

IMPLEMENTATION OF LEARNER CENTERED APPROACHES  
IN ENGLISH LESSONS: THE CASE OF KASUNGU  
TEACHERS' TRAINING COLLEGE

MASTER OF EDUCATION THESIS

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**IMPLEMENTATION OF LEARNER CENTERED  
APPROACHES IN ENGLISH LESSONS: THE CASE OF  
KASUNGU TEACHERS' TRAINING COLLEGE**

**A Thesis by**

**SELLINA KANYERERE-MKWETEZA**

**Submitted to the Faculty of Education**

**University of Malawi**

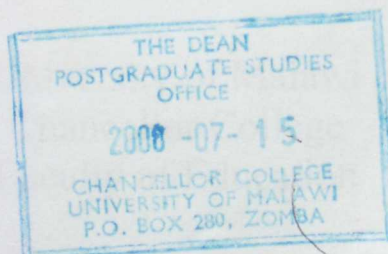
**In partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree Of**

**MASTER OF EDUCATION**



**June 2008**

**Policy, Planning and Leadership  
Chancellor College**





## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the text of this thesis entitled: IMPLEMENTATION OF LEARNER CENTERED APPROACHES IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE: THE CASE OF KASUNGU TEACHERS' TRAINING COLLEGE is substantially my own work

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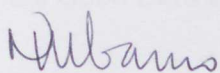


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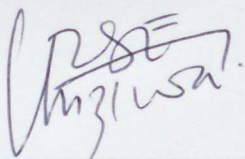


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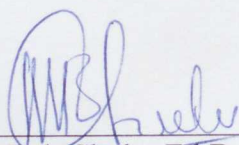
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## DEDICATION

To my beloved and faithful husband Katenge Kiefer Mkweteza and my cheerful daughter Lyness- Hendrie Ellen Mkweteza for untimely support and love during the hard times I went through. It was long two years that you waited for while I read for this Master degree. This is dedicated to both of you.

\*\*\*

Also to my beloved parents Samuel Lyton Kanyerere and Ellen Rachael Kanyerere who laboured to get me a good education under worrying socio -economic circumstances. May the Good Lord bless both as their dream is being realized.



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## ABSTRACT

This is a case study on how teaching and learning innovations were being implemented at Kasungu Teachers' Training College in English lessons.

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate how tutors implemented Learner Centred Approaches when teaching English after undergoing an in-service training programme. The study explored the tutors' perceptions about the approaches, identified the challenges that tutors encountered as they implemented the innovation in the classroom and found out the mechanisms the tutors had identified in order to solve problems they encountered.

A qualitative research design was employed and data was collected using informal and semi-structured interviews and lesson observation. The key respondents of the study were eight tutors, one college principal and one professional development officer from InWEnt Sandwich Programme.

Major findings of the study indicated that the tutors have adopted the Learner Centred Approaches (LCAs) in their classrooms. The study also found that the perceptions of the tutors towards the new approaches were positive. In addition, the study revealed that there were a lot of challenges that inhibited the effective implementation of the Learner Centred Approaches and these included among others, inadequate resources, time, lack of institutional support and large classes.

The study also found that some tutors had devised strategies of coping with the challenges by modifying the approaches to suit their teaching environment and improvising resources from the local environment.

This study recommends that the Ministry of Education should invest in the implementation of new teaching and learning innovations by providing the necessary support such as providing adequate resources and continuous professional development. In addition, the study recommends that the institutions should introduce resource centres to store teaching and learning resources which could readily be used in the classroom.



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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

|       |                                               |
|-------|-----------------------------------------------|
| CPD   | Continuous Professional Development           |
| LCA   | Learner Centred Approaches                    |
| LCE   | Leaner Centred Education                      |
| MOE   | Ministry of Education                         |
| MoEST | Ministry of Education Science and Technology  |
| MoEVT | Ministry of Education and Vocational Training |
| OBE   | Outcomes Based Education                      |
| PCAR  | Primary Curriculum Reform                     |
| PIF   | Policy Investment Frame                       |
| T.T.C | Teachers' Training College                    |



## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background Information

This study investigated the implementation of Learner Centred Approaches (LCA) in the Primary Teachers' Training Colleges (TTCs) focusing on the teaching of English. This is a new teaching and learning innovation that is being implemented by tutors in the Teachers' Training Colleges. English as a subject is critical in that it has been adopted as an 'official' language in Malawi. Therefore, the quality of teaching of this subject has a bearing on the socio-economic development of the country. However, a study by (Chimombo & Milner, 2001) has shown that most learners' performance in English is poor.

According to Mmela (2004) it is the complete reliance on traditional methods of teaching which contributed to the learner's inability to acquire English as a second language for literacy development in Malawi. It is this background that necessitated this study in order to gain an understanding of how tutors were implementing LCAs in a subject that has a special place in the Malawian society.

This study on the implementation of Learner Centred Approaches in English lessons was conducted at a time when the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT) was reforming the primary education from an Objectives Based Education to an Outcomes Based Education (OBE) curriculum (MoEST, 2006). The arching goal of this curriculum reform process was to improve the quality of education in the country.

Outcomes Based Education is described as a process that involves restructuring of curriculum, assessment and reporting practices in education to reflect the achievement of higher order learning and mastery rather than accumulation of course credits (Tucker, 2004). Emphasis is placed on systems-level change, observable, measurable outcomes; and the belief that all learners can learn despite the individual differences that may occur.

The focus on ensuring that learners master the outcomes and that all learners succeed has given OBE special attention. Outcomes Based Education is aimed at activating the minds of young people so that they are able to take part in economic and



social life (Schlebusch & Thobedi, 2004). The teaching strategies that are used in order to achieve this type of education are Learner Centred Approaches which allow the learners to fully contribute towards the teaching and learning process.

In Objectives Based Education, learners are exposed to a segment of curriculum over a specified time (McNeir, 1993). The Objectives Based Education mostly depended upon the examination results of the learner in order to determine the learners' achievements. The table below summarises the differences between Objectives Based and Outcomes Based Education:

**Table 1 Objectives Based Education versus Outcomes Based Education**

| <b>Objectives Based Education</b>                                                                   | <b>Outcomes Based Education</b>                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Passive learners                                                                                    | Active learners                                                                                                      |
| Assessment process- exam and grade driven                                                           | Continuous Assessment                                                                                                |
| Rote learning                                                                                       | Critical thinking, reasoning, reflection and action                                                                  |
| Content based/ broken into subjects                                                                 | Integrated knowledge, learning is relevant/<br>connected to real life situations                                     |
| Textbooks focused and teacher centred                                                               | Learner centred and educator/facilitator use<br>group/team work                                                      |
| See syllabus as rigid and non negotiable                                                            | Learning programmes seen as guides that allow<br>educators to be innovative and creative in designing<br>activities. |
| Teachers/tutors responsible for learning<br><br>Learners are motivated by personality of<br>teacher | Learners take responsibility for their learning, and<br>are motivated by constant feedback/<br>affirmation of work   |
| Emphasizes what teacher hopes to achieve                                                            | Emphasizes on the outcomes                                                                                           |

Source: Spady (1994)



As most countries strive to improve their education systems by implementing the OBE, Malawi has not been left out. It is expected that OBE is going to improve quality of education (MoEST, 2004). The Policy Investment Framework (PIF) document stipulates that Malawi shall adopt an outcome-based, integrated curriculum which shall enable the learner to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, values and desirable attitudes acquired (Government of Malawi, 2001). According to the Ministry of Education, OBE is aimed at the achievement of expected levels of knowledge, skills and values through the setting of benchmarks or standards (Government of Malawi, 2006).

In order to implement the above stated policy, a new curriculum introduced in the primary schools in Malawi known as the Primary Curriculum and Assessment Reform (PCAR). The Curriculum reforms underway in primary education have not spared Teacher Training Colleges. It had been argued that in order for the new curriculum to effectively be implemented, teachers must abandon the traditional Teacher Centred Approaches and adopt Learner Centred Approaches (Kaambankadzanja & Lemani, 2005, MoEST, 2004). If change had to be realized, in the shift from teacher centred to learner centred teaching, the training of teachers should also follow the learner centred approaches.

For this to be realized, the tutors who had been entrusted to train the teachers required the skills and knowledge on how to use the Learner Centred Approaches. Therefore, there was need to provide professional development for the tutors in the Primary Teacher Training Colleges (PTTC) in methodology that are learner centred approaches

The government of Malawi with the technical support from Germany under a Sandwich programme for teacher trainers and facilitators in Primary Education in Malawi organized seminars for tutors in order to orient them in the use of the new learner centred approaches. This approach to teaching and learning derived its philosophical underpinning from the constructivist views of education. It was anticipated that an intensive training would support tutors implement the planned reform of teacher training curricula in both content and methodology (InWent, 2004). In this programme, 60 tutors from all the five public TTCs in the learning areas of Literacy and Languages, Numeracy and Mathematics, Science and Technology and Educational Foundations were oriented in the use of the



Learner Centred Approaches. This study focused on how tutors implemented LCAs in the learning area of Literacy and Languages in particular English language.

The first part of the training took place in Malawi at the Malawi Institute of Education where the tutors were introduced to the theories that guide the approaches. The second part of the training took place in Germany where tutors observed LCAs being practiced in best elementary schools and universities with enriched environment (adequate resources and very small classes)

After the trips to Germany, tutors came back to Malawi to implement learner centred approaches in the TTCs where they were expected to put the theoretical knowledge acquired into practice. The assumption made was that introducing the learner centred approaches would improve tutors' practice in various subjects including English.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The Ministry of Education in Malawi through the department of Teacher Education, adopted the use of learner centred approaches in Teacher Training Colleges. The challenge was how teacher trainers who had been used to teacher centred approaches would implement the new teaching and learning innovations which are learner centred in nature. The problem which the research is likely to address is assumption that teaching practices that work in enriched learning environment can automatically be feasible in deprived learning environment in Malawi.

The implementation process seemed to have been imposed on the tutors without giving them time to make proper decisions to adopt the approaches. The tutors were oriented to Learner Centred Approaches in an environment where necessary supporting resources were available, yet the same tutors were expected implement to the approaches in an environment where the scarcity of resources might be both frustrating and inhibiting. The success of a new teaching and learning innovation to a larger extent depends on the implementers' readiness and creativity to modify it so that it fits practical realities of class situation. It was this situation that the study was set out to investigate by finding out how tutors were handling this mismatch between pedagogical expectations and local classroom realities.



### **1.3 Purpose of the study**

The main purpose of this study was to investigate how tutors implemented Learner Centred Approaches in English lessons at Kasungu Teachers' Training College.

### **1.4 Research Objectives**

This study was guided by the objectives as outlined below:

1. Describe how tutors implement Learner Centred Approaches when teaching English.
2. Explore the tutors' perceptions of Learner Centred Approaches.
3. Identify the challenges that tutors encounter when implementing Learner Centred Approaches.
4. Find out how tutors cope with the challenges of using Learner Centred Approaches in their classrooms.

### **1.5 The Significance of Study**

It was anticipated that this study would shed light on how tutors interact with new teaching innovations by highlighting their fears, concerns and coping mechanisms. Such findings might aid staff development planners to provide supportive environment for tutors to adopt new innovations. The study would help in identifying the factors that affect implementation of knowledge and skills gained from in-service training.

In addition, the study would contribute to the already existing literature on staff development of college tutors especially on the impact of in-service training programmes in Malawi. The study would also provide information for increased understanding and dialogue about the issue (Creswell, 1998) as a result the study would stimulate the need for further studies to look at teacher education in a holistic manner.

## 1.6 Operational Definitions of Terms

The meanings of many terms commonly used can be interpreted in different ways. To ensure clarity for the reader, the following definitions are provided below:

**Change** as used in this study refers to the process of self reflection on aspects of one's teaching practice and relating there reflections to a change in current state.

**Implementation** is referred to the translation of ideas into action and involves devising and instituting an approach to help ensure that the innovations are put into practice efficiently and effectively ( Ramsenger, 2004)

**Initial Primary Teacher Education** refers to the new mode of training at TTC which was introduced after the Malawi Integrated In-service Teacher Education Programme in 2005.

**Learner Centred Approaches** are the strategies that require the learner to be in the centre of the teaching and learning process, contributing and participating fully while the teacher becomes the facilitator in the process.

**Learner Centred Education** is the perspective that focuses on individual learners, their experiences, background, talents, interests, capacities and needs with a focus on learning.

**Outcomes Based Education** is the educational approach based on learners' achievement in which they build knowledge based on what already exists; their outcomes are also assessed continuously during the teaching and learning process.

**Student teachers** are the learners at the Teachers' training College

**Tutor** in this study refers to the teacher trainer who has been entrusted to train the students at teacher training college.



## **CHAPTER 2**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents a review of literature on the adoption of new teaching innovations and its related challenges. It presents scholarly work and research findings on Learner Centred Approaches, Professional Development, teacher education programmes dealing with the introduction of new teaching methodologies into educational systems. The last section of this chapter discusses Rogers' model of the Diffusion and Adoption of Innovations which provided a theoretical framework for the study.

#### **2.2 Learner Centred Approaches**

The education of teachers for their profession made extraordinary strides since the colonial period when the only real criterion was that a teacher had to know more than the students (Cooper, 2003). This mostly left the students to be passive and wait from the teacher without making any decisions in the learning process. The present studies extend the commonly held view of learner centredness among class lecturers beyond a mere provision for more paired or group activities in the language classroom by addressing the question of how the new role of the learner can be implemented through teacher-learner interaction (Anton, 1999). It is indicated that the goal of promoting change and learning depends on the personal relationship between the learner and the facilitator of the learning (Cooper, 2003).

Anton, (1999) indicates that teaching and learning resources, attitudes of the learners as well as the tutors would also add to the promotion of learning in classrooms. It becomes difficult therefore, to promote creativity among the students in a situation where learning resources are not available and negative attitudes among teachers and learners prevail. In recent years, educators, policy makers and implementers of educational innovations have ventured into learning which demands active participation.



When using Learner Centred Approaches teachers require a holistic view of the learner, valuing the learner's life experiences as the starting point for their learning process (NIED, 2003). The teachers should be able to select content and methods on the basis of a shared analysis of the learner's needs, use of locally available resources as an alternative or supplement to ready-made study materials that are suggested in the teaching manuals in order to develop learners' creativity.

Learner Centred Approaches are viewed from the constructivism theory that states that the process of learning involves construction of links between what is known and the new information presented (Foley, 2004). It is indicated that man is not merely a social creature but also an individual with right of his own, who must discover his own educational path (Ramsenger, 2004). Learner-centred approaches thus demand a high degree of learners' participation, contribution and production (NIED, 2003). This approach is based on a democratic pedagogy, a methodology which promotes learning through understanding and practice directed towards empowerment to shape the conditions of one's own life.

When Learner Centred Approaches are used, learning is seen as an interactive, shared and productive process. In this process opportunities are created to enable the learners explore different ways of knowing and developing critical thinking, unlike where the learners are simply recipients of information. Serbessa (2006) indicated that the pedagogical shift from traditional teacher centred approach requires a fundamental change in the role of the educator from that of didactic teacher to that of a facilitator of learning.

The result of being accustomed to "our way" of doing things has become a problem when the teacher becomes the only one who is knowledgeable in the teaching and learning process. It should be noted that Malawi's background of the dictatorship rule had much influence in the way learning was done. The idea that one person rules and is more knowledgeable than others placed the teachers in the same position. Learners were seen as empty tins and the teacher the 'boss' with all the information. He or she dictated the classroom activities.

As the country moved from total dictatorship to democratic, the school also shifted. The view of the teacher changed from "know it all" to facilitator of learning. More freedom among the learners and flexibility on the part of the teachers was seen. Both the



teacher and the learner are source of information. This gives the opportunity for the learners to make contributions and share their knowledge among themselves.

### **2.2.1 Learner Centred Approaches in Europe**

Research about learner centred approaches in Eastern Europe around 1990, for example showed that there were efforts to change the teacher centred learning environment in Germany, Poland and Czech Republic schools (Stokes, 2007). In a study done in 1992 of which the focus was on human side of reforms, teaching methods used in classroom setting, the habits and actions of teacher and students in pursuit of learning aimed at finding out if new methodologies were actually used by the teachers and if they were, what were some of the challenges and successes. The main challenge that was identified in the study was the fact that most teachers had experienced the communism; they did not want to have their powers removed from them in the classroom as a result learners were denied the freedom to contribute during the process of teaching and learning.

The study by Stokes (2007), is somehow related to my study because both studies were looking at the implementation of the Learner Centred Approaches and the challenges that teacher encountered. The difference however is that my study takes a step further on looking at the mechanisms that the implementer uses in order to cope with the challenges identified. In addition, my study focused on teacher trainers unlike Stokes's which focuses on primary school teachers.

A collaborative project in Czech Republic carried out a research which emphasized the call for reform towards autonomous schools and child centred methodologies toward the end of 1990s where it was discovered that a window of opportunity to introduce the change narrowed (Stokes, 2007). The Czech Republic was focused on changing methodology from transmission based information to inquiry-based active learning. It was also observed that these fairly new strategies to the Czech schools were rarely practiced. It was thus concluded that the introduction of innovative methods in most schools in Czech was left to the initiative of creative teachers. The challenge that most teachers faced was lack of motivation or positive reinforcement by both the parents of the learners and the learners themselves also the schools (Stokes, 2007). The learners did not have interest in the methods.



In Poland, around the 1990s, the interaction between teachers and students characterized by a sequence where teachers pose questions, direct or orders, the students responded and the teacher evaluated, approved or disapproved. The reform in Poland that aimed at preparing students for live society and not just rote memorization was hope to lead to innovations that would change the education process and help overcome traditional teaching methods (Stokes, 2007). It was thus concluded that teachers in Poland desired a more learner centred pedagogy and would like to practice it. The main challenges that hindered the widespread use of such methodologies were lack of training and lack of ways of coping.

A study which was conducted in Germany between 1992 and 1994 which aimed at examining teachers' perception on many issues such as new education polices and new student-oriented methods in which a survey and classroom observation revealed that the same teacher centred methods used before the changes in the reform were still in place (Mintop, 1996). Some teachers reported that they had tried new methods, but found that they didn't work due to attitudes of both the teachers and the students (Stokes, 2007). The study however did not indicate the challenges that the teachers faced when trying out the new methods.

### **2.2.2 Learner Centred Approaches in America**

In addition to researches in Europe, a study that was conducted from two universities in the USA in a study conducted to test the Learner Centred Model at college level by interviewing students and their instructors revealed that teachers' learner centred beliefs were positively related to students' perception of classroom practices and the students perception of classroom practices had strong impact on their motivation and achievement than did teachers' perceptions.

The findings confirmed that if students perceived that their instructor was learner centred, they tend to be positively motivated to learn and consequently to achieve more in class. Students' perceptions of their instructors' practices were collated with students' motivation and achievement (McCombs et al. 2002).



Despite similar aspects in the study conducted in the USA, my study is going to be conducted at teacher training college in Malawi of whose classroom environment cannot be compared to one in USA.

### **2.2.3 Learner Centred Approaches in Africa**

A descriptive comparative survey that was also conducted in Ethiopia aimed at finding out the extent to which the learner centred approach is being employed in the Ethiopian primary schools and what challenges teachers encounter while using active learning. The results of this study showed that there was ample evidence that teacher-dominated pedagogy is the norm in the vast majority of Ethiopian primary schools. It was stated that little application of active learning methods was made in the schools as Serbessa (2006) notes that although the innovative teaching and learning is emphasized in the policy, currently traditional lecture methods, in which teachers talk and students listen, dominate most classroom.

The study also showed that not only do teachers' attitudes affect the effective implementation of learner centred teaching approach, but also attitudes and expectations of students affect how learning is viewed and how teaching is organized (Serbessa, 2006). The common obstacles identified in the Ethiopian study were: the Ethiopian tradition of teaching and child bringing, lack of institutional and learning resources, teachers' lack of expertise, inappropriate curricular material for active learning and learners' lack of prior experiences to actively participate in the teaching and learning process. This study is related to my study; however the study done in Ethiopia did not involve students at a teacher's training college level, but rather at primary level.

Another study was carried in Namibia in 2003 to find out if the concept of learner centred education was well understood by those practicing it. Since learner centred education was introduced as a policy in Namibia in 1991 (NIED, 2003), there have been different understandings of what is meant by learner centred education and how it is put into practice. From research, it has shown that the curricula and syllabus, textbooks and materials, assessment and examinations developed during the 1990s are not consistently based on learner centred principles (NIED 2003). The delivery of learner centred education thus is affected by the inconsistency among many more constraints. The way



one teacher understand learner centred approach is different from another. The learners' cultural background limits the participation of the young ones in front of the elderly making the learners sit back and listen attentively from the teacher (NIED, 2003).

Learner Centred Approaches in Namibia are used in a situation where the classroom setting, the teachers' and students' perceptions and views are still those of 'the teacher as the producer of knowledge and students as recipient' (NIED, 2003). The classroom setting is in a way that the teacher stands tall and the students are always seated unless called to answer a question. For the teachers to have a clear understanding of what is involved in learner centred education, they require adequate and continuous in-service training. The study in Namibia however did not look at pre-service teacher training as to how those who train the primary school teachers perceive learner centred approaches.

In a study that was conducted in South Africa which aimed at examining the curriculum of the HDE Programme in which interviews with student teachers, analysis of curriculum materials and completed questionnaires by the faculty of education revealed a lot of challenges faced by lecturers in the shift of methodologies (Robinson et al. 2002). The first challenge that was observed from the interviews was that styles and methods employed by lecturers are largely determined by the class size. Due to large classes in education theory courses for instance, there was a tendency towards using less interactive, one way lecture methods. In addition, in subject methods courses on the other hand lecturers had smaller classes and were able to employ learner centred approaches; however the challenge observed was limited time (Robinson et al. 2002).

#### **2.2.4 Learner Centred Approaches in Malawi**

In 2005, the Centre for Education Research and Training (CERT) conducted a study which served as a baseline to document teaching and learning processes which occur in Teacher Training Colleges and primary schools in Malawi. This study was conducted prior to the introduction of the learner centred education which was aimed at improving the quality of teaching by using learner centred approaches (Kunje, et al. 2005). The report presented the teaching approaches as practised by tutors and teachers in selected number of TTCs and primary schools in Malawi.



The report by CERT showed that in the classrooms, tutors established, initiated and controlled the order of activities and the sequence of the learning process where at the end they asked students questions (Kunje, et al. 2005). It was reported that tutors' skills were more suggestive of traditional transmission teaching than the learner centred, active participatory methods advocated by the revised primary curriculum. Many of the tutors interviewed, looked at student teachers as empty vessels to be filled (Kunje, et al. 2003) and the students waited for the tutors to give them the information.

In a study done on teacher education, it was found that teacher training colleges in Malawi relied on the traditional teacher centred or direct teaching methods (Stuart & Kunje, 2000). The study also indicated that lecturing in the TTCs was undertaken in order to transmit information where very few opportunities for students to engage in debate and reflection was provided. Much of the teaching appeared to be examination driven (Kunje, et al. 2003), since the students are expected to write final examinations which is set by the Malawi National Examinations' Board (MANEB). This makes the student teachers follow instructions from their tutors as a result these students play a passive and submissive role and wait for examinations to regurgitate what they have been taught in class.

The report, however failed to give a true picture of lessons conducted in TTCs because the tutors did not actually teach the student teachers, instead they taught primary school children. In this case the results of the findings did not reflect on what methods of teaching are used in teacher training colleges, so my study will observe tutors teaching in their natural setting in classes in the TTC and not in the primary schools in order to get a true picture of what happens.

Another study done by Mmela in 2004 showed that in English language teaching particularly, primary teacher education colleges based their teaching and learning practices in the traditional teacher centred approaches that are characterised by grammatical analysis, reading without comprehension, and pattern drills. As a result student teachers score well on grammar tests but failed to communicate in English (Mmela, 2004). Further studies indicate that teachers pay lip service to learner centred approaches, but in reality use transmission style (Kunje et al. 2003). This clearly shows how teachers and tutors fail to put theory into practice.



This position is also supported by the Ministry of Education and UNICEF in a study conducted in 1998 that teachers use traditional approaches to teach English despite the fact that the curriculum is expected to be child centred (Mmela, 2004). From many researches conducted on LCAs, it seems that despite training about learner centred approaches on the part of practitioners such as teachers or tutors; there is still a gap between theory and practice. What they are taught during the orientation period is not always done during the implementation period. It also has been noted from the studies conducted in Africa, that the ideas about learner centredness is mostly bought from the developed countries. Thus the implementation of such ideas is carried out in environments that are different from where the ideas come from.

It is important to note these ideas about learner centred approaches cannot be regarded as new. There have been changes in terminology and addition of the approaches. Some studies called these “child centred,” “Interactive learning and others referred them to “participatory methods.” However, my study views Learner Centred Approaches as newly introduced in the TTCs.

### **2.3 Primary Teacher Education in Malawi**

Teacher education is the process intended to prepare those individuals who want to practice in the profession (NSTED, 2003). It involves acquisition of knowledge and ability to apply it as well as the development of critical behaviour and skills. It is also noted that teacher education typically involves instruction and practice aimed at reaching a particular level of competence of operative efficiency (Tight, 1996). It is indicated that the overall goal of teacher education in Malawi is to educate and continually develop professionalism of teachers so that they are able to effectively and efficiently deliver quality and relevant education (Government of Malawi, 2001). Primary Teacher Education in Malawi aims at producing teachers who are flexible and capable of adapting to the changing needs and environment of the society (NSTED, 2003). This can be realized by competent teacher trainers who are aware of the theoretical and practical aspects of the teaching process.



However according to the amount of time that is put into the training of these teachers, it could not be feasible to produce flexible and capable teachers who would easily adapt to changes in the primary education as Camp (1988) states that training is a process which should take longer for a person to learn, understand and then apply the knowledge in practice.

The primary teacher education in Malawi is carried out in five public teacher training colleges namely: Kasungu, Lilongwe, Blantyre, Karonga and St. Joseph. Of these, four are co-educational and one recruits females only. The total capacity of these colleges is limited by the number of boarding facilities to approximately 2500 student teachers (Government of Malawi, 2000). In addition to the public colleges, there are three private training colleges namely: Mariam Teacher Training College, Development for People to People (DAPP) and Emmanuel Teacher Training Colleges.

While the Ministry of Education requires that competent tutors with degrees be deployed to the train these primary schools teachers, the current practice in the recruitment of these tutors is not in line with the requirement. According to Kunje & Chimombo (1999) most of the tutors who teach in TTCs were trained to teach in primary and secondary schools. Most tutors were merely handpicked from either primary or secondary school to teach in the TTCs. This is evident from the qualification that most of these have. Below is a table showing the qualifications of tutors in the TTCs.

**Table 2 Tutors’ Qualification in the Public Teachers’ Training Colleges**

| TTC         | Male tutors |         |      | Female Tutors |         |      | Total |
|-------------|-------------|---------|------|---------------|---------|------|-------|
|             | Degree      | Diploma | MSCE | Degree        | Diploma | MSCE |       |
| Blantyre    | 11          | 6       |      | 5             | 3       |      | 25    |
| Karonga     | 7           | 11      | 2    | 1             | 1       |      | 22    |
| Kasungu     | 14          | 7       | 3    | 2             | 6       | -    | 32    |
| Lilongwe    | 9           | 5       | 3    | 7             | 8       | -    | 32    |
| St Joseph’s | 4           | 9       | 1    | 6             | 2       | -    | 22    |
| Totals      | 45          | 38      | 9    | 21            | 20      |      | 133   |



For a very long time until recently, Malawi did not have a programme that produced specialized persons to train primary schools teachers. The Ministry of Education identified a primary or a secondary school teacher to become a tutor at the TTC. These teachers joined the Teachers' Training College without thorough understanding of the basic concepts and pedagogical content of the primary education. They lacked relevant experience since they had never taught at elementary school level (Ngalande, 1999), yet they were asked to train the teachers.

Primary teacher education in Malawi has undergone several changes from the missionary era and is still undergoing changes in an attempt to produce teachers that will improve teaching and learning. The main issue in bringing about all these changes was the need for more primary teachers in the shortest period of time.

The two year residential programme was one the first programmes in teacher training. In this programme, student teachers with a Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) and a Junior Certificate Examination (JCE) qualification were trained to obtain either T3 or T2 Primary Teacher Certificate (NSTED, 2003). This programme lasted long until the 1980's.

Later in 1987 the Special One-Year Teacher Programme was introduced. The special programme was running concurrently with the normal two-year programme in different colleges (Kunje & Chimombo, 1999). The enrolment was restricted to candidates who were already teaching under the term 'Temporary Teacher' (TT).

After the One Year Programme, the Malawi Special Teacher Education Programme (MASTEP) came into the scene in 1990 and ended in 1993. Its objective was to train 4000 primary school teachers in three years (Kunje & Chimombo, 1999). This programme offered a three-year course with integrated residential and distance modes of training, aiming at upgrading the large number of untrained teachers serving in the system. The introducing of this programme led to increased rates of student teachers from an average of 3% to 12.8% between 1985 and 1988 (Kunje & Chimombo, 1999).

While MASTEP and the two-year 'normal' programmes were running concurrently the ever-increasing primary school enrolment overwhelmed the teacher supply, (Kunje & Chimombo, 1999). As a result a Modified One Year Programme was in operation between 1993 and 1996. Similar to the One-Year Special Programme, the



curriculum for the modified programme was a two-year course compressed into a one-year course

The declaration of the Free Primary Education (FPE) in 1994 saw high enrolment rates of pupils by 70% from 1.9million in 1993/1994 school year to 3.2million in 1994/1995 school year (Kunje et al. 2003). This increase brought in the largest number of untrained teachers into the system in order to resolve the problem of teacher shortage in the primary schools; about 22,000 teachers were recruited (Kunje & Chimombo, 1999). The Malawi Integrated In-service Teacher Education Programme (MIITEP) was identified to train the teachers with the main goal of training a large number of untrained teachers in a shortest period possible according to Kunje & Chimombo (1999). This was achieved, but with shortfalls where it was found that tutors initiated and controlled all the activities in the classroom (Stuart & Kunje, 2000) perhaps this was done in order to finish the work in the syllabus for students to graduate and get deployed to the primary schools.

Another programme known as the Initial Primary Teacher Education Programme (IPTE) was introduced in 2005 after MIITEP phased out. This programme enrolled those students with a Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) with passes in Mathematics and two Science subjects in addition to English. In this training programme, student teachers spend one year at college going through instructional materials with the theoretical and practical aspects and the second year is spent in primary schools where they teach (DTED, 2005). This programme was started in line with the shift from Objectives Based Education to Outcomes Based Education, where the teaching and learning process is expected to use the Learner Centered Approaches.

In all the programmes that came after the 'normal' two year programme, the main goal was increasing the number of primary school teachers. The effect of training more teachers at once lead to squeezing the content for the 'normal' two years into one year. The output was more important than the quality of training. This put a lot pressure on the part of the tutors because they had to aim at finishing the two year syllabus in a single year as result the tutors rushed through the material in order to finish the syllabus and wait for the next group to commence. The implication of such a move is that teaching became a routine without much effort put for quality.



## 2.4 Teaching of English in Malawi

Malawi is linguistically heterogeneous with thirteen Malawian languages and their numerous dialects being spoken within the country (Kayambazinthu, 1998). The language situation in Malawi, like that in most other African countries, is characterized by the asymmetrical coexistence of English, the official language; Chichewa, the national language, and 12 other indigenous languages and their varieties. In Malawi, the dominant language that is used for communication is Chichewa. English is therefore a second language. English, although foreign, has been the *official language* of the country since Malawi was a colony of Britain (Kayambazinthu, 1998), and it is the language of government and business. It is used as a mode of instruction in the primary, secondary as well as universities.

Approximately 80% of Malawian children speak Chichewa in their homes prior to entering primary school (Mmela, 2004). English is viewed as more important than Chichewa because it is the language of government and official language of the country. Most people tend to admire the little children who speak English from private schools. There have been controversial arguments as to what grade in the primary school should be the starting point for teaching other subjects in English in the public schools. It was viewed that children learn better and faster if they are taught in their mother tongue during the early years and as they learn to understand the concepts in their first language which becomes a prerequisite to the second language (Mmela, 2004).

The importance of learning English in Malawi schools however cannot be over emphasized. English plays important roles in Malawi, for instance, it is the language of government, commerce and education and secondly it is a language for socioeconomic advancement which according to (Kayambazinthu, 1998), it is a means to acquiring information in the scientific and technological world, and it is a determining factor in the Malawian job market.

Further, English is widely spoken globally and in Malawi it is regarded as the benchmark for passing any examinations, such that that if a child at the end of primary or secondary circle fails English, he or she is seen as having failed all the examination. It is however argued that the process of acquiring a second language can be described as an



unfamiliar territory for the learner until he or she can use both his primary and secondary language effectively to communicate (Farris, 2001).

Most of our teachers in Malawi, however, seem to rush the learners into learning English, perhaps because it is a passing subject for many examinations. Perhaps if teachers were more flexible to allow these learners express themselves in a language that would be clearly understood and with the use more of communicative way of teaching the subject, the learners would build up their vocabulary in English. This could help them understand some concepts better.

Primary school teachers in Malawi are vested with the responsibility of helping children acquire English as a second language to their own native languages even if they are not specifically provided with any special skills for teaching English, rather they are trained in all the primary school subjects. Malawian children are motivated to learn English, but they do this with much difficulty and, as a result, their achievement is critically low. The traditional teacher-centred approaches have often been largely blamed for the low English achievement.

Khomani (1996) in his study of curriculum change found that the teaching approaches used when teaching English in the primary schools were didactic and of habit formation through repetition and the teachers failed to use communicative approaches. Stuart & Kunje (2000) also concurs with Khomani that teachers use direct teaching approaches when teaching English in Malawi primary classes. It was noted that most of Malawian learners only depend on the schools as source of English learning (Chimombo et al. 2001), as a result after school, the learners have no chance of practicing spoken or written English. For this reason it becomes difficult for them to apply the language when needed; all they do is memorize and regurgitate later in examinations.

Furthermore, Stuart (2002) noted teachers' use of inappropriate approaches to teaching English in Malawi, suggesting that the poor teaching approaches used by teachers was a consequence of how teachers were trained; they do what they were taught to do and what was modeled for them by their own teachers. In their study of teacher education, (Stuart & Kunje, 2000) found that teacher-training colleges in Malawi relied on the traditional teacher-centred or direct teaching methods. Direct teaching approaches are characterized by grammatical analysis, reading without comprehension, and patterned



drills resulting in students' scoring well on grammar tests but failing to communicate in the target language (Stuart & Kunje, 2000).

In a study, that aimed at answering the question "How does a teacher acting as a co researcher come to understand integrated literacy approaches?" Mmela (2004) found out that teachers can change the ways of teaching English because learner centred integrated approaches were feasible in Malawi only if conditions such as collaboration, reflective teaching, teacher willingness to learn, school management and teaching and learning materials were present. Her study revealed that what the teacher learned in theory about integrated literacy approaches did not translate into practice.

## **2.5 Professional Development for Teachers in Malawi**

Teacher development is an important aspect in the Policy Investment Frame (PIF) which tallies with the goal of teacher education and development, which is to continually develop professionalism of teachers so that they are able to effectively and efficiently deliver quality and relevant education (Government of Malawi 2001). In basic education, one of the goals of the primary teacher education is to produce teachers who are flexible and capable of adapting to the changing needs and environment of the Malawi society (Government of Malawi, 2001). The professional development thus creates new images of how teachers can shift from teacher centred to learner centred strategies that are intended to develop teachers' capacity (Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995). In addition, teacher education aims at developing an awareness and appreciation of innovation in the field of education and an ability to utilize them (MoE, 2001). This can be achieved only if the teachers are given adequate time for in-service training in the case of those already in the field of teaching.

## **2.6 Professional Development in Teacher Training Colleges in Malawi**

The goal that professional development entails is to enable teachers to gain knowledge and skills new to them and transfer that knowledge and skills to active classroom practice (Joyce & Showers, 1988). A study which was conducted in order to evaluate the Primary Teacher Training in Malawi and Lesotho as part of comparative study of first and advanced teacher training found a clear need for advanced training in the



development and implementation of learner oriented, active teaching methods suitable to the context of Malawi schools (Stuart et al. 2000). It is argued that changing traditional concepts of learning, the goals and methods of teaching requires a profound shift in ideas that can only be achieved through education and training (InWEnt, 2003). However, if the education and training was provided in abundance, but the people who are concerned with the change are not interested or have negative attitudes towards the idea, it is unlikely that the implementation of innovation would be effective.

## **2.7 Teacher Change**

Change is a complex term to define. It is “to make or become different” or ‘to replace with another usually of the same kind or category’ (Webster, 2004). Implementation, on the other hand is translating ideas into action (Ramsenger, 2005) and Fullan also agrees that implementation of educational change involves change in practice (Fullan, 2001). It involves devising and instituting an approach to help ensure that innovations are put into practice efficiently and effectively.

Wills (1998) investigated how teachers changed from being disseminators of information in teacher centred classrooms to a more facilitating teaching style in a learner centred classroom. In the study, students and teachers who had participated in a two year training programme were interviewed and observed. The study identified the forces that lead to change and examined what the change meant for the teachers. The results of the study indicated that the teachers showed positive attitudes and beliefs about teaching as they saw students become more engaged in learning (Wills, 1998). This means that the active participation of the learners motivated the teachers further and this made them change their previous thoughts about teaching.

When working with new programmes, the user has to be aware of the change. Thus, change often is (and should be) a result of adaptations and decisions made by users as they work with particular new policies or programmes (Fullan, 2001). As a result people become uncertain about the incoming change since all real change involves passing through the zones of uncertainty (Fullan, 2001). It has also been noted that the greatest pains to human nature is the pain of the new idea it makes one think that after all the favourite notions may be wrong, the firmest beliefs ill-founded (Rogers, 1995). Despite



uncertainties that may sprout from the organization or among individual practitioners, it takes a strong mind to try out new ideas and make a decision to use that idea effectively.

A study done in 2006 in American schools in the GE Foundations Maths Excellence (ME) Programme in which the project sought to increase teacher use of learner centred instructional strategies. The results of the study on teacher use of learner centred instructional strategies, indicated that after participating in ME Programme, teachers on average increased their use of strategies from 2.2 to 2.3 with 55% of the teachers becoming more student centred in their teaching. However, 10% did not change while 35% became less learner centred in their approaches (Campbell & Carson, 2006). The results indicated a positive shift from teacher centred to student centred strategies. The only conclusion that the study gave for the shift was that the training helped to increase teachers' use of the strategies. It did not however give reasons for the lack of change among the other teachers.

### **2.7.1 Implementing Change**

If tutors are to implement the learner centred approaches effectively, they need to practice the change. One author notes that change efforts are effective when the change to be made is clearly defined (Foley, 2004). This can be effective if the persons who are aware of the importance of the change and interested in change (Rogers, 1995). Joyce and Showers also agree that when theory that underlies specific behaviours is well understood, it enable flexibility and appropriateness in the use of the behaviour or approach in multiple situations (Joyce & Shower, 1988). This means that if the tutors who were oriented to learner centred approaches, understood the theories underlying the concept of learner centred education, change would be seen in the way they teach from teacher centred to learner centred.

Change can however be implemented effectively where support and assistance are available and when leaders and policy makers support the change instead of leaving it to the practitioners alone. The question that can be posed here is “are the tutors supported enough to put theory into practice?”

Most innovations fail to materialize because the user fails to implement the innovation effectively or does not try out the new changes that occur, instead sticks to the



old ways of doing things. In other ways, there is lack of change in practice when there is no support even if the issue to be changed is well known theoretically (Fullan & Park, 1981). However, even if the tutors could try out the approaches, but if they do not have relevant, adequate resources at hand and if they have negative attitudes towards the change, they would still fail to implement effectively. As it was noted in the research that was conducted by CERT in 2003, the tutors' lack of resources for teaching and learning led to the use of the traditional teacher centred approaches (Kunje, et al. 2003)

In addition, the implementation of such approaches should be noted that is happening in a region which has a different culture of reading, interacting and viewing things. In most cases the background of the human beings shapes the way they perceive change or any new idea. As noted in the Namibia, that Learner Centred Education was received with some resistance because the learners' cultural background did not advocate free interactions among children and adults (NIED, 2003).

## 2.8 Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory. Rogers's theory is reflected in his definition of innovation decision process which states:

*"The process through which an individual passes from first knowledge of an innovation, to forming an attitude toward the innovation, to a decisions to adopt or reject, to implementation of the new idea, and to confirmation of this decision". (Rogers, 1983, p.163)*

The model centres on the conditions which increases or decreases the likelihood that a new idea, product or practice will be adopted by members of a given culture (Rueger, 1999). The adoption and diffusion of innovation classifies adopters of innovations into various categories. Rogers categorized individuals into: "Innovators" as brave people, pulling the change. These are very important in communication; "Early majority" are thoughtful people, careful but accepting change more quickly than the average; "Late majority" are skeptic people who will use new ideas or products only when the majority is using it; "Early adopters" are respected people, opinion leaders who try out new ideas but in a careful way and finally the "Laggards", these are traditional people, caring for the old ways. They are critical towards new ideas and will only accept



change if the new idea has become mainstream or even tradition (Rogers, 1995). In other words, there is lack of change in practice even if the issue to be changed is well known theoretically (Fullan, 2001). However Rogers indicates that for people to adopt change they have to through the stages of adoption process:

From the definition, Rogers has identified five distinct stages that an individual or an organization goes through in an adoption of innovation process. These stages are: knowledge, Decision, Persuasion, Implementation, and Confirmation.

1. Knowledge: The first stage occurs when an individual or a decision making body in an organization is exposed to innovation ideas and gains some understanding of how the innovation functions. This knowledge usually is gathered during informal conversation, by reading about the innovation or through professional training. Through the process, the individual or the group develops an interest in the innovation and better understands how an innovation works (Rogers, 1983, Rogers, 1995).
2. Persuasion: The second stage of innovation is what Rogers describes as the individual or the group getting psychologically involved. During this stage the individual or group forms a favourable or unfavourable attitude toward the innovation based on the information available to him or to them (Rogers, 1995)

Because of lack of knowledge, teachers failed to create positive attitudes as a result would not make decisions to adopt the approaches (case of Czech and Poland)

3. Decision: The third stage of innovation is when an individual or group is engaged in activities that leads to a choice to adopt or reject the innovation
4. Implementation: The fourth stage is when an innovation is introduced or put into use. This is when all the mental process is transformed into an action process.

From the reviewed literature, it shows that in some cases the teachers were asked to move to implementation stage without adequate knowledge or skills (Namibia, Czech and Poland). Sometimes when people know what to do, how to do something, have set has developed positive attitudes and made a decision to get involved, implementation can be achieved. However, sometimes this stage



does not go smoothly because people who are involved in the implementation process still are learning and becoming accustomed to the innovation.

5. Confirmation: The fifth stage is when an individual or group seeks reinforcement for the innovation decision already made. The individual or group could reverse this decision if exposed to conflicting messages about the innovation. The stage continues as the individual or group continues to support or reject the innovation (Rogers, 1995).

Diffusion of Innovation theory predicts that media as well as interpersonal contacts provide information and influence opinion and judgment. In the teaching profession for instance, team teaching or inquiry from those who have the knowledge would definitely change the way one thinks and may lead to adoption of an idea. Rogers' model is useful in understanding teacher change because it is concerned with the process of introduction of innovation in an organization from its inception of the time of its acceptance and implementation (Safuli, 1992). It presents a way of explaining and predicting the adoption or rejection of new ideas and practices (Warford, 2007).

However, Rogers's model has the following limitations: Firstly, this model has been presented in a linear where one stage follows the other, but in real adoption things do not go in such a distinct order. In case of Namibia, it was noted that teachers were asked to implement the Learner Centred Approaches following the Policy that was formed, yet they had no knowledge about them and they did not make their decisions to adopt.

In addition, this model has been used more in scientific and technological innovations than educational innovations as indicated by Warford (2007) that although Diffusion of Innovation has precedents in educational research, to date has not been employed to evaluate the spread of the many new educational ideas and practices.



## 2.9 Summary

Primary teacher education is vital in the education system in Malawi even though little attention is paid. The changes in programmes that aim at training primary school teachers have all come in due to the high demand for primary schools teachers. Changes in the curriculum of teacher education has often been in terms of content, but recently the new curriculum looks at teaching and learning approaches in addition to content. New teaching and learning approaches which are learner centred in nature have been introduced in the primary teacher training colleges. The emphasis of teaching and learning in most countries including Malawi has now been put on the learners' achievement instead of being teacher centred. The studies that have been carried out have shown the shift from the teacher centred to learner centred approaches despite various challenges in the implementation of such approaches.



## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the methodology of the study. It presents the rationale for the research design used, gives a description of the sample, the data collection instruments that were used, how the collected data were analysed. The chapter concludes by highlighting ethical considerations that were taken into account.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

Qualitative research design was dominantly used in this study in order to capture relevant information and understand tutor's experiences with Learner Centred Approaches. The study collected experiences, perceptions, opinions and views of the respondents in regard to the study in question. Therefore a qualitative approach was deemed appropriate for this study as subjects were observed, interviewed in their natural setting. Narman (1995), Crossley & Vulliany (1997), Weis (1998), agree that qualitative researchers tend to study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them and qualitative methods offered vivid vignettes and accounts of real individuals.

The other reason for using qualitative approach in this study was to provide opportunity to explore how a teacher training institution was responding to the implementation of learner centred approaches in English lessons. In addition, qualitative research was employed in this study because the researcher wanted to interact with the implementers of the learner centred approaches while collecting data from them. The tutors' and principals' opinions, views, values and experiences were collected using qualitative methods in order to make a good description on how tutors implemented Learner Centred Approaches.

Within the qualitative paradigm the study employed a case study approach. a case study is an exploration of a bounded system overtime through detailed, in depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context (Creswell, 1998) was employed. In order to understand how tutors implement the Learner Centred Approaches



in a classroom setting and observe why things are being done in a way they are, the researcher actually found herself in the situated environment.

It has been argued that our knowledge of what goes inside the average classroom in Third World countries is rather deficient and that the educational planner normally does have statistics concerning the physical condition of the schooling but often lacks information about instructional practices in schools (Bude, 1995). This research used Case Study in order to gain that deep understanding of what goes inside a classroom with regard to the implementation of Learner Centred Approaches at teacher training level.

Even though the study is mainly qualitative, but it is also partially quantitative because statistical data was also collected during the interviews and lesson observations

### **3.3 Study Site and Sampling Procedure**

There are five public Teachers' Training Colleges (TTCs) that are completely functioning with the aim of training primary school teachers in Malawi. From the five public colleges, Kasungu Teachers' Training Colleges was used for the study. Kasungu Teachers Training College is situated in the central region of Malawi in Kasungu district about two kilometres from the main road to Mzuzu. The total number of IPTE II students is 620 and the total number of tutors as of July 2007 was 26. The area attracted the researcher's interest as potential area of study because Kasungu had the largest number of tutors who were oriented to the Learner Centred Approaches under the INWENT Sandwich programme.

Another justification for the choice was that Kasungu was accessible because it was closer to the researcher's home in which case the study was conducted without much economic stress on part of the researcher. Another reason was accessibility to required information that helped in the study because according to Creswell (1998) "studying one's backyard provides easy access to informants and information at minimal cost" (p.115). The advantage of accessibility and proximity assisted the researcher to complete the work within the space time at the researcher's disposal; however the disadvantage of studying behind my own yard that tutors kept on postponing the lessons to be observed.

From the total established number of 35 members of teaching staff that are supposed to be at Kasungu Teachers' Training College, 26 tutors were involved in



teaching various subjects at the time the study was conducted. From the population of 26, eight tutors were purposefully sampled from the timetable. The main characteristic which led to such a sampling procedure was the fact that the eight tutors were English tutors at the time of the study. These eight tutors were all interviewed in order to get their perceptions about Learner Centred Approaches and identify the challenges that they encounter as they teach English using LCAs as well as coping mechanisms that they identified to overcome the challenges.

Then I randomly sampled two tutors from the eight with one who went to Germany and one who did not go. The procedure was that the names of the tutors were arranged into two groups, one group contained names of those that had gone to Germany and the other group had those that did not go. I called for two tutors to choose one piece of paper from each group. The two tutors that were selected randomly were each observed five times teaching English, making a total of 10 lessons for observation. The Principal of the college was interviewed as an informant in order to get his views about Learner Centred Approaches and his role in the implementation of the new approaches. One representative of the INWENT was also interviewed as another informant.

Random sampling was used in order to select the students and the tutors because according to Gay (1987) all individuals in the defined population have an equal and independent chance of being selected for the sample. The probability of selection is the same and the selection of one individual in no way affects the selection of another, so the sample used in this study was a representative one. Below is a summary of sample of participants in the study.

**Table 3: A Sample of participants in the Study**

| Type of Participants | Population understudy |        | Number of Participation |        | %   |
|----------------------|-----------------------|--------|-------------------------|--------|-----|
|                      | Male                  | Female | Male                    | Female |     |
| Principal            | 1                     | -      | 1                       | -      | 100 |
| Tutors               | 19                    | 7      | 7                       | 1      | 31  |
| Inwent participant   | 1                     | 1      | 1                       | -      | 50  |
| Total                | 21                    | 8      | 9                       | 1      | 34  |



The above data show that 34% of the total population was involved in the study and out this 31% of tutors available participated in the study.

### 3.4 Data Collection Methods

Data were collected in the third term of the college based phase of the IPTE training from the 11<sup>th</sup> June 2007 through 29<sup>th</sup> June. The time for collection of data was planned and executed during the period so as to allow participants ample time in the use of the new approaches. In order to describe how tutors implement Learner Centred Approaches, the challenges that they encounter and to find out how tutors are coping with the challenges, I observed English lessons taught by two tutors. One of the tutors was formally oriented in the use of the approaches through the *Inwent* Sandwich Programme, while the other was not oriented in the use of the approaches through the programme. A total of 10 lessons were observed with five from each tutor.

I also collected the primary data through informal and semi-structured interviews in order to explore the tutors' perceptions about the LCAs, the challenges that they encounter as they implement the LCAs and how they coped with the challenges while using LCAs. For the secondary data, I reviewed school documents such as schemes and records of works and lesson notes to find out how they aid in the effective implementation of the new approaches.

All the semi-structured interviews were recorded by the aid of an MP3 voice-recorder after seeking consent from the interviewee. In this way, the data-recording procedure used in the interviews did not interfere with the process of conducting interviews. I however made notes on the nonverbal communication where necessary during the interviews (such as head nodding where the question required yes or no, shoulder movement). The data collected was later transcribed into text for analysis. This process of transcription took place alongside data collection as an ongoing process. Putting all the interview time together there were 18 hours of recorded interviews. Throughout the data collection, field notes were taken.



### 3.4.1 Lesson Observation

One of the methods that used in the study to collect the qualitative data was observation which according to some authors entails the systematic noting and recording of events, behaviours and artefacts (objects) in the social setting chosen from study (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Other authors also indicate that the researcher takes field notes on the behaviour and activities of individuals at the site (Creswell, 2003). Lesson observation is the most obvious way to identify good or bad practices since it is a valuable tool for improving the quality of teaching (MoEST, 2006). Observation method is fundamental and highly important in all qualitative inquiry (Marshall & Rossman, 1999).

I used observation technique to help in noticing the differences and similarities between what was claimed during interviews and what was taking place in actual practice. As it is indicated that observational techniques enable researcher to gather information that would be unavailable by other means (Weiss, 1998). It is also noted that observation is used to discover complex interactions in natural settings (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Class observations of the English lessons by the tutors aided in the collection first hand information because I had the direct access to the events, interactions and the setting as indicated that teacher preparation and development programmes cannot be understood outside of their context (Stuart, 1999) Class observations have been chosen in order to allow collection of data through direct contact in the setting (Mertens, 1998).

In this study I took the role of complete observer. In this role as noted by Creswell that:

- Researcher has a first hand experience with participants
- Researcher records information as it unfolds
- Unusual aspects can be noticed during observation (Creswell, 2003)

The observations were noted through jottings which enabled the researcher to catch significant actions and to construct descriptions of the scene.

### 3.4.2 Informal Interviews

These interviews were helpful because they were uncontrolled and unstructured (Weiss, 1998). These helped me to understand how some things happened the way they did during class observation period. The technique acted as a follow up to the observation



technique. Informal interviews are widely used in educational research generally and in teacher research more particular with a distinct advantage for the teacher researcher working within a known culture with fellow professionals (Hitchcock a& Hughes, 1989). These informal conversations constituted important course of data. The informal interviews were used as a way of triangulation for the formal interviews as stated by Cohen and Manion (1980) that “triangulation can be a useful technique where a researcher is engaged in case study in order to respond to the multiplicity of perspectives present in a social situation” (p.260). In order to represent fairly any conflicting view points that might be observed, I had to ask the tutors soon after teaching a few questions as we walked to the staffroom.

### **3.4.3 Semi- structured Interviews**

This method is where the researcher conducts face-to-face conversation with participants (Creswell, 2003). This type of interview was used in this study because it is a much more flexible version of structured interview (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1989) and since the primary issue is to generate data which give authentic insights into people’s experiences (Miller & Glassner, 2004), these interviews brought out just that. Both closed and open-ended questions were incorporated in the interview schedule. There have been observations made by various authors about using interviews for data collection. Rossman and Rallis (2003) for instance indicate the interviews take you (the researcher) into participants’ worlds at least as far as they can (or choose to) verbally relate what is in their minds.

In this regard six reasons are noted why interviews are important in qualitative research.

- To understand individual perspectives
- To probe or clarify
- To generate rich descriptive data
- To gather insights into participants’ thinking
- To learn more about the context (Rossman & Rallis, 2003)

In this study all the above reasons were appropriate for the choice the method.



The method was helpful because as an interviewer I had the opportunity to probe, negotiate, discuss and expand the interviewee's responses. In addition, this method allowed me to add comments or make notes in the space included on the interview schedule while tape recording the responses. This method was used to collect data on the tutors' and students' perceptions about learner centred approaches, the challenges that they encounter as they implement LCAs and also the coping mechanisms that these tutors identified as they implement the new approaches. In addition, the interviews in this study helped to construct narratives and according to Miller & Glassner (2004) the qualitative interviewing has been noted for opportunity to provide, to collect and rigorously examine narrative accounts of social worlds. The semi- structured question schedules were administered to the tutors, principal, InWEnt representative, and the students.

#### **3.4.4 Document Analysis**

The researcher studied various documents that tutors used during the preparatory stage of the teaching process. As noted that during the process of research, the qualitative investigation may collect documents (Creswell, 2003). Some of the documents that I analyzed were schemes and records of work and lesson plan or lesson notes. This method was used in order to find out if such documents helped to facilitate the implementation of learner centred approaches and if at all they influence the way tutors teach.

#### **3.5 Data Management and Analysis**

There is always too much data soon after collection. In order to manage the data I did the following.

- Using the MP3 voice recorder with the participants' consent as a storage device
- Labelling the interview responses with date and number codes
- I carried extra batteries and paper
- Finding quiet places for interviews away from noise which could have affected the audio devices
- Using colour coding for the interview responses
- Saving the interview responses on the computer, floppy diskettes, CDs and Flash Diskettes in case something happens to the MP3 voice-recorder



- Saving all the data collected by class observation in a word document
- Putting the hard copies in separate folders for example interview responses for students were separated from tutors' responses as well as the principals and InWent participant.

It is noted that data analysis is not off-the-shelf; rather it is custom built, revised and choreographed (Creswell, 1998). In this case it was an ongoing process which was carried out alongside data collection. Without ongoing analysis, the data can be unfocused, repetitious and overwhelming in terms of the large volume of material that needs to be processed (Creswell, 2003). Throughout the data collection period, I analyzed some of my data.

The researcher attempted to get familiar with the responses from the interviews before developing any kind of systematic analysis (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1989). At the end of each data collection day the lesson observation notes were read, recorded conversation were listened to for key words, phrases or repetitive statements that appeared to be related to the purpose of the study and research questions. In order to get a general sense of the coherence of the information, data which was collected during the interviews were compared to search for emerging outstanding features.

The researcher transcribed the recorded data and stored it using Microsoft Word. As noted that transcripts are read several times trying to get sense of the interview as a whole before breaking it into parts (Creswell, 1998), I checked for inaccuracies, irrelevance, unclear statements and incomplete data and cleaned the data in order to ensure that there were no contradictions consistency and clarity.

I reviewed the interview data and colour coded the typed data using different colours for issues that were related in order to build themes. For instance all the responses that were related to challenges in implementation of LCAs had different colours for each one of them. For instance or responses on time factor were coloured "blue" and all responses that had to do with lack of knowledge about LCAs were coloured "green" and so on. This assisted in finding the information quick and it was easy for me to find out how many respondents had given a particular response. Some of the data that I did not need was put aside in a different folder of word programme. This helped to formulate manageable set of themes to help in my final narrative. Thus, qualitative data was



categorized into meaningful major themes first following the objectives and then those themes that came out during data collection.

Even though the study used qualitative methods and collected qualitative data, there were some statistical data that were collected. This type of data was tabulated and some were presented using graphs.

### **3.6 Researcher's Perspectives**

Prior to ending this chapter, it is important to note that a perspective that influences this study is that I have been a classroom tutor of English at Kasungu Teachers' Training for five years. My experience in the use of learner centred approaches helped me to recognize if indeed the approaches were being used as expected or see if tutors were just claiming to use such.

As an insider however, I collected data which was free from biasness. In order to ensure credibility of the findings, I did the following:

- I played the role of complete observer during the data collection process
- Upon analysing data, I went back to the tutors to confirm whether my interpretation was consistent with their articulated views
- I used multiple instruments which assisted in triangulating the data.

### **3.7 Ethical Considerations**

Some important ethical issues were considered in this study since I was involving people. Informed consent was obtained from all the participants and confidentiality was emphasized and observed. In addition the participants were given the right to withdraw.

#### **3.7.1 Informed Consent**

The protection of individual privacy in education research involves obtaining consent from an individual to get involved in a study (Borg & Gall, 1989). In this regard, the researcher brought an introductory letter from the University of Malawi, Chancellor College, in order to make the institution's manager aware of my intent (see appendix A). The researcher also obtained consent from all the participants who were involved in the study before collecting any data from them. It was also explained to the participants that



they were free to withdraw from the interviews if desired so, fortunately all the participants showed willingness to be involved in the study.

However, with the nature of this study according to Borg & Gall (1989) would invalidate the research findings if I told the individual participants the purpose of the study and the type of information they were expected to provide during the study beforehand. There has been clear evidence that results of some studies can be drastically altered if research subjects are informed of all details about the research (Borg & Gall, 1989).

### **3.7.2 Confidentiality**

For the interviews, I assured respondents that information obtained from the interview would be solely for purposes of academic research and was confidential. I also assured them that no one would have access to the data except the researcher (See Appendix B). The participants were also assured that their names would not be known instead there letter codes were indicated on each interview response. This concurs well with Borg and Gall (1989) who explains that confidentiality must be further protected by not using names of individuals in any publications that result from research project.

### **3.7.3 Right to Withdraw**

The participants were provided with the right to withdraw from the study if they did not feel comfortable in continuing to participate in the study. Fortunately this study did not experience any withdrawals.

### **3.8 Limitation of the Study**

This is a case study of one teacher training college and only one subject. As a result the findings can not be generalized. The study did not involve students in order to get more information about the implementation of the approaches.

In addition, the period of data collection would be inadequate to understand in-depth the process of innovation adoption because the study was dealing with belief and attitude of the implementers in which case it might take longer to notice change .



However the study used various data collection methods in order to minimize the effects of the limitations.

### **3.9 Summary**

This chapter describes the research methods and the rationale for the choice of such methods. Various literatures have been reviewed on the use of such methods. Sampling procedures and the study site have been elaborated to provide the reader with an idea of why such a site and not any other. Various techniques for data collection are also discussed and the justification for choosing the data collection techniques. Class observation, semi-structured and informal interviews as well as document analysis are some of the techniques that have been discussed in this chapter. Since the research is a member of the site to which the study was conducted, her perspectives and experiences have briefly been discussed in the chapter. The fact that the study targeted a group of people, ethics and gender are also discussed in the chapter to avoid issues of gender bias and infringement of people's rights. The chapter has also tackled the issues on how data was managed in process of collection and how it was analysed.



## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS OF THE FINDINGS

#### 4.1 Introduction

The study investigated the adoption and the implementation of Learner Centred Approaches in English lessons by tutors at Kasungu Teachers' Training College. In this chapter, findings of the study are presented and discussed.

#### 4.2 Implementation of Learner Centred Approaches

The study sought to investigate how tutors were implementing learner centred approaches. The findings are presented and discussed under the headings; *how tutors prepare for teaching, the roles played by the tutors in the classroom, students' participation, use of teaching and learning resources, tutors' knowledge about LCAs and use of the LCAs.*

##### 4.2.1 How tutors prepare for Teaching

The study found out that implementation of the learner centred approaches begun with the preparation of schemes of work. The researcher found that the methods column in the schemes of work indicated the suggested approaches that the tutors planned to use for the rest of the term.

An examination of the schemes of works and lesson plan revealed that most tutors had included various approaches to be used during teaching. It was however found that lesson plans were sketchy without giving a clear direction of the lesson. Both tutors relied on student handbooks for notes.

It is clear from the above stated observation that tutors did not plan adequately for learner centred classes. Planning to teach is an important element in the teaching profession and according to Coombs (1995) planning in advance is the key to success in all courses, both those with final examinations and those based on continuous assessment. The class observations of tutor A & N showed that tutors were not fully prepared to teach using the approaches that were suggested in the schemes of work. This was true of tutor N whose schemes of work for topic on "Teaching speaking skills" suggested nine



approaches to be used, but instead he only read to the students different situations in which speaking skills could be enhanced from the tutors' handbook. Tutor A had similar experience where the topic on "Supplementary Reading Materials" had indicated use of several approaches, but the tutor only concentrated on group work and seemed not to be sure of when to use the approach to the extent that he asked the students if they wanted to work on groups at that time or work on the task as homework.

The tutors observed, taught most of their lessons without lesson plans or lesson notes. It was difficult to see what approaches the tutors had planned to use for the topics. From the sketchy lesson plan that tutor N prepared, there was no clear elaboration of teaching and learning approaches. Coombs (1995) reminds us that any lesson is like a journey into the unknown, but if one has a lesson plan it is like having a route map before the lesson begins.

#### **4.2.2 The Role of the tutors during the lessons**

The study found that tutors played multiple roles in the classroom at different times. The predominant role that was mentioned during the interviews was that of facilitator. Six out of eight tutors reported that their role was that of facilitator of the learning process. Tutor L said,

*"the student will be 100% involved in the lesson, my main duty would be to facilitate the process"*

Supporting the views of Tutor L, another tutor reported:

*"I just act as a facilitator, not actually being fully involved myself"* (Tutor N)

Learner centred education requires that the teacher takes more of a facilitating role than teaching, so that the students are left to think on their own and do the activities without fear. This position is supported by Farris (1997) that the role of the teacher in learner centred environment is that of a facilitator. The tutor must be supportive and sincerely interested in the intellectual growth and welfare of all the students in the classroom and give constructive feedback.

The study also found that tutors played the role of information transmitter. Through class observations it was found that both tutors spent more time explaining for concepts on the topics than guiding the students to work on tasks. Tutor A for example



would define concepts even when the students showed interest to speak. Through interviews with tutors, one tutor said,

*"There are times when I am forced to do all the explaining, this is because books are not available for all students"* (Tutor A)

It is clear that resource constraints frustrated the effective implementation of learner centered approaches. If such factors exist, the tutors are bound to explain the information so that the students memorize and regurgitate during the national examinations. The study found that tutors played the role of consolidating the ideas that the students discussed in their group work. The study however observed that consolidation was not given adequate time and in two of tutor N's and three of tutor A's class, the lessons ended abruptly without proper conclusion to consolidate all the ideas from the group discussions. By taking this role, the tutors were expected to marry the ideas that were raised by the students after group work which in essence varied from one group to another.

It might be said that perhaps the tutors did not have adequate time in the lessons to consolidate the ideas or the tutor took for granted the fact that the students also required his input in the results of their group discussions or perhaps the tutor was not sure of which groups had presented correct facts because of lack of mastery of the content. The role of tutor as consolidator might be lost if the tutor was not prepared enough to find expected responses by different groups of students in advance especially in a topic that is completely new to the students. Consolidation of ideas on the other hand is easier if the topic is well known and the tutor knows where the students will get the information for discussion.

The results show that the shift from teacher centred to learner centred approaches has greatly influenced the role of the tutors and even the way the students respond to the tutors' roles. This concurs with the United Nations (1991) which stated that teachers become more as managers of the means to acquire knowledge and less as the transmitters of knowledge. Borich (1988), InWEnt (2003) agree that when the teacher does not take the role of controller of learning, the learners learn to accept other people's ideas.



#### 4.2.3 Use of teaching and learning resources

The study found that there was minimal use of teaching and learning resources in all the 10 lessons that were observed. Tutor A and N used few supplementary readers, newspapers and magazines when teaching the topic on “Supplementary Reading Materials.” The tutors used few flip charts which were given to students in groups for students to write their discussions in readiness for presentations. The chalkboard was the only resource that was available throughout the teaching and learning process where the tutors jotted down some points after further explanation of concepts.

During class observation it was evident that resources were inadequate, Tutor N for instance said

*“Sorry, you just have to use your note books to write your discussions because I do not have materials”*

It was also evident to the researcher that textbooks were limited in supply in both classes. The learners had to share books, in some instances up to six students shared one textbook.

*“Make sure you are working in groups not individually because we do not have enough books”* (Tutor A)

The study also found that the old curriculum MIITEP handbooks were mostly used by the students during their group discussion for reference. Tutor N had an IPTE handbook which was in draft form which was used to read out information to the students. The class walls were bare with only one chart displayed in tutor N’s class on a group presentation that was made previously.

The chalkboard which was the most available resource was mainly dominated by the tutors who used it throughout the lessons to jot down short notes for the students. The chalkboard was mainly used as support material to explain some concepts of the lesson and to display tasks that were done by the students in their groups. The researcher also noted that even though the schemes of work indicated television and radio as some of the resources to be used to teach some topics, the tutors did not attempt to use any. The absence of some of the resources in the classroom could be viewed as a factor that led to poor lesson presentation by the both tutors especially in the topics that demanded greatly the use of teaching and learning resources.



Implementation of the LCAs would be effective if the resources were used adequately. In the lesson that was presented by Tutor A for instance, when he was teaching “supplementary reading materials” instead of telling students examples of supplementary reading materials, it would have been more feasible to bring to class the materials. This could have been done either by telling the students before hand to bring any reading materials. This would have taught the students to be resourceful themselves and the lesson would have been meaningful. In addition, when Tutor N was teaching a lesson on speaking skills, it would have been exciting if the students listened to a recorded speech or news reading in order to identify some important issues in speaking skills instead of just feeding the information to the students.

#### **4.2.4 Tutors’ Knowledge of LCAs**

The study found that all of the tutors were generally aware of the learners centred approaches, however some indicated that they lacked in-depth knowledge of some the approaches. This was mostly reported by those who did not go through the formal orientation on the use of the approaches. An inspection of the schemes of work prepared by tutors showed that they included some of the approaches. This was clear indication that they were aware of the LCAs. All the tutors mentioned that they knew more about group work, pair work and question and answer approaches.

Below is a summary on approaches that were mentioned by the tutors when they were interviewed.



**Table 4 Approaches mentioned by tutors (N=8)**

| Approach                    | Frequency |
|-----------------------------|-----------|
| Question and answer         | 8         |
| Pair work                   | 8         |
| Group work                  | 8         |
| Explanation                 | 6         |
| Think-pair share            | 6         |
| Mind mapping/future's wheel | 6         |
| Brainstorming               | 6         |
| Demonstration               | 4         |
| Debate                      | 2         |
| Jig saw                     | 2         |
| Card Collection             | 2         |
| Analytical teams            | 1         |
| Bus stop                    | 1         |

These results collaborated with what the tutors said about their knowledge of the LCAs

*Partially am aware, because I have found them here at the college, I am just learning from here. I have never been oriented in these approaches, I learn about them through reading, but not actually going through training as our friends did and from my little understanding, most activities should be discovered by the learners, but the tutor should just touch here and there” (Tutor B:)*

*“I am aware because of my colleagues who went to Germany, I have observed them using the methods sometimes, but am not 100% conversant, learner centred is approach where you have to involve students as much as possible rather than a tutor becoming centred of learning” (Tutor N:)*

*“ Yes, am aware, I learnt about these long time ago when they were called Child Centred methods and then interactive methods, right now some names have just changed for example ‘mind mapping’ is what we called ‘future’s wheel’ (Tutor C):*



These findings are supported by Kunje et al. (2005) who found that tutors were familiar to the notion of learner centred teaching and learning, but the strategies taken showed limited ability to implement the approaches. It was evident from the findings of my study that the tutors have knowledge about how different approaches work; however the knowledge varies from one tutor to the other. The knowledge of the approaches came in two folds. The first group knew the approaches through orientation and the other group through own initiative. The tutors who learnt about the approaches from the orientation said highly of how the approaches had eased their work and how the knowledge of such had changed their way of teaching and their relationship with the students.

*"I now know better that it is important to engage the learner, I have really changed in the way I used to teach, the new methods make students participate more and I know how to relate with my students now"*(Tutor C)

*" Even though, I had some knowledge about the participatory approaches before LCE, I think now I know better, and I can use these methods "* (Tutor A)

Other tutors on the other hand got the information about the approaches from their colleagues and own initiative. These had this to say,

*"I have been assisted by my friends who went to Germany and I can say I know something about LCAs even though not 100%"* (Tutor K)

The tutors had an interest to learn about the approaches in order to deliver effectively in this case, they passed the *knowledge* stage. Even though tutor N was not oriented in the LCAs through the initial training by InWent, he managed to grasp the theoretical principles underlying the LCAs which he applied very well from other sources. As Rogers (1995) in his stages of adoption of innovation indicates that an individual gathers the knowledge, ideas and understanding of the innovation during informal conversations, by reading and through professional training. Tutor N might have not used Mind mapping, card collection, Bus stop, Boss method or letter to the author just to mention a few, but the way he presented his lessons and involved the students in one way or another using the little knowledge about the other LCAs, he definitely can be placed in the line of implementer of LCAs.



Many tutors recognize the potential of constructing knowledge and interactions among the students during the process of teaching and learning, however they wrestle with how to provide a conducive environment while ensuring that the ideas presented relate to the curricula agenda. The results clearly indicate that some tutors may without doubt be placed as innovators of innovations as indicated in the diffusion of innovations model while some would be regarded as early adopters. From the results, there was no indication of laggards who would reject the adoption of the learner centred approaches.

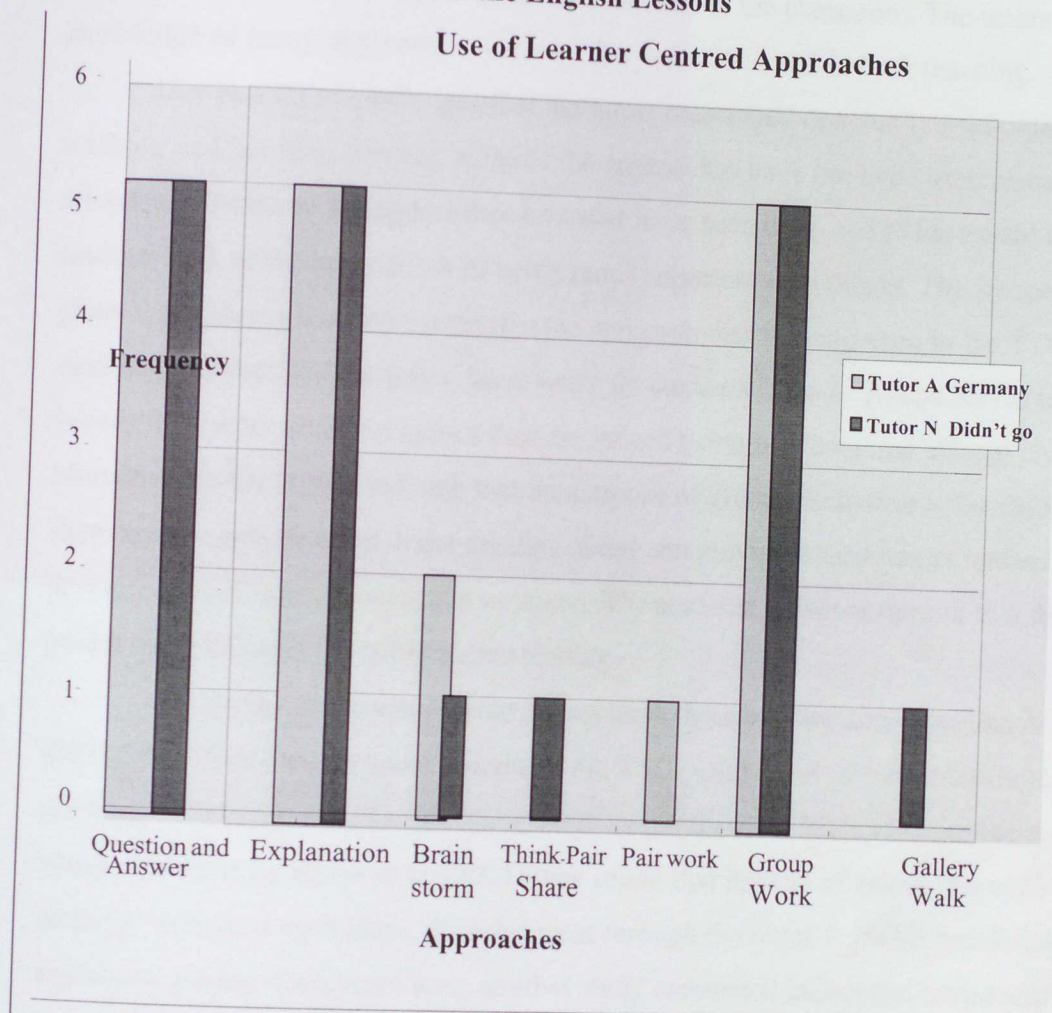
#### **4.3 Use of Learner Centred Approaches**

The study found that both tutor A and tutor N used group work, explanation and question and answer more than any other teaching and learning approach in all the lessons that were observed.

The figure below shows the approaches that were actually used by the tutors in their lessons.



Figure 1 : Approaches used in the English Lessons



The results above indicate that tutors preferred group work, question and answer and explanation in their teaching to any other. They also used brainstorming, pair work, think-pair share as well as gallery walk. The results agree with what some tutors had to say on their use of the LCAs.

*"I often use group work and pair work because they are easy to use, I tried some of the approaches, such as jigsaw and think-pair share, but I had problems in using them"*(Tutor L)

*"I have tried to use mind mapping, but was not successful because the students did not contribute much since they did not know much about the topic, but I prefer group work to other approaches."* (Tutor A).



Although all (8) the tutors during the interview reported that they use pair work more, it was observed that pair work was less used in the classroom. The tutors indicated knowledge of many approaches, yet very few were observed in their teaching.

Due to a lot of challenges that the tutors mentioned or actually encounter during the teaching and learning process, some of the approaches have not been used since orientation. Some of the approaches however have been overused to the extent that the students look at the approaches as being more important than others. The frequent use of group work leaves the impression that the approach that is being used in the TTC is group work and the fact that the tutors leave work for students to do in groups leaves to many the belief that learner centered approaches are indeed being implemented effectively.

Mtunda & Safuli (1991) indicate that the purpose of group discussion is for students to share knowledge, develop understanding about complex problems and stimulate the development of new attitudes and opinions. The students however require that the tutor guides them through for better understanding.

In Trinidad and Tobago, from the research done by Quamina-Aiyejina & George (2003), they found that teacher trainers in the TTCs used more of transmission methods of teaching, reflecting more on how their tutors taught them. In Malawi, from the research which was done by Kunje et al. (2003) they found that instead of asking the students to come up with their own ideas, the tutor went through the notes from his handbook, explaining points. Two years later, another study conducted before the introduction of the learner centred approaches in TTCs by Kunje et al. (2005) similar results were found where tutors relied more on transmission or traditional methods of teaching.

The primary data in my study showed a great shift from the teacher centred to learner centred approaches despite the hiccups that tutors faced as they implemented the approaches. Not only did the tutors try several approaches, but they increased their comprehension of such approaches. As noted by Lewis & Hill (1990) that some teachers have taught the same lessons in the same way for years and believe that it is the best way of doing something. If the tutors have found the "approach" they consider the best, they follow it strictly and carefully. However, Lewis and Hill (1990) argue that language is complex and language teaching is correspondingly complex in that it is difficult to make



any statement which is always true about language teaching since different situations call for different materials, different methods, different activities and different strategies.

The results tell us that tutors have made a decision to adopt particular approaches and reject others that they are not very sure of. This is the stage that Rogers (1995) in his diffusion of innovation model, refers to as “*Decision*” stage. After the individual is aware of the innovation, he or she goes in the second stage where he or she forms a favourable or unfavourable attitude toward the innovation based on his knowledge and then he makes a decision that will adopt or reject the innovation. In this case we see the tutors making choices of particular approaches which they “feel comfortable” to use as one tutor had indicated.

Killen (1998) points out that teaching and learning strategy describe the ways in which educators apply skills, techniques and styles. Educators need to apply a variety of teaching strategies to allow learners to demonstrate the learning they have mastered. One such strategy is where learners engage collaboratively in pairs or groups in order to enhance the acquisition of English as a second language. Thus the approaches that were used by the tutors in this study provided the ground for active participation.

The explanation that could be given on the use of the approaches that have ranked higher could perhaps be that the tutors have known such approaches for a long time and it has become part of them, so when they were reoriented in them, the orientation just increased their knowledge in the use of such. Perhaps the tutors used group work more because of the nature of topics or may be because of the number of students in the classroom which was regarded as ‘large’ by both students and tutors.

*“ I like to put students in groups because it saves resources in large classes”*(Tutor N).

From the results of use of LCAs, it showed that tutors use of the approaches despite the demand for a lot of time and resources. The way the tutors used some of the approaches, showed that given more time to practice and chance to have readily available resources, they would make a greater change. As indicated that the primary aim of Outcomes Based Education is to facilitate desired changes within the learners, by increasing knowledge, developing skills and or positively influencing attitudes, values and judgment (McNeir, 1993), the use of the approaches will realize the change within the



learners. The tutors have shown their acceptance of the OBE approach in which they have indicated greater shift in the use of the teaching approaches. The use of some LCAs by both Tutor A and N in the teaching of English was evident during class observations where the student teachers were put in groups or pairs to work on a given task. This is according to Rogers' model means that the tutors have reached the implementation stage. Tutors were able to use the approaches that they found easy to use given the poor conditions.

As the tutors moved from implementation stage to confirmation, they were capable of working together with other stakeholder in order to make proper improvements. Team teaching for instance would help the tutors to learn from each other how some of the approaches are done. As McCann & Radford (1993) state that in a global society, in which time information is the most important commodity, collaboration is not simply desirable; it is inevitable. It is also noted that collaboration improves communication skills, gives a sharper focus in the teaching work, increases the amount of time they spent reflecting on their work and enhances confidence in the teaching ability (Camp, 1988). For collaboration to be effective, tutors will be required to make decisions and reach conclusions of who will do what.

The study however found that collaboration at some point was not encouraged between the group that went to Germany and the one that did not. Some tutors indicated that those tutors who went to Germany do not like to assist the other group of tutors. Another group of tutors said that those who did not go to Germany do not want to learn from the other group. The assumption that could be made on the part of those that complained of not being assisted perhaps is the attitude leading to lack of acceptance. The reception of material was not done positively. In this view less attention is bound to occur as a result, the decision that the tutors might make is to reject the change and continue their old ways of doing things. This assumption was made from the lamentations that were made by some tutors about the way the information about LCAs was disseminated from the second hand informer.

It is clear that tutors may try the approaches not knowing whether they will be successful, thus "trial and error" approach is put in place. Those approaches that are successful are repeated and those that prove to be difficult are not repeated and this according to the model of diffusion of innovations, the adoption process is discontinued.



The results also gave the impression that tutors did not relate with each other in a manner that would lead to professional growth. This view is expressed by Mmela (2004) who argues that continuous professional development is more of workshops with monies being highly expected than the information given. So perhaps these tutors were not given any money during the few days' orientation while those that had gone abroad had money provision.

#### 4.4 Tutors' Perceptions of Learner Centred Approaches

Through interviews, the study found that tutors' perceptions about LCAs were generally positive. Most tutors indicated that the approaches were not new, that they had been there only changing their names. Another tutor reported that some of the approaches that they referred to as 'participatory' approaches were not different from the newly introduced Learner Centred Approaches which that also referred to as child centred then. The only problem was that they were not using them. This was reported by one tutor who said,

*"these approaches have been there and they are very good, but some of us never used them because they demand a lot of our time"* (Tutor K)

Some tutors indicated that the learner centred approaches were very good in terms of improving the independent thinking capacity in the student teachers. As one some tutor note,

*"there is greater change in the student teachers in that they are more critical and make good arguments even though sometimes it gets personal with the tutors"*(Tutor B)

*"even the slow learners do participate during group work".* (Tutor C)

Most tutors recommended the adoption of the Learner Centred Approaches at the teacher training level and showed positive attitudes towards the implementation of the approaches because they saw the innovation as having improved student teachers' participation despite coming from the teacher centred background.

The table below gives a summary of the perceptions of the tutors about LCAs.



**Table 5 Tutors’ Perceptions about Learner Centred Approaches**

| Statement                                                                                   | Frequency<br>(N=8) |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| More students get involved than in teacher centred.                                         | 7                  |
| LCAs have changed our roles                                                                 | 7                  |
| Approaches are good                                                                         | 7                  |
| Students are now critical and argumentative                                                 | 6                  |
| Approaches make our work easier                                                             | 6                  |
| Improves independent thinking in students                                                   | 5                  |
| I think we over use the group work approach                                                 | 2                  |
| Approaches have brought good seating plan                                                   | 4                  |
| Some of these approaches have been there all this time, we just did not practice using them | 4                  |
| Approaches lead to laziness in tutors                                                       | 1                  |

7 out of 8 tutors said that the approaches were good and that more students get involved when Learner Centred Approaches are used than in teacher centred approaches. The tutors’ ideas on this are illustrated by two responses below:

*“these approaches are good, they because I can just ask the students to work in groups, however, hiccups here and there since the background for most students is teacher centred and learner centred approaches are new so sometimes some students do not like it”*(Tutor N)

*“My perception about LCAs is that they are good and should be encouraged because learners are encouraged to critical thinking, and there is independence of learning, it also encourages learners to find information by themselves “it avoids the backing*



*method spoon feeding method, issues also get internalized in the learner because he or she owns the knowledge” (Tutor K)*

From the tutors’ interviews the main ideas that can be seen are that tutors have changed their hearts. Their perceptions towards the use of learner centered approaches are positive. This shows readiness in the application of the newly introduced approaches despite some hiccups. Their perception towards teacher centred approaches has greatly shifted towards learner centred. Most of the teachers give credit to the new approaches for having incorporated even those labelled ‘shy’ in that they are able to get involved. The student teachers thinking abilities are being accredited to the use of learners centered approaches. The student teachers’ response to group work, pair work and other approaches that were employed equally indicated their positive attitudes towards the newly introduced learner centred approaches. Most tutors think good of the approaches, confirmation stage would be attained where they will continue with the innovation and make modifications where necessary in order to suit their needs.

#### **4.5 Institutional Support**

Tutors were asked about the kind of support that they get from the college in order to successfully implement learner centred approaches as college level. The first question was, “How often do you get visited in your class by the head of department or the principal to see how you are implementing the approaches?” All the eight tutors said that they were never visited to see how they implement the approaches.

From the responses, it was clear that the tutors were not visited as indicated,

*“Honestly speaking I have never seen the principal or head of department enter into my class” (Tutor B)*

*“No, my head or principal have never visited my class however informally I discuss some issues with my head of department” (Tutor L)*

*“I have never been visited ever since we started implementing these approaches”*



*"no one has ever visited my class you are the first one, my principal has never before, may be he passes by I hear that there is 'Management By Walking' (MBWA) so, may be he uses that"* (Tutor K)

When the head of the institution was asked as to how often he had visited the tutors to see how they were implementing the approaches, he honestly indicated that he had not gone to any class to see how tutors were using the approaches.

The other question that the tutors were asked is "What kind of support have you been provided with for the implementation of the approaches?" The responses included material support, social support and professional support. The tutors indicated that they are encouraged, commended when they do well during staff meetings. On materials, tutors indicated that they are provided with few teaching and learning resources when available which was not often as indicated from the examples below,

*"We are not provided with the required material, yet during the orientation period we had all the resources, you know for us to use these approaches, we need a lot of resources"* (Tutor D)

On professional support, some tutors indicated that the college administration had helped in organizing in-service training (INSETs) for some of those who did not go for the orientation of the use of Learner Centred Approaches, but the tutors indicated that their orientation to the approaches was too short in which case the approaches were rushed through as a results most of them came out with very little knowledge.

From the results, it can be said that support for any innovation is important if that innovation has to be sustained. It has been observed that many programmes fail to continue because they are not supported by the users (Safuli, 1992). From this study it has been noted with great concern that the college support is minimal for the tutors to implement the approaches. As much as we could say they should improvise the resources, there will still be a time when commercially bought resources would be useful for the students.

On top of the resources, the tutors still require personal and professional support from the administration in which case they would be supervised and get comments on how they are doing so that they can raise their morale to go on or change where they are not doing well. Supporting the tutors in the crucial stage of implementation would enhance



their interest towards the innovations and in turn increases the capabilities to adopt the innovation

4.6 Challenges in the Implementation of LCAs

The study found out that tutors were encountering a number of challenges as they strived to implement learner centred approaches. Below are some of the challenges that tutors mentioned that are encountered during the implementation stage of the learners centred approaches.

Table 6: What tutors saw as challenges in the implementation of LCAs.

| Challenges                                  | Tutors<br>N=8 |
|---------------------------------------------|---------------|
| Large classes                               | 8             |
| Inadequate teaching and learning resources  | 8             |
| Time consuming                              | 8             |
| Lack of Institutional Support               | 8             |
| Fast learners' domination                   | 7             |
| Calibre of the student teachers             | 6             |
| Inadequate Knowledge about LCA              | 4             |
| Too many responsibility /mobility of tutors | 3             |
| Attitudes of students                       | 3             |

All the tutors (8) indicated that the main challenges that impede their effective implementation of the LCAs were large classes, inadequate resources and time. Some tutors stated that fast learners’ domination of the class activities was also a challenge for them while others alluded that the calibre of the student teachers hinges their success in the implementation. Some tutors also said that mobility of the tutors is another challenge.



#### 4.6.1 Time consuming

Time as a challenge was highly mentioned by the tutors. The study found that one hour was allocated to each subject at the TTC including English. During the class observations, it was observed that both tutors had some lessons not finished because the bell rang before they could wind the lessons. For instance out of the five lessons that tutor N taught; two of them were not concluded. He failed to consolidate the students' discussions after they had reported. Tutor A on the other hand had three lessons not concluded; instead he had asked the students to continue working in their groups since the following lesson had no tutor, so they would take advantage of another hour to finish the one hour lesson. All the eight tutors said that they do not have enough time to cover work planned for the hour because the learner centred approaches demand a lot of time and one hour is not enough. This is complimented with what the tutors actually said,

*"time is not enough when we use these new approaches, you know when the students are put in groups we expect them to discuss fully and exhaust their ideas, then they have to share with the whole class"*(Tutor C)

*"these approaches consume a lot of time, sometimes we fail to finish the lesson on time"* (Tutor N)

The sentiments raised by the tutors were evident during the class observations where it was noted that three of tutor A's lessons and two of tutor N's lessons ended five minutes after the bell had already rung.

Farris (1997) stated that teaching for understanding takes longer, but the learning lasts longer agrees and the approaches that are more participative consume a lot of time because the student become so involved in the lesson. Perhaps one of the reasons, tutors failed to consolidate ideas from different groups was because of lack of time.

Perhaps due to lack of proper planning could be attributed to shortage of time among most tutors. When one is not fully prepared, decisions are made right in front of the students, as a result more or less tasks are given to the students. In all the lessons that were observed, it was difficult to not how much time was given for the activities. At some point the tutors gave the students too much time on simple tasks while on some tasks that seem



to be difficult, lesson time was given. As much as the failure of effective use of learner centred approaches is blamed on time, sometimes preparation before the lesson is a necessity that would assist to know what approaches would suit the tasks.

#### 4.6.2 Large classes

All tutors indicated large classes as another great challenge that impedes their progress in the implementation of the approaches. By "large class" tutor D indicated that there were over 40 students in one class and saw that it was difficult to work with all these students while using the LCAs. The tutor said,

*"some of these approaches like card collection require that each student writes their ideas on paper and pin them on the soft board so that they can be arranged according to emerging themes"*(Tutor D)

On this, the tutor indicated that it would take a lot of time to have all the students to finish the exercise and make conclusions.

The study found that class N had 47 students and class A had 48 students. The ministry of education however indicated in its policy document (Government of Malawi, 2001) that it is expected to reduce the ratio of teacher/pupil to 1:60 even lower in primary schools, but there is no mention of TTCs. Tutors in the training colleges however have been complaining in several forum about problem of large classes which hinder proper delivery of lessons, but all falls on deaf ears of the ministry of education.

Most of the tutors related their failure to implement the learner centred approaches effectively to large classes and this has affected their choice of applicable approaches. Mostly they have resorted into using group work as a remedy for large class. In this regard, group work is being overused and tutors fail to try out some of the good approaches. For some tutors it has become an escape goat to their failure to use the learner centred approaches. Because one tutor failed to use other approaches due to large class could not mean that everyone will fail.



#### 4.6.3 Inadequate resources

All the tutors (8) indicated that resources were a problem. Tutors said that the new approaches demand a lot of resources because the students have to work on various tasks and do more hands on activities for full participation. This is what some said,

*"the main challenge is lack of resources, we are not given any materials to help in our teaching"* (Tutor B),

*"these approaches would be very easy to use if we had resources"* (Tutor N)

The challenge of resources was also observed in the classroom when the study found that both tutors had presented their lessons well, but when it came to tasks, the students were either squeezed in groups in order to at least have access to chart paper or books. Sometimes the tutor would give information than letting the students work on tasks because there were not resources.

The resources in this study would be divided into two: human and material. The study also found that there were few English tutors against 13 classes which meant that they are overloaded. The Principal of the college indicated that the Language and Literacy department was in great problems because it had inadequate tutors who would effectively handle the subjects, instead, some tutors who did not specialize in English are forced to take the subjects.

The material resources, is another group. It was indicated by the principal that handbooks for IPTE II students were not available on time. The study revealed that the handbooks for term one came to the colleges in term two, these were also inadequate. Thus, handbooks for terms two are expected to be delivered in term three or even later.

From the beginning, this study had provided a statement based on the assumption that practices from an enriched environment are feasible in Malawi which would be regarded as an environment with scanty environment and that creativity of the teacher would necessitate the effective implementation of the innovations. The study has therefore revealed that despite the challenges faced by the tutors on the resources, large classes, time, lack of institutional support, the tutors have managed to implement the approaches at their best. They have tried to use the available resources and used some not all the approaches depending on the resources available.



Most researchers have indicated that learner centred education is a notion that states that learning new concepts is based on the previous knowledge. One author says "children learner best when they are interested in the topic and are allowed to include their own previously gained knowledge as part of the learning setting" (Farris, 2001 p. 41). However the extent to which the learner is exposed to the knowledge relevant to the new concepts differs from one learner to another. When the students are exposed to wide reading, they are able to relate their previous encounter with a familiar concept, but where the reading materials are scarce; the students are more dependent on the tutor for new information because for them everything they hear is new. If the students had adequate materials for instance, they could read and learn from what literature is saying in order to bring their valid arguments.

The main idea that can be drawn from the results is that as much as the tutors would be interested in adopting the innovation or change their perceptions towards the learner centred approaches, they are faced with challenges of different kinds, some of which they can handle, but there are some which they cannot find solutions on their own. Fullan (1999) notes that implementation of an innovation is never smooth, that there are various things that might frustrate the implementers. Rogers (2003) in his model also indicates that there are conditions which increases or decreases the likelihood that a new idea, product or practice will be adopted by members of a given culture

#### **4.7 Coping mechanisms in the implementation of LCAs**

The study sought to find out how tutors coped with challenges when implementing the new teaching innovation. It was found that tutors had devised a number of ways of coping with the challenges in the implementation of the approaches.

##### **4.7.1 Modification of the approaches**

The study found that tutors modified some of the approaches in order to suit their environment. Tutor N for example indicated that he sometimes changes the 'Think pair-share' approach to 'Think group -share'. The reasons that he gave for such modification was that it saves time since he found that time was one big challenge in the use of the learner centred approaches. This is what he said when interviewed,



*"I have tried to modify the think pair share approach to think group share, it is ok for me"* (Tutor N)

The think pair - share approach is where the tutor gives a task to the students and asks them to work individually, after that they find a pair to share their findings, and then present their findings to the whole class. While in the modified approach, instead of the students sharing their individual findings in pairs, they were asked to share in groups, then come up with a consensus then present to the whole class.

By modifying the approach, the tutor saved time for pair presentation and in class N which had 45 students meant that 22 pairs would each present their findings. In addition, the modification seemed to have saved use of resources, in which case instead of using 22 chart papers, the tutor used seven chart papers since he had put the students in seven groups. The examples of statements made by the tutors below indicated what they identified as ways of coping with the challenge,

*"I modify some methods to suit the level of my learners and the availability of the resources- I take information from this one and this one to come up with what I say is the hybrid LCA."* (Tutor K )

*"To overcome the challenges of time, I usually present the exercise and let them do it at their spare time and come back later to make presentations"* (Tutor B)

*"For time constraint, I ask a few groups to present their work instead of all the groups"* (Tutor L)

'To modify' according to Webster (2004) means to change or to alter. This would mean that the tutors would move the approach from its original form. This process of altering or modification requires good knowledge and understanding of how the approach works so that some tuning can be done. This is what Rogers (1995) in his model diffusion of innovation call the persuasion stage. This is the stage in which the individual forms a favourable attitude toward an innovation based on the information available. From the results of the study, it shows that the knowledge that the tutors had gained through the orientation of LCAs assisted them to use some of the approaches. Through the same



knowledge after trying out some of the approaches and seeing that they had problems, they tried make some modifications. This process requires a positive attitude towards a particular thing that one can change.

By modifying an approach to suit their environment, tutors have shown that they can sustain the use of some of the approaches. Farris (2001) also indicates that it takes an experienced and great thinker who can, at a strategic moment and with one question of observation move class discussion into an entire different dimension.

It should be noted here that the modified approach worked well for the tutor as well as the students. As the tutors went to the extent of making modifications of the approaches, they have proved to have also attained the fourth stage of "implementation" in the diffusion of innovations model in which they put the theory into practice. It is argued however, that this is not a smooth stage since the practitioners continue to learn and face challenges in the process, but the tutor must be flexible.

#### 4.7.2 Improvisation

Some tutors mentioned that they tried to improvise teaching and learning resources in order to curb for the inadequacy of resources which was among the major challenges faced. They said that sometimes they use the local environment to get some resources.

During class observation, the researcher also found another way of improvisation where the students were put into groups instead of pairs in order to solve the problem of inadequate resources. This is illustrated below:

*"For inadequate resources, I use group work"* (Tutor B)

*"I improvise by using simple materials available at the moment, they may not be effective, but what can I do."* (Tutor N)

There was also another evidence of improvisation when tutor N cut the chart papers into halves to allow all groups to use the chart paper for discussion and also asked students to improvise chart paper by stapling A4 size paper together. At some point the tutor asked the student to use their note books to write group deliberations. It is indicated that when ready made teaching and learning resources are inadequate, inappropriate or unavailable, teachers should improvise (TDU, 1998). The improvised resources generate



interest in teacher and learner and promote creativity and encourage other more practical skills to be shown among both the tutors and students. The tutors thus need more orientation of the importance of improvisation in order to depend on themselves when it comes to search of teaching and learning resources.

From the results it can be noted that the tutors really wanted to use the approaches despite the challenges, they had to think quickly instead. The tutors did not let lack of resources take them back to lecture method.

#### ***4.7.3 Reverting to the traditional approaches***

2 out of 8 tutors indicated that they sometimes revert to the lecture methods in order to cope with the challenge of large classes. The study showed that in most cases the tutors do this when the topics are new and they know that if the classes are large they are bound to have too many groups which will mean too many presentations.

One tutor was however quick to note that it was not their making, but the situation forces them to do that.

In his words tutor B said,

*"For large classes, I use lecture methods, because there is nothing that I can do"*

Despite the challenges, the tutors are walking towards the "confirmation" stage of Rogers' model however; in this stage individuals could reverse their decision if exposed to conflicting issues about the innovation.

It is unfortunate that tutors revert to the traditional lecture method to solve the problem of large classes because this contradicts the principle of LCAs which demands that the learner should be actively involved. Perhaps the tutors follow Mtunda & Safuli (1991), TDU (1998) that lecture method can be used where classes are large. I think that if the tutors are going to follow that principle then, there will be little change in the way student teachers are taught. There is need to find better ways of coping with the problem of large classes than going back to the old ways of doing things.



## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND AREAS OF FURTHER RESEARCH**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents conclusions of the study, makes recommendations for change and identifies areas for further studies.

#### **5.2 Conclusions**

The Ministry of Education has taken a bold step towards the implementation of Learner Centred Approaches in the TTCs to support the newly introduced OBE curriculum in primary education. Existing literature suggests that many countries in Europe, America as well as Africa have implemented the LCAs with varying degrees of success.

The findings of this study illustrated that implementation of the Learner Centred Approaches had followed the stages stipulated in Rogers' model of diffusion of the innovation. The tutors' knowledge of the teaching and learning approaches through the direct or indirect orientation and their positive perceptions towards the new approaches assisted them to make decisions of shifting from the traditional teacher centred approaches to the new learner centred approaches. Many approaches were mentioned by most tutors, which showed that they were more aware of the approaches than before and this is a good sign in the process of change adoption. The use of some of the approaches in the classroom indicated the adoption of the innovation.

It is also indicated that continuous professional development for both the tutors and teachers was a necessary tool for learning more about new innovations although it is not adequately offered to the TTCs.

The study found that participation in the Sandwich Capacity Building Programme influenced tutors to decide and try out learner centred approaches. However it was found that various factors affected the smooth implementation of the innovations, the challenges that rated the highest were inadequate resources, time constraints, lack of institutional support and large classes.



The study concluded that with creativity, interest and positive attitudes, Learner Centred Approaches are feasible in Teacher Training Colleges in Malawi and demonstrated that the practices that were taken from the enriched country can work in Malawi with some modification in view of practical realities on the ground.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

The paradigm shift from Teacher Centred to Learner Centred is a transitional process that requires support in a number of ways. In view of this study made the following recommendations:

- The Ministry of Education through the Department of Teacher Education and Development should providing necessary support for the sustenance of the innovations at college level in form of adequate resources and provided on time and also provision of Continuous Profession Development for tutors.
- The Ministry of Education through the MANEB should review the nature of national examination to take into account the demands of OB E.
- Ministry of Education through department of planning should build more classrooms at the TTCs to decrease the tutor/student ratio in the classrooms in order to allow tutors work with few students when using the LCAs.
- TTCs should introduce resource rooms for storage of improvised resources for future use

### **5.4 Areas for further Research**

This study provides a spring board for other research opportunities in the area of teaching and learning in Teacher Education in Malawi. In view of the fact that this was a preliminary and a case study of one teacher training college in one learning area, it is recommended that other researchers could carry out a broader study at national level.

A comparative study could be carried out to compare how the student teachers implement the learner centred approaches in the primary schools during the college based phase and the school based phase.



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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Introductory Letter to conduct research

UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI



CHANCELLOR COLLEGE

Department of Educational Foundations

#### **PRINCIPAL**

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13<sup>th</sup> June, 2007

Our Ref.: Edf/6/19

Your Ref.:

---

Dear Sir/Madam

#### INTRODUCING MRS SELINA KANYERERE - MKWETEZA

I have the pleasure to introduce to you Mrs. Selina Kanyerere – Mkweteza, our postgraduate student who is studying for a Master of Education degree in Policy Planning and Leadership. To fulfill some of the requirements for the program, she is required to carry out a field-based research study to collect data for her thesis. Mrs. Mkweteza is due to start her research study this month and accordingly, any support rendered to her will be greatly appreciated.

I thank you in anticipation for your cooperation and support.

A handwritten signature in ink, appearing to read 'Bob Wajizigha Chulu'.

Dr. Bob Wajizigha Chulu

Head, Educational Foundations Department

## **Appendix B: Introduction and Informed Consent**

My name is Sellina Kanyerere-Mkweteza. I am a student from the University of Malawi, Chancellor College. I am collecting data for an academic research study whose general objective is to investigate how tutors implement Learner Centred Approaches. I would be grateful if you could spend some time with me to answer some questions. This study is being conducted independently. Everything you tell me will be strictly confidential and your name will not be written anywhere. Note that your answers are strictly for this academic research. The researcher is a student for Master of Education specializing in Policy, Planning and Leadership who is seeking for thesis work. You are not forced to answer any questions that you do not want to and you may withdraw from the interview at any time.

Do you have any questions?

May I continue?



## Appendix C: Interview Guidelines for Tutors- (Teacher Training College)

### Preliminary Information

Name of College: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of College: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: Male/ Female      Age \_\_\_\_\_ Highest education  
qualification \_\_\_\_\_

1. For how long have you been in the teaching service? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How many years have you been a tutor? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you teach other subjects apart from English? What else do teach?
4. Can you describe the way you teach English? What methods do you use when teaching English?
5. Do you like the way you teach? Why?

### Knowledge and use of learner centred approaches

6. How did you know about learner centred approaches?
7. Do you actually use learner centred approaches when teaching English?
8. What is your role in a learner centred environment?
9. Among the learner centred approaches that you know which ones do you not feel comfortable when using? Why?
10. What have you done in order to learn about the other learner centred approaches that you do not understand?(directed to those who did not go to Germany)

### Implementation

11. What kind of materials were you provided with in readiness for the implementation of the learner centred approaches in your classrooms?
12. Do you need any support in using LCA? What kind of support?
13. What challenges have you been facing as you implement the approaches here at the TTC?
14. How have you tried to overcome the challenges that you face? Are able to modify some of the approaches? How helpful has it been?
15. How do you see yourself having changed the way you teach after the introduction of LCAs?

16. Do you practice team teaching when conducting English lessons? If not, why?

17. How have your fellow tutors assisted you in the use of LCAs?

### **Institutional Support**

18. How helpful has the administration been as you implement the learner centred approaches?

19. How often does your principal or head of department visit your class to see how you are implementing LCAs?

### **Evaluation**

20. In your opinion, do you think tutors should completely change their practices in the way they teach? Why?

21. What would you recommend on the use of LCAs in TTCs?

### **Closing Remarks**

Thank you very much for the information that you have provided to make this study a success. Once again be assured of confidentiality about the information that you have provided.



## **Appendix D: Interview Schedule- The Principal -Teachers' Training College**

### **Preliminary Information**

Name of College: \_\_\_\_\_ Type of College: Public/ Private

Number of tutors: Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Students: Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: Male/ Female \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Highest Education Qualification \_\_\_\_\_

1. Did you teach before becoming Principal of this College? \_\_\_\_\_ For how long did you teach? \_\_\_\_\_ How did you teach?
2. How many years have you been Principal of Kasungu TTC? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What do you enjoy most about your work as Principal?

### **Knowledge about Learner Centred Approaches**

4. Are you aware of the learner centred approaches that are being implemented in TTCs? What do you know about learner centred approaches? How did you learn about learner centred approaches?
5. As a Principal, were you involved in any way in the learner centred approaches? How important has been your involvement in the approaches?
6. What is your perception on LCAs? What do you think about them?

### **Implementation**

7. Do you know if the tutors are using learner centred approaches in their classrooms? What measures have you applied to see if the tutors are using the approaches?
8. How would you describe the tutors' attitudes towards learner centred approaches?
9. What challenges do tutors encounter in implementing learner centred approaches?
10. Do the tutors practice team teaching? How do you as Principal work with the tutors in the implementation process?
11. What do you see as the value of the implementation of learner centred approaches?

**Appendix E: Interview Schedule – Professional Development Officer (DTED / InWEnt Representative)**

**Preliminary Information**

1. Gender: Male/Female    2. Age: \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Nationality: \_\_\_\_\_  
4. Highest Education Qualification: \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Have you been teacher before? What did you teach?

**Knowledge about Learner Centred Approaches**

6. What do you know about learner centred approaches?  
7. Who proposed the idea of learner centred approaches for TTCs? Were you involved in the proposition? Were tutors involved in the proposition for the use of LCAs?

**Implementation**

9. Do tutors actually use the proposed new approaches? How do you know?  
10. What challenges do the tutors encounter as they implement the Learner Centred Approaches?  
11. What support have you provided to the tutors as they implement LCAs?  
Is it adequate?  
12. What do you think can be changed about LCAs, in a Malawian context?  
13. What do you see as the value of the implementation of LCAs?  
14. On your part as DTED/INWENT, what have you done to make the implementation of LCAs effective?  
15. In your opinion, do you think tutors should completely change their practices in the way they teach? Why?  
16. What would you recommend on the use LCAs in TTCs?

**Thank you.**



## Appendix F: Sample Schemes and Records of Work

|                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4<br>28 <sup>th</sup> May<br>to<br>1 <sup>st</sup> June<br>2007 | Students teachers must be able to:<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Describe situations for teaching speaking skills</li><li>Teach speaking skills using different situations</li><li>Use techniques for teaching reading aloud</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Identifying situation for teaching speaking skills e.g. debates</li><li>Discussing guidelines to consider when using each situation in teaching speaking skills</li><li>Preparing, conducting and analyzing micro lessons</li><li>Discussing the meaning, strengths and limitations of reading aloud</li><li>Identifying techniques for reading aloud e.g. read and look up</li><li>Using appropriate techniques in reading poems, plays and dialogue</li><li>Identifying activities that could accompany reading aloud e.g. clapping hands dancing and stamping feet</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Role play</li><li>Debate</li><li>Question and answer</li><li>Discussion</li><li>Self assessment</li><li>Brainstorming</li><li>Songs and rhymes</li><li>Demonstration</li><li>Group work</li><li>Teacher observation</li><li>Micro-teaching</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Radios</li><li>Videos</li><li>Recorded debates</li><li>Observation</li><li>Checklists</li><li>Questionnaires</li><li>Different objects</li><li>Cassette recorders</li><li>Dictionaries</li><li>Poems</li><li>Dialogues</li></ul> | IPTE English Teach Syllabus page 26-27<br><br>IPTE Lecturers Hand book for term 3, Unit and 5<br><br>IPTE Students Hand book Units 4 and 5 |
| 5<br>4 <sup>th</sup> June<br>to 8 <sup>th</sup> June<br>2007    | Student teacher must be able to:<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>use techniques for teaching poems and plays</li></ul>                                                                                                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Discussing the importance and procedures for teaching poems, plays and dialogues</li><li>Analyzing poems and plays</li><li>Developing, conducting and discussing micro lessons on poems, plays and dialogues</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Discussion</li><li>Demonstration</li><li>Teacher observation</li><li>Role play</li><li>Pair work</li><li>Self-assessment</li><li>Micro teaching</li><li>Dramatizations</li></ul>                                                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Dictionaries</li><li>Checklists</li><li>Recorded poems, plays and dialogue</li><li>Reading boards</li><li>Cassette recorders</li><li>Language laboratory</li><li>Flash cards</li></ul>                                           | IPTE English Teach Syllabus page 27-28<br><br>IPTE Lecturers Hand book for term 3, Unit and 5<br><br>IPTE Students Hand book Units 4 and 5 |





## Appendix G: Sample Lesson Plan

CLASS N.

15/6/07

### Teaching Listening Skills

#### Introduction

Why are listening skills important?

- Give any 4 techniques for teaching listening skills.

#### Development

Step 1: Procedure for teaching listening skills using stories  
- Ref. to notes

Step 2: Practise (Demonstration by dr.)

Step 3: Practise by students.

Conclusion: Summary of the lesson

### QUESTIONS - Guide questions

1. What ~~was~~ <sup>is</sup> the setting of this story (Circumstances)
2. Who was the most suffering member in the institution mentioned above.
3. ~~How~~ how long had this person been in this institution.
4. What was the cause of the whole scenario?

## Appendix H: Teaching Vignettes for Tutor A & N

- Tutor N begins his lesson with questions from the previous lesson “Idiomatic expressions” and the student teachers respond in chorus. He quickly writes a few activities on the chalkboard for students to work on from the topic “Figures of speech” and asks them to go into their groups. While they are working he goes around monitoring the progress and announces time up after 30 minutes of working. Already, 40 minutes have gone, she then asks student representative from each group, one a time to make their presentations. After every presentation students make comments, tutor asks questions and this time the responses are both individual and chorus. One group is left because it is time, they are asked to do in the next lesson.
- Tutor A starts his lesson by revising the previous lesson through question and answer technique. The responses are chorus. He asks the students to brainstorm on the topic “supplementary reading materials” Tutor begins explaining the various figures of speech, giving their definition and examples. Student teachers listen attentively. Then after explanation, he asks questions on the topic.
- Tutor N goes straight to writing the new topic “supplementary reading materials”. He then reads out the definition of the term from his handbook. He gives examples of supplementary reading materials. Students listen. Tutor then asks for four volunteers to display some supplementary reading materials on the tables which have been put in front of the class. In groups, students are asked to have a gallery walk to see what kind of reading materials were displayed, the volunteers take the responsibility to explain to their friends what is on their display table.