Role of Teacher Education Pedagogy in Developing Communication Competences among Teacher Trainees. A Case of Makerere University – Uganda

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Abstract—This article explains the communication competences that teacher education pedagogy at Makerere University equips to her teacher trainees through her two pre – service teacher education programs of Bachelor of Arts with Education and Bachelor of Science with Education. Data was collected from 134 third year teacher trainees using self-administered questionnaires (SAQs) as well as observation checklists and researchers’ reflections on education practices at School of Education, Makerere University. SAQs were administered to establish teacher trainees’ perceptions of the various communication competences they felt that had been developed in them as a result of the various pedagogical activities they have been engaged in during the course of their studies in the two teacher education programs. On the other hand, observation checklists were prepared on various communication competences that teacher trainees were expected to practically demonstrate in their lessons during school practice. Data collected indicates that teacher education pedagogy of Makerere University develops in teacher trainees’ multiple communication competences like understanding other people’s ideas that are different from their own perspective, accepting suggestions from their colleagues as they work on their assignments, paying attention to nonverbal cues of others, giving and accepting critical feedback when necessary, looking at people when listening to them as well as speaking at appropriate volume levels. However, there were also other communication competences that are yet to be fully developed among teacher trainees like redirecting conversations when people rattle on and on, ease at receiving compliments, complementing and praising others, and speaking the truth more especially if saying it can upset another person or make matters worse. Based on the findings in the study, the researchers recommend the need use more active teaching and learning methods of teaching that can offer teacher trainees more opportunities to communicate with each other so as even the competences that are not fully developed can be embraced by teacher trainees during such interactions. Some of these pedagogies include tutorials, online pedagogy as well as debates as part of the normal lectures.

Index Terms—Communication competences, teacher education pedagogy, teaching profession, teacher trainees

INTRODUCTION

This study was conducted in order to find out the communication competences which teacher education pedagogy equips in its recipients in the two preservice teacher education programs of Makerere University. The reasons for this study were based on Reddy (2017)’s analogy that ‘No matter which career you pursue, you need to be an expert at communication as well as Janthon, et al (2014) and Kivunja (2014)’s attribution to communication skills as the key to success in any given career in the 21st century. Indeed, for one to function successfully academically and professionally, one needs not only to learn effective oral communication skills but also effective listening, writing, reading and nonverbal communication (Akinola, 2014). However, excellent communication skills are to a large extent not in born talent but skills that have to be developed into teacher trainees through scaffolding the potential skills of writing, listening, public speaking, interaction among others (Reddy, 2017). The nature of the teaching profession has a triple down effect on the rest of the population in the country, so if teachers are not carefully prepared by teacher training institutions, there are high chances that their communication in classrooms, as well as the larger school community will be very ineffective.

LITERATURE REVIEW

COMMUNICATION COMPETENCES AND THE TEACHING FRATERNITY

Hunt (1987) cited in Loy (2006) defines communication as “the process of people sending and receiving information.” Communication is an interpersonal process that requires two or more individuals sending and receiving messages and meaning (Loy, 2006). The ability to communicate is integral in all professions and occupations. The Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21, 2009) as cited by Kivunja (2014) delineates five sets of communication skills needed in any given career. These are; “the ability to articulate thoughts and ideas effectively, both orally and nonverbally, the ability to
listen and make sense of what is being said, the ability to utilize communication effectively, the ability to utilize a wide range of media and related technologies and ability to communicate in different environments.” Reddy (2017) refines the most important communication skills to be ‘listening, reading, speaking, body language and technological communication’. Thus, the nature of human communication comes in the forms of verbal, written and nonverbal. Verbal communications are always accompanied by gestures and facial expressions, while written communication comes accompanied by tables and graphs (Carvalho, 2007).

Without any doubt therefore, we come to an agreement that communication skills are equally needed by the teaching fraternity as the main job of a teacher is about communication as precisely put by Hunt et al, (2002) that, “A teacher encounters multiple communication exchanges each day with students, other teachers, administrators, and parents.” And in instances where a teacher fails to communicate, no educational proposal can successfully get through to the learners in one’s classroom (Carvalho, 2007). A successful teaching proposal to be realized requires what Eskandarjouy (2013) refers to as a transactional process that enables educators and students to create joint communication climates which changes from moment to moment as the conversation unfolds and the thoughts, attitudes and behaviors of both parties influencing each other in some way. An aspect considered by McLoughlin& Luca (2000) as the negotiated model of communication which puts emphasis on giving and taking of ideas among equals.

It is important to note that the communication skills used every day by teachers are to a large extent not in born talents but skills that have to be developed and improved through awareness, training and practice (Planas&Er, 2008). Reddy (2017) argue that “Some brilliant people are unable to impart the knowledge that they have onto other people because they lack effective communication skills.” This necessitates teacher education programs to include training of teacher trainees in a range of communication skills (Hunt et al, 2002). For example, oral communication is a unique and learned rhetorical skill that requires understanding what to say and how to say it (Kathiholil, 2007). Speech in more formal environments does not come naturally (Kathiholil, 2007). What should be learnt is how to critically think about how to present oneself as a speaker in all occasions and also how to function in a variety of speaking environments (Kathiholil, 2007). Oral communication can take many forms, ranging from informal conversation that occurs spontaneously and, in most cases, for which the content cannot be planned, to participation in meetings, which occurs in a structural environment, usually with a set agenda (Akinola, 2014). As a speaker there are several elements of oral communication of which one need to be aware of in order to learn how to use them to his/her advantage in order to be able to communicate effectively (Akinola, 2014). These elements are; sender, message, channel, receiver and feedback. It is usually erroneously assumed that the learners know these basics of oral communication (Akinola, 2014).

CONTEXT OF THE AREA OF STUDY

Makerere University was the first government university in Uganda to offer teacher education programs until the early 2000s when other government universities like Kyambogo University and Gulu University were established (Kagoda&Ezati, 2014). Despite being the first university to offer teacher education in Uganda, Makerere University has only two undergraduate pre-service teacher education programs. Namely; Bachelor of Arts with Education and Bachelor of Science with Education. These undergraduate teacher education programs study for a period of three academic years. During the course of their studies, teacher trainees are taught subject content from the faculties of science, Arts, and Economics while they are taught pedagogical related content at the School of Education (Kagoda&Sentongo, 2015). There is no standalone course unit at School of Education taught to teacher trainees with respect to communication skills, therefore all the possible communication skills that these teacher trainees graduate with are either a result of the topic on communication process in the Educational Technology course unit or the informal curriculum teacher trainees are subjected to through the mode of teaching and assessment by various lecturers as they pursue their studies in the three academic years.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

One of the most important 21st century competence for all professions including teaching is the ability to communicate. However, given the current curriculum offered to teacher trainees at School of Education, Makerere University, this skill has been given low attention as there is no standalone course unit on any of the teacher education programs to help in equipping the essential communication competences expected in the 21st century graduate teachers. Consequently, this study was carried out to establish the nature of communication skills that teacher trainees develop informally from the various teacher educators’ pedagogical activities.

PURPOSE

The main purpose of this study was to find out Makerere University teacher trainees’ perception of the nature of communication competences they develop informally from the various teacher educators’ pedagogical activities.
METHODOLOGY
This study surveyed the perceptions of the 2017/2018 third year teacher trainees on the forms of communication competences they developed throughout their stay at the university from 2015/2016. It was a largely quantitative study that used both close ended and open ended questionnaire. Four research assistants were used to administer close ended questionnaires to third year teacher trainees. Close ended questions were given to respondents so as to provide the researchers’ predetermined communication competences for respondents to choose from the Likert scale of strongly disagree, disagree, not sure, agree and strongly agree their perception of the extent to which a particular communication competence had been developed.

Another close ended questionnaire based on the same Likert scale was administered by the researchers during school practice as an observation checklist for the various communication competences teacher trainees would demonstrate during their lessons that they had prepared to be supervised. Therefore, the results of the observation checklist are for lessons where teacher trainees were demonstrating their best performance of all the pedagogical competences that include communication. There was also an open ended questionnaire that was administered to third years in May 2018 to collect their views on the forms of communication competences that teacher trainees thought had been developed as a result of pursuing studies in their respective teacher education programs.

All teacher trainees that participated were in their final semester of their final year although they have diverse backgrounds in terms of teacher education programs, subjects offered, secondary schools attended as well as their study time at the university.

SAMPLE
A total of 134 third year teacher trainees participated in the study, 77 responded to close ended self-administered questionnaires, 24 to open ended questionnaire and 33 accepted to have their school practice lessons be rated for communication competences they exhibited. Responses are first segregated in terms of lesson observation checklist and close ended responses and later analyzed concurrently together with the open ended question responses. Data was analyzed according to the objectives that guided the study.

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS
The research results are contextually situated to teacher trainees of Makerere University. Specifically, results reported were conducted among third year teacher trainees of 2017/2018. The results in Table 1 reflect the comparative perceptions in terms of percentages of the teacher trainees’ responses to the questions posed to them on the self-administered questionnaire with the observations of researchers of teacher trainees’ communication competences demonstrated during school practice. The percentages indicated in the table were generated from the SPSS data that was first calculated on the basis of Likert Scale of strongly disagree, disagree, not sure, agree and strongly agree. But for purposes of this article, researchers added up totals of both agree and strongly agree to represent the percentages that show that teacher trainees had developed the various communication competence through the various pedagogical activities that the 2015/2016 Bachelor of Arts with Education as well as Bachelor of Science with Education cohort had been engaged in.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relevant 21st Communication Skills</th>
<th>Teacher Trainees’ Response to SAQ (%)</th>
<th>Researchers’ Observations Ratings (%)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understands ideas that are different from one’s perspective</td>
<td>98.8</td>
<td>39.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pay attention to nonverbal cues of others</td>
<td>95.3</td>
<td>24.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accurately paraphrase other people’s words</td>
<td>84.2</td>
<td>57.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accept suggestions from people with whom one is working with on an assignment</td>
<td>94.8</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask for more details and clarification</td>
<td>86.9</td>
<td>51.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give critical feedback when necessary</td>
<td>90.8</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accept critical feedback when necessary</td>
<td>90.8</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accept critical feedback from others</td>
<td>87.9</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openly acknowledge one’s errors</td>
<td>76.3</td>
<td>24.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask others for critical feedback</td>
<td>86.5</td>
<td>45.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Express ones ideas when they differ from other people’s ideas</td>
<td>86.8</td>
<td>48.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capture other people’s attention when one is talking</td>
<td>82.2</td>
<td>69.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliment or Praise others</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>54.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak the truth even if saying it can upset someone or make matters worse</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>54.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easily receive a compliment</td>
<td>73.7</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First let the other person finish talking before one can react to what the other person was saying</td>
<td>88.2</td>
<td>63.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take an appropriate amount of notes when listening to others</td>
<td>84.2</td>
<td>39.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use pauses and silence to allow other people to understand the points one is making</td>
<td>82.7</td>
<td>48.5</td>
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Understanding what they had developed this sentence. Rarely, would teacher trainee be from aowers given to them bysters from what actually teacher trainees.

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each other

Table 1 indicates that this study studied twenty-eight communication competences that are expected to be possessed by the 21st century teachers.

**INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS**

To begin with is the communication competence that requires teacher trainees to understand ideas that are different from their own perspective. 98.8% of the teacher trainees held a view that they had developed this competence. However, observations of lessons indicated that only 39.4% of the teacher trainees were in position to express this competence before their learners. There were instances in classes where teacher trainees were not willing to accept divergent answers given to them by their students during discussion sessions. Similarly, some teacher trainees during conferencing after their lesson observations would hesitantly accept critical criticism from their supervisors especially in relation to the order of the content in the scheme of work as well as writing subtopics that are completely out of range. For example, there was a situation of a teacher trainee of Literature in English who was teaching techniques used by novel writers and termed them as dramatic techniques in a novel. Whereas the former is generic, the latter is very specific and one of the techniques that a novel writer can use to present his message to his/her readers/ audience. The major point of contention with this teacher trainee was teaching dramatic technique as the generic techniques. The situation was worsened by the fact that the supervisor who had supervised this teacher trainee was assumed by the teacher trainee to be from a background that had no any grounding in Literature. The teacher trainee insisted and even reached an extent of calling her lecturer of Literature methods to help guide the supervisor. Unfortunately, the lecturer to be called her phone couldn’t be reached at that time because it was off. However, among the 39.4% of the teacher trainees that were observed on this competence, there were exceptional cases who would easily take in divergent points from their students during brainstorming and discussion sessions of lessons observed by supervisors. This very category also had teacher trainees who were receptive to critical feedback during conferencing after their lesson supervision. Some of these exceptionally good teacher trainees even could ask their supervisors to talk about the weaknesses that had been identified during their lessons and offer possible suggestions for improvement.

Paying attention to nonverbal cues of others was another communication competence that was studied. Results indicate that 95.3% of the teacher trainees who participated in the study held a view that they had developed this competence. Teacher trainees have opportunities to attend to nonverbal cues of others through student presentations, debates, group and whole class discussions held as part of lecture proceedings, and discussions held outside lecture rooms as they prepare their coursework assignments as well as for the end of semester examinations. Unfortunately, the claim put forward by teacher trainees that they have developed the ability to pay attention to nonverbal cues was not substantiated by lesson observations. Only 24.3% of the teacher trainees that were observed were in position to demonstrate this competence. Rarely, would teacher trainees be seen paying attention to their learners’ nonverbal cues. In some instances, students would not pay attention to their teachers and some learners would not rightly sleep during lessons but teacher trainees wouldn’t get them back on track or wake them up.

An average of 82% of the participants indicated that they had developed the abilities to use nonverbal cues to communicate with colleagues. 82.7% believe that they use pauses and silence to allow other people to understand the points one is making. However, this was highly contrasted by data collected from lessons that were observed as only 48.5% of the teacher trainees that were observed actually demonstrated this competence while explaining points to their students. 84.2% of the teacher trainees believe that they have the ability to vary the tone of their voices in order to emphasize key points. However, just like the case was with use of pauses to allow people understand, even in this case, there is a glaring contrast from what actually teacher trainees demonstrated in lessons with only 36.4% of the participants demonstrating this competence. Another nonverbal cue studied was the ability to talk at a speed which enables everyone to understand what one is saying. In regard to this variable, there is seemingly a close relationship between teacher trainees’ perceptions and their actual practice during school practice as the data indicates that 70.6% of the participating teacher trainees hold the opinion that they have developed this competence and actually 78.8% of the participants demonstrated this ability during school practice in their
lessons. There were also 84.3% who reported that they can hold a direct eye contact when speaking to other people and actually, 48.5% of the lessons supervised demonstrated this ability as they would closely look at their students though there were also instances of those who were seen staring on the roof as well as speaking to their learners while facing the chalkboard. Finally, and mostly developed nonverbal cue is the use of hand movements and gestures to reinforce the points one is making. 85.5% of the participants believed they have developed this attribute and at the same time 81.8% of the teacher trainees observed teaching were actually seen using this nonverbal competence.

On the variable of accuracy in paraphrasing other people’s words, 84.2% of the teacher trainees that participated in the study believe that they have developed this competence. Development of this competence was attributed to discussions teacher trainees are always engaged in as well as active teaching learning methods used by some teacher educators such as presentations and debates integrated into lectures. On the other hand, lessons that were observed, at least 57.4% of the teacher trainees that were observed were in position to demonstrate this competence as they would always be heard restating and clarifying points that were being raised by their students in lesson proceedings.

94.8% of the teacher trainees that participated in the study indicated that they had developed the ability to accept suggestions from their colleagues as they were working on their assignments. Working as a team requires the ability to negotiate and renegotiate meaning and interpretations of questions. If you are not open to positive criticism of the ideas you raise in argument or academic discussion, then you are liable to fall out with discussion group members. Thus, because teacher trainees believe they have developed the ability to willingly receive other people’s suggestions could as well be the reason as to why 90.8% of the participants were of the view that they had equally developed the abilities to give and receive critical feedback when necessary. Indeed, 66.7% of the supervised lessons were in agreement with the teacher trainees’ opinion that they would give critical feedback to their learners when they were asked questions or when they were trying to orally assess learners’ contributions to classroom based questions as well as discussions, role plays and brainstorming sessions they would use as methods of teaching their lessons. Likewise, 86.5% and 80% of the teacher trainees indicated that they can now ask others for critical feedback and developed the willingness to receive critical feedback from others respectively. One of the researchers would guide teacher trainees in reflecting on one of the lesson proceedings and would ignore the second lesson observed on any single day. This supervisor encountered a teacher trainee who asked him for feedback in both of the subjects she had taught that day, and clearly stated “I need to know my mistakes in my S.3 English language so as I can improve and prepare for the next supervisor and my practice as well.” This is such a rare encounter from teacher trainees but that willingness to learn from critical feedback from others is starting to be developed among teacher trainees.

In line with the above attribute, there were another 86.9% teacher trainees who informed the researchers that they always ask for more details and clarification on issues or explanations that are not clear. Such clarifications are sought in active teaching learning methods like debates, students led presentations, whole class discussions during lectures as well as in their group proceedings outside lecture rooms as they are working on group assignments as well as general discussions in preparation for end of semester examinations. During school practice, 51.5% of the teacher trainees were in position to seek for clarifications from their students during lessons as well as from supervisors during pre and post lesson conferencing. Some of these teacher trainees would seek for clarification on the choice of teaching aids to use in their lessons, how best they would have used them as well as some methods of teaching that would appear challenging like distinguishing for them discussion and brainstorming methods of teaching as well as supervisors becoming clear on the formats of schemes of work that they would prepare during school practice. Some would specifically tell you that, “In curriculum they told us to state our objectives in reference to end of the week while in the subject methods they told us end of period, so what should we use as the most appropriate format?” In effect, they never wanted to make avoidable mistakes in their pedagogical documents. Other teacher trainees in History would always ask supervisors that “you need us to use teaching aids in our lessons, but what type of teaching aids can one use in History for a topic like the causes of Bantu Migration into East Africa?” Teacher trainees of history were so much concerned with teaching aids because 11% of the school practice marks are dedicated to them. Hence, one’s failure to use teaching aids is a recipe for poor performance in school practice and yet it has got the highest credit unit for students offering undergraduate teacher education programs of Makerere University.

Besides accepting positive feedback and seeking for clarifications on matters that seem not to be clear to teacher trainees, 76.3 % of the participants informed the researchers that by their third year of teacher education programs of Makerere University they had developed the ability to openly acknowledge their errors in pedagogical discourses. They informed the researchers that there are course units like Educational Technology, teaching techniques and Planning for Teaching, Evaluation of Instruction as well as Supervision and Guidance to School Practice where they have to make individual presentations as they are submitting individual course works before the course facilitators. That no coursework mark can be given to them unless they acknowledge errors in their assignments and rectify them. Unfortunately, during school practice only, 24.3% of the teacher trainees supervised demonstrated this attribute during lessons as well as during conferencing.
Data collected has revealed that 92% of the teacher trainees believe that teacher education pedagogy at Makerere University has enabled them to develop the ability to speak at appropriate levels dependent on their audience. They decide on when to be loud and when to be soft based on the occasion and purpose of communication. This competence was also observed in 81.9% of the lessons supervised by the researchers during school practice. An implication that, teacher trainees’ opinions were to a large extent coherent with supervisors’ observations during school practice. Hence credit has to be given to facilitators as well as the mode of teaching and assessment that are used during the teacher formation processes at Makerere University.

Not only have teacher trainees developed the ability to speak at appropriate levels, they have also developed the competence of looking at people when listening to them. Listening is necessary to complete the communication process. Teachers need to listen to their learners in class, their colleagues in the staff room, their bosses or school administrators, parents as well as other institution stakeholders. Flaws in this competence are a likely cause of many disagreements. The good news is that, data collected revealed that 92.1% of the teacher trainees that participated indicated that they had been in position to develop this competence. Even during school practice, 69.7% of the lessons observed indicated that teacher trainees were in position to listen to their learners when they were asking questions or responding to questions that teacher trainees had posed. Thus three thirds of teacher trainees observed being in position to demonstrate this competence is a credit to teacher education programs for having incorporated this skill as part of their pedagogy.

In addition to looking at people as they speak, 88.2% of teacher trainees that participated have a feeling that they have developed the ability to be patient and first let someone finish talking before they can react to what the other person has been saying. This is quite a rare attribute in human transactions as people are good at interrupting their colleagues while communicating. Indeed, quite a number are impatient with others in verbal communications whether on phone or face to face. Quite a number of people instead of listening, they are quite often preoccupied with the nature of response they will give. If 88.2% of teacher trainees believe that they have developed this attribute and to a large extent supported by their actions on this attribute during school practice where 63.7% of the teacher trainees observed teaching were in position to demonstrate this attribute in class while listening to learners as well as letting supervisors first talk about their strength and weaknesses in the lessons observed before they would respond and seek clarification, it is another credit to give to teacher education pedagogy of Makerere University.

84.2% of the respondents to the SAQ reported that they can pronounce words clearly so that everyone understands them first time. Teacher trainees indicated that by the end of the three years of their teacher education programs, they had developed the ability to clearly pronounce words as they ask questions, addressing assemblies and when explaining concepts to learners in their classes. Alongside this ability, teacher trainees who responded to the open ended questionnaire reported that they can now articulate words so well, they have improved upon their spoken English which is the official language in Uganda’s classrooms with exception of local languages taught in both primary and secondary schools like Luganda, Lusoga, Luo, Lango and Runyakitara. However, observations done during school practice indicated that only 36.4% of the teacher trainees had the ability to articulate and pronounce clearly words as they were teaching their learners. Some had challenges with the spoken English and pronunciations of some words for instance there was a teacher trainee who would consistently pronounce the word ‘chiefs’ as ‘thieves’ and another who used the Luganda word ‘era’ meaning ‘also’ for a minimum of forty-five times in a lesson of forty minutes.

Interestingly, whereas the observations reported that only 36.4% of the teacher trainees observed in the lessons were in position to articulate and pronounce their words so well, on the variable of expression of one’s ideas face to face in a concise way so that one can easily be understood, 78.7% of the teacher trainees supervised had developed and mastered this art. They were in position to fluently explain their points with use of relevant examples and emphatic expressions on their face supplemented by hand gestures. Indeed, in their own perceptions, 86.7% of the teacher trainees that participated in the study expressed that they had developed this competence in the course of studying their teacher education programs of Makerere University.

Besides the ability to express themselves face to face, 86.8% of the participating teacher trainees indicated that they are in position to express their ideas even when they differ from other people’s ideas. This is a good attribute in question interpretations that teacher trainees will always be engaged in with their students as well as other teachers they will be working with in their departments at schools they will be employed or in national examinations where some will be hired as examiners. The politics in national examinations sometimes requires those hired as examiners to be in position to articulate their interpretation of questions before other examiners so as not to disadvantage candidates they have been teaching or that have been taught by other teachers but still hold a similar interpretation. Thus, if 86.8% of Makerere University’s teacher trainees have developed this competence, it implies that Ugandans are most likely to receive independent minded teachers who will equally be in position to mentor their students to be like them. Unfortunately, lessons observed during school practice indicated that there is a long way to have teacher trainees with the ability to express opinions that are generally not believed or accepted by set society standards as only 48.5% of the teacher trainees observed were in position to counter argue their learners who held different ideas from what they were explaining.
Similarly, 71% of the teacher trainees hold the opinion that they can speak the truth even when such information can upset someone or make matters worse. Data collected from observations of lessons also indicated that 54.6% of the teacher trainees observed were in position to out rightly differ from their learners. This attribute was mainly observed in Literature classes where teacher trainees had to always differ from their learners on matters of analysis of the various themes and character traits of what they were teaching from the various novels and drama books.

Teacher education pedagogy has also been in position to help teacher trainees to develop the competence of capturing other people’s attention when one is talking. Data collected from SAQ revealed that 82.2% of the teacher trainees were of the view that they had developed this skill likewise, 69.7% of the teacher trainees that were supervised demonstrated this ability. As they were in position to capture the attention of their learners in both single (40 minutes) and double (80 minutes) lessons. Majority of the learners in teacher trainees’ classes appeared to be active and followed lesson proceedings. As part of capturing attention of those they are talking to, 75% of the teacher trainees also believe they have developed the capacity to redirect conversations where participants rattle on and on. 51.5% of the observations conducted in teacher trainees’ classes agreed with this perception. Teacher trainees were seen advising their learners to continue with the other aspects of the lesson instead of spending their time of the lesson on only one issue that could have generated too much debates as well as discussions. For instance, in one Christian Religious Education lesson that was dealing with the significance of the ten commandments in Israel, the teacher trainee had not adequately planned her lesson. She did not talk about how the Israelites received the ten commandments and how did the Israelites prepare to receive the ten commandments. As she proceeded with her lesson, there was a keen student who asked her how Moses on behalf of the Israelites received the ten commandments. The teacher advised her student to read Exodus chapter 19, which the student did. After reading the chapter there was no clear mention on how the ten commandments were laid down to Moses. This led to a discussion that almost was taking a third of the time she had planned for the lesson. Consequently, the teacher trainee told the class she will look up for the facts and report to them another time they meet. This helped her to proceed to the other aspects of the lesson.

75% and 73.7% of the teacher trainees also reported that the different teacher education pedagogical activities have enabled them to learnto compliment or praise others as well as to receive compliments from others respectively. Involvement in active teaching learning activities like discussions and presentation as well as emphasis for peer feedback among teacher trainees were credited for being in position to enhance the development of these competences. Lessons observed revealed that 54.5% of the participating teacher trainees complimented their learners who would volunteer answers in the course of the lessons with words such as ‘good attempt, excellent, well tried’ and there was this teacher trainee of Biology and Chemistry who had mastered this art so well. Quite often you would hear him calling upon the learners to clap for their colleagues who had given right answers to his questions.

Up to 84.2% of the participating teacher trainees indicated on the SAQs that they had developed the ability to take appropriate amount of notes when listening to others like lecturers and fellow students while in class or outside. Some reported that they have been working as secretaries to discussion groups in preparation of group assignments and others that they developed this competence in lectures where lecturers do not dictate for them notes but bases their lectures on handouts or pure lectures. 39.4% of lessons observed also revealed that teacher trainees had developed this competence through taking note of key points that students would raise on the chalk board.

Lastly, 89.5% of the teacher trainees believe that they can communicate with non-educational professionals. The nature of the teachers’ job requires them to talk with the school bursar, secretaries, school nurses, security personnel, matrons as well as parents from diverse professional backgrounds. They have to communicate to each of these stakeholders in a language that is appropriate to them. Unfortunately, the time researchers spent in the field observing teacher trainees’ lessons, they were unable or never took keen interest in observing teacher trainees’ interactions with other stakeholders. But all the same, we give them the benefit of doubt because in the course of their studies they attend some of their lectures with students offering other study programs from the servicing units of College of Humanities and Social Sciences, College of Business and Management Studies as well as College of Science and Natural Resources.

**CONCLUSIONS**

The study indicates that to a large extent, teacher education pedagogy of Makerere University develops relevant verbal, nonverbal and interpersonal communication competences among teacher trainees. Unfortunately, reports from teacher trainees’ SAQ are in most cases way too high rated compared to what researchers observed in lessons taught by teacher trainees during school practice.

**IMPLICATION FOR TEACHER EDUCATION IN UGANDA**

Teacher training institutions in Uganda are hereby called upon to use student centered pedagogy to create an atmosphere for teacher trainees to practice the various communication competences during the course of their studies.

**REFERENCES**

Role of teacher education pedagogy in developing communication competences

Buluma et al.


