



Effectiveness of Teachers' Classroom Pedagogy in Teaching English in Tanzanian Primary Schools

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Abstract: This study examined the effectiveness of teachers' classroom pedagogy in teaching English in both private English-medium and public Kiswahili-medium primary schools in Dodoma, Tanzania. Grounded in Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as a theoretical framework, the study employed a mixed-methods approach with a convergent parallel design. Data were collected through classroom observations, interviews with Standard 3 and 6 teachers of English, focus group discussions with pupils, documentary reviews, and questionnaires administered to both pupils and teachers. Stratified random sampling was used to select 142 pupils, while purposive sampling selected two teachers from each school, totaling 150 respondents. Findings revealed that teachers largely failed to implement CLT and language-supportive pedagogy due to challenges such as inadequate teaching and learning materials, large class sizes, reliance on traditional teaching methods, limited teacher and pupil motivation, and lack of recognition for teachers' efforts. These challenges constrained interactive learning, reduced pupil engagement, and limited opportunities to develop communicative competence in English. The study recommends targeted in-service training to enhance teachers' pedagogical skills, provision of adequate teaching and learning materials, creation of a supportive classroom environment, strategies to boost teacher motivation, and the effective use of technology to access instructional resources. Implementing these recommendations can improve the quality of English language teaching and learning in Tanzanian primary schools.

Keywords: Classroom pedagogy, English language teaching, primary schools, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Tanzania

How to cite this work (APA):

Ringo, E. L. (2025). Effectiveness of Teachers' Classroom Pedagogy in Teaching English in Tanzanian Primary Schools. *Journal of Research Innovation and Implications in Education*, 9(3), 365 – 375. <https://doi.org/10.59765/kny8>.

1. Introduction

The effectiveness of classroom pedagogy is widely recognized as a key factor in English language teaching and learning outcomes worldwide. Effective pedagogy enhances learners' communicative competence, whereas teacher-centered methods such as lecturing and rote memorization limit practical language use (Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Harmer, 2015). In sub-Saharan Africa, a tension between language policy and classroom reality has been well documented, as many education systems promote English through learner-centered pedagogies, yet classrooms remain dominated by traditional approaches due to large class sizes, limited resources,

and insufficient teacher preparation (Brock-Utne, 2007; Bamgbose, 2015).

In Tanzania, the Education and Training Policy (1995) and its 2014 revision designate Kiswahili as the medium of instruction in primary schools, while English is taught as a compulsory subject and later becomes the medium of instruction in secondary and higher education (Mtana, 2013). Although seven years of primary education are expected to equip pupils with sufficient English proficiency, many complete primary schools without adequate mastery. The predominance of Kiswahili outside classrooms, combined with teachers' continued reliance on traditional methods, contributes to persistent weaknesses in pupils' communicative skills. Previous

studies in Tanzania have highlighted challenges in English teaching, including reliance on teacher-centered methods, limited teacher training, large class sizes, and insufficient classroom interaction (John, Vuzo & Mkumbo, 2021; John, 2024; Shirima, 2012; Alfani, 2017; Ngonyani, Matete & Kashaigili, 2022).

1.1 Statement of the problem

Limited studies assess the effectiveness of these pedagogical strategies in improving pupils' English proficiency. This gap between policy expectations and learning outcomes accentuates the need to examine the factors that hinder or facilitate effective classroom pedagogy in Tanzanian primary schools. Therefore, this study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of teachers' classroom pedagogy in enhancing pupils' English proficiency and to identify the factors that affect the implementation of pedagogical strategies. Specifically, the study addresses the research question: *What factors hinder or facilitate effective use of classroom pedagogy?* This study addresses this question by providing evidence-based insights to inform curriculum design, teacher training, and policy decisions, aiming to enhance classroom pedagogy and equip students with the English skills needed for successful transition to secondary education and sustained academic success.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Empirical Studies

The effectiveness of classroom pedagogy is widely recognized as a crucial factor in enhancing learners' English proficiency, particularly where English is taught as a second language. Globally, Richards and Rodgers (2014) emphasize that Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) enables students to communicate effectively in real-life situations by focusing on meaningful communication rather than solely on grammatical accuracy. CLT encourages interactive activities, such as role-plays, discussions, and group work, to promote authentic language use. Similarly, Harmer (2015) notes that traditional teacher-centered approaches, including lecturing and rote memorization, restrict interaction and active learning, limiting learners' ability to apply English practically. Collectively, these studies highlight that teacher knowledge, pedagogical skills, and methodological decisions are central to effective language instruction.

Extending this global perspective, Levina (2017) investigated English teachers' understanding and application of CLT in New Zealand. Interviews with ten professors revealed that misconceptions about CLT, reliance on grammar-based methods, limited English proficiency, and lack of professional training constrained the use of learner-centered strategies. This accentuates the pivotal role of teacher competence and confidence in

translating curriculum policy into effective classroom practice.

In the African context, similar challenges emerge. Udesemowo (2005) and Oluwole (2008) examined English teaching in Nigeria and found that low conversational skills among teachers, combined with reliance on traditional "chalk and talk" methods, resulted in passive learning, limited retention, and poor academic outcomes. These findings indicate that teacher proficiency and pedagogical approach directly affect learners' performance, particularly in environments where English is learned as a second language.

Focusing on Tanzania, English is introduced as a compulsory subject in primary schools and later becomes the medium of instruction in secondary and higher education (Mtana, 2013). Nevertheless, many pupils' complete primary education without sufficient English proficiency. Ngonyani (2019) identified challenges faced by primary school teachers in Kongwa District, Dodoma, including overcrowded classrooms, limited teaching aids, lack of English reading materials, interference from pupils' native language, and teachers' limited experience with instructional techniques. The study recommended that the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology implement professional development programs to enhance teachers' competence and confidence.

Similarly, Ngonyani, Matete, and Kashaigili (2025) found that Standard Six pupils struggled with reading comprehension due to ineffective teaching strategies, highlighting the gap between curriculum objectives and classroom practice. John (2025) assessed the effectiveness of teachers' pedagogical practices in enhancing English literacy skills among primary school children in Tanzania. The study revealed that, despite CLT-based curriculum guidelines, teachers predominantly used lecturing and rote memorization, leading to insufficient English literacy skills among pupils, particularly in rural areas. Hillary and Makundi (2024) explored the impact of inquiry-based, visual, and problem-based teaching strategies in Bagamoyo District and found that limited resources constrained implementation. Byabato and Onyango (2022) similarly identified that low motivation, inadequate learning environments, and ineffective teaching approaches contributed to limited English proficiency among pupils in Nyamagana District. Mgeni (2021) further showed that teachers' subject mastery and competence in applying Technological, Pedagogical, and Content Knowledge (TPACK) were critical determinants of teaching effectiveness, but insufficient training and resources limited quality instruction.

Together, the above studies reveal that while challenges and obstacles in English teaching have been well documented, few investigations explicitly examine how these factors contribute to the ineffectiveness of teachers' classroom pedagogy. Limited attention has also been given to identifying appropriate pedagogical approaches

that could mitigate these barriers and enhance pupils' communicative competence. This study, therefore, seeks to address these gaps by investigating the factors that hinder effective classroom pedagogy and evaluating how teachers' pedagogical practices impact pupils' English proficiency in Tanzanian primary schools.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This study is guided by Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), a pedagogical approach that emphasizes interaction as both the method and the goal of language learning. Developed in the 1970s in response to the perceived limitations of traditional grammar-translation approaches, CLT prioritizes practical communication over mere mastery of grammatical rules and vocabulary, focusing on enabling learners to communicate effectively in real-world situations (Richards, 2006). As Richards (2006:3) notes, "One can master the rules of sentence formation in a language and still not be very successful at using the language for meaningful communication." Savignon (2002) further emphasizes that CLT offers a student-centered, communicative framework, making it one of the most applicable teaching and learning theories in contemporary language education.

Furthermore, CLT promotes activities such as pair and group work, the use of authentic materials and tasks, illustrations and visual aids, and information gap exercises, all designed to enhance learners' communicative competence. This theory is particularly appropriate for this study, which assesses the effectiveness of teachers' classroom pedagogy in teaching English in Tanzanian primary schools, because it closely aligns with the objectives of English language instruction in these settings. Specifically, the Tanzania English syllabus for Standards III to VI, developed by the Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE) and revised in 2023, is competency-based and emphasizes communicative teaching to develop speaking, listening, writing, and reading skills (Savignon, 2002; TIE, 2023). However, in practice, classroom realities including inadequate teacher training, lack of conducive learning environments, large class sizes, reliance on outdated teaching methods, and limited teacher English proficiency often hinder the effective implementation of CLT strategies (John, 2020; John, 2023).

By grounding the study in CLT, this research examines how teachers' classroom pedagogy facilitates or constrains pupils' ability to communicate effectively in English, thus providing a clear and direct connection between the theoretical framework and the study's purpose of evaluating the effectiveness of teachers' pedagogical practices in Tanzanian primary schools.

3. Methodology

3.1 Design

This study employed a mixed-methods approach to assess the efficacy of teachers' classroom pedagogy in teaching English in Tanzanian primary schools. Specifically, the mixed-methods approach was chosen because it integrates both qualitative and quantitative methods within a single study, thereby providing a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. Consequently, the study utilized a convergent parallel design, in which qualitative and quantitative data are collected simultaneously, analyzed independently, and then synthesized collectively (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

3.2 Sampling and Sample Size

Sample for this study comprised pupils and teachers of English from four primary schools in the Dodoma region, including two private English-medium schools (School A and School B) and two public Kiswahili-medium schools (School C and School D). Specifically, pupils from Standard 3 and Standard 6 were selected to represent lower and upper primary classes, respectively, as these classes were not preparing for NECTA examinations, thereby minimizing disruption to their studies and allowing full participation in the research.

To select pupils, stratified random sampling was employed, with strata defined by class level, and pupils randomly chosen within each stratum to ensure representativeness. In addition, purposive sampling was used to select two teachers of English from each school because they directly taught the target classes and were most affected by the challenges associated with teaching English; consequently, they could provide detailed insights on classroom pedagogy and teaching effectiveness. Tables presenting the demographic distribution of the respondents are provided below.

Table 1: Distribution of Student Respondents by School and Class

School Name	Std 3	Std 6	Totals	%
School A	13	09	22	15.49
School B	20	20	40	28.17
School C	20	20	40	28.17
School D	20	20	40	28.17
Totals	73	69	142	100

Source: Field Data (2024)

As shown, a total of 142 pupils participated, with School B, C, and D contributing the largest proportion of respondents, while School A contributed slightly fewer pupils.

Table 2: Teacher Respondents by School and Gender

Teachers								
Sex	School A		School B		School C		School D	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
M	00	00	01	50	01	50	01	50
F	02	100	01	50	01	50	01	50
Totals	02	100	02	100	02	100	02	100

Source: Field Data (2024)

To ensure comprehensive and triangulated data, this study employed multiple methods, including questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), non-participant observation, and documentary review. Questionnaires were administered to English language teachers and Standard 3 and Standard 6 pupils to gather broad insights into the challenges of teaching and learning English, as this method allowed for large-scale, cost-effective data collection that directly supported the study's objective of assessing the effectiveness of classroom pedagogy. In addition, non-participant observation captured real-time classroom interactions, the use of communicative strategies, and pupil engagement, complementing the questionnaire data with qualitative insights as recommended by (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

Likewise, interviews with teachers provided detailed contextual information about pedagogical practices, experiences, and challenges, offering depth that questionnaires alone could not provide (Kothari, 2004). Furthermore, FGDs with pupils facilitated the collection of diverse perspectives, revealing students' perceptions of teaching effectiveness, engagement with communicative activities, and learning challenges. Finally, documentary review examined relevant school documents, including lesson plans, teaching schedules, assessment records, and the Tanzanian English syllabus, to verify alignment between curriculum guidelines and classroom practices.

3.3 Validity and Reliability

To ensure validity and reliability, this study employed triangulation and a pilot study. Triangulation involved using multiple data collection methods, including questionnaires, interviews, observations, focus group discussions, and documentary review, while gathering information from both teachers and pupils. This approach enhanced validity by cross-checking data across sources and minimizing bias. Additionally, a pilot study was conducted in one primary school in Dodoma to test and refine the instruments, improving their clarity,

structure, and consistency. Collectively, these strategies ensured that the study's findings on the effectiveness of teachers' classroom pedagogy and its impact on pupils' communicative competence in English were both credible and reliable.

3.4 Data analysis

This study employed thematic analysis to examine qualitative data from interviews, observations, and focus group discussions. Data were transcribed, coded, and analyzed inductively, with themes refined through iterative review and cross-checked by multiple researchers for reliability in line with (Kothari, 2004). Findings were interpreted using verbatim citations, descriptive accounts, and narrative summaries to provide insight into classroom pedagogy and its impact on pupils' learning. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages, and inferential statistics where appropriate as proposed by (Creswell, 2014).

3.5 Ethical considerations

To ensure that the study was conducted ethically, the researcher considered a variety of rules during this examination. The researcher followed the ethical guidelines for study proposed by Fouka and Mantzorou (2011). Based on these, SJUT granted the researcher authorization and research clearance to collect data in the selected schools. The District Executive Director, who has the authority to allow the researcher to conduct the study in the district, got the letter of authorization. The researcher ensured that all participants understood the study's goal and how it would benefit them. Participants could decide whether or not to answer. To ensure secrecy, participants were not permitted to write their names on the questionnaires to ensure confidentiality and anonymity.

4. Results and Discussion

This section presents the study findings in line with the main research question: *‘What factors hinder or facilitate effective use of classroom pedagogy in Tanzanian primary schools?’* The findings are organized around key themes that emerged from the data, integrating both qualitative and quantitative evidence from classroom observations, interviews, focus group discussions, and survey responses. Tables, direct quotations, and narrative summaries are used to illustrate patterns, challenges, and relationships, providing a comprehensive understanding of how teaching practices, resources, and classroom conditions affect the implementation of pedagogical strategies and, consequently, pupils’ English proficiency and communicative competence.

4.1 Insufficient teaching and learning materials

Effective classroom pedagogy depends largely on the availability of adequate teaching and learning materials. To understand factors that hinder or facilitate effective English teaching in Tanzanian primary schools, this study examined the accessibility and sufficiency of instructional resources. Data collected through classroom and school observations, teacher and pupil questionnaires, and interviews with English language teachers from private English-medium and public Kiswahili-medium schools revealed a significant shortage of materials, which emerged as a key obstacle to effective teaching and learning. The study focused on resources such as English textbooks, storybooks, teachers’ guides, and other tools essential for developing pupils’ English language skills. Insights from both teachers and pupils regarding the availability and adequacy of these materials are presented in the tables below.

Table 3: Teachers’ Responses on Teaching Materials Availability

	Yes	%	No	%
School A	02	25	00	00
School B	02	25	00	00
School C	00	00	02	25
School D	00	00	02	25
Totals	04	100	04	100

Source: Field Data (2024)

The table indicates that teachers from two English-medium schools (School A and School B) reported having sufficient teaching and learning materials. In contrast, teachers from two public Kiswahili-medium schools (School C and School D) reported that instructional materials were insufficient or completely lacking. Direct quotes from teachers illustrate these challenges:

“NO, because the school does not have enough books for pupils and teachers’ guide” (English language teacher from SCHOOL C, August 2024)

“There are no enough materials such as extra materials apart from (TIE), Dictionaries for students and shortage of audio-visuals materials” (English language teacher from SCHOOL D, August 2024)

Teachers from School C and School D emphasized that lack of textbooks, teachers’ guides, dictionaries, and audio-visual resources severely limits classroom pedagogy. Without adequate materials, teachers rely on lecture methods and pupils struggle to follow lessons, practice independently, and build language skills, resulting in low English proficiency. The shortage also disrupts lesson pacing, increases teachers’ workload, and reduces time for communicative activities. Over time, this lowers pupils’ motivation and widens the gap between private English-medium and public Kiswahili-medium schools, highlighting systemic inequalities and challenges in meeting curriculum standards.

To further understand the availability of teaching and learning materials, pupils from Standard Three and Standard Six in both English-medium and Kiswahili-medium schools were asked whether adequate resources were provided. Their responses are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4: Pupils' Responses on Teaching Material Availability

School Name	Std 3				Std 6			
	Yes	%	No	%	Yes	%	No	%
School A	03	37.5	10	7.5	00	00	09	6.7
School B	03	37.5	17	12.7	00	00	20	14.9
School C	02	25	18	13.4	00	00	20	14.9
School D	00	00	20	14.9	00	00	20	14.9
Totals	08	100	65	48.5	00	00	69	51.4

Source: Field Data (2024)

The data in Table 4 indicates that both English-medium (Schools A and B) and Kiswahili-medium schools (Schools C and D) face a shortage of teaching and learning materials. Only 8 Standard 3 pupils across the schools reported that materials were sufficient, while 65 Standard 3 pupils and all 69 Standard 6 pupils reported inadequate or unavailable resources. Pupils specifically mentioned the lack of textbooks, teachers' guides, dictionaries, and other teaching aids. This shortage makes it difficult for both teachers and pupils to ensure effective teaching, independent practice, and mastery of English.

The above findings are in line with previous studies showing that shortages of teaching and learning materials hinder effective classroom pedagogy in Tanzania. Lack of textbooks, teachers' guides, and supplementary resources forces teachers to rely on lecture-based and rote methods, limiting interactive and communicative learning (Brock-Utne, 2007; Bamgbose, 2015; John, Vuzo & Mkumbo, 2021).

Classroom observations revealed that in public Kiswahili-medium schools, one textbook was often shared by eight or more pupils, preventing all students from following lessons simultaneously. This shortage disrupts lesson pacing, reduces opportunities for group work or practical exercises, and increases teachers' workload. UNESCO (2014) emphasizes that the availability of sufficient, high-quality instructional materials for teachers and students is a main factor in teacher satisfaction, motivation, and educational outcomes.

Placing all of the above findings in line with Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) perspective, adequate materials are crucial for meaningful interaction, authentic language practice, and learner engagement (Savignon, 2002; Richards, 2006). Without these resources, pupils struggle to develop communicative competence, practice English

independently, and achieve the objectives of the Tanzanian competency-based English syllabus (TIE, 2023), ultimately affecting their language proficiency and overall learning outcomes.

4.2 Large Class Size

In the observed schools, especially public Kiswahili medium primary schools such that School C and School D pupils were overcrowded in their classroom. In these schools, classes often exceeded 45 pupils, making it difficult for teachers to manage the classroom and ensure that all students actively follow the lesson. During an interview, one teacher explained the challenge.

“You find you teach the class with more than 90 pupils and they use to sit down on the floor; it gives me difficulties to ensure not only one to one help but also implementing group discussions and others. But when they will solve the issue of building other classes and to reduce the number of pupils per class it will be easier to enhance mastery of English language to each pupil”. (English language teacher, SCHOOL D, Data from Interview, August 2024)

This statement highlights how overcrowding, coupled with inadequate seating, prevents teachers from effectively implementing group or pair work. The large number of pupils per class creates obstacles to individualized attention, interactive activities, and effective lesson delivery. The table below shows the total number of pupils in these classrooms. The following table presents the total number of pupils per classroom in the public Kiswahili-medium schools included in the study, highlighting the issue of overcrowding.

Table 5: Classroom Enrollment in Public Kiswahili-Medium Schools

Name of the School	Total Number of Pupils in the classroom	
	STD 3	STD 6
School C	93	98
School D	67	78

Source: Field data (2024)

The data in Table 5 above indicate severe classroom overcrowding in public Kiswahili-medium schools, with some classes exceeding 90 pupils. Such large class sizes limit teachers' ability to manage classrooms effectively, provide individual support, and deliver timely feedback within the standard 40- to 45-minute lesson period. Innovative classroom management strategies, which are essential in such contexts, were largely absent in the observed sessions. As a result, learning is less effective, and both teachers and pupils are often confined to rigid routines rather than engaging in interactive, communicative pedagogical practices. These findings align with previous studies showing that large class sizes in sub-Saharan African schools hinder learner-centered approaches, reduce student engagement, and constrain opportunities to develop communicative competence in English (Brock-Utne, 2007; John, 2024; Ngonyani, 2019; Hillary & Makundi, 2024; Byabato & Onyango, 2022).

According to Richards and Rodgers (2014) and Harmer (2015), effective English language pedagogy, such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), relies on interactive, student-centered methods that become difficult to implement in overcrowded classrooms. Savignon (2002) and Richards (2006) emphasize that communicative competence develops most effectively when teachers can engage learners in meaningful interaction, a process constrained by excessive pupil numbers. Collectively, these studies highlight that large class sizes are a significant barrier to implementing effective English teaching strategies in Tanzanian primary schools.

4.3 Use of Inappropriate Teaching Methods

Observations revealed that while some teachers attempted to use student-centered approaches, many were unable to implement them effectively due to the lack of lesson plans, teaching aids, and textbooks. Of the eight teachers included in the study, only two used teaching aids: one from SCHOOL D used flashcards to teach short and long vowels, and another from SCHOOL B used manila cards for word formation. The limited use of teaching aids in both English-medium and public Kiswahili-medium schools hindered pupils' understanding of English lessons. For example, in SCHOOL C, Standard 6, the lesson on "Personal Notes" and the subtopic "Parts of the Friendly Letter" was taught without visual aids. Pupils were unable to identify the components of a letter, which could have been clarified with simple materials like manila cards. Teachers from SCHOOL C and SCHOOL D explained:

"Even those materials in which could be used are not available in the office, for instance sometimes no manila cards." (English language teacher SCHOOL C,

Data from Interviews, August 2024)

Furthermore, only two teachers entered classrooms with lesson plans, but even these teachers struggled with time management due to the 40-minute lesson period and overcrowded classrooms. Consequently, individual attention to pupils and effective delivery of content were limited. Pupils' difficulty in understanding English led teachers to spend more time explaining basic concepts, reducing the opportunity for interactive, communicative activities.

These findings are consistent with global and Tanzanian studies showing that the effectiveness of classroom pedagogy is a key determinant of English learning outcomes. Effective pedagogy, particularly learner-centered approaches, enhances communicative competence, whereas teacher-centered methods such as lecturing and rote memorization limit practical language use (Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Harmer, 2015).

In sub-Saharan Africa, a tension between language policy and classroom reality is common, as many education systems promote learner-centered pedagogies, yet classrooms are dominated by traditional approaches due to large class sizes, limited resources, and insufficient teacher preparation (Brock-Utne, 2007; Bamgbose, 2015). In Tanzania, despite the policy designating English as a compulsory subject and later medium of instruction (Mtana, 2013), pupils often complete primary school without adequate mastery due to reliance on traditional teaching methods, lack of classroom interaction, and insufficient instructional materials (John, Vuzo & Mkumbo, 2021; Ngonyani, Matete & Kashaigili, 2022).

Grounded in the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) theoretical framework, which emphasizes interaction as both method and goal of language learning (Richards, 2006; Savignon, 2002), the observed practices limit opportunities for pair and group work, authentic tasks, and meaningful communication. CLT prioritizes learner engagement, the use of visual aids, and interactive activities to develop communicative competence. When teachers rely on traditional methods or lack adequate materials, pupils' language skills remain underdeveloped, their motivation diminishes, and the objectives of CLT are not achieved.

Generally, the ineffective use of teaching methods in these schools reflects a broader challenge in Tanzanian primary English education: insufficient resources, overcrowded classrooms, and limited teacher preparedness collectively hinder learner-centered, communicative teaching and restrict pupils' ability to achieve proficiency in English.

4.4 Lack of Support from School Administration

The study revealed that English language teachers were not receiving adequate support from school administration, which negatively affected their teaching effectiveness. Interviews indicated that teachers felt their efforts to help pupils master English went largely unrecognized. One teacher explained:

“Imagine you are trying to your level best to make pupils pass their examinations, but no one can recognize this. (So, you will find someone who is teaching for the purpose of ensuring he or she is meeting teaching responsibilities hence you teach and wait the session to end and go (SCHOOL C teacher, Data from interviews, August 2024).

This lack of administrative support manifested in several ways, including insufficient provision of teaching and learning materials, lack of mentorship or professional development, limited access to classroom technology, and absence of recognition or feedback for teachers’ efforts. Consequently, teachers were unable to prepare effective teaching aids, implement interactive pedagogies, or fully engage pupils in communicative activities.

The observed lack of support directly limited the implementation of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach. CLT emphasizes active learner participation, interactive activities, and the development of the four language skills, listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Richards, 2006; Savignon, 2002). Without administrative backing to provide materials, training, and recognition, teachers struggled to create a communicative classroom environment, relying instead on limited resources and teacher-centered methods.

These findings align with existing literature highlighting the critical role of school administration in teacher effectiveness. UNESCO (2014) emphasizes that administrative support, including provision of resources, mentoring, and professional recognition, enhances teacher motivation, classroom innovation, and student learning outcomes. Similarly, studies in sub-Saharan Africa show that insufficient administrative support contributes to low teacher morale, reduced instructional quality, and poor student performance (Brock-Utne, 2007; Ngonyani, Matete & Kashaigili, 2022).

In the Tanzanian context, although the Education and Training Policy (1995, 2014 revision) and Tanzania Institute of Education guidelines expect schools to provide adequate resources and support for teachers, the

observed reality shows a significant gap between policy and practice. As a result, English teachers face challenges in implementing learner-centered, communicative pedagogies, which ultimately limits pupils’ mastery of English and reduces their engagement in classroom activities.

4.5 Lack of Interest in the Part of Pupils

The study found that some pupils exhibited low interest in learning English, which negatively affected teachers’ ability to ensure mastery. Pupils perceived English as difficult, particularly those who had previously learned in Kiswahili-medium nursery schools. During a focus group discussion, a Standard 6 pupil stated:

“English is a difficult language thus why we don’t understand it, as others we learned by Kiswahili in nursery school.” (Standard 6 pupil, Data from FGDs, August 2024)

This indicates that pupils’ lack of motivation stems from both prior language exposure and insufficiently engaging teaching methods. Teachers confirmed these challenges, reporting that some pupils refused to participate in class or answer questions in English, even when encouraged, limiting classroom interaction and hindering effective learning. One teacher from SCHOOL D explained:

“Imagine you are teaching in the class and you find some pupils don’t answer the questions, even if you force them to speak, they don’t speak they said they don’t know to answer in English.” (SCHOOL D teacher, Data from interviews, August 2024)

Such low engagement directly impacts the implementation of learner-centered approaches, which are essential for developing communicative competence. Grounded in the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) framework, effective language learning relies on interaction, participation, and meaningful use of English in authentic contexts (Richards, 2006; Savignon, 2002). When pupils are disinterested or disengaged, opportunities for pair work, group discussions, and active practice are limited, undermining CLT objectives.

Language Supportive Pedagogy (LSP) offers a practical strategy to address low pupil interest and limited English proficiency. LSP involves scaffolding content, strategically using the learners’ mother tongue, glossaries of difficult terms, and varied activities in reading, writing, speaking, and listening (Anderson, 2015; Rubagumya et al., 2021). In Tanzanian classrooms, using Kiswahili to clarify complex content helps pupils

gradually build confidence and engagement in English. As Anderson (2015:62) notes:

“If you are teaching in a context where you do not have many resources, the mother tongue of your learners, if you know it, maybe the most useful one has.”
(Anderson, 2015)

Therefore, pupils’ lack of interest is a critical barrier to effective English language learning. It reduces the efficacy of CLT-based pedagogical approaches, limits communicative practice, and diminishes overall learning outcomes. Teachers’ adoption of context-sensitive strategies, such as LSP, is essential to motivate pupils, enhance engagement, and improve proficiency in English.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This section presents key recommendations based on the study’s findings and summarizes the main conclusions. The recommendations focus on strategies to enhance English language teaching and learning in Tanzanian primary schools, addressing challenges such as insufficient teaching materials, large class sizes, inappropriate teaching methods, limited administrative support, and low pupil interest. The conclusion synthesizes how these factors affect classroom pedagogy and pupils’ English proficiency, linking the findings to theory, literature, and policy implications.

5.1 Conclusion

This study shows that the effective use of classroom pedagogy in Tanzanian primary schools is influenced by multiple interrelated factors. Key challenges include insufficient teaching and learning materials, large class sizes, reliance on traditional teacher-centered methods, limited support from school administration, and low pupil interest in English, all of which hinder the implementation of learner-centered approaches such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Language Supportive Pedagogy (LSP), resulting in reduced pupil engagement, limited opportunities for interaction, and low English proficiency. At the same time, the study identified facilitating conditions that enhance classroom pedagogy, as English-medium schools with better access to teaching aids, committed teachers, and supportive learning environments demonstrated more interactive and effective practices, illustrating that adequate resources, teacher motivation, and strategic engagement can positively impact learning outcomes.

In the context of CLT and LSP, the findings emphasize the importance of creating learning environments where pupils actively participate, use English meaningfully, and receive tailored support based on their proficiency, while teachers’ use of innovative methods, including digital

resources and strategic use of the mother tongue, further promotes communicative competence. The study also highlights the critical role of school administration and educational policy in supporting effective pedagogy, as the provision of teaching materials, professional development opportunities, recognition of teachers’ efforts, and a conducive learning environment are essential for promoting interactive, learner-centered teaching practices. Addressing both the hindering and facilitating factors is crucial for improving English language teaching and learning in Tanzanian primary schools, and future interventions and research should focus on strengthening resource provision, teacher capacity, classroom management, and pupil engagement to ensure that pedagogical reforms lead to tangible improvements in pupils’ communicative competence and long-term academic success.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the study’s findings, several recommendations are proposed to improve English language teaching and learning in Tanzanian primary schools. These recommendations are categorized into practical interventions, policy implications, and directions for future research.

5.2.1 Recommendations for Practice

To enhance pupils’ English proficiency and improve classroom learning outcomes, it is essential to implement practical strategies that actively engage both teachers and learners, and involve parental support:

1. English teachers should provide a variety of interactive activities to ensure mastery of the language, including comprehension exercises, essay writing tasks, and group work that encourages communication and collaboration.
2. Teachers should employ formative assessments to monitor pupils’ progress continuously, rather than relying solely on summative tests. This allows teachers to identify learning gaps, adjust instructional strategies, and support slower learners effectively. Active engagement in classroom activities, including facilitating group discussions, providing corrective feedback, and ensuring full participation, is crucial for fostering language acquisition.
3. Teachers’ motivation should be strengthened through recognition, awards, and other forms of professional appreciation, which can increase their commitment and enthusiasm in teaching English.
4. Parents should be encouraged to provide additional English learning materials and to ensure that pupils complete school assignments at home, thereby reinforcing classroom instruction and supporting consistent language development.

5.2.2 Recommendations for Policy

1. To strengthen English language teaching and learning at the primary school level, educational policies should focus on teacher development, resource provision, and creating conducive learning environments:
2. English language teachers should receive regular in-service training on effective teaching strategies. This will equip them with diverse pedagogical techniques to engage pupils and ensure mastery of English as a second language.
3. Kiswahili should be used strategically as a support language in teaching English, leveraging pupils' first language to facilitate comprehension and bridge understanding of new concepts.
4. The Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology (MoEST) should ensure the consistent availability of English textbooks and teachers' guides in all schools. Additionally, incorporating digital tools and resources, such as educational apps, language learning software, and virtual platforms, can enhance interactive and collaborative learning opportunities.
5. Educational authorities should promote favorable learning environments by developing libraries, providing sufficient desks and seating, and constructing classrooms with adequate ventilation, lighting, and space to support effective teaching and learning of English.

5.2.3 Recommendations for Future Research

Future research should aim to identify effective strategies to enhance English language teaching and learning in Tanzanian primary schools:

1. Investigate the effectiveness of learner-centered approaches, such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Language Supportive Pedagogy (LSP), in improving pupils' English proficiency in both Kiswahili- and English-medium schools.
2. Examine the impact of classroom resources, including textbooks, teaching aids, and digital tools, on pupils' learning outcomes and teachers' instructional practices.
3. Explore the role of teacher motivation, administrative support, and professional development in enhancing the quality of English instruction.
4. Conduct comparative studies across rural and urban schools to understand contextual challenges such as large class sizes and inadequate infrastructure and recommend context-specific interventions.
5. Undertake longitudinal studies to assess how sustained implementation of innovative teaching methods and resource provision

influences pupils' English proficiency over time.

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