IMPLEMENTATION OF COMPETENCE BASED ENGLISH CURRICULUM IN TANZANIA SECONDARY SCHOOLS: How far has it been successful?

Godlove Elioth Kiswaga, Masters in English Education

Yogyakarta State University Indonesia

This paper aims at investigating the achievement of competence based syllabus in ordinary level secondary schools in Tanzania with the view to suggest the improvement strategies. The researcher was astonished with continues massive failure of students in English language after introducing the syllabus based on communicative competence in 2012. Data were collected through questionnaires and documentary review. Three schools were involved in data collection and 60 students, 20 randomly selected from each school. Theoretical questions and practical questions were about essay writing were given to students. The data were quantitatively and qualitatively analyzed. Common European Frame-work of Reference was used as conceptual frame-work.

The results showed that more students were able to answer theoretical questions than practical questions. Therefore most of them were below B1 level as far as CEFRE is concerned. Grammar was a critical problem.

The researcher recommended that more practical exercises should be involved in competence curriculum implementation with combination of grammar too.

*Key words; **Communicative Competence Language Teaching, Common European Frame – work of Reference, Teaching Essays by Theory and Practice***

1.Introduction

1.1 Background of Study

1.1.1 History of Language Teaching in Tanzania Before 2005

Before 2005, Tanzania used Linguistic Competence Based Curriculum. This curriculum based on linguistic competence and little communicative skills such as reading and writing. The syllabus in ordinary level emphasized on grammatical form. Students were taught parts of speech in English language and how to make sentences. Reading story books and writing dictations and sentences were also included but in relation to grammar. Students were assessed through National Examination in what Brown (2003) calls paper and pencil tests. In advanced level the syllabus emphasized on the morphology, syntax, semantics and phonology what Canal and

swain, 1980 in Brown (2007) states this as grammatical competence. The second part was Literature where students were required to read selected books and poems and understand the content, this is textual competence according to Brown (2007). The National Examination were done through paper and pencil test (Brown 2003;11)

1.1.2 History of Communicative Language Teaching in Tanzania after 2005

In 2005 the curriculum was suddenly changed to Communicative Competence. It was manifested through the syllabus which a teacher had to use to prepare lesson plan in the class. The syllabus emphasized on four language skills, reading, writing, listening and speaking with little grammar this one among the criteria for communicative language teaching according to Brown(2000). The syllabus stated the teacher and the learners roles as related to Richards (2006:4) that there should be cooperation between them in the learning process, the teacher should be a facilitator, it should be learner centered and the activities should be done in form of shearing within peer groups, the teacher also should make use of errors to facilitate the learning process. The syllabus suggests the communicative competence activities like role play, pear of work activities and group work .The suggested activities are in line with Brown (2000:44) who gives the alternative of using video, television, audiotapes web computer especially when the teacher is not a native speaker of the language. In the nut shell the principles five principles stated by Brown (2000:46-51) cooperative and collaborated learning, interactive teaching, learner centered, whole language and content based have been reflected in the syllabus also the 22 features of communicative language learning have been reflected in the syllabus.

However the implementation of the communicative syllabus in classroom situation is not done, the teachers relay on tradition methods almost in all activities conducted in class the teacher is the main controller of the class, students are passive learner they just write the notes prepared by a teacher. Also the assessment is summative and is paper and pencil without integrating the four skills in   language use. This is contrary to performance based assessment as suggested by (Brown, 2003:10-11). He stated that paper and pencil tests do not reflect the communicative language assessment instead in communicative approach the learner should be assessed through being involved in the actual performance of the behavior that is measured in the interactive tasks, learners are measured in act of speaking, requesting, responding in combining listening and speaking in integration with reading and writing. In actual fact the students are measured in

writing and reading though one National Examination set on the same date for all students without considering the context.

After introduction of communicative competence based curriculum there were massive failure of students in English language. However it was believed that these changes would lead to student`s mastery of English language better than it was in structural based curriculum. Example the trend for performance of English National exams for ordinary level from 2010 to 2012 was as shown in the table below

YEAR	CANDIDATES SAT FOR ENGLISH EXAMINATION	CANDIDATES PASSED	% OF THOSE PASSED
2010	350753	106392	30.3
2011	335799	101118	30.1
2012	397005	103574	26.09
TOTAL	1083557	311084	86.49

Source, BEST (2011-2013)

This data were taken five years after introduction of competence based curriculum in Tanzania, 2012 it was too much and this trend has never become   better. Also in January 2016 , the ministry of education and Vocational Training announced the form four results in which English was the second in rank among the subject with worst performance and the rate of performance was less than 50%. Though the syllabus as a document has features related to Communicative Language Teaching. Its implementation practically is failure.

1.2 The Purpose of the Study

Therefore this paper aimed at investigating the implementation of Communicative Competence syllabus used in Tanzania in view of suggesting improvement strategies. Specifically this paper investigated essay writing   theoretical and practically because essay writing is the most part

which is always measured in National Examination this would reflect the real communicative competence of the students.

2. Literature Review

2.1Paragraphing in Essay Writing

Paragraphing is essential part of the basic structure of an essay. Paragraphs are the collection of related sentences. Every paragraph has related sentences which explain one idea. Mostly, the first sentence in a paragraph is called the topic sentence and the rest are supporting sentences. Normally a paragraph has five sentences; the topic sentence, three supporting sentences and the concluding sentence. The topic sentence introduces the topic of the paragraph, the supporting sentences explain further on the topic by giving examples and illustrations and the concluding sentence gives the general conclusion of the paragraph. Sometimes the number of the sentences in the paragraph depends on the length of the whole essay, so it is not necessary that there should be a specific number of sentences.

According to Germov (2000), a single paragraph has an introduction, main body and conclusion. The introduction of the paragraph should start with the topic sentence, then the main body of the paragraph should present both descriptive material and analytic material and the last part of the paragraph should consist of the linking sentence which provides a logical flow to the next paragraph.

Also it has been claimed that a paragraph is like a fence that holds the words together and the words inside the paragraph work together for a common purpose. Hence the paragraph must have a topic sentence, an elaboration of the topic sentence, the idea presented, evidence and analysis, then a transitional phrase (Hamilton, 2011).

Wingersky (2009) supports the idea of the relationship of sentences in a single paragraph. He argues that the topic sentence is the one which carries the main idea of the paragraph and it commits the writer to explain and to illustrate the main ideas; all other sentences help to shape the focused idea in the topic sentence. Two parts of the topic sentence are keyword or phrase and the direction or general word which may be a conclusion and opinion or a statement about a

topic sentence. Furthermore, he also emphasizes that the structure of the paragraph is made by a topic sentence, support sentences and the conclusion. This structure is recursive after every single paragraph in an essay.

Banjo et al. (2007) emphasize the importance of arranging sentences to make a paragraph. In their explanation, they express the necessity of having five sentences in a single paragraph. They explain that there must be a topic sentence and three related sentences and the concluding sentence in a single paragraph. Therefore if there are five paragraphs then there must be five topic sentences too. The idea that an essay must consist of paragraphs is also explained by Msanjila (2005) who used documentary analysis and Questionnaires in collection of data and the recommendation of the study was education is to be provided to the secondary school students on how to write good paragraphs.

2.2 Coherence and Cohesion in a Paragraph

A good essay should be both cohesive and coherent. Coherence and cohesion have long been recognized as important textual elements of "good'' writing (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Coherence refers to elements consisting of cohesion and register. A text is a passage of discourse which is coherent in these two aspects: it is coherent with respect to the context of situation and therefore consistent in register, it is coherent with respect to itself and therefore cohesive. Cohesion refers to the relations of meaning that exist within a text. In other words, cohesion can be defined as linguistic devices that are used to link one part of the text to another. Cohesion is manifested though the use of reference (the indication of the information from elsewhere such as personals, demonstrative and comparatives, substitution, ellipses, conjunction and lexical cohesion repetition of the same or relative lexical items) (Halliday & Hasan,1976)

The Theory of Cohesion was challenged by Carrel (1982) who argues for the importance of reader's background knowledge basing on schema theory. The authors argued that text understanding is the result of the interactive process between the text and the prior knowledge or memory of the reader or listener. Not only structure and content of the text but the reader`s operation on the text that should be taken into consideration.

Hinkel (2004) defines coherence as the organization of discourse with all elements present and fitting together logically. The author explains that a coherent essay consists of the introduction, a thesis statement and conclusion.

According to Ahamed (2010) cohesion is a semantic concept and it refers to the relationship of meaning that exists within the text and that defines it as a text. Ahamed explains cohesion at both macro and micro levels. The macro level refers to linking ideas in an essay and the micro level to connecting sentences and paragraphs in an essay.

Ahamed's study (ibid) on problems with cohesion and coherence in English as a foreign language writing in Egypt reveals that most students had problems with coherence and cohesion in their essays. Moreover, students were not able to link the introduction, thesis statement, topic sentences and conclusion, and some had problems sequencing the ideas. Finally, the author suggests that there should be an essay-writing syllabus to enable the students to write essays properly.

Thus, it is essential for a written essay to be coherent and cohesive for the purpose of making it communicate what it is supposed to communicate from the writer to the readers, although coherence and cohesion alone cannot make an essay clear if the reader has no background knowledge of the content which is discussed in the text. Cohesion and coherence must be integrated with all other criteria to make the essay well understood.

2.3 Detection of Spelling and Punctuation Marks in an Essay

Spelling and punctuation are essential parts of an essay. Misspelling and improper punctuation make the essay illegible. The illegibility of an essay will bring confusion to the reader and therefore hinder effective communication between the writer and reader.

According to Coyle and Peek (2005), the essential skill in writing is the ability to generate a "correct" sentence followed by another correct sentence and so on. A correct sentence, according to Coyle and Peek (ibid) is one which follows the conversions of Standard English in its punctuation, spelling and grammar. A correct sentence will make the writer communicate ideas

clearly, accurately and effectively. It is easy to produce fragments when the writer does not punctuate properly, follow grammatical rules, and spell properly. The fragments are mostly produced especially in the examination essay when the writer is describing something, telling a story or explaining a sequence of events or actions (ibid).

Punctuation must be carefully used when writing essays, and most of the students' essays have common errors in punctuation where they fail to use apostrophes, colon and semicolon (Spurr, 2005).Similarly Msanjila (2005) and Mwaseba (1997) argue that proper spellings are essential for good essays. They found that most of the students cannot spell and punctuate properly.

2.4.Conceptual Framework

The study used the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).as the conceptual frame work to guide the assessment of Form Three English essays. Historically CEFR can be traced back to theoretical proposals made by philosophers like Ludwig Wittgenstein in the 1950s and social linguists such as Dell Hymens. The approach regards language users as social agents who develop general and particular communicative competence while trying to achieve their everyday goals (Jimenez, 2011).

The CEFR was published by the Council of Europe in 2001. It describes language learners' ability in terms of speaking, reading, listening and writing, categorized at three levels which are A, B and C. Level `A` is for the basic user of the language, level `B` is for the independent user and level; `C` is for the proficient user. These levels are divided into six sub levels of A_1, A_2, B_1, B_2 and C_1, C_2.

Level A is divided into A_1*the breakthrough* and A_2*waystage*; Level B is divided into B_1*threshold* and B_2*vantage*. Similarly, Level C is divided into C_1 *effective operational proficiency* and C_2 *mastery*. These two levels combine to form the proficient user. The CEFR also provides explanations on what a learner must be able to do corresponding to the level indicated. The levels have been indicated starting from $A_1$the lowest level of competence in language to $C_2$the highest level of competence in learning language (Council of Europe, 2001a).

The CEFR is useful in assessing the learners' proficiency in English, since it provides the common basis for elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations and textbooks across Europe (Council of Europe, 2001a).

The levels of competence illustrated by CEFR range from general proficiency in a language from A_1 as the lowest to C_2 as the highest with different actions which the learner has to perform according to the levels. With regard to writing skills, the CEFR has provided a framework which illustrates the levels of competence in writing skills from A_1 the learner is able to write some words, and in A_2 the learner is able to connect words into simple sentences; In B_1 level the learner is able to write simple connected texts on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. In B_2 the learner is able to write a clear detailed text on a wide range of subjects related to personal interests. At this level the learner is also able to write an essay giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view. At Level C1 the learner is able to express personally in a clear and well structured text his or her point of view at some length. Moreover, the learner can write about complex subjects in a letter, an essay or a report, underlining what he or she considers being the salient issues. At the last level C2 the learner can write a clear and smoothly flowing. The learner can also write complex letters, reports or articles, and can review and summarize different literary works of professionals.

The present study aims at investigating the competence of Form Three essay writing compared to the levels described by CEFR. It therefore investigates whether the Form Three have reached the level of writing English essays. The study assesses whether Form Three students are proficiently ready to do the Form Four National Examinations in the following year, the examinations which give more weight to essay questions. The assessment considers organization of different sentences to form paragraphs. It also pays due regard to spelling, punctuation and grammar.

3. **Methodology**

3**.1 Research Design**

Research design is a procedural plan that is adopted by the researcher to answer questions validly, objectively and economically (Ranjit, 1996:74). This study used case study design and employed both qualitative and quantitative methods in the analysis of data. It is designed to examine students' competence in essay-writing. It was chosen to test whether essay-writing

competence relates to performance in National Examinations. The research delineates the problems which secondary students face in writing essays especially in their classroom assignments and examinations, and hence determine the level of competence in essay writing.

3.3 Study Area

The study was conducted in Mbeya Municipality. Mbeya is one of the regions located in the Southern Highlands in Tanzania. The region is a fair representative of any other region in Tanzania with the assumption that Form Three students use the same syllabus. Mbeya was chosen to represent other regions because it was accessible to the researcher, and it was possible to get different schools with different levels of pass marks in their national examinations. For instance, St. Francis Secondary School ranges within top ten best schools in Tanzania, Meta Secondary School has intermediate pass marks, and Lyoto Secondary School a ward school has the lowest pass mark compared to the two.Hence, St. Francis Girls' Secondary School, Meta and Lyoto secondary schools have been selected purposively basing on the Form Four results in 2012.

3.4 Data Collection

This study used primary data from Form Three students at St.Francis, Meta and Lyoto secondary schools. Form Three students were chosen because they were available for the study, and they had studied how to write their essays accordingly by the time this study was being carried out. At this time they were also in preparation for their annual examinations.

3.5 Sample Population

The respondents of this study were 60 Form Three students, 20 from each of the three secondary schools. The number was assumed to be representative of the Form Three from each school.

3.6 Sampling Technique

Twenty students from each school were selected randomly among the students who were in the class on that day. Simple random method was used where all students were told to pick pieces of paper and there were only 20 papers marked number 1-20 and only those who selected the numbers participated in the research. Then they were told to write one essay for one hour. Their essays were collected for analysis.

The same twenty students were then told to fill the questionnaire. Filled-up copies of the questionnaire were used for quantitative data analysis. Also five students were selected randomly among the twenty students using the previous procedure, the twenty students participated and the chosen were those who picked the papers from 1-5. Then the five students were told to bring their assignments which they did with their teachers as normal essay tasks in their classes the assignments were also analyzed.

3.7 Research Instruments

This study employed two methods of data collection, namely documentary review, and questionnaire

3.7.1 Documentary Review

This is a method of collecting data through reading the documents which relate to the investigated problem. With the application of this method first, the researcher chose five students randomly from 20 students, the students were told to bring the corrected essay assignments which they normally do in classes in other subjects rather than English. The assignments were also collected for analysis. Second the form Three English Syllabus used in Tanzania was considered as one of the documents for documentary review (Appendix (iii))

3.7.2 Questionnaire

Sixty copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the three selected secondary schools, each of the schools receiving 20 copies. Form Three students filled the questionnaire in order for the researcher to evaluate their theoretical understanding on essay writing.

3.7.3 Practical Assignment on Essay writing

An assignment of essay writing was given to the students; the researcher gave one hour for the task to be completed. In each school 20 students who filled the questionnaires were involved in this task. The question of the task stated "*What should be the best language to be used as the medium of instruction in Tanzanian Secondary Schools*"? After an hour the assignments were collected for analysis by the researcher .This procedure was done in the same way to all selected

schools for the purpose of determining the competence level of assay writing practically after filling the questionnaires.

3.8 Methods of Analysis and Presentation

The data were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitatively by application of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS 20) and qualitatively by describing the findings of the selected schools basing on the specific objectives.

Document analysis was done using a checklist adopting some elements from CEFR. The elements which were adopted from CEFR are coherence of ideas, grammatical language including proper tenses, proper use of pronouns and the use of proper numbers (singular and plural), paragraphing, correct sentences, complete sentences, appropriate use of punctuation marks, proper introduction, main body, proper conclusion, the use of cohesion and coherence. The adopted elements were those which correlated with specific objectives.

Statistical methods were used in presenting the findings using frequency distribution tables and cross tabulation, percentages were calculated, and bar graphs were drawn to represent the data. After every statistical presentation explanations were given to clarify what is presented.

4. Findings of the Study

4.1. Organization of Sentences in a Paragraph.

In this part the students were asked to arrange the sentences so as to form a paragraph with one idea. The findings are presented in the tables below.

Table4.1: **The First Sentence in the Arrangement is Number** 4

			arranging the sentences properly				Total
			1	2	3	4	
Name of school	Meta secondary school	Count	1	5	4	8	18
		% within name of school	5.6%	27.8%	22.2%	44.4%	100.0%
	St. Francis secondary school	Count	0	1	0	18	19
		% within name of school	0.0%	5.3%	0.0%	94.7%	100.0%
	Lyoto secondary school	Count	1	6	2	11	20
		% within name of school	5.0%	30.0%	10.0%	55.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	2	12	6	37	57
		% within name of school	3.5%	21.1%	10.5%	64.9%	100.0%

Table.4.2.The Second Sentence in the Arrangement is Number 1

			arranging the sentences properly				
			1	2	3	4	Total
name of school	Meta secondary school	Count	13	1	0	4	18
		% within name of school	72.2%	5.6%	0.0%	22.2%	100.0%
	St. Francis secondary school	Count	19	0	0	0	19
		% within name of school	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	Lyoto secondary school	Count	15	2	1	2	20
		% within name of school	75.0%	10.0%	5.0%	10.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	47	3	1	6	57
		% within name of school	82.5%	5.3%	1.8%	10.5%	100.0%

Table 4.3 The Third Sentence in the Arrangement is Number 3

			arranging the sentences properly				
			1	2	3	4	Total
Name of school	Meta secondary school	Count	3	1	11	3	18
		% within name of school	16.7%	5.6%	61.1%	16.7%	100.0%
	St. Francis secondary school	Count	0	0	18	1	19
		% within name of school	0.0%	0.0%	94.7%	5.3%	100.0%
	Lyoto secondary school	Count	1	2	11	6	20
		% within name of school	5.0%	10.0%	55.0%	30.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	4	3	40	10	57
		% within name of school	7.0%	5.3%	70.2%	17.5%	100.0%

The table above expresses the findings that almost all students from St. Francis Secondary School responded positively followed by Meta Secondary School whose respondents exceeded a

half of all students while Lyoto Secondary School was the last. Consider the blank coloured column with number 3.

Table 4.4.The Fourth Sentence is Number 2

			arranging the sentences properly				
			1	2	3	4	Total
name of school	Meta secondary school	Count	1	11	3	3	18
		% within name of school	5.6%	61.1%	16.7%	16.7%	100.0%
	St. Francis secondary school	Count	0	18	1	0	19
		% within name of school	0.0%	94.7%	5.3%	0.0%	100.0%
	Lyoto secondary school	Count	3	10	6	1	20
		% within name of school	15.0%	50.0%	30.0%	5.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	4	39	10	4	57
		% within name of school	7.0%	68.4%	17.5%	7.0%	100.0%

The summaries from the four tables above reveal that most of students are not competent in arranging sentences logically to form good paragraphs. The ability to connect logically English sentences to form paragraph as suggested by (Germov, 2000: Hamilton, 2011 and Wingersky,2009) seems to be above their level. It is obvious that these students cannot write good essays since essays need not only connection of the given sentences rather to read the questions and understand, to think on how to tackle the questions, to create the English words which collocate to the given answers, to connect those words to form sentences finally to arrange those sentences to form paragraphs. For that case the students must be below level B_1 learners of

English as far as CEFR is concerned while the reality from the table shows that these students are just forced to write English essays the stage which does not collocate to their level that is why they might fail the examination which consists of essays written in English language. The leading school in the arrangement might be exceptional due to difference in English background, and the struggles the school do in improving English by practice.

4.1.2 The Necessity for a Logical Arrangement of Sentences in a Paragraph

In this part the students were asked to mention the reasons of having a logical arrangement of sentences forming a paragraph. The findings are summarized in the table below

Table.4.5: Reasons of Having a Good Arrangement of Sentences in a Paragraph

Meta		St. Francis		Lyoto		Total	
Correct	Incorrect	Correct	Incorrect	Correct	Incorrect	Correct	Incorrect
%(count)	%(count)	%(count)	%(count)	%(count)	%(count)	%(count)	%(count)
76.9(10)	23.1(3)	100(15)	0(0)	70(14)	30(6)	82.3(39)	29.1(9)

The summary from the table shows that a good number of students got correct responses. This signifies that the theoretical understanding of the context of a paragraph is not a critical problem to a great number of students. The reason might be teachers are good at implementing the Form Three English syllabus theoretically.

4.1.3 Students' Competence in Joining sentences in a Paragraph.

In practice most of the essays written by students of St. Francis Secondary School have proper related sentences which are joined to form paragraphs. The paragraphs were properly formed and each paragraph had a topic sentence, supporting sentences, examples and the conclusion. The exception is with one essay with ill-formed paragraphs. However, most of the essays written by students at Lyoto Secondary School have problems in creating paragraphs similarly most of the essays written by the students at Meta Secondary School have at least one problem in paragraphing.

The following are examples of problems of paragraphing which were observed from essays. These problems do not vary from those seen in their classroom assignments.

i.   Connecting Sentences into a Single Paragraph

Extract 1

Language. Is the best or is the true communication. *Or is the very importance language because sources of development of communication in the society or country, the best language that can be use in our school is* **English.because** *English emprovethe knowledge of teaching and writing this means when we use English language.get knowledge English is the source of development of dictionary English is the source of emprove skills of writing or teaching.This means English very important in our* **school.because** *the teacher or student emprove skill of writing for student or teacher.*

ii.   Paragraph Made up of Single Sentence from the Beginning to the End

Extract 2

To helping people to pass examination; because many of the students especially secondary schools in the communicated between students and teachers to builded confidence amonag of the students and others teachers is different and others language in the schools like secondary schools In the Tanzanian country different and other language in the country.

iii.   The Use of Vague Expressions at the Beginning of the Paragraphs

Extract 3

Are used for international language. The English are the international language because many nations are the English is the language for communication in Many antions.So as the main people for this time are understand the English language to helped to be the people are go in out of the country are not problems for understanding the people of their country or nation.

Having seen the extracts above the researcher counted the problems in all essays from the selected schools. The findings are displayed in the figure below.

Figure 4.1**: Problems in Paragraphing**
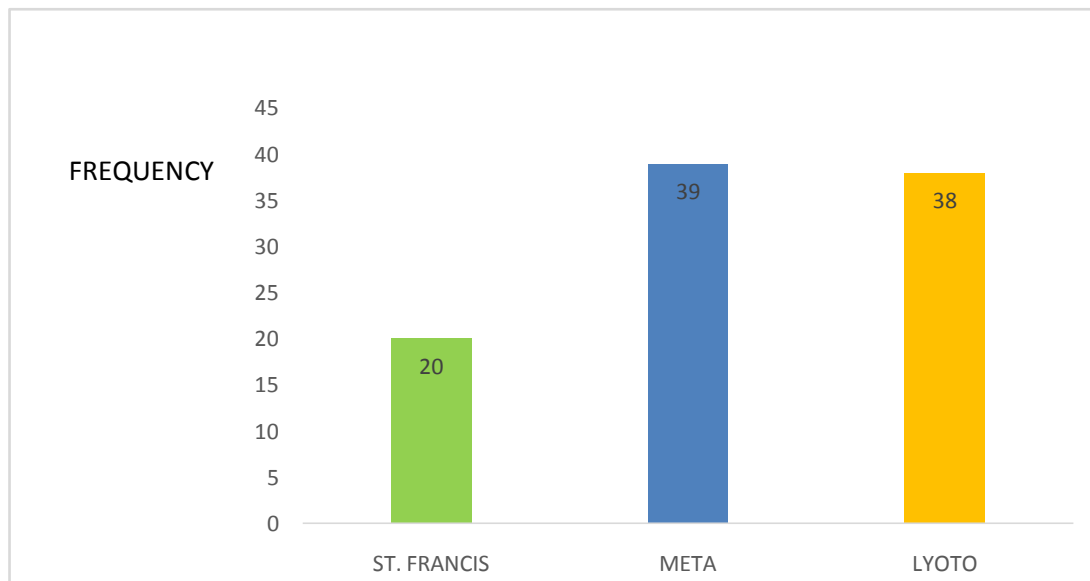
The figure above shows that paragraphing is a severe problem to the students of Meta Secondary School where the frequency of problems is maximum, followed by Lyoto Secondary School with one frequency less than Meta Secondary School, and St.Francis Secondary school with the minimum frequency of problems. The findings reveal the extent to which the problem of making paragraph affect the good essay writing exercise to the form three students. The extracts above signify that students do not have regular exercise in writing essays, the students are not given feedback on correction on how paragraphs of essays should be written .Learning writing essays as shown in the Form Three Syllabus in competency based approach should go stage by stage with consideration to the levels of English learning as suggested by CEFR to solve the problems of paragraphing. Hence, this problem might be solved if there will be regular practice exercises for students. Komba et al. (2012): Kato(2006) and Msanjila (2005) did similar study they found that paragraphing was one of the problems in essay writing and they suggested that logical

connection of sentences should be taught to secondary schools and tertiary levels to make students perfect in essay writing.

4.2 Spelling Problems in Essay Writing

This subsection aimed at testing whether the students know the problems which result from improper spelling. The findings are summarized in the table below.

**Table 4.6: Problems Resulting from Improper Spelling**

	The essay becomes illegible	There will be communication barrier	Incorrect response
	% (COUNT)	% (COUNT)	% (COUNT)
META SEC. SCHOOL	39.4 (13)	30.3 (10)	30.3 (10)
ST. FRANCIS SEC. SCHOOL	44.1 (15)	47.1 (16)	8.8 (3)
LYOTO SEC. SCHOOL	39.5 (15)	34.2 (13)	26.3 (10)

The table above reveals that more than three quarters of all students from St. Francis Secondary School had correct response while almost three quarters of the students from Lyoto Secondary School provided correct responses, and finally less than three quarters of the students from Meta Secondary School got correct responses. This implies that students at St.Francis Secondary School are more competent in spelling compared to the rest. St.Francis Secondary School is followed by Lyoto then Meta is last among the three. However, mentioning the problems does not necessarily imply competence in practical. The combination of theoretical and practical responses yielded the best means for evaluation of competence.

4.**2.1 Specific Findings on Spelling**

The following table shows the frequency   of the spelling problems in essays written by all 60 students from the three selected schools. Most of students have problems in spelling.

Figure 4.2: Spelling Problems
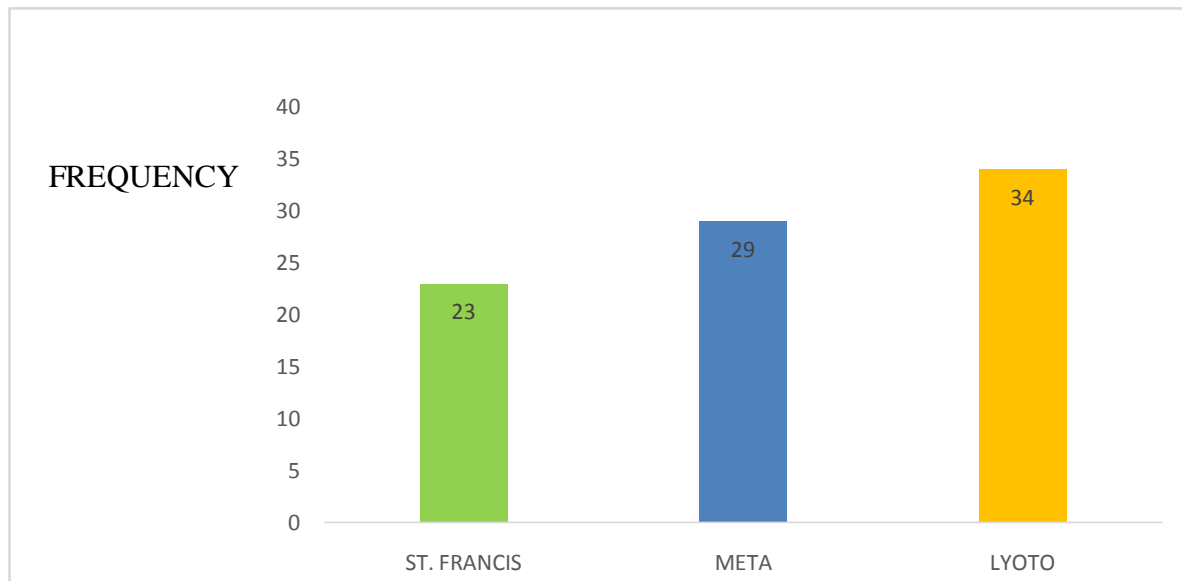
The figure above reveals that all schools had spelling problems. St. Francis secondary school had the lowest number of problems compared to Meta and Lyoto secondary schools. Lyoto Secondary School had the highest number of spelling problems compared to Meta and St.Francis. The findings above reveal that most of students in secondary schools have problems in writing English words that means they are below A_1 as far as CEFR is concerned. While the levels of CEFR starts from A_1 that is when a learner is able to write English words most of students do not deserve to be in that level in contrary they are measured by writing English essays which is supposed to be written by a learner of English who is in level B_1 that might be a possible reason of failure in National examination since the stage of the learner is not direct proportion to the English tasks given in Examinations. These findings are in line with the findings obtained by Komba et al. (2012), Mwaseba (1997) and Msanjila (2005) who revealed that spelling is among the problems the students face as they write their essays. However, Komba et al. (2012) used the participants from a higher learning institution while Mwaseba (1997) and Msanjila(2005) used participants from secondary school as it was done in this study. In addition Mwaseba (1997) used the transfer theory while this study uses the Common European Framework of Reference.

The following are examples of the spelling problems from different schools.

Extract 4: Essay from St. Francis Secondary School

*It has many **vocabollary***The word vocabulary is misspelt.

*It has many textbook; Since of all school of Tanzania has used English book for **studing**.* The word studying is misspelt.

Extract 5: Essay from Lyoto Secondary School

*English is the simple language to use **becouse**is enough in all thing."*

*The English language have many **vocablies**to used in each sector like school, books, **diction** so that many people have weed language which have many **diction** or **vocablies***

4.3 Accuracy in Punctuation in Essay Writing

Before observing the practical work the researcher wanted to know whether the students were familiar with different punctuation marks used in essays together with their functions. Then the documentary analysis was done to the essays and assignments done in the classes to examine punctuation problems.

4.3.1 Punctuation Marks and their Functions

In this subsection the students were asked to mention different punctuation marks which they normally use in their essays and the function of each punctuation mark. The findings are summarized in the figures below

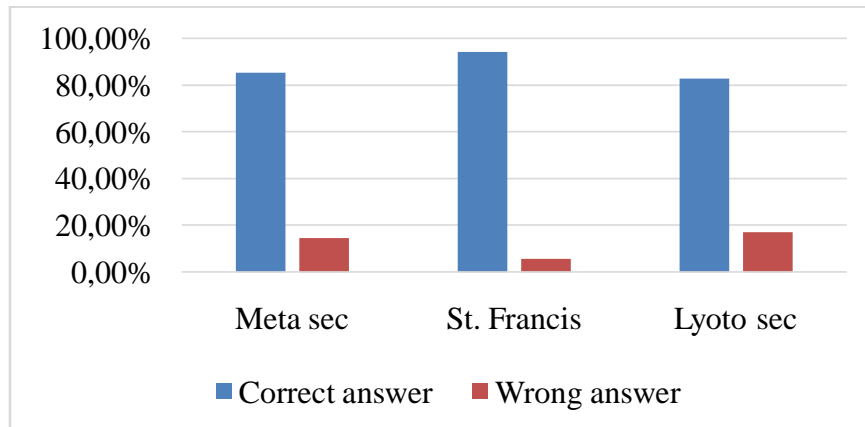**Figure 4.3: The Mentioned Punctuation Marks**
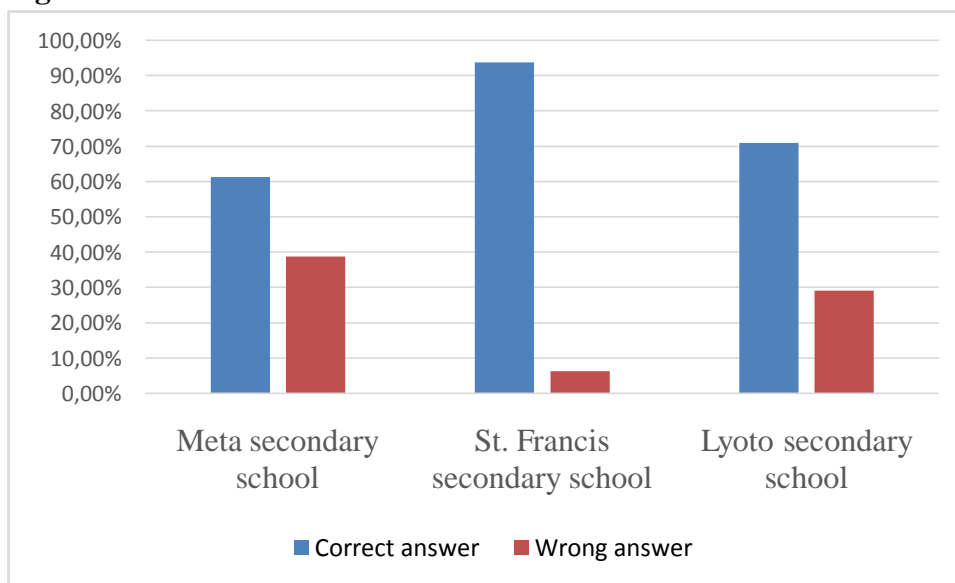

Figure 4.4: Function of each Punctuation Mark

Figure 4.3 shows that most of the students from the selected schools succeeded to mention the punctuation marks since in every school the correct responses were more than three quarter of the total number of students, with St.Francis leading while Meta and Lyoto had almost similar results. However, the summary from the second figure shows a large variation from St. Francis which maintained the leading.

The findings signify that there is a need of improvement of implementation of the competency based practically. Punctuation marks are essential for making a correct sentence (Coyle and peek, 2005) For that reason most of students cannot connect words to form correct sentences because of failure to understand the functions of each punctuation marks hence they belong to levels below B_1 in CEFR.

Most of the essays written by students from St. Francis Secondary School had at least one error/ problem in punctuation marks. Only four essays had no punctuation problems. Also the frequency of punctuation problem was five. However, both Lyoto and Meta secondary schools had at least one problem in punctuation marks.

The following were the problems of punctuation marks observed from the essays.

i. Writing Sentences without Full Stop

Some students could not apply the full stop. The full stop was either used improperly or was not used at all.

Extract 6: Essay From St. Francis Secondary

Second, it is used in different economic activities as the medium of communication especially in trading activities such as agricultural, industries, mining, fishing. So it is better to be used in school especially secondary in order student to relates with the environment of the society

This essay has five paragraphs, three of them without full stops.

Extract 7: Essay From Meta Secondary School

-Have many books.. In many secondary schools.. Have many books. So many students.Was. lead..books of language so was lead that. Language because that language. is interaction. Language

ii. The use of capital letter where it was not required

Extract 8.Essay From Lyoto Secondary School

*Langauge is the communication which people or different Society they Speak as Social of Communication.The best language to **Used** as the **Midium** of Instruction in Tanzania Is English language this Is best language **Which** is **Support** to be **Used** in Tanzania. Help **Student to Understand School** are.*

iii. Naming proper noun using small letters

Extract 9: Essay From Lyoto Secondary School

*The other school who from n **european** country or schools it can uses **english***
*Language so if the **tanzanian**school who coming from **European** country because the medium language of **european** country is **english.***

The practical findings show that almost all essays from all selected school had at least one problem in punctuation. However, students at St.Francis Secondary was competent in punctuation marks compared to Lyoto and Meta since its frequency in punctuation problems was half the frequency of the other two schools which had almost similar problem frequencies.

The practical findings on the problems of punctuation marks have significance since there is discrepancy between St.Francis Secondary School whose level of English learning is different from the other two schools. The students whose back ground is English Medium Schools are different from those from normal Primary schools whose medium of instruction is Kiswahili. The reality has been revealed by the problems in punctuation denoted by the figure below where using punctuation marks is realized practically. These findings are almost similar to the findings by Msanjila (2005) and Kato (2006). However Msanjila showed that the problem of punctuation out numbers the other problems in essay writing, while Kato`s findings are in line with this study. The figure below gives the summary of findings.
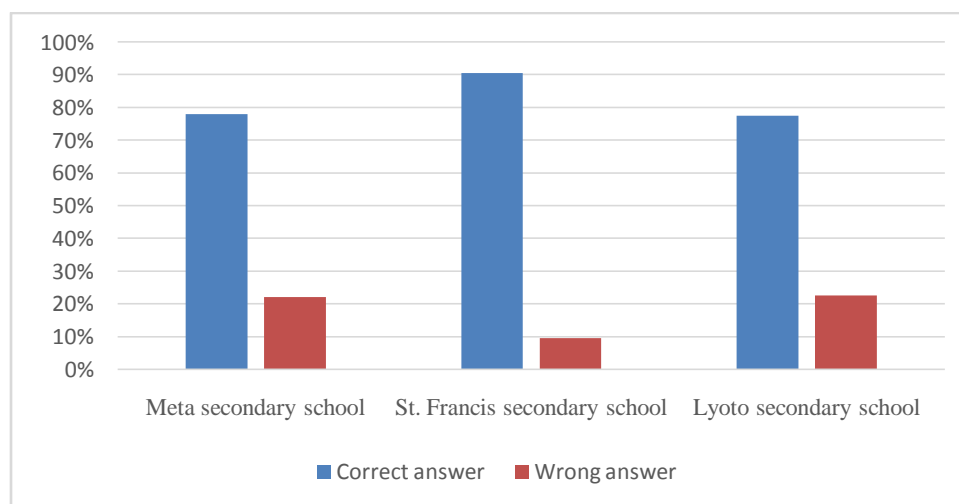
Figure 4.5: Punctuation Problem
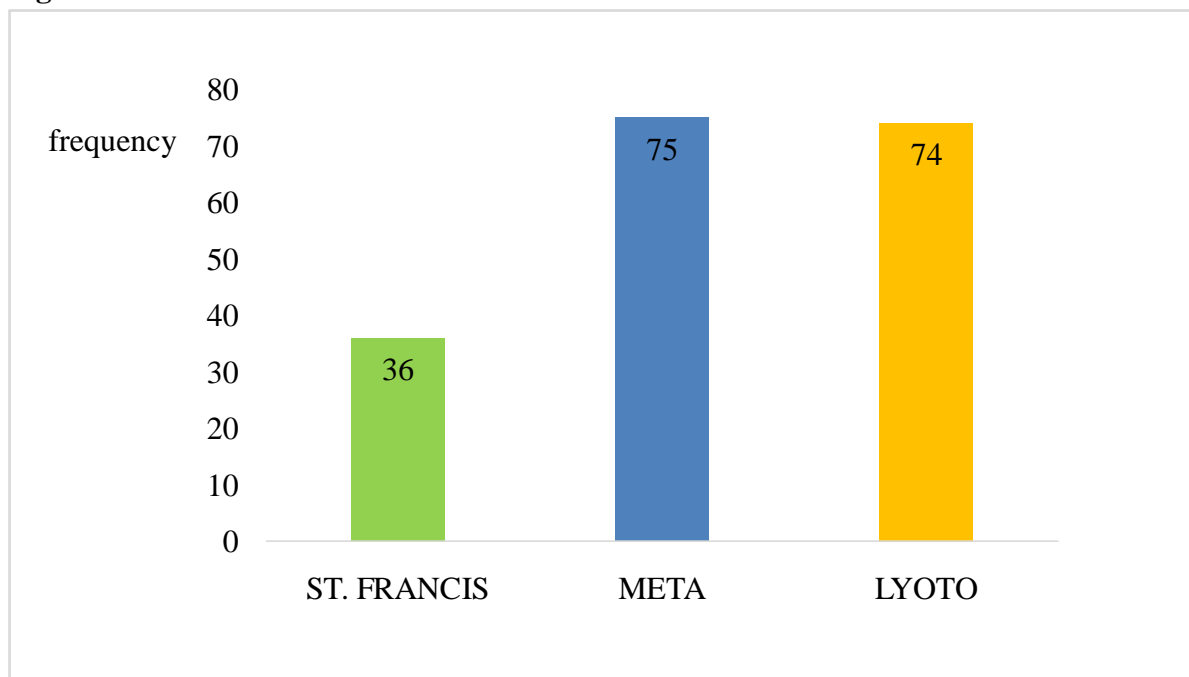
4.4 Grammatical Accuracy in Essay Writing

This subsection aimed at testing whether the students know the problems which resulted from using improper grammar. The findings are summarized in the figure below.

Figure 4.6: Problems with Grammatical Inaccuracy

The table above shows that more than three quarter of the students from St.Francis Secondary School identified the problems while almost three quarter of all students from Meta and Lyoto had correct responses too. The findings reveal that English grammar is a problem to most of the students in secondary schools. The fact that the students did not succeed to point out the most visible grammatical problems from the text signifies that students are not grammatical competent. It is very difficult to implement the competence based syllabus if the students are not competent in grammar of the language used as the medium of instruction. Grammar of the particular language is the base of communicative competence since it is reflected in reading, writing, listening and speaking. Hence most of students might be below level B_1 in writing in CEFR, they cannot write essays since they are incompetent in grammar. St.Francis Secondary School students have slightly different results since they studied English grammar from English Medium Schools while students from other two schools did not pass through those schools.

4.4.1: Specific Findings on Grammatical Accuracy

Figure 4.7 Grammatical Problems
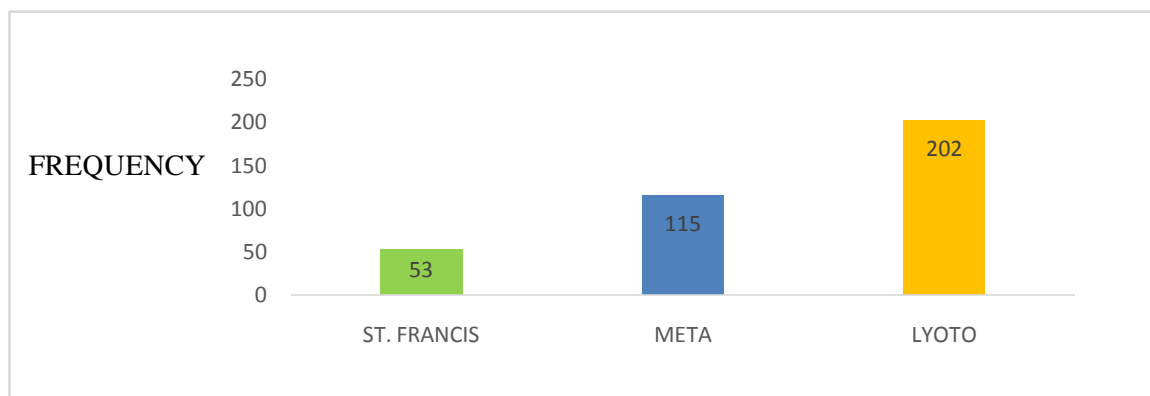
The table above shows that grammar is a critical problem in all schools because in each school the total frequency was more than 50. However, St. Francis had less grammatical problems compared to the other two schools. The other two schools had twice the number of grammatical problems as the number of problems found in St.Francis. These findings signify that most of students are in very low stage in learning English since grammar is the first stage of the learner of any language. Hence these students cannot write English essays since they do not know how to connect words into phases and sentences. Environment of the schools also is a contributing factor since those exposed to English earlier in primary school do better than those who start studying English in secondary schools .These findings are in line with Hashim (2004) who found

that in some instances grammatical problems were so serious that they distorted even the intended message in writing Similarly, Mwaseba (1997) and Msanjila (2005) noted that grammar was a serious problem in essay writing.

The following are the grammatical problems found in essays written by students.

i.Improper Use of Singular and Plural Nouns

Extract 10: From Lyoto secondary

It is simple to understand: The English language **are** *simple to understand because* **are** *understanding very which people* **are** *studying the English effectively.*

English language **are** *the medium because the* **student are** *not pass examination without not*

ii. Improper use of tenses

Extract 11: Essay from Meta Secondary School

In many secondary schools. have many books. So many students. **was.lead.** *books of language so was lead that" Here it is not known whether the writer is explaining about the present or past tense ondary school.*

iii. Improper use of pronouns

Extract 12: From Lyoto Secondary School

The English language **it** *is easy to understand in the students or in the society and in the students to understand well.*

English language **they** *use more books to teach some problems ract.*

iv. Improper use of passive voice and active voice

Extract 13:.Essay from St.Francis Secondary School

This means that many bookshas written in English and many country use English" essay.

And those subject of secondary school are use English language except Kiswahili language

4.5 Summary of Findings

From the findings which are presented and discussed in this chapter, it is revealed that all schools involved in the study have problems in paragraphing, punctuation, spelling, grammar and structure of the essay. However, grammar is the most critical problem, followed by punctuation, paragraphing and spelling. The summary is presented in the figure and the table below.

Figure 4.8: Summary of Findings
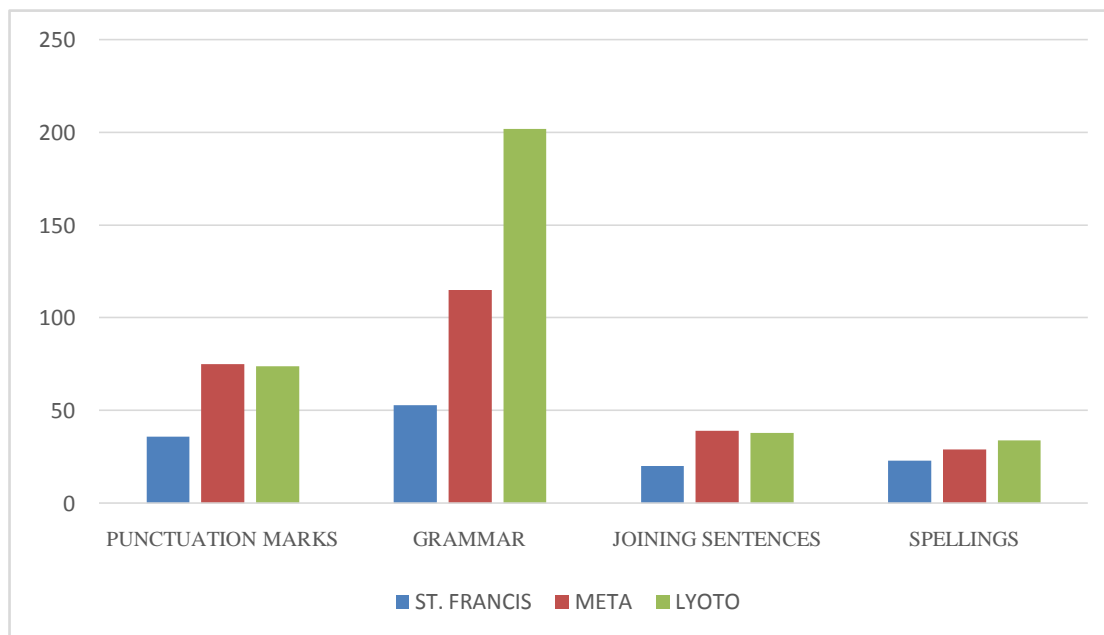
The findings also show that St.Francis Secondary School was competent in all aspects compared to Meta and Lyoto Secondary Schools, and Lyoto had more serious problems compared to the other two schools.

The findings obtained in this study imply that students at St.Francis Secondary School are more competent in essay writing compared to those at Meta and Lyoto. Considering the levels in Common European Framework of Reference, students at St.Francis should be placed at a level higher than Meta and Lyoto. Most of St.Francis students deserve to be in level B_1 and A_2 and few in B_2,that means most of them are able to write simple connected texts on topics which are familiar or of personal interest and to connect words into sentences while few are able to write clear detailed texts on a wide range of subjects. As seen from their written assignments some are able to write an essay while giving reasons in support or against a particular point of view. Though not perfectly, the students from St.Francis wrote introductions, main bodies and conclusions. Furthermore, they tried to spell and punctuate .Most of these students are in a position to try to tackle the essay questions in their examinations since they can to a small extent satisfactorily respond to essay questions. The situation is mostly contributed by the background of English to the students since most of them studied English Medium Schools in Primary level and they use English daily around their boarding school being highly externally motivated by their administration.

The students at Meta and Lyoto Secondary Schools are at the same level of competence in essay writing. However, there is a little variation in grammar and spellings where Lyoto seems to be at level lower than Meta. Hence, basing on the CEFR some students from these schools deserve to be in level A_1 and most of them in A_2 and very few of them belonging to level $B_1.$This means that some students are able to write only words, and most of them are able to only connect those words into simple sentences, and while very few are able to write simple connected texts on topics which they are familiar. Due to the problems realized, most of the students from Meta and Lyoto are at the lower level compared to St.Francis, which means most of these students might not be able to do well essay questions in their examinations. The background of English seems to be a major reason for this since the students from Meta and Lyoto are still struggling in learning English, they studied in normal Primary School where Kiswahili is used as the medium of instruction and they do not use English in their surroundings except when they are taught in classes The table below presents results on the grading of the essays in line with the CEFR.

5.3 Conclusion

Basing on the findings from this study, it can be concluded that most students have problems in essay-writing. Besides writing skills, most students have problems in English grammar, which is critical in determining the competence and proficiency level in essay writing.

The background and frequent use of English attribute to the writing performance of the students. Students who were access to English Medium Primary schools and those who use English daily in their boarding secondary schools deserve to be placed in B_1 as far as CEFR is concerned. While those who attended normal primary using Kiswahili as the medium of instruction and do not use English daily at homes are below B_1 as far as CEFR is concerned. The levels of English learners should be considered when the examinations are measured through essay writing since it is not fair for St.Francis Meta and Lyoto with different levels of English to do the same essay questions.

The study showed that there is need to integrate more the teaching of grammar of the language of instruction with the application of the competence-based curriculum to enhance the implementation of the recent Ordinary Level English Syllabus to make secondary students competent in essay writing.

The communicative competence syllabus is not implemented effectively, hence it leads to failure of English mastery to most of students. Students learn theories more than doing practical.

Recommendation

Most of theories in communicative language teaching should be done practically. Teachers and students should be involved in preparing syllabus, and there should be regular training for the teachers on how to implement Communicative Language Teaching syllabus practically.
 The aspect of grammar should not be left out in implementation of communicative Language competence, students should practice grammar while doing tasks relating in this sense they will improve their mastery of language.

Curriculum developer Tanzanian Institute of Education, curriculum evaluator National Examination Council and teachers as implementers should work together to make sure performance is done rather than emphasizing on theories.

REFERENCES

Ahamed, A.H. (2010). Student`s problems with Cohesion and Coherence in FFL Essay writing In Egypt: Different perspectives. *Literacy information and computer education (LICEJ), 1(4), December 2010*

Banjo, A., Ben, E., Ozoma, O & Ayo, A.(2007). *New secondary English course for senior secondary schools.* Ibadan: University Press PLC.

Brown, D.(2000). *TEACHING by PRINCIPLE An Interactive Approach 2nd Ed*. USA. Longman.

Brown, D. (2003). *LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT Principle and Classroom Practices.*USA: Logman.

Brown, D. (2007. *PRINCIPLE of LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING.5th*.USA: Pearson Longman.

Carrel, P. L. (1982). Cohesion is not Coherence. *TESOL Quarterly, 16(4) 479-488.*

Coyle, M. & Peek, J (2005).*The Student Guide to Writing Grammar Punctuation and Spelling* .New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 175 Fifth Avenue,

Germov, J. (2000). *Get Great Marks for your Essays*, Australia: Library of Australia

Halliday, M.A.K. & Hasan, R. (1976). *Cohesion In English*. London: Longman University Press.

Hamilton, C. (2011). *Anthem Guide to Essay Writing*. Newyork: Athem Press

Hinkel, E. (2004). *"Rhetorial Features of Text: Practical Techniques in Vocabulary and Grammar".* Lawrence Erlbaum Associates: Mahwah New Jersey.

Jimenez, C. (2011). *El Marco Europeacom`unde Refencia Para laslenguasylacomprensionteoricadel conocimiento del language: Exploraciondeunanormativid flexible paraemprenderoccioneseducativas (essay).* Mexico: Universidad Nacional. Autonomade.

Kato, (2006). *Error Analysis of High School Student Essays Accents* Asia [on line],1(2),1-13.

Komba, S.C., Kafanabo, E.J., Njabili, A.F & Kira, E.S. (2012). Comparison between students academic performance and their abilities in written English language Skills: "A Tanzanian perspective". *International journal of Development and sustainability, .1(2), 305-325.*

Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, 2005. *English Ordinary Level syllabus For Secondary Schools.* Dar es salaam: Tanzania Institute of Education.

Msanjila, P. (2005). Problems of writing in Kiswahili: A case study of Kigurunyembe and Morogoro Secondary schools in Tanzania. *Nordic journal of African studies 14(1):15-25,*

Mwaseba, J. J. M. (1997). *How Tanzanian secondary school teachers react to student`s interlanguage focus on the treatment of errors in written work. Unpublished M .A Dissertation.* University of Dar es salaam.

NECTA,2012. Form four ExaminationResults.http://www.Necta.go.tz.opendata/open

data.html retrieved 13/10/2013 at 17Hours

Ranjit, K (1996). *Research Methodology: A step-by-step Guide for Beginners*. Longman Australia: Melbourne.

Richards, J. (2006). *Communicative Language Teaching today*. New York: Cambridge

Spurr, B. (2005). *Spurr`s Guides Successful Essay Writing for Senior High School College and University.* Australia: New Frontia Publishing.

Wingersky, J. (2009). *Writing Paragraphs and Essays Integrating reading, Writing and Grammar Skills*. Boston- USA: Nelson Education Ltd