

**USING CRITICAL PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH IN TEACHER  
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR COMPETENCE-BASED ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE TEACHING IN LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN  
KABALE MUNICIPALITY, UGANDA**

**EKYAKUNZIRE BRENDA**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, DEPARTMENT  
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FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF  
DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION IN RESEARCH**

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## DECLARATION

### Declaration by the Candidate

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree award in any other University. No part of this work may be reproduced without the prior written permission of the author and/or Moi University.

Signature..........Date 23/11/2023

**Brenda Ekyakunzire**

**MS/R/5882/22**

### Declaration by Supervisors

This thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as University Supervisors.

Signature  Date 24.11.2023

**Dr. Susan Kurgat**

Department of Curriculum Instruction and Educational Media,

School of Education,

Moi University.

Eldoret, Kenya

Signature  Date...23.11.2023

**Dr. Malve Von Mollendorff**

University of Oldenburg,

Oldenburg, Germany.

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to the most extraordinary woman I have ever known, my mother, Goretti Basiime, who introduced me to the value of education at early age. This thesis is a tribute to your memory, in the hope that it reflects the values you instilled in me and the dreams you had for me. As my first teacher, the bittersweet memories I have of you have always inspired me to persevere and fueled my determination to pursue knowledge and understanding. I am grateful that you are my beacon of hope. Though your spirit continues to exist in the deepest part of my heart, I miss you terribly. May this thesis honor your memory.

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## ABSTRACT

Teachers are central in implementing new school curricula including teaching practices that support the new approaches. In order to enable and support teachers in changing classroom practices effectively, Teacher Professional Development (TPD) is needed, especially after curriculum reforms like the recent change from a knowledge-based towards a competence-based curriculum in Uganda. However, recent studies on in-service teacher training in Uganda have found small positive effects on skills acquisition and improvement in teaching and learning, which implies a drawback to the intended curriculum change. This resulted in the need to explore if a transformative and reflective approach to TPD, that started from the teachers' concerns, could spark positive change processes towards the new curriculum and instructional strategies. Research has shown that Critical Participatory Action Research (CPAR) has the potential to challenge prevailing discourses and lead to genuine transformations in classroom practice by improving teachers' critical self-reflection on their practices. The aim of this study was therefore, to explore the use of CPAR in TPD for competence-based teaching of English language in lower secondary schools in Kabale Municipality, Uganda. The study was guided by two objectives: to explore the use of CPAR in TPD for competence-based teaching of English language and to explore the experiences of English language teachers with the use of CPAR in professional development for competence-based English language teaching. Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy provided the guiding theory and framework. This exploratory study was anchored on the critical constructivism paradigm, adopted a qualitative approach and employed a Critical Participatory Action Research design. The study targeted 32 English language teachers and the sample size was 14 teachers selected purposively; with 2 from each of the seven public secondary schools. Data was generated using the CPAR design and its procedures; reconnaissance, planning, enacting the plan while observing how it worked, and reflection. Data analysis was done thematically. The findings revealed that participating in the CPAR created in teachers a sense of ownership and empowerment which increased their commitment to meaningfully change their teaching practice as well as that of their colleagues in their respective schools. The teachers also developed a deeper understanding of their practice and alleviated their teaching practice fears. The teachers' experiences of the use CPAR revealed that this approach helped them to become better practitioners and it enabled a change of mindset towards rethinking and developing alternative teaching approaches. The teachers also got a deeper understanding of their capabilities and strengths which in turn improved their confidence, sense of belonging and connectedness to a supportive professional community. This study therefore concludes that CPAR is an empowering and transformative approach for continuous TPD in Uganda, based on its strength to make teachers active agents in their own transformation and professional growth. The findings contribute to the discussion about effective approaches to teacher professional development, particularly in contexts of curriculum change. As such, they can support policy makers in the ministry of education and sports by giving them insights into a new way of TPD to advance competence-based instruction, the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) which could use CPAR to monitor implementation of the NLSC, and secondary school teachers of English language by showing them empowering ways of transforming their teaching practice towards competence-based curriculum implementation. The study recommends that NCDC incorporates CPAR into its continuous TPD programmes.

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

<b>AR</b>	Action Research
<b>CBC</b>	Competence-based Curriculum
<b>CPAR</b>	Critical Participatory Action Research
<b>MoES</b>	Ministry of Education and Sports
<b>NCDC</b>	National Curriculum Development Centre
<b>NLSC</b>	New Lower Secondary Curriculum
<b>PAR</b>	Participatory Action Research
<b>TPD</b>	Teacher Professional Development

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY**

#### **1.1 Introduction of the Chapter Contents**

This chapter presents the background, statement of the problem, purpose and objectives of the study. It also presents the research questions, justification, significance and scope of the study. It finally depicts the assumptions and theoretical underpinning of the study, the conceptual framework and the operational definition of key terms.

#### **1.2 Background of the Study**

The 21st century society is being more characterized by globalization and this requires more flexible skills such as critical thinking, and other professional competencies (Solov, 2020). These global changes have necessitated shifts from rigid to more adaptive and flexible education systems. Nations worldwide have been revising their education curricula to be competence-based so as to improve learner competence.

Competency-based education has been adopted in developed countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States of America, France, Germany and the Netherlands and in African countries such as South Africa, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Mozambique, Kenya, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Zambia and most recently Uganda (Mulenga et al., 2019; M'mboga Akala, 2021).

Curriculum reform always necessitates professional development. Traditionally, professional development is a teaching process that focuses on the increase of teacher learning and the changing of teacher classroom practices to improve student outcomes (Coldwell, 2017; Fischer et al., 2018). It is therefore the activities aimed at improving the

professional skills, attitudes and knowledge, of teachers so as to improve student learning (Herbert, 2019).

New approaches, however, view professional development as activities that pay attention to improvement of teachers' teaching and learning practices within their distinct, occupational and social scopes in an inquisitive, self-directed and collaborative learning environment to advance the teaching-learning process (Derri et al., 2015).

In 2020, Uganda's Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) ventured into a Competency-based Curriculum (CBC) in lower secondary school commonly called the New Lower Secondary Curriculum (NLSC) (NCDC, 2020). The previous one was knowledge-based therefore discredited for failure to deliver the kind of skills required by the labor market to meet the nation's emerging needs, and for its production of graduates lacking in 21st century required competencies (Ecology, 2012; MoES, 2017; Olema et al., 2019). A CBC is hoped to satisfy the needs of different learners' abilities, thereby improving quality of education through improving the students' levels of achievement in numeracy, life skills and literacy. This is expected to contribute significantly to creating a literate population that is considered a necessity to achieve economic growth and sustainable development in Uganda (NCDC, 2020).

The NLSC was introduced to the first class of secondary school students (Senior one) at the beginning of the 2020 academic year, and it was to progressively advance with this first group of learners (Giacomazzi et al., 2022). Uganda's curriculum review focused on producing assured individuals, responsible and patriotic citizens, lifelong learners and positive contributors to society. This would strengthen the foundation for creating effective citizens in the world of work, self-employment and further studies (MoES, 2017).

The new curriculum therefore emphasises application of knowledge application and change of behaviour that is based on generic skills, cross-cutting issues and a clear set of values integrated in all the subjects for learners to understand the connection between the different subjects and life complexities of life. Competence-based English language teaching and learning means that English language is taught and learnt in contexts and situations that are relevant and varied so as to develop problem solving ability and linguistic competence to help them navigate life's emerging and challenging situations. (Ntongieh, 2016; NCDC, 2019). Learners are also placed at the center of learning with the focus being what they are expected to do with language. They are taught the basic skills they need so as to be prepared for to face their everyday life encounters (Muhangi, 2019).

Competence-based teaching ensures that learners acquire competencies essential for them to succeed in their schools, in their pursuit of higher education and also in their adult life. It requires that teachers constantly improve themselves and be innovative in new and varied methods of instruction to cope with the fast changes happening in society, since knowledge as well as skills gained during education and training are insufficient (Loveline & Mbah, 2020). Being innovative in teaching promotes creativity and makes teachers more committed to the teaching-learning process and participatory methods come in handy.

Transition from knowledge-based to competence-based curriculum is never a smooth ride, and is often faced with challenges such as insufficient training to in-service teachers, insufficient knowledge about the CBC, insufficient instructional materials and limited understanding of the CBC pedagogy (Saware, 2021). It is often challenging to practice competence-based policies in classrooms (Mulenga & Kabombwe, 2019).

Professional development is vital especially after curriculum change, but it does not necessarily fulfil other fundamental professional needs of teachers such as development of practices that are context-based and specific to different teachers' areas of specialization (Alwadi et al., 2020).

Even with continuous TPD, teachers need to collaborate in implementing new teaching methods and reflecting on new acquired practices (Svendsen, 2016). According to Nsengimana et al., (2020), competence-based instruction in sub-Saharan Africa still remains teacher-centered instead of learner-centered, years after CBC implementation in schools.

Training needs to be combined with participatory approaches that study, implement and reflect on learning done in different contexts (Monnier & Gruson, 2018). These participatory approaches create collaborative opportunities to improve classroom practice and empower teachers so that they can also empower their learners to reach higher cognitive development. The participatory approach assumes that people have knowledge on issues that affect and are important to them (Svendsen, 2020). According to Arslan (2019), participatory approaches give teachers chance to reflect on challenging real-life situations in their practice and find ways to overcome them for example, English language teachers can identify and modify certain teaching techniques that promote their professional growth and use them in their classroom instruction. This is a good way of merging theory with practice and like Paulo Freire puts it, "real educational praxis must be linked to its social context and the complexities of its environment" (Shih, 2018).

Uganda's NLSC requires that teachers promote learners' generic skills such as knowledge application and problem-solving (NCDC, 2019). This implies that teachers need to have these skills and can develop them through collaborative reflection on their lessons and

classroom practices (Trapero & Gómez, 2017). The need for change must come from teachers themselves as they collaborate with, support and learn from each other since teachers, improvement increases with greater collaboration (Ronfeldt et al., 2015).

Competence-based curriculum puts the learners at the forefront of learning with teachers as partners in tasks involving exploration and real-world purposes (Ayçiçek, 2021; UNEC, 2022). Teachers are also learners and learning is more productive if it is context-based, involves active engagement in practice, intentional, collaborative and reflective (Hanemann, 2021). However, teacher professional development often times considers teachers to be “technicians implementing handed down practices” rather than people with the knowledge and skills to solve the pedagogical concerns unique to their contexts (Svendsen, 2020).

Even though workshops and seminars are often organized to train in-service teachers, the goals of curriculum reform are often times challenging to implement in practice (Tadesse et al., 2021), and impose additional demands on instructors (Olema et al., 2021). Therefore, implementation of participatory and innovative professional development activities that are context-based needs attention.

Studies on the challenges of implementing curriculum in sub-Saharan African countries point at the neglect of teachers’ context as one of the major challenges (Nsengimana et al., 2020). Professional development equips teachers with knowledge and understanding of CBC pedagogies, but might not be enough in helping teachers positively impact their learners (Koellner & Jacobs, 2015) especially when it is not contextually relevant for the teaching and learning environments in which teachers work (Burroughs et al., 2019).

English is Uganda's official language, and the medium of instruction at all levels of education from primary four upwards; and therefore the language which learners use to learn all the other subjects on the curriculum (Framework, 2019). The Ugandan curriculum framework positions English as the subject that will help in the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 of quality, equitable and inclusive education, and promotion of life-long opportunities for all the (NCDC, 2019). English language is therefore vital in education, and learners' proficiency in the language largely determines their educational progress (Manyike & Lemmer, 2014; Nankindu, 2020; Ssentanda et al., 2019). However, spoken and written English are a struggle for most students bringing forth the need for many teachers to use multiple approaches to help students understand different concepts (Okello, 2020). Although there are no right or wrong approaches to language teaching and no single method can be said to be ideal for teaching/learning English (Ntongieh, 2016; Topuzov et al., 2020), participatory methods have been proved to have a positive impact on learning outcomes motivation, cognitive skills such as critical thinking and autonomy (Cross, 2021; Kani et al., 2020; Pedrosa et al., 2020).

However, the participatory approach still remains largely unexplored in-service teacher training in Uganda. It is imperative that teachers work together to develop new approaches to teaching English as an important step towards government's current goal of producing job-creators rather than job-seekers (Manyike & Lemmer, 2014). Participatory approaches to TPD might therefore a powerful additional approach teachers' professional improvement, since effective change in classroom practices must come from the teachers themselves as they collaborate and reflect on new acquired practice (Bates & Morgan, 2018; Loveline & Mbah, 2020; Svendsen, 2020).

It is out of the foregoing concern that this study explored the use of a participatory approach to teacher professional development for competence-based English language teaching.

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

Effective English language teaching and learning is critical for attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 4, Uganda's vision 2040 and one of the Education Sector Strategic Plans' aims of reforming secondary education to equip learners with skills and competencies required to thrive in the 21st century (NCDC, 2020; NCDC, 2019).

Teachers continue to encourage learners to cram passages without them genuinely learning the language in a move to make them pass without making them understand (Okello, 2020).

Teachers need to be creative, innovative and able to reach for the implicit aspects of language learning by helping learners to experience language at the affective, sociocultural/interactional levels and cognitive levels (Ghimire, 2019). This will help learners to acquire cognitive skills such as knowledge application and problem solving (Pedrosa et al., 2020; Topuzov et al., 2020).

Although TPD workshops and trainings have been held at regional and local levels since the NLSC introduction for improvement of teacher skills and competencies to produce outstanding educational results in students, they are often times insufficient in equipping teachers with the necessary skills to meet the different learner needs and to promote changes in instructional practices (Koellner & Jacobs, 2015; Olema et al., 2021; Smith & Robinson, 2020).

Critical Participatory Action Research when used for professional development can challenge available discourse to transform classroom practice by improving teachers' critical self-reflection on their practices (Sheidaei & Tahriri, 2017; Wright, 2021).

Whereas many studies have been done on teacher professional development, very few have explored transformative approaches (De Sousa, 2021; Spear & Da Costa, 2018), and less so in the wake of curriculum reform to advance implementation of new policies in Uganda.

This study therefore sought to explore the use of critical participatory action research in teacher professional development for competence-based teaching of English language in lower secondary schools in Kabale Municipality, Uganda.

#### **1.4 Purpose of the Study**

This study's purpose was to explore the use of Critical Participatory Action Research in teacher professional development for competence-based English language teaching in lower secondary schools in Kabale Municipality, Uganda.

#### **1.5 Objectives of the Study**

- i. To explore the use of Critical Participatory Action Research in teacher professional development for competence-based English language teaching in lower secondary schools.
- ii. To explore the teachers' experiences with the use of CPAR for their professional development in CBC implementation in lower secondary schools.

## **1.6 Research Questions**

- i. How can critical participatory action research be used in teacher professional development for the implementation of English language teaching in the framework of the competence-based curriculum in lower secondary schools?
- ii. What are the English language teachers' experiences with the use of critical participatory action research concerning their own professional development for competence-based English language teaching in lower secondary schools?

## **1.7 Justification of the Study**

Teacher professional development is a fundamental component of educational reforms and policy shifts. However, and trainings have been proved to have a small impact on teachers' classroom practice (Nakabugo et al., 2016), because TPD is most times not contextually relevant for the different environments in which teachers work. As a result, teachers still grapple with implementing new policies in their classrooms. Studies on previous continuous TPD programmes that are context-based in Uganda such as Secondary Science and Mathematics Teachers (SESEMAT) have cited the missing link to their success as the lack teacher collaborative engagement in sharing and reflecting on their personal experiences and classroom challenges (Malunda, 2017). Failure to address this means teachers might continue to teach with a focus on finding correct answers instead of exploring options that promote the development of generic skills necessary for learners' success both in and out of school. The Ministry of Education's goals of curriculum reform will not be realized. As a result, the attainment of SDG 4 on quality education will be hampered. This study was necessary so as to explore the use of alternative ways of teacher professional development

that organize teachers together, within their various contexts, as they share classroom experiences, reflect on and discuss how to advance implementation of the NLSC practices.

### **1.8 Significance of the Study**

The study explored the use of Critical Participatory Action Research in teacher professional development for competence-based English language teaching in lower secondary schools. The results hold significance in both practical and theoretical perspectives in the following ways:

- i. The findings of the study could benefit education officers and policymakers in the Ministry of Education and Sports as they promise to give insights in new ways of teacher professional development to advance the implementation of the competence-based instruction of English language in lower secondary schools in Uganda. This should be through highlighting teachers' perceptions, experiences and practices during and after a CPAR intervention for improved competence-based teaching. The findings of the study could also provide insights into the use of CPAR in teacher professional development programmes for example to advance competence-based teaching of English language in lower secondary schools.
- ii. The study should be beneficial to secondary school teachers of English language by showing them empowering ways and examples of how they can transform their teaching practice in meaningful ways towards the competence-based curriculum. This would help teachers to improve their teaching practice by using CPAR to advance themselves professionally in accordance with requirements of the competence-based teaching and instruction.

- iii. The findings of the study should lay the groundwork for more research touching the use of CPAR as an additional powerful contextualized tool for TPD in implementation of the NLSC in Uganda.

### **1.9 Assumptions of the Study**

- i. The study had an assumption that the participating teachers were aware of competence-based curriculum and had received some training in that regard.
- ii. It was grounded in the assumption that the teachers are experts in their own field and that they co-constructed the knowledge generated in the study about the use of CPAR in teacher professional development.
- iii. The study assumed the target population operated in the same environment, and was therefore faced with related contextual issues.
- iv. The study assumed that the outcomes of the CPAR would lead to positive social change and a transformation of teachers' classroom practices.

### **1.10 Scope of the Study**

The study was confined to the use of CPAR in teacher professional development for English language competence-based teaching in lower secondary schools in Kabale Municipality, Uganda. The study focused on three key constructs of CPAR, TPD and competence-based English language teaching. Qualitative data was generated using communicative action and reflexive journals to obtain the English language teachers' perceptions, experiences and practices concerning their professional development using CPAR. The data generation process took place from 11th March to 8th April, 2023.

### **1.11 Limitations of the Study**

- i. This qualitative study used a small number of participants from public secondary schools. The researcher gave thick descriptions of the research process so that the readers can decide whether results are transferable to their own settings or not.
- ii. The study relied on self-reported data from participants since they observed their own practice and reported their experiences. The researcher and participants focused on the conscious articulation of experiences. Such self-reported data may not be verifiable. However, I triangulated the communicative action with reflective journals to attain credible findings.
- iii. This study was limited to critical participatory action research.

### **1.12 Theoretical Framework**

This study was guided by Brazilian educator Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy (1972) and the critical pedagogy seven basic elements framework by Spear & da Costa, (2018).

The educational theory's main aim is humanization, that is; that education should enable both teachers and learners to critically and consciously understand their how they relate with the world, and pedagogy in which teachers and learners have a conscious awareness of their contexts and conditions (Ordem, 2021). The critical pedagogy is based on the assumption that education means critical understanding of reality, making a commitment to and changing reality, training those who will make this change and dialogue (Shudak & Avoseh, 2015).

Believers in the critical pedagogy contend that there is no educational practice that is detached from the realities and influences its context (Shih, 2018). Paulo Freire was against banking and domestication of education which he contrasted with the problem posing or

liberating education (Freire, 2020). Problem-posing education engages those involved in it in the process of becoming, as they striving towards conscientization, and this implies that learners and educators learn to read reality with a critical lens (Freire, 2020). This liberating education is based on creativity, and stimulates action upon reality after reflection. People have to be engaged in inquiry and creative transformation. People are seen as incomplete, unfinished in an equally unfinished reality. As a result of this unawareness and incompleteness lies the roots of education. The incomplete character of human beings and the transformational character of reality necessitate that education be an ongoing activity. Education is thus constantly remade in praxis. Problem-posing education is revolutionary. People should move forward and look ahead, for immobility is a threat, and looking back should only be a means of understanding what and who beings are so as to build the future. People do not exist apart from reality and can only progress if they recognize the situations in which they are sub-merged. With its liberating praxis, problem-posing education makes teachers and learners subjects of the education process so that they overcome their false perception of reality.

According to Freire, changing the world into a humanized one is achievable only through true dialogue and “theory without practice would be mere abstract thinking, just as practice without theory would be reduced to naive action” (Freire & Vittoria, 2007). For him, praxis (tension between educational theories and practices) can both sink a classroom or drive it to greater heights. Teachers could be inclined to teaching in a certain way due to their individual philosophies whereas they could also feel pressured to teach in a certain way because of more practical concerns (Shih, 2018a). This implies that teachers must find a balance for their teaching philosophies, their practical concerns and education must be

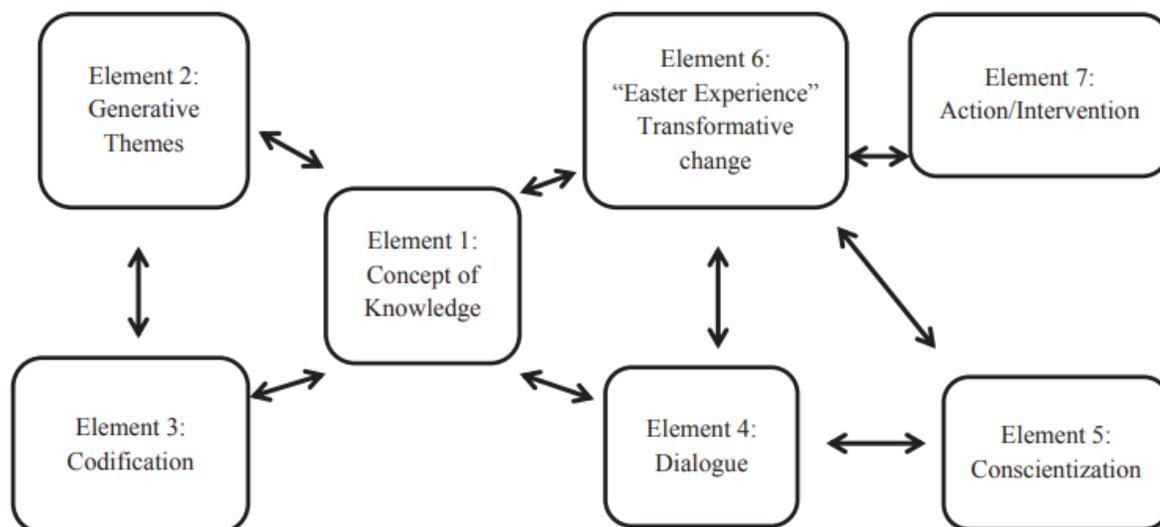
dialogical and democratic. Teachers can engage in dialogue and recreate themselves (Nouri & Sajjadi, 2014).

This study found the critical pedagogy relevant because of its acknowledgement of the importance of continuous teacher professional development starting from the grassroots. Continuous professional development programs can be driven to the greatest possible extent if teachers themselves design programs suited for their contexts (Spear & da Costa, 2018). Beginning training with the needs and demands of teachers ensures a commitment to change. Moreover, teachers' voices and input are vital for successful teacher training and implementation of the NLSC since they too are active learners. A suppression of their input and voices would be a reinforcement of what Freire calls the "status quo".

The study used critical pedagogy as its guiding theory in exploring the use of CPAR in teacher professional development for competence-based English language teaching in selected lower secondary schools in Kabale Municipality, Uganda.

### 1.12.1 The Critical Pedagogy Framework

According to Spear & da Costa, (2018) there are seven elements of critical pedagogy as shown in figure 1.1.



**Figure 1.1 The Seven Elements of Critical Pedagogy**

*Source: (Spear & da Costa, 2018)*

The first concept is the element of knowledge which looks at whose knowledge is heard, whose is legitimized, who controls it and who has access to it. The critical pedagogy emphasizes the need for teacher training programs starting from their contexts. Teachers can therefore design and structure training programs instead of only relying on those dictated by the Ministries of Education and other educational establishments such as the National Curricula Development Centers.

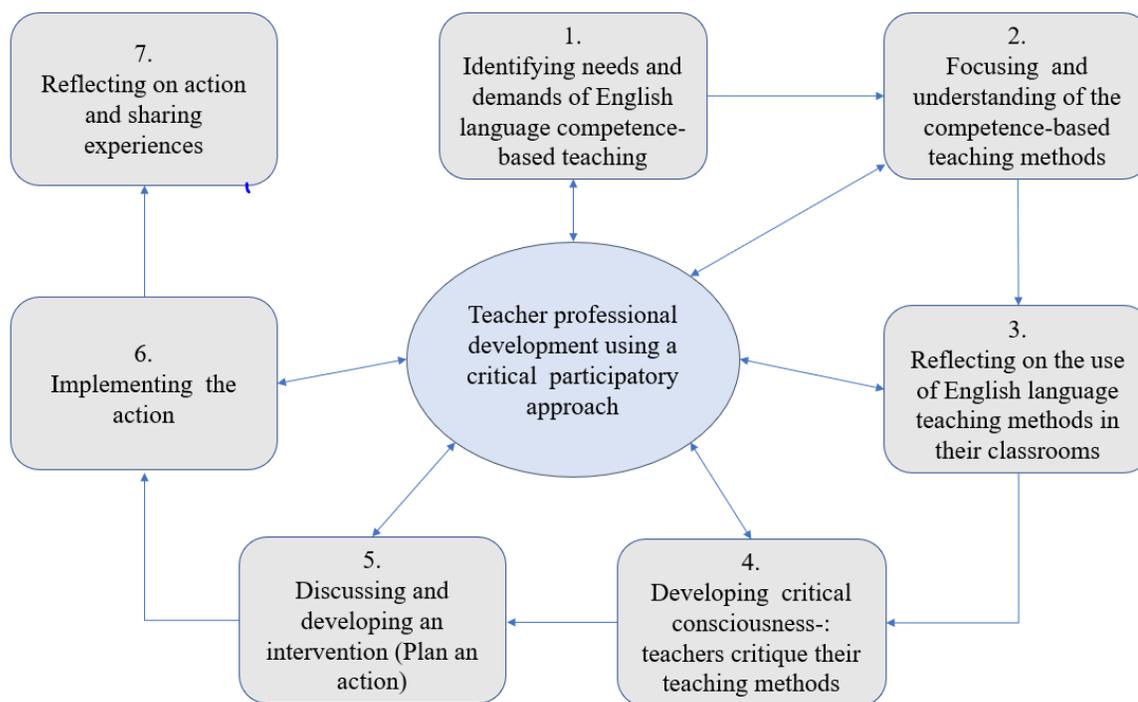
The second and third concepts are generative themes and codification. All teachers collaborate in creating ideas and concepts about how best an area of concern can be addressed within their contexts in what Freire calls “generative themes”. “Codification” as Freire puts it involves developing a focus and an in-depth comprehension of the situation at hand, listening to and incorporating all the voices of all the different teachers. This is aimed at understanding the various social-cultural aspects so that the developed intervention or program is modified to meet varying needs and conditions.

The fourth and fifth concepts of dialogue and conscientization involve critical dialogue between the participants and facilitator. The process involves dialogue and critical, self-assessment activities that offer opportunities for the participants to reflect on their social realities and the root cause of the problems and challenges they face, as well as their own role in perpetuating the issues.

The sixth and seventh concepts are known as the “Easter experience” and “action/intervention”. Easter experience results from dialogue and critical reflection as teachers collaborate to review the curriculum, teaching materials and resources. Action is what Freire calls “conscientization” and it involves participants, in this case English language teachers becoming change agents through action. The teachers implement the agreed-on action focusing on their needs and those that have direct bearing on the daily classroom engagements and challenges faced in their school settings.

### 1.13 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework shows the interaction of key concepts in this study as shown in figure 1.2



**Figure 1.2 Conceptual Framework**

*Source: Researcher's construct, 2022*

Teacher professional development started with the first concept in which English language teachers met within their context, discussed competence-based teaching and defined what it meant to them. The second concept involved a deeper understanding of the approaches used in teaching English in the NLSC. The next concept involved teachers reflecting on their classroom practices in relation to the requirements of competence-based teaching.

This led to the next concept of critical consciousness. The teachers identified what had and what had not been going as required, why so and what is it that was needed to effectively implement competence-based teaching. In concept five, the teachers planned and developed an action as an intervention which they implemented in their classrooms in concept six. The last concept (7) involved teachers reflecting on their classroom experiences with the use of the method that had been developed in concept six. The concepts are summarized in figure 1.2.

### **1.14 Operational Definition of Key Terms**

This section gives the operational definition of key terms as used in this study.

**Communicative Action:** Dialogues that takes place in every critical participatory action research initiative (Kemmis et al., 2014). In this study, communicative action means the dialogues and group discussions of the participants during the CPAR process.

**Competence-based Curriculum (CBC):** Systems of instruction, assessment, grading, and academic reporting that are based on students' demonstration of knowledge and skills expected to be learned as learners progress through their education (Sadeq et al., 2021). In Uganda, the competency-based curriculum is known as the New Lower Secondary Curriculum (NLSC). In this study therefore, CBC, NLSC and "the new curriculum" were used interchangeably to mean the same thing.

**Critical Participatory Action Research:** A type of inquiry where the researcher and individuals who display dedication to engaging in a comprehensive social analysis of their circumstances, come together, collaboratively investigate their practices and collectively decide on strategies to enhance and resolve their situation through communicative action

(Kemmis et al., 2019; McTaggart et al., 2017). For this study, CPAR is the inquiry in which the researcher and English language teachers confronted with implementing CBC in lower secondary schools engage in communicative action to reflect on and improve on their classroom practice.

**Dialogue/ discussion:** In this study, dialogue and discussion were used interchangeably to refer to teachers' in-depth conversations.

**Group Modification:** In this study, group modification meant that the groups normally used in classes would be rotated and the learners' roles in these would be groups substituted.

**Teacher Professional Development:** The process of enhancing the skills and competencies of to be able to produce outstanding educational outcomes in learners (Pharis et al., 2019). In this case TPD refers to English language teachers continuous learning process and application of their learnings to improve their classroom practices through communicative action.

**Teachers' context:** In this study, teacher context refers to the teachers' classroom realities, challenges and environments in which they work.

**Teaching Approach:** A set of principles, beliefs or ideas about the nature of learning which is translated into the classroom. This study operationalizes a teaching approach to mean a teaching strategy that a teacher uses to support learning.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents pertinent literature on competence-based curriculum, teacher professional development, PAR, and CPAR. The chapter ends with a highlight of the literature gaps and summary of the review.

#### 2.2 Concept of Competence-based Curriculum

The Competence Based Curriculum (CBC), also known as Competency Based Education (CBE), is derived from the concept of competence which is as a set of competencies that people require in order to do tasks at school and outside school in the workplace (Nsengimana et al., 2020).

A CBC refers to systems of instruction, evaluation, grading, and academic reporting that are based on students' demonstration of the knowledge and abilities they are supposed to learn as they progress through their education (Sadeq et al., 2021). A CBC places more emphasis on the complex learning process outcomes such as skills, knowledge and attitudes that learners apply, rather than on the traditional subject content that learners are expected to learn (Samudera & Zuhdi, 2017). A CBC aims to provide learners with generic competencies and employable abilities that will help them function in the modern world (Nsengimana et al., 2020; Ruth & Ramadas, 2019). Learners are competent if they have specific skills and knowledge required to effectively perform real-life tasks, and therefore, competency is the demonstrated capacity to use skills and knowledge for professional and personal development both within and outside of the school (Hatami et al., 2017).

Competency-based education (CBE) arose from the desire by different countries to equip their nationals with the employable skills needed to succeed in life and in the workplace (Nsengimana et al., 2021). The CBE is constructivist in nature and advocates for approaches to teaching and learning that regard learners as having the ability to construct and apply knowledge rather than just assimilating the knowledge transmitted from the teacher (Lupeja & Komba, 2021). As a result, the traditional teacher-centered, authoritarian classrooms are being replaced with more participatory, learner-centered ones that are more motivated by the knowledge and skill requirements of the twenty-first century (M'mboga Akala, 2021). This is necessary so as to produce graduates that are well equipped with the required knowledge and life-long skills that could enable them to make it in the ever changing and competent world (Kitta & Tilya, 2018). A CBC uses a learner-centered teaching strategy that is flexible to meet the changing needs of learners, teachers and the society (Mabonga, 2021). Teachers are therefore challenged to use various teaching strategies that focus on real life situations and allow learners to collaboratively investigate and construct their own knowledge (Kitta & Tilya, 2018). A CBC environment requires students who are motivated and self-disciplined and teachers are expected to decide on which competencies demonstrate mastery, how to adapt their course material for students to move through different speeds, and how to help the struggling students to catch up with the new system (Sadeq et al., 2021).

Both the developed world, including the United Kingdom, the United States of America, France, Germany and the Netherlands, as well as the African continent including South Africa, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Mozambique, Kenya, Rwanda, Ethiopia and Zambia have seen a rise in the popularity of competence-based education (Mulenga et al., 2019; M'mboga Akala, 2021).

### **2.2.1 Implementation of Competency-based Curriculum in Africa**

South Africa was the first African country to adopt a competency-based curriculum in 1998 to equip South Africans with relevant employable skills befitting of the 21st century professionals. The CBC was referred to as Outcome-based Education (OBE) and seen as a means of addressing inequalities in learning across different racial groups” (Mulenga & Kabombwe, 2019). This OBE emphasized individualized learning and learner performance as part of a larger effort to address unemployment and inequality among various racial groups through skills acquisition.

In Zambia, the Ministry of General Education implemented a Competency-based Curriculum, also called an Outcomes-based Education from primary education to tertiary education. The said curriculum implementation began in 2017 and sought to link education to the real life experiences (Mulenga & Kabombwe, 2019b) by equipping learners with appropriate knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that respond to the changing needs of the society (Mutale & Ng’andu, 2022). This means that the curriculum was aimed at developing learner’s acquisition of competencies (Moobola & Mulenga, 2020). Learners were made directors of their own learning and teachers were to employ a variety of instructional techniques including small groups, hands-on activities and discussions. Inquiry-based teaching and learning activities are characterized by an emphasis on real-world phenomena in the classroom, outdoors, or in the laboratory where learners are given the opportunity to research and create their own truths. (Mulenga et al., 2019).

In 2004, Tanzania conducted an evaluation of its various educational levels’ curricular. The goal of the review was to raise educational standards by assisting learners in acquiring knowledge and skills necessary for the workplace (Dikriansyah, 2018). The old curriculum

had been ineffective in producing graduates with desired abilities and competencies to meet the local, national and international markets (Dikriansyah, 2018). A competency-based curriculum was introduced in 2005 to produce graduates well equipped with knowledge and abilities necessary to survive in the constantly changing world (Lupeja & Komba, 2021; Makunja, 2015). By 2006, the CBC became operational in both primary and secondary schools and learning changed from being teacher-centered to being learner-centered (Reform & Suleiman, 2020). This curriculum reform involved pedagogical changes in the teaching approaches which incorporated OBE to address Tanzania Development Vision 2025 and the Education Development Sector Programme education to address Tanzania Development Vision 2025 and the Education Development Sector Program (Mulenga & Kabombwe, 2019a). This indicates that learning and teaching strategies in classrooms were concentrated on helping learners gain the necessary competencies and on use of learner-centered activities. The curriculum recommended employing active learning and teaching techniques (Groot, 2018) in order to prepare scholars for life and career skills for transition to the job market (Ruth & Ramadas, 2019) .

A competence-based curriculum was introduced in Rwanda in 2015 and implemented in 2016 to attain education transformation with emphasis on science and technology (Mulenga & Kabombwe, 2019a). The Rwandan education system needed to raise capabilities and employability skills of graduates to meet its global and local job market demands. The aim of the reform was to improve students' independent, lifelong learning habits, impart appropriate skills and knowledge and facilitate the ability of learners to apply knowledge to real life situations (Ngendahayo & Askill-williams, 2016). The Rwandan Educational Board envisioned CBC as a way to produce a new generation of Rwandans who are job creators

rather than job seekers and to help learners build the competencies necessary for success in both academia and the present day's knowledge-based economy (Christison & Murray, 2020). Teachers employed interactive and participative techniques in place of traditional ones that engaged learners in the learning process and addressed learners' individual needs (Ruth & Ramadas, 2019). Learning experiences included but were not restricted to one-on-one, pair and group work, oral questioning, conversations, debates, role playing, presentations, projects, practical work, investigations, problem-solving, assignments, field trips, tests and quizzes (Christison & Murray, 2020).

In Kenya, a competence-based curriculum was rolled out in Kenyan lower primary schools in January 2017. The motivation for the reform stemmed from the necessity to provide children with knowledge, suitable attitudes and skills to make them competitive globally (Sifuna & Obonyo, 2019). There was also a need to integrate and equip learners with competences and abilities that can be used in real-world situations (Nyaboke et al., 2021). The goal of CBC in Kenya is to foster learners' critical thinking, passions, abilities and competences (Waweru, 2018). To improve their life skills, learners are exposed to real-world situations in the classroom to enhance their life skills and build the self-reliance. Learning is expected to be flexible as students spearhead their own learning in order accomplish Kenyan Vision 2030's human resource goals based on the acquisition of core skills and competences (Amunga et al., 2020; Okeyo et al., 2021).

### **2.2.2 The New Lower Secondary Curriculum (NLSC) in Uganda**

A Competency-based curriculum known as the New Lower Secondary Curriculum (NLSC) was introduced in Uganda in February, 2020. The curriculum places a strong emphasis on knowledge integration, skills, and attitudes to provide learners a performance-oriented

competence to achieve specified objectives that would allow them navigate this world that is uncertain and continually changing continually. The aim is to raise learner accomplishment levels in reading, numeracy and life skills, which is projected to greatly contribute to creation of a literate population, which is viewed as essential for sustainable development and economic prosperity (*NCDC, 2020*).

To help learners comprehend the connections between the courses and the complexities of life, the NLSC places on knowledge application and behavioral change that are founded on a defined set of values, generic skills cross-cutting issues incorporated across all subjects. Values underpin the whole curriculum and are derived from the 2013 Uganda National Ethics and Values Policy (Luis & Moncayo, 2019; MoES, 2017).

Classroom activities involve active learner engagement as the teacher draws on learners' prior knowledge and experience and designs learning activities that allow learners to explore the meaning and comprehend how it is applied in real-world circumstances. Competency-based teaching emphasizes group work and cooperative techniques (Olema et al., 2021).

### **2.2.3 English Language Competence-based Teaching**

With regard to teaching English as a second language, competence refers to the underlying knowledge that a speaker has about English language. English language competence-based teaching focuses on what is learned and how learners can demonstrate their learning (Christison, 2021). This method of learning and instruction considers the language function as more important than language structure (Sibomana & Dushimumuremyi, 2018). Competencies are developed through creating suitable teaching-learning settings and approaches which are organized, experiential and active. Teachers are tasked with

facilitating the process of competence development through various techniques of teaching and learning based on competencies they intend to develop in learners (Rieckmann, 2018).

For the purpose of building linguistic competence and problem-solving skills that can be applied in novel and difficult circumstances in daily life, learners study English language in a variety of relevant contexts. Learners are placed at the center of the teaching-learning process, and by this type of education, their learning is given a purpose (Eyovi Ntongieh, 2016; Framework, 2019). The teachers' role is to facilitate learning, and he is tasked with organizing and arranging the learning situation, and monitoring students' learning to create clear communicative objectives (Luis & Moncayo, 2019).

### **2.3 Teacher Professional Development (TPD)**

Historically, TPD has previously been characterized by seminars and lectures led by external experts with an aim of promoting teachers' knowledge of particular skills and competencies. Such approaches assume that teachers require expert instruction because they lack the necessary knowledge and skills (Bergmark, 2020). TPD involved giving teachers lectures on teaching and learning theories, sometimes with accompanying real-world video examples, so that they would adjust their teaching practices accordingly (Korthagen, 2017). The limited ownership and decreased relevance of these TPD programs for teaching practices persistently limited the effectiveness of these professional development processes (Lloyd & Davis, 2018).

Teacher professional development, also often known as in-service teacher training, is regularly employed as a tool to help teachers alter their methods when new national educational initiatives are launched (Gardner et al., 2019). In fact, it is an important factor in educational improvement and a much-needed career necessity for changing classroom

practices and bettering learning outcomes especially after curriculum reform (Postholm, 2018; Van den Bergh et al., 2015). Presently, TPD is a process of improving educator skills and competencies so as to be able to produce outstanding educational in learners (Pharis et al., 2019).

However much traditional approaches to TPD develop teachers' knowledge and skills, they are not sufficient in promoting sustainable changes in instructional practices (Koellner & Jacobs, 2015). According to Fischer et al., (2018), TPD can help teachers to align their instruction with curriculum reforms and change their classroom practices, but this is not enough to help them meet distinct needs of different learners. Teacher trainings and workshops with a top-down approach to professional development might therefore not be enough in helping teachers to positively impact their learners.

Studies done in China and England indicate that teacher learning should be taken into consideration as well as student learning so as to make professional development programs effective and sustainable. They also highlight the value of considering the needs of teachers carefully while planning professional development processes and the urgent need to give these processes sufficient practical focus (Ayvaz-Tuncel & Çobanoğlu, 2018; Uztosun, 2018).

Zeng & Day, (2019) suggest that TPD programs should go beyond collaboration to help teachers to reflect on, review, refresh and maintain their commitment to the larger reasons of teaching. The personal, professional and external circumstances that put teachers' commitment in jeopardy need to be considered when designing professional learning opportunities (Avidov- Day, 2017; Ungar & Herscu, 2020). Teachers who participate in different TPD courses do not necessarily put into practice what they learn, therefore, training

modules should be related to practical situations and challenges with a focus on pedagogical innovation so as to positively impact student learning (Catalano et al., 2020).

Similarly in the African context, Ajani, (2020) noted that the “one-size-fits all” type of professional development workshops for teachers in Nigeria and South Africa were not effective in enhancing teachers’ classroom practices. Ajani recommended that effective in-service professional development initiatives should be designed according to different subject areas of the participating teachers, their teaching challenges and actual areas of needs that require fixing so as to promote better teaching abilities in schools.

Moreover, Amadi, (2015) found that TPD did not adequately prepare teachers for the ongoing changes in teaching technique, which he attributed to professional development approaches that were impractical and as a such coerced teachers into attending but not putting learned teaching methods into practice Most developing countries, Uganda included, are victims of such shortcomings of TPD not equipping teachers with transferable and practical pedagogical skills (Nzarirwehi & Atuhumuze, 2019). Past studies in Uganda have found in-service teacher training to have little positive effect on skills acquisition and improvement in teaching and learning (Lehiste, 2015; Ssempala & Masingila, 2019).

Nakabugo et al., (2016) found that large-scale workshops in Uganda had little impact on teachers’ practice and recommended context-based participatory and school-based TPD through lesson study or action research.

Therefore, greater attention of TPD needs to be put on how to translate existing policies into practices which are relevant for teachers and learners (Bonfield et al., 2020). According to Corbett & Guilherme, (2021) , to attain SDG 4 on quality education, teachers must be

properly trained and qualified and use relevant teaching and learning strategies that meet the needs of all learners.

Furthermore, there is need for application of new strategies that perceive TPD as teachers' learning, learning how to learn, and transferring their knowledge into classroom practice for the progress of their learners. The reason is that expert knowledge and comprehension of pedagogies are not assurances of change of classroom practices. As a result, scholars suggest the use collaborative TPD techniques that are incorporated into teachers' daily work, originate from acknowledged needs for teacher development and are context-specific. These approaches need to be teacher- driven and focused on teaching practices with an aim of improving student outcomes (Bergmark, 2020; Lloyd & Davis, 2018).

The designation of TPD as collaborative should not be interpreted as implying a rise in the knowledge and skills needed to deliver policy objectives more successfully. According to Zeng & Day (2019), collaborative TPD must develop in teachers the transformative capacity to become creative co-content creators in their own fields and situations. Only then can teachers promote learning and replicate new, inventive lessons to guide learners toward developing and evaluating their own learning, as well as application of new knowledge, skills and methods in the classroom (Botha & Herselman, 2018).

Participatory approaches to TPD are recommended since they are centered on the notion that people are knowledgeable about issues that are important to them and just need opportunities to collaboratively improve themselves through practice so as to be able to empower learners to reach higher levels of achievement (Monnier & Gruson, 2018). Svendsen (2020) also acknowledges the need for professional development activities that give teachers an

opportunity to learn, develop and be empowered to study their own practice as well as that of others in order to advance their own practice

The TPD approaches that are non-participatory and not contextual-based often fail to support teachers in enhancing their continuous professional development (Dhungana et al., 2019). As Freire puts it, the social context and complexity of the environment must be connected to practical educational practice for education to be truly (Shih, 2018a).

Studies show that successful TPD is dependent on initiatives that are built on teachers' genuine inquiries, participation and ownership of the process so that these processes are teacher-driven (Bergmark, 2020; Christian et al., 2021). Action research comes in as an invaluable participatory approach that is collaborative and based on teachers' identified needs and day-to-day classroom experiences. Action research is one powerful way to enhance instruction for both teachers and learners and a very effective approach to improve professional learning of teachers (Kemmis et al., 2013, 2014; Mamlok-Naaman, 2018, McTaggart et al., 2017).

However, the current educational processes require teachers to implement knowledge and solutions offered by outside experts and the curriculum (Herr, 2017). Studies have proved that when teachers engage in action research, they develop a shared concern related to the local needs since they have a chance to question and reflect on challenging real-life dilemmas so as to collaboratively find ways of overcoming these challenges (Johannesson, 2022; Yalcin Arslan, 2019). A meta-analysis of studies done in trans-Saharan Africa proposes that teachers should not only be trained in instructional content, but also in improving their practice and daily interactions with learners (Conn, 2017). This informs the next session of discussion of participatory action research.

## **2.4 Participatory Action Research (PAR)**

Action Research is a newly developed method for solving problems that emphasizes application, knowledge generation and problem-solving focused on practice and knowledge creation (Bradbury, 2015). Action research projects look into an organization and make changes using a cyclical action-reflection approach (Ahlawat, 2015).

Participatory Action Research (PAR) on the other hand aims to integrate theory, practice and collaborative action in solving issues of concern to people (Guy et al., 2020). PAR is an approach to knowledge generation that is both collaborative and focused on attaining positive social change. Chevalier & Buckles, (2019) describe it as group decision-making and evidence-based learning that is geared towards social action PAR is characterized by the fact that the problem is defined by the people affected by it, within the local setting and the solution to the problem is within the same setting (Morales & Action, 2016). The aim of PAR is to generate knowledge and action that are useful to people through research, adult education or socio-political action (Swantz, 2015).

PAR is different from other forms of research because of the respect it offers to people's knowledge, the fact that everyone involved participates in the study process as equal partners and the participants' commitment to take action so as to lead to positive social change (Brydon-Miller et al., 2020). PAR is an emergent process in which both learning and change are embedded, as well as the outcomes of research. The action inquiry process involves participants actively in all stages, from developing pertinent research questions and themes through planning and carrying out the study and disseminating findings.

Therefore, participants' opinions and voices are crucial when it comes to thinking about and making decisions about the issue of concern, carrying out and interpreting group dynamics,

monitoring and assessing inquiry outcomes. The researcher serves to contribute investigative insights and inquiry techniques. Change is in form of new knowledge and skills as people are shaped into skilled advocates for themselves or their communities, and also in form of relationships and alliances with other people who are brought together by a shared interest or concern (Brydon-Miller et al., 2020).

PAR mediates between theory and practice so that new knowledge is gained and heightened through practice and reflection (Gustavsen & Pålshaugen, 2015). It goes without saying that PAR has the power to significantly improve practice in a setting where more traditional approaches have had little impact (Wright, 2021). PAR has the capacity to challenge prevailing discourses and bring about real transformations in classroom practice. PAR also addresses TPD by actively incorporating practitioners in the action and research processes. in the processes of action and research (Miedijensky & Sasson, 2022a).

### **2.5 Critical Participatory Action Research (CPAR)**

Critical Participatory Action Research (CPAR) is that type of inquiry in which a researcher and participants who are committed to engaging in a broad social analysis of their situation, gather, collectively study their practices and collectively decide what to do to better and address their condition through communicative action (Kemmis et al., 2019; McTaggart et al., 2017). It originates from among others Paulo Freire's pedagogy which aims at liberation and democracy in all spheres of life, education included, through dialogical reflection and action (Freire, 1970a). CPAR, also known as emancipatory PAR differs from other traditions of PAR (psychosocial also known as transformative and pragmatic alternatively known as rational) because it advocates radical thinking and action in support of knowledge democracy and radical pedagogy among others (Openjuru et al., 2015). The "P" in CPAR

stands for “rich and deep” participation of the researchers and those most impacted by the issue at hand, “C” which stands for “critical” in CPAR means that processes focus on inequities, and are shaped by a collective action by those most impacted by the issue, “A” means research is linked with action while “R” signifies an obligation to undertake systematic inquiry as based on the viewpoints of those most affected (Fine & Torre, 2021).

Participatory Action research itself is a social practice which challenges traditional social and action research. CPAR builds on PAR by committing to examine power dynamics throughout the research design. (Xin & Brion-Meisels, 2022). It arises when individuals concerns and collaborate to improve their respective practices making them more reasonable, more sustainable and less unfair (McTaggart et al., 2017), so that among others, traditional education which controls and limits people’s creativity and ability to transform their own lives is overhauled. According to Freire, the banking system of education where students are empty vessels who receive knowledge from imposing teachers should stop and be replaced by a deep and mutual exchange of knowledge (Freire, 1970a).

Critical practitioners emphasize collective thinking and action by establishing a convenient environment for participants’ freedom of expression of thought and feelings about a challenging situation freedom of thought and sentiment regarding a challenging situation so that participants understand each other, share pressing issues with sincerity and pursue a course of action that is appropriate (Whitehead, 2017). Critical participatory action researchers just stimulate discussions and debates about urgent matters of concern so as to direct the investigation and discovery process, rather than serving as external consultants who disseminate professional counsel and objective knowledge and objective knowledge (Chevalier & Buckles, 2019; Kemmis et al., 2016). The objective is to change practitioners’

practices, their perceptions of their practices and the environments in which they engage in their practices. Therefore, participants communicate with one another, agree on how they perceive their situation, make an effort to understand one another's viewpoints, and then come to an unforced decision about what to do (Chevalier & Buckles, 2019).

CPAR reflects an epistemology, not a methodology and offers a unique approach of considering who possesses the knowledge, who is skilled, how new knowledge might be created and how those most impacted by an issue can take the lead in bringing about change (Fine & Torre, 2021).

Methods of data generation include techniques that bring order into group-thinking (Lykes & Scheib, 2015; McTaggart et al., 2017) and analysis is mostly iterative (Levitt et al., 2021). Along with new knowledge production, CPAR enables participants and researchers to learn in a transformative way that leads to action toward personal or social transformation (Anderson, 2017).

## **2.6 Critical Participatory Action Research (CPAR) in Professional Development**

Participatory professional development approach is conceived as professional co-learning (Dhungana et al., 2019). CPAR focusses on assisting teachers in transforming their work and qualitatively altering the circumstances in which they are present and how they interact with those situations rather than changing their professional practice (Brooks et al., 2021).

Morales & Action, (2016) reviewed PAR as an approach to TPD in the Philippines, and found that incorporating PAR in adult learning had the capacity to make teachers agents of change through their self-evaluation and reflection that boosted reflective practices. The study highlighted that PAR professionalizes teachers and gives them the much-needed

support to be able to offer solutions to pressing classroom issues and equips them with long term skills to “solve their own problems and keep solving them,” which is an outcome that extends beyond the research project itself.

Dhungana et al., (2019) did a continuous professional development school-based project with teachers using collaboration and reflection for curriculum development and implementation. The study was done with 16 teachers in a community school. The study concluded that PAR was critical for improvement of teachers’ professional autonomy and agency and for integrating curriculum and professional development programs. However, this study was done with teachers of young learners of 4-12 years, who also had an agricultural background.

Alwadi et al., (2020) used lesson study in helping Bahrain Kingdom teachers to pursue their personal professional development. The study involved a group of English language teachers working together, designing, developing, researching and analyzing their own practice so as to improve teaching skills. The study used semi-structured interviews and group discussions with four English language teachers and their senior teacher. The findings demonstrate that the participatory approach has a positive impact on teachers’ professional development by increasing their confidence and making them feel trusted in their teaching practices. The Participatory approach saw teachers support of each other in exchanging and modifying their current pedagogical practices.

In a related study, Calvo et al., (2018) found that lesson study was an appropriate TPD strategy to equip teachers with the ability to deal thoughtfully with the dilemmas and questions of their teaching practices. Similarly, lesson study enabled teachers to collectively

discover what worked and what did not so as to draw up alternatives for improvement (Arani et al., 2017; Latifa, 2019; Nashruddin & Nurrachman, 2016; Trapero & Gómez, 2017; Ustuk & Çomoglu, 2019; Vermunt et al., 2019).

However, lesson study focuses on students' experiences and students' learning progress yet this study focuses on teachers' experiences with the use of CPAR to advance their professional development.

Miedijensky & Sasson, (2022) examined the impact of TPD on in-service teachers who participated in a year-long activity for professional development activity in a multiple-case study. The four meta-design principles of learning from and with peers, making thinking visible, content accessibility and supporting autonomy were used to collect data through interviews, observations and instructor performance challenges. The findings suggested that creating a learning environment where teachers participated in formative peer learning, conduct and experience gave them an opportunity to alter their teaching approaches and their viewpoints on teaching and learning. This study was however part of a master' teacher training course.

A related study by Sheidaei & Tahriri, (2017) examined the effects of engagement in action research on English language teachers' practices as part of TPD. The mixed methods study involved eighteen junior school English teachers in an action of five months research. While the qualitative phase of the study relied on reflective journals for data generation, the quantitative phase used communicative language teaching perception questionnaire and teacher advancement program rubrics. AR helped teachers to evaluate their teaching practice and increase their problem-solving, proving that critical reflection is an important component

in professional development. This reflection increased professionalism and effectiveness of teachers by helping them to find answers to their own queries regarding practice.

Ahlawat (2015) used PAR to investigate the effect of a purposeful and sustained professional learning community on TPD in a secondary school context. Self-contained focus group of teachers organized in a learning community and focus group meetings served as professional development sessions. Data was collected through audio recordings and analyzed using inductive and comparative data analysis. The study findings indicated the need for teachers to get favourable conditions for “shared knowledge generation “and recommended the use of PAR as an effective way to prepare teacher for the modern classroom.

Botha & Herselman (2018) investigated ways to transform instructors in the South African Eastern Cape Province into co-creators by fusing their existing subject-specific expertise with their contextual knowledge and new information about using mobile tablets to improve their instructional strategies. The PD course consisted of 10 modules done in a 1-year period. The participatory innovative study made teachers innovative cocreators of their own enhanced classroom practices. The study was however limited to science education.

Ma et al., (2018) did a quasi-experiment, peer coaching-based personalized learning system with 20 active female Mandarin teachers. Learner participation rubric and performance evaluations of the lesson plans and instructional films by participating teachers were used as the study’s instruments. The study used a control and experimental group with 10 participants respectively in a 5-week program for individualized learning based on the issues highlighted in their initial lesson plan. In contrast to the control group which employed the expert guidance-based personalized learning approach, the former group used peer coaching as the basis for their personalized learning strategy. The results showed that peer coaching

promoted the in-service teachers' learning design skills and in-practice teaching abilities in a beneficial way. However, the study was conducted online and this detaches the researcher from the participants.

Keller et al., (2022) used online discussion forums as part of professional development of teachers. The teachers participated in a collaborative problem-solving in online discussion forums, in two roles; one as students mentored by the writer and the other as mentors. Forty-seven (47) high-school mathematics teachers participated. Although, the study developed in participant teachers the group synergy which supported the development of their mathematical articulacy in teaching, it was done online one and for mathematics teachers.

## **2.7 Teachers' Experiences during and after Participating in CPAR for Professional Development**

Vaughan (2020) investigated how much action research countered the impression that teachers were becoming less professional and questioned the exploitative nature of education. In addition to conducting semi-structured interviews with teachers who employed action research for their master's dissertations, the researchers also reflected on their own experiences working with instructors who had completed action research projects. The researcher used five teacher-student participants. Three participants were interviewed by telephone, and two via email. The findings revealed that critical participatory action research improves performability, confidence, accountability as well as teachers' critical self-reflection on their practices and feelings of being treasured professionals. Aside from the online data generation, the study involved university masters' students who did a variety of unrelated action research projects.

Sheidaei & Tahriri (2017) explored the experiences of 18 junior school English teachers who were in the process of conducting action research were the subject of a mixed method study that examined their experiences. The findings of the study demonstrated that action research was successful in improving teacher practice. The process helped teachers reflect on their teaching practice and build their capacity to solve the problems. The teachers generated new ideas through collaboration, which ideas they transferred to their classroom instruction. The professionalism and efficacy of teachers was reported to have grown as a result of a change from their normal instructional approaches to more effective and creative ones. The study, however, was a multi-case, and mixed.

In Ma et al.,'s (2018) study on personalized learning with 20 in-service female teachers, it was discovered that peer coaching-based personalized learning increased teachers' learning participation and made it simple for them to express and accept their peers' ideas as well as propose solutions to questions based on their own experience. The teachers learned from each other and were able to reflect on their own work. The study transformed the participants' in-practice teaching abilities and enriched their practical knowledge as well connecting it with specific teaching context. However, it was a quasi-experiment study.

Wright (2021) did a CPAR in England to transform classroom practices through participatory action research. The author and five teacher researchers collaborated on the study to show how curriculum content may be applied in the classroom. The research processes facilitated critical reflection. The research design utilized three of the critical research processes and was based on Skovsmose & Borba's (2004) critical research model. The three processes are practical organization, pedagogical imagination and exploratory thinking. The CPAR was done in seven meetings. The findings proved that CPAR has the

power to refute dominant ideologies and trigger genuine changes in classroom practice. However, the context was mathematics.

Xin & Brion-Meisels (2022) examined teachers' opinions on their feelings of wellbeing and agency after taking a CPAR professional development course of a CPAR professional development course as related to their self-identified feelings of well-being and agency. The study looked at how instructors used their personal experiences with agency and wellbeing to circumstances of their classrooms. In the findings, teachers reported that they had developed feelings of agency and well-being in terms of knowledge and expertise for the workplace, mutual support, inclusion of everyone in the decision-making process and valuing others' opinions. Participants reported emotions of wellbeing in terms of having positive relationships, feeling competent, and having a sense of meaning and purpose in their work. The study however used school counselors and disciplinary coaches as teacher participants and was restricted to feelings of agency and wellness.

McKendree & McKim (2021) explored an innovative Professional Development (PD) approach where seventeen instructors were positioned as change agents and authorities. The findings showed that TPD programs must make use of teachers' knowledge, particularly by enabling them to produce and contribute to new information. The study equipped participants with a willingness and eagerness to learn from peers and a renewed energy to renovate courses for students. However, the study was done with agriculture, food and natural resources Michigan teachers.

## **2.8 Research Gap**

Although studies show that CPAR is an additional powerful approach for TPD because of positioning teachers as experts and drivers of change especially in the event of curriculum

reform, it largely remains unexplored in TPD in developing countries, less so in Uganda. From the reviewed literature, most of the research on the use of CPAR for TPD to improve English language instruction were lesson studies, some online and others done either quantitatively or using a mixed methods approach.

Few studies focused on exploring the use of CPAR for TPD using a critical constructivist approach. This study therefore sought to explore the use a CPAR in TPD for competence-based English language teaching in the Ugandan context using a qualitative approach.

## **2.9 Summary of the Review**

The discussed literature has reviewed the concept of teacher professional development and the need to use CPAR. Past studies have also highlighted the value of using CPAR in TPD as well as the teachers' experiences with its use. Several studies have used quantitative and mixed methods approaches to generate data while two studies were done online, a fact that detaches the researcher from the participants instead of being equal partner researchers. Unlike the current study that focusses on in-service English language instructors who are facing the implementation of the new curriculum, the reviewed studies on lesson study were for the professional development of beginner and pre-service teachers. The next chapter covers the research design and methodology that were used in the study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the worldview guiding the study, the study approach, design and methods of data generation. It presents the general and target population as well as the sampling design, procedure and size. The chapter looks at how trustworthiness of the research findings was ensured, how the generated data was analyzed and the ethical issues that were observed during the study.

#### **3.2 Research Paradigm, Approach and Design**

##### **3.2.1 Research Paradigm**

This study was guided by critical constructivist paradigm. A paradigm is a general philosophical perspective and understanding of the world which influences the study. (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). According to Guba, a paradigm is a patterned set of assumptions about reality (ontology), how we know reality (epistemology), and the specific methods we use to know reality (methodology) (Wadams & Park, 2018). Therefore, a paradigm is a representation of the researchers' worldview, including their definition of it and how they approach it (Abdullah, 2019).

Critical constructivism is grounded on the notion of constructivism. According to Creswell & Creswell (2018), social constructivists believe in multiple, varied realities and participants' views of the situation being studied. People create meaning as they interact with the world and try to make sense of it using their social and historical context; therefore

meaning-making is a social and interactive process (Crotty, 2020). Only people who are part of the world should interpret the knowledge that that world yields.

This idea of social construction is expanded by critical constructivists by adding critical theory. The epistemological position of critical constructivism examines the process by which knowledge is socially constructed (Kincheloe, 2005). Teachers in this case reflect on classroom practices, how they are inscribed by particular values and shaped by the identities of those who consume it. Critical constructivism sees the world as characterized by rationality which is not universal but is context-bound, and this context brings meanings and values into the design process such as in the in the initial definition of the problem and in the description of the real means for solving it (Feenberg, 2020).

Social justice serves as the foundation of a critical paradigm and advocacy for the emancipatory function of knowledge. With this worldview, it is critical that those most impacted by an issue should take the lead in defining, prescribing, as well as determining what steps could be most useful in bringing about change.

A critical paradigm was deemed the most appropriate for creating an avenue to fulfil the objectives of this study. The aim was to attain agency and ownership of TPD. When teachers meet professional dilemmas or concerns in their educational practice that call for a change in underlying principles, a transformative approach is the most suited (Walker, 2018). Also, it is the best design to support the researchers' and participants' professional development, since it offers an opportunity for reflexive practices and enables participants to engage in rigorous discussion as a means of knowing and learning (Damons, 2017; Freire, 1970).

### **3.2.2 Research Approach**

This study used a qualitative approach. Creswell & Creswell (2018) describe an approach as a plan and procedure for research. Qualitative researchers study phenomena in their natural environments and try to understand or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people assign to them (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2022). Qualitative researchers are interested in how people interpret and create meaning of social processes and what their lived experiences are like.

Qualitative inquiry was preferred as the most appropriate approach for work-based learning inform of continuous professional development since the researcher would engage in an intense interaction with fellow participants (Creswell, 2014).

### **3.2.3 Research Design**

Critical Participatory Action Research type of inquiry guided this study. According to Creswell & Creswell (2018), a research design is a strategy of investigation within the qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches that offers a clear direction for procedures in a research study. For critical constructivists, practice and theory are much related to practices of shared adaptation, joint questioning and of shared illumination (Bentley, 2016). Critical Participatory Action Research (CPAR) illuminates the voices of the teacher participants and empowers them to make changes in their practices through analysis, interpretation, and reflection (Nugent, 2019). To address the negative effects of social practices that are often rooted in global issues, participants plan, act, observe and reflect (Kemmis et al., 2016; McTaggart et al., 2017). Critical Constructivists encourage “issue-centered” approaches which Freire calls problem-posing education (Freire, 1970b).

This study adopted CPAR, as the best approach for bridging the gap between theory and instructional practices since it promotes group and self-reflective inquiry with the goal of enhancing a specific situation in a specific environment (Laudonia et al., 2018; Miedijensky & Sasson, 2022). CPAR was seen as the best approach to help teachers deal with uncertainties of implementing new pedagogy (Miedijensky & Sasson, 2022b). CPAR was used because of its ability to engage teachers to reflect and work together to overcome challenges faced while implementing new NLSC practices in their classrooms.

### **3.3 Study Location**

The study was conducted in Kabale Municipality in the South Western region of Uganda. The study was conducted in Kabale Municipality in the South Western region of Uganda. The district is bordered by the districts of Kanungu to the north-west, Rukungiri to the north, Rukiga to the north-east, Rubanda to the west and the nation Rwanda to the east and south. Kabale district is located 240 square miles and is expected to have a population of 248,700 as of 2020, according to the Uganda Bureau of Statistics. The district is divided into Ndorwa East, Ndorwa West and Kabale Municipality constituencies. The district is highly populated and characterized by a mushrooming number secondary schools to accommodate the large number of learners especially the products of the free universal primary education. These secondary schools are spread throughout urban and rural areas and are both public and private. English is a subject taught as an essential in all these secondary schools which means all the schools have English language teachers currently implementing the new curriculum in their lower secondary classes. All English language teachers were possible participants for the study since all were beneficiaries of the Ministry of Education general training workshops. The study targeted English language teachers from public secondary schools, in

Kabale Municipality. Kabale Municipality was chosen because of the researcher's positionality as an insider in the research and because CPAR advocates for research by and in the natural context of those affected by an issue.

### 3.4 Target Population

The general population of interest for this study was secondary school English language teachers of Kabale Municipality. However, this study only targeted 32 teachers teaching English language in the 7 public lower secondary school classes of senior one and senior two as shown in table 3.1.

A target population is the group of people or participants who meet the study's specific criteria for relevance and of interest for the study (Asiamah et al., 2017). The pioneers of the NLSC were currently in senior three, so CBC implementation was currently in the three classes. The English language teachers of the remaining one lower secondary class were excluded since they were not implementing CBC, and therefore could not inform the study.

***Table 3.1: Target Population***

<b>Public Secondary Schools</b>	<b>Target Population (English Language Teachers in senior 1,2&amp;3)</b>
School A	8
School B	8
School C	4
School D	4
School D	4
School E	2
School F	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>

*Source: Researcher, 2022*

### **3.5 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure**

The study comprised a sample size of 14 participants selected using purposive sampling. From the 32 target participants, I purposively selected two English language teachers from each of the 7 schools. The seven public secondary schools therefore provided 14 participants to participate in the study.

A sample is a representation of the total population that has the relevant knowledge and is selected as representative of the bigger population (Asiamah et al., 2017). It is therefore the last group of individuals from which data is generated. Sampling is the process of selecting elements from the population to represent the entire population (Kumar et al., 2019). Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique that does not provide a fair chance for everyone in the population to be chosen, but rather uses the researcher's discretion to select cases that can richly inform a study (Oribhabor & Anyanwu, 2019). It is therefore the researcher's selection of information-rich samples so as to have a comprehensive understanding of the phenomena being studied (Farrugia, 2019). The researcher selected information-rich participants, in this case the English language teachers implementing CBC in senior 1, 2 and 3 based on their willingness to commit effort and time into the discussions and action that will form the study as shown in table 3.2.

*Table 3.2 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size*

<b>Public Secondary Schools</b>	<b>Target Population (English Language Teachers in senior 1,2&amp;3)</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Sampling Procedure</b>
School A	8	2	Purposive
School B	8	2	Purposive
School C	4	2	Purposive
School D	4	2	Purposive
School D	4	2	Purposive
School E	2	2	Purposive
School F	2	2	Purposive
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>14</b>	

*Source: Researcher, 2022*

### **3.6 My Positionality and Motivation for this Study**

My motivation to undertake this study arose from having been a teacher of English language for more than thirteen years in different secondary schools in Uganda. In the year 2021, I had the opportunity to attend workshops organized by the Ministry of Education and Sports that were meant prepare me alongside other teachers to spearhead the implementation of the competence-based curriculum; known in Uganda as the New Lower Secondary Curriculum (NLSC).

According to Christian et al.(2021) & Dhungana et al. (2019), successful teacher professional development activities should be contextual-based, teacher-driven and dependent on teachers' authentic questions, engagement and ownership of the process. However, I experienced these workshops as de-contextualized 'one-size fits all' sessions, which were unproductive as I could not relate the content to my own practice. These sessions combined all subject teachers regardless of the subjects, based on the presumption that a given educational tool could be applicable to all subjects. Through interaction with my

colleagues, I realized we shared the feeling, that the trainings for implementing the NLSC were largely ineffective, since our own concerns and actual situations were not considered.

This experience resulted in a desire to explore professional development from a different angle and prompted me to undertake a Critical Participatory Action Research (CPAR) study. It was based on the question of what a teacher professional development programme could look like when based on the experiences of the teachers. Kemmis et al. (2014 & 2019) argues that participants in a CPAR collectively monitor their own practice, analyse their situation, and collectively identify the best course of action for improving and resolving the issue through communicative action. He further advocates that researching one's own practices and practice traditions be done from the inside, using the unique insights that only insiders may have into their own practices. It is with this understanding that I undertook this research with my colleagues as an "insider".

From my own experience and that of my colleagues, I was convinced that teachers are professionals with the knowledge and expertise needed to help one another in developing through reflection on their own classroom practices and collaborative knowledge sharing. This prompted me to consider using a CPAR approach to teacher professional development so that we as teachers could learn from each other as we reflected on our classroom practices and initiated change by ourselves. The other important realization for me was, that the competence-based-curriculum offered relevant new angles to reflect and change our own pedagogy towards more learner-centeredness, participation, interaction and inclusion.

I decided to conduct this study with secondary school teachers for a number of reasons. As an insider, I believed that my already-existing professional and shared relations would make me more readily acceptable to my colleagues as a researcher. I also had easy access to

teachers in secondary schools around Kabale municipality since we worked in the same area, were part of the same training sessions in the workshops and I could easily arrange the focus dialogue meetings with them. I felt that this research could offer me an opportunity to improve my own practice as well as that of my teacher colleagues as I explored the potential of using a CPAR approach to teacher professional development.

### **3.7 Data Generation Procedure and Methods**

#### **3.7.1 Data Generation Procedure**

The data generation process happened in three meetings with the participants. In the first meeting, the 14 participants of the study engaged in dialogue. The participants and I discussed our classroom teaching practice concerns in relation to English language CBC implementation. In the second meeting, the participants focused the dialogue on the current aspects of our classroom practices that needed improvement and agreed on a teaching approach that suited our context. We refined the approach and planned how to implement it. We then implemented the agreed-on approach in their classrooms. We observed and reflected on our own classroom action, and recorded our reflections in reflective journals. These journals formed the basis for the dialogue in the last reflection meeting. All the dialogue sessions were audio-recorded for later transcription and analysis.

The participants were made aware of the value of communicating respectfully and openly with one another throughout meetings. They came to an understanding on how they would communicate, the importance of appreciating one another's viewpoints and the necessity of making concessions while deciding what to do in certain situations.

As a researcher and participant, I was responsible for ensuring that participants understood each other's language and ideas and that different perspectives were being recognized and

respected. The importance of each participant's participation to the inquiry process and the fact that all the contributions of participants were valued and significant were made clear to the participants. The researcher ensured that no participants were coerced into accepting a point of view, but rather that participants tried to understand each other's' concerns and tried to reformulate their ideas through learning together.

The researcher audio-recorded these ideas as they unfolded to take note of individual transformation, to strengthen collective educational identity of the group and for later transcription and analysis.

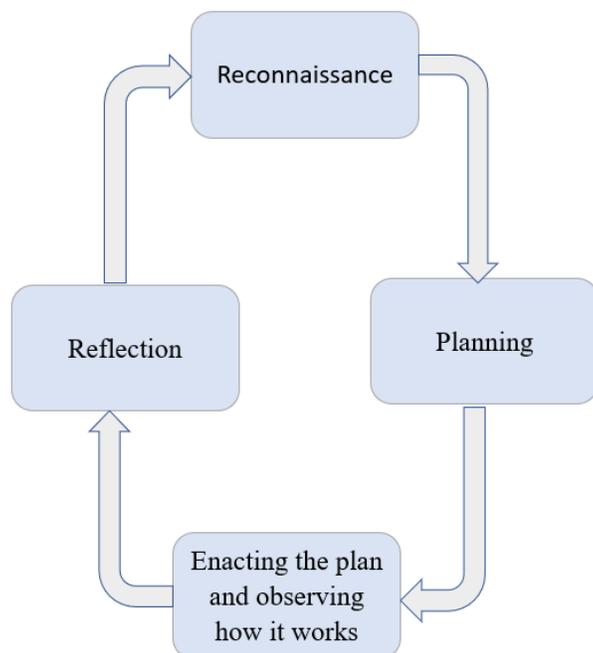
### **3.7.2 Critical Participatory Action Research (CPAR)**

The teaching and learning approach associated with critical constructivism is action research (Børsen, 2020; Kemmis et al., 2013). Critical constructivists argue that local populaces can improve practice in collaboration with researcher's guidance (de Toledo & Giatti, 2014). Action Research (AR) also referred to as Participatory Action Research (PAR) (Morales & Action, 2016), is an approach to engaged human inquiry that directs the researcher toward practice that is action-centered and places a priority on reflection and working together with participants to better their practice (Guy et al., 2020).

The goal of Participatory Action Research is putting evidence-based innovations into practice, encouraging teachers' critical thinking, and improving both the teaching practice and teachers' professional abilities (Stern, 2019). Critical Participatory Action Research is an inquiry in which the researcher and participants who are dedicated to engaging in a thorough social analysis of their circumstance, come together, collectively examine their practices and collectively decide on a course of action to better their situation through communicative action (Kemmis et al., 2019; McTaggart et al., 2017). This study will engage

English language teachers in a CPAR, in the form of communicative action, to reflect on and improve their classroom practices.

The Critical Participatory Action Research will be guided by Maros & Juniar's (2016) CPAR process steps as shown in figure 3.1



**Figure 3.1: Critical Participatory Action Research Steps**

*Source: (Researcher's construct, 2022)*

The participants and I held three meetings for three dialogue sessions, a first one for the reconnaissance stage, another for the planning phase and a third one for the reflection stage.

In reconnaissance, the recruited participants and I met. I opened a communicative space for the participants to engage in dialogue. Participants shared their experiences with the regional

re-tooling workshop attended. They reflected on teaching approaches they were using to implement the NLSC in their various classrooms.

Participants then expressed and shared their teaching practice concerns in their context. The context in this case was the location of their schools, which is Kabale Municipality. I led participants into a discussion of aspects of their current classroom practices that needed to be improved for effective CBC implementation. Participants had the freedom to openly express their opinions, ideas, challenges and outcomes. The participants observed ethics of dialogue. The hierarchical modes of communication were suspended and participants were required to listen, speak, act and relate to others carefully and respectfully. This ensured the free exploration of felt concerns, dissatisfactions, and suggestions for improvement. As the participants interacted and shared with each other, the study gained their commitment.

The planning phase happened in the second meeting, the afternoon after the first meeting. Participants thought about what aspects of their present teaching practices needed to be changed. They went on to suggest and decide on a teaching approach to implement in the classroom while thinking of the possibilities and limitations of the action, the resources to be used and their availability. The planning phase ended with participants reaching some shared understanding of the classroom action to be implemented, and when and how it was going to be done. The participants decided on the implementation schedule and how they were going to monitor their own classroom action using reflective journals.

The third step of this study was to enact the plan and observe how it worked. Teachers implemented the agreed-on approach in their classrooms. The participants monitored their classroom action which served as evidence for later reflection. They recorded ideas and impressions in journals to help them recall more accurately what actually happened in the

process of action. Journals helped participants to compose their thoughts in the process of acting. The participants used their reflections in their journals as they discussed their experiences in the following meeting.

The final workshop was held for the purpose of reflection. The participants critically reflected about the whole CPAR process. They discussed what happened, the opportunities and constraints, and the benefits and limitations of CPAR as well as implications for future action. The participants finally evaluated the CPAR and the process ended with the researcher thanking the participants and formation of a group WhatsApp page for continued networking and collaborative inquiry.

### **3.7.3 Reflective Journals**

I availed the participants reflective journals for recording their personal observations, thoughts, and opinions before and during implementation the classroom action. Journals are personal records of regular observations, ideas, interpretations, hunches and reflections on subjects of concern. They encourage continuous recording of opinions about what is currently happening. In CPAR, participants make their own records as the study progresses (Maros & Juniar, 2016).

Keeping a journal enables participants to think about what they are doing regarding the study, reflect and compose their thoughts and review what they have done. These journals guided both the participants and I in learning as we noted down our reflections, and our experiences with the entire CPAR process for our professional development. Since journals record observations, interpretations and questions together with the timing and location of these reflexes, they were a source of data on different perspectives and experiences of the different participants on the whole CPAR process. These journals were also important in the

final meeting as the participants and I reflected on the CPAR and gave feedback about our experiences as part of professional development in the implementation of competence-based English language teaching in our schools. The written reflections also guided the participants in the final reflection meeting. The decision to use of reflective journals to guide later reflection was based on Coles-ritchie & Coles-ritchie's (2019) argument that when teachers verbalized their reflections with other teachers instead of just writing them, “they developed the capacity to understand and resolve the complexity” and made sense of their reflections as they taught each other how they moved through their classroom instruction.

### **3.8 Trustworthiness**

This study ensured trustworthiness of the qualitative data generated, following Lincoln and Guba’s four criteria of credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability (Singh et al., 2021).

The term trustworthiness refers to as the “goodness criteria” by Lincoln and Guba parallels the word rigor used in quantitative research. Rose & Johnson (2020) define trustworthiness as the “overall impression of quality associated with a research endeavor”. It is therefore truth value, applicability, consistency and neutrality of qualitative research data.

#### **3.8.1 Credibility**

I had a prolonged engagement with the teachers to ensure credibility of the data generated. Credibility refers to how congruent research findings are with reality (Stahl & King, 2020) and is one way of ensuring rigor in qualitative research (Hoorani et al., 2019). I also triangulated data from two sources so as to enable verification of claims, and obtained both broad and deep information to ensure a rich accumulation of data from which to draw

inferences. I also solicited feedback from the research participants in what is referred to as member checking to ensure that the data was accurate.

### **3.8.2 Dependability**

I kept an audit trail so as to ensure dependability of research findings. Dependability is the extent to which a researcher's interpretation of data would be consistent if replicated over similar conditions (Wray et al., 2019).

I gave a transparent description of the research steps taken from the start of the study to the development and reporting of the findings.

### **3.8.3 Transferability**

I purposively selected the study participants, provided rich, thick descriptions of relevant contextual information, fieldwork, time frames for data generation and the entire research process so that the readers would evaluate if findings were applicable to theirs or other contexts in a bid to ensure transferability.

Transferability is the extent to which research findings can be applied to other contexts and how readers can apply the study's conclusions to their own circumstances (Pietilä et al., 2020). A qualitative study is transferable if the findings have meaning to individuals not involved in the study and readers can associate the results with their own experiences (Stacey, 2020).

### **3.8.4 Confirmability**

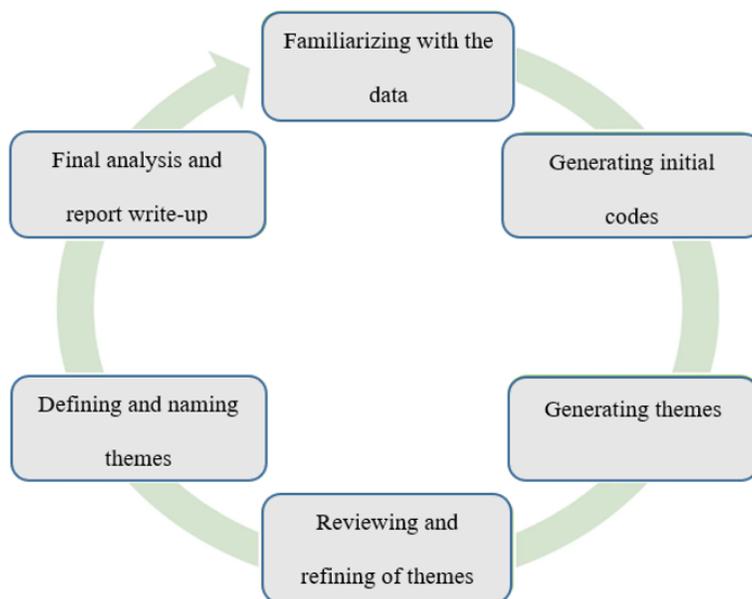
I explained my positionality and the biases I brought to the study for confirmability of my research findings. I also did member checking for participants to confirm that the findings were a reflection of their conversations.

Confirmability is the degree to which the study results are free from bias that is; it is the neutrality and accuracy of the data. Results from qualitative research are confirmable if they are based on and reflective of the data obtained from participants rather than the researcher's bias or interpretations (Johnson et al., 2020).

### **3.9 Data Analysis Procedure**

I analyzed the data gathered from the recordings of the communicative action meetings, according to Braun and Clarke's (2006) procedure for conducting the thematic analysis. Kemmis et al., (2014) recommend that critical participatory action may transform into a case study once the analysis stage is reached. As a result, the analysis phase of this study shifted to that of instrumental case studies and a focused on the issues that emerged. Data interpretation was done with the help of participants. However, I completed the analysis and took full responsibility for documenting the findings. The participants were however involved in establishing the credibility of the findings after documentation to cater for rigor.

Thematic analysis is a technique for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) of meaning within data (Braun et al., 2017). In the process of thematic analysis, a data set is searched for recurring patterns of meaning (Braun & Clarke, 2006, cited in Braun & Clarke, 2021) as shown in figure 3.2



***Figure 3.2 Thematic Analysis Steps***

*Source: (Researcher's construct, 2022)*

Firstly, transcribed the verbal data, for only then could it be thematically analyzed (Herzog et al., 2019). I went on to familiarize with the data by breaking it down, reading through the entire data set and actively engaging with it by searching for patterns of meaning. I transcribed the verbal data, for only then could it be thematically analyzed (Herzog et al., 2019).

In the second phase of generating initial codes, I systematically reviewed and manually coded all ideas. Codes indicate a characteristic of the data that is intriguing and pertinent to the information and that may be evaluated in a useful manner with relation to the phenomenon. Coding is essential for organizing data into meaningful groups (Peel, 2020). Codes were matched up with extracts that were thought important illustrations.

Thirdly, I generated themes by analyzing the relationships between various codes and organizing them according to preliminary themes. I analyzed previously identified codes and thought about how different codes may be joined based on related meanings to create sub-themes and themes. I looked at the relationships between the various codes and how these relationships could influence the stories that were related to the particular theme. Themes needed to be organized into theme-piles (Byrne, 2022). The third phase ended with the creation of a map with codes and data items arranged according to their respective themes

Fourth, the themes were reviewed and refined in two levels. The first level, I examined connections among the data items and codes that informed each theme and sub-theme and looked out for coherent patterns. I reworked on the themes that did not form a coherent pattern to create new themes and find a home for those extracts that did not fit in the already existing themes. In the second level, I reviewed themes in connection to the data set to see how effectively they offered the most suitable interpretation of the data in light of the research questions. In reviewing the codes, Braun & Clarke, (2006) suggest Patton's (1990) 'dual criteria for judging categories' to review the codes, detecting internal homogeneity within themes and outward variation. These two levels of review are crucial in showing that the items and codes can inform a theme, and the interpretation of the entire data set. Also, any additional information contained in themes that was overlooked during earlier coding phases can be identified so as to attain a satisfactory thematic map (Finkelstein et al., 2021).

In the fifth phase, I identified the basic idea of each theme, as well as the specific data aspect that each theme captured. I went back to the pre-prepared data extracts for each theme, and sorted them into accounts with supporting narratives that were logical and consistent. In order to create an articulate narrative that was consistent with the content of the dataset and

valuable in relation to the research questions, I made sure that each theme offered a cogent and internally consistent account of the data that could not be told by other themes. I also revised the names of the themes during this phase as advised by (Byrne, 2022). To create a coherent story, I studied each extract, interpreted it in light of its underlying topic and larger context of the study issue.

The final analysis and report writing process was the last phase. I tabulated all codes under the finalized themes along with corresponding categories that characterized these themes. According to Herzog et al. (2019), this required supplying adequate justification of the themes found in the data and connecting the data to the questions being addressed by the research. I established an order for reporting themes and connected them in a logical narrative of the data.

### **3.10 Ethical and Legal Considerations**

#### **3.10.1 Ethical Clearance**

I started the data generation process by requesting clearance from the Educational Management and policy studies department at Moi University to go out and conduct the study to go and conduct the research study. I then sought ethical clearance from Gulu University Research Ethics Committee (GUREC) and thereafter, the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) granted permission and consent for the research to be conducted in Uganda. I then sought approval for carrying out the study in Kabale district from the Kabale District Education Officer, as well as from headteachers and heads of English Departments of the different schools to allow their teachers to take part in the study.

### **3.10.2 Ethics for the Critical Participatory Action Research**

I observed Locke et al. (2013) ethical considerations of doing a CPAR. The main ethical consideration of doing CPAR according to Locke et al. (2013) is the “the affective principle” which addresses affirming each other as complete individuals and protecting study participants from harm. I refrained from indulging in anything that could cause physical harm to the participants and from asking questions that could lead to worry, anxiety or other negative effects such as lowering the participant’s self-esteem as teachers.

I observed justice by ensuring practices that allowed participants the right of self-expression and discouraged domination. I discussed at the outset what it meant to collaborate in a participatory way and the importance of being comfortable, honest and open. This discussion lessened tension brought by certain participants’ excessive control to take charge of conversations and activities often times, and encouraged “critical self-reflexivity” among the participants.

Each participant was entitled to express their opinions regarding important research-related choices. This answered the concern of beneficence and inclusivity, which demanded that research be conducted in the best interests of those involved and affected, as well as taking the interests of all participants into consideration. Every participant was regarded as a key and full participant in the action research to observe Locke’s “principle of maximal participant recognition”.

Regarding informed consent and assent, I used a clear language and gave the respondents clear information about the study’s goals and nature, any records generated, maintained and used during the research study. Participants were informed that they had the freedom to revoke their agreement to participate in the study at any moment without being penalized,

and to withdraw from the CPAR any time they wanted to. All generated evidence, audio or video records were taken with informed consent of all the participants involved.

All evidence gathered was securely stored, used only for purposes of the study, accessed only by the research team for analysis and interpretation and would be destroyed after usage and the acceptable time for its storage.

I ensured confidentiality and anonymity by coding to hide and protect names and identities of the participants. I will consult participants for consent after data analysis in case of need for publication of the research findings.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter presented the research study's paradigm, approach and design. It also presented the study location, target population, sample size and sampling procedure. The chapter further presented my motivation and positionality for the study, data generation procedure and methods, data analysis procedure and technique as well as the ethical and legal considerations of the study.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the data that was generated by three dialogue meetings and the classroom action. It presents the teachers experience with the workshop attended in preparation for CBC implementation, the teaching approaches they were using, their perceptions of these approaches and their teaching practice concerns. It further presents the data from participants' discussion of what teaching approaches they could use to solve most of these concerns and their reflections from the classroom action as well as the whole CPAR process. It ends with a presentation of the emerging issues from the use of CPAR for teacher professional development as well as the linking of these issues with related literature.

#### 4.2 Presentation of Findings

Throughout the study, the data generated was meant to answer the following questions:

- i. How can critical participatory action research advance teacher professional development for competence-based teaching?
- ii. What are the English language teachers' experiences with the use of CPAR in professional development for competence-based teaching in lower secondary schools?

I present the findings from the CPAR study which comprised data from three dialogue sessions and reflective journals of the classroom action. The data generated from the whole study addresses the first research question while the second question is addressed by the data from the reflective journals and the last reflection meeting. In the first dialogue, we reflected

on our teaching practice. We discussed the kind of professional development trainings we had undergone so far with regard to implementation of the NLSC, our experiences with these professional development programmes, and our perception about the CBC approaches we used to teach English language. We further reflected our teaching practice concerns. In the second dialogue, we shared about the aspects of the current teaching practices that we could improve for effective NLSC implementation and came up with an approach that could address these concerns. This was followed by three weeks of classroom action in our respective schools where we implemented the agreed-on approach. We then met for the last dialogue meeting in which we reflected on our experiences.

The data generation in in this study was guided by Maros & Juniar's, (2016) four CPAR steps of reconnaissance, planning, enacting the plan while observing how it works and reflection. Throughout the dialogues, I was guided by the CPAR goal which is to collectively transform the conduct and consequences of participants' practice to meet the needs of changing times through communicative action (Mctaggart et al., 2014; Zuber-Skerritt, 2016).

As both an insider who was both a lead investigator and participant, I was the one asking the questions, directing the group and prompting discussions to keep the dialogue focused towards critical reflection about our teaching practice concerns and how to address them through critical reflection. I present the demographic information of participants and a narrative analysis of the dialogue sessions from which themes discussed emerged.

### 4.3 Demographic Information of Participants

In this study I worked with 14 teachers of English language from Kabale Municipality, Uganda. I had 2 teachers from each of the 7 public secondary schools that constitute Kabale Municipality. Six of these participants were female while 8 were male. The participants selected were currently implementing the New Lower Secondary Curriculum (NLSC) in senior one and senior two. In alignment with the CPAR design of this study, the participants were invited to share their English language teaching practice concerns in regards to the implementation of the NLSC in their classrooms and come up with an approach to address these concerns as a way of professionally developing themselves. Table 4.1 gives a brief description of the participants.

***Table 4.1 Participants' Demographic Information***

<b>Sno</b>	<b>Name of the Participant (Pseudonym)</b>	<b>Name of the School (School Code)</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Teaching Experience (Years)</b>
1	Boris	School A	M	9
2	Clara	School A	F	8
3	Nestorn	School B	M	5
4	Andre	School B	M	15
5	Rina	School C	F	4
6	Seb	School C	M	12
7	Rorian	School D	F	16
8	Den	School D	M	17
9	Rian	School E	M	18
10	Dowin	School E	M	5
11	Anah	School F	M	7
12	Jany	School F	F	20
13	Nina	School G	F	6
14	Bena	School G	F	14

*Source: Research Data, 2023*

#### **4.4 Reconnaissance**

Reconnaissance took place in the first meeting which lasted four hours from 9:00 a.m to 1:00 p.m and I had three sub-questions to guide this dialogue session to keep it focused.

- i. What were your experiences with the professional development trainings attended so far regarding the new lower secondary curriculum?
- ii. What is your perception about the CBC approaches currently being used to teach English language?
- iii. What are your teaching practice concerns when using these approaches to teach Language in your classrooms?

##### **4.4.1 Teachers' Experiences of Professional Development Trainings for Implementation of the NLSC**

To answer the first sub-question, I opened up a communicative space for teachers to share freely about their experiences of the professional development trainings we had so far attended in preparation for and as we implemented the NLSC. According to Mctaggart et al. (2014), opening a communicative space means that participants in a CPAR project talk about whether things are going the way they hoped or if things would be going differently if they acted differently. From the discussions, participants found that they had all only attended the four-day regional retooling workshop organized by the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC). It turned out that none of the participants had attended any national training. The following were the teachers' experiences:

The teachers experienced the regional training as engaging. The teachers were allowed a chance to actively participate in the discussions and activities that characterized the sessions.

The workshops were very interactive since teachers were most times engaged in group activities.

However, all participants admitted that the workshop was a “one-size-fits-all” that combined all teachers from the entire South-Western region. For instance, Rorian experienced the workshop as a “*general*” one that “*did not go into details of English as a language and how to handle it in class.*” Rian added that “*We only got a sketch of what could be done*” and similarly, Bena added that “*We were required to go into groups, but the groups had one syllabus book which was not necessarily for English.*”

Many participants indicated that the training had been inadequate in re-tooling them for the NLSC implementation. Among other factors, COVID-19 was one of the reasons why the members felt that the training was inadequate. Jenny said, “*...we trained in January, 2020, then went into lockdown soon after.... By the time schools opened for the lower classes, what we had trained had been completely erased from our memories.*” In addition, Den experienced the training as “*hurried,*” saying, “*The trainers themselves seemed unsure ...and maybe not thorough preparation was made....*” Andre highlighted that the workshop had been challenging especially since the issue of “*projects was not handled well*” and suggested the need for “*another training to retool us about that area.*” Moreover, the participants felt unsupported in the implementation of the NLSC since there had been no follow-up activities by the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC). For instance, Rian indicated that “*They haven’t come on ground to ascertain whether what they trained us is actually being followed....*”

From this the dialogue, it was evident that the one regional NCDC workshop undergone at the regional level was a one-size-fits-all that was inadequate in retooling us teachers with

what we needed to do in the classrooms. The participants did not see it as enough in retooling them for implementation of the NLSC and would have loved to have more workshops so as to get grounded on what they needed to do in their classrooms. They also expressed the need for contextualized workshops that were subject-based. Much as the competence-based curriculum was much sought for its ability to equip learners with employable skills that are competitive in the job market (NCDC, 2019), participants expressed that the implementation was hurried, without adequate preparation and retooling of the teachers who were the key implementers.

#### **4.4.2 Perceptions about the CBC Approaches used to Teach English Language**

The CBC advocates a number of approaches in doing classroom instruction including group work, roleplay, drama and discussion. I felt it important to ask participants which of the teaching approaches they most often used in their classrooms. It was surprising that all the participants only used group work, and rarely used other approaches unless the activities in the learners' book dictated otherwise. It seemed to me that the reason for choice of groupwork was because participants felt pressured by the logical sequence of activities in the learners' books that had to be completed before learners advanced from one class to the next and also the learner's books always instructed that the learners be paired for each lesson. Also, the national curriculum development Centre always released textbooks a little late, so the participants were lagging behind in coverage of content. Some were still handling senior one content in senior two, and senior two content in senior three. It was evident that most participants were still driven by the need to complete a set number of activities rather than the learners' acquisition the expected skills and competences.

As a result, participants rarely used other approaches and often used groupwork, also because it cut across all topics expected to be covered by learners. Therefore, the dialogue on perceptions about CBC approaches used in classrooms was centered on group work. Wilson et al. (2018), defines group work as students working together on a task within the classroom for a specific period of time. The participants revealed both positive and negative perceptions about groupwork.

All participants agreed that group work was a good approach for promoting student collaboration and active learning. The approach was learner-centered and made learners active agents of their learning process. As Seb says, *“CBC emphasizes...collaboration. By grouping learners, they collaborate and help each other discover a number of things.”* Rian further added that the approach was good because it encouraged self-discovery of the learner and prevented a teacher from appearing as the sole owner of knowledge. *“It [groupwork] is hands-on, all-involving and learners aren’t bored while in class.”*

The participants noted that group work was indeed a valuable approach due to its ability to be incorporated into classes of different sizes and in limited space. Group work was further commended for being a learner-centered approach as Seb added, *“In fact, ...the learners do almost everything and they enjoy it.”*

On the other hand, most participants felt that group work was time consuming. Group work was seen to be challenging especially considering the short length of lessons in which many activities had to be completed and the large numbers of learners in their classes.

The participants were worried about the fact that almost all activities required group work; even the simple minor ones yet the activities to be covered were many. Jany noted, “*It [groupwork] takes a lot of time yet the content to be covered is a lot....*”

Nestorn added, “*We are using group work...it takes a lot of time especially for the large classes. You find that you’re having around 15 groups in a class with at least 6 members each for easy management so as to have every member active.*”

It seemed to me that the negative perception about group work was linked to the fear of the unknown. The participants had not received any sample from the national examination body of a sample examination. They seemed to be pressured by the instruction in the learners’ books to use groupwork on one hand and the need to adopt approaches that enabled them to quicken the coverage of what they had to cover. *These fears were worsened by the fact that teachers had not received any circular from the National examination body about how exams were to be set.* Jany notes: “*There is a risk that we might reach the time to sit UNEB (time for final examinations by the national examination body) when we are still covering the senior two work.*”

Participants were distressed by the large numbers of activities in the NLSC learners’ books. All groups had to present their ideas at the end of discussions and this was difficult to accomplish in a lesson. It was challenging to choose which groups would present and which ones would be left out. Yet there was this conflicting need to listen to all group ideas. As Rorian said, “*You hardly complete a lesson fully and most times carry it forward...we are allowing all groups to participate, time wasted is a lot and not much content is covered.*” Jany added “*Sometimes, I want to skip some things. Then I discover that the activity I’m*

*tackling is connected to the one I want to skip....We want learners to discuss every activity yet it doesn't seem practical."*

The participants' perception was attributed to group dynamics since they found it challenging to foster equal participation of all group members. As a result, some learners dominated the group discussions while others were passive and laid back in the lessons since tasks would be completed with or without them contributing. Seb noted; *"You realize there is this passive member of the group who I should say is not part of this whole learning process., He is forcefully like a passenger in this moving vehicle. He's not the turn man, he's not the driver, he's just waiting for the time to reach the destination and disembark. This is also one big challenge especially if you're dealing with big classes with groups of seven to eight with some members not having specific roles."*

The individual differences among the learners made it hard for equal participation. In addition to this, participants felt that the groups were not favoring both the quick and slow learners. Rian: *I also believe that group work does not cater for the fast learner. It assumes that all learners are at the same level and even when we are pairing, we put them in different groups. The fast learner quickly understands while the slow learner will take time to interpret. And again, this CBC does not cater for learners with poor English background who we have in our system. And most of the questions are short response questions. This means this candidate will come out very half-baked, and cannot communicate properly. If they can't communicate properly, they cannot write properly and competence will be poor.*

The participants had a positive perception towards group work as an approach to teaching English language since it is learner-centered and allows self-discovery. However, they expressed concern that group work was time-consuming especially with the large number of

learners in the classes looking at the fact that all groups had to present their ideas in the lesson. Also, the large number of activities made it hard for both the learners and us to progress.

#### **4.4.3 Concerns Regarding CBC Implementation in our Classrooms**

A competence-based curriculum adopts an approach to teaching that is learner-centered and adaptive to the changing needs of learners, teachers, and society (Mabonga, 2021). Since teachers are responsible for delivering the NLSC and assessing their learners' progress, I considered it important for them to share their concerns with CBC implementation in their classrooms so as to critically reflect on them and collaboratively discuss potential solutions. Therefore, in this narrative, I explore some of the concerns that teachers had about implementation of CBC in their classrooms.

From the dialogue with the participants, I felt that participant creativity was crippled. Even after the regional retooling training attended, participants seemed to think that they were solely supposed to use the books provided. For instance, Seb had this to say: *“The teacher is challenged and the learner is equally challenged because we are also learning on job. We learn as we teach. That’s the biggest challenge. The reason as to why we find it most difficult to find more content apart from that in the books brought by NCDC is because ...our creativity is limited in some way.”*

Furthermore, the implementation of the NLSC seemed to be clouded with so much uncertainty. The participants were highly uncertain with the way they were implementing the curriculum. This is evident in; *“This is the third year, the first year was utter chaos, the second year was no better.... and now we are beginning to ask ourselves questions; is what we are doing right? Is the content we are helping learners bring out in class enough?”* (Seb).

Another concern was about instructional materials. Implementation of CBC requires the availability of adequate instructional materials so as to effectively teach specific skills and competencies. However, their absence and therefore inadequacy poses a challenge for teachers in their classroom instruction. Participants were struggling with classroom instruction due to inadequate instructional materials. As Jany said, *“My concern are the books. Like now, we have the pioneers in senior three and we don’t have the books... Even when they bring them, they are not enough.”* Dowin added, *“My concern is materials (lack of basic resources) to use. Textbooks, markers, manillas ...are few...”*

Participants expressed concern with group work dynamics. Group dynamics refer to learners’ interactions and relationships in a group. Group work is a good approach because it involves active and collaborative learning as learners work together in groups to solve problems, share ideas and learn from one another as emphasized by CBC. However, groupwork has its own challenges.

Participants expressed concern about the fact that it was difficult to ascertain equal participation of all the learners in the group activities. Participants noted that some learners were always dominant while others were less involved in group activities. Seb indicated, *“...we have this member who is going to represent them to the rest of the class, then you realize there is this passive member of the group.”* Moreover, the groupworks did not cater for the individual differences of the learners as stated by Rian said, *“I also believe that group work does not cater for the fast learner. It believes that all learners are at the same level and even when we are pairing, we put them in different groups. The fast learner quickly understands while the slow learner will take time to interpret.”*

From the dialogue, it was evident that we still felt uncertain whether we were implementing the new curriculum the right way or not. We noted that instructional materials were inadequate for the large number of learners in our classes, and textbooks provided were few and had so many activities to be covered in a very short time. Furthermore, the groups were encouraging dominance of some learners and the teachers experienced this as time wastage when it came to listening to ideas from each group with a lot of repetition of the almost the same ideas with each group. Therefore, group work dynamics needed to be addressed to promote active learning and enable equal participation of learners.

These concerns necessitated that we meet again to critically reflect on them as we looked into how to engage with the new curriculum in meaningful ways. We agreed to meet that afternoon so as to suggest solutions and develop an approach that would best address our concerns.

#### **4.5 Planning**

This took place in the second meeting the same afternoon after the first, and started with a recap of the previous meeting as participants further reflected on their teaching practice concerns as well as suggesting solutions. The overriding concerns were about group work dynamics, inadequate instructional materials, the participants' uncertainty about whether they were doing the right thing and limited creativity.

From the dialogue, the participants agreed on the need to put more effort into adequate preparation for lessons. The participants also suggested the need to be creative solving the issue of group dynamics, as well as looking into how to address the concern of inadequate time to cover the activities in the learners' books. We also realized we had to look into how

to monitor learners as they engaged in group work, find ways of making each and every learner actively engaged in lessons, listen to all groups and improvise instructional materials.

I invited participants in a discussion of what teaching approach we could use to solve most of these concerns. The participants suggested we form groups so as to save time and get a variety of approaches from which to choose one that we would implement in our classrooms. We divided ourselves into three groups of 5, 5 and 4 members each. The three groups had 30 minutes to discuss and were expected to make a presentation at the end. We would then reflect on the approaches of all the groups and choose one to implement in our classrooms.

The group discussions were guided by one sub-question:

**Guiding sub-question:** What teaching approach do we use to teach English language in the framework of CBC considering our different concerns?

The dialogue below captures the presentations from the three group representatives.

**Group 1:** *We looked at how best we can modify groups. We dealt with groups majorly at rotation and substitution of roles of the members of the groups which we have called group modification. We found that students in class tend to have roles. We need to have rotation of roles in the groups. We must break down that group that has been together all the time and form our own groups so we don't have those students who don't want to actively participate. The same groups have the same roles taken by the same learners every time.... the teacher needs to be curious and vigilant and analyze the roles learners take up in groups so that it should not be the same learners presenting every time... and allow every learner participates in the different roles of the group.*

*We talked about the dominance of certain members and ....and students' failure to improve their English competencies or the writing competence. We decided that when we come to class as teachers, we have to have a recap of the previously taught content before we venture into the day's content. We need to have students given an opportunity to practice the reading skill. Every time I entered class, I would ask the learners to form groups. Then there's this student that was so laidback and was not as vibrant as others. One day, one of the active students missed and the laid-back student stepped in and turned out more brilliant than all these learners I was always counting on. People are quiet in class not because they do not know but lack the confidence so it is our responsibility as teachers to give these learners the platform to grow and show their talents thus growing their confidence. The teacher may not be the one to give these roles but can encourage the learners to surrender/exchange roles.*

**Group 2:** *We said, that we had little time to cover all activities, limited instructional materials, ....., shallow content, low participation by some learners, large classes, limited time. We thought of an approach that could solve these. We looked at a Frayer model. This is the organization of content in circular form on either a chart, piece of paper or even learners' exercise books since papers and charts might not be available, more so for each lesson. This model can be used at the start, middle or end of the lesson depending on you as a teacher, remembering that this curriculum is learner-centered. The learners must discover by themselves, in their groups and note down the content in*

*circular form in their books. Remember we want to find out what these learners know. For example: You'll tell the learners what it is they have to discover and discuss about an aspect of interest ...what is covered is dependent on the teacher's planning... We are also trying to solve this problem whereby if a learner gives you a response, you stop there and proceed to something else. So, we are trying to get the knowledge of all the groups. We use what we call a "cold calling". So, much as we have a secretary, anyone from the group must know that they will be picked on randomly to present. The teacher picks a presenter from the group randomly ...and this will give us what learners know, encourage everyone's participation, and allow us a wider coverage. We are doing a supervisory role as the learners discuss. You choose a group that displays what you are interested in, for example maybe the group you noticed had misconceptions which you want to correct, or they have excellent ideas to share with the whole class. In this way, we solve the time issue and cover a lot, the issue of materials is solved because each group needs one book, the content is covered more widely compared to what is in the NLSC books. At some point, refer learners to other books so that they can find information you feel was not tackled in the lesson. Even the learner who is always laid back tries to understand knowing he/ she could be randomly picked to present. In case of many groups, you the teacher move around and use your discretion to pick groups to present. Maybe one with the best answers and one with the wrong ones so that you correct the misconceptions since its unlikely that in a class*

*of let's say 90 learners all groups can present in a lesson. The Frayer can be done on a paper since manillas are expensive for schools and for each lesson. Learners can also use their books as the Frayer so that we solve the problem of insufficient instructional materials.*

**Group 3:** *We agreed on the falling leaves approach. While using falling leaves, you give learners different small papers. You give learners an activity to be done on the papers. When a presenter makes a presentation of an idea, the groups with the same idea drop their papers on the ground if they don't have a different idea. The falling leaves are these papers which have the same ideas as those presented and are being dropped. Only the groups with a different idea stay with their papers as they await the turn to present this idea. The groups that stay with the papers present and the same is repeated until the last paper is dropped. This helps the teacher to get ideas from all the groups without the unnecessary repetitions and time wastage that graces our lessons.*

The participants noted that the all the three presented approaches were very good at addressing different concerns. The Frayer model was time-effective, would make all the learners alert in their various groups. However, some of the groups would not get to present their ideas since a teacher would use his discretion to select groups of interest to present their ideas. This meant the left-out groups would be denied chance to present their ideas. They would therefore miss out on the different ideas from the groups unable to present.

This led participants to modify “the Frayer model” so that it could accommodate “the falling leaves approach” for its strength in ensuring that all ideas from all the groups were listened to in the shortest possible time. We agreed that “the Frayer model” should also encompass

“the group modification approach” for its suitability for large classes and strength in fostering collaborative learning. This was the approach we agreed to implement in our classes and we called it “**the modified Frayer model**”.

#### **4.6 Enacting the Plan and Observing how it Works**

The classroom action commenced two days after the second meeting that was held on a Saturday and lasted three weeks. This classroom action necessitated the participants to write their reflections before and during the classroom action. They had been given reflective journals on which to document their thoughts, observations, reflections, before, during and after the process of classroom. In the presentation below, I explored the reflections of the 14 participants who used reflective journals in their classrooms throughout the classroom action. In presenting this data, I used narration, weaving extracts from different reflective journal data to illustrate the journey of teachers as they engaged in the classroom action.

##### **4.6.1 Reflective Journals**

The aim of this study was to use CPAR for teacher professional development, so the reflective journals were for teacher’ reflections both before implementation of the modified Frayer model in their classes and for writing personal observations, thoughts and experiences during, and after their lessons. The researcher collected and analyzed the reflective journal entries to gain a deeper understanding of the teachers’ perspectives and the impact of the research intervention on their teaching practice as well as to validate their reflections in the final meeting.

Initially, the reflective journals reflected teacher apprehension towards implementing the modified Frayer model in their classrooms. Majority of the participants reported that they were nervous and uncertain which feelings they attributed to the fear that the modified Frayer

model approach might face resistance from the learners. Other participants reported being worried that there could be a negative reception of the group modification especially from those learners that always dominated group discussions, and doubted whether the approach would allow all learners to present their ideas;

*“I am a little nervous about implementing this new approach because I am afraid whether learners will adopt the changes made especially group rotation and substitution of roles (journal 2).”*

*“I am concerned that the big numbers will make it impossible for every learner to be given an opportunity to present their ideas (journal 12).”*

*“I am afraid that this Frayer model might take much time especially when organizing the class, limiting the time for presentation (journal 8).”*

A few participants were hopeful that the new approach might be supportive in helping them overcome the challenges they were facing in their classrooms. They reported that the approach could be beneficial to learners as they would get to socialize, that the “cold calling” would encourage passive learners to participate, and that the falling leaves would make learners put more effort into classroom activities to get a chance to present.

*“I believe that passive learners will fully participate in classwork (journal 6).”*

*“Students may put more effort in carrying out research when given a number of activities (journal 5 and journal 8).”*

*“Changing the teaching approach in this way may help my learners to communicate effectively (journal 1).”*

*“Learners will get the chance to analyze different views during presentation (journal 12).”*

Later on, as I continued to analyze the teachers’ classroom reflections, I got to witness the teachers’ shift in mindset and appreciation of the modified Frayer model as a good approach in helping them to overcome their concerns with the implementation of the NLSC in their classes. They reported gaining confidence and witnessing changes in learner participation in the lessons.

*“Learners paid attention as they expected to take up different roles any time (Journal 3).”*

*Most of the learners were active and alert since they did not know who was going to present (Journal 1).”*

Participants noted that learners were happy and enjoyed the activities, which they attributed to the new approach. This required that teachers be creative in coming up with different approaches;

*“It seems learners don’t like it when a teacher repeats the same method every now and then...learners were happy and enjoyed every activity (Journal 2).”*

*“I have learnt to always be innovative in teaching (Journal 7).”*

However, some of the participants reported that it took them a long time to group the learners because they had very large numbers in the classes;

*“What did not work well was that it took a lot of time to group the students, considering the big number of learners in the class (Journal 3).”*

The reflective journals offered a comprehensive understanding of the teachers' transformative experiences and valuable insights into the effectiveness of CPAR for empowering teachers for positive change in their teaching practice.

The written reflections later guided the teachers in the final reflection dialogue as they reviewed the data they had generated, compared it with their initial expectations and reflected on implications for their teaching. I decided to use reflective journals to guide participants in later reflection based on Coles-ritchie & Coles-ritchie's (2019) argument that when teachers verbalize their reflections with other teachers instead of just writing them, "they develop the capacity to understand and resolve the complexity" and make sense of their reflections as they teach each other how they moved through their instruction. This was also because Mctaggart et al. (2014) says the aim of CPAR is to "help people understand in order to transform the way they do things."

The participant reflections also helped teachers in identifying the impact of the new approach and areas for improvement so as to improve their teaching practices. They formed the basis for the dialogue in the last reflection meeting, and provided evidence to support claims in terms of themes and conclusions drawn from the CPAR study.

#### **4.7 Reflection**

After three weeks of classroom action, the participants met again for a final reflection meeting. Guided by the second objective of the study, the purpose of this meeting was to reflect on the teachers' experiences with the use of CPAR for professional development. This meeting was necessary so that participants would reflect on their classroom action and how they experienced the whole CPAR process.

#### 4.7.1 Teachers' Experiences with Use of CPAR for Professional Development

The purpose of CPAR is to help teachers collaboratively identify and address issues related educational equity and social justice in their classrooms (Avci, 2021). By exploring the experiences of teachers, I hoped to shed light on the potential of CPAR approach for professional development through promoting transformative teaching practices and contributing to equitable educational systems. In order to keep the participants focused on how they experienced CPAR process as part of their professional development, I used the sub-question below to guide the dialogue session.

**Guiding sub-question:** What were your experiences with the use of CPAR for professional development?

At first, the participants found it challenging especially during the classroom action. It was quite a challenge for them to disband the groups that they had been so much used to especially because the learners themselves were hesitant to accept the change. Bena said, *"The first time I tried group rotation, learners were a bit reluctant."* Anah reported a similar challenge, *"At first changing the groups was challenging to me. Learners did not receive it well which made the whole thing a bit time consuming..."* However, participants revealed that this challenge was overcome with time as learners slowly accepted the change. For instance, Bena went ahead to report, *"What was very helpful in making learners accept to change was the fact that I informed them that I would be the one to randomly choose the one to present the ideas of the group. That made the learners very cooperative in class."*

Other participants found it challenging to have learners blend in the new groups. As Jany reports, *"The challenge I got was with the dominant learners. They were not so comfortable because they were used to dominance."* She however reported that her constant

encouragement made them realize the value of working with others, *“I kept encouraging them till they realized the value of giving others chance share their ideas...”*

Participating in the study was a transformative experience for the teachers. Before participating in the study, some teachers viewed themselves as experts. As they participated in the study, they began to acknowledge the fact that they did not know and so much they could learn from their colleagues. As they worked together and reflected on their teaching practices, they became more open and committed towards collaborating to improve their practice. Den reported, *“There is always this tendency we have as English language teachers of thinking we know it all. Being in this workshop [the CPAR study] has made me realize that no one actually has sole knowledge of the subject. I realize we all have very constructive ideas and by sharing we get to know that we can learn from one another.”* Rina added that *“By sharing ...I realize that there’s always something new to learn from a colleague.”* Andre admitted that both learners and his colleagues could be very resourceful; *“Previously, I thought I was the overall source of knowledge. When I used the frayer model, I realized learners know a lot and can even bring in something knew...I can learn much more from my colleagues....”*

Participants expressed that the study provided them space to critically reflect and analyze their teaching practices. The teachers had the opportunity to share teaching practice concerns, engaged in a critical reflection and dialogue with colleagues to suggest approaches for addressing them. They collaboratively evaluated these approaches, discussed the strengths and weaknesses of each, and refined them to address different concerns. Boris said that he learnt different strategies that he could use in his classroom instruction; *“Working together made me get different strategies that I could implement in my classes. I realize that*

*with the use a different approach, there was active participation, learner engagement, less boredom....” Rorian added that she learnt approaches she did not know previously; “I didn’t know about “the falling leaves” and the frayer model. Even the group work which we always used could be rotated to break monotony.” She further indicated that the use of the discussed approaches positively impacted her teaching practice; “When I integrated the three approaches, it was amazing. The coverage was clear, learner participation was better ...my delivery of lessons has improved.”*

Participants indicated that participating in the study improved their confidence. Previously, teachers felt that CBC implementation was filled with myriad uncertainties and challenges. Engaging in a collaborative inquiry with their colleagues and discussing strategies tailored towards addressing them gave them the support to become confident teachers as they continued to implement the New Lower Secondary Curriculum. For instance, Downin wondered if other teachers were experiencing the same challenges that he was facing; *“I was actually eager to see if other teachers were having the same challenges I was having in the classrooms.”* He added that sharing with other teachers of English language and realizing they had similar concerns gave him the self-assurance he needed as a teacher; *“...sharing with other teachers gave me the confidence to keep going. I also got to use the suggested approach and it turned out very helpful.”*

After participating in the CPAR study, teachers reported feeling a sense of belonging, agency and professional network. Developing a shared approach gave them a sense of purpose and strengthened their collaboration as educators. They shared their experiences and concerns in an open and honest dialogue and a non-judgmental and supportive environment. By collaboratively discussing and suggesting solutions to their teaching practice concerns,

participants benefitted from each other's' strengths and expertise and felt empowered to use the discussed teaching approaches, knowing that they were working together as colleagues. For instance, *“By sharing everyone's concerns...I am firm now, well knowing that I'm not alone, that we are all together in this implementation. I look forward to more subject-based dialogues of this nature.”* In addition to this, participants felt empowered to decide on teaching practices based on their own expertise and needs of their learners. They were determined to no longer simply follow predetermined teaching practices but to actively shape them to suit the needs of their learners. As Seb indicated; participants expressed willingness to go and involve other teachers in their schools in similar dialogues; *“...previously, when we were being trained, we never got ample time to interact with our colleagues...but working with other teachers of the language gave me more practical approaches that have been tried in this context. I believe I am even well equipped to help other members of my department in my school.*

The study provided teachers with the opportunity to explore their creativity and work together towards refining and coming up with innovative approaches to teaching and learning. Due to the collaborative nature of the study, teachers were empowered to suggest, reflect on and use a variety of approaches in their teaching practice. Teachers collaborated and critically reflected on their teaching practice. This collaborative inquiry pushed them to think outside the box and become creative so as design new and exciting approaches to better engage their learners. For example, Boris commended the study thus; *“...in sharing, I got to know how I can overcome these [teaching practice] challenges, get new insights and new ways of handling this curriculum through creativity.”* Rinah added that sharing inspired participants to become creative professionals capable of devising means to address their

concerns; *“By sharing... we were able to come up with an approach to address our classroom concerns which I would never have done as an individual.”*

From the above narrative, it is true that participating in this study gave participants a voice. Since none of the participants had undergone a national training and all felt training had been inadequate, the participants realized we could actually learn a lot from one other, and lift each other up. The study not only gave them a platform to freely voice their concerns, but also to collaboratively work together so as to address these concerns. Participants came to a realization that as a group, they could accomplish much more than they ever could as individuals. All participants were creative in different ways, and only through such dialogues could they enrich themselves with each other’s creativity. Through helping each other would participants get to address their concerns since the National Curriculum Development Centre might not reach each and every one of the teachers. Participants felt empowered to go help colleagues in their different schools. It is evident that the study empowered them to make rational changes within their context and classroom practice.

#### **4.8 Discussion**

This section presents the main results of this study as obtained from the data. I have discussed the findings in line with the literature and Freire’s critical pedagogy. A summary of the findings is shown in Table 4.2 The summary table describes the themes created for each research objective and the underlying code categories. This study came up with ordinary themes.

**Table 4.2: Summary of Findings by Theme and Categories**

Using CPAR in Teacher Professional Development (TPD) for Competence-Based English Language Teaching		
Research Question	Themes	Categories
1. How can CPAR advance TPD for competence-based teaching?	Teacher Agency	Mutual Engagement
		Creativity
	Empowerment	Critical Reflection
		Collaborative learning
2. What are the experiences of English language teachers with the use CPAR in TPD for competence-based teaching?	Professional Growth	Knowledge Co-creation
		Teacher Efficacy
	Improved Confidence Sense of Belonging and Network	

*Source: Researcher, 2023*

The data for each research question was generated by the teachers' dialogue sessions and the main findings are summarized below.

#### **4.8.1 Teacher Agency**

Teacher agency refers to the capacity of an individual to act for change. A teacher is a crucial element of teacher professional practice especially during curriculum reform since it looks at teachers' responses to gaps in their schools (Ogwang, 2018). Agency is therefore a creative

aspect of teachers' professional development and according to Bandura (2018), developing a sense of agency is a social process that cannot be developed in isolation

Whereas participants were part of the NCDC regional training and had received teachers' and learners' books to help in classroom implementation of the NLSC, they reflected on their teaching practices and approaches and decided it was impractical to apply them uncritically in their classrooms. The teachers' concerns with these approaches generated an in-depth discussion on how these approaches could be adapted to their context. The participants generated constructive ideas of group modification as well as the modified frayer model as an approach to address many of their teaching practice concerns. The participants' commitment to bring about positive change in their classrooms was evidenced by their mutual engagement and creativity that saw them refine the groupwork approach they had all been using, as well the discussion of the frayer model which they modified and applied during the classroom action.

#### **4.8.1.1 Mutual Engagement**

Mutual engagement refers to active involvement of two or more parties in a shared activity (Bergmark, 2020). In this study, mutual engagement was signified by the active involvement of participants in the study through investing both time and energy in it.

Participants sacrificed time to meet and engage in dialogue sessions about their teaching practice concerns with the implementation of the NLSC. They also shared aspects of their current teaching practices that they felt needed to change for effective implementation of the new curriculum. The in-depth conversations showed a commitment towards working together to find a solution to the various classroom challenges and concerns. The participants

were eager to know if they were experiencing similar challenges, learn from each other, and loved work together.

Participants worked together, shared their English language teaching practice concerns and collectively developed a modified Frayer model to address these concerns which they implemented in their various classrooms. The participants final reflection about the whole CPAR process revealed the successes and challenges of working together. Moreover, their own concerns formed the basis for the approach that was implemented in the classroom action and this actually reflected mutual engagement.

These findings agree with Dhungana et al., (2019) who asserts that TPD should be participatory and contextual-based so as to enhance teachers' continuous professional development. The focus of TPD should be on activities that improve teachers' learning and teaching practices within their individual, social and occupational contexts in a collaborative, self-directed environment (Bergmark, 2020; Van den Bergh et al., 2015). Freire's critical pedagogy theory advocates problem-posing education that is based on creativity and stimulates reflection upon reality through dialogue (Freire, 1970a; Taylor & Hikida, 2020; Torres-Olave, 2021).

#### **4.8.1.2 Creativity**

Creativity refers to the ability of teachers to generate new ideas, approaches and solutions that challenge existing norms and contribute to positive change within their educational settings.

The teachers questioned the existing approaches and collaboratively explored the teaching approaches used in their classrooms. They adjusted the existing approaches and made

necessary modifications based on their classroom concerns to improve teaching and learning. Teachers utilized their creativity to come up with innovative interventions for more equitable educational practice.

Teachers actively contributed their unique experiences, insights and creative ideas which were all valued. They thought outside the box, developed a modified Frayer model as a teaching approach that was suitable to their teaching environment. They embraced different voices and viewpoints so as to make the modified Frayer model inclusive and reflective of the diverse realities of their classroom teaching concerns. The teachers were therefore active agents in shaping their professional development and contributing to meaningful change in their teaching practice and educational settings. The creativity and collaborative engagement of teachers in the study enhanced their knowledge, skills and professional competence.

Past studies have proved that when teachers engaged in action research, they developed a shared concern related to the local needs since they had a chance to question and reflect on challenging real-life dilemmas so as to collaboratively find ways of overcoming them (Johannesson, 2022; Yalcin Arslan, 2019). Also, teachers' creativity and collaborative engagement with others heightens their sense of agency and is therefore a crucial element of their professional practice and development (Ogwang, 2018).

#### **4.8.2 Empowerment**

Empowerment increases teachers' motivation and confidence to take charge of their own growth and resolve their own problems with a strong belief that they can confront new circumstances and solve their own challenges to change their practice (Vodopija-Krstanović, 2023). Critical Participatory Action Research is meant to empower educators to make informed decisions about how to improve their own practice and to promote equitable and

socially just educational outcomes for all learners (Kemmis et al., 2019). CPAR therefore values the lived experiences of teachers, their expertise and acknowledges their skills, knowledge and insights as authentic contributions to educational research and practice.

This study offered teachers a collaborative environment to engage in dialogue and knowledge sharing. Teacher empowerment was reflected through critical reflection and collaborative inquiry.

#### **4.8.2.1 Collaborative Inquiry**

Critical Participatory Action Research (CPAR) advocates collective participation of educators in all aspects of the research process for individual, collective and professional transformation of their own practices (Kemmis et al., 2014a). Collaborative inquiry gives participants an equal voice in the entire research process in order to create a shared ownership of the research process and outcomes so that the research is meaningful, relevant and sustainable. CPAR is a learning process in which inquiry is done with participants as they equally contribute to knowledge generation (Avci, 2021).

This CPAR study highlighted the value of establishing a collaborative relationship in researching issues of common concern. Participants were collaborative co-constructors of knowledge as they suggested, discussed and negotiated which of the approaches could be used in the classroom action. They learnt from each other in a dialogical and less authoritarian process in which each other's ideas were recognized and respected.

Among the fourteen participants of the study, every two were from a different school. They freely shared and listened to each other's experiences, concerns and collaboratively discussed an approach to go and implement in their different schools. This made them more

open, and reflective about their teaching practices. The teachers showed a commitment to continue to work to change and transform their teaching practice and that of their colleagues. They were empowered to become active participants in their professional development.

The findings concur with literature that that collaborative inquiry empowers teachers to take charge of their professional development (Lieberman, 2023) and that teachers should not be passive recipients of a retooling process but active agents that contribute to educational change through analyzing issues of concern, developing action plans implementing and reflecting on them (McTaggart et al., 2017). The teachers should therefore engage in communicative action with one another, reach a consensus about the ways they understand their situation, try as much as possible to understand one another's points of view and reach an unforced consensus about what to do. Also, those most impacted by an issue should take the lead in bringing about change (Chevalier & Buckles, 2019; Fine & Torre, 2021)

#### **4.8.2.2 Critical Reflection**

Critical reflection is closely linked to professional development of teachers as it enables them gain more insight into their professional work which enables them consider alternative perspectives in their teaching practice. Critical reflection is important for improvement in professional practice and growth because it helps practitioners to keep their knowledge and skills up to date since practice is never static and constantly changes along with the changing times. According to McGarr et al. (2019), reflection can be a personal process where a teacher reflects on some aspects of their work in order to improve it or a shared meaning-making one in which teaching colleagues engage in conversations about practice and work together to come up with insights and perspectives that may not emerge through personal reflection.

This study took the collegial approach to meaning-making as participants engaged in dialogue about their teaching practice concerns and how to address them. Through dialogue, teachers engaged in critical reflection about their teaching practice concerns and reached a shared understanding of how to address them. They acknowledged that the three suggested approaches from the three groups were good at addressing different classroom concerns and decided to adopt and merge them into one approach. This reflection process gave them a new understanding that they could solve their own concerns and make changes that were vital for improvement of their teaching practice. Through critical reflection, teachers gained deeper insights into their practice, reflected on their teaching practices, and adapt their teaching approaches to better meet the needs of their learners; thereby becoming better practitioners.

These findings concur with the findings of Morales & Action, (2016) that teachers' constant reflection on what they do empowers them to develop and improve their teaching. This is also supported by Sheidaei & Tahriri (2017) & Vaughan (2020) who found that critical reflection improved teachers' practices and effectiveness. Freire also acknowledges the role of critical reflection in teacher empowerment as a means that allows teachers to discover new knowledge and interpretation of reality through problematizing educational issues and addressing them.(Spear & da Costa, 2018).

#### **4.8.3 Professional Growth**

The NLSC places teachers as learners, meaning that teachers are partners with learners in the learning process. Professional growth can only occur if teachers collaboratively reflect on their lessons and classroom practices. Professional development challenges teachers to

find ways of translating knowledge into instructional practices for the benefit of their learners and to adapt learning strategies to their local contexts (Zeivots et al., 2023).

Professional growth is driven by a commitment to continuous collaborative and collective learning. In this study, participants experienced professional growth that was reflected by their active engagement in the research process which resulted in knowledge co-creation.

#### **4.8.3.1 Co-creation of Knowledge**

From the dialogues, the participants had various concerns. In addition to inadequate instructional materials, and inadequate training, the participants noted that group dynamics were a challenge since they encouraged dominance of some learners and it was practically impossible for all groups to present their ideas. Either the lesson had to be carried over which made them lag behind in coverage, or they listened to some groups and left others which also meant leaving some learners' ideas unexpressed. However, the participants suggested a number of approaches that could be a solution to these teaching practice concerns.

The participants noted that despite the challenges with group work, it was a very good approach for instruction in most of their classes that had large numbers of learners and therefore discussed how best they could modify these groups. When the teachers discovered that the group modification could not solve their concerns with inadequate instructional materials, inadequate time to handle the many activities in learners' books, low participation by some learners and dominance of others learners among other concerns, they adopted the Frayer model approach to address these concerns, and into it they incorporated group work

Although the participants found the Frayer model an exciting approach to use in implementation of the NLSC in classrooms, most of the groups would still be unable to

present since the teacher would use his/ her discretion to choose which group to present. The best way to get to listen to all group ideas was to incorporate another approach in this already modified Frayer model. The additional approach to be incorporated in the frayer model was “the falling leaves”. “The falling leaves” was a very good approach that would ensure all ideas of all groups would be listened to using a fair elimination method but which could only supplement other approaches. Also, teachers replaced the papers with the learners’ exercise books for their ready availability. This new approach was what the teachers called the “Modified Frayer Model.”

The active participation of teachers in the research process positioned them as active agents in generating knowledge. Teachers shared in dialogue and collaboration, valued the diversity of perspectives and acknowledged the teaching approaches that different participants suggested. This enabled them to shape and merge the different approaches into one which they applied in their own classrooms is evidence of knowledge co-creation. This shared learning that characterized the teachers’ dialogues as they co-created knowledge enhanced their understanding of effective instructional strategies and professional growth. The teachers were able to find solutions to their teaching practice concerns, generated ideas through collaboration and changed their teaching approaches.

The above findings are consistent with (Calvo et al., 2018; Miedijensky & Sasson, 2022a; Sheidaei & Tahriri, 2017 & Vermunt et al., 2019) who showed that through collaboration, teachers were able to generate new ideas, change their teaching approaches and deal with the dilemmas and questions of their teaching practice.

#### **4.8.4 Teacher Efficacy**

This refers to teachers' own beliefs in their ability to positively impact their learners' learning. It entails teachers' confidence in their instructional skills, their capacity to manage their classrooms effectively and their ability to motivate and engage their learners (Barni et al., 2019).

Engaging in the process of reflection, dialogue and action gave participants an understanding of their strengths and areas for improvement and collaborating with other teachers gave them new insights and perspectives that further enhanced their sense of efficacy. The participants' self-efficacy was reflected in their change of beliefs and improved sense of belonging and network.

##### **4.8.4.1 Improved Confidence**

Through participating in the study, teachers believed that they had the power to effect meaningful change their classrooms. Before participating in the study, teachers felt less confident about their ability to implement the NLSC. Their classroom implementation of the curriculum was characterized with a lot fear, self-doubt and uncertainty. Participants feared that groupwork which was their most commonly used approach required a lot of time to apply. They also seemed to be bogged down by the number of activities in the learners' books.

These fears had been heightened by the fact that the training received had been inadequate in skilling them mostly because it was general and left them with unanswered questions. Also, there was the lack of follow-up activities from the curriculum body; the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) that had not come on ground to ascertain whether what they trained was actually being followed.

Participating in the study reinforced the teachers' efficacy to implement the curriculum by improving their confidence to continue implementing the curriculum. Furthermore, the participant dialogues reflect a change in mindset and positive attitude towards change. The study brought them to a realization that improving their teaching practices majorly relied on them and they could not entirely rely on the National Curriculum Development Centre to help them improve their teaching practice.

It was evident from the teacher discussions that their mindset, attitude and confidence in their ability to implement the NLSC improved after they participated in the study. These findings concur with Alwadi et al. (2020) whose study shows that participating in a CPAR can improve teachers' confidence levels. Vaughan, (2020) got related findings that involvement in his CPAR study gave teachers a deeper understanding of their practice, making them confident practitioners.

#### **4.8.4.2 Sense of Belonging and Network**

This study offered participants a chance to validate their experiences with implementation of NLSC in their classrooms. They reflected on their challenges, successes and concerns and worked together towards creating a more equitable and inclusive educational practice. The collaborative inquiry process created a supportive environment for teachers' free expression of their ideas. This enabled them to share their experiences honestly which reinforced belonging and trust. Their contributions were valued, which fostered in them a sense of support and belonging as part of a larger group of people striving for positive change. The process of listening to and learning from one another helped participants realize that they were not alone in the struggle, but part of supportive community.

They also came to a realization that they could do much better when they collaborated than when they worked individually. Working together gave the teachers a sense of common purpose, a commitment towards bettering their teaching practice and commitment towards helping their colleagues and a desire to keep in contact with their colleagues so as to keep helping each other.

The above findings concur with Xin & Brion-Meisels' (2022) findings that after attending a CPAR professional development course, the teachers developed feelings of well-being in terms of mutual support and positive relationships.

#### **4.9 Summary and Conclusion**

This chapter presented the findings from the CPAR study which comprised data from three dialogue sessions and reflective journals of the classroom action. It also presented the emerging issues from the teachers' involvement in the whole CPAR process as well as their individual and collective experiences. The descriptions above demonstrate the positive impact that CPAR can have on teachers through its reflective practice and development. In that way, CPAR helps them to become catalysts of positive change within their classrooms and different contexts within which they work. The proceeding chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

The aim of this study was to explore the use of Critical Participatory Action Research (CPAR) in teacher professional development for competence-based English language teaching in lower secondary schools. The study used a qualitative approach guided by the critical constructivist paradigm. CPAR was the design used and it laid down procedures for undertaking the study. Fourteen participants including the researcher were engaged in the communicative and classroom action to generate data for this study. Classroom action was monitored by individual participants who noted down their reflections in reflective journals, and the critical pedagogy guided the meaning-making process of the entire dataset. The study answered the following research questions:

- i. How can critical participatory action research advance teacher professional development for the implementation of English language teaching in the framework of the competence-based curriculum in lower secondary schools?
- ii. What are the English language teachers' experiences with the use of critical participatory action research concerning their own professional development for competence-based English language teaching in lower secondary schools?

In this chapter, I present a summary of the study findings, the conclusions drawn from the analysis, as well as recommendations and suggestions for further research.

## **5.2 Summary of the Findings**

The following is a summary of the study findings in response to the research questions.

### **5.2.1 How CPAR can be Used for Teacher Professional Development**

The study sought to explore how CPAR can be used for teacher professional development in competence-based English language teaching in lower secondary schools.

The findings revealed that participating in the study improved the teachers' commitment to working together to find solutions to their various classroom challenges and concerns. The creativity and collaborative engagement of teachers in the study enhanced their knowledge, skills and professional competence, and reflected their agency as they became active agents in their own professional growth. The teachers' own challenges formed a basis for development of the modified Frayer model in whose formation they were mutually engaged. Through mutual engagement, the teachers became active agents in shaping their professional development and contributing to meaningful change in their teaching practice and educational settings.

The findings of the study also revealed teacher empowerment reflected through critical reflection and collaborative inquiry. The teachers were empowered to continue to work together to change and transform their teaching practice and that of their colleagues. Through critical reflection, they gained deeper insights into their practice, reflected on their teaching practices, and adapted their teaching approaches to better meet the needs of their learners; thereby becoming better practitioners. They embraced different voices and viewpoints so as to make the approach inclusive and reflective of the diverse realities of their classroom teaching concerns. The creativity and collaborative engagement of the teachers enhanced their professional competence as they re-thought alternative contextual approaches instead

of solely depending on the National Curriculum Development Center to attend to their teaching practice concerns.

### **5.2.2 Teachers' Experiences with the Use of CPAR for Professional Development**

The study sought to explore English language teachers' experiences with the use of CPAR for their professional development in implementation of the New Lower Secondary Curriculum.

The teachers felt that they were better practitioners after engaging in the study. Their active participation in the research process positioned them as active agents in generating knowledge. Teachers valued the diversity of different perspectives, shaped and merged the different approaches into one which they applied in their own classrooms. The teachers revealed that the shared learning that characterized their dialogues as they co-created knowledge enhanced their understanding of effective instructional strategies and professional growth.

Engaging in the process of reflection, dialogue and action gave participants an understanding of their strengths and areas for improvement. Furthermore, collaborating with other teachers gave them new insights and perspectives that enhanced their sense of efficacy. The teachers reported that participating in the study improved their confidence to implement the New Lower Secondary Curriculum. Moreover, the participant dialogues reflected a change in mindset and positive attitude towards change. The teachers found that improving their teaching practices majorly lay on their shoulders as they could not entirely rely on the National Curriculum Development Centre to help them improve their teaching practices.

Before the study, the teachers' implementation of the New Lower Secondary Curriculum in their classrooms was characterized by fear, self-doubt and uncertainty. The groupwork approach which the most commonly used required a lot of time to apply and they seemed to be bogged down by the number of activities in the learners' books. These fears were heightened by the fact that the regional workshop attended had been inadequate in skilling them and the lack of follow-up activities from the National Curriculum Development body (NCDC).

The collaborative inquiry process created a supportive environment for teachers' free expression of their ideas which reinforced their sense of belonging and trust. The teachers revealed that they developed a sense of support and belonging in them as part of a larger group of people striving for positive change. The process of listening to and learning from one another helped participants realize that they were not alone in the struggle to implement the New Lower Secondary Curriculum, but part of a larger supportive community.

The study offered participants a chance to validate their experiences with implementation of NLSC in their classrooms. They were able to work together to create more equitable and inclusive educational approaches. Teachers reported that as they listened to and learnt from one another, they came to a realization that they could do much better when they collaborated than when they worked individually.

Working together gave teachers a sense of belonging with individuals that shared a common purpose and commitment towards bettering their teaching practice. The findings reveal that the study fostered a sense of connection among participant teachers since they developed a sense of belonging and network with their colleagues.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

Participation in CPAR gives teachers a sense of ownership and empowerment which increases their commitment to bring about meaningful change in their teaching practice. CPAR puts teachers in charge of their own professional development, teachers collaborate in alleviating their teaching practice fears, develop a deeper understanding of their practice, and co-create knowledge that is contextually relevant and therefore more sustainable. It engages teachers with deep interest and develops in them feelings of agency and a commitment to change their practice as well as becoming change agents in their respective schools.

Participating in CPAR makes teachers better practitioners as they co-create knowledge and change their mindset towards rethinking and developing alternative teaching approaches. Additionally, the collaborative and supportive nature of CPAR gives teachers a deeper understanding of their capabilities and strengths which in turn improves their confidence, sense of belonging and connectedness to a supportive professional community. CPAR is therefore an empowering and transformative approach for the teachers' continuous professional development for its strength in making teachers active agents in their own transformation and professional growth, especially after curriculum change. It creates opportunities for meaningful transformation and engagement in implementation of new curricula.

## **5.4 Contribution to Knowledge, Policy and Practice**

### **5.4.1 Contribution to Knowledge**

I contributed methodological knowledge. As a Master's student and English teacher, I initiated a CPAR and found out that it had positive effects and that it can be useful in situations where teachers often feel left alone with the implementation of a new curriculum.

The teachers' common teaching practice concerns including inadequate instructional materials, group work dynamics, little time to cover many practice activities and shallow content in the learners' books, and limited creativity necessitated that they come up with an approach that could solve them. The teachers came up with a Frayer model. Jafarie & Heidari Tabrizi (2022) define the Frayer model as an instructional strategy that utilizes a graphic organizer to teach vocabulary. While using it, the teachers are supposed to create a worksheet with multiple templates that allow students to visually depict a vocabulary word along with all other required related information.

The teachers felt that the Frayer model would help them handle very many activities in a short while, thereby solving the problem of limited time to cover the large number of activities in the learners' books. Also, the learners could use their exercise books as worksheets and content would be covered more widely. Within this model, the teachers incorporated the group modification to cater for the large number of learners in their classes. Group modification meant that the groups normally used in classes would be rotated and the learners' roles in these would be groups substituted.

To ensure participation of all learners, the teachers would use a "cold calling" in inviting groups of interest to present their work. The teachers felt that the one hour and twenty minutes allocated to each lesson was little time for all the groups to present, yet it was

imperative that all groups get to present their ideas. Also, the cold calling would ensure learner concentration during the group discussions since the teacher would use his discretion to pick a group and a group member to present, but still some groups would not get to present their work.

The teachers therefore incorporated, within the Frayer model, another approach that would ensure all groups' ideas were heard. This approach was "the falling leaves". In this approach, learners answered activities on papers and as each group presented, groups with only similar ideas would drop their papers on the ground. This way, all ideas from the learners would be listened to in the shortest possible time. This was what the teachers called the Modified Frayer model and is what was implemented in their classrooms.

#### **5.4.2 Contribution to Practice**

The study participants formed a professional learning community, starting with the WhatsApp group that had been formed to unite, keep sharing their subject-based concerns, and learn from each other's experiences. The participants agreed that they would use the group to organize similar meetings, preferably on a termly basis. None of the teachers had undergone national training for CBC implementation, so they felt it was necessary to help each other concerning whatever challenges they were having regarding the implementation of the New Lower Secondary Curriculum. Also, the outcomes of the classroom action revealed different experiences. Whereas some teachers reported that the group modification aspect of the Frayer model had positive outcomes, others found it quite challenging. They suggested a need to plan another meeting to help each other. Each member was going to talk to and add other English language teachers from their schools. A professional learning

community helped the teachers to value and promote curriculum change as they joined in the reform as change agents.

### **5.4.3 Contribution to Policy**

This study shows different way of looking at TPD especially after curriculum change. TPD needs to start with the teachers' concerns because involving their voices creates a deep commitment to curriculum change. Teachers do not have to be passive recipients of a retooling process since they have the capacity to be active participants in their own professional development. Teachers can actively engage with the NLSC in a meaningful way. Opening space for teachers to engage in dialogue about their teaching practice motivates them to play a significant role in implementation and acceptance of new pedagogies.

CPAR is a powerful tool for teacher professional development since it is inclusive, collaborative, context-based and originates from the teachers' own questions and concerns. Through it, teachers monitor their own implementation progress, and the policy makers can improve and monitor this process through gathering the teachers' voices and creatively involving them in the suggestion and use of context-based approaches, and getting feedback from implementation of the NLSC in their classrooms.

## **5.5 Recommendations**

- i. The study recommends that participatory modes of teacher professional development should be used widely and possibly be taken up by the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), and National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) in demarcated regional school settings that exhibit a great similarity. This can be done by establishing platforms and spaces for mutual engagement where teachers come

together, share their experiences with NLSC implementation and collectively identify issues of concern so that they are empowered to become active agents of curriculum change.

- ii. Based on this research, I recommend CPAR to be used by the NCDC in Uganda for effective monitoring and evaluation regarding the process of implementation of the NLSC. This will be based on gathering the teachers' voices, concerns and critical reflections on their classroom practice, which can differ widely in the various regions. CPAR has proven to be a powerful tool to for creatively involving teachers in the suggestions and use of context-based solutions, which will make the implementation process more effective.
- iii. CPAR is a time-consuming process and needs support. Educational institutions should recognize the opportunity of CPAR and provide support in terms of time and resources for CPAR-based professional development initiatives and encourage collective learning and action among teachers. If the institutions can facilitate opportunities for teachers to engage in critical dialogue so as to create opportunities for shared decision making in implementing the NLSC in schools, the teachers themselves, the learners and institutions will benefit.
- iv. Educational institutions should provide support in terms of time and resources for CPAR-based professional development initiatives and encourage collective learning and action among teachers. The institutions can facilitate opportunities for teachers to engage in critical dialogue so as to create opportunities for shared decision making in implementing the NLSC in schools.

- v. The teachers should be exposed to opportunities for critical inquiry and actively engage in CPAR to challenge existing assumptions and practices as they embrace opportunities to reflect on their own teaching and learning. They should not be passive recipients of retooling programmes, but collaborate with colleagues to establish professional learning communities where they can critically reflect on their teaching practices, share insights, and collaboratively work towards addressing their teaching practice concerns.

### **5.6 Suggested Areas for Further Research**

The following are the further areas of research that can be undertaken to enrich the present study:

- i. There is need for a comparative study examining the effectiveness of CPAR in teacher professional development. This research could contribute to a deeper understanding of the unique benefits and limitations of CPAR in promoting teacher professional development.
- ii. The current study was qualitative in nature. There is need to carry out a similar study using mixed method approach to expand the scope of the study and possibly measure some of the effects of CPAR on teachers and learners.
- iii. There is need for a longitudinal study to explore the long-term impact of CPAR in in teacher professional development. There is need to investigate how CPAR influences the teachers' instructional practices attitudes and professional growth over an extended period of time. This research would provide valuable insights into the sustainability and transformational potential of CPAR as a professional development approach in different contexts.

- iv. Similar studies could be done in different educational settings to investigate how the specific contextual factors influence the implementation and outcomes of CPAR in teacher professional development. Such research could provide guidance on tailoring CPAR to meet the specific needs and challenges of different educational contexts.

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## APPENDICES

### **Appendix i: Communicative Action Guide**

I am a student of Moi University pursuing a Master's degree in Educational Research and Evaluation. The purpose of this meeting is to explore how we teachers can take charge of our professional development and work together to advance the implementation of competence-based English language teaching. We are participating in this study as English language teachers currently implementing CBC in senior one and two. Your participation in this study will involve discussion, classroom action and a final meeting for reflection about the action. The information you provide will be used only for this study and confidentiality is assured.

### **Reconnaissance**

No of participants 8-14 English language teachers

- |         |          |
|---------|----------|
| 1. .... | 8. ....  |
| 2. .... | 9. ....  |
| 3. .... | 10. .... |
| 4. .... | 11. .... |
| 5. .... | 12. .... |
| 6. .... | 13. .... |
| 7. .... | 14. .... |

### **English language teaching practice concerns in the CBC framework**

1. What kind of professional development courses/trainings have you had so far with regard to the new lower secondary curriculum?
2. What were your experiences with these professional development courses/training programmes?
3. What is your perception about the CBC approaches when teaching English language?
4. What are your teaching practice concerns when using these approaches to teach Language in your classrooms?
5. Suggest aspects of the current teaching practices that can be improved for effective CBC implementation.

## Planning

No of participants '8-14 English language teachers

- |         |          |
|---------|----------|
| 1. .... | 8. ....  |
| 2. .... | 9. ....  |
| 3. .... | 10. .... |
| 4. .... | 11. .... |
| 5. .... | 12. .... |
| 6. .... | 13. .... |
| 7. .... | 14. .... |

**Guiding Question:** What teaching approach do we use to teach English language in the framework of CBC considering our different concerns?

The activities to be done in the second meeting will be aimed at teachers coming up with an approach that can address their earlier mentioned concerns. The agreed-on approach will be further refined and developed to suit their context and participants will plan the implementation procedure of the action in their own classrooms.

## Enacting the Plan and Observing how it Works

The participants will implement the action that is agreed on in the planning meeting. Their action will be guided by the following questions.

**a) Please complete this part while you are in the process of using the agreed-on approach to teach English in your class.**

Tell me about your thoughts and feelings regarding your experience with the use of Critical Participatory Action Research (working together with other teachers of the same subject) to solve your teaching practice concerns? The following are some examples of information you can provide.

- i. I feel excited about implementing this approach because.....
- ii. I am a little nervous about implementing this approach because.....
- iii. I believe that by changing the teaching approach in this way, it may help my students ..... (**specify how**)

**b) Please complete this part immediately after conducting the action in your class.**

- i. Did you do anything differently in your instruction as a result of participating in the discussions? (**Please explain**)
- ii. Did you use the same approach agreed on in the discussion sessions or a modified version? What worked well and what did not go well? (**Explain what you have learned**)
- iii. How did participating in the discussions influence your teaching practice? (**Kindly elaborate**)

- iv. Did the new approach influence learners' motivation and interest in the lesson?  
**(Please explain in detail)**
- v. What is your view on learners' creativity when you applied the new approach?

### Reflection

No of participants '8-14 English language teachers

- |         |          |
|---------|----------|
| 1. .... | 8. ....  |
| 2. .... | 9. ....  |
| 3. .... | 10. .... |
| 4. .... | 11. .... |
| 5. .... | 12. .... |
| 6. .... | 13. .... |
| 7. .... | 14. .... |

### Questions Guiding the Reflection Phase in the Third Meeting

#### Main question.

What were your experiences with the use of CPAR for professional development.

#### Sub-questions

- i. What are your experiences with the being involved in the CPAR process?
- ii. Do you feel that participating in this study has improved your practice? **(Please explain)**
- iii. Was taking charge of your own professional development helpful in your teaching practice?
- iv. Would you recommend the use of the CPAR approach to professional development to other teachers? **(Please explain)**

## **Appendix ii: Informed Consent Document**

**Title of the Study:** Using Critical Participatory Action Research in Teacher Professional Development for Competence-based English Language Teaching in Lower Secondary Schools in Kabale Municipality, Uganda

**Investigator: Ekyakunzire Brenda**

Institution: Moi University, Eldoret, Kenya

### **Introduction**

The researcher is a student at Moi University, Kenya pursuing a Master's degree in Educational Research and Evaluation. This informed consent explains the study to you. After the study has been explained, any questions you may have will be answered. When you have decided to participate in the study, you will be asked to sign a consent, after which you will be given a copy to keep. The study is meant to explore the use of Critical Participatory Action Research (CPAR) in Teacher Professional Development (TPD) for Competence-based English Language Teaching. This study is being done to explore how teachers can take charge of their professional development and work together to advance the implementation of competence-based English language teaching.

### **A brief description of the sponsors of the research project**

This research study is sponsored by the East and South African-German Centre for Educational Research, Methodologies and Management (CERM-ESA), at Moi-University, Kenya, in cooperation with the University of Oldenburg, the Nelson Mandela University, the University of Dar es Salaam and the Uganda Management Institute; and is funded by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD).

### **Purpose:**

The study seeks to explore the use of critical participatory action research in teacher professional development for competence-based English language teaching in lower secondary schools in Kabale Municipality, Uganda.

The findings of this study will give insights into the use of a new approach (CPAR) in teacher professional development to advance the implementation of the competence-based teaching and show an empowering way and example of how the teaching practice and TPD can be transformed in a meaningful, participatory way towards improved teaching in the competence-based curriculum. Furthermore, the findings lay the groundwork for more research touching the use of CPAR as an additional powerful contextualized tool for TPD in implementation of the New Lower Secondary Curriculum in Uganda.

### **Procedures:**

Your participation in this study will involve attendance of three meetings and classroom action. The first meeting will involve discussion of shared teaching practice concerns and critical questions about teaching practice as well as aspects of current classroom practices that might need to improve. The second meeting will involve participants reaching a shared understanding of what can be done to improve classroom practices, deciding on a teaching approach to implement, when and how to implement it while thinking of the possibilities

and limitations of the action. You will then be required to implement the agreed-on action in the classroom, observe and reflect on the practice, and record your reflections and then meet for the final reflection meeting as we reflect on the whole process. All the meetings will be tape-recorded for later transcription and analysis. You will have an important role to play in the inquiry process and your contributions are valued and important. You will freely express your points of view, will not be coerced into participating or accepting a point of view since different perspectives will be recognized and respected. You will also be required to listen, speak, act and relate to other group members carefully and respectfully. The researcher will participate in the study as a guide, document ideas as they unfold, record individual transformation and strengthen collective educational identity of the group. You will be required to meet three times for the three dialogue sessions and this will be over the weekends to avoid interference with your weekly classroom schedule.

**Who will participate in the study?**

You have been chosen to participate in this study because you are an English language teacher that is currently implementing CBC in senior 1 and 2. Therefore, your participation will richly inform the study. The study will last 3 weeks and will most likely involve 16 participants. The 16 participants will be divided into 2 equal groups and the dialogues will happen concurrently.

**Risks/discomforts:**

There is no foreseeable risk of harm or discomfort that will arise from your participation in this study. The only risk or discomfort will be the inconvenience in terms of time spent during the three dialogue sessions and while implementing the classroom action.

**Benefits:**

This study will show an empowering way of how to transform teaching practice and enable you, other English teachers of the new curriculum as well as the researcher to work together and take charge of professional development.

You will be informed of the progress and findings of the study, as well as any new information related to and/or affecting the study.

**Confidentiality:**

Your identity will not be revealed to any one since I shall attach codes to conceal all participants' identities. Information obtained will only be accessible by the research team. Soft copies of the data will be protected by passwords and hard copy files will be kept under lock and key. Confidential information will only be accessed by the principal researcher and all the data evidence will be destroyed when no longer needed for the study. The study findings will be disseminated in relevant journals.

**Alternatives:**

You do not have to participate in this study if you are not interested, and you will not lose any benefit in case of no participation. If you choose to participate in the study, you have a right and permission to withdraw from the study at any time you feel uncomfortable to continue.

**Cost:**

There will not be any additional cost incurred as a result of participating in this study.

**Questions:**

If you have any questions related to the study as a research participant, you can contact the principal investigator, Ekyakunzire Brenda on telephone number 0779719885 or via email on [brendadaniella59@gmail.com](mailto:brendadaniella59@gmail.com).

**Statement of Voluntariness:**

Participation in the research study is voluntary and you may join on your own free will. You have a right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

If you have any issues pertaining to your rights and participation in the study, please contact the Chairperson, Gulu University Research Ethics Committee, Dr. Gerald Obai Tel: No., 0772305621; email: lekobai@yahoo.com/lekobai@gmail.com; or the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology, on plot 6 Kimera Road, Ntinda, Kampala on Tel 0414705500.

**Statement of Consent**

The researcher has described to me what is going to be done, the risks, the benefits involved and my rights as a participant in this study. I understand that my decision to participate in this study will not affect me in any way. In the use of this information, my identity will be concealed. I am aware that I may withdraw at any time. I understand that by signing this form, I do not waive any of my legal rights but merely indicate that I have been informed about the research study in which I am voluntarily agreeing to participate. A copy of this form will be provided to me.

**Name** ..... **Signature of participant**.....**Date**.....

**Name:** Ekyakunzire Brenda **Signature of researcher**  **Date**.....



## Appendix iv: Gulu University Research Ethics Committee Permit



# GULU UNIVERSITY

P.O. Box 166, Gulu (U)  
 Website: [www.gu.ac.ug](http://www.gu.ac.ug)  
 Email: [gurec@gu.ac.ug](mailto:gurec@gu.ac.ug)

Tet: +256 471 432 096  
 Fax: +256 471 432 913  
 Mob: +256 772 305 621  
 +256 776 812 147

## RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

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03/02/2023

To: EKYAKUNZIRE BRENDA

0779719885

**Type:** Initial Review

**Re:** GUREC-2022-461: USING CRITICAL PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH IN TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR COMPETENCE-BASED ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KABALE MUNICIPALITY, UGANDA, 2.0, 2023-02-02

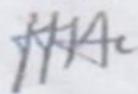
I am pleased to inform you that at the **95th** convened meeting on **19/01/2023**, the Gulu University REC, committee meeting, etc voted to approve the above referenced application.  
 Approval of the research is for the period of **03/02/2023** to **03/02/2024**.

As Principal Investigator of the research, you are responsible for fulfilling the following requirements of approval:

1. All co-investigators must be kept informed of the status of the research.
2. Changes, amendments, and addenda to the protocol or the consent form must be submitted to the REC for re-review and approval **prior** to the activation of the changes.
3. Reports of unanticipated problems involving risks to participants or any new information which could change the risk benefit: ratio must be submitted to the REC.
4. Only approved consent forms are to be used in the enrollment of participants. All consent forms signed by participants and/or witnesses should be retained on file. The REC may conduct audits of all study records, and consent documentation may be part of such audits.
5. Continuing review application must be submitted to the REC **eight weeks** prior to the expiration date of **03/02/2024** in order to continue the study beyond the approved period. Failure to submit a continuing review application in a timely fashion may result in suspension or termination of the study.
6. The REC application number assigned to the research should be cited in any correspondence with the REC of record.
7. You are required to register the research protocol with the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) for final clearance to undertake the study in Uganda.

No.	Document Title	Language	Version Number	Version Date
1	Protocol	English	2.0	2023-02-02
2	Informed consent form for the recruitment of research participants	English	2.0	2023-02-02
3	Data collection tools	English	2.0	2023-02-09
4	COVID-19 & EBOLA risk management plan for the study	English	2.0	2023-02-02
5	Informed Consent forms	English	2.0	2023-02-02

Yours Sincerely



Dr. Gerald OBAI  
 For: Gulu University REC



*Appendix vi: Research Budget*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Amount in Ugandan</b>
1	Proposal Typesetting and Printing	120,000/=
2	Stationery	150,000/=
3	Conference hall	600,000/=
4	Data Analysis (Software Hire)	150,000/=
5	Typing and Report Binding	200,000/=
6	Airtime, Data and other Communication Expenses	200,000/=
7	Meals (break tea and lunch)	996,000/=
8	Transport refund	480,000/=
9	Subsistence	100,000/=
10	Contingencies	100,000/=
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3,096,000/=</b>

## Appendix vii: Plagiarism Certificate

*SR241*



**THESIS WRITING COURSE**

*PLAGIARISM AWARENESS CERTIFICATE*

This certificate is awarded to

*BRENDA EKYAKUNZIRE*

**MS/R/5882/22**

In recognition for passing the University's plagiarism Awareness test for thesis: USING  
CRITICAL PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH IN TEACHER PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT FOR COMPETENCE-BASED ENGLISH ANGUAGE TEACHING IN  
LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KABALE MUNICIPALITY, UGANDA with a similarity  
index of 3% and striving to maintain academic integrity.

Awarded by:



Prof. Anne Syomwene Kisilu , CERM-ESA Project Leader

10/08/2023