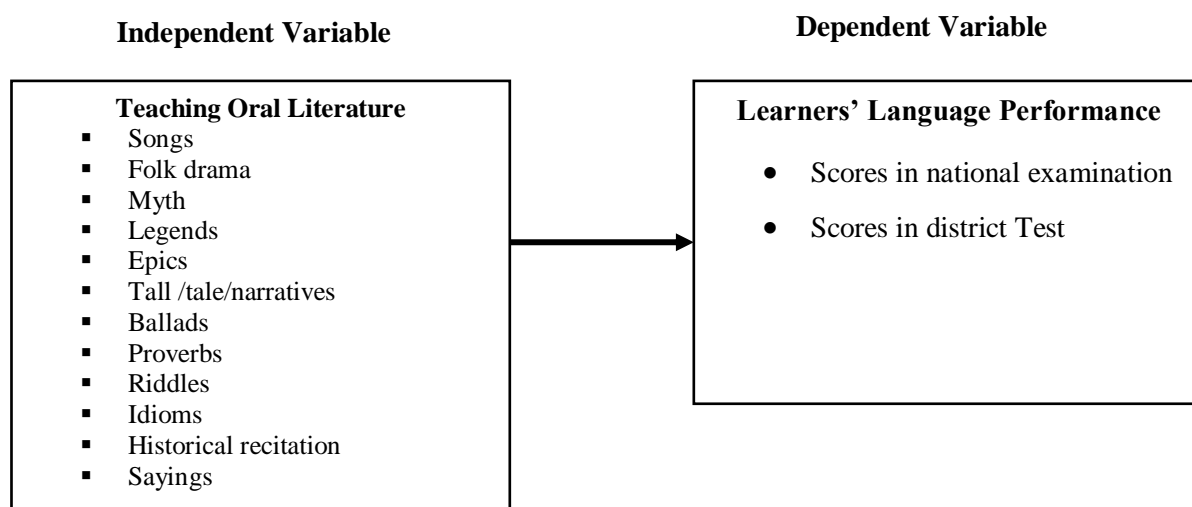
Independent Variable

Dependent Variable

Teaching Oral Literature
- Songs
- Folk drama
- Myth
- Legends
- Epics
- Tall /tale/narratives
- Ballads
- Proverbs
- Riddles
- Idioms
- Historical recitation
- Sayings

Learners' Language Performance
- Scores in national examination
- Scores in district Test

Figure 1
Conceptual Framework

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The focus population consisted of 15 participants (12 teachers and 3 deputy headteachers in charge of academic duties) from three selected secondary schools. The study adopted a quasi-mixed method. The researchers used both qualitative and quantitative tools to get relevant information.

Table 1
Research Design Components

Teaching oral literature and learners' language performance in secondary school in Rwanda		
	Typical Research Approaches	**Objectives**
Descriptive analyses	Use of questionnaire and interview	• Identify the forms of oral literature taught in secondary school in Burera District; • Explore the relationship between forms of oral literature with secondary school learners' language performance. • Examine how the oral literature in English teaching methods affects learners' English proficiency of secondary schools in Burera District.
Empirical data analyses	Documentary tools	• To find out the learners' language performance in secondary schools in Rwanda.

3.2 Description of the Study Area

This research was conducted in Burera District, tackling three secondary schools with language combinations (E.S. Kagogo, G.S. Rugarama, and GS. Butete). Three parastatal schools are managed by both the government and churches, and their location is in Burera District, alongside the volcano's base (Muhabura volcano). Table 2 provides a brief description of these schools:

Table 2
Three Secondary Schools with Language Combination in Burera District

S/N	School	Date of Establishment	Sector	Owner
1	E.S Kagogo	1989	Kagogo	GOV& Protestant Church
2	GS Butete	2005	Cyanika	GOV & Catholic Church
3	G.S Rugarama	1962	Rugarama	GOV & Evangelic friends church

3.3 Sample and Sampling Technique

The study used purposeful sampling. Respondents were chosen based on their ability to provide the required information. Simple random sampling was applied in selecting respondents from the three selected in order to provide an equal chance for them to be selected as samples. Based on Creswell's (2014) findings and research specifics, the researchers purposefully selected a sample size of 15 respondents using universal/census, following Kothari's (2009) recommendation that sample size computation is unnecessary when the total population is less than 100. Therefore, the total sample size of this study was 15 participants, including 12 teachers and 3 deputy headteachers.

3.4 Research Instruments

The tools used for this study were a questionnaire and an interview, as well as literature. The questionnaire consists of three parts. The first section includes four (4) demographic variables (gender, age, teaching experience, and university level). The second part aims to investigate the primary elements of oral literature in English, as taught in secondary schools within the Burera district. The third part is designed to correlate oral literary forms with the academic achievement and learning outcomes of learners in three selected high schools in Burera district. Twelve (12) teachers from three selected schools in the Burera district completed the questionnaires. Seven (7) open-ended interviews were conducted with three research managers from three universities. Documentation tools are used by collecting secondary data from school report cards on student learning outcomes.

3.5 Construction, Validity and Reliability of the instruments

For the effectiveness of the tool, an item bank was first created, containing 180 items. Experienced researchers carried out the initial construction, inspection, and reconstruction. The questionnaire was tested for further clarification with teachers from six schools, and the responses were satisfactory. Participants were asked to answer five points. Rating scale ranging from SD (1) = strongly disagree, D (2) = disagree, U (3) = undecided, A (4) = agree, and SA (5) = strongly agree. The validity values for different aspects of forms of oral literature in English taught in secondary school in Burera District were found to be more than 0.70 thresholds (0.733) computed from 132 items agreed on by judges (teachers and director of studies) as suitable out of all 180 items from the research tools that were being judged. A valid content index of 0.733 shows a satisfactory level of statistical testing for the social sciences

(Cohen et al., 2007). Using the midpoint mark of 2.5, it was assumed that a statement having a mean score of more than 2.5 would demonstrate evidence of all forms of literature in English taught in secondary school in Burera District. Similarly, it was assumed that the average mean score of more than 2.5, for example, 3.785 (consider table 2 of this research paper), was a high level for all forms of literature in English taught in secondary schools in Burera District.

3.6 Data Analysis and Presentation

Primary data was analyzed descriptively and inferentially, while data from interviews was subjected to content analysis, and it shows a vivid picture in looking at the data to know what happened so as to make a better analysis and conclusion of the data being presented. Additionally, the data presented in this chapter was taken from a field survey in three sampled secondary schools with language combinations where the study was carried out, pulling out responses from participants on "Teaching oral literature on learners' language proficiency." The logical arrangement of findings from general information to specific information was a major concern of the researcher to meet specific objectives.

IV. RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Results

Initially, quantitative data were entered into SPSS software (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). Descriptive statistics were used to analyze these data. The results are presented using tables and percentages. In the second step, qualitative data are copied from the strips on the paper. The goal is to clean up and edit the manuscript by removing typographical errors and inconsistencies. Analysis and interpretation of items have been developed, data coding and minimization have been completed, and trends in the data have been identified. During this process, the researchers took all the collected data, including field notes and interview transcripts, and began to get a clear picture of the information. To identify specific topics, the researchers encrypted the data and conducted content analysis.

4.1.1 Research Tools Return Rate

Out of an estimate of 15 participants selected from English teachers and head of studies from ES. Kagogo and G.S Butete as well as G.S Rugarama, 15 participants selected from three sampled secondary schools, 12 questionnaire items were distributed to the teacher respondents. All distributed questionnaire items were filled and received back with convincing maximum responses of 100%. Interviewees sat and responded to the questions of the interview, rendering a response rate of 100 percent.

Table 3

Research Tools Return Rate

Tools	Number of respondents	Questionnaire	Received back	Percent
Questionnaire	12	12	12	100
Interview	3	3	3	100

4.1.2 Demographic Characteristics

Table 4 shows that out of the 15 respondents who received the questionnaire and interview in the study, 10 were male and the remaining 5 were female. This presented 66.6% and 33.3%, respectively. This implies that there are more male teachers than female teachers in Burera secondary schools, and this was necessary for the study to balance male and female teachers' views and thoughts about forms of oral literature taught in secondary schools. The factors behind low language performance among learners in secondary schools and oral literature in English teaching methods affect learners' English proficiency in secondary schools in Burera District.

Furthermore, the respondents lie within different age groups ranging from 31 to 40 years (n = 7, 46.6%), followed by those ranging from 21 to 30 and 41 to 50 years (n = 3, or 20%). At the same time, 2 respondents, who also accounted for 13.3%, were in the age category of 51 years old and above (27–32). The implication here is that the respondents were sufficiently informed about the impact of teaching oral literature on learners' language performance in secondary schools in Burera District and, therefore, could give reliable, relevant, and informed responses that authenticate the results of the study.

The survey also showed that most respondents (73.3%) had completed their university studies and received a degree, while 20% held a diploma, and 6.6% held other qualifications (G3 ACA). None of the respondents in this study had a secondary certificate or master's degree. The high number of qualified teachers in this study implies

quality oral literature teaching activities, which would have a positive effect on learners' achievement in the English language.

Last but not least, the majority of the respondents, 7 (46.6%), had been English teachers for 6–10 years; 3 (20%) of teachers have experience of 11–15 years; those who have been English teachers for less than 1 year, 16 years and more, were 2 (13.3%); and 1–5 years were 1 (6.6%). These findings suggest that teaching experience is a crucial variable in students' learning outcomes in secondary schools.

Table 4
Demographic Information of Respondents

Attribute	Response	Frequency	Percent
Gender of respondents	Male	10	66.6
	Female	5	33.3
Age of respondents	21-30 yrs	3	7.8
	31-40 yrs	7	46.6
	41-50 yrs	3	20.0
	51 and Above	2	13.3
Level of education of respondents	Secondary certificate	0	0.0
	Diploma	3	20.0
	Bachelor degree	11	73.3
	Masters	0	0.0
	Others	1	6.6
Experience in teaching English	Below 1 yr	2	13.3
	1-5 years	1	6.6
	6-10 years	7	46.6
	11-15 years	3	20.0
	16 years and above	2	13.3

N=15

4.1.3 Mean and SD Scores of Forms of Oral Literature in English

The results showed that folk drama is the type of literature that most teachers in the sampled secondary schools use to help their students do better in English. This is shown by the fact that the mean value was 4.25, which is close to 4 (agree), and the standard deviation was .452, which shows that the responses were not very different from one another. Also, the results showed that myth was used to teach oral literature in three sampled secondary schools in Burera District (mean = 4.08, which tends towards a maximum 4 (agreeing) and weak SD = 289, which shows that respondents have almost the same reactions to the assertion). However, the teachers' agreement on the use of legends to teach oral literature was not unanimous (mean = 3.50, standard = 1.624). Furthermore, the respondents showed a lack of awareness regarding the use of epics in teaching oral literature, with a mean score of 3.17 and a standard deviation of 1.697. Moreover, respondents unanimously agreed that teachers used tall tales and narratives in G.S. Rugarama, G.S. Butete, and ES. Kagogo to teach oral literature (mean = 4.67, standard deviation = 651). In addition to these findings, the teachers contended that the use of proverbs, idioms, and riddles in oral literature instruction enhances learners' speaking proficiency and performance, with the mean value of all oral literature components approaching a maximum of 4.

The researchers conducted a study to investigate the use of historical recitation in oral literature instruction at G.S. Rugarama, G.S. Butete, and ES. Kagogo. The results reveal a significant number of respondents expressing disagreement with the assertion, as evidenced by the mean value of 2.25 and the robust standard deviation, indicating a range of responses from different respondents. This suggests that teachers in secondary schools in Burera District did not use historical recitation to teach oral literature. Teachers in Burera District argued that they primarily used sayings and tongue twisters in teaching oral literature, as indicated by mean values of 4.25 (full agree) and 3.92 (approach agree). Based on the above findings, it is clear that folk dramas and tales, myths, proverbs, sayings, and tongue twisters were the most focused components of oral literature by English teachers in ES. Kagogo and G.S. Rugarama, as well as G.S. Butete.

The results presented in Table 5 indicate that the respondents consider the forms of English spoken literature taught in three selected partially state-owned schools in Burera district satisfactory (average mean = 3.785, standard deviation = 1.078). The majority of respondents agree with the statement regarding the teaching of English-language literary forms in sampled and selective secondary schools in Burera district.

Table 5
Mean and SD Scores of Forms of Oral Literature in English

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Folk drama	12	4	5	4.25	.452
Myth	12	4	5	4.08	.289
Legends	12	1	5	3.50	1.624
Epics	12	1	5	3.17	1.697
Tall tale	12	3	5	4.67	.651
Ballads	12	1	5	2.75	1.485
Proverbs	12	2	5	4.58	.900
Riddles	12	3	5	4.50	.798
Idioms	12	2	5	3.50	1.243
Historical recitation	12	1	5	2.25	1.422
Sayings	12	1	5	4.25	1.138
Tongue Twisters	12	1	5	3.92	1.240
Average mean value				**3.785**	**1.078**

4.1.4 Level of Influence of Teaching Oral Literature on Learners' Language Performance

The figure below organizes the data into numerically appropriate categories for the study's second objective. That is, all the respondents (English teachers) when asked their rating on the influence level of teaching forms of oral literature on learners' language performance, 7 teachers respondents representing 58.33 percent rated it as high compared to 4 respondents representing 33.3 percent who rated it as medium, while another 1 respondent representing 8.33 percent said that the level of influence of teaching subgenres of oral literature on learners' language performance was very high. The results showed that the level of influence of teaching forms of oral literature on the learners' language performance at G.S. Rugarama, G.S. Butete, and ES. Kagogo as well, was high as far as it was concerned.
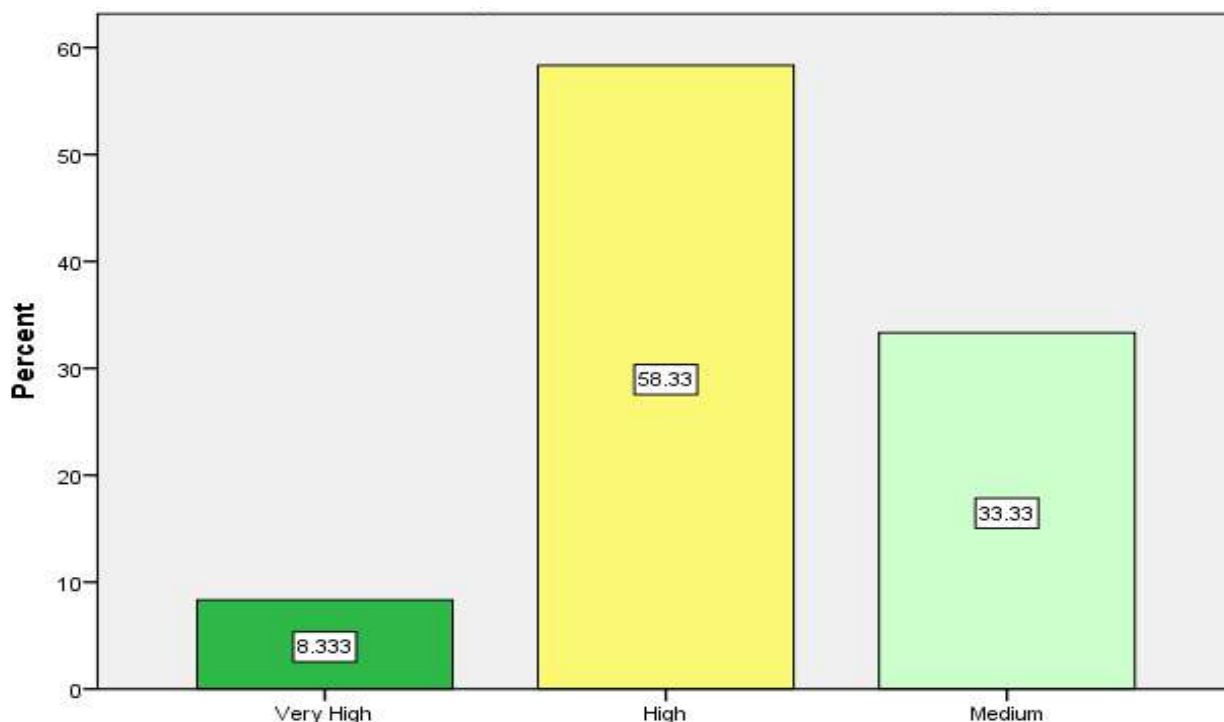

Figure 2
The Level of Influence of Teaching Oral Literature on Learners' Language Performance

4.1.5 Correlation between Forms of Oral Literature and Learners' Language Performance

According to the survey results in Table 6, the value of the correlation coefficient between the form of English oral literature and the language performance of learners is (0.746), and the significance level is (0.015), which is

higher than 0.01. In other words, there is a strong positive and significant relationship between the forms of oral literature taught in schools and learners' language proficiency.

Table 6
Correlation between Forms of Oral Literature and Learners' Language Performance

			Oral literature	Learners' Language Performance
Spearman's rho	Oral literature	Correlation Coefficient	1	.746**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	12	12
	Learners' Language Performance	Correlation Coefficient	.746**	1.
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	12	12

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
r = ±0.01 to ±0.35: Weak relationship; r = ±0.36 to ±0.65: Moderate relationship; r = ±0.66 to ±0.99: Strong relationship

4.1.5 Linear Regression of Teaching Oral Literature in English and the Learners' Language Performance

Table 7 shows the relationship between forms of oral literature in English and learners' language activities. The model shows that 27.31% of variation in student learning outcomes is explained by oral literature teaching (R = 0.2731). Based on the significant coefficient (ß = 0.337, p<0.05), the null hypothesis, H_0: Oral forms of literature do not significantly affect learners' language performance, was rejected. This indicates that oral literature significantly influenced the academic performance of learners in secondary schools in the Burera District, thereby confirming the alternative hypothesis.

Table 7
Linear Regression of Teaching Oral Literature in English and the Learners' Language Performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	ß	p-value
1	.2731[a]	.746	. 716	.337	.027

Predictor: teaching Oral literature in English   Criterion: Learners' language performance

4.2 Presentation of Qualitative Data
4.2.1 Main Components of Oral Literature in English Taught in Sampled Secondary Schools

In an emailed response of 27 January, 2022 (9:30), head of studies of G.S Butete beheld that the forms of oral literature that are taught at G.S Butete are teaching of drama through group discussion with a small group of learners who communicate face-to-face in order to fulfill a common purpose and achieve a group goal. He added that teachers use role-playing by having learners role-play in small groups or pairs to create some communication practice opportunities.

In addition, the dierector of studies (DOS) of ES. Kagogo observed that the multitude of poems, folk tales, proverbs, riddles, and other sayings in modern fiction and other works of art show a very elaborate use of oral literature and therefore teachers cannot ignore oral literature.

Correspondingly, the findings are in tandem with a face- to- face computer based interview with the heads of studies of G.S Rugarama (27th January, 2022: 9:00 AM). Head of studies of G.S Rugarama said that oral Literature has always been an important art of moulding learners to fit within their environment and social milieu. Usually, the author aims to convey human emotions to other people (audience), and also emotionally touches the target audience to convey human perception and know-how.

Folktales, myths, legends and proverbs as well as the entertaining aspect has been utilized not only to make learning interesting but also to sharpen the creative genius of learners as they grow up and find their niche within the various social boundaries and improve learners' language performance.

4.2.2. Relationship between Teaching Oral Literature in English and Learner's Language Proficiency

Virtually, the interviewers emphasized the effects of oral literature in English teaching methods on the learners' English proficiency of secondary schools in Burera District. The respondents mentioned that oral literature in English teaching methods enables learners to fluently speak English, helps to remove fear of discussion, enabling learners to lead different panel discussion and public talks.

Similarly, oral literature is a literary tradition transmitted from one generation to another through the word of mouth. To understand a literary work, one needs to look for basic elements such as author, narrator, character, theme/subject, message (moral lesson), setting/tone/attitude, mood, and mood/emotion.

Oral literature in English teaching help learners in memorizing what they study and learners become able to exchange the learnt materials as some oral literature is sung/recited; learners are able to recite what they learn and be able to speak English fluently.

4.3 Discussions

Generally, arts-integrated teaching brings lessons to life and helps learners realize better language achievements, as it triggers their natural desire for active learning and challenges them to use creativity and critical thinking (Alasmari & Alshae'e, 2020). Similarly, organized and systematic teaching of the three literary genres can enhance the English language (Adejimola, 2013). Results indicate that dramas and folk stories, myths, proverbs, sayings, and tongue twisters are the items most targeted by English teachers in secondary schools, specifically at Kagogo Secondary School, G.S. Rugarama, and G.S. Butete. To increase students' receptivity, secondary school teachers must be proficient in teaching oral literature.

Qualitative data showed that teaching rhythm in middle school can effectively teach English sounds. Teaching prose, on the other hand, helps develop learners' reading skills and trains students' English-speaking ability. In addition, plays, stories, proverbs, sayings, and slurs help learners absorb information, acquire a variety of group communication skills, and develop their English fluency through practice. Practices include crafting meaningful sentences to convey ideas, thoughts, and emotions, as well as mastering pronunciation, social variation in language, and grammar.

This result aligns with James' perspective that schools teach English literature not only for entertainment and critical thinking but also for its various expected functions in language acquisition, opinion formation, and moral development. To achieve all of this, the teachers must properly teach the three genres of literature, namely drama, prose, and poetry, as well as their aspects (Lazar, 1994).

The study also determined the relationship between oral literature in English and learners' language performance. The study's findings indicate a high positive relationship ($r = 0.746$) between oral literature and learners' language functioning ability. Therefore, 0.746 (i.e., 74.6%) indicates that oral literature affects learners' language performance by 74.6%, and 25.4% comes from other factors (moderate variables) that can also affect learners' language performance.

The researchers tested the significant impact of oral literature in English teaching methods on the language performance of learners in secondary schools in the Burera district. The researchers employed linear regression analysis, presenting the results in Table 4 of this paper. The model reveals that oral literature instruction explains 27.31% of the variation in student learning outcomes ($R = 0.2731$). It also shows a significant relationship between oral literature teaching and learner performance ($\beta = 0.337$, $p = 0.027$ greater than 0.01). These results indicate that a one-unit improvement in spoken English literature resulted in a 0.317-unit increase in learners' language performance at three selected high schools in Burera district. This allows the researchers to reject the formulated hypothesis that "forms of oral literature do not significantly affect learners' academic performance in secondary schools in Burera District" and confirms the alternative one.

In tandem, Kadzamira (2012) found that the development of literature-based instruction in new and meaningful readings that can be applied to many areas of language teaching and learning are factors that influence students' linguistic performance in senior secondary schools.

V. CONCLUSION& RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

The main objective of this study was to investigate the role of oral literature in enhancing learners' language proficiency in secondary schools in Rwanda. More specifically, this study sought to identify forms of oral literature taught in secondary schools in Burera District, scrutinize the relationship between forms of oral literature and secondary school learners' language performance, and examine whether oral literature in English teaching methods affect learners' English proficiency in secondary schools in Burera District. There is a significant positive relationship between literary forms and learner performance, as demonstrated by Spearman's correlation index ($r = 0.746$). Oral literature affects the language performance of learners in ES. Kagogo and G.S. Rugarama, as well as G.S. Butete at 74.6%.

5.2 Recommendations

In light of the questions that guided this study, the following recommendations were made: First, training, refresher courses, and seminars are recommended as strategies for the regular development of oral literature teaching skills. Supplementary reading textbooks, classroom books, review books, and stationery books should be provided as well. It should be noted that when planning for secondary students, more attention should be paid to classroom-related activities, as there should also be an overall plan for teachers to teach according to the necessary and modern requirements. To shape learners' English-speaking ability, research suggests the development of literacy skills at an early age.

Further, a learner-centered approach is recommended for teaching literature in English. Group discussions should be promoted by intensifying debate sessions. The culture of writing and speaking competitions should be promoted among learners to improve language skills and critical thinking in secondary schools across the country. Lastly, notwithstanding the results of this study, a similar inquiry involving a larger sample size should be conducted to gauge similarities and differences among public and private schools.

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