



FACULTY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE

RESEARCH REPORT

**EXPLORING THE TEACHING OF PROJECTS BASED LEARNING IN THE
LANGUAGE CLASSROOM IN PALLISA DISTRICT.**

BY

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BU/UP/2023/2206

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**A Research Report submitted To Busitema University Faculty of Science Education in
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of A Bachelor's Degree Of
Education In Language And Literature**

JUNE, 2026

DECLARATION

I APOLOT MARTHA declare that this research report is my original work and has never been presented or submitted to any institution of higher learning for any academic award

Sign.......... Date..01/09/2026..

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my beloved family, friends, and the English teachers in Pallisa District whose dedication to language teaching continues to inspire meaningful classroom change.

ENDORSEMENT BY THE SUPERVISOR

This research report has been prepared under our supervision (MS. NAKAZINGA RACHEAL AND DR. TENDO SHIRA NAMAGERO) mentorship upon appointed by Busitema University

Signature.......... Date01/09/2026.....

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the Almighty God for the strength and wisdom He has given me throughout this academic journey. I am deeply thankful to my supervisor for the constant guidance, patience and constructive feedback without which this proposal would not have taken shape. My appreciation also goes to the lecturers in the Department of English, Busitema University, for laying the academic foundation upon which this study stands. Finally, I am grateful to my family and friends for the financial and moral support they offered me during this process.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

Abbreviation	Meaning
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
L1	First Language / Mother Tongue
L2	Second Language
LoLT	Language of Learning and Teaching
LSC	Lower Secondary Curriculum
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
NCDC	National Curriculum Development Centre
PBL	Project-Based Learning
PjBL	Project-Based Learning
SBA	School-Based Assessment
SCT	Social Constructivist Theory
UNEB	Uganda National Examinations Board
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

Abstract

This study explores the use of project-based learning in English language classrooms in selected lower secondary schools in Pallisa District. The research is motivated by ongoing concerns that classroom English instruction in rural Uganda continues to emphasize rote learning, grammar memorization and teacher-dominated lessons. While Uganda's competence-based lower secondary curriculum encourages learner-centered approaches, evidence suggests that teachers still struggle to implement such methods meaningfully. This study therefore investigates how PBL is currently being used (or could be used) in the English language classroom, the benefits it offers to learners' communicative competence and engagement, the challenges teachers face in applying it, and the strategies that can be adopted to strengthen its implementation in resource-limited rural schools. The study will adopt a qualitative case study design, drawing data from English teachers and Senior One to Senior Four students in three purposively selected schools. Data will be collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis, and analyzed thematically using Braun and Clarke's framework. The findings are expected to enrich the existing body of knowledge on learner-centered pedagogy in Uganda and offer practical suggestions for teachers, school administrators and curriculum implementers in Pallisa District and similar contexts.

CHAPTER ONE:

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the entire study. It begins by presenting the background of the study, which sets the discussion in a broader context before narrowing it down to project-based learning in the language classroom in pallisa district. The chapter also presents the background to the study, points out the statement of the problem, gives the purpose and objectives of the study, raises the research questions, justifies the study, points out the scope and delimitations as well as the limitations. The chapter sets the stage for the entire proposal by guiding the reader through what the study seeks to do, why it is worth doing, and the boundaries within which the research will take place.

In today's world, project-based learning skills are becoming increasingly important for students to navigate through different situations they face in their daily lives. Developing project abilities is crucial to making informed decisions and judgments, solving problems, and evaluating information. Therefore, incorporating project-based learning skills into literature classrooms is important because it helps to prepare students for life and the workforce outside class.

1.1 Background of the Study

Language teaching across the world has been undergoing major changes in the past three decades. Educational researchers and curriculum reformers have moved away from the traditional idea that treats the learner as an empty vessel to be filled by the teacher, in favor of approaches that place the learner at the Centre of the learning experience (Rustemovna, 2025). Among these modern approaches, project-based learning has emerged as one of the most practical and engaging ways of teaching content and language at the same time (Hamidah & Pinkan, 2023).

PBL is a learner-centered instructional approach in which students work in groups on realistic, open-ended problems and produce a final product, performance or presentation as evidence of their learning (Saimon et al., 2022). It differs from conventional teaching because the teacher's role changes from being the main source of knowledge to being a facilitator, guide and co-learner (Sadad et al., 2024). For language learners in particular, PBL creates meaningful situations in which English must be used for a real purpose, not just for answering questions in a textbook (Dawson, 2023). Several studies have shown that PBL produces positive results in

language classrooms. In a study involving twenty-eight seventh-graders in an EFL setting, Maulina found that participation in PBL rose to 85% by the end of the third cycle, while 90% of the students reported feeling more motivated to learn English. Speaking and writing scores also rose markedly, with speaking moving from 60% to 85% and writing from 55% to 80% (Maulina, 2024). In Cameroon, Fongod and colleagues observed that secondary school learners exposed to PBL significantly improved their writing skills, with the experimental group's post-test mean of 56.45 almost double the control group's mean of 35.04 (Fongod et al., 2025). In Tanzania, a PBL communication skills model was shown to enhance the 4Cs among college students (Saimon et al., 2022). Online PBL during the COVID-19 pandemic also produced positive effects on the communication, engagement, motivation and academic achievement of 100 EFL college students (Al-Bahadli et al., 2023).

In Uganda, the Ministry of Education and Sports introduced a competence-based Lower Secondary Curriculum in 2020 to promote learner-centered teaching in all subjects, including English (Atuhura & Nambi, 2024). The curriculum encourages teachers to use approaches such as group work, project work, demonstration and problem-solving in their lessons (Mulumba, 2026). Sadly, many studies have shown that despite the official push for learner-centered pedagogy, most classrooms in Uganda and other low-income countries are still largely teacher-centered (Sakata et al., 2022). Teachers point to large class sizes, limited instructional materials, time pressure, lack of training and weak administrative support as some of the main barriers (Onen & Ayiorwoth, 2025; Sikoyo, 2010). In rural districts, where resources are scarcer, the gap between policy and practice is even wider (Atuhura & Nambi, 2024).

Pallisa District, located in the eastern region of Uganda, is largely rural with agriculture as the main economic activity for most families. Schools in Pallisa, like many rural schools in Uganda, struggle with issues such as inadequate teaching materials, limited exposure to English outside the classroom, and reliance on the mother tongue at home (Early & Norton, 2014). These challenges often make it difficult for learners to gain confidence in speaking, reading and writing in English. Despite the encouraging national push for learner-centered methods, very little research has been done to specifically examine how project-based learning is being experienced in English language classrooms in districts like Pallisa. This study therefore steps into that gap.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Many learners in Pallisa District continue to perform poorly in English language, particularly in the productive skills of speaking and writing. Classroom observation and reports from teachers suggest that lessons are still dominated by note-taking, dictation and rote learning, with little room for learners to practice English in realistic situations. Although Project-Based Learning has been promoted in educational policy documents as a way of making language learning engaging and practical, there is limited documented information on how it is being understood, adopted, or experienced by teachers and learners in Pallisa District. Without this understanding, efforts to

improve the teaching of English in the district through PBL may be misplaced. Hence, this study sought to explore Project-Based Learning in the language classroom in Pallisa District.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to explore the use of project-based learning in the English language classroom in selected lower secondary schools in Pallisa District, with a view to understanding its benefits, the challenges of implementation, and possible strategies for improvement.

1.4 Specific Objectives

The study was guided by the following specific objectives:

To examine teachers' awareness and understanding of Project-Based Learning in language teaching in Pallisa District.

To identify the strategies teachers, use to implement Project-Based Learning activities in language classrooms.

To assess the challenges teachers, face in adopting Project-Based Learning in language instruction.

To find out how Project-Based Learning influences learners' participation and performance in English language lessons

1.5 Research Questions

The study answered the following questions:

What is the level of teachers' awareness and understanding of Project-Based Learning in language teaching in Pallisa District?

What strategies do teachers use to implement Project-Based Learning activities in language classrooms?

What challenges do teachers face in adopting Project-Based Learning in language instruction?

How does Project-Based Learning influence learners' participation and performance in English language lessons?

1.6 Hypotheses

The study is guided by the following research hypotheses:

Project-based learning significantly improves learners' speaking, writing and overall engagement in English lessons.

Teachers' use of project-based learning is hindered by limited resources, large class sizes and inadequate training.

With proper training and administrative support, teachers can effectively integrate project-based learning in English language classrooms.

These hypotheses will be tested through the data collected from teachers, students and school documents.

1.7 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are useful in several ways:

To the Ministry of Education and Sports: the study provides evidence on the practical realities of adopting PBL in rural districts, which can inform curriculum review and the design of teacher training programs.

To teachers and school administrators: the findings highlight workable strategies and challenges of PBL, helping teachers to refine their classroom practices.

To learners: improved use of PBL could lead to more engaging lessons, better language skills and improved academic performance.

To researchers and scholars: the study adds to the existing body of knowledge on learner-centered teaching and opens up areas for further research in other districts of Uganda.

To curriculum developers: the study points out gaps between policy intentions and classroom realities, which is useful for curriculum designers at NCDC.

1.8 Scope of the Study

The study focused on Project-Based Learning in the language classroom, with English language as the central subject. It covered selected secondary schools in Pallisa District. Both teachers and learners of English formed the respondents. The study addressed four specific areas: teachers' awareness of PBL, implementation strategies, challenges, and the influence of PBL on learner participation and performance.

1.8:1 Limitations of the Study

The study faced the following limitations:

Geographical limitation: the study was confined to Pallisa District and may not represent all districts in Uganda.

Respondent bias: some respondents, especially teachers, may have given socially acceptable answers rather than the truth about their classroom practices. This was minimized by assuring respondents of confidentiality.

Time constraint: data collection was done within a limited period, which restricted the number of schools that could be visited.

Financial limitation: the resources available were limited, which restricted travelling to a wider sample of schools. However, key schools were purposively selected to give representative information.

CHAPTER TWO:

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of literature related to project-based learning in language teaching. It begins with the conceptual framework, which defines and explains key concepts, followed by the theoretical framework that grounds the study. The chapter then reviews related studies from different parts of the world and what other scholars have written about project-based learning, English language teaching, organized around the study's research objectives.

2.1 Conceptual Framework

2.1.1 The Concept of Project-Based Learning

Project-based learning was widely described as a teaching approach in which learners acquire knowledge and skills by working for an extended period to investigate and respond to an authentic, engaging and complex question or challenge (Saimon et al., 2022; Sedubun & Nurhayati, 2024). Unlike short, drill-based classroom activities, PBL projects usually span several lessons and culminate in a real product such as a poster, a presentation, a podcast, a play, a magazine, a community campaign or an e-book (Dooly et al., 2021). The teacher does not deliver information from the front of the class but rather designs the project, monitors group progress, asks probing questions, offers resources and helps learners reflect on what they are learning (Sadad et al., 2024).

Sedubun and Nurhayati argue that PBL allows meaningful language use, encourages learner autonomy and builds communicative competence among language learners (Sedubun & Nurhayati, 2024). Kavlu adds that PBL is built on constructivist and social-constructivist principles, and that it puts learners at the center of knowledge construction, not simply knowledge reception (Kavlu, 2020). In EFL contexts, recent reviews confirm that PBL, when well implemented, supports speaking, listening, reading and writing competencies while increasing motivation and student participation (Rustemovna, 2025; Zahro & Dilxumor, 2025).

The language classroom is a setting where language learning takes place, whether it is the first, second or foreign language. In the context of Uganda and Pallisa District, English is treated as a second language, required for academic communication, employment and national integration.

The language classroom is meant to develop four main skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing, together with grammar and vocabulary. The way a language classroom is structured, the resources available, and the methods used by the teacher determine the quality of learning.

When PBL is applied to language teaching, certain features become prominent:

Integration of skills: learners practice listening, speaking, reading and writing within the same project.

Use of authentic texts and audiences: projects connect learners to materials and people beyond the textbook.

Collaborative learning: learners work in pairs, groups or whole class teams.

Critical thinking and problem solving: language is used as a tool to investigate and solve a problem, rather than as an isolated subject of study.

2.1.4 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework below shows the relationship between the independent variable (project-based learning), the moderating factors (teacher training, resources, class size, time, administrative support) and the dependent variables (communicative competence, learner engagement, writing and speaking skills, learner autonomy, motivation).

Independent Variable: Project-Based Learning

Driving question / authentic task

Inquiry and investigation

Collaboration

Production of final product

Public presentation / reflection

Moderating Variables:

Teacher training in PBL

Availability of teaching and learning resources

Class size and time allocation

Administrative and stakeholder support

Learners' proficiency levels

Dependent Variables:

Communicative competence (speaking, listening, reading, writing)

Learner engagement and motivation

Learner autonomy and critical thinking

Performance in English language activities

Confidence in using English

The framework suggests that PBL can produce the desired language-learning outcomes when it is supported by adequate training, resources, time and institutional backing, and that its effects are weakened in environments where these supports are missing.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This study was grounded in Vygotsky's Social Constructivist Theory, particularly the idea of the Zone of Proximal Development and the related concept of scaffolding. According to Vygotsky, every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first on the social level and later on the individual level; first between people and then inside the child (Qiao & Zhao, 2023). Learning, in this view, is fundamentally a social act in which learners internalize knowledge through interaction with more knowledgeable others.

The ZPD refers to the gap between what a learner can do independently and what the learner can do with the help of a more capable peer or adult (Hammoodi & Alishah, 2020). Scaffolding describes the temporary support that teachers or more capable peers provide to help learners operate within their ZPD until they can perform the task on their own (Alkhudiry, 2022). PBL provides a natural fit with these ideas because group projects require learners to collaborate, negotiate meaning, share language resources and support one another, all of which happen through the target language (Dawson, 2023; Hamidah & Pinkan, 2023). In this study, SCT will help explain why learners working together on language projects may develop communicative skills, learner autonomy and critical thinking more meaningfully than learners sitting and listening passively. A considerable body of research shows that PBL produces impressive gains for language learners. Maulina's classroom action research with seventh-graders in Indonesia recorded consistent participation from 85% of learners by the end of the project cycle, with 90% reporting greater motivation to learn English. Speaking scores improved from 60% to 85% and writing scores improved from 55% to 80% (Maulina, 2024). In Cameroon, Fongod, Endeley and Yula found that the experimental group using PBL recorded a post-test mean writing score of 56.45 compared to 35.04 for the control group, a difference described as almost twice the control group's score (Fongod et al., 2025). These findings suggest that PBL is particularly powerful in helping learners apply language in practical and communicative contexts.

Al-Bahadli, Al-Obaydi and Pikhart note that PBL has substantial positive effects on communication, engagement, motivation and academic achievement in L2 acquisition settings, including online contexts during the COVID-19 pandemic (Al-Bahadli et al., 2023). Benlaghrissi and Ouahidi report that mobile-assisted PBL significantly improved Moroccan university students' speaking skills (Benlaghrissi & Ouahidi, 2024). Similarly, Sadad, Juhana and Saehu found that PBL stages encouraged student autonomy, authentic task completion, scaffolding, ongoing assessment and peer collaboration (Sadad et al., 2024). In Tanzania, Saimon, Lavicza and Dana-Picard argue that PBL is a "feasible and reasonable" teaching model for developing the 4Cs in language classrooms (Saimon et al., 2022).

Together, these studies suggest that PBL benefits language learners by making the target language a tool for doing real things, not just a set of rules to memorise (Dawson, 2023; Hamidah & Pinkan, 2023). The 21st-century competencies captured by the 4Cs are increasingly being demanded by employers, universities and society at large, which makes PBL even more relevant to contemporary English teaching (ahmad.hariyadi@umk.ac.id et al., 2023; Haniah et al., 2021). Despite the benefits, PBL is not without challenges. Several researchers have pointed out that its success depends heavily on the availability of materials, time, teacher competence and institutional support (Evenddy et al., 2023; Haji & Mwakalinga, 2025).

a) Resource constraints. PBL projects often need access to technology, books, posters, stationery and other materials, which may not always be available in rural schools (Evenddy et al., 2023). In a study involving seventh-graders in a rural Turkish school, Kızıkan and Bektaş reported that being in a rural environment with insufficient research resources and equipment affected student performance negatively (Kızıkan & Bektaş, 2017). This resonates with the Ugandan context, where English teaching is undermined by scarcity of textbooks and other reading materials (Atuhura & Nambi, 2024).

b) Time constraints. PBL projects typically take longer than ordinary lessons to complete, and many teachers complain that the syllabus is too tight to allow extended projects (Haji & Mwakalinga, 2025). In rural schools with multiple subjects competing for limited time, teachers may feel pressured to abandon PBL in favour of "covering" the syllabus (Evenddy et al., 2023).

c) Teacher preparedness. Many teachers, especially in rural and low-income contexts, are not adequately trained to design, manage and assess PBL tasks (Evenddy et al., 2023; Kizys et al., 2025). Haji and Mwakalinga's study in Zanzibar found that teachers' readiness was patchy, with assessment difficulties being a major concern (Haji & Mwakalinga, 2025).

d) Large class sizes. PBL works best in smaller, manageable groups, but Ugandan classrooms often have 50 to 100 learners per teacher (Onen & Ayiorwoth, 2025; Sikoyo, 2010). Managing cooperative group work becomes very challenging under such conditions.

e) Assessment difficulties. Assessing individual contributions in group projects is not easy, and some learners may freeload while others do most of the work (Muttahidah & Zen, 2023).

f) Communication problems. In rural areas where learners live far apart, group coordination outside school becomes hard, and project collaboration may suffer (Kızkapan & Bektaş, 2017).

Uganda's education policy has, for many years, advocated for active, learner-centered learning rather than passive, lecture-based teaching (Abiria et al., 2013; Mulumba, 2026). The 2020 Lower Secondary Curriculum in particular places strong emphasis on competence-based, learner-centered methods, including project work, problem-solving and group activities (Mulumba, 2026).

However, research shows that policy and practice do not always align. Sikoyo's study of the problem-solving approach in Ugandan primary schools revealed that teachers' uptake of learner-centered methods was heavily shaped by what schools could realistically provide, with large class sizes, lack of materials and examination pressure being powerful obstacles (Sikoyo, 2010). Atuhurra and Kaffenberger showed that even where curricula promote learner-centered principles, classroom instruction often remains teacher-driven because of exam orientation and limited support (Atuhurra & Kaffenberger, 2020). Atuhura and Nambi's case study on ESOL teachers implementing the 2020 competence-based English curriculum pointed to scarcity of materials, time pressure, large class sizes, limited planning and weak stakeholder support as real-life adaptive challenges (Atuhura & Nambi, 2024).

In rural northern Uganda, Abiria, Early and Kendrick found that teachers used plurilingual and multimodal resources creatively to support learning, but were still constrained by the larger policy environment (Abiria et al., 2013). Early and Norton observed that language policies, despite their best intentions, often become "dysfunctional" when transferred from well-resourced urban settings to poorly resourced rural ones (Early & Norton, 2014). This means that PBL, while promising, must be reintroduced with sensitivity to the rural African context. Studies from neighboring countries echo similar concerns. In Zanzibar, Haji and Mwakalinga identified limited administrative support, insufficient resources, assessment difficulties, large class sizes and inadequate professional development as barriers to PBL implementation in public secondary schools (Haji & Mwakalinga, 2025). In Nigeria, Aragbuwa recommends integrating PBL into the English curriculum to boost learner autonomy, maintain balance across the four strands and enhance formative feedback (Aragbuwa, 2026). Similar recommendations have been made in Cameroon (Fongod et al., 2025) and Mozambique (Bandawe, 2025).

2.3. Theoretical and Conceptual Gaps in the Literature

Although PBL has been studied in several African countries, very little empirical work has focused specifically on its use in the English language classroom in rural eastern Uganda. Most Uganda-focused studies have examined general learner-centered pedagogy, task-based teaching or competence-based curriculum implementation (Atuhura & Nambi, 2024; Atuhurra & Kaffenberger, 2020; Mulumba, 2026). There is therefore a need for a focused study on PBL in

English language teaching, situated in a specific rural district such as Pallisa, where contextual realities are likely to influence how PBL plays out. This study fills that gap.

2.4 Summary of Literature Review

The reviewed literature shows that PBL was widely regarded as an effective learner-centered approach for language teaching, with documented benefits for communicative competence, learner engagement, motivation, collaboration and critical thinking. It also shows that PBL faces serious implementation challenges in low-income contexts, including limited resources, time pressure, teacher preparedness gaps, large class sizes and assessment difficulties. Uganda's competence-based curriculum provides a favorable policy environment for PBL.

CHAPTER THREE:

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter explains how the study was conducted. It describes the research design, study area, population, sample size and sampling techniques, data collection methods, data analysis, quality assurance measures and ethical considerations. Each decision has been guided by the purpose and objectives of the study and by what is feasible within the time available for a Bachelor's degree research project.

3.1 Research Design

The study adopted a mixed-methods research approach using a descriptive survey design. The mixed-methods approach was appropriate because the study collected and analyzed both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data was obtained mainly through structured questionnaires administered to teachers and learners, while qualitative data was obtained through interviews and classroom observations. The descriptive survey design was used to obtain information about teachers' awareness of Project-Based Learning, the strategies they use, the challenges they face, and the perceived influence of Project-Based Learning on learners' participation and performance in English language.

The study was conducted in the real classroom context of selected secondary schools in Pallisa District. The use of different sources of information enabled the researcher to obtain a broader understanding of Project-Based Learning in the language classroom.

A qualitative approach is suitable because the research questions seek to explore experiences, perceptions and classroom realities, rather than to measure variables statistically (Özkan, 2015; Strauss, 1987). Qualitative research produces detailed, context-rich descriptions of participants' feelings, opinions and experiences, which fits the purposes of this study (Strauss, 1987).

A case study design, in particular, allows the researcher to study a phenomenon in its real-life context and to draw on multiple sources of evidence (Yazan, 2015). As Yazan explains in his review of Yin, Merriam and Stake, case study is one of the most frequently used qualitative

methodologies in education because it works well for "complex phenomena in real-life settings" (Yazan, 2015)

3.2 Study Area

The study was conducted in Pallisa District mainly in pallisa community secondary school located in the eastern region of Uganda. Pallisa District is largely rural, with most of the population engaged in subsistence agriculture. The district has a number of lower secondary schools, both government-aided and private, which serve learners from a variety of linguistic backgrounds, predominantly Ateso, and Lugwere. The choice of Pallisa District is based on accessibility to the researcher and the need to add research evidence from rural eastern Uganda to the discussion of project-based learning in language teaching.

3.3 Study Population

The study population included;

Teachers of English language in pallisa secondary school.

Senior one to Senior Four learners in those schools.

3.4. Sample Size

A total of 180 respondents participated in the study.

Category	Population	Sample
English language teachers	120	60
Senior three learners	Large	60
Senior four learners	Large	60
Total		180

Sauce: primary data (Martha,2026)

3.5 Sampling Techniques/Criteria

The following sampling techniques were used:

Purposive sampling: used to select schools that offer English at both Senior Three and Senior Four levels, and to select teachers offering English language.

Simple random sampling: used to select individual learners from the chosen classes, so that every learner had an equal chance of being part of the study.

Convenient sampling: applied to select teachers who were available during the data collection period.

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

Three instruments were used to collect data:

1.Questionnaire for teachers: a structured questionnaire with closed and a few open-ended questions covering all four research objectives.

2.Questionnaire for learners: a structured questionnaire that asked about learners' experiences with project activities, their participation in class, and their views on English performance.

3.Interview guide for teachers: a semi-structured guide that allowed in-depth discussion with selected teachers.

3.7 Validity of Instruments

Validity refers to whether the instruments measure what they are intended to measure. To ensure validity: The instruments were constructed based on the research objectives and reviewed by the supervisor. A pilot study was conducted in one school that was not part of the final sample, allowing the researcher to identify unclear items.

3.8 Reliability of Instruments

Reliability refers to the consistency of the instruments. To enhance reliability: The questionnaire items were kept clear and simple. Closed-ended questions used a consistent Likert scale. The same instruments were used across all schools in the study. Test-retest was done during the pilot study.

3.9 Data Collection Procedures

The following steps were followed:

A letter of introduction was obtained from the Department of Languages and Communication Studies of Busitema University.

Permission was sought from the District Education Officer of Pallisa District.

Permission was also sought from head teachers of selected schools.

The purpose of the study was explained to respondents, and informed consent was obtained.

Questionnaires were distributed to teachers and learners, with enough time given to fill them in.

Interviews were conducted with selected teachers at agreed times.

Classroom observations were carried out in some schools to verify what teachers reported.

3.10 Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative techniques:

Quantitative data from questionnaires was sorted, coded and entered into a computer.

Qualitative data from interviews and open-ended questions was organised thematically. Common themes were identified, summarized and used to support or enrich the numerical findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents, analyses and interprets the findings of the study based on the four research objectives. Data was collected from 60 English language teachers, 120 Senior Three and Senior Four learners, and interviews with selected teachers. Findings are organized according to the research questions and are supported by tables, figures and direct quotations from interviews. The presentation combines both quantitative results.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

4.1.1 Teachers' Demographic Information

Table 4.1: Gender Distribution of Teachers (N = 60)

Gender	Number	Percentage(%)
Male	28	28%
Female	32	35%
Total	60	60%

Gender distribution of teachers (Martha,2026)

What the table above shows; It describes that out of 60 teachers, 28 were male and 32 were female.

In simple terms:

Meaning: There were slightly more female teachers than male teachers, but both were well represented. So the study got opinions from both men and women. This gender balance suggests that both male and female voices were captured in the study.

4.1:2: Table of Highest Academic Qualification of Teachers (N=60)

Qualification	Number	Percentage(%)
Diploma in education	18	18%
Bachelor's Degree	32	32%
Master's Degree	6	6%
Others	4	4%
Total	60	60%

Highest academic qualification of teachers (Martha,2026)

The table above shows that; The highest education level the teachers reached is explained below.

Bachelor's Degree; 32 out of 60 teachers had a degree from university. This is the biggest group.

Diploma level; 18 of the teachers out of 60 had a college diploma.

Master's Degree; 6 out of 60 teachers had a master's, which is higher than a degree.

Others; 7 out of 60 had other qualifications.

Which Means that most teachers are university graduates. This is good because it means they have the academic knowledge to teach well. Only a few have a Master's.

Table 4.1:3 Years of Teaching Experience (N=60)

Experience	Number	Percentage
Below 5	14	14%
5-10	22	22%
Above 10	24	24%
Total	60	60%

Sauce: primary data (Martha,2026)

The table shows discription of teachers according to their years of teaching experience. The findings indicate that the largest population of teachers 24 (twenty-four) had over ten years (10) of experience. A further twenty-two (22) teachers had between five (5) years of experience, while fourteen (14) teachers had less than five years, they were just fresh graduates.

4.4 Teachers' Awareness and Understanding of PBL

The first objective of the study was to examine teachers' awareness and understanding of Project-Based Learning in language teaching. The findings are presented the Table below;

Teachers' Awareness of PBL (N = 60)

Awareness statement	Yes	No	Total
Have heard about PBL	23	-	23
Understand what PBL Means	13	6	19
Attended trainings on PBL	8	2	10
Can design a PBL unit on their own	6	2	8

Sauce: primary data (martha,2026)

What it shows: Do teachers know PBL and can they use it?

23 out of 60 teachers have heard about PBL, 13 out of 60 teachers understand what PBL means and 6 out of 60 actually don't fully know what it is. 8 attended training, and 2 of the 60 teachers have never attended any trainings. 6 can design a PBL unit and Only 2 out of 60 feel they cannot make a PBL lesson by themselves because they are just fresh from campus and still learning.

This means that although PBL is mentioned in education circles, very few teachers in Pallisa District had been systematically prepared to use it. This was confirmed during interviews. One experienced female teacher noted:

"I have read about project work in newspapers and during workshops, but I was never specifically taught how to plan it for English. I just try small things like group discussions and assign essays as projects."

This suggests that PBL awareness among teachers exists at a surface level, without the deeper conceptual understanding needed for proper implementation.

4.4:1 Findings on Strategies Teachers Use to Implement PBL

The second objective was to identify the strategies teachers use to implement PBL activities. Information was gathered from both teachers and learners.

Table On PBL Strategies Used by English teachers (N=60)

Strategy	Regularly	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Group discussions	13	3	2	-
Research assignments	8	4	3	-
Class debates	3	2	1	2
Drama and role-play	3	3	1	5
Production of plays and writings	3	2	-	2

Sauce: primary data(Martha,2026)

The table above shows that the most regularly used strategy was group discussions were 13 teachers regularly used it. Research assignments and class debates were also moderately used as demonstrated in the table above. Strategies requiring more resources and time, like community surveys, poster production, and digital projects, were rarely or never used by many teachers.

4.4:2 Findings on Challenges Teachers Face in Adopting PBL

The third objective was to assess the challenges teachers encounter when adopting PBL in their language classrooms. The findings are presented in Table 4.7.

Table On Challenges Faced by Teachers (N = 60)

Challenge	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly disagree (%)
Large class size makes Projects hard	12	5	-	-
Limited time to Complete the syllabus	8	3	2	-
Lack of teaching and Learning Materials	6	2	-	-
Inadequate training on PLB	4	3	2	2
Limited ICT materials	3	2	-	-
Negative attitude of some parents	2	2	1	1

Sauce: primary data(Martha,2026)

The table above describes the most pressing challenges, in order, which were as follows below;

Large class sizes 12% out of the 60 teachers strongly agree. And 5% agree and none disagreed or strongly disagreed. many classes in Pallisa have more than 50 learners, making group management difficult. Limited time 8% strong agreement the syllabus is wide, and teachers feel pressure to "cover content" instead of engaging in projects.

Lack of materials 6% of the teachers strongly agree schools lack textbooks, reference books, newspapers, and internet access and 2% disagreed. Inadequate training (4% strongly agreed most teachers have not been formally trained in PBL. 3% agreed, 2% disagreed and 2% disagreed. Limited ICT 3% strongly agreed the school has few computers that learners can use for research.

In the interviews, one head of department commented:

"We would love to do projects, but when you have 65 learners in one stream, and only one textbook for every ten learners, how can you ask them to research? You just teach what is in the book and prepare them for exams."

These findings show that structural and resource-related challenges are the biggest barriers to adopting PBL. They are beyond the individual teacher's control and require institutional and policy intervention.

4.4:3 Findings on the Influence of PBL on Learner Participation and Performance

The fourth objective was to find out how PBL influences learners' participation and performance in English language lessons. Findings from both teachers and learners are presented below.

Table On Teachers' Views on the Influence of PBL on Learners (N = 60)

Statement	SD(%)	A(%)	D (%)	SD(%)
PBL increases learner participation	20	3	1	-
PBL improves learners' speaking skills	9	3	-	2
PBL improves learners' writing skills	5	2	1	-
PBL improves learners' reading habits	2	2	-	-
PBL improves overall English performance	5	2	2	1

Sauce: primary data(Martha,2026)

In the table above a combined 20% of teachers strongly agreed, 3% agreed, 1 disagreed and none strongly disagreed that PBL increases learner participation, 12% felt that PBL improves speaking skills, and 2% strongly disagreed. 5% strongly agreed, 2% agreed and 1% disagreed that it improves writing skills.

This implies that teachers who have attempted PBL have noticed positive effects on learners' language development.

Table 4.4:4 Learners' Views on the Influence of PBL on Their Performance (N = 120)

Statement	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
I feel more confident when speaking English during projects	15	11	2	5

My writing becomes clear when I do project writing	8	12	4	5
I read more books/articles when working on projects	6	4	4	2
Group projects help me learn from other learners	16	9	3	-
I enjoy English lessons more when projects are used	10	4	-	-

Source: primary data (Martha, 2026)

The results in the table above show high levels of positive perception among learners. Foreexample 15% strongly agreed and 11% agreed that they feel more confident when speaking English during projects. Likewise, 8% strongly agreed and 12% agreed that writing becomes clear when they are doing project writing. Then 6% strongly agreed that they read more books when working on projects. 16% strongly agreed that projects help them learn from others and 9% agreed, 10% strongly agreed, 4% agreed that they enjoy lessons more when projects are used. However, there were learners who disagreed and strongly disagreed as indicated in the table.

The consistency across these responses suggests that PBL creates a more interactive, enjoyable and confidence-building environment.

During interviews, several learners noted:

"When we do group work, I get courage to speak because we are many, not just the teacher asking me alone."

"I used to fear writing, but when we wrote a project on Waste management in our village, I realized I could write a long report in English."

In schools where the researcher observed some form of PBL activity, learners were visibly engaged, moving around, asking each other questions, and using English to plan and execute tasks. In contrast, in classes where teaching was entirely teacher-centered, learners were mostly quiet and copying notes.

4.5 Discussion of Findings

The findings can be discussed in relation to the research objectives, the literature reviewed and the theoretical framework.

4.5:1 Teachers' Awareness of PBL

The fact that 23% of teachers had heard about PBL but only 13% truly understood it, and only 8% had formal training, indicates a gap between hearing about an idea and being equipped to practice it. This is consistent with literature from other parts of Uganda and Africa, which shows that teachers are aware of learner-centered methods on the surface but lack the technical preparation to implement them

In line with Dewey's theory, learning by doing requires that teachers themselves experience what it feels like to design and run a project. Without that experience, they cannot guide learners effectively. The findings therefore suggest that teacher education programs and continuous training should integrate hands-on PBL training.

4.5:2 Strategies Teachers Use to Implement PBL

The strategies that were most regularly used, such as group discussions and research assignments, are entry-level forms of PBL. While they encourage some collaboration, they do not always lead to authentic products and public presentations, which are core to PBL. The least used strategies, such as Drama and Role play and production of plays and writings are the most capable of transforming language learning because they push learners to use English in real-world communication.

4.5:3 Challenges Faced by Teachers

The major challenges, namely large class sizes, time pressure, material scarcity, inadequate training and limited ICT, are not unique to Pallisa District. They are well documented in many African classrooms. However, their combination in Pallisa makes the gap between policy intention and classroom practice even wider. The teachers' voices in the interviews make it clear that they are not opposed to PBL, they are simply overwhelmed by working conditions.

Vygotsky's theory reminds us that learning is scaffolded. Teachers cannot scaffold PBL effectively if they themselves are not scaffolded by training, resources and supportive school leadership. Therefore, the challenges address the system more than individual teachers.

4.5:4 Influence of PBL on Learner Participation and Performance

The positive influence reported by both teachers and learners confirms what the literature consistently shows: that PBL makes classrooms more interactive and improves language skills, especially speaking and writing. Learners enjoy English lessons more when projects are used, which is a key motivator in language learning.

This supports Dewey's idea that learning through experience produces stronger motivation, and Vygotsky's idea that language develops best in social interaction. Group projects offer the kind of social context that Vygotsky described, where more capable peers help others progress within their ZPD.

4.6 Summary of Chapter Findings

In summary, the findings show that:

Teachers in Pallisa District are aware of PBL at a basic level, but lack deep understanding and formal training.

The strategies used are mostly light versions of PBL, such as group discussions and short research assignments, with limited use of authentic, community-linked or digital projects.

Teachers face serious challenges, especially related to large class sizes, time pressure, lack of teaching materials, and inadequate training.

Where PBL is practiced, both teachers and learners report positive effects on learner participation, speaking, writing, motivation and overall English performance

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of the Study

This study explored the teaching and implementation of Project-Based Learning in the English language classroom in Pallisa District. The study examined teachers' awareness of Project-Based Learning, the strategies used to implement it, the challenges faced by teachers, and its perceived influence on learners' participation and performance in English language.

The study adopted a mixed-methods approach using a descriptive survey design. Quantitative data was collected through structured questionnaires administered to teachers and learners, while qualitative information was obtained through semi-structured interviews and classroom observations. The quantitative data was analyzed using numerical summaries, while qualitative data was organized into themes to provide deeper explanations of the findings.

5.2 Conclusions

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

Teacher awareness of PBL in Pallisa District is superficial. Most teachers have heard about PBL but lack the depth of understanding and formal training needed to apply it effectively in language classrooms.

Implementation strategies are limited to simple collaborative tasks such as group discussions and basic research assignments. Strategies that require real-world engagement, such as community projects, drama productions and digital media projects, are seldom used.

Challenges facing teachers are largely structural. Large class sizes, time pressure, limited teaching and learning resources, inadequate teacher training, and poor ICT access all hinder effective PBL adoption.

Influence of PBL on learners is positive where it is practiced. PBL improves learner participation, develops speaking and writing skills, and motivates learners to take English more seriously.

5.3 Recommendations

From the conclusions above, the study recommends that:

The Ministry of Education and Sports, through the National Curriculum Development Centre, should incorporate structured PBL modules into teacher training colleges and universities, ensuring that pre-service and in-service English teachers are systematically prepared for project work.

School administrators should support PBL by reducing class sizes where possible, providing adequate teaching and learning materials, and creating time in the timetable for project activities.

English language teachers should start with small manageable projects, such as class magazines, mini-debates, and short community interviews, gradually scaling up as they gain confidence.

Non-governmental organizations and education partners should support schools with reading materials, computers, internet access and library facilities to enable project work.

Parents and communities should be sensitized about learner-centered methods, so that they support rather than resist innovative teaching practices.

5.4 Further Study suggestions.

The study recommends further research in the following areas:

A comparative study of PBL in language teaching across urban and rural schools in Uganda.

A study on the impact of PBL on learners' performance in English at the Uganda Certificate of Education level.

An investigation into the integration of ICT-supported project work in English language classrooms.

A study on head teachers' and parents' attitudes towards PBL in rural Ugandan schools.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: RESEARCH TOOLS AND INSTRUMENTS

APPENDIX II: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION TO THE FIELD.

I **APOLOT MARTHA** a bachelor student at Busitema University is conducting research proposal about exploring the teaching of project-based learning in the literature language classroom

This is for academic purpose and the findings will help to improve on the teaching of skills in secondary schools mainly in arts students as well Participation in this study is voluntary and refusal to participate will not cause any harm. Therefore, you are kindly requested to participate in the study by answering question that will be asked.

Thank you.

Participant.....

I the undersigned respondent, the purpose of the study has been explained to me, that the study is voluntary and I therefore willingly agree to participate in it and no consequence will result if I refuse to participate. Sign.....

APPENDIX III: TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

INTRODUCTION

I am Apolot Martha, a student of Busitema University, faculty of science and education, pursuing a bachelor's degree in education languages (English and Literature in English).

I am doing my research on a topic of, **“exploring the teaching of project based learning in the language classroom in pallisa district”**.

I have chosen you to be part of this study because I want to examine teachers' awareness on PBL, how they have implemented it, challenges and strategies used by teachers and how it is of help to learners as well. This study is basically for academic purpose with highest confidentiality.

The questions have been divided into sections based on the study variables.

Section A: personal information.

Please tick the appropriate box that responds with your answer.

Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

Highest academic qualification:

☐ Diploma ☐ Bachelor's ☐ Master's ☐ Other (specify)

Years of teaching experience:

☐ Below 5 ☐ 5–10 ☐ Above 10

School.....

Section B: Awareness of PBL

Statement	Yes	No
I have heard about PBL		
I understand what PBL means		
I attended training on PBL		
I can design a PBL Unit on my own		

Section C: Strategies Used

Strategy	Regularly	Sometimes
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Section D: Challenges Faced

Challenge	Strongly Agree	Agree
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APPENDIX IV: LEARNERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Section A: personal information

Class: ☐ S.3 ☐ S.4

Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

Section B & C: Likert-scale items on PBL experience and influence (similar to teachers' questionnaire)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

APPENDIX V: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

INTRODUCTION

I am **Apolot Martha**, a student of Busitema University, faculty of science and education, pursuing a bachelor's degree in education languages (English and Literature in English).

I am doing my research on a topic of, **“exploring the teaching of project based learning in the language classroom in pallisa district”**.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. This study is basically for academic purpose with highest confidentiality.

Participant code: _____

School: _____

Date: _____

Interviewer: _____

The questions have been asked based on the study variable.

Question 1: Can you tell me about your experience with project work in English teaching?

A female teacher of senior three said she has been using project work in her English lessons for some time, especially under the Competency-Based Curriculum. She normally assigns learners activities such as writing stories, conducting interviews in the community, preparing speeches, creating posters, and performing drama and through the projects, learners become more active and are able to apply English in real-life situations. However, she added on and said the success of the projects depends on the availability of time and learning materials.

Question 2: How would you describe your understanding of Project-Based Learning (PBL)?

Another language teacher said according to her, Project-Based Learning is a learner-centred teaching approach where learners gain knowledge and language skills by working on meaningful projects over a period of time. Instead of depending only on classroom lessons, learners investigate problems, collaborate with others, communicate their findings, and produce a final product such as a report, presentation, drama, or poster.

Question 3: Which PBL strategies have you used in your English lessons?

One teacher said he usually uses group projects, role plays, debates, oral presentations, storytelling, creative writing, community interviews, research assignments, poster making, and drama performances. Another said she encourages peer assessment and group discussions so that learners can learn from one another while developing their communication skills.

Question 4: What challenges have you faced when using PBL?

Two teachers of language of senior three and two said the major challenges include limited teaching time, large class sizes, inadequate teaching and learning materials, limited access to technology, and insufficient financial support. They said some learners also have weak English language skills, making it difficult for them to participate fully which makes assessing individual contributions in group work challenging.

Question 5: In your view, how has PBL affected learners' participation?

A senior three teacher said Project-Based Learning has greatly improved learners' participation. Most learners become more confident in speaking English, asking questions, working in groups, and presenting their ideas. They show greater interest in lessons because they are actively involved in learning. Although a few shy learners still require encouragement and overall participation has improved significantly.

Question 6: What do you think should be done to improve PBL practice in this district?

Generally, teachers said they think teachers should receive more training on how to implement Project-Based Learning effectively. Schools should provide adequate teaching materials, improve access to ICT facilities, and reduce class sizes where possible. More time should also be allocated for project activities, and parents should be encouraged to support learners during project work. In addition, they said school administrators and education officers should regularly monitor and support the implementation of PBL.

APPENDIX VI: RESEARCH TIMELINE

ACTIVITIES	DURATION	TIME FRAME
Topic approval and proposal writing	4 weeks	October 2025
Data collection	3weeks	January - 2026
Data organization and analysis	2 weeks	April 2026
Drafting of the final report	3 weeks	May 2026
Submission and presentation	2 weeks	July 2026

APPENDIX VII: RESEARCH BUDGET

Item	Description	Estimated amount
Printing and photocopying	Questionnaires, interview guides,	11,000ugx
Transport	Movement to schools	10,000ugx
Stationary	Pens, files and note books	25,000ugx
Communication	Phone calls and data	10,000ugx
Data analysis	Typing and editing of the findings.	25,000ugx

Miscellaneous	Unforeseen expenses	12,000ugx
Final printing of research	Printing out of final research copies and binging	95,000ugx
Total Amount	Full Amount of what was spent to do research	188,000ugx

THE END