



Teachers' Understanding of the Learner-Centred Approach in English Language Classrooms in Selected Secondary Schools in Central Uganda

Racheal Nakazinga¹ Mark Michael Waiswa², Eric Douglas Kalanda³ Peace Buhwamatsiko Tumuheki⁴

^{1,2,3} School of Education, Kyambogo University

⁴ Faculty of Special Needs Education, Kyambogo University

Email; mmwaiswa@kyu.ac.ug

Abstract: Despite the changes in the curricula to Competence Based Education (CBE) , there are still issues related to comprehension of the concepts of learner-centred learning. This study aimed at investigating teachers' understanding of Learner-Centred Approach (LCA) in English language classrooms within selected secondary schools in Central Uganda inspired by curriculum reforms advocating for a change from teacher-centred to learner-centred learning. The research adopted a qualitative research using multiple case study design. Sixteen secondary school English language teachers with a minimum of four years teaching experience in Central Uganda were purposively selected as participants. Interviews served as the data collection method used while data analysis was done through thematic analysis of Braun & Clarke's model with the use of ATLAS.ti software. Findings reveal that although teachers are generally aware of curriculum reforms promoting learner-centred pedagogy, their understanding remains largely procedural rather than conceptual. It is common practice for teachers to connect learner-centred approaches to classroom learning using cooperative learning, learner interaction, and active learning but adopted only in a restricted and teacher-controlled environment. Integrating ICT, contextual learning, learner autonomy, and formative assessments have not been effectively adopted due to overcrowded classes, workload pressures, curriculum requirements, and assessment practices based on examinations. The study found that there is a significant mismatch between policy expectations and classroom practice with respect to adopting a learner-centred approaches. The study recommends strengthened professional development for teachers, improved alignment between curriculum and assessment systems, and enhanced school-level support to facilitate meaningful implementation of learner-centred pedagogy.

Keywords: Learner-Centred Approach, English language teaching, teacher understanding, competency-based curriculum, competence based education.

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1. Introduction

Incorporation of Learner-Centred Approach (LCA) has become one of the hallmarks of curriculum reforms in the Ugandan secondary education system, which began in

2020 through the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). Curriculum reform in this context focuses on shifting from teacher-centred approaches of teaching towards pedagogy that supports the engagement of learners in their learning processes. With