



## Using Print Media to Facilitate Luganda Language Teaching and Learning for Authentic Learning

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**Abstract**

*Luganda language teachers in Uganda have promoted the use of traditional language teaching strategies which are characterised by the CCR (copy, cram and reproduce) practice. Whereas language instruction has greatly shifted from traditional language teaching approaches to modern ones, this has not been the case with Luganda language teaching. Within the context of this background and with the aim of addressing this issue, we conducted a qualitative study, using a participatory action research approach to explore how Luganda teachers could use communicative strategies with the support of a variety of print media to facilitate Luganda teaching and learning for authentic learning. This paper presents an overview of how participants planned lessons using diverse print media to facilitate Luganda teaching and learning for authentic learning. Data was collected through participant observation and focus group discussions (reflective sessions). The findings emerging from this study indicated that the use of print media to facilitate Luganda language teaching led to enhanced learner participation and critical engagement.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The world over, there is an ever-increasing demand for language competencies by language learners and consumers (Richards, 2006; Tosuncuoglu, 2013). This has largely resulted in language instruction shifting from traditional language teaching approaches to modern ones. Whereas many languages have embraced modern, more contemporary teaching approaches, this has not been the case with Luganda language teaching in Uganda. Mukasa (2014) notes that Luganda and other local language teachers in Uganda are not keeping abreast with the use of contemporary strategies such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in their pedagogical practices. Consequently, this has led to a mere acquisition and mastery of Luganda grammatical rules and structure (Kabugo, Masaazi, & Mugagga, 2015), and de-

contextualised inauthentic learning of Luganda. One of the reasons for the above consequences is that the national local languages framework (syllabus) is silent on which approaches and strategies local languages teachers could adopt for the acquisition of local languages' grammatical rules and communicative skills (NCDC, 2013) that are emphasised in the framework.

For Luganda instruction in secondary schools in particular, although the national framework (syllabus) emphasises both the acquisition of Luganda grammatical rules and Luganda communicative skills through creative composition and comprehension, it is silent on which approaches and strategies teachers could adopt to achieve this (NCDC, 2013, p. i). Hence, Luganda teachers teach the above content abstractly. According to Heydari (2015), Luganda teachers' teaching approaches are synonymous with the principles and features of the traditional grammar-translation approach. This is because during Luganda language instruction, greater emphasis is placed on Luganda grammar rules and their application, with little or no attention to other language skills, such as speaking.

It is noted therefore that despite the existence of various communicative strategies for language teaching, little is known in terms of how Luganda teachers could use them to facilitate the teaching and learning of Luganda for authentic learning. Richards (2006) and Heydari (2015) mention two broad communicative strategies that could be used to facilitate language learning which are; functional communication strategies and social interactional strategies. Functional communication strategies require language students to utilise language resources they have at their disposal to solve information gap challenges. On the other hand, social interactional strategies require that the language student takes note of the difference between formal and informal language contexts as used in the different sub-tasks. How Luganda teachers could use these strategies is not yet established.

Since Luganda language teachers have limited exposure to modern language teaching methodologies, there has been persistent poor performance in the Luganda national examinations at 'A' level (Mukasa, 2014) which has also led to schools dropping Luganda, since it is an optional subject. This, coupled with the assumed limited relevance of Luganda to professional courses offered at universities in Uganda, is a major threat to the survival of this language in the national curriculum (Masagazi, 2004). Strengthening Luganda's pedagogical and methodological practices could prevent the language from becoming extinct.

Further still, Luganda pedagogical practices should be strengthened in order to preserve this language and the culture of its people, since a language defines a community and its culture (Savignon, 2007). Mulumba (2011) and Masagazi (2004) support this idea when they emphasise that the pedagogical empowerment of Luganda teachers promotes the preservation of the socio-cultural identity of the Baganda people. Consequently, the availability of competent indigenous teachers will lead to the authentic incorporation of indigenous languages and their knowledge into the formal curriculum. This is one way of decolonising our formal education system.

The effective teaching of a language requires that the teacher use instructional material and strategies in authentic contexts. Pedagogically, the use of authentic communicative instructional strategies assists the facilitator in becoming aware of the set objectives of the teaching-learning activity in question, with full participation of the learners (Körkkö, Kyrö-Ämmälä, & Turunen, 2016; Sharma, 2015). In support of this, Schweisfurth (2015) argues that although the teacher must use communicative instructional strategies, it is very important to critically analyse the relevance of the selected strategies in terms of what is to be learned. Thus, effective instruction would be realised if the teacher uses communicative instructional

strategies which are relevant, efficient, and authentic (Sanders-Smith, Smith-Bonahue, & Soutullo, 2016; Schwartz & Asli, 2014).

According to Mukasa (2014), there is an increased tendency on the part of Luganda teachers to teach the language in an abstract manner, without utilising adequate authentic print resources and instructional strategies. This is partly due to the continued use of traditional teaching approaches and a heavy reliance on textbooks and workbooks, which have resulted in the ineffective teaching and learning of Luganda (Kabugo et al., 2015). The implementation of traditional approaches to teaching Luganda and the use of inauthentic material place learners at the receiving end of a teaching-learning process where they are reduced to passive recipients of learning rather than active recipients. An outcome of such passive learning has led to a reduction in the number of learners opting to enroll for Luganda. Consequently, if nothing is done to revive Luganda pedagogical practices and instructional material, soon this language will cease to exist in the education system of Uganda; and become dormant (Kipuri, 2009; Pillai, Soh, & Kajita, 2014; Silverstein, 2015). Hence, if this is to be averted, teachers need to exercise creativity in their pedagogical practices and expose their learners to a range of authentic print media such as magazines, newspapers, and cartoons, amongst others.

In a study conducted by Harya (2022) on print media in the classroom, it emerged that teachers worked monotonously through textbooks in a mechanical way without varying the text types or teaching strategies. This led to the learners merely listening to the teacher without engaging actively in the lesson or reflecting critically on the reading comprehension texts in the prescribed textbook. Consequently, they were disengaged from the reading and learning process. It is with this in mind that Harya (2022) asserts that teachers need to explore the use of print material such as newspapers for the teaching of reading skills since they offer opportunities for learners to engage with a variety of genres of writing that cover a range of language styles and text types. Another important advantage of using newspapers to teach is that it assists in disseminating topical information covering local, national, and international issues (Awuttey, 2020).

In a further study conducted by Harya (2022) on the influence of authentic print mass media such as newspapers and magazines on grade 11 learners' comprehension, through the application of a pre-, intervention, and post-test design, using an experimental and control group, she discovered that the use of print media had a significant influence on learners' reading comprehension ability. The results of the study indicated that the experimental group performed markedly better than the control group, where the teacher only used the textbook to teach reading comprehension.

In another study conducted by Ramadoney (2018) based on the use of print media to teach English using a pre-, intervention and post-test research design, it was concluded that the use of newspaper articles from the Jakarta Post improved learners' reading comprehension in that they were motivated to engage more effectively with the texts since they found them to be relevant and interesting.

*The aim of this study was to explore how Luganda teachers could broaden their range of communicative strategies through participatory action research by incorporating a range of authentic print media such as newspapers, magazines, advertisements, cartoons etc. in the design of their lessons for the facilitation of communicative language teaching and learning.*

## **2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This study was informed by David Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Theory (ELT). Generally under his theory, Kolb (1984) suggests four different cyclic stages under which people attain experience, which are: Concrete Experience (CE), Reflective Observation (RO), Abstract Conceptualization (AC), and Active Experimentation (AE) (Gogus & Ertek, 2016; Manolis, Burns, Assudani, & Chinta, 2013; Poore, Cullen, & Schaar, 2014). We find Kolb's theoretical assumptions related to the process of our study in a way that in collaboration with our teacher participants, we reflected on their lived experience of using traditional approaches to teaching and drew a plan of improving on this experience by using print media materials and activities. Additionally, we observed and evaluated the implemented plan. Consequently, the principles of this theory enabled us to generate rich data in relation to using print media in the teaching of the Luganda language.

Quinn and Shurville (2009) argue that for experiential learning to be effective, the teacher must facilitate the learning process by creating a positive learning climate, providing clear objectives and learning resources, balancing intellectual and emotional components and sharing the learning experience. Likewise, the participants in this study believed that if they, in their capacity as Luganda teachers, could provide a positive learning environment through communicative strategies, they would be able to achieve the outcome. The aim was to transform teaching from being teacher-centred to learner-centred, so that their roles would be more akin to the facilitation of learning.

### **3. LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **3.1. Print media**

According to Ratminingsih and Budasi (2019), print media is a strategy that involves a variety of print materials intended to influence the behavior change of the intended audience. It is a combination of text and visualisation from pictures and images (Ratminingsih & Budasi, 2019). This kind of media not only enables language learners to learn the language optimally but also permits them to acquire knowledge of what is happening around the world. Print media includes materials such as pictures, flipcharts, magazines, storybooks, newspapers, cartoons and textbooks (Bala, 2017).

According to Maloch (2002), print media resources are found to be appropriate in offering opportunities for interaction during language teaching and learning. This is because the facilitators and the students are free to select appropriate and exciting resources to use in their classes (Mukasa, 2013; Mukasa & Masembe, 2018; Ssentanda, 2014). Therefore, we aimed to explore how the teaching and learning of Luganda by using print media could assist Luganda learners to critically reflect on and participate in what was being learnt, which could lead to the development of enhanced competencies in the Luganda language.

In support of the above, Bala (2017) observes that print media provides a rich learning experience in the classroom. This means that using print media to teach Luganda could engage learners in learning and provide them with a richer experience of the environment around them (Mukasa & Masembe, 2018). This kind of environment allows learners to observe and appreciate the real examples of what they are learning and reduces monotony (Rao, 2014). We should also note that print media helps learners to read and write the language effectively as they are exposed to a variety of material which can increase their concentration in class. The literature consulted thus provides a basis for our exploration of the use of print media for authentic learning.

According to Rao (2019), teaching and learning materials have the potential to contribute significantly to enhancing learning a language in terms of both the content and the procedures. Hence it is incumbent on teachers to ensure that they select authentic print material

from a range of sources including newspapers, magazines, textbooks, and picture books, among many others. The incorporation of such material into the lessons, as pointed out by Rao (2019), motivates learners to read and learn the language, since they are stimulated to learn the language through the incorporation of a range of stimuli. One of the advantages of using newspapers in class, for example, is that learners are motivated to apply the language structure they learn from textbooks to authentic reading material, which they encounter in their daily lives (Rao, 2019).

Rao (2019, p. 155) highlights how “learners’ concentration, persistence and enthusiasm” in learning the language increases when authentic material such as newspapers, cartoons and brochures are used, compared to when inauthentic material is used. Furthermore, according to the study by Yin and Fitzgerald (2017), the use of authentic print material such as cartoons from newspapers can have a marked impact on learners’ critical thinking and learning especially if teachers encourage them to share insights on their experiences, as highlighted in the example included in this study. The study conducted by Demirci and Ozyurek (2017), also highlighted the significant impact that the use of cartoons has on enhancing the critical thinking skills of learners in the teaching of astronomy. Based on the studies, print media such as cartoons and newspapers have the potential to promote teaching and learning, which could lead to the development of critical literacy skills among learners.

### **3.2. Communicative Language Teaching**

According to Qasserras (2023), the aim of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is to motivate learners to develop their communicative competence by using the language in meaningful, authentic, and real-life situations. Since the emphasis is on fluency rather than accuracy, it has grown in popularity in many contexts. A key feature of CLT is that it is dependent on a range of communicative strategies which include, genre strategies –focusing on the teaching of grammar by using advertisements, articles, newspapers etc.; and skills strategies – which incorporate a range of speech activities, oral communication and writing for authentic purposes and contexts (Jantassova 2015).

Since the strategies used to teach Luganda are largely based on the grammar-translation approach, the incorporation of such communicative strategies for the teaching of Luganda could improve teachers’ pedagogical practice. Such strategies enable learners to negotiate meaning through social interaction with the limited influence of the teacher (Littlewood, 2013). Hence the teacher’s role in the CLT process is to provide the required resources, tasks, and strategies, but not to act as the source of knowledge. Furthermore, the focus is on more learner-centred, democratic approaches (Qasserras, 2023) and the use and development of material that will contribute to teaching and learning the language in authentic contexts (Coskun, 2011). This view is further supported by Hsu (2015) who opines that for teaching and learning to be meaningful and relevant, the print material that teachers use must be authentic and based on the students’ lives so that they are able to identify with it.

## **4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN**

This study was guided by a participatory action research design, using a qualitative approach under the transformative paradigm. This supported us in exploring how Luganda teachers could broaden their range of communicative strategies and their use of print media that could be used to facilitate Luganda teaching and learning for authentic learning.

Participatory action research (PAR) is research in which people explore their practices of communication, production, and social organisation in order to deliberate on how to improve their interactions by changing the acts that constitute them (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988). The



focus of this type of research is on planning and conducting a research process with those people whose life worlds and meaningful actions are under study (Burns et al., 2014; Etmanski & Pant, 2007). Thus, in terms of participatory action methodologies, the researchers and the participants identified the problem, engaged in data collection and analysis, and participated in taking action. As such, the research was for the participants, whose knowledge counted at every level of the study. Therefore, in this study, in their capacity as Luganda teachers the six participants (P1-P6), that constituted the sample, identified the challenges that they faced while using traditional language teaching strategies and planned to implement actions relating to how they could overcome these challenges by using communicative strategies. The three researchers facilitated the process by engaging with the Luganda teacher participants over a 12-month period, visiting their classes and creating a safe space for them to share their insights, concerns, and successes as they reflected on their practice and the processes they implemented in their classes, to enhance teaching and learning by using a range of print media for authentic learning.

According to Kemmis and McTaggart (1988), the PAR cycle has four steps namely; plan, act, observe and reflect. The cyclical form of the four stages is repeated until the desired outcome is achieved. Therefore, the participating Luganda teachers working collaboratively, proposed a plan of how they could use the different communicative strategies in Luganda teaching, implemented the plan, observed how they were implementing it and then evaluated the initial plan (Townsend, 2010). Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) observe that the cyclic or spiral nature of participatory action research allows responsiveness and rigour within the research project.

This article reports on part of a larger action research study that was informed by the transformative paradigm (Mertens, 2015). This design enabled us to work collaboratively with our participants to critically reflect on the findings of the different cycles of the larger study. The purpose of the study was to explore and describe how Luganda teachers could use various communicative strategies to facilitate Luganda teaching and learning for authentic learning. After the acquisition of the required permissions from the relevant authorities, we approached the Luganda teachers, purposefully selected six of them from two schools to participate and engaged them through the three cycles of the larger study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). The data from the different data collection strategies were translated from Luganda to English and analysed qualitatively according to themes.

Under cycle one we dealt with establishing the teaching strategies used by Luganda teachers and how they used them. From this cycle, we learnt that Luganda teachers used traditional strategies to teach Luganda, and this had several shortcomings.

Our learning in cycle one led to our implementation of communicative strategies in the second cycle. We planned and implemented communicative strategies that could be used by Luganda teachers and deliberated on how they could use them. These strategies included the group work strategy, drama, print media, role-play, and audio and audio-visual strategies. On reflection after cycle two's implementation, we realised that the participants failed to implement the activities of the audio and audio-visual strategy effectively due to several factors for example using inappropriate devices. This learning led to the suggestion of revising this strategy under cycle three.

Briefly, that is the background of the larger action research study and its cycles. In this article, we focus on the print media strategy with the major aim of establishing the kind of print media activities that Luganda teachers could use and how they could use them during active teaching and learning.

Our learning from the first cycle indicated that Luganda teachers used traditional strategies to teach Luganda, and this had several shortcomings (Mustapha & Yahaya, 2013). This learning led to our implementation of communicative strategies in the second cycle, the print media strategy inclusive.

This article specifically addresses the second cycle of the study focusing on the implementation of print media in the teaching of Luganda. We used participant observation and focus group discussion as strategies for data generation for this article. We observed participants' Luganda lessons and recorded their experiences (Given, 2008; McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). We later held several sessions of focus group discussions with the participants to reflect on what transpired in the respective lessons. Finally, we applied the multi-layered inductive participatory approach to analyse data (Patton, 2002). Below is a detailed discussion of this article's findings.

## 5. FINDINGS

Findings are discussed in line with the two themes that emerged from the thematically analysed data. The first theme deals with the sample print media activities that the participants managed to develop. The second theme covers the active implementation of print media activities.

### 5.1. Theme 1: Sample print media activities designed by the participants

Participants commenced the discussion by brainstorming the kind of print media they could obtain from their respective schools and how they could design activities using them. They suggested several print media materials, which included photographs, pictures, books, magazines, newspapers, short stories, brochures, advertisements, charts and signposts. Participants' identification of such a range of material was useful to us in establishing the starting point of our journey. When we asked the participants why they believed that such material was useful for language teaching, their responses were not different from the observations of Maloch (2002) and Hsu (2015). They claimed that most of the material such as newspapers were accessible within their schools. The usability and durability of the print media material were amongst the other reasons they provided.

With this background, the participants were engaged in the design of the sample print media activities that could guide them in the development of their own activities at a later stage. It is important to note that participants decided to use the Luganda verb as an area of focus in designing the sample activities. In this regard, participants had the following to say:

**P2:** .....*I propose that we look at how we can teach verbs.*

**P5:** *To add onto my colleague [P2]'s view, we can look at verbs via newspapers.*

**P3:** ..... *because newspapers are even easy to access.*

**P6:** ..... *because even schools buy them on a daily basis.*

**P4:** ..... *assuming I have obtained a newspaper, now how do I extract verbs from them?*

**P2:** ..... *I think that you can choose a student and ask him/her to read an extract from that newspaper.*

P2's submission made us acknowledge that we needed to exercise care in the design of these activities and not leave students on their own, since this would not contribute to effective learning (Tosuncuoglu, 2013). Likewise, Griffiths and Chunhong (2008) observed that as learners interact with the print material, they could encounter some challenges and if the

challenges are not rectified by the teacher, this could result in poor language learning. They also discussed the importance of the teacher's active reinforcement of learning, since it is an important factor for the subsequent occurrence of the desired behavior (Karavas, 2014).

Subsequently, they engaged in designing sample study activities for teaching Luganda verbs using print media material. Through their discussions, they observed that for the effective use of print media, it is necessary to invest significant time to think it through, prepare, and decide on the delivery mode that could enable learners to participate actively in the lessons. This is supported by Schwartz and Asli (2014) who observe that teachers who prepare properly for a lesson have a positive influence on learners' academic achievement. Therefore, observing the principle of effective preparation from the planning stage was important. Also, as noted by Hsu (2015), students' domination of the teaching-learning process while using print media activities should not inhibit teachers from forgetting about their contribution to the process.

Through these initial discussions, the participants demonstrated skills in designing practical study activities from print media material. As emphasised by Coskun (2011) and Zhou and Niu (2015), participants further realised that when learners interact with well-designed print media activities, they would be developing all their Luganda language skills including reading, listening, writing and speaking through these activities. Additionally, the participants discussed some anticipated challenges in the use of print media material and their possible solutions as follows:

- P1:** .....in most Luganda newspapers, the tense in which they write is past tense. Now if a student is writing the verbs he/she has heard from the text, in which tense does he/she write them?
- P2:** ..... I think he/she has to write it the way he/she has heard it.
- P2:** By the way, that can act as an exercise; in case you already taught about tenses, you tell them to use those same verbs but in a different tense that was not used in the text.
- P5:** ..... I think that as we saw with the teaching of nouns that is how it is even here. After guiding on what has been taught, the teacher asks their students to take note of what has been resolved.

By the end of these discussions, the participants indicated that they had developed the requisite skills to design both theoretical and practical activities based on the print media material. They were furthermore also able to identify a variety of print media both within and outside the school environment that they could incorporate into their lessons. Consequently, they agreed that it would be each individual participant's responsibility to choose the type of material they wished to use depending on what they intended teaching, whilst ensuring that learners participated actively in the lessons. In the next section therefore, we present the activities that were designed and implemented by the participants during their active teaching.

## **5.2.Theme 2: Active implementation of print media activities**

After realising that the participants had developed the requisite skills in the use of print media for the design of interactive lessons, the teacher participants proceeded to implement the strategy in the classroom. This was aimed at establishing the kind of print media activities that each participant could develop independently for their respective classes, and how they could use them during active teaching.

First and foremost, we observed that gradually, participants managed to generate print media activities that encouraged learners' participation in Luganda teaching and learning. They designed activities using several print material, mostly local newspapers, textbooks,



magazines, and Luganda novels. Amongst the newspapers was a Luganda language daily called Bukedde newspaper and 'The New Vision' - *an English language daily newspaper*. Some of the material was downloaded from the internet while others were photocopied. All the material related to their specific Luganda language teaching areas.

As observed earlier, using such material creates a close relationship between learners' real-life and their educational experiences. This is emphasised by Maloch (2002) who observes the potential of print media in the teaching of language because most media reflects the language used by a wider society. This was highlighted in the activities that were designed by the participants, as well. For example, P1, P2, P4 and P5 used material from the *Bukedde* newspaper, P6 used stories from the *New Vision* newspaper while P3 used material from the National Curriculum Development Centre set books for local languages. While P1 found short stories from *Bukedde* and used them to teach parts of speech and sentence construction in Luganda, P2 used cutouts from the same newspaper to teach Luganda nouns.

On the other hand, we noted that P4 downloaded photos and stories from *Bukedde* online and used them for teaching functional writing. P5 used cut-outs from *Bukedde* to teach the structure of the Luganda alphabet and orthography, while P6 used a story from the *New Vision newspaper* to teach translation. Lastly, P3 used the novel *Bwali Butamanya* to teach letter writing in Luganda.

When P1 introduced sentence construction during her lesson, she asked a volunteer to provide an example of a sentence. She selected another learner to write the sentence on the chalkboard. Others volunteered by providing each word type and its role in the sentence. P1 used this same sentence to pose more probing questions that led to a general discussion relating to Luganda tenses, direct and indirect speech, and active and passive voice. She subsequently distributed her short stories from the *Bukedde newspaper* among each of the groups so that each group received a different one. She instructed them to:

- a) Convert their respective stories from their current tenses to future tense.
- b) Convert their stories from active to passive voice.

The learners worked in their groups as she guided those that required assistance. The group that finished first presented their activity to the entire class. P1 selected each group member in turn, which afforded all the group members an opportunity to read to the class. During her lesson, we observed that the teacher was unphased by the restrictive, unstimulating local languages framework. This resulted in collaborative, interactive learner-centered learning. Actually this observation is confirmed by Mukasa (2013) who notes that when teachers use such print media they are free to select appropriate resources to use in class. However, we also observed that the use of print media to teach Luganda calls for a committed and creative Luganda teacher, who will be able to examine print material critically and identify relevant and student-engaging material that will lead to authentic learning. Otherwise, presenting such material without proper preparation cannot yield any meaningful results.

Like P1, other participants managed to apply attractive study activities from print media into their lessons. For example, P4 downloaded several cartoons and written stories that she used to teach functional writing. In one of the activities, she distributed copies of a write-up among the groups and invited one of the learners to read it aloud to the rest of the class. She then asked them what type of writing it was. After several trials, she informed them that it was a newspaper column, and the writer is called a columnist. She further asked them to identify the characteristics of such write-ups and they gave points such as *having a title, writer, writer's*

address, introduction, reasons for writing, and conclusion. She then presented other write-ups and pictures, and asked learners to identify them based on their physical characteristics.

We noticed that such print media activities had a significant impact on how learners perceived the environment around them (Hsu, 2015). For example, one group did a presentation on the traditional ceremony called “Okwanjulwa” (introductory ceremony). Based on the cartoon below, they wrote a letter from a man requesting to be introduced to the woman’s family.

**Figure 1: Cartoon used by P4’s learners representing traditional marriage**



In relation to our observation, P4 noted that using such cartoons enabled her to explore the learners’ prior knowledge and experience of the language used in daily life. This is because learners attend such functions in their communities and often in their homes (Heydari, 2015). However, the letters and language style, which precedes such functions, could be new to some learners. This kind of activity according to Scheckle (2009) is an authentic and higher order

activity. We noticed that it required learners to link the cartoons to what they knew. In other words, to make the cartoons ‘talk’ or ‘tell’ a story. So, the learners’ interactions during this activity gave us the impression that they enjoyed it, most probably because they were relating their real- life experiences to Luganda language learning. As the group read the letter to the class they wrote, we observed that although the activity was about writing a formal letter, the class also brainstormed cultural practices associated with marriage in Buganda. The informed learners enriched the discussion with their knowledge, as illustrated in the translated discourse below (L=Learner):

- L1: In the letter I have heard you calling the girl’s dad ‘father’, are you already accepted in that family?*
- L2: For us we thought that it is a way of showing respect.....*
- L3: Because he is the father of the girl.....*
- L1: No.....you are not supposed to call him father until you are accepted in the family.....*
- L2: So how should we call him?*
- L1: You can call him mzee, Sir, or an elder.....*
- L4: By the way are you aware that there are some items they do not take to the bride’s home? They may accept you to go and then you carry such things.....*
- L3: Like which things?*

The discussion continued until P4 intervened and guided the learners to concentrate on the requirements of a formal letter in relation to what the group had presented. The teacher’s guidance assisted the class in facilitating productive interaction within the classroom (Maloch, 2002). Maloch (2002) proceeds to note that when learners move from a teacher-led format to a student-led one, they face multiple demands, including interpersonal, interactional and response related issues. Thus, we realised how important it was for teachers to identify the challenges that learners could be confronted with when engaging with print media if they are left on their own to discuss whatever they wanted. Prior recognition of such challenges could help teachers in planning ways of overcoming them.

We must report that like P1 and P4, all the other participants (P2, P3, P5 and P6) demonstrated improved skills and scenarios in designing activities from the print media material. We observed that they designed practical activities that required learners to use their acquired Luganda language knowledge. Consequently, we observed that such activities could contribute to developing learners' Luganda language skills in reading, writing, listening and speaking (Heydari, 2015).

## **6. DISCUSSION**

The main aim of this article was to report on the implementation of print media in the teaching of Luganda for communicative language teaching and learning. The findings emerging from this participatory action research study indicated that the print media strategy was perceived by the teacher participants to be more effective than traditional approaches. Participants indicated that when they used traditional approaches and relied on the prescribed textbooks, learners were demotivated and disengaged. On the other hand, when participants used print media material and activities, they revealed, during our reflective sessions, that their learners were more involved in what was being taught. Consequently, such involvement led to meaningful learning of the Luganda language. From the lessons we observed, the level of participation in the learning process was characterised by group presentations which seemed to be more effective than whole class teaching.

On several occasions, learners engaged in small group discussions on the print media activities before presenting them to the whole class. We observed teachers facilitating interactions across numerous small groups. This practice is in line with the NCDC (2006) philosophy which places the learner at the centre of the learning process. Hence, when teachers place learners at the centre of the learning experience, their role is that of a facilitator thereby enabling learners to structure their own discovery and search for knowledge (Altinyelken, Moorcroft, & van der Draai, 2014).

However, we noticed that some participants encountered challenges in designing appropriate Luganda study activities from the print material they had selected. This could be ascribed to their previous mode of presenting learning content to their classes without being mindful of the appropriate activities. Therefore, it was observed that teachers required considerable skills development for the implementation of the print media strategy.

From our experience of using print media in the teaching of Luganda, we observed that there were several genres of print media that Luganda teachers could use during Luganda teaching and learning. These included pictures, flipcharts, magazines, storybooks, newspapers, Luganda novels, and textbooks (Bala, 2017). Using such a range of authentic learning material contributed to the promotion of a stimulating Luganda learning environment. Relatedly, learners' interaction with such material assisted them in enhancing the four basic language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing (Mukasa & Masembe, 2018, Rao, 2019). Consequently, the learners' acquisition of basic Luganda language skills due to the use of print media will lead to the development of fluency and accuracy in the Luganda language (Heydari, 2015; Scheckle, 2009).

Secondly, the participants used print media material to design study activities. Some of the activities involved pair work, small group, whole class, or individual learner activities. We observed that the participants designed activities according to the kind of Luganda content they intended covering during active teaching. Likewise, we noted that using print media material assisted Luganda language teachers in identifying the learners' present mode of representation which, through the use of good discourse (Nath, 2010), encouraged the learners to think critically. Within the context of this study, it emerged that eventually the participant teachers enabled the learners to read with the text, which is more than just decoding, but requires that

the readers understand the rhetorical context of texts by analysing them with a focus on the finer details and nuances (Janks, 2019). Hence this study also demonstrated how cartoons could be used to stimulate critical literacy as highlighted by the learners' discourse emerging from their writing based on the cartoon. Sibanda (2021) emphasises the significance of empowering learners with skills in critical literacy so that they can engage with texts on deeper levels rather than superficially, thereby enabling them to be active thinkers rather than passive consumers of information (Freire, 1972). The promotion of critical literacy in the teaching of languages furthermore enables learners to become critically reflective readers rather than depending on their teachers to analyse the content of the texts for them (Shor et.al, 2017).

More than that, this study is significant in the way that it describes and suggests how Luganda teachers could use the print media strategy in their teaching, rather than using conventional strategies which are characterised by the CCR (copy, cram and reproduce) approach (Sălăvăstru, 2014). This alternative strategy enabled the Luganda teachers to plan for the study's activities thereby creating desired experiences for the learners in the learning process (Kabugo et al., 2015). Furthermore, such activities led to the development of a learning process, which promoted interactive, authentic learning.

Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle, which served as the theoretical framework for the purposes of this study, enabled the participants to critically reflect on the strategies they were implementing to teach Luganda and how and why these strategies did not have the desired outcomes, especially in terms of enabling learners to think critically and creatively for the development of critical language awareness. There was a realisation among the participants that the '*Copy, cram, reproduce*' strategy that they were implementing in their classes to teach Luganda stifled learners' creativity and critical language skills as they were straight jacketed into thinking in specified ways and according to specific patterns. Hence the participants started to realise that the use of traditional approaches such as the grammar translation approach to teaching the language deprived learners of tapping into their own creativity to explore the varied nuances of the language.

Additionally, there are several local languages taught in secondary schools in Uganda. Teachers of these languages could use the findings emerging from this study to conduct similar studies in their respective languages. This would assist in a comparison of findings relating to the use of the print media strategy to facilitate local languages teaching in Uganda. Such studies would contribute to the development of relevant proposals that would be beneficial to all local languages in the education sector of Uganda. Consequently, this could lead to the preservation of several endangered local languages.

The findings arising from the study indicate that there is a dire need for Luganda secondary school teachers to receive in-service pedagogical training to develop their skills and knowledge for innovative teaching practice in the teaching of Luganda. Such training implies that teachers need to be empowered with skills to source relevant print material for their Luganda lessons as well as to recognise and plan the teaching-learning activities based on relevant print material and related activities. Furthermore, through workshops and seminars, all teacher trainers should be sensitised to the supportive roles that they could play in the implementation of novel approaches to the teaching of Luganda.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

This action research study highlights the significance of incorporating authentic material such as newspapers, magazines, cartoons and other print material into the teaching of languages,



rather than depending exclusively on the use of a textbook and on the grammar translation approach. Its significance lies therein that it has the potential to stimulate learners to think critically, be more interested in learning the language and to examine how the academic language they are exposed to in class can be applied to their analysis of authentic print resources such as newspapers, cartoons and brochures etc.

Furthermore the use of participatory action research enabled Luganda language teachers to share insights on specific language related issues and to work collaboratively in exploring the strategies that they could implement in their classes to address areas of concern. This process also contributed significantly to enhancing reflective practice amongst the participant teachers, which is important for their personal and professional development if they hope to improve their practice. Within the context of this study the teacher participants demonstrated how they worked collaboratively by using a range of print media in their classes so that authentic teaching and learning could be realised.

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