

Teacher Reliance on Downloaded Lesson Plans and Its Impact on Competency-Based Communicative Language Teaching: Evidence from Rural Secondary Schools in Mbinga District, Tanzania

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Abstract

Grounded in the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Constructivist Learning Theory, this study examined teachers' reliance on downloaded lesson plans and schemes of work, and the implications for competency-based teaching in rural public secondary schools in Mbinga District, Tanzania. A qualitative case study design was employed, involving 46 participants: 8 English language teachers, 4 headmasters, 2 school quality assurance officers, and 32 Form Three students. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, documentary review, and focus group discussions. Findings revealed that many teachers perceived lesson planning primarily as an administrative requirement, leading to heavy reliance on standardised digital materials with minimal contextual adaptation. This practice reduced teacher creativity, limited learner engagement, and weakened the development of students' communicative competence. The study further noted that uncritical use of downloaded resources diminished opportunities for meaningful language interaction. The study concludes that the use of digital tools enhances the efficiency of lesson preparation, whereas downloading instructional materials without domesticating them to local contexts undermines pedagogical quality. The study recommends strengthening teacher training, encouraging the contextual adaptation of digital resources, and enhancing quality assurance mechanisms to align classroom practices with the realities of competency-based education.

Keywords: *Communicative Language Teaching, digital adaptation, downloading practices, Lesson planning, creativity.*

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1.0 Introduction

Lesson planning is central to effective teaching, ensuring curriculum alignment and consistency across terms (UNESCO, 2023). Traditionally, plans were handwritten and tailored to learners' needs, fostering creativity and contextual relevance (Lubuwa, Ndibalema, & Mbwapbo, 2024). In many developed contexts, lesson planning remains linked to professional responsibility and modern pedagogy. However, the rapid growth of ICT has transformed this practice, with online repositories offering efficiency and uniformity (OECD, 2022). While digital resources save time, overreliance on them risks producing generic lessons detached from classroom realities (National Digital Education Strategy, United Republic of Tanzania, 2025). In Africa, ICT integration is promoted to enhance skills and teacher training (African Union, 2023). Nevertheless, studies show that teachers often download plans without adapting them, limiting innovation (Mgaya, 2024; Machemba & Biswal, 2025). Rural schools face additional challenges, including poor infrastructure and limited expertise (Jonathan & Biswal, 2025). Tanzania's education policy (United Republic of Tanzania, 2023) prioritises ICT, but rural districts struggle with limited access to ICT and materials. Despite policy emphasis, little recent research has examined how reliance on downloaded lesson plans affects competency-based English teaching in rural Tanzania. This study addresses that gap by analysing downloading practices and their pedagogical implications in Mbinga's public secondary schools.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Foundation

This study employs Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Constructivist Learning Theory to examine how reliance on downloaded lesson plans affects teacher creativity and contextual relevance in rural Tanzanian classrooms. CLT, as articulated by Hymes (1972) and Canale & Swain (1980), emphasises communicative competence, including grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic skills, through learner-centred approaches and authentic interaction. The concern is whether standardised digital materials support or limit these skills. Constructivism complements CLT by emphasising that knowledge is actively constructed through engagement, collaboration, and experience (Piaget, 1970; Vygotsky, 1978). In resource-constrained settings, digital resources offer efficiency but also pose risks, producing decontextualised lessons when used uncritically. Effective Competency-Based Teaching (CBT) requires teachers to adapt materials creatively, foster participation, and design communicative tasks grounded in students' realities. Thus, the value of digital resources lies not in their availability but in their contextual adaptation to support meaningful communication and knowledge construction.

2.2 Empirical Studies

Studies in Tanzania and Africa show that while digital resources improve efficiency in lesson preparation, they reduce creativity and contextual relevance when used uncritically. Mgaya (2024) found that teachers acknowledged ICT's potential but struggled with inadequate training, poor infrastructure, and low digital competence. As a result, many relied on downloaded lesson plans without modification. The study recommended

strengthening professional development to enhance digital competence and encourage creative adaptation. Similarly, Machemba & Biswal (2025) reported that teachers held positive attitudes toward ICT but used it as a substitute for traditional methods rather than as a tool for pedagogical innovation. Their study emphasised integrating ICT skills with pedagogical strategies that promote contextual adaptation. A study by Lubuva, Ndibalema, and Mbwambo (2024) found that teachers perceived ICT as a means of improving efficiency rather than for designing context-specific lessons. Mwalongo supports the concern that downloadable lesson plans encourage dependence on readymade resources. Beyond teacher competence, infrastructural challenges remain significant. A Policy Forum (2025) analysis highlighted unreliable internet access, limited access to computers, and an inconsistent electricity supply as barriers to effective ICT integration in rural schools.

Teacher preparedness is another recurring theme. Jonathan & Biswal (2025) found that many teachers lacked the skills to evaluate and adapt downloaded materials, leading to unmodified classroom implementation. They called for stronger training in digital literacy and instructional design. Similarly, Ng'ambi (2019), studying rural African schools, observed that teachers used downloaded lesson plans without contextualising them to socio-cultural realities, resulting in a disconnect from learners' experiences. Kasuga et al. (2025) reported that teachers primarily used digital resources to save time, with limited modifications. Tanzania's National Digital Education Strategy (2025) underscores the importance of digital repositories but warns against uniform teaching practices that neglect local contexts. It advocates for teacher autonomy in adapting resources to maintain creativity and relevance. These studies highlight a persistent tension: digital adoption expands access and efficiency but risks eroding pedagogical quality when teachers replicate rather than adapt materials. Despite these insights, research has focused on national or urban contexts, leaving rural districts underexplored. This gap is critical because rural schools face dual challenges: limited access to digital resources and the risk of overreliance on downloaded lesson plans when access is available. These conditions may undermine teachers' creativity and reduce the contextual relevance of English language teaching.

3.0 Methodology

This study employed a qualitative case study design to investigate teachers' reliance on downloaded lesson plans within the Competency-Based Communicative Language Teaching framework in Mbinga District. The qualitative approach was chosen to capture teachers' lived experiences and contextual practices, enabling a holistic understanding of how downloaded instructional materials are adapted in resource-constrained classrooms. The case study design, as emphasised by Creswell (2013) and Yin (2003), provided a flexible framework for examining the interplay between teachers' practices and contextual realities. The study area was deliberately selected to reflect rural secondary schools where structural and pedagogical challenges often shape CBT implementation. Mbinga's linguistic context, students' bilingualism in Kimatengo and Kiswahili alongside English as the instructional language, further highlighted the need to explore how lesson plans are contextualised to support communicative competence in rural schools.

A purposive sample of 46 participants was drawn from four public secondary schools with persistent poor performance in English, including teachers, school heads, quality assurance officers, and Form Three students. Data collection employed triangulated qualitative methods, including semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, documentary review, and focus group discussions, to capture both reported and observed practices. Classroom observations verified alignment between teachers and actual practices, while documentary reviews assessed the contextual relevance of instructional materials. Focus groups provided students' perspectives on lesson delivery and communicative opportunities. Data were analysed using content analysis guided by Creswell's (2013) approach, combining deductive coding informed by constructivist and communicative theories with inductive theme generation. Trustworthiness was ensured through triangulation, peer debriefing, and reflective memos. Ethical considerations included informed consent, confidentiality, voluntary participation, and adherence to institutional guidelines, ensuring the study was conducted responsibly and that participants' rights were safeguarded.

4.0 Findings and Discussion

4.1 Demographic Information of Respondents

The study involved 46 purposively selected participants from four public secondary schools with persistent poor performance in English, comprising 8 teachers, 4 school heads, 2 quality assurance officers and 32 students. Teachers' ages ranged from 28 to 52 years, with 3–20 years of classroom experience. School heads were aged 40–55 and had 5 years of administrative service. The quality assurance officers, aged 35–50, and the students, aged 15–17, represented diverse ability levels from classes that consistently underperformed in English. Gender distribution was mixed, with men slightly more represented among teachers and administrators, while female students were marginally more than males, ensuring varied insights into instructional practices and contextual challenges.

4.2 Teachers' Perceptions of Downloading the Scheme of Work and Lesson Plans

The findings suggested that teachers understood the significance of preparing lesson documents. However, teachers' understanding was linked to fulfilling inspection requirements rather than pedagogical requirements. A Teacher had this to say: *"..... lesson plans are important for inspection requirements, when inspectors visit the school* (Teacher, KIS, 30/8/2025).

This statement reflects a compliance-oriented culture in which teachers perceive lesson planning as an administrative obligation tied to inspection, rather than a pedagogical practice. The finding suggests that external accountability structures shape teacher behaviour, potentially overriding the intrinsic educational value of lesson planning. Another teacher made a similar observation, describing that the lesson plan and scheme of work were not prepared. Teachers download them from free-access links and submit them to the head of school. The teacher had this to comment;

"... We have technology, and we have WhatsApp and other social media. When the school opens, and you need to prepare the scheme of work, we download it, make a few modifications, and submit it. However, in reality, it was not supposed to be so. Teaching is an art and a science; we were required to use the principles we learned in college, but we do not. These occur due to heavy workloads and multiple activities..." (Teacher, K1S. 31/8/2025).

The teacher's reference to WhatsApp and social media highlights the growing role of digital platforms in lesson preparation. Technology is perceived as a convenient shortcut that enables quick access to schemes of work. However, the finding shows that reliance on ready-made digital materials reflects a shift from traditional to modern instruction and from creative lesson planning toward dependency on external resources. The teachers' findings concurred with the school quality assurance officer, who reported that teachers tended to download schemes of work and lesson plans without contextualisation. She had this to comment;

"... Teachers download lesson plans to meet the requirements of inspectors. It is not valued as important or as pedagogical preparation. One time, I went to school just a month ago; I found two teachers had downloaded the scheme of work, and during a classroom visit, I noted that one was teaching a lesson which was not in his documents" (SQA 1, 22/9/2025).

The finding revealed that teachers downloaded lesson plans and schemes of work to meet inspection requirements. The observation findings suggested that schemes of work and lesson plans were not valued as pedagogical tools. Along the same lines, the head of school (K4S) insisted that teachers' perceptions of lesson preparation focused on compliance rather than on pedagogical tools. She explained that teaching is most effective when the teacher is well prepared. She had this to confirm;

".....teachers do not prepare lessons; the majority believe it is a waste of time.... when you talk to some of them, they tell you that preparation is a formality (Head of school KS4, 4th September 2025).

The findings revealed a negative attitude among teachers towards lesson preparation. They perceived preparation as a "waste of time" and reduced it to a "formality." This finding reflects a professional culture in which pedagogical planning is undervalued and normalised as unnecessary. The students' findings corroborate the school head's concerns, providing sharper detail on classroom realities. Their testimonies revealed that teachers entered the classroom unprepared, leading to inconsistencies and repeated topics, thereby undermining pedagogical progress. The enquiry highlights a pattern of instructional deficiency, with preparation either superficial or absent, leaving students without a clear framework for teaching and learning. One student claimed:

"... Teachers prepared lessons; there was no teaching and learning guide. Teachers entered the classroom without teaching aids, a lesson plan, or even a book. This situation caused a teacher to repeat a topic without moving forward. When inspectors came, they used to prepare us to respond to questions, making us take notes and threatening to punish anyone who really practised..." (Student K2S, 24th September 2025).

Students reported that teachers often entered classrooms without teaching aids, lesson plans, or even textbooks, leaving them without a structured guide for teaching and learning. This lack of preparation led to repeated coverage of the same topics and hindered progress. This finding highlights pedagogical deficiencies and curricular stagnation, in which a lack of resources and planning undermines the quality of instruction and students' competence. The students' voices emphasise that the classroom experience is reduced to repetition, depriving students of meaningful engagement. The findings revealed a widespread practice among teachers of downloading schemes of work and lesson plans rather than preparing their own documents. The Quality Assurance Officer had this to say:

"Last time I went for school supervision, it was fun. I found teachers downloading the scheme of work and lesson plan instead of preparing their own. This situation affects communication competence, and I also noted poor English examination results, with one school having 120 students; 80 students attained D and F grades in 2024" (SQA, 24/9/2025).

The findings show how reliance on externally prepared materials undermines pedagogical preparation and contributes to poor student outcomes. Teachers' practices, described as superficial and disconnected from classroom realities, resulted in weak communication competence. Komba (2018) emphasises that lesson planning is not an administrative requirement but a fundamental aspect of active pedagogy, ensuring structure, sequencing, and contextual adaptation. Neglecting these processes produces fragmented lessons and misalignment with learners' needs. Interviews with teachers and school leaders confirmed this inadequacy. One teacher admitted:

".....I have been here for twenty years; I have not received training in CBT, but I know that we are instructed to teach with CBT, which the majority of teachers in this school and many schools in rural areas are not familiar with" (Teacher, K3S, 16/9/2025).

Another teacher said: "... a good number of teachers do not prepare a scheme of work and lesson plans; they do not value them, and that is why our school performs poorly in the English subject (Teacher, 1/10/2025).

Head of School (K3S) reinforced this by saying: *"...in most cases, teachers do not prepare a lesson plan as a requirement of teaching professionals. Preparation is completed when they are informed that quality assurance officers will be visiting the school.* The statement claims that teachers prepare lessons for compliance and that most lesson plans are unsuited to students' needs. These reflections suggest that teachers' reliance on downloaded materials is not only a matter of convenience but also a symptom of inadequate training in Competency-Based Teaching.

Teachers often view downloading schemes of work and lesson plans as a convenient substitute for professional preparation. A Quality Assurance Officer observed: *"Last time I went for school supervision, it was fun. I found teachers downloading schemes of work and lesson plans; this is very funny instead of preparing their own" (SQA, 24/9/2025).* This perception frames downloading as an acceptable shortcut, even though it undermines pedagogical integrity. Teachers acknowledged that downloading lesson plans was driven by inadequate training and a lack of familiarity with Competency-Based Teaching. One

teacher said: "I have been here for twenty years, I have not received training in CBT, but I know that we are instructed to teach with CBT, which the majority of teachers in this school and many schools in rural areas are not familiar with" (Teacher, K3S, 16/9/2025). The quotation highlights how teachers perceive downloading as a coping mechanism in the absence of structured professional guidance. Without sufficient training, teachers may view external materials as necessary aids, even if they are poorly adapted to local contexts.

Similarly, the Head of School also confirmed that teachers perceive lesson planning as a compliance exercise rather than a meaningful pedagogical tool. The Head of School at K3S noted: "... *Preparation is done when they are informed that quality assurance officers are visiting the school....*" This finding shows that teachers prepare compliance-focused lessons that are unsuited to the curriculum requirements or mismatched with the scheme of work. The finding was supported by students in Focus group discussions (FGDs), which revealed dissatisfaction with teachers' instructional practices, with participants consistently pointing to lesson preparation, teaching approaches, and professional conduct. One student had this to say:

".....Our teacher does not prepare lessons and lesson notes; we are told how to express ourselves, how to write good essays or reports, but the challenge is teachers' preparation,sometimes come and tell us to help each other without being assisted" (Student, K2S, October 2, 2025).

This quotation suggests that teachers neglect structured preparation, leaving students without adequate guidance or resources and forcing them to seek private tutoring to fill instructional gaps. Students emphasised that teachers' lack of lesson notes and teaching aids undermined their ability to learn effectively, particularly in language subjects where structured practice is essential. The reliance on peer support rather than teacher-led instruction reflects a breakdown in professional responsibility, leaving learners to manage their own progress without adequate scaffolding. This situation not only weakens classroom engagement but also erodes students' confidence in the teaching profession, as they perceive preparation as superficial. These findings carry significant implications for both policy and practice.

Classroom observation reinforced the same patterns of inadequate preparation and superficial compliance. In school K4S, for example, a teacher was observed teaching *indirect speech* to Form Three students, despite the lesson plan and scheme of work indicating that the appropriate topic was *literary analysis*. This mismatch revealed that the teacher was not using the lesson plan and scheme of work as pedagogical tools to guide instruction, but rather as documents for administrative compliance.

This practice reflects that teachers prepare documents to satisfy external requirements rather than to enhance classroom learning. The observed lesson demonstrated that schemes of work and lesson plans were treated as bureaucratic artefacts rather than frameworks for structuring teaching and learning. The findings reveal that teachers in the studied schools perceive lesson planning as an administrative requirement rather than a pedagogical necessity. This compliance-oriented culture, shaped by inspection demands and job security concerns, aligns with earlier studies that highlight how external

accountability often overrides intrinsic educational values in rural African schools (Ng'ambi, 2019). Teachers' reliance on WhatsApp and other digital platforms to download schemes of work reflects a broader trend of ICT adoption in Tanzanian classrooms, yet the practice remains superficial when materials are not contextualised to learner needs. The teacher admitted, *"teaching is an art and a science; we were required to use the principles we learned in college, but we do not"* (Teacher, K1S, 31/8/2025). This view underscores the tension between professional training and classroom realities, where heavy workloads and inadequate preparation foster dependency on external resources.

The observation also aligned with Mgaya (2024) and Machemba & Biswal (2025), who observed that teachers substitute downloaded lesson plans for creative instructional design, reducing opportunities for learner-centred engagement. Similarly, Jonathan & Biswal (2025) noted that teachers lacked the skills to evaluate and adapt digital materials, resulting in their unmodified implementation in classrooms. Students' findings further confirm the consequences of such practices. These outcomes resonate with Constructivist Learning Theory, which emphasises the construction of contextualised knowledge through active engagement (Piaget, 1970; Vygotsky, 1978).

The discussion also highlights systemic implications. Teachers' neglect of lesson planning undermines the goals of Competency-Based Teaching (CBT), which requires contextual adaptation and creativity to foster communicative competence. Komba (2018) argues that lesson planning ensures coherence, sequencing, and alignment with learner realities. The erosion of these principles in secondary schools reflects both inadequate professional development and weak institutional accountability. This finding suggests that without sustained CBT training and stronger monitoring mechanisms, teachers will continue to rely on downloaded materials, thereby perpetuating poor student outcomes in English language learning.

4.3 Downloaded Materials and the Erosion of Contextual Communication Skills

The findings revealed that teachers' reliance on downloaded schemes of work and lesson plans was widespread in rural schools, with direct implications for students' communication competencies. Students consistently described lessons as unstructured and lacking contextual relevance. A student complained: *"Our teacher does not prepare lesson notes, sometimes tells us to help each other without examples"* (Student, K2S, 2/10/2025). This observation illustrates how downloaded materials, often generic and ill-suited to the local environment, failed to provide structured oral activities, leaving learners with limited opportunities to build speaking confidence. A teacher admitted: *"We are instructed to teach with CBT, but most of us are not trained, so we just use what we find online"* (Teacher, K3S, 16/9/2025). This reliance on external resources led to lessons dominated by teacher talk, with little emphasis on interactive listening tasks such as dialogues, debates, or audio comprehension.

Reading competence was similarly affected. Classroom observation revealed mismatches between downloaded schemes and actual teaching practice. The study shows a teacher teaching *indirect speech* rather than the literary analysis topic indicated in the scheme of work. Similarly, a student explained: *"Sometimes we are told to read on our own because the*

teacher has no prepared notes or book" (Student, K3S, 25/9/2025). This lack of structured reading guidance deprived learners of opportunities to analyse texts critically, weakening comprehension and vocabulary development. The Head of School at K3S noted: *"Preparation is done when they are informed that quality assurance officers are visiting. Most of the lessons prepared are mismatched with the scheme of work"* (Head of School, K3S). The observation shows that teachers prepared lessons for inspections rather than for pedagogical use.

The advent of digital technology was a promising development for teachers and students; however, the findings revealed that it had a negative impact when used improperly. The fact that technology enabled teachers to access materials easily, strengthened classroom interactions, and improved teaching and learning outcomes led teachers to use it differently; downloading instructional plans without adapting them to contextual needs is one such misuse. During the interview, the quality assurance officer had this to say;

".....I went to a few schools last month for supervision. I checked the lesson plans and noticed that they were retrieved from open links. The danger is that no authority was deemed competent to prepare and post it via open links. When I asked a teacher why he did that, he responded that he had no time to prepare for 36 periods a week, that the workload was heavy, and that we were supposed to finish the syllabus (School Quality Assurance, September 18, 2025).

The observation raises serious concerns about the credibility, relevance, and pedagogical soundness of such materials. Within the Competency-Based Teaching (CBT) framework, lesson preparation is expected to be context-specific and aligned with learners' needs. However, reliance on unverified online materials suggests a shift from professional instructional design to convenience-driven practices, which may weaken the quality of classroom delivery and limit the effective development of students' English communication skills. The quotation, which states that *"we are supposed to finish the syllabus,"* reflects a system that prioritises administrative requirements over effective teaching and meaningful learning. The emphasis on syllabus coverage forces teachers to move quickly through content, often at the expense of students' understanding and skill development.

Findings from classroom observations and student testimonies reveal the consequences of downloading practices for learners' communicative competence. Students reported that teachers who relied on downloaded materials entered the classroom without teaching aids or structured notes, leading to repeated topics and stagnation in curriculum delivery. One student noted, *"Teachers usually came into the classroom without teaching aids, a lesson plan, or even a book to guide them. This situation caused a teacher to repeat a topic without moving forward"* (Student K2S, 24/9/2025). Such practices undermine the CLT's requirement for interactive, learner-centred tasks and reduce learners' opportunities to actively construct meaning and engage in authentic communication.

These findings have significant implications for implementing Competency-Based Teaching (CBT) in rural Tanzanian schools. Teachers who prepare their own materials align closely with CBT's goals of skill development, contextual adaptation, and learner participation. However, the widespread reliance on downloaded documents reflects challenges such as heavy workloads, inadequate training, and institutional pressure to complete the syllabus.

One of the teachers admitted, *"I have not received training in CBT... the majority of teachers in this school and many schools in rural areas are not familiar with it"* (Teacher, K3S, 16/9/2025). The finding reveals a gap between policy directives and classroom realities, calling for professional development and supportive supervision to help teachers adapt communicative tasks and foster learner-centred instruction.

Nevertheless, another finding shows a contradiction between ideal pedagogical approaches and the realities of classroom practice. A teacher continued, confirming that *"English teaching needs time and teaching slowly using communicative methods,"* yet concluded that the current situation is *"like a nightmare."* The emotional tone of a teacher reflects challenges that hinder the implementation of communicative and competency-based approaches. This finding shows that teaching English through a communicative approach takes time, and when this approach is not observed, the goal of communicative and competence-based education remains incomplete.

The overall findings indicate that teachers depend on downloaded schemes of work and lesson plans for compliance purposes. These findings align with those of Mgya (2024), Machemba and Biswal (2025), and Mwalongo (2011), who found that teachers prepare lessons for compliance rather than for instructional use. Despite the advantage of digital resources' accessibility (OECD, 2020; UNESCO, 2019), contextual adaptation is diminished by uncritical use, resulting in generic lessons that disregard socio-cultural realities (Ng'ambi, 2019; Policy Forum, 2025). Lesson planning is approached bureaucratically, with workloads of 36 periods per week that restrict preparation time, reflecting research suggesting that plans are used for inspection rather than for teaching (Mgya, 2024). This observation compromises the learner-centred approach of CLT, resulting in disjointed, educator-dominant teaching.

The study also points out that content downloaded is not always aligned with the curriculum, leading to incoherent and shallow learning (Jonathan & Biswal, 2025; Kasuga & Kalolo, 2025). Student complaints about poor preparation, repetition, and ineffective English-only teaching were identified during focus groups. Teachers lacked plans or aids, as there had been previous reports of inadequate training and competence (Mwalongo, 2011; Mgya, 2024). Little contact with the English language diminished communicative practice and skills in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Savignon (2022) emphasises the active aspect of competence, whereas Jonassen (1999) emphasises the necessity of contextual scaffolding, which occurs only when teachers develop their own sources. The study also aligns with Policy Forum (2025) and John (2024) in indicating that workload and lack of training, the pressure to rely on downloaded resources in the syllabus, and the increasing gap between policy and practice are all systemic issues. Constructivist theorists focus on contextual adjustment (Piaget, 1970), and Hattie (2009) attributes improved performance to structured planning. Professional growth and supervision are necessary for the effective integration of digital resources, particularly in rural areas where ICT is a limiting factor (Policy Forum, 2025).

5.0 Conclusion

This study finds that Competency-Based Teaching (CBT) in rural public secondary schools in Mbinga District is undermined by the use of downloaded schemes of work and lesson plans, which are primarily used to achieve administrative compliance rather than to provide pedagogical direction. Under pressure from inspections, excessive workload, and a lack of professional development, inadequate contextualisation and disengagement from classroom realities continue to leave teachers with only shallow, poorly contextualised practices, reducing the possibility of meaningful interaction and communicative competence. Systemic issues, including insufficient CBT training, limited digital access, and workloads, exacerbate policy expectations and classroom practice, further narrowing reforms to nominal implementation. Although digital resources offer efficiency and accessibility, their pedagogical importance requires teachers to adapt them creatively to local contexts. To develop students' communication skills, it is thus necessary not only to provide them with digital tools but also to invest in teachers' professional development and training.

6.0 Recommendations

Lesson planning must be regarded as a significant intellectual and pedagogical endeavour, rather than an administrative directive. The downloaded schemes of work and lesson plans should be modified to reflect learners' linguistic, cultural, and environmental contexts. It is necessary to pay more attention to communicative activities such as discussions, role-plays, and group work, which engage students more in using English. School leaders need to ensure that lesson plans are not only presented but also effectively implemented in the classroom. The Ministry of Education needs to focus on lifelong professional development in Competency-Based Teaching, digital literacy, and instructional design. Quality assurance should focus on classroom practice rather than paperwork. There must be clear guidelines to help teachers adapt online materials, and reallocation of resources should prioritise rural secondary schools.

Future research may use mixed-methods and experimental designs to investigate the impact of context-based lesson planning on students' communicative outcomes. A comparative study of rural and urban schools would be useful for examining differences in the contextual adoption of digital and teaching methods. These studies will enhance knowledge of how lesson-planning strategies can be adjusted across various learning settings and of the evidence base for policy and practice in competency-based communicative language teaching.

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