



Implementing the Learner-Centred Approach in English Language Classrooms: Strategies Used by Secondary School Teachers in Central Uganda

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Abstract: *The study explored the strategies teachers of English use in implementing the learner-centred approach in secondary schools. Using a case study design, qualitative data were collected from 16 teachers of English and 48 learners purposively selected in four well-resourced secondary schools from four districts of central Uganda. Data collection was done by using interviews and focus group discussions. Data was analyzed using thematic analysis facilitated by ATLAS.ti Version 25. Although teachers reported using a range of learner-centred strategies, implementation was often superficial characterized by over-reliance on group work. The study revealed that large class sizes limited teachers' ability to effectively facilitate instruction and assess learners during the teaching and learning of the English language. In light of the above findings, the study recommends that MoES strengthen in-service training programs that guide teachers on how to facilitate learning and conduct continuous assessment in large classes. The Ministry of Education and Sports should collaborate with other education stakeholders to reduce teacher- learner ratios in secondary schools by recruiting more teachers of English language and increasing classroom space.*

Keywords: *Implementing, Learner-centred approach, English language, Strategies, Secondary schools*

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1. Introduction

The contemporary education secondary system in Uganda is undergoing significant transformation, marked by a shift in pedagogy from the teacher-centred approach towards the adoption of the learner-centred approach. According to Dole et al. (2015), early instructional practices were predominantly teacher-centred; thus, teachers experienced themselves as the central authority in the classroom. In the teacher-centred approach, instructors used the lecture method that emphasised memorisation and repetition (Sakata et al., 2022). In English language teaching, non

native speakers of English were taught how to read and write using teacher-centred methods such as grammar translation, audio-lingual and direct methods, which emphasised rote learning (Keo & Lan, 2024). Furthermore, in Uganda, Kyeyune, (2021) asserts that teachers of English language focus on accuracy and control, often valuing correct repetition as a sign of learning. During teaching and learning, teachers controlled the pace of the learning, the content to be taught and learners were viewed as passive recipients of knowledge.