

**Exploring the Extent to which the Initial Primary Teacher Education programme
develops Teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence: A Case of Four Public
Teacher Training Colleges in Malawi**

By

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DECLARATION

I, **Geoffrey Subuhana**, hereby declare that this thesis titled, “Exploring the extent to which the Initial Primary Teacher Education programme in Malawi develops teachers’ Classroom Interactional Competence” is my own original work and has never been submitted to any other institution for the same purpose. Other writers’ opinion or findings included in this thesis are quoted or cited in accordance with the ethical standards.

Full name

Signature

Date

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Geoffrey Subuhana, entitled ‘Exploring the extent to which the Initial Primary Teacher Education programme in Malawi develops teachers’ Classroom Interactional Competence is his own work and he is completely responsible for its content. It is, therefore, submitted with my approval.

Signature _____

Lydia Kishindo-Mafuta, PhD

SUPERVISOR

Date _____

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my mother, Esther Chiwambo and my late dad, Charles Subuhana. I also dedicate this work to my lovely wife, Thokozani Tembo Subuhana, my son, Winston Subuhana and my younger brothers, Macdonald and Chifundo.

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ABSTRACT

Lack of proper interaction between teachers and learners in Malawian primary school classrooms makes lessons to be passive, therefore, posing a risk on learners' communication benefit in and outside the classroom. However, little effort has been done to reveal how teachers are trained in the Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) to manage the classroom interaction. The present study explored the extent to which the Initial Primary Teacher Education (IPTE) programme in Malawi develops teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence (CIC) in Teacher Training Colleges. It was a qualitative study which used an interpretive paradigm and was guided by Professional Competence theoretical framework. It answered the following three research questions: How do the Initial primary English teacher educators understand Classroom Interactional Competence? How do the Initial Primary Teacher Education programme in Malawi support teachers' development of Classroom Interactional Competence? What strategies do the Initial Primary Teacher educators employ when teaching English? The study was conducted at four public Teacher Training Colleges in the Central, South and Eastern regions of Malawi. It used English lecturers and their students as research participants to collect data. Interviews, Focus Group Discussion, lesson observation and document analysis were employed for data collection. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data. The study found out that the Initial Primary Teacher Education programme partially develops teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence with shortfalls in English curriculum and lecturers' interactive pedagogical knowhow and skills. The results demonstrate that English lecturers in the mentioned Malawian TTCs need to possess second language teaching competences, skills and very high sense of personal linguistic proficiency in the language of instruction. In addition, curriculum developers should ensure enriching the IPTE programme English modules with necessary curriculum input to make it competence-based.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CIC	:	Classroom Interactional Competence
CK	:	Content Knowledge
CLA	:	Communicative Language Ability
CLT	:	Communicative Language Teaching
CoP	:	Community of Practice
DTED	:	Director of Teacher Education and Development
EFL	:	English as Foreign Language
EGRA	:	Early Grade Reading Activities
ESL	:	English as a Second language
GPK	:	General Pedagogical Knowledge
IPTE	:	Initial Primary Teacher Education
L1	:	First language
L2	:	Second language
MoEST	:	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
NRP	:	National Reading Programme
OBE	:	Outcome-Based Education
PCAR	:	Primary Curriculum and Assessment Reform
TE	:	Teacher Education
TTC	:	Teacher Training College

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Chapter Overview

The study is about an exploration of the extent to which the Initial Primary Teacher Education (IPTE) programme in Malawi develops teacher's Classroom Interactional Competence. This chapter firstly looks at the background information of the study. Given within it are; brief details on the Malawian education system, IPTE programme, the status of English language in Malawi and efforts by government and other stakeholders to boost the Malawian primary school education system. Additionally, the chapter highlights the statement of the research problem, main research question and its subsidiary questions. Further, it provides the purpose, rationale, significance and delimitations of the study. Finally, the chapter describes the theoretical framework guiding this study, definitions of key terms used in the study and an outline of how the thesis has been organised.

1.2 Background to the Study

The choice of Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) as sites of the research is purposeful in that they are places where primary school teachers are imparted with knowledge and various classroom teaching skills to pass on to primary school learners. The skills and knowledge acquired by Malawian learners help them to develop wholly as human beings. This assertion is supported by Croft (2012), who emphasizes that education as one of the greatest building blocks for human development has a formative effect on the mind, character and accelerates the development of knowledge, skills, and attitude in learners. Teachers in TTCs are taught using English Language in all learning areas except for Chichewa. The same is true in primary schools where these teachers are entrusted with the duty of making the learners attain the

English language skills for them to do well in all the subjects, in which English is the medium of instruction.

1.2.1 The Malawian Education System

The education sector in Malawi comprises five sub-sectors, that is, Basic Education which consists of Early Childhood Development, Complementary Basic Education, Adult Literacy and Primary Education; Secondary Education; Teacher Education and Tertiary Education (Universities, Technical and Vocational Education). The sector also has various forms of special provisions for disadvantaged and vulnerable children and youths, including those with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and orphans (UNESCO, 2014).

Primary education in Malawi runs for eight years, with children aged 6 to 13 years. The education system is built upon it as it is the foundation of the other school levels. Thus, it is the key to the success or failure of the whole school system (World Bank, 2010). The majority of the learners enter primary education without having gone through the pre-school sector because the pre-schools are mostly found in urban areas. These pre-schools offer some learners their first point of access to English (World Bank, 2010). It should be further noted that in Malawi, transition from one school level to another is determined by passing government national examinations with English proficiency serving as the final determiner for getting a passing score. As such, English is a compulsory subject at all levels of Malawian education (UNESCO, 2014). This entails that the English Primary school curriculum is designed to cater for the same.

1.2.2 The Initial Primary Teacher Education Programme in Malawi

Initial Primary Teacher Education programme, which is also referred to as Pre-service training is provided in a teachers' college where the student teacher is introduced to the knowledge and

skills needed to do a professional job in teaching (UNESCO, 2014). Currently, Malawi has a total of 16 Primary Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs). Of these, 8 are public and the other 8 are private. The public colleges are Karonga, Kasungu, Lilongwe, St. Josephs, Machinga, Chiradzulu, Blantyre and Phalombe Teacher Training colleges. The private colleges are; Laudon, Alma, Emmanuel, DAPP Mzimba, DAPP Dowa, Maryam, DAPP Chilangoma and DAPP Amalika. Worthy to mention is the fact that 3 more public TTCs are about to be completed and this will bring the tally of public colleges to 11 (UNESCO, 2014).

The IPTE programme accepted its first cohort (IPTE 1) in 2005 after the phasing out of other teacher training programmes. The current programme lasts for six terms covered in two academic years. Presently, the programme in Malawi uses the training structure known as 2 IN-2 OUT. This is whereby students spend the first two terms in college learning teaching content and methodologies. In the subsequent two terms, they are allocated to various primary schools for teaching practice. The last two terms are for both reflections on the teaching practice they had and content learning (Ministry Education, Science and Technology (MoEST, 2013).

People who enrol in teacher education programs bring with them a variety of knowledge on school subjects, a certain general culture, digital skills and a certain mastery of the language of instruction. Being former students, they are already familiar with academic practices and teachers, and what remains for them are competencies with regard to the practice of teaching for their professional development. This being the case, in TTCs, student teachers are introduced to the principles that underlie teaching such as the aims of education, the curriculum, the nature and characteristics of child development, methods of teaching and learning and the resources on which learners and teachers can draw from learning and teaching (Croft, 2012).

Teachers are thus, trained in a range of knowledge, competences, skills to teach learners to read, to write, to manipulate numbers, to observe and record their experiences of the world. In English, in addition to teaching methodologies, the student teachers are exposed to content work, which mostly is what they will teach in the primary schools and it is not new to them since it is what they covered throughout their primary and secondary school learning (MoEST, 2013). All these are imparted to the teachers for them to provide the learners with experiences which stimulate their imaginations and expand their worlds. Therefore, Malawian primary school teachers are trained to work in accordance with vision and imagination of the schools and a country as a whole by giving all learners full opportunity to learn for their success.

1.2.3 The Status of English in Malawi

English is the official language of Malawi. This language policy originates from the fact that Malawi was previously a British colony until the granting of independence in 1964. Nevertheless, Djite (2008) observes that in Malawi, the majority of the people have no competence in the official language, and therefore, the country is a non-English-dominant despite being called an English-speaking African country. According to Kachru's (1988) model of the diffusion of English language, Malawi belongs to the outer circle of English as a second language (ESL) category.

The said model further indicates that in Malawi, learners learn English but do not acquire it and therefore lack its proficiency. This is because language acquisition has to do with acquiring the language through natural means, but since Malawi is a non-English-dominant country, learners need the classroom in order to access the English language. This has resulted in the inactiveness of primary school classroom lessons, due to poor interaction in various subjects except for Chichewa. According to Masina (2014) and Hulme (2014), this is attributed to the

teachers' deficiency in English teaching skills and knowledge. This therefore, denies the learner the interaction which is a vehicle for the acquisition of the target language and the needed information.

1.2.4 Efforts to Boost the Malawian Primary School Education Sector

1.2.4.1 Malawi Government Policies (Initiatives)

To improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the primary sector, Primary education curriculum was revised through the Primary Curriculum and Assessment Reform (PCAR) from January 2007 to May 2008 emphasizing Outcome-Based Education (OBE) (Kamwendo, 2016). OBE emphasizes literacy in English and Chichewa for academic work across, among other skills. Additionally, the then MoEST (2013) launched the *National Education Standards: Primary and Secondary Education* in May, 2015. Under this, six outcomes were identified: Learning in lessons, students' outcomes in the curriculum which involves mastery of learning outcomes, attainment across the schools (for instance, examination results), students' participation in education, students' behaviour and involvement in school life, and students' safety and protection. All these efforts were aimed at improving the quality education offered in primary (and secondary) and ensuring that learners fully participate in different subjects' lessons for the achievement of educational goals set by the Ministry of Education.

1.2.4.2 Foreign Interventions

A latest addition to PCAR is the National Reading Programme (NRP) which focuses on effective Reading Instruction in English and Chichewa languages (Kamwendo, 2019). It is an approach to reading in the lower primary grades which includes a focus on five crucial language components such as; phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The programme is yet to be introduced to standards five up to eight. The NRP came after the

Early Grade Reading Activity (EGRA), which was introduced from 2013 and ended in 2016. It began in 2016 initially with the Malawi Early Grade Reading Improvement (MERIT) activity (2015-2020) with USAID support and implemented by Research Triangle International (RTI). World Bank (2010) states that to attain the goals of Education For All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by the 2015 deadline, the developing countries had been engaged in quantitative and qualitative improvement in basic education in collaboration with the cooperating partners (CPs). Furthermore, to reach the goals set in Vision 2020, the Malawi Growth Development Strategy (MGDS) was developed for 2006 to 2011 as a mid-term national development perspective. There were 6 areas of priority, which some of them were education, science and technology (Miti, 2015). This new Strategy was aimed at expanding equitable access to education, improving quality and relevance of education and improving governance and management in the education system to improve effectiveness and efficiency in delivering services (The Ministry of Development Planning and Cooperation (MDPC), 2010).

Given the aforementioned, this study therefore, aimed at exploring the extent to which the Initial Primary Teacher Education programme in Malawi develops teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence. This is because it is in the TTCs, where the teachers tap their knowledge, competences and different skills from, for them to pass on to the Malawian primary school learners for their personal development as human beings. As Miti (2015) stresses, "it is only when a teacher has learnt and acquired language and its teaching skills sufficiently that he or she can proceed to use the same as a medium of teaching and learning in schools."

1.3 Statement of the Problem

In Malawi, English, which is a second language, is an official language. With this status, it is the language of administration, education and commerce, among other functions (SACMEQ, 2017). As such, it is a compulsory subject in all school levels as well as a medium of instruction from standard 1 of primary school up to tertiary level (Kamwendo, 2016). This follows that, learners are supposed to learn it well for effective communication. However, there is passive learning in English and other subjects at primary school as both teachers and learners are not involved in the required classroom interaction (Hulme, 2014). This is due to lack of English proficiency amongst learners and a deficiency in English knowledge and teaching skills in teachers. This has a negative bearing on the success of the teaching and learning process as it hinders classroom interaction which is considered as the tool for mediating and assisting learning (Walsh, 2011). As a result, learners cannot interact with others and may lose some opportunities that would need them to properly communicate with others in English.

Studies on the teaching and use of English language in primary schools in Malawi by Kamwendo (2019), World Bank (2016), Hulme (2014) and Masina (2014), have all attested to the said problem in the primary school sector. The mentioned studies and many others have focussed on how English is taught in primary schools and it is not known how the teachers are trained to teach the English language so that the learners are equipped with the necessary competences for communication in the target language. It is against this gap therefore, that this study sought to explore the extent to which the Initial Primary Teacher Education programme develops teacher's Classroom Interactional Competence in Malawian Teacher Training Colleges.

1.4 Main research question

To what extent does the Initial Primary Teacher Education programme in Malawi develop teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence?

1.4.1 Subsidiary questions

The main research question was supported by the following questions which originated from Grant et al. (1979) Professional Competence theory that has framed this research:

- How do Initial Primary English teacher educators understand Classroom Interactional Competence?
- How does the Initial Primary Teacher Education programme in Malawi support teachers' development of Classroom Interactional Competence?
- What strategies do Initial Primary English teacher educators employ to develop teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence when teaching English?

1.5 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the extent to which the Initial Primary Teacher Education Programme develops teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence in Malawian Teacher Training Colleges.

1.6 Rationale of the Study

Majority of studies on the teaching of English in Malawian schools like those done by Kamwendo (2019), World Bank (2016), Hulme (2014) and Masina (2014), have all indicated the absence of English language proficiency in most primary school learners in Malawian primary schools. This has affected the way English lessons are conducted since there is no active involvement of the learners in English lessons.

As can be observed, the studies have a common focus, on English learning in primary schools. Therefore, since most of the studies in Malawi have concentrated much on the learning of English in primary schools and that little has been done in TTCs where the teachers are trained, this study aims at making sure that the IPTE programme has the capacity to equip the student teachers with necessary knowledge, skills and strategies to help learners in primary schools develop interactional competence in English language. This is because English is used as medium for instruction as already pointed out. This, in the end, will accelerate learners' acquisition of English language which is also a Second Language (L2) in Malawi. Eventually, this will develop learners' English language proficiency thereby, being able to take part actively in the lessons conducted in the L2 (Kamwendo, 2016). Therefore, the only way for this to happen is through classroom interaction in the target language as most of the learners do not speak English in their homes (Walsh, 2013).

1.7 Significance of the Study

The scarcity of studies on how Malawian primary school teachers are trained to teach English subject for the learners' necessary interactional competence in the language led to this study on the exploration of the extent to which the Initial Primary Teacher Education programme in Malawi develops teacher's Classroom Interactional Competence in Teacher Training Colleges. It is hoped that this study will fill the gap and add knowledge on Classroom Interactional Competence in TTCs to the existing body of literature.

In addition, its findings are valuable to education officials especially those interested in teacher education programmes and basic education (primary schools). These interested parties are the Ministry of Education (MoE), Malawi Institute of Education (MIE) Department of Teacher Education and Development (DTED), the German Corporation for International Cooperation

(GIZ) and TTCs. Thus, the study will provide them with useful information on whether to modify or maintain some of the curricular inputs and pedagogical approaches used in English teaching in TTCs. This will ensure the achievement of Malawian educational goals as highlighted in both the National Educational Standards and the Malawi Vision 2063 since education is the enabler of the later (National Planning Commission, 2020).

1.8 Delimitations of the Study

There were sixteen Teacher Training Colleges in Malawi at the time of this study, which one study could not manage to reach. The purpose of demarcating this study was to make it more manageable. Therefore, the study did not focus on all the TTCs in all the regions of Malawi. The study specifically looked at selected TTCs in Eastern, Southern and Central regions of Malawi. Furthermore, it only engaged TTC English lecturers because emphasis of this study was on interaction in English classes only and not in other subjects. This is because interaction competence in English lessons will aid good interaction in other subjects taught through English in primary schools as teachers in TTCs are trained to teach all the subjects.

1.9 Theoretical Framework for the Study

According to Ravitch and Riggan (2019), a framework is a structure composed of parts framed together, especially one designed for inclosing or supporting anything; a frame or skeleton. In the case of theoretical framework therefore, the “parts” referred to in this definition are theories, and what is being supported are the relationships embedded in the theoretical framework. Therefore, a theoretical framework represents a combination of formal theories to clarify some aspects of this work. This study was thus, guided by Professional Competence theory.

1.9.1 The theory of Professional Competence

The theory according to Mulder (2017) was first introduced into higher education by Grant et al. (1979) in the United States (US). Professional competence is used to describe an individual characteristic of the level of correspondence with the profession and leans heavily on the ability and proficiency to perform certain labour tasks, to act independently and responsibly (Markova, 2016). Adding to this, Westera (2020) says that professional competence is practically demonstrated by aspiration and ability or readiness to realize one's potential which encompasses knowledge, skills, experience, and personality traits, among others. So, generally, competence is a combination of knowledge, skills, abilities formed in the process of learning of a particular discipline, as well as the ability to perform any activity on the basis of the acquired knowledge, skills and abilities.

Grant et al (1979), came up with the notion of competence in education and it became prominent in the US during the 1960s and 1970s with its concentration on successful performance on tasks sampled from real-life situations. To emphasise this, Mulder (2014) declares that if someone wants to know who will make a good teacher, they will have to get videotapes of classrooms and find out how the behaviours of good and poor teachers differ. This means that the theory on the other side acknowledges that desired competence is defined by what key stakeholders in a professional context expect in terms of professional action.

According to Cebotaryova (2015), the strongest element of professional competence in education is the professional knowledge of the teacher. The teachers' professional knowledge is commonly categorized into Content Knowledge (CK), Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK), and General Pedagogical Knowledge (GPK). CK and PCK are specific for each subject whereas GPK includes knowledge about generic teaching and learning tasks such as classroom

management (Oonk et al., 2011). All these are helpful to learners for they enhance the required competencies in them (Alake-Tuenter et al., 2012).

Grant et al. (1979) in their theory, argue that certain competence-based teachers' education have to be fulfilled in order to make students come out successfully in their test that is used to measure learning outcome. They further stress on the competence-based programs which they claim are not received well by students at various institutions of higher learning worldwide. The theory thus, aims to describe competence-based teaching and learning at undergraduate college level in various teaching and non-teaching professions. Thus, competence-based education tends to be a form of education that focuses on an analysis of a prospective or actual role of teacher's competence in modern society to certify student's progress (Mulder, 2014).

According to Wesselink and Wals (2011), the level of an individual's competence in some area of practice can be defined in terms of the extent to which the individual can handle the various situations that arise in that area of practice. Such situations are referred to as professional encounters or just "encounters", where each encounter involves a context, a client, and the reason (the goal or problem) for professional intervention. As stated by Chappell et al. (2015), professional encounters vary in terms of the problem to be addressed, in terms of client characteristics (age, sex, level of functioning) and, in terms of context or setting variables such as availability of resources and support personnel.

Nevertheless, as asserted by Blömeke (2012), to allude that professionals are competent is also to say something that goes beyond their expected performance over some domain of encounters. To this effect, competent professionals in education are thus, expected to help clients by using certain professional tools, including subject matter knowledge, procedural

knowledge and skills, and the judgment needed to combine various knowledge, skills, and abilities into effective solutions to client's problems (Chappell, et al., 2015). In agreement with the assertion is Mulder (2014), who affirms that in a profession such as teaching, clients (students) have needs for professional help and the purpose of the profession (teaching) is to provide such help. Therefore, practitioners should be competent to manage the problems they are likely to encounter ranging from management of classrooms, facilitation and guidance in lessons, among others.

Mulder et al. (2009) add that the knowledge and competence base of a profession is typically well developed and highly sophisticated, and often has a long and well-known history. As such, the organization of curricula for professional programmes reflects the organization of the knowledge base for the target professionals and tends to institutionalize it. For all of these reasons, the knowledge base shapes people's thinking about professional practice and professional competence. With this in mind, professional competence is presented via a set of several competencies that determine the individual's professional maturity as used in this study: Special competence; Social competence; Personal competence; and Individual competence.

As defined by Mulder (2014), special competence means mastery of the professional activity at a sufficiently high level, ability to project one's further professional development and social competence, on the other hand, is the mastery of cooperative professional activity, collaboration, and professional communication techniques that are accepted in a specific occupation. Further, personal competence refers to the mastery of self-expression and self-development means and means of resisting professional deformations of the personality while individual competence dwells much on the mastery of self-fulfilment means as a professional

and means of developing individuality in the occupation. It also concentrates on the ability of professional personal growth, self-organization, self-rehabilitation, proficiency in modern Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), developed culture of communication in global networks and ability to work with sources of information (Blömeke, 2012). The diagram below illustrates a set of competencies for a professional lecturer.



Figure 1.1: A relationship between a lecturer and a set of professional competences.

Generally, basing on the set of professional competences presented, teachers' professional competence is regarded as a universal characteristic that determines their readiness for and ability to adequately, independently, and responsibly perform their professional activity in a constantly changing social and professional environment. Thus, the set demands them to display professional activity, constant professionalism, and self-development of the personality by comprehending the social importance of pedagogical activity and the demands of the well organised competence-based curriculum. This is in line with what Astuty (2018) contends when he defines professional competence in education, as the lecturer's ability to master learning materials in broad and deep manner. This includes mastery of materials, curriculum as well as mastery of the structure and methodology. Thus, the theory of competence was used

in this study to uncover the lecturers' professional competence in classroom interaction in Malawian primary Teacher Training Colleges.

1.9.2 Relevance of the Theory to the Study

With this study, exploring the extent to which the IPTE programme develops teacher's Classroom Interactional Competence, the theory is a perfect fit since professional competence stresses that the knowledge base of a profession shapes peoples thinking about professional practice and professional competence. Therefore, it is more or less like interactional competence which also relies on knowledge to shape the best interactional practices (Carr and Skinner, 2019). Such Knowledge that aids practices is a reflection of Teacher Education (TE) programmes which are built on the assumption that knowledge has to be delivered first before students undergo practical training to develop situation-specific skills.

In addition, as argued by Lum (2019), professional competence depends on the organization of curriculum in professional schools to reflect the organization of the knowledge base of the practitioners. This is in line with interactional competence which also leans on contents of the programme's curriculum to effectively shape the interactional practices of the interactants. Furthermore, according to Leung and Park (2012), teachers' competence development can happen continuously in terms of incremental processes (Braeken, 2015). This is also the case with interactional competence which professionals in teaching should master via a continual process.

1.9.3 Criticisms against the Theory

The theory however, has some drawbacks though it is relevant to the study. According to some critics, the main one being that it is not possible to measure competence directly, therefore

there is no effective criterion used to empirically confirm someone's professional competence (Verbitsky, 2019). What this means is that it is difficult to label someone as competent in a certain field because there is no reliable way of assessing professional competence. So, what people come up with as declarations of one's competence are mere opinions.

1.9.4 Justification of the Theory despite Criticisms

Nevertheless, despite its weakness, this study was framed within the professional competence theory. This is because competence-based education under professional competence places more emphasis on the fact that teachers' professional competence develops through the active uptake of various learning opportunities and that individual characteristics influence the degree to which teachers utilize these learning opportunities. This is in line with CIC which emphasizes on the need for students to be actively involved in the lessons so as to utilize all the learning chances at their disposal and stand out as competent teachers in classroom interaction (Carr and Skinner, 2019).

Moreover, the theory of professional competence as argued by Paine et al. (2016) stresses that competence based curricula from around the world which has the vision of good teaching is learner-cantered, focused on active learning, and moving away from traditions of what is typically described as teacher-cantered, transmissible instruction. In CIC as well, emphasis is on the use of participatory teaching approaches so as to give students necessary opportunities to enhance their interaction skills.

Furthermore, CIC is identified by fostering students' developmental growth of socio emotional as well as cognitive qualities as a shared objective of teaching almost worldwide. Therefore, the above links between professional competence and interactional competence shares the same

understanding with Leung and Park (2012), who allude that since TE intends to develop the competence necessary to meet the specified objectives by providing theoretical and practical opportunities to learn (OTL), the competence-based curriculum ensures that learning happens in a social context with certain assumptions about which knowledge, skills, and affective-motivational attributes are needed to succeed as a teacher. In this regard, CIC ought to be developed via the curriculum and the teacher educators' knowledge and skills on the same.

1.9.5 How the Theory was used in the Study

In the study, to explore the extent to which the IPTE programme develops teacher's CIC, the researcher used the set of professional competencies such as special competence so as to determine the lecturers' mastery of the professional activities at a sufficiently high level and ability to project one's further professional development; such as social competence. This was done in order to determine the lecturers' mastery of cooperative professional activity, collaboration, and professional communication techniques that are accepted in a specific occupation; in this case, English lessons (Paine et al., 2016).

In addition, personal competence was used in order to determine the lecturers' mastery of self-expression in the target language and self-development means, means of resisting professional twists of the personality; and individual competence where the lecturers' mastery of self-fulfilment means and means of developing individuality in the occupation. Furthermore, it was used to determine the ability of lecturers' professional personal growth, self-organization, and self-rehabilitation (Markova, 2016). Lastly, the lectures' proficiency in modern ICTs, developed culture of communication in global networks, ability to work with sources of information was analysed. All these assisted in clarifying and addressing the main research

question: “To what extent does the Initial Primary Teacher Education programme in Malawi develops teachers’ Classroom Interactional Competence?”

1.10 Definition of Key Terms

Classroom Interactions: Institutional talks that are locally organized into conversational exchanges system cooperatively (Abarca, 2019).

Classroom Interactional Competence: Teachers’ and learners’ ability to use interaction as a tool for mediating and assisting in learning (Walsh, 2021).

Language (Medium) of Instruction: A language through which the contents of a curriculum in a given educational system or part of it are taught (Gosh, 2019).

Second Language (L2): A language that is not the mother tongue of a person, but he or she communicates with it (Seedhouse, 2014).

Professional Competence: The habitual and judicious use of communication, technical skills, critical reasoning, emotions, values, knowledge and attributes in daily practice of the benefit of the individual and community being served (Sutopo, 2020).

1.11 Organisation of the Thesis

The thesis comprises of five chapters. Chapter one, which is the introduction contains the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, rationale of the study, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, theoretical framework that guided the undertaking of the study and interpretation of its findings and definition of key terms used in the study. Chapter two presents literature review in relation to the present study. Chapter three is a discussion of the methodologies used in the study which includes: research design, study sites, participants’ sample, data collection methods, data collection tools, an explanation on how the generated data was analysed, ethical issues and

limitations of the study. Chapter four presents and discusses the findings. The presentation and discussion of the findings is based on the research questions and has been done using literature review and the theoretical framework. Chapter five is the summary of major findings, conclusion, implications of the study and suggestions for further studies.

1.12 Chapter Summary

The chapter has looked at background information of the study which encompasses; brief details on the Malawian education system, the Malawian IPTE programme, the status of English language in Malawi and efforts by government and other stakeholders to boost the Malawian primary school education system. Moreover, the chapter has highlighted the statement of the research problem, main research question and its subsidiary questions. Further, it has provided the purpose, rationale, significance and delimitations of the study. Finally, the chapter has described the theoretical framework guiding this study, definitions of key terms used in the study and an outline of how the thesis has been organised. The next chapter focusses on the literature related to the present study which other scholars have published.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Chapter Overview

The concern for poor classroom interaction among learners and teachers in second language teaching is a global phenomenon (Walsh, 2019). As such, significance of the issue of Classroom Interaction Competence in L2 classroom has led to substantial literature on the subject in the field of education research. Thus, understanding the nature of Classroom Interaction, its importance in the language classroom, activities that promote it and the strategies needed to make it manifest itself in the L2 classroom is important for successful communication between teachers and learners in classroom set up resulting in the latter gaining the required knowledge, competences and skills from the former.

This section reviews the literature related to the present study. The study is about an exploration of the extent to which the Initial Primary Teacher Education programme in Malawi develops teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence. In this field, some scholars have done their studies mostly using two kinds of approaches which are mainly used in the studies of English taught as a second language classroom interactions (Supakorn, 2020). The first category is that of behaviour. This category classifies behaviours of the teacher and students in terms of language skill acquisition and consequences of the behaviours. It involves the use of a form or schedule consisting of a set of categories for coding specific classroom behaviours. The second category is that of discourse analysis. This is a thorough description of the kinds of interactions that occur in language classrooms. Thus, in the studies, the researchers aim to account for the joint contributions of teacher and students and describe all the data.

The literature review for this study starts with a discussion on the understanding (nature) of Classroom Interactional Competence. Further, the Categories and Importance of Classroom Interaction will be expounded and then the assumptions of Classroom Interactional Competence, factors affecting Classroom Interaction, and literatures on second language acquisition and Classroom Interaction. Finally, literatures on curriculum content for promotion of CIC and English teaching in Malawian Teachers' Training Colleges will be discussed in details.

2.2 Understanding Classroom Interactional Competence

2.2.1 Interaction

Papaja (2020), provides the meaning of 'interaction' as an action, reaction or a mutual or reciprocal influence which may be between individuals in classroom setting or between materials and individuals or groups. An interaction in this regard, is usually inferred from the behaviour of persons in the environment being studied. While Walsh (2011), asserts that the said behaviour maybe verbal or non-verbal and can be classified as being predominantly cognitive, affective or controlling in nature, this paper argues along the lines of (Papaja, 2020) that in the classroom, controls on the behaviour are on the teacher's hand as the knower. That is, she or he modifies and simplifies his or her utterances to help students understand the language easily; they frequently give feedbacks or correction when students make errors. So, the common interaction pattern follows the moves where the teacher initiates communication, students respond and teacher gives feedback (Walsh, 2019). In this regard, Classroom Interaction can be defined as institutional talks that is locally organized into conversational exchange system done in a cooperative manner.

2.2.2 *Interactional Competence*

Tsegaw (2019), defines Interactional Competence (IC) as a relationship between participants' employment of linguistic and interactional resources and the contexts in which they are employed. This definition stresses the relationship between the linguistic and interactional resources used by interlocutors in specific contexts. This relationship is an important one and includes, for example, interlocutors' ability to take a turn, interrupt politely, and acknowledge a contribution, in addition to their ability to make appropriate use of vocabulary, intonation, verb forms and so on (Walsh, 2019). Moreover, it is the relationship between linguistic and interactional resources which is crucial to effective communication both in classroom and outside it.

2.2.3 *Classroom Interactional Competence*

Classroom Interactional Competence (CIC) on the other hand, is defined as, teachers' and learners' ability to use interaction as a tool for mediating and assisting learning (Walsh 2011). CIC puts interaction firmly at the centre of teaching and learning and argues that by developing it, both teachers and learners will improve learning and opportunities for learning. It is an extension to the concept of Communicative Competence (CC) by Hymes (1972) which revolutionized people's understandings of spoken communication and contributed greatly to advances in language teaching methodology, especially concerning speaking (Ellis, 2008). As can be inferred from the testing literature, one major disadvantage of CC, is that it focuses on solo performance, as if communication is operated at the level of the individuals only (Tsegaw, 2019). Yet, communication is not the sum of the abilities of individual speakers but a joint enterprise which requires the speakers' as well as the listeners' collective and reciprocated competence. Thus, whereas listeners play a key role in demonstrating understanding and in clarifying meaning and checking, it is the speakers' responsibility, for example, to adjust their

speech to the needs of their interlocutors. Essentially, in any conversation or spoken interaction, speakers and listeners have equal responsibility to ‘make it work’ and their ability to do this depends very much on their level of IC rather than on their CC (Tsegaw, 2019).

2.3 Categories of Classroom Interaction

To interact with students in the language classroom, several aspects need to be taken into account by teachers either inside or outside the class (Supakorn, 2020). According to the participants in classroom interaction who are the teachers and learners, classroom interaction is classified into two categories: teacher-learner interaction and learner-learner interaction and learner-content interaction.

2.3.1 Teacher- Learner Interaction

Urmeneta (2013), indicates that teacher-learner interaction has broad sense and narrow sense. In broad sense, teacher-learner interaction is the interaction between the teacher and learner while in narrow sense, it is the interaction between the teacher and learner or the teacher and learners in teaching situation. However, if the interaction is initiated by the learner, this kind of interaction can also be referred to as learner -teacher interaction. This is because as put by Walsh (2013), the classroom communication between the two parties can be best named depending on who initiates the talk in the classroom.

2.3.2 Learner – learner Interaction

On the other hand, learner-learner interaction is based on peer relationships, which allows the maximum degree of communication among themselves. Mann and Walsh (2013), observe that carefully structured learner-learner interactions provide a forum for extended, meaningful exploration of ideas, which exposes learners to more varied and complex language from their

peers than does traditional teacher-fronted classroom interactions. What this argument is trying to advance is that through interaction with other learners in pairs or groups, learners can have more opportunities to make use of linguistic resources in a relaxing and uncontrolled manner and use them to complete different kinds of tasks assigned by the teacher (Walsh, 2019).

2.3.3 Learner -Content Interaction

According to Urmeneta (2013), another type of interaction, which is learner-content interaction is proposed. Learner-content interaction typically occurs when, after listening to a demonstration on a particular topic, students go through the course readings and attempt the activities, self- assessments, assignments, project, et cetera. It is done following the processes of expressing, pondering, and exchanging their indulgencies of the course. Mann and Walsh (2013) rate this kind of interaction highly as it complements the other two kinds of interaction and in the process, facilitates language output and language input in learners. Therefore, since language output mainly concerns second language learners' competence of using the language and that language input aims at improving learners' mastering of target language and speeding up their language acquisition, the learners benefit a lot from the interaction they have with the content.

2.4 Importance of Classroom Interaction

As already stated, classroom interaction takes an important place in the process of language teaching and learning. Abhakorn (2014) alludes that CIC gives learners opportunities to receive the input that is provided by the teacher, learners or material. The input is supposed to be understood by the learners in order to make them involved in the classroom task by providing the output. Interaction in English classroom is the heart of communication in an era of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Agreeing to this, Jefferson (2004) asserts that

classroom interaction makes the students participating in the process of teaching and learning language. It means that classroom interaction encourages students to involve themselves in learning situations. So, teachers need to be aware of the extent to which their classroom practices facilitate language learning in reality.

In language learning, basing on Walsh's (2013) observation, the communicative language teaching theory reveals that communication and interaction are the purpose of language learning. Interaction plays significant roles in the language classroom since it can increase students' language store, strengthen the social relationship, develop communication skill and build up confidence in learners. Accordingly, CI is used as a component of building knowledge and improving language skills. So, by reducing the amount of teachers talk in classroom and by increasing the learners' talk time, it keeps the learners active in the classroom. The importance of interaction has a significant role both in the classroom and out of classroom (Urmeneta, 2013). Therefore, teachers and students should consider it as an essential part in learning and teaching language skills, especially in speaking class. Classroom interaction helps teachers to manage who should talk, to whom, on what topic and in what language.

2.5 The Assumptions of Classroom Interactional Competence

Walsh (2019) attests that the central argument of a focus on Classroom Interactional Competence is that by helping teachers better understand classroom interaction, there will be a corresponding impact on learning. This is especially where learning is regarded as a social activity which is strongly influenced by involvement, engagement and participation in the activities and content delivered. However, since CIC is highly content and context-specific, there are a number of features which are common to all contexts.

2.5.1 Pedagogical Goals and Language used

To begin with, pedagogical goals and the language used to achieve them work together. To illustrate this, Seedhouse (2004) gives an example of a teacher whose aim is to elicit personal opinions from students, the use of ‘yes’ or ‘no’ questions will not be convergent with their pedagogic goal of the moment. Instead, ‘wh-questions’ like, when, where, who, among others, would need to be asked because these are more likely to produce longer, more elaborated responses. This point assumes that pedagogic goals and the language used to achieve them are inseparable and therefore intertwined and are always being re-adjusted (Walsh, 2012; Seedhouse, 2004). So, any evidence of CIC must therefore demonstrate that interlocutors are using discourse which is both appropriate to specific pedagogic goals and to the agenda of the moment.

2.5.2 CIC Creates Space for Learning

The second feature is that CIC creates space for learning (Walsh, 2012). CIC facilitates interactional space between students and the teacher. Teachers purposefully plan space in relation to classroom activities so that students can participate in the discourse, contribute and receive feedback on their contributions. There are a number of ways in which space for learning can be maximised by teachers. These include; increasing wait-time before a learner gives response, promoting extended learner turns in conversations and allowing activities planning time (Abhakorn, 2014). When all these are managed, they provide learners with space in the learning process and are better able to contribute to the process of constructing meanings of what they learn.

2.5.3 CIC Demands Teacher's Full Understanding of Learners' Feedback

The other feature is that CIC demands teacher's understanding of learner's feedback more fully. In classroom communication, particular value is placed on the ability of a teacher to shape learner contributions (Walsh, 2013). Shaping involves taking a learner response and doing something with it rather than simply accepting it. For instance, a response may be paraphrased, using more technical language, a particular code or it may be summarised or extended in some way, or even linking it to a specific reference. What this entails is that a learner's response may require scaffolding so that learners are assisted in saying what they really mean. Urmeneta (2013), adds that by shaping learner contributions and by helping learners to articulate what they mean, teachers are performing a more central role in the interaction, while, at the same time, maintaining a student-centred, decentralised approach to teaching. This gives a conclusion that shaping is most effective when students are aware of its purpose and teachers can therefore guide students to notice their shaping and other feedback strategies.

From the above explained points, the relevance of CIC in learning is clear. If the aim of language teachers is to promote dialogic, engaged and safe classroom environments where students are actively involved and feel free to contribute and take risks, we need to study the interactions which take place and learn from them (Richards et al., 2012). The proposal here is that we need to acquire a better understanding of what constitutes CIC and how it might be achieved in classroom setting. The understanding will result in more engaged and dynamic interactions in classrooms and will also enhance learning (Walsh, 2019).

2.6 Factors Affecting Classroom Interaction

In English classrooms where there is poor interaction, the following factors are needed to boost classroom interaction in foreign and second language teaching (Mann and Walsh, 2013). In other words, the following factors are what are needed for improving English teaching in English class.

2.6.1 Teacher-learner Rapport

Rapport is an important concept increasing positive climate in the classroom (Papaja, 2020). Rapport here is the relationship or connection the teacher establishes with their learners, a relationship that is built on trust and respect and that leads to learners feeling capable, competent, and creative (Jefferson, 2018). In classroom setup, part of the rapport is created on the delicate balance that is set between praise and criticism. Thus, too much of either one renders it less and less effective and genuine praise enables students to welcome criticism.

2.6.2 Teacher's Beliefs

The second factor according to Walsh (2013) is teachers' beliefs. Papaja (2020) indicates that teachers' theoretical beliefs guiding their expectations and decisions are thought to act as models through which teachers make instructional judgments and decisions. Teachers' beliefs are instrumental in shaping how learners interpret what goes on in their classrooms and how they will react and respond to it. Jefferson (2018), observes that when teachers enter teacher education programs, they bring with them an accumulation of prior experiences that manifest themselves in the form of beliefs. These beliefs tend to be quite stable and rather resistant to change. This inflexibility on part of the teachers shows lack of knowledge about how to adjust their beliefs to the realities of life in classrooms. This can negatively affect classroom interaction.

2.6.3 Teachers' Questions

The other factor is teachers' questions. According to (Papaja, 2020), questioning plays a significant part in classroom teaching. Questions should not be stated in language that is too complex or too wordy for aural comprehension. Thus, teachers' questions should provide necessary methods to communication, attract learners' attention, and learn about the extent of learners' comprehension (Abhakorn, 2017). This can help learners understand and avoid any confusion and know what is important. It can also provide learners with opportunities to find out what they think by hearing what they say.

However, asking a lot of questions in classroom will guarantee stimulation of interaction while certain types of questions may discourage interactive learning (Abhakorn, 2017). Therefore, the teacher should choose the types of questions according to the different proficiency level of learners. That is, the higher the English proficiency level the learners are in, the more the teacher can venture into asking referential questions (Walsh, 2014). So, teachers should challenge their learners sufficiently but without overwhelming them with unnecessary questions.

2.7 Second Language Acquisition and Classroom Interaction

Learners learn a language because they need to communicate. Second language learners develop their competences in social interactions and relationships via participation in communication with more experienced, knowledgeable, and competent participants, such as a teacher and/or a peer (Ellis, 2018). So, the roles of teachers or peers in second or foreign language classroom are to guide and assist in completing linguistic tasks and language production through interaction. L2 learning is done in various social contexts, of which, classroom is one of them.

Ellis (2018), further argues that the classroom is a small society consisting of a teacher and learners with a specific cultural system in which roles, functions, and goals are different among them. According to Seedhouse (2015), language classroom is a place that aspects of language are learnt and taught. Additionally, methods, syllabus and materials are applied, theories and practices are met, social identity and affective factors are affected. Therefore, classroom is a site where interaction and education unite. In other words, interaction practices occurring inside the classroom are apparently influenced by factors outside the classroom.

Everything in the classroom requires the use of language. Ellis (2018), notes that in the field of second language acquisition, negotiation of meaning through modified input occurs in interactional conversation. This means that conversational negotiation and linguistic adjustment provides comprehensible input that is integrated into acquired language. Walsh (2011) states that learners access new knowledge, acquire and develop new skills, identify problems, and establish and maintain relationship through language in interaction. Particularly, in language classroom, interaction is viewed as central of language learning and teaching. As such, the language used is as both the object of study and the medium of instruction (Walsh, 2019). The teacher and students use the language in interaction in the classroom as the learning goal. Alison (2019), adds that interaction mediates input and intake with meaningful activities; therefore, it is prominent to facilitate acquisition.

Ellis (2018), further puts it that second language learning is a process that takes place over time, whether in a formal classroom setting, or an informal out-of-class setting. The extent of learning depends in part on the duration, amount and richness of the input. That is, what the learner hears or reads, and also the type of language activities in which learners engage like

repeating phrases, listening to the teacher, singing songs, writing stories, and so on affect learning.

According to Alison (2019), for learners to acquire sufficient language input, there should be effective interaction which must involve collaboration, establishment of a triangular relationship between sender, receiver, and context. The interaction should consist of all the variables of who the participants are, why they are communicating, and what the purpose of the communication is (Ellis, 2018). In other words, the construct of Interactional Competence provides a context for understanding a number of aspects of communication such as the nature of discourse, conversation, styles, pragmatic conversations, and even the place of non-verbal communication.

2.8 Curriculum Content for the Promotion of CIC

Richards (2013) mentions that before we can teach a language, we need to decide what interactive content to teach for engagement of the students in the lesson. That is, focus should be on selecting content with different types of learning activities, procedures and techniques from their modules and teaching resources (Ellis, 2018). Gosh (2019) describes interactive activities that the content of English as L2 should cover for it to adhere to the requirements of an interactive teaching and learning curriculum. The main activities are discussion, storytelling, role play, reading aloud, quiz and debates.

Basing on Gosh's (2019) experience, if both teachers and learners have an experience of these activities on daily basis, they stimulate classroom interaction in L2. This is for the reason that learners attempt to speak the target language spontaneously as the activities allow them to interact freely with their peers as they construct their own ideas, hence developing Classroom

Interactional Competence. Therefore, Gosh (2019) emphasises that different kinds of contexts in text books such as; model dialogues, pictures, role play are dominant inputs that are aimed at maximising classroom interaction. As shared by Abarca, (2019), textbooks have positive and vital roles to play in the day-to-day language teaching and their importance is increasing from time to time. They are also critical ingredients in learning the intended curriculum via various teaching methods. Thus, in schools, textbooks or content modules are a media through which teachers and students communicate each other in an effort to forward the teaching and learning process.

2.9 English Teaching in Malawian Teachers' Training Colleges.

Language is a means of control as well as of communication. People can transfer information or messages and express their ideas and emotions with language (Abhakorn, 2014). Language is also used to express everyone's hopes, ambitions, and thoughts. Moreover, language can serve the human needs in their communication in all sectors, such as industry, military, business tourism, transportation, sports, international relations and especially in education (Ellis, 2018). In education, as already stipulated, English has become the primary language of communication. In Malawi itself, English is considered a foreign language as well as L2 taught from elementary to tertiary level.

Basing on the stated facts, the objectives of teaching and learning English in Malawian TTCs is to prepare student teachers as the future English teachers to deliver their lessons in English in their own classes. They are taught English as a subject and as a mode of content delivery in almost all the subjects except for Chichewa (Masina, (2014). They are also taught how to communicate in L2 or Foreign Language (FL) which sometimes can be troublesome for language learners especially those who live outside the L2 or FL. Thus, in TTCs, student

teachers need to practice English and use it communicatively inside or outside the classroom (Abarca, 2019).

Even though research has been conducted into the teaching of speaking skills locally as well as internationally, as can be observed from the literature captured in this study, most of them have their focus in primary schools, secondary schools and universities. Thus, according to the studies the researcher has come across in relation to the current study, none of these has revealed what classroom interaction in Malawian TTCs is like and how the teachers are trained to handle English lessons. The literature has also not captured the extent to which the Malawian IPTE programme in general develop teachers' CIC. It seems very little research is available on investigating Classroom Interactional Competence in English language education in TTCs. Therefore, basing on the aforementioned shortfalls, the researcher was stimulated to conduct this study since he believed that this area merited attention and was supposed be researched.

2.10 Chapter Summary

The literature review chapter has discussed the available works of some scholars on understanding of Classroom Interactional Competence, the Categories and Importance of Classroom Interaction. In addition, it has also expounded the assumptions of Classroom Interactional Competence, factors affecting Classroom Interaction and literature on Second Language Acquisition and Classroom Interaction. Finally, it has discussed in details literature on curriculum content for the promotion of CIC and English teaching in Malawian Teachers' Training Colleges. The next chapter is about the research methodology.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Chapter Overview

This is a study that sought to explore the extent to which the Initial Primary Teacher Education programme in Malawi develops teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence. This chapter therefore, highlights the research methodology which was used in gathering the information for the study, how it was designed and presented. It focusses on the following aspects: research paradigm, research design, research site and the participants, sampling techniques, methods and instruments of data collection, data analysis techniques, issues to do with trustworthiness, ethical considerations and limitations of the study.

3.2 Research Paradigm

According to Lindsay (2019), research paradigm is an all-encompassing system of interrelated practice and thinking that define the nature of enquiry. It clarifies how one views the constructs of social reality and how knowledge affects, and gives the direction on how the researcher should go about uncovering knowledge of relationships between phenomena and social behaviour. Literature presents three key research paradigms namely: positivism, interpretivist and critical paradigms. However, this study was framed within the interpretive paradigm because it focuses on the holistic analysis of the phenomena and provides an opportunity for the voice, concerns and practices of research participants to be heard (Cole, 2020; Weaver and Olson, 2006).

The researcher, in this regard, believed exploring the extent to which the Initial Primary Teacher Education programme in Malawi develops teacher's Classroom Interactional

Competence was an exercise which required a constructivist (interpretive) paradigm (Barbour, 2021). Additionally, this paradigm is the most appropriate because it allows interaction between the researcher and the participants and the semi-structured interviews enables multiple constructed realities which are anticipated to be experienced. This is due to the fact that no two people perceive realities in the same way. Eriksson and Kovalainen (2012) agree with this when they state that interpretivism captures the lives of participants in order to understand and interpret the meaning they attach to social issues.

This study utilised a systematic analysis of socially meaningful action through the direct detailed observation of people in their natural settings in order to arrive at understandings and interpretations off how people create and maintain their social worlds (Neuman, 2020). Through the use of the interpretive approach, the researcher also attempted to answer questions about the phenomena under study with the purpose of describing and understanding it from the participant's point of view (Madrigal and MacClain, 2019).

Furthermore, since interpretivism holds that research can never be objectively observed from the outside but rather it must be observed from the inside through the direct experience of the people (Ndengu, 2012), this research involved a direct observation of the participants for a better understanding of the topic in question. The researcher's intent was to make sense of the meanings by observing what others had about the world and also taking into consideration of what the researcher knows about the topic under study. This interpretive paradigm in this study was supported by Grant et al.'s Professional Competence theory.

3.3 Research design

A qualitative research design was employed for this study to answer research questions. Creswell (2013) defines a research design as a plan of action that links the philosophical assumptions to specific methods which are techniques of data collection and analysis. Ndengu (2012) explains that it serves as a guide to answer questions on what the research seeks to find, where to collect data and how the data is to be collected. It further guides the data analysis process so that in the end the research objectives can be achieved. In essence, research design reflects on the research question and provides the means of answering it. So, this is a qualitative research of some selected TTCs in Malawi in relation to the development of teacher's Classroom Interactional Competence in English language.

Ndengu (2012) describes qualitative research as a type of research that seeks to probe deeply into the research setting with an aim of obtaining an in-depth understanding about the way things are, why they are that way, and how the participants in the context perceive them. Lambert (2018) concurs with Ndengu (2012) when he puts it that the goal of qualitative descriptive studies is to have a comprehensive summarization of specific events experienced by individuals or groups of individuals. It is an approach that is very useful when researchers want to know, regarding events, who were involved, what was involved, and where did things take place. Therefore, this approach was necessary since it attempted to describe how the IPTE programme at the time of research would facilitate the development of teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence in English speaking classes. In addition, the researcher was interested in finding out how the lecturers approached their English lessons in relation to the development of teacher's CIC, how they interpreted their experience, and what meaning the students attributed to the experience they got in English lessons (Creswell, 2011).

The research design however, has its demerits. As cited by Richards et al., (2012), the major drawbacks associated with qualitative analysis are firstly, the process is time-consuming, and because of this, a particular, important issue could be overlooked. The second potential problem is that a particular issue could go unnoticed since some interpretations of the data by the researcher are limited. Additionally, as positioned subjects, personal experience and knowledge influence the observations and conclusions. Finally, because qualitative inquiry is generally open-ended, the participants have more control over the content of the data collected (Choy, 2014).

However, despite the shortfalls of the design as highlighted above, this study still found the qualitative design suitable. This is for the reason that the researcher hoped that it would help to generate the recommended data as far as developing teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence was concerned in the required settings (Choy (2014). It would also assist in reviewing some realities about how teaching and learning using English language facilitates interaction strategies that would offer clues on how to deal with the problems that affect learners and teachers in Malawian primary schools. This approach would help to reveal what was on the ground and would make it possible for the researcher to gain an insight on this phenomenon. This would be done by bringing to the fore the experiences and perceptions of individuals from their own understanding, hence, construction of meaning in the interpreted setting. Thus, the underlying rationale in a basic qualitative research approach was the notion that meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the worlds they are interpreting (Merriam, 2019).

The study therefore, drew information from three sources. Firstly, English subject lecturers and student teachers in the selected TTCs provided their experiences on how the lecturers know and understand CIC and how the IPTE programme develops teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence. The second source of information consisted of documentary sources, which included English curriculum (4 English subject modules) that are used in the teaching and learning of English in TTCs. The last source of information was classroom observation, where every detail of the events and artefacts in the classroom was noted, observed and video recorded by the researcher.

3.4. Study Site

The study used a multiple case study strategy whereby, it was done at four public primary Teacher Training Colleges in Malawi. The multiple case study strategy for collecting data was used to ensure that there was rich data collected and this could assure the credibility and trustworthiness of the study. The four TTCs involved in the study were from the central, south and Eastern regions of Malawi. One college is from the Eastern region, while two of them are from the Southern region and the other one is from Central region of Malawi. The TTCs were conveniently selected because they were proximal to Zomba city, where the researcher resides. Therefore, the colleges had been selected mainly because of their proximity since effort to involve both public and private institutions to address variety factor proved futile.

3.5. Population

Study population refers to a theoretical specified aggregation of survey element (Madrigal and MacClain, 2019). These authors contend that an element is that unit about which information is collected and which provides a basis of analysis. A study population is therefore that aggregation of elements from which the survey sample is actually selected. As noted by Sidhu

(2018) the study population is totality of objects or individuals regarding which inferences are to be made in a sampling study. In this present study, the participants were lecturers of English subject, together with their students in English L2 speaking classes at the Teacher Training Colleges that participated in the study for interview and observation purposes. Each lecturer was one with more than five years of teaching experience in the teaching of English subject at that level. The choice of lecturers as subjects for this study had been made taking the fact that they are the ones who interpret curricular input and processes in the English subject modules (curriculum) and pass on that input to the student teachers during the facilitation of learning.

3.6. Research Sample Size

The target number of participants in this study included a total number of 40. That is, 8 lecturers, 2 from each TTC and 32 student teachers, 8 from each institution. The lecturers were those teaching English subject at the time of the study and those with knowledge and experience to the issues in question (Patton, 2014). This enabled the researcher to get the rightful information as the participants involved were those that had hands on experience in as far as facilitating in Second language is concerned. Additionally, the student teachers were from classes the lecturers involved in the study taught. Furthermore, English lessons were observed in two classes of each college that were involved in the study and this involved complete classes. Table 3.1 and Table 3.2 presents a summary of the participants that were involved in the study, that is, lecturers and student teachers, respectively.

Table 3.1: Demographic status of the lecturers that took part in the study.

College name Peudo Names- ABCD	English Lecturer (Peudo names)	Gender	Qualifications	Teaching Experience
TTC- A	Maka	Female	BEd (Primary)	18 years
TTC-A	Bak	Male	MEd, BEd (Primary)	6 Years
TTC-B	Kame	Male	MEd, BEd (Primary)	11 Years
TTC-B	Sozi	Female	BEd (Primary)	14 Years
TTC-C	Zani	Female	BEd (Primary)	9 Years
TTC-C	Pale	Male	BEd (Primary)	12 Years
TTC-D	Dupi	Female	BEd (Primary)	11 Years
TTC-D	Fesna	Male	BEd (Primary)	8 years

Source: Field Data, 2022

Table 3.2: Particulars of Student teachers who were involved in the study

TTC	No. of Males	No. of Females	Total
TTC-A	4	4	8
TTC-B	4	4	8
TTC-C	4	4	8
TTC-D	4	4	8
Grand Total			32

Source: Field Data, 2022

3.7. Sampling techniques

The sampling procedure for selecting English subject lecturers for each selected TTC was purposive sampling. Lambert (2012) contends that purposive technique is opted for based on the researcher's judgment of the individuals that would provide rich data but also ensures good representativeness of the population. The use of purposive sampling in this study therefore, was to ensure that participants with similar characteristics are picked. These are participants that were information rich on the topic.

Their ability to share experiences and perceptions on the extent to which the Initial Primary Teacher Education programme in Malawi develops teacher's Classroom Interactional Competence in TTCs provided the requisite answers to the critical research question. Therefore, purposeful sampling technique was thus employed in this study because it allowed the researcher to choose samples with the aim of identifying information that would allow one to study a case in depth. In this regard, it provides a maximum understanding of what is being studied. The other reason for using this sampling technique is that it is used when a researcher tries to understand something and when the motive of the study does not require generalisation of results. Furthermore, it was done to increase the utility of the information obtained from the small sample as it was likely to be informative about the issues being investigated.

There are different types of purposive sampling, one of which is convenience sampling and it had been used to select the TTCs and the participants involved in this study. Ary, et al. (2019), defines convenience sampling as one that involves choosing a sample basing on the availability of time, location, or ease of access. As such, the TTCs that took part in the study were conveniently selected due to proximity unlike other public TTCs.

In terms of research participants, purposive and convenience sampling were employed to get the lecturers and student teachers (respectively) as respondents from each college into the sample. To be specific, intensity sampling technique, which is used when a researcher only identifies sites and individuals in which the phenomenon of interest is strongly represented, was used (Kothari, 2018). This is because the researcher only wanted to get those people who were knowledgeable enough and were teaching and learning English subject in the colleges at the time of the study (Patton, 2014). However, because there were more than eight student teachers in each class and more than two lecturers of English at each institution, convenience sampling was applied. Thus, the first eight willing student teachers from each class (4 males and 4 females) and two willing English lecturers (1 male and 1 female where possible) at each institution were considered for the study.

3.8. Data Collection Methods and Instruments

Data collection is a methodical process of gathering and analysing specific information to proffer solutions to relevant questions and evaluate the results. That is, data collection focusses on finding out everything as regards to a particular subject matter. There are several ways of collecting data in a qualitative research. Some of them include interviews, observation, and review of documents and records (Mertens, 2019). Each method has its own instrument used to collect data.

3.8.1. Data Collection Methods

This study used a multi-method approach for data collection. This is for the reason that using multiple sources of data and avoiding reliance on a single source enhances confirmation of the findings. Therefore, since this is a qualitative study, data was collected using qualitative research methods such interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FDGs), classroom observations

and document analysis. This approach was used to ensure triangulation as the responses to the research questions would crosscheck each other. Lambert (2018), adds that data collection of qualitative descriptive studies focuses on discovering the nature of the specific events under study. So, data collection involves minimal to moderate, structured, open-ended, individual or focus group interviews, observations, and examination of records, reports, photographs, and documents.

3.8.1.1 Interviews

An interview is a form of conversation in which the purpose is for the researcher to gather data that address the study's goals and questions (Neil, 2016). This study used one-on-one interviews with open-ended questions. This method works well with the qualitative research design and the interpretive research paradigm as it enables the researcher to have an in-depth understanding of the phenomena under study. Moreover, many different researchers have rated interviews as a flexible and accessible research tool. Therefore, semi-structured interviews for the observed classroom lecturers were employed to provide information that unearthed the participant's views, feelings as well as attitudes about how the IPTE programme develops teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence, things that could not be observed. In other words, this was one way of consolidating the data to be gathered through observation. The researcher conducted one-on-one interviews with the lecturers which is a data collection process in which the researcher asks questions to and records answers from only one participant in the study at a time.

Creswell (2020) illustrates some disadvantages of interviews. To begin with, interviews provide only information filtered through the views of the interviewers. In other words, the researcher summarises the participants' views in the research report. This means that the

information given by the interviewees may be at some point be misinterpreted and misrepresented. Secondly, interview data may be deceptive and provide the perspective the interviewee wants the researcher to hear.

Creswell (2013) illustrates that another disadvantage is that the presence of the researcher may affect how the interviewee responds. Interviewee responses also may not be articulate, perceptive, or clear. In addition, equipment issues may be a problem, and you need to organise recording and transcribing equipment (if used) in advance of the interview. Also, during an interview, you need to give some attention to the conversation with the participant. This attention may require saying little, handling emotional outbursts, and using icebreakers to encourage individuals to talk. Lastly, Creswell (2012) indicates that with all of these issues to balance, it is little wonder inexperienced researchers express surprise about the difficulty of conducting interviews.

So, in mind of the aforementioned drawbacks of interviews, the researcher came up with ways to outdo them. Firstly, during the interviews, the researcher tape recorded the sessions while at the same time, some notes were taken. This was done so that in case the gadget failed, the researcher would have a backup of information (Patton, 2014). Secondly, taking of notes also helped the researcher to record the participant's non-verbal behaviours; everything occurring in the immediate surroundings for these could not be tape recorded. The interviewer also probed for more information when the respondents gave short unsatisfactory answers. This was possible because by its nature, an interview allows both the interviewer and the interviewee to clarify any questions and answers that are difficult to understand and the respondents are also given room to expand their answers according to the desire of both parties. Thus, interviews supply large volumes of in-depth data as required (Frankel and Wallen, 2019).

3.8.1.2 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

Focus group discussions were carried out to collect data from student teachers. Gilbert (2018) writes that “focus groups consist of a small group of individuals, usually between six and ten people, who meet together to express their views about a particular topic defined by the researchers” (p.31). This method also explores in-depth the views and experiences of the participants and brings unique data and insights because of the group interactions (Patton, 2014). This method of collecting data was utilised on students with the aim of digging deep on the research questions while also benefiting from the group interactions. So, in this study, 8 student teachers were included from each TTC.

The student teachers were involved purposefully because they were thought to be the ones that would provide the best information since classroom interaction was between themselves and their lecturer. To get the 8 students out of many in their respective college classes, convenience sampling technique with respect to gender balance, was applied (Oppong, 2018). This, according to Leiner (2014), was done by selecting equal number of male and female students that were readily accessible and were willing to provide the needed information by virtue of their knowledge or experience. The justification of this being that all the class members were qualified individuals in the target population of this study but only few were needed for the group discussion.

It should further be mentioned that engaging the student teachers in FGDs helped to address all the qualitative research questions since they assisted in bringing to the surface aspects of situations that might not have been exposed by the lecturers and the classroom observations. Thus, the group situation also stimulated students in making explicit their views, perceptions, motives and reasons (Punch, 2019). This, in the end, provided quality data for this study.

3.8.1.2 Classroom Lesson Observations

In this study, to obtain the necessary data, 8 English lessons were observed and video-recorded. Observation of lessons and video-recording were employed as the major tool. Observation is an activity in collecting data by observing source of data to get information needed. Sutopo (2020) describes observation as a technique used to get the data from the source of data as event, place, and things or documents. Creswell (2012) agrees with the assertion when he argues that observation is the process of gathering open-ended, first-hand information by observing people and places at a research site.

As argued by Oppong (2018), as a form of data collection, observation has both advantages and disadvantages. Advantages include the opportunity to record information as it occurs in a setting, to study actual behaviour, and to study individuals who have difficulty in verbalising their ideas. However, some disadvantages are that you are limited to those sites and situations where you can gain access. Further, in those sites, you may have difficulty in developing rapport with individuals.

So, the researcher conducted an observation as a non-participant observer, using observational protocol as a form designed for taking notes during the observation. Creswell (2012) describes a non-participant observer as an observer who visits a site and records notes without becoming involved in the activities of the participants. The nonparticipant observation was suitable since the observer did not want to attract attention of the students so that the characteristics of classroom interaction would not be affected (Angrosino and Rosenberg, 2013). So, the observation was carried out by identifying all potentially relevant occurrences of interactions' characteristics of the lecturers and student teachers.

3.8.1.3. Video recording

Video-recordings were also used during the observations in the TTC classes. Video-recordings are a relatively straightforward means of recording interaction in the classroom and have the added advantage of providing a visual representation of what is happening (Howard, 2019). Consequently, 60 minutes from each session was recorded on video.

3.8.1.3. Document analysis

Finally, documents (IPTE programme English modules) using a checklist, were used to analyze curricular inputs for speaking skills (interactive teaching activities and strategies). This data collection method ensured gathering of enough data and in ways that would complement to the interview and lesson observation. This is because documents represents a good source for text (word) data for a qualitative study (Oppong, 2018). They provide the advantage of being in the language and words of the participants, who have usually given thoughtful attention to them. They are also ready for analysis without the necessary transcription that is required with observational or interview data (Creswell, 2020).

3.8.2. Data Collection Instruments

Data collection instruments are devices or tools used to gather data. They include; interview guide, observational protocol and checklist, among others. Madrigal and MacClain (2019), advances that it is important to decide the instruments for data collection because research is carried out in different ways and for different purposes. Therefore, this study, being a qualitative one and that it used data collection methods such as interviews, observation and document analysis, the researcher used interview guide for interviews, observation protocol for classroom observation and checklist for document analysis.

3.8.2.1 Interview guide

The interviews were conducted based on an interview guide that was formulated. As posited by Creswell (2013), it is important to develop an interview guide which spells out the relevant questions to be asked or thematic areas to be explored. Turner (2020) suggests that the guide ought to be a reflective approach to the knowledge sought and the interpersonal relation of the interview situation. The use of open-ended, face-to-face interviews as a data generation method works well with the interpretivist research paradigm as it helps to understand, explain, and reveal social reality through the eyes of different participants as noted by Creswell (2013).

3.8.2.2 Observational Protocol

Before data collection, Creswell (2020) advises researchers to use an observational protocol as a form designed for taking notes during the observation. On this form, the researcher records the chronology of events, a detailed portrait of an individual or individuals, the setting, and verbatim quotes of individuals. In this study therefore, as already pointed out, the researcher conducted the observation as non-participant observer having an observation form for recording all interactive activities and the strategies applied by the lecturers in their English class to encourage the students to speak, so as to improve the classroom interaction.

The classroom environment was also examined in relation to interactive print rich available in it, as advised by Walsh (2013). In addition, the classroom activities were video-recorded and all participants were requested to pay no attention to the video recordings and to participate in the class as usual. The lecturers on the other hand, were requested to provide the researcher with the English modules for the IPTE programme and teaching notes so that they be used in this study when appropriate.

3.8.2.3 Checklist

The document analysis procedure began by asking for the documents (English Modules) that were to be analysed in terms of curricular input that may help in developing teacher's CIC. Next, was analysing the English modules using a checklist. A checklist is a list structure of points that needs to be observed or evaluated (Madrigal and MacClain, 2019). Using this technique, you can mark the presence or absence of criteria or can note down short comments about a matter. Basing on this study therefore, the checklist had a list of classroom interaction activities, features of language acquisition and classroom interaction strategies. This was done by ticking whether the items were available or not in the IPTE programme English curriculum. A brief explanation on each item was written if there was such a need.

3.8.2.4 Audio and Video Recorders

In the study, to capture the real experiences of the research subjects as regards to the topic under study an audio and video recorder were used. Thus, interviews with the lecturers and FGDs with the student teachers were recorded by an audio recorder whereas the interaction between lecturers and their students during the English lessons were recorded by a video recorder as advised by Creswell (2013). The same advice is also shared by Madrigal and MacClain (2019), who indicate that in qualitative research, researchers need to use relevant data collection equipment among the many and relevant depending on the circumstances.

3.9. Pilot Testing the Data Collection Instruments

Polit and Beck (2018) explain that a pilot study can be described as a small-scale version or trail run, done in preparation for a major study. The scholars add that a pilot study can be used to improve a project, assess its feasibility, improve its clarity, eradicate problems and refine methodology. The researcher in this study had case pilot study at one of the TTCs in the

southern region, which was not in the main study. There, two English lecturers were interviewed, students were engaged in a Focus Group Discussion and two English lessons were observed. This TTC was omitted from the study and the findings were also excluded from the main study.

The interview guides, observation protocols and checklists used in this study were therefore pre-tested to ensure that they provided accurate and valid data that the researcher sought as advised by Creswell (2013). This was done to ensure that the instruments were correct and that they collected valid data. Permission to go to the piloting study site was sought from the office of the Directorate of Teacher Education and Development after the researcher was given an introductory letter from Mzuzu University and got cleared to collect data by Mzuzu University Research Ethics Committee. Finally, the researcher sought consent for recorded interviews, observation and video recording from both lecturers and student teachers.

3.10 Trustworthiness of qualitative data.

Trustworthiness is used to measure the quality of qualitative data. The researcher ensured trustworthiness of the data by making it credible enough. The credibility was ensured through prolonged engagement, use of triangulation, persistent observation and member checking. Furthermore, as Creswell (2013) suggest about trustworthiness issues, it is assumed that the data of this research would be transferable, dependable and would be verified. The following are details on how trustworthiness was achieved:

3.10.1 Credibility

Bryman (2012), claims that Credibility is the equivalent of internal validity in qualitative research and is concerned with the aspect of truth-value. Thus, credibility addresses the “fit”

between respondents' views and the researcher's representation of them (Madrigal and MacClain, 2019). Creswell (2012), suggest a number of techniques to address credibility including activities such as prolonged engagement, persistent observation, data collection triangulation, and researcher triangulation. He also recommended peer debriefing to provide an external check on the research process, which may therefore increase credibility, as well as examining referential adequacy as a means to check preliminary findings and interpretations against the raw data. Credibility can also be operationalized through the process of member checking to test the findings and interpretations with the participants (Bryman, 2018).

3.10.1.1. Prolonged engagement

Prolonged engagement was achieved by spending enough time in the field during data collection (Madrigal and MacClain, 2019). The researcher allocated 2 days for data collection for each of the colleges. This helped because it gave the researcher range of the issues through an awareness of the multiple contextual factors and perspectives of the participants in their social setting (ACAPS, 2020). Additionally, several distinct questions were asked regarding topics related to the understanding of Classroom Interactional Competence. Participants thus, were encouraged to support their statements with examples, and the interviewer asked follow-up questions. Then, the researcher studied the data from the raw interview material until a theory emerged to provide them with the scope of the phenomenon under study.

3.10.1.2. Triangulation

According to Maxwell (2018), triangulation plays a role in collecting information from a diverse range of individuals and settings using a variety of methods. In this regard, the data from various participants was integrated in order to find common themes and sub themes using all tools that actually described the phenomena under investigation. Moreover, the study was

conducted in four different settings and dates and results from these various areas were combined for interpretation. Maxwell (2018) further argues that triangulation reduces the risk that conclusions reflect only the systematic biases or limitation of specific sources and allows for broader and more secure understanding of the issue of investigation. Bryman (2018), contends that triangulation aims to enhance the process of qualitative research by using multiple approaches. Thus, in this study, methodological triangulation was used by gathering data by means of different data collection methods such as in-depth interviews, classroom observations and document analysis.

3.10.1.3. Persistent observation

In research, this is about developing the codes, the concepts and the core category helping to examine the characteristics of the data (Korstjens and Moser, 2018). Therefore, in this study, the researcher constantly read and reread the data, analysed them, theorized about them and revised the concepts accordingly. Then he recoded and relabelled the codes, concepts and the core categories. The researcher finally, studied the data until the final themes and sub-themes provide the intended depth of the insight of the study.

3.10.1.4. Member checking

All transcripts of the interviews were sent to the participants for feedback. In addition, halfway through the study period, a meeting was held with those who had participated in the interviews, enabling them to correct the interpretation and challenge what they perceived to be wrong interpretations. Finally, the findings were presented to the participants in another meeting for confirmation (Bryman, 2018).

3.10.2. Transferability

Korstjens and Moser (2018) attribute transferability with the aspect of applicability of the study. That is, the responsibility as a researcher is to provide a ‘thick description’ of the participants and the research process, to enable the reader to assess whether your findings are transferable to their own setting. This, according to Kothari (2018) is called transferability judgement. This implies that the reader, not the author, makes the transferability judgment because the author do not know the readers’ specific settings. Therefore, basing on this study, a description of both participants and the research process have been given. This will make it easy for the readers to make their transferability judgement.

3.10.3 Dependability

To achieve dependability, according to Creswell (2013), researchers can ensure the research process is logical, traceable, and clearly documented. He further explains that when readers are able to examine the research process, they are better able to judge the dependability of the research. So, in this study, the researcher ensured that the research process is logical, traceable and clearly documented. This was done by checking whether the analysis process was in line with the qualitative design, the interpretive paradigm and the Professional Competence theoretical framework guiding this study.

Creswell (2013), indicates one way that a research study may demonstrate dependability for its process to be audited, in a process known as *Audit Trail*. An audit trail provides readers with evidence of the decisions and choices made by the researcher regarding theoretical and methodological issues throughout the study, which requires a clear rationale for such decisions. ACAPS (2020), states that a study and its findings are auditable when another researcher can clearly follow the decision trail. Thus, basing on this study, the decisions for choosing the

Professional Competence theoretical framework, interpretive paradigm and all methodological issues have been justified. This therefore means that the readers will have the needed evidence for some of the decisions made by the researcher.

3.10.4 Conformability

ACAPS (2020), states that conformability is concerned with establishing that the researcher's interpretations and findings are clearly derived from the data. In other words, it concerns the aspect of neutrality of the researcher and that the interpretations should not be based on your own particular preferences and viewpoints but need to be grounded on the data. This therefore demands, the researcher to demonstrate how conclusions and interpretations have been reached (Tobin and Begley, 2004). According to ACAPS (2020), conformability is established when credibility, transferability, and dependability are all achieved. This is because researchers include in their study markers such as the reasons for choosing the theoretical frame work, design, methodological issues, and analytical choices throughout the entire study, so that others can understand how and why decisions were made. Therefore, the researcher for this study will keep records of the raw data, field notes and transcripts so as to help other researchers to systemize, relate, and cross reference data. This will provide a good means of creating a clear audit trail as well (Creswell, 2013).

3.11. Research Data Management

George and Jones (2012) define research data as any information that has been collected, observed, generated or created to validate original research findings. Thus, research data management is about the effective handling of information that is created in the course of research. It saves time and resources in the long run. Good management helps to prevent errors and increases the quality of the researcher's analyses. Cohen, et al. (2005), add that well

managed and accessible data allows others to validate and replicate findings. Therefore, to ensure that the collected data has been managed effectively, the researcher clearly named files for easy finding, keeping track of every versions of the data files and deleting those not needed. He also backed up valuable data and outputs, focused on the quality of the data, allowed only the right people to access the data and prioritised the security of the data collected.

3.12. Data analysis

Data analysis is the process, which implies editing, coding, classification and tabulating of collected data (Kothari, 2018). In this study, after administering research tools, data was collected and organized. The analysis was thematic in nature as this type of data analysis is suitable for this type of study (Creswell, 2014). To analyse the data collected through the different instruments, qualitative methods of data analysis were carried out for the data which was obtained from observation, interview and documents (English modules). This exercise was done using the lens of Professional Competence, a theory that guided this study.

The process of data analysis was done as follows: Firstly, the data from interviews, FDGs and lesson observation was transcribed. Transcription involves converting audio or video recordings to text format (Creswell, 2014). The transcribed data was then printed out and put together with the data from documents, notes and other materials. This, according to Opong (2018) is what is known as preparation and organisation of data. For the instruments, qualitative content analysis (Latent content analysis) was employed. Latent qualitative content level analysis concerns an interpretative analysis of the underlying deeper meaning of the data (Dornyei, 2019).

Additionally, the researcher was also involved in the process of marking all the sources of information, the demographics that was collected and any information that helped the researcher in analysing the data (Zhi, 2018). After the preparation and organisation of data, the researcher reviewed and explored the data. Under this, the researcher read all the data several times to get a sense of what it contained as advised by Creswell (2013). The activities also included keeping notes about his thoughts or any questions the researcher may had on the reviewed and explored data. This was to allow the researcher to make corrections and conclusions on the findings of the study. Furthermore, the researcher engaged himself in the activity of creating initial codes. This was done by using highlighters, notes in the margins of the documents or anything that helped to connect the researcher with his data (Leiner, 2014). Thus, creating initial codes helped the researcher in taking note of the key words and phrases to categorise the data. This helped the researcher in sorting out the information for easy analysis.

Then, the researcher reviewed the codes created on the data and revised them. Further to that, the codes were combined into themes. This was done by identifying recurring themes, language and beliefs of the respondents amongst the coded, revised and combined themes (Zhi, 2018). The mentioned activities were done in respect to the principles of qualitative research design and interpretive paradigm.

After the codes had been combined into themes, the researcher presented the themes in a cohesive manner by connecting them. According to Creswell (2013), this is about writing a study report. By this, the researcher considered his audience, the purpose of the study and what content could be included to best tell the story of the data. Thus, the researcher interpreted the larger meaning of the data by conducting an analysis based on the specific theoretical approach

of this study and method of narrative techniques suitable for the study design (George and Jones, 2020).

As advised by Creswell and Piano (2022), the data from observation was coded based on two characteristics which were on the observation form; lecturers' language accuracy and classroom discourse. The lecturers' language accuracy comprised some sub-characteristics which covered pronunciation, vocabulary, instructions, questions, explanations, eliciting information, use of first language (L1), and correction of language error. Under classroom discourse, the following were considered; monologue, dialogue, restructure discourse, filling gaps for students lack of language, use of L1 or L2 (for both lecturers and students), accepting incomplete answers from students, and unnecessarily accepting of one word answers (Ellis, 2018). Recurring characteristics of classroom interaction exhibited by the lecturers in the classroom activities were identified and categorized through reading and re-reading the data. After that, similar characteristics were developed and the emerging themes were presented.

3.13. Ethical considerations

Issues of ethics are a must-consider in any research and researchers are unconditionally responsible for the integrity of the research process (O'Leary, 2004). According to Resnik (2011), ethics refers to norms for conduct that distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Adding to this, George and Jones (2020) indicates that ethics is concerned with the moral values or principles that guide behaviour and inform us whether actions are right or wrong. The underlying principle behind ethics is to help people do the right thing at the right time and in the right manner. Which is why ethics must be adhered to at all times in social research as any gap would significantly be harmful to those taking part in the research.

In this study, before meeting the research participants, the researcher undertook different ethical considerations. In the first place, clearance was applied from Mzuzu University Research Ethics committee so as to allow the researcher to visit the study sites. It was granted. Furthermore, the researcher was given an introductory letter by the coordinator of Master of Education programme at Mzuzu University. Besides, the Directorate of Teacher Education and Development (DTED) granted the researcher permission to collect data in the TTCs. Finally, the principals' offices were asked for permission to engage the research subjects. On the other hand, ethical issues on the part of the participants covered an array of areas including informed consent, voluntary participation, privacy or confidentiality and protecting participants from harm.

3.13.1 Informed consent

Before research can be carried out, the researcher must clearly state the nature of the research to the would-be participants and seek their consent to participate (Cohen, et al., 2005). The concept of informed consent, as stressed by O'Leary (2004) and Cohen et al. (2005), entails that the participant must fully understand the nature of the research and any potential risks be explained so that the participant makes an independent and informed decision to participate or not. This freedom to make independent and informed decision means the participant should neither be induced nor coerced to participate in the research (Creswell, 2014). In this regard, the nature of the study was explained to the participants and were then given letters of consent to append their signatures as evidence of their informed consent of participating in the study, either through interviews or being audio and video recorded.

3.13.2 Voluntary participation

O’Leary (2004) and Cohen et al. (2005) emphasize on the need that participation in a social research must be voluntary. As argued in the preceding paragraph, participants should not be induced or coerced into participating in the research but it should be out of their own volition. Creswell (2012) further advises that since participation is voluntary, participants should also be made aware of their right to discontinue at any time should they wish so. This ethical principle in social research means that participants are under no obligation to continue. In this study therefore, participants were told that at any time they wish to withdraw from the study, they were free to do so and inform the researcher. The researcher also assured them that such withdrawal would not have any negative impacts on their relationship.

3.13.3 Privacy and confidentiality

As emphasized by O’Leary (2004) and Woods (2019), there is a need to reflect on the issue of privacy and confidentiality in social research and ensure that at all times these are guaranteed. According to Resnik (2011), social research often requires that people reveal personal information that may be unknown to their friends and associates. As such, the participant must be assured of his or her personal respect in terms of wellbeing, privacy or confidentiality. In other words, the researcher must do all it takes to make sure that the participants remain anonymous throughout the study. This can be achieved by the use of pseudonyms (Woods, 2019). In this study, alphabetical letters have been used to identify colleges and pseudo names for lecturers.

Another important point on confidentiality concerns how the generated data will be used and kept. As argued by Ndengu (2012) it is reasonable to explain this to the participant as it ensures confidentiality as well as security. In this study therefore, participants were informed that data

generated from the study will be used purely for academic purposes. The generated data has been stored on a compact disk (CD) which would be securely guarded and that accessibility would be restricted to the researcher only. Participants were also informed that all generated data in this study would be destroyed after 2 years of producing the final thesis.

3.13.4 Protection from harm

Woods (2006) observes that participants in a social research can be harmed physically or emotionally. Therefore, any harm that can befall on the participant must be clearly explained prior to getting their informed consent. As stated by Resnik (2011), the researcher is under obligation to explain potential harm and how the participant can be protected. In this study, the participants were assured that no harm would befall them as a result of their participation in the research. It was also stressed by the researcher, that whatever they tell him would not in any way be shared with anyone else or be used against them but would be used purely for academic purposes.

3.14 Limitations of the Study

The study was conducted at four public TTCs only against the initial plan of mixing both public and private institutions. This came into being because the private ones denied the researcher access of collecting data in their institutions. The institutions cited different reasons which they claimed to be beyond their control. This development made the researcher to include other public TTCs which were not initially proposed to be part of the study. This extended the data collection period and projected transportation costs since the researcher had to travel long distances to reach the additional public TTCs. Another setback the study experience was the use of convenience sampling technique when sampling students. This technique did not give participants equal chances of being selected into the study. However, at the end of everything,

the exercise was done successfully but it should be pointed out that though the data that was generated provided what the study was looking for but the findings are limited to the four public Teachers' Training Colleges in Malawi.

3.15 Chapter Summary

This chapter has highlighted the research methodology which was used in generating the information for the study, how it was designed and presented. Its focus was on the following aspects: research design, research paradigm, research site and the subjects, sampling techniques, methods and instruments of data collection, data analysis techniques, trustworthiness, ethical considerations of the study and limitations of the study. The next chapter is about presentation and discussion of findings of the research data.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter presents and discusses the findings of the study in relation to its key questions. The study focussed on exploring the extent to which the Initial Primary Teacher Education programme in Malawi develops teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence (CIC) in primary Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs). The chapter presents and discusses a range of responses, observations and analyses of documents that were obtained across the three key research questions with the guidance of the Professional Competence theory. The three research questions were:

1. How do the Initial primary English teacher educators in Malawian Teacher Training Colleges understand Classroom Interactional Competence?
2. How does the Initial Primary Teacher Education programme in Malawi support teachers' development of Classroom Interactional Competence?
3. What strategies do initial primary English teacher educators employ to develop teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence when teaching English?

The findings have also been discussed in line with literature review and the theoretical framework. To observe confidentiality and anonymity, the participants were given pseudo names which have been used in this chapter to present the findings.

4.2 How Initial Primary English teacher educators in Malawian Primary Teacher Training Colleges understand Classroom Interactional Competence

The first research question was aimed at establishing the level of knowledge and understanding of Classroom Interactional Competence by the lecturers in Malawian Teacher Training Colleges. Here, with the guidance of the Professional Competence theory, the study came across a wide range of views from both lecturers and students. The views are presented in the themes below:

4.1.1 Lecturers' Knowledge and understanding of Classroom Interactional Competence.

Under this theme, lesson observations were conducted and lecturers and students were interrogated to establish:

- The lecturers' knowledge of Classroom Interactional Competence;
- The lecturers' role and responsibilities in an English classroom;
- The students' role and responsibilities in an English lesson;
- What the lecturers do to promote Classroom Interactional Competence in the students;
- Their view on the advantages of Classroom Interactional Competence to both lecturers and students.

4.2.1.1 Lecturers' inadequate knowledge and understanding of Classroom Interactional Competence

Through face to face interviews with the lecturers, the study discovered that the lecturers had insufficient knowledge and understanding of classroom interaction competence. When asked about what they know about Classroom Interactional Competence, the lecturers gave varying responses with majority of them pointing at the fact that they had little knowledge and

understanding of Classroom Interactional Competence. In addition, most of the lecturers' responses showed that the concept of Classroom Interactional Competence was strange to them as they confused it with classroom interaction. For example, lecturer Fesna (13th May, 2022) of TTC D responded saying, *"Classroom Interactional Competence is the talk between the teacher and the students in the classroom during the lesson.....in any lesson."*

Responding on the same was lecturer Maka (20th April, 2022) from TTC A who stated that, *"I know classroom interaction competence as talking with the students in the classroom and making English lessons student-centered ones. That is, allowing the students talk in the lesson."* Additionally, giving her input, another lecturer from TTC B indicated that, *"It is the talk between lecturers and students in the lesson in English language which we use during the process of teaching and learning"* (Sozi, 22nd April, 2022).

As can be observed from the responses given above, it is clearly showing that the lecturers have little theoretical knowledge on what Classroom Interactional Competence is. This is evidenced in their description of Classroom Interaction in a question that demanded them to talk about Classroom Interactional Competence. This, according to Walsh (2013) is a challenge as the lecturers cannot be able to develop CIC in the students. The idea here is that teacher educators need to fully know and understand theoretical part of CIC for them to ably develop it in their students. The argument is supported by Papaja (2020), who declares the need for teachers to know the basics and boundaries of CIC if they are to make their students competent in classroom interaction. This is for the fact that theoretical knowledge is seen as one of the requirements of competence because it encompasses academic and pedagogical know how which in the end strengthens and occupies a central place in teacher's professional preparation.

In addition to the arguments by Walsh (2013) and Papaja (2020), professional competence theory states that professional activities in teaching require a certain level of knowledge and understanding by the practitioner (Tarnovo, 2020). This means that the lecturers, as professionals responsible for the development of teachers' CIC are required to have the knowledge and an understanding of the concept in question for them to create tasks and employ proper teaching methodologies for the benefit of the students. It is, therefore, most likely difficult for the participants in this study to help their student teachers develop CIC because of their inadequate knowledge of what it is.

4.2.1.2 Lecturer's role and responsibilities in an Interactive English Classroom

The study through face to face interviews with the lecturers and students and lesson observation found out that the lecturers had the role and responsibilities of being a facilitator and a guide to students in an interactive English classroom. This is for the reason that the lecturers are the ones in charge of the classrooms as they have higher knowledge than the students.

(a) Lesson Facilitation

Under this theme, lesson observation revealed that some lecturers were general overseers of learning, who coordinated the activities in a manner that provided coherent lesson progression via different teaching and learning methods and resources. Moreover, lecturers and student teachers who participated in the study reported that the lectures have the role of facilitating the teaching and learning process in an interactive English classroom. According to the responses majority of them indicated them as the organisers of the main classroom business in an English lesson. For instance, a lecturer at TTC-A said,

“During the teaching and learning process, as a lecturer, my major duty is just to facilitate. I make sure that student teachers are doing the tasks that I have

assigned them to do whether in groups or individually, they answer questions and I ensure that there is much interaction between myself and the student teachers” (Maka, 20th April, 2022).

In compliance with the above statement, a student at TTC-C (FGD, 28th April, 2022) was quoted saying,

“The role of the lecturer in an English lesson is to facilitate everything taking place in the classroom. That is, the lecturer is there to give us instructions on activities so that when we are participating in the lesson, whether in groups or as an individual, we should follow those instructions and do exactly what is required of us.”

Another lecturer at TTC-B, was reported saying, *“I am a facilitator. My job is to oversee all the classroom activities and make sure that the lessons are flowing according to my plan....”* (Sozi, 22nd April, 2022). On the same, a student at TTC-D (13th May, 2022) indicated that, *“The lecturer’s role in English lesson is to give the students clear instructions and tasks either to be done in groups or in pairs.”*

The findings show that though the Initial Primary English teacher educators had difficulties in explaining what CIC is, some of their practices in the classroom reflected the elements of CIC. This has been justified in the data that has been presented. First, the lecturers’ organised and coordinated classroom activities allowed for all forms of interaction to take place in the lessons since students were given a chance to talk to one another and with the lecturer. Furthermore, students in such lessons were encouraged to take part in the lessons by frequent supervision of the lecturer in the group activities. This is in line with what Goddard and Evans (2018) states that teachers’ role in an interactive classroom is to create interaction by firstly being a

participant and a facilitator to encourage the students to be involved in the interaction. This means that the lecturer has to be involved in the interaction in order for the students to be attracted to participate at the classroom interaction.

The lecturer also has to make the students realize that they have to be active in learning process. Thus, the coordination of activities and good progress of the lessons means that there is good classroom interaction in the lesson and thereby, providing the students with a good learning environment. Such kind of learning is supported by proponents of professional competence theory who claim that competent teachers facilitate learning for their students and that such teachers show they know the ways in which learning takes place and the appropriate levels of intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development of their students (Mulder, 2017).

Adding on the same, Çelik (2016) advances that competent teachers identify developmental levels of individual students and plan instruction accordingly while assessing and using teaching resources needed to address the strengths and weaknesses of students. In this case, the efforts by the lecturers in creating a good learning environment by good organisation of the activities and methods may help student teachers who are being trained to teach in primary schools to communicate effectively in the lessons thereby making them becoming competent in classroom interaction. Therefore, this may help to address the problem of passive learning in primary schools when the student teachers follow what they learn in the colleges.

(b) Guiding students in the lesson

It was observed in the lessons that some lecturers, especially those who used hands-on teaching methods assumed the role of guiding (teaching) student teachers in the lessons. That is, such lecturers were language instructors, who presented new language, controlled the language,

evaluated its use and corrected students' mistakes. Additionally, the lecturers were consultants or advisers in communicative activities helping the student teachers where necessary. Thus, the lecturers would move around the groups, checking the students' work, helping them and answering their questions. In agreement with what was observed in the lessons were lecturers' and students' responses on the role and responsibilities of lecturers in an interactive classroom. For instance, lecturer Pale of TTC-C (27th April, 2022) indicated that, *"I am supposed to guide the student teachers what they are supposed to do in the classroom, not leaving the students doing what they want"*. Concurring to this was a lecturer at TTC-A, who said, *"My role as a lecturer is to let the student teachers know how English is taught in Primary schools. That is, through methodologies and even how to handle those methods, how to integrate the methods in a lesson (Bak, 20th April, 2022).*

Similarly, a student teacher at TTC-D (FGD, 14th May, 2022) was noted saying, *"The lecturer's responsibility in the English classroom is to clarify students' responses. When the students provide wrong answers or poor tenses and sentence construction, the lecturer is there to make such corrections."* Another student of TTC-B (FGD, 23rd April, 2022) said, *"His role (the English lecturer) in the lesson is to impart in us the methods and skills on how to teach English as we are going to teaching practice and after this programme."*

In the above responses, lecturers as well as student teachers in the TTCs had the feeling that lecturers, as professional teachers, have the responsibility of training the students through guidance on how they can perform certain tasks, therefore, become competent in their work. Lesson extract 1 is an example of part of a lesson in which a lecturer is guiding students on how they should pronounce letter sounds and how they are used in different words. In the

extract, *L* stands for Lecturer, *S* for student and *Ss* for students. The students' names are represented by pseudo names like; Bosami (male) and Pokala (female).

Extract 1

1. L : But I think these varies according to how we can use them. Let's try. The first one is 'A'. Can somebody come in front to write for us the sound 'A'. Anyone? I now need a lady. Yes, Bosami.
2. S :(writing '/α/' on the chalkboard)
3. L : Is that right?
4. Ss : Yes!
5. L : A hand for her. So, it should be / α /. That's a long sound / α /. But as I said, this long sound /α/ has been classified into four. Four classes. This is the first one, who can tell us the other ones? You can just come and write on the chalkboard.
6. L : Yes, Pokala.
7. S : (writing (/ə/) on the chalkboard)
8. L : Is she correct?
9. S : Yes
10. L : Really? Pokala, what is that sound?
11. S : 'A'
12. L : She says 'A'. Is she right?
13. Ss : Yes
14. S : I said 'E'

15. Ss : (laughter)
16. L : She has started changing which means she is not stable.
Right? So, how should it be? Or what do we call this 'A'?
17. S : /ɑ/
18. L : Thank you for trying but this is a weak sound 'A'
so it should be sounded as /ə / (pronouncing), just very
weak. Another 'A'?? Yes! (pointing)
19. S : (writing /ʌ/on the chalkboard)
20. L : What do we call that?
21. S : Strong 'A'
22. L : Is that true, class? Is that strong 'A'? ... Yes (pointing)
23. S : We do not say strong but I have forgotten what we call
it. It is used like 'U' for example in the word *but* and *can*.
24. Ss : (Laughter)
25. L : It is called Sharp 'A'. And we have words like *but* and *cup*
as examples but not *can* because *can* has long 'A' sound.
The words have letter U in them but sounds like 'A'.

In the above extract, the lecturer put much effort in correcting students' mistakes for them to give proper letter sounds and words in which the sounds are used. As can be observed, in the extract, both bidding and non-bidding students are engaged in giving answers (lines 1 and 5). Furthermore, in lines 5, 18 and 25 the lecturer has assisted the students in coming up with the right letter sounds. This is guided learning aimed at making the students master the language item.

From the findings, the presentation of new language, controlling of the language and correction of students' mistakes via different activities and methods can help student teachers learn by doing, reading, and reflecting by collaborating with other student teachers. This kind of learning enables students to meaningfully learn language in an active, constructive, authentic and cooperative manner (Franchi, 2016). Additionally, students are motivated to take part in the lessons when they are engaged in activities that are relevant to their lives. Thus, correction of students' mistakes in a friendly manner can make the tasks make sense to and interest students thereby involving themselves in the lesson and enhancing classroom interaction. Therefore, if the lecturers' kind of teaching observed in this study is a tradition in the TTCs, it may help in producing English teachers who are competent enough in classroom interaction.

As DBEM (2013) puts it, the goal of teacher education programs should be to present curriculum in such a way as to teach the necessity of social interaction. This will help students to expand their Zone of Proximate Development which reflects the relationship between what learners can achieve by themselves, and what they can achieve with the interaction with others. Adding to this is the professional competence theory which encourages teachers, as professionals, to establish and maintain effective communication channels with learners that see to it that students are assisted accordingly by the practitioners (European Commission, 2013). Therefore, English lectures in TTCs should not tire in providing proper guidance to the student teachers because according to competence theory, teachers learn while doing and with the passage of time and the repeated and prolonged contact with their lecturers and groups of students, they develop experiential knowledge about subject-specific and pedagogical knowledge to help develop their competencies. Thus, the focus of Professional Competence theory is usually on practitioners (in this case, lecturers) in creating a collaborative and interactive environment with the students.

4.2.1.3 Students' role and responsibility in an Interactive English Classroom

(a) Participation in the lessons

On the part of the students, the study through interviews, discovered that the students had the role of being active participants in the English lessons and not being mere idle observers. In addition, where participatory teaching methods were used, the students took part in the lesson and contributed a lot making the lesson an interactive one. That is, the lecturers could interact with the students and the students could also interact with each other. Additionally, the lecturers and students responding to the research questions on this emphasised on the need of the students to be fully involved in the lessons. For instance, a student at TTC-A (21st April, 2022) had this to say, *“We need to be mostly involved in all activities conducted in a particular lesson so that we can contribute a lot in that lesson. We need to participate fully so that most of the activities should be done by us, the lecturers should just be guiding us on what to do in the lessons.”*

A lecturer at TTC-B, agreed to this and highlighted that, *“The major responsibility of the students in an interactive classroom is that they have to be active participants. They are the ones who have to generate the process of learning not just depending on the lecturer for everything in the classroom”* (Kame, 22nd April, 2022).

Another student from TTC-D (FGD, 14th May, 2022) was heard saying, *“The most thing as our role in the English lesson is to fully participate in the lesson by listening attentively, working hard in all the activities given by our lecturer and giving our suggestions on what has been taught.* On the same, TTC-B's lecturer said,

“I expect them (students) to participate fully in all the tasks given, not just being idle and leaving everything to others. I make sure that the roles of presentations should be rotating, not only the same people doing the presentations because others are shy, they just keep quiet, as if they cannot do it. So, I try as much as possible to involve every student teacher” (Sozi, 22nd April, 2022).

Another lecturer at TTC-C, lecturer Zani (27th April, 2022), reported that, *“In the lesson, the student teachers have to respond to my questions, they should also ask questions where they don’t understand when doing some of the activities. They should also interact with their friends.”*

As can be observed from the respondents’ answers, it is clear that the responsibility of student teachers in an English lesson is to participate actively. That is, they are expected to do as per their lecturers’ demands as professionals. However, though one of the roles of the students was to communicate in English, which was the target language, some students in other lessons were seen by the observer speaking to each other or even to the lecturers using vernacular language (Chichewa). To make matters worse, the lecturers in such classes never at any time discouraged the students from using the local language. This may be because some of them were also at times delivering their lessons in the same language.

Basing on the findings, some lecturers’ decisions on activities and methodologies used in the lessons show that students are actively involved in social interaction which positively impact their learning. Therefore, they can carry on the practice in their future classrooms. In support of this, Li (2006) indicates that teachers need to create a safe and nonthreatening learning community in which students feel comfortable participating and in which students develop

confidence that they can learn and achieve high academic standards. According to Bromley (2018), active engagement in English lessons helps to create a positive classroom environment and establish a community of learners who support each other. This is also agreed by the professional competence theory by stating that competence-based education allows for students' active participation in lessons for them to gain the needed competences (Zainun et al., 2015). In this regard, lecturers under Initial Teacher Education programme, therefore, are required to embark on activities that will make student teachers participate actively in the lessons. In this way, their involvement in the lessons will make them interact with their fellow students and the lecturers as well and this will eventually help them in the development of CIC.

4.2.1.4 Techniques for promoting Classroom Interactional Competence in the students

Under this sub theme, the lesson observations and interviews provided data that show some techniques or strategies used by the lecturers in English lessons that were aimed at promoting Classroom Interactional Competence in the student teachers. To this effect, the use of teaching and learning materials and variation of teaching methods were concluded to be the most techniques used by lecturers in English classroom to promote CIC in the student teachers.

(a) Use of Teaching and Learning Resources

Under this, it was observed in the lessons which adopted learner centered methods that the lecturers used charts, story extracts, and old English primary books, among other common teaching, learning and assessment materials. These resources made students talk to the lecturer as well as to each other in groups, pairs as they were discussing. In the same vein, the lecturers and students mentioned that charts and drawings, were used during English lessons to make

the students involved in the teaching and learning process and thereby making the lesson interactive. For instance, lecturer Bak (20th April, 2022) of TTC-A, reported that,

“....so, according to the tasks, I make sure that the student teachers interact with teaching and learning resources because that’s the major tool that can make the lesson effective because as they will be interacting with the teaching resources at the same time they will be participating in the lesson.”

Supporting this statement was a lecturer at TTC D who stated that, *“....I usually use charts but apart from the charts, sometimes I borrow some learning materials from the department of expressive arts, those that are produced by either the lecturers or students in that department”* (Dupi, 13th May, 2022). On the same, a student at TTC-B (FGD, 23rd April, 2022), said that,

“When she has given us a task in groups like writing things on a chart, or reading, she moves around to make sure that we are participating in those activities. This makes every student to take part in the lesson because even if you are not willing to discuss with our friends, you have that feeling to participate.”

Basing on the responses, it is clearly observed that some lecturers believe in the use of teaching and learning materials for them to deliver their lessons interactively. Again, from the responses, it is evident enough that student teachers’ participation in the lessons is reinforced by the availability of teaching aids put at their disposal by the lecturers.

(b) Variation of Teaching and Learning Methods

The study, through lesson observation and interviews, found out that some lecturers varied teaching methods and, in those lessons, lecturer-student, student-students, students–lecturer

and students-content types of classroom interactions were visible and that learning was very interesting. For example, at TTC B, a lecturer used pair work, think-pair share, group work discussion and revolutionary methods in one lesson. The lesson was highly interactive and interesting because there was dual communication throughout the lesson. Moreover, when asked about the techniques the lecturers use to promote classroom interactional competence, the lecturers and students mentioned the variation of strategies as one of them. For example, lecturer at TTC-B, lecturer Kame (22nd April, 2022), stated that,

“To ensure maximum interaction with the students and the students themselves, I vary the teaching and learning methods. As you have seen, I used a number of critical thinking methods including revolutionary method, which involved almost every student in the groups including silent participants. That was to ensure that there was interaction in the class for the students’ knowledge as well.”

In agreement with this, a student at TTC-C (FGD, 28th April, 2022) said,

“The lecturers try their best to ask us questions and they also give us a chance to ask them questions. They also give us a chance to interact with books during lessons. In addition, they vary methods of teaching so that they should reach to the needs of all the students. Sometimes, they tell the most active member in the group to be writing for the group so that others should speak out by contributing ideas and presenting the findings.”

Another student teacher at TTC-B (FGD, 23rd April, 2022) was recorded stating that, *“They use different methodologies like jig saw, pair work, group work and talk around, just to give few examples.”* Lecturer Bak (20th April, 2022) of TTC-A, had this to say,

“Usually, I use a lot of methods in one lesson so that they can also learn the art of using the methods for them to do the same when they go for teaching practice and also when they qualify as teachers. For example, I may use group work, lecturing, pair work or authors’ chair.”

The above responses by the lecturers and student teachers gives an assurance that some lecturers, as professionals in the field of teaching, employ as many strategies as possible in a lesson. This, according to the lecturers is a deliberate move aimed at making the lessons interactive and successful as well as for student teachers to copy the art and use it in their lessons in primary schools.

From the findings, lecturer’s use of expertise in helping the students via varied teaching and learning materials and strategies shows the lecturers knowledge and understanding of what Classroom Interactional Competence is. This is because employing different teaching and learning strategies and materials in an English lesson provides an opportunity of talking in the classroom and therefore making the students understand different concepts and make connections in the activities (Franchi, 2016). Thus, where such is not evident in the English lessons, the students play a receptive role in the learning while the teacher acts as a knowledge transmitter. This affects the students learning as the lesson is mostly inactive. That is, there is no student-student, student –lecturer and student –materials interaction which promotes interaction in a lesson. In other words, such lessons do not provide opportunities for action-oriented, contextualized language practice and use (DBEM, 2013). They also fail to build on learners’ backgrounds, interests, experiences and prior knowledge and do not provide opportunities for meaningful communication. So, such circumstances lead to poor interaction

in the lesson. In other words, the students do not become independent learners to acquire enough information to build on new knowledge and become an intellectual.

Richardson (2013) notes that teachers should be aware of different strategies and lesson activities to guide students and facilitate learning. Dubasenyuk (2010) adds that another important component for the competent teacher in classroom interaction is pedagogical experience. Initial teacher educators need to have advanced pedagogical experience that can be transferred and passed on to others (student teachers), as well as reproduced in training techniques and methods so as to be used by the future teachers. This, in turn, provides high results with the output of the required competences. It may also be of help to the student teachers in the development of CIC because, usually, the teaching skills and life-long learning competencies of professional teachers help them to perform complex pedagogical duties that call for highly cooperative and varied learning methods and physical activities for much enhanced learning (Mulder, 2017).

Additionally, in such kind of teaching, students learn new information and acquire ideas through many learning activities and strategies while the teacher' role is to help foster the gained competencies. The same views are also shared by Mulder (2017), who stipulates that competences in education can be attained through physical activities and group work which will typically motivate those students who are demotivated. Thus, those teaching strategies and activities can make students more productive and motivated while implementing those learning strategies as they are learning in the colleges as well as after their training. Therefore, since students are the main part in the learning process as argued by the competence theory under competence based education, teachers should motivate them and actively involve them in learning by the use of various interactive teaching and learning activities and strategies. This

way, the inactive learning in the Malawian primary schools will be history since teachers will be able to use the knowledge of classroom interaction, they acquire from the TTCs.

(c) Use of Non-verbal Communication in English Lessons

However, it should be noted that one of the strongest elements discovered under this theme was the use of nonverbal resources that enhanced classroom interaction as it complemented to the usual verbal communication in the English lessons. Going through the videos, it was evident enough that some lecturers made good use of non-verbal communication in the delivery of English lessons. This was witnessed in the classrooms where classroom interaction manifested itself due to the active participation of the students. Thus, in the lessons, a great deal of turn allocation by lecturers was achieved through personified allocations where the teacher educators used gaze, nods, and pointing, to accompany talk. Consequently, students would know who was selected as the next speaker and get feedback via the mentioned embodied allocations and students gained the floor by hand raising at transition relevance places (TRPs). Therefore, turn allocations could occur with a nonverbal additional expansion between a lecturer's initiated turn and a student's reply, using gaze, points, and nods (Goddard and Evans, 2018).

The use of non-verbal communication in the English lessons by the lecturers revealed in the study shows that some lecturers know what makes an English class interactive. As argued by Maxwell (2018), good use of non-verbal communication in the delivery of English lessons is good for the better learning of the student teachers as it brings inclusion in the lesson. As a result, students of different backgrounds are able to understand the language and ably communicate with others in the classroom. This is because the use of all forms of communication in an English lesson accelerates the acquisition of language since students

match words and the actions unlike using only words. This is in agreement with what Verbitsky (2019), who argues that education involve organized and sustained communication designed to bring about learning.

Additionally, according to Maxwell (2018), communication may be verbal or non-verbal, direct face to face and media, or indirect or remote and may involve a wide variety of channels and media. Professional competence theory support this by arguing that competent teachers use effective communication strategies that includes all students in the lesson and that classroom communication is always in all forms. This encourages active participation and interaction among learners, their teacher and other components of the teaching and learning process (Verbitsky, 2019). Moreover, this form of classroom communication by the teachers leaves no gap in communication as the words and non-verbal cues used in the classroom complement each other. Therefore, if lecturers keep this trend of classroom communication, student teachers will participate fully in the lessons and there will be positive interaction in the English lessons between the students themselves, the lecturer and even the teaching resources. This will help the student teachers to be masters of CIC after their programme and contribute in the Malawian education sector by making lessons active for the benefit of the primary school learners.

4.2.2.5 Benefits of Classroom Interactional Competence to Lecturers and Student Teachers

The study discovered advantages of Classroom Interactional Competence to both lecturers and students. In other words, the responses on the advantages of CIC to both the lecturers and students, all pointed at enhancement of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in the students. Thus, in response to the questions that were asked, the lecturers praised CIC as a very

vital skill which every lecturer and student teacher should have. They indicated that it is good for it allows lecturers to communicate with the student teachers and at the same time, passing the skills to the students for their use in the primary schools. In addition, it instils confidence in the student teachers to communicate well with their colleagues and their learners during the teaching practicum and when they will be deployed in schools. This, according to them, promotes active participation to all learners. For instance, lecturer Pale of TTC-C (27th April, 2022), was recorded saying,

“It is advantageous to both of us because the student teachers have to learn from the lecturer what they need to do when they go on practice as well as when they finish the course. So, these competencies will help them deliver the content which we give them as they will be able to communicate with their students in lessons of various subjects in primary schools. This in the end will make their learners to participate fully in the lessons.”

Lecturer Maka (20th April, 2022) of TTC-A also commented that,

“CIC is very good because it helps students to interact with each other and with the lecturers as well. So, with the student teachers, it can help them to interact with their learners out there in the primary schools for better teaching and learning in the all the subjects they will be teaching.”

On the same, a TTC-B lecturer Sozi (22nd April, 2022) responded that, *“It helps us to have the knowledge on how to interact with the students and for the students to interact well with their learners in primary schools.”* Another lecturer from TTC-A indicated that,

“Classroom Interactional Competence helps students to learn well as it is easy for them to ask questions since it instils in them confidence to speak either

to the lecturers or fellow student teachers. It also helps them to learn from one another in the groups. For example, in a group, if one is not able to explain a certain concept, a friend within the group can assist them” (Maka, 20th April, 2022).

The above responses gives an indication that the lecturers are aware of some of the benefits of CIC to the student teachers and lecturers themselves. The core of their message is that CIC helps to have effective classroom communication between teachers and students and students themselves and because of that, it mediates and assist in learning.

The advantages of Classroom Interactional Competence revealed in the study shows the lecturers’ knowledge of what the concept is and that their actions in the classroom in English lessons help student teachers, who are future teachers to know how interaction should be handled in the classrooms. This also means that the lecturers know how to incorporate social interaction into their classrooms.

Hussain (2018) states that teachers of English who know how critical social interaction and collaboration are in learning do not keep their learners quiet and they strive to enforce the interactional competencies in them. They make sure that reading, writing, listening, and speaking activities are interactive in nature and are incorporated into everything students do throughout the day. This is because reading, writing, and social interaction are part of everyday life in the real world (Richardson, 2016). So, it does not make sense for classrooms to be social interaction-free zones where the teacher talks while students listen. According to competence based-education, all teachers must learn to understand that some competencies in education may promote students’ learning via different skills attained (McHugh et al., 2013). The point

here is that what the study reveals may make student teachers to be competent in classroom interaction since they show interest and take part actively in the lessons.

Richardson (2016) adds that Classroom Interactional Competence has the potential of making the students interested in communicating in the classroom. This is because the lecturers and students display for one another their understanding of “what is going on” (Richardson, 2016). As a result, this communicative experience or input, as observed by DBEM (2013) does not evaporate when the student leaves the room or when the student goes to sleep at night; it remains, memory permitting, in the form of a modified, individual and internal mental representation of the L2. So, simply put, if language learners have the opportunity to speak repeatedly with more experienced speakers in similar contexts, they will increase their chances of mastering interactional competence as expounded by the respondents in this study (Masuda, 2011).

According to Kasule (2015), teachers, as professionals should have the competence of classroom communication and make it the medium through which they interact with their students. In other words, what CIC is capable of in the classroom means that it is worthy to be known and understood by lecturers. Therefore, understanding Classroom Interactional Competence by the lecturers will help in producing good English teachers who will be able to change things in the primary schools where it has been marked that classroom interaction in all subjects except for Chichewa, is a challenge.

As it can be seen, most of the lecturers as revealed by the study, only had difficulties in describing Classroom Interactional Competence theoretically but were able to show some of the recommended CIC activities. Thus, the deficit in their theoretical knowledge of CIC had

little negative impact on their exhibition of CIC activities and methodologies. However, there is a need for them to reinforce their familiarity with Classroom Interactional Competence knowledge and techniques for them to reduce the shortfall. As professionals, they need to know the theoretical part of what they do for them to ably assist student teachers theoretically as well as practically. This will help Malawian TTCs to show evidence of teacher's pedagogical talk which is needed in order to fully make student teachers understand the highly context-specific classroom practices (Hume, 2014). This understanding will accordingly be the basis for teacher professional development in terms of the lecturers' roles as the classroom manager and facilitator and the individual responsible for the students' improvements in speaking English.

4.2. How the Initial Primary Teacher Education Programme in Malawi support Teachers' Development of Classroom Interactional Competence.

The second research question was aimed at identifying the extent to which the Malawian Initial Primary Teacher Education programme develops teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence. Under this question, the study, through document analysis of the IPTE English modules, with the guidance of Professional Competence theory discovered results presented in the themes below:

4.2.1 IPTE Programme's Development of Teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence

Under this theme, data were garnered by analysing documents and interviewing lecturers and student teachers. In this case, to come up with the required data, documents of the IPTE English modules were analysed with special emphasis on:

- English classroom lesson activities (interactivities) that can promote Classroom Interactional Competence in the student teachers.

- Teaching and learning strategies (interaction strategies) outlined for student teachers to master classroom interaction.

On part of the lecturers and students, they were asked to describe:

- Interactive activities found in IPTE English curriculum to be used by lecturers and students;
- Interactive strategies factored in IPTE English curriculum for lecturers and students' use.

4.2.1.1 Interaction Activities across the Curriculum

Under this sub theme, the study discovered interaction activities outlined in the IPTE English curriculum that would help to enhance CIC in the student teachers if used by the lecturers in lessons. That is, in all the four English modules that make up the curriculum, interaction activities like, storytelling, role-play, discussion, read-aloud, debate, gallery walk and jig-saw are spread across the various topics.

Table 4.1 shows interactive activities in each IPTE Programme English module and the whole English curriculum.

Table 4.1: Interactive activities in each IPTE Programme module and the whole English curriculum.

Module No.	No. of Topics	Interactive Activities in the Curriculum
1	13	Discussion, storytelling, panel discussion, simulation, speeches, role playing, reading aloud and debate, games
2	11	Discussion, riddles, picture description, storytelling, picture stories, role playing, reading aloud and debate.
3	8	Discussion, singing songs, word chanting, readers theatre, simulations assisted reading, echo reading, storytelling, role play, and debate
4	8	Discussion, lesson critiquing, gallery walk, retelling a story, whole group game: four corners, storytelling, role play, reading aloud and debates.
Whole Curriculum	Total 40	Common in all the Four Modules: Retelling a story, discussion, storytelling, role playing, reading aloud, simulations, picture stories, lesson critiquing, singing songs, gallery walk and debate.

Source: Field data, 2022.

As can be observed from the Table 4.1, some few activities that are believed to promote classroom interaction in English lessons are missing in the whole curriculum. Interaction activities such learning centres, scripting and use of diaries and posters among others are missing in the modules. These activities are highly interactive as they are speaking activities

and they provoke and force active participation of students in a lesson thereby ensuring interaction between the lecturer and the students and between the students themselves.

The findings are similar with those found during interviews with lectures and student teachers, who stressed that the most common interactive activities factored in the English modules are storytelling, role-play, discussion, read-aloud, debate, gallery walk and jig-saw. For example, one of the lecturers at TTC-D lecturer Dupi (13th May , 2022) said, *“I think the activities like gallery walk, storytelling and role-play found in our modules, promote Classroom Interactional Competence in the students when we have fully utilized them in the lessons.”*

Lecturer Maka (20th April, 2022), of TTC-A pointed out that, *“In the modules, there are games, storytelling and debate. So, sometimes we ask them to use games, sometimes we arrange debates. These are the major activities that are interactive in nature.”* Another lecturer at TTC-B, was quoted indicating that, *“Reading, demonstrations, making presentations and answering questions are the practical activities outlined in the modules that enhance the skill of speaking, like how it can be used in the classroom”* (Sozi, 22nd April, 2022).

The above responses from lecturers confirms the common interaction activities that are available in the whole IPTE English curriculum. The interactivities are the ones trusted and used by the lecturers and students in the teaching and learning of English for all the four terms the students are at the campus.

4.2.1.2 *Interaction Strategies across the Curriculum*

The study, under this sub theme exposed interaction strategies suggested in all the four modules of the IPTE English curriculum. These strategies are the ones believed to be at the core of enhancing CIC in the student teachers if well utilised and mastered by both the lecturers and

students. The document analysis and the interviews with the lecturers both showed that group discussion, pair work, and presentations were the common interaction strategies that would help to promote CIC in the student teachers if well managed by the interactants.

Table 4.3 shows interactive strategies in each IPTE Programme English modules and the whole English curriculum.

Table 4.3: Interactive strategies in each IPTE Programme English modules and those dominating in the whole English curriculum.

Module No.	No. of Topics	Interaction Strategies in each Module and the dominants in the whole Curriculum
1	13	Pair work, group work, think-pair-share, brainstorming and non-verbal gestures.
2	11	Pair work, use of simple and direct language, group work, think-pair-share, brainstorming and non-verbal gestures.
3	8	Pair work, gallery walk, one stray-three stay, reading in pairs, group work, think-pair-share, brainstorming and use of non-verbal gestures.
4	8	Choral reading, reading in groups, repeated reading, dramatizing, Pair work, group work, think-pair-share, brainstorming and use of non-verbal gestures.
Whole Curriculum	Total 40	Common in all the Four Modules: Pair work, group work, think-pair-share, brainstorming, use of non-verbal gestures, reading in groups and choral reading.

Source: Field Data, 2022.

Table 4.3, shares information that agrees with the claim made earlier in the report that some equally important interactive English teaching strategies are not available in the lecturers' modules and the whole curriculum at large. That is, browsing into the modules, interactive strategies like talk and walk around, revolutionary, hot seat, three part song, pens on the middle, among others are not found.

The results are similar to what the lecturers mentioned when asked about interactive strategies outlined in the IPTE English curriculum. For instance, lecturer Fesna (13th May, 2022) of TTC-D highlighted that,

“The IPTE programme encourages us to teach using participatory teaching methods such as, group work, think-pair-share and pair work which are learner-centred. These methods are right there in the modules because when the modules were being developed, they were developed in such a way that we should be using learner centred methods when teaching, hence, we are also following it.”

Concurring to this, another lecturer at TTC-B stated that, *“In the modules, strategies like group discussion, demonstration, Pair work, think –pair share, where we ask students to think and share with their friends then report to the class are the mostly suggested interactive methods”* (Kame, 22nd April, 2022). In addition, lecturer Maka (20th April, 2022) of TTC-A, indicated that, *“There are teaching methods like: pair work, think pair share, repeated reading, dramatizing, that are in the IPTE English curriculum and we use them and they are very effective in ensuring classroom interaction.”*

Likewise with the interaction activities, the lecturers in their answers have given a hint at the only interaction strategies put at the disposal of lecturers and student teachers in the IPTE English curriculum. According to the practitioners, the available and outlined interactive strategies help in making English lessons interactive and thereby helping in the promotion of CIC development in the student teachers.

As shown by the results, the missing of some interaction activities and strategies and over using of few same available across the curriculum may limit the lecturers in engaging student teachers in effective interaction. In addition, the students may be bored to be involved in the same few activities and by the same few strategies through the entire learning period. As stipulated by Franchi (2016), engaging students in classroom interaction calls for activities and teaching methods that will make classrooms to be social interaction zones where the teacher talks with students, students talk to each other and interact with teaching and learning materials.

As one of the requirements for competence based-education, the curriculum for teacher education programme, should, without fail, highlight the most effective activities that will help interpreters to instil different competences in the students (Alake-Tuenter et al., 2018). Therefore, the IPTE English curriculum should provide lectures with a lot of stimulating interactive activities facilitated via different interactive teaching strategies to be used in the English classroom. Such activities in addition to those stipulated in the curriculum may be; games, songs, scripting, use of diaries and posters, library as a learning centre, and talk-based communicative activities.

On the other hand, interactive strategies that IPTE English curriculum may have on top of the ones already in it can be hot seat, authors chair, revolutionary, walk and talk around, pen in the

middle, among other missed interactive strategies. This will encourage lecturers to use interactive group activities in most of their lessons so as to create space for learning by making students speak a lot in the classroom (Hussain, 2018). That is, they will be attempting to engage their students in authentic communicative situations, such as exchanging information, making presentations, arranging meetings, solving problems, and engaging in daily classroom business. This is supported by Richardson (2016), who states that English curricular interactive activities rely heavily on students involvement and materials used in the lesson for the students' to interact with in groups. Thus, to achieve the objectives of teaching and learning a particular English topic, lecturers, through the guidance of the curriculum, need to develop students' confidence by using effective strategies and activities drawn from the curriculum.

4.3 Strategies Initial Primary English Teacher Educators Employ to Develop Teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence when Teaching English

The third research question was aimed at identifying the teaching strategies the IPTE programme English lecturers in TTCs used to develop teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence. From this research question, the study came across a variety of data from the lecturers and students, the IPTE English modules that were analysed as well as English lessons that were observed. The data, which were interpreted through the lens of Professional Competence theoretical frame work generated results that are presented in the themes below:

4.3.1. Common Teaching Strategies English Teacher Educators Use in their lessons and IPTE Programme's Fitness in supporting Students' Development of CIC

Under this theme, lessons observed and questions posited to lecturers and students were done to find out:

- Teaching and learning strategies the lecturers use in English lessons;
- Student teachers' general response to the teaching and learning strategies;
- Their opinion on whether the said strategies are enough and effective in developing teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence.
- The lecturers' and students' opinion on whether or not the IPTE programme develops teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence and reasons for the option

4.3.1.1. Common Teaching Strategies English Teacher Educators Use in their lessons

The study through interviews and lesson observation discovered two categories of teaching methods that the lecturers used in their English lessons. The lecturers used participatory and non-participatory teaching methods. These methods had both positive and negative impacts towards the students' learning which was conducted in English, the target language.

(a) Use of Participatory Teaching Methods

It was observed in the lessons and interviews that the lecturers mostly employed group work discussions and presentations as strategies of conducting their classroom business. Thus, they relied heavily on the mentioned methods apart from hot seat, author's chair, think pair share, revolutionary among others that were observed in other classrooms and mentioned by lecturers and students. However, some methods were not seen being used by the lecturers despite the fact that they were mentioned by them as some of the strategies they use. For instance, when asked to mention teaching strategies they use, lecturer Zani (27th April, 2022) of TTC-C indicated that, *"Sometimes I engage them in group discussion, pair work, walk around, talk around. I do that in order to make them interact with each other and force them to talk in the classroom."*

Another lecturer at TTC-A stated that, *“I use several strategies. Sometimes we ask them to discuss in groups, we give them questions to work in groups, in pairs, and also present their finding using hot seat method”* (Bak, 20th April, 2022). On the same, students gave similar answers to those of lecturers. For instance, a student at TTC-D (FGD, 14th May, 2022) reported that, *“The lecturer mostly uses group discussion and we share ideas for presentation. This is the only way we can share ideas because students who cannot express themselves because of shyness or being afraid of the activities are forced to speak for their contribution.”* Additionally, student from TTC-B (FGD, 22nd April, 2022) indicated that, *“They (lecturers) use a lot of teaching methods like: revolutionary, talk around, pair work, think pair share, and walk around. These methods give us freedom to talk with the lecturer and our fellow students.”*

The above responses by both lecturers and student teachers indicate that in order to make lessons interactive in nature and thereby contribute to the students’ development of CIC, some practitioners use participatory teaching methods as highlighted by different respondents. However, the study through interviews came across data which indicated that lecturers have resorted to use critical thinking methods of teaching, as previously highlighted in this report, as a remedy for the insufficient teaching strategies in the English curriculum.

(b) Use of Lecture Method

The study came across data that show that some lecturers employed lecture method of lesson delivery. The lesson observations and interviews with the lecturers and students attest to this fact. Thus, the lecturers were seen delivering lessons without involving the students much, turning the lesson into one man’s show. Some of them could just read lesson notes as the students were listening and writing. Often, such lecturers stood in front of the class, and desks were arranged in neat rows being in charge of the chalk and the blackboard and students

listened silently as lecturers spoke. This made the students to be idle or just focusing on writing in the lesson without speaking as they were just receivers of message not contributors.

Additionally, during interviews, some lecturers admitted that they use lecturing method of teaching but with reasons as they know that the said method is discouraged because it does not give a chance to students to own the learning process. The lecturers thus, cried foul of the huge work load prescribed in the curriculum that is supposed to be covered in a period of four terms which on average each has thirteen weeks. For instance, lecturer Pale (27th April, 2022) of TTC C stated that,

“Most of the times it is lecturing method because the way the curriculum is designed, there is a lot to cover but time is so limited. So, if we give them a lot of time to discuss, then we cannot finish the syllabus. So, in most cases we tell them there is this and that. That’s lecturing and very little time is spared for group work and pair works.”

Concurring with this statement is lecturer Bak (20th April, 2022) of TTC-A who said,

“I mostly use lecturing method of teaching because there is much content to be covered. The structure of our curriculum (IPTE) was designed in a way that 50% is supposed to be methodology, 30% content and 20% assessment. However, this is not the reality in the modules because when we compute the percentages, it shows that content is taking a lions’ share in the syllabus yet on the ground they are claiming that we need to have 50% methodology. So, for us to cover the work before the students write their end of programme examinations, we employ lecture method, though we know that it is not health for the students’ learning.”

The responses are for lecturers admitting that they use lecture method, a teaching strategy which is non-participatory in nature. The method is teacher-centred and regards students as mere receivers of information and not contributors. It enforces declarative knowledge and not procedural knowledge in students. However, basing on their answers it is worthy concluding that they employ the method while knowing that it does not mediate and assist in learning.

The following extract is an example of some parts of lessons observed which were not learner-centred. In the extract, *L* stands for Lecturer, *S* for Student and *Ss* stands for Students.

Extract 2

1. L : Wrong spelling. Yes, wrong spelling. Sometimes learners can write wrong spellings. That's very true. Another type of error?
2. S : Incorrect combination of words.
3. L : Incorrect combinations of words. Like which words are sometimes incorrectly combined? Another example of a word that is mostly combined wrongly. Yes! (pointing)
4. S : In front.
5. L : In front is one of the words. So, many people write the word wrongly like this (writing on the chalkboard-*in front*). This is not supposed to be the case. It is supposed to be like this (*in front*).
6. L : So, these are some of the examples of types of errors. Let's now look at the causes of errors. Yes, possible causes of errors. We have a number of them. So, I want

a few of the causes of errors. Why do learners in the primary school make such errors? One cause is? Yes (pointing).

7. S : Attempting to use language not yet mastered.

8. L : Attempting to use of language items that have not yet been mastered. Yes, that's what some learners in the primary school, even in secondary school do. They see their teacher using a particular word, and then what they do without necessarily looking at the context in which the word has been used, they tend to use that word without knowing where it can be used. Another cause of error apart from attempting to use language not yet mastered? Yes! (Pointing)

9. S : Poor teaching of language material.

10. L : Poor teaching of language material. Very correct. Can you explain, somebody explain. Poor teaching of language material. What are we trying to...say? How does that contribute to errors that learners make at school? If the teacher is teaching language items poorly for sure, learners will not master some of them and so, what will follow is the incorrect use of the same. Another possible cause? Another possible cause? Yes, Madam (pointing).

11. S : First language interference.

12. L : First language interference. Alright? First language interference, mother tongue interference, ok? Any other

possible cause? That people still remember? Yes (pointing).

13. S : Exposure to the errors made in the community in which learners are living.

14. L : Exposure to the errors made in the community in which learners are living. For example, imitating some people in the community and if the person is attempting to an English word and that this person is making a lot of errors, learners will not see them as errors, they will copy the same and use them. On the radios, remember, so many errors are made. So, learners will take whatever is coming from the radio.

Even on TV. Am I making myself clear there?

15. Ss : Yes!

So, as can be seen from lines 5,6,8,10, and 14 of the extract, the lecturer is doing much of the talking in the lesson and the only time the students are involved is when they want to answer questions, which are also short answer kind of responses. This is because the lecturer asked short answer questions that did not demand students' use of the target language by giving lengthy descriptions or explanations. Also, the lecturer did not probe the students to justify their responses, a thing which would make the students express themselves using the target English language in the lesson which the student teachers need to master its competencies for them to ably interact with the lecturer as well as their learners in the primary schools as English teachers.

Moreover, the lecturer seemed to be in a hurry as he had been observed by-passing students response (line 10). That is, before the students gave answers to his questions, he moved on to ask yet another question. This shows that he was following an approach of teaching which was aimed at finishing the content as the lecturer appears to be explaining things for himself without engaging the students, making the lesson passive. To this effect, there was no motivation to the students for them to take part in the lesson because of the method of delivering the lesson the lecture used. Thus, in second language learning, the motivation to speak depends heavily on the teacher's choice of teaching technique to be used (Warriner & Anderson, 2016).

These results suggest that the use of participatory and lecture methods in the teaching of English by the teacher educators has both positive and negative bearing on the development of teachers' CIC respectively. In the first place, on the use of participatory methods, the findings means that the use of various interactive learning methodologies in English lessons can help learners stimulate interest and involvements during the whole lesson and feel comfortable with what they learn. This can provide an opportunity for them to speak a lot in the target language and thereby mastering classroom interaction (Lee, 2016). This is because interaction competence focuses on co-construction which is an incorporation of a range of interactional processes, including collaboration, cooperation, and coordination.

So, as Lee (2016) indicates, classroom interactions considers how individual competence is connected to, and partially constructed by both those with whom a language learner is interacting with. Thus, from the above statements, it can be deduced that IC is necessary for sustaining social interaction and relies upon the speakers' ability to use resources drawn from interactive practices (Masuda, 2011). So, the involvement of the student in the lessons is what is encouraged by professional competence theory which states that knowledge and

competences in education are developed through a continuing process of reflection on practice via varying teaching strategies. Therefore, the body of knowledge central to professional practice is never complete but is continuously refined and broadened in the context of the practitioner's concrete practice aided by more professional teaching methods (Altukhova, 2014). This therefore, assist in the development of CIC in the students which is of paramount importance in the Malawian primary schools for better learning.

Besides, the use of lecture method implies that lecturers use a strategy that cannot promote Classroom Interactional Competence in the student teachers. This is because employing such a strategy in teaching L2 prohibits students in practicing using it for their mastery and competent communication in the lessons at college and in classrooms with primary school students (Gilbert, 2018). In addition, the student teachers cannot be involved in the lesson because the method is always boring for it does not enable students to express themselves, establish a context and therefore do not promote oral fluency. In support of this is lecturer Kame (22nd April, 2022) of TTC-B who reported that,

“Employing teacher-centred type of lesson delivery does not make students learn since social interaction is limited. So, this being the case, I cannot employ it in my lessons because it is not fun, it does not allow students to learn from classmates through extended learner turns, does not give us chances to give feedback, and does not permit us to learn more about the students’ personalities and interests.”

This therefore means that employing such a strategy in English lessons does not support the students’ development of CIC since the students are reduced to just listeners and the lecturers do much of the talking. Therefore, the concept of teacher educators doing all of the talking in

classrooms is in direct contrast to the philosophy that learning is primarily a social activity (Dewey, 1963). ECOSTAR (2017) notes that the teacher is the one reading, writing, thinking, speaking, and therefore, the one who is learning and we need to shift the burden of learning from teachers' shoulders to students. Alexandra (2013) agrees that "there needs to be a gradual release of responsibility for control of the discussion from teacher to students and it should be the student who should be doing most of the work."

4.3.1.2. Students' Reaction to the Strategies used by Lecturers in English lessons

Basing on the teaching strategies used by most lecturers that were observed and the interview data from the lecturers and student teachers, it was noted that students' involvement in the lessons was affected both positively and negatively.

(a) Active Participation in the Lessons

The study revealed that students participated actively in the lessons when hands-on strategies were employed. Thus, methods like; group work discussion, think-pair share and group presentations made students to contribute a lot for the success of their learning. So, both interviews with the lecturers and students and lesson observation confirmed this. During lessons, the students in most of the classes were actively taking part in the lessons that used participatory methods. They could talk to each other as well as answering questions from the lecturer. Some students could as well ask questions to their lecturers and at times, to their fellow students especially in lessons where hot seat and author's chair strategies were used. On the other hand, during the interviews, when asked on how the students responded to the strategies the lecturers employed in the English lessons, a TTC- D lecturer Dupi (13th May, 2022), emphasized that, "*The students are very familiar with the strategies we use and they respond*

to them positively. When we tell them, “can you discuss this”, they right away engage themselves in the discussion and the lessons become very fruitful because they participate fully.”

Concurring with this, was lecturer Kame of TTC- B (22nd April, 22) who said,

“They respond positively to the said teaching strategies and they make them participate actively in the lessons and they also use them when teaching at the demonstration school. So, the same strategies we use in the classroom, they also use them in the primary schools and they do better than us because they combine so many strategies from us.”

Another lecturer from TTC- A, stated that, *“The students respond positively to the strategies and they enjoy. The enjoyment comes in since they are allowed to contribute to the lesson through active participation. This makes the lessons to move smoothly”* (Bak, 20th April, 2022). On the same, the students had their opinions. One of them at TTC-D (FGD, 14th May, 2022) said, *“I respond by taking part in the lessons when our lecturer involve us. I take part in group activities such as revolutionary, group discussion and presentations. Another student at TTC-C was recorded saying that, “When the lecturer ask us to do a certain task in groups, I make sure that I have spoken and contribute my ideas. During presentations, I make sure to volunteer and make the presentation”* (FDG, 28th April, 2022).

The expressions by the respondents shows that hands-on teaching methods employed by lecturers in English lessons call for active involvement of students in the lessons. That is, students are forced to take part in the lessons only when participatory teaching methods are used.

(b) Passive learning in English Lessons

Under this sub theme, the study captured data that shows that there was passive learning in the lessons because of either over use of one or two teaching methods or the use of lecture method. As already indicated in this report, some lecturers used non-participatory teaching strategies whereby, students were not involved in the processes of teaching and learning. During lesson observation, in some classes, lessons could end with only few students talking in lessons. Students thus, could not compete for classroom turn taking as such opportunity was not provided by their lecturers. They were just information receivers and not contributors. Their input in the lesson was very minimal and they could hardly be seen raising their hands because questions from their teachers that could demand such action were also scarce in such English lessons.

The students were just writing or just being listening to the lecturer who was busy speaking to them without giving them a turn. In such classes, the students could only talk when answering questions which were also short answer questions that did not demand long answers as given in Extract 5 in the previous sub theme. This is against the need for interactional competence because such classes cannot enforce it as the professional competence itself has not been given room for its manifestation (Brooks and Brooks, 2013).

The above data from classroom observation is supported by the interviews with the lecturers. For instance, lecturer Bak (22nd April, 2022) of TTC-B in responding to the question on how the students react to lecturing method he mostly use as already alluded to in this report, he stated that, *“The students are used to (the lecture method). When you lecture them you ask questions and they answer though not actively. We just proceed teaching them because if we give them a lot of time to use participatory methods, then much work cannot be covered.”*

Also, lecturer Maka (20th April, 2022) of TTC-A responded to the same question by saying,

“They respond positively to the strategies but they need to be varied (the strategies) for them to be involved in the lesson. This is because if you use the same method like group work, they become bored just like when we use lecture method and, in the end, they will actively participate in the lessons. So, what we do is using group work but in a different form in order to maximise interaction.”

Therefore, the above quotes confirms the over use of one participatory teaching method and lecturer method, which is a teacher centred kind of teaching strategy. The quotes have also highlighted the negative effects of the lecturers’ practices on the student teachers in the learning of English which is Malawi’s Second language used as an official language.

As observed by Selik (2016), the active and passive reaction by the student teachers to the strategies employed by English lecturers implies that the strategies are interactive or not in nature so much so that students are fully involved in the lessons or not. This is because in lessons where participatory strategies are used, students actively participate and where the strategies are not participatory, there is passive learning since there is nothing to demand students’ active reaction in the lesson apart from being listeners and writers (Nurul, 2012). Therefore, for maximum interaction, students’ needs to be given opportunities to use the target language meaningfully and purposefully in various context through highly interactive teaching strategies. So, the duty of the lecturers is to give students tasks that will require student to use the target language for meaningful communication in the classroom and beyond.

According to Mulder (2014), competent teachers use multiple teaching and learning strategies to help them engage students in active learning opportunities that promote the development of

critical thinking, problem solving, and performance capabilities while helping them assume responsibility for identifying and using learning resources. This way will help the student teachers to talk in the lessons and be active and thereby increasing chances of being competent in classroom interaction. This is in line with what Masuda (2011) alludes by “if language learners are assisted and have the opportunity to speak repeatedly with more experienced speakers in similar contexts, these language learners will increase their IC. Thus, teachers are challenged to find approaches in the classroom which prove to be efficient in helping students have adequate understanding after each task or lesson set. So, this being the case, the main assumption of competence based education is that live classrooms are aided by practitioner’s use of various teaching strategies and activities (Barannikov, 2019).

All these points to the fact that using interactive teaching and learning strategies in English lessons results in active participation by the students. The active involvement leads to the use of the target language which in the end make them stand out as competent teachers in classroom interaction. Whereas, as argued by Alexandra (2013), employing teacher-centred kind of teaching yields passive learning as chances to practice the target language are not provided by the class managers. Therefore, student teachers’ CIC can never be promoted leading into the persistent inactive learning in the Malawian schools which in turn, will compromise effort the National Education Sector Investment Plan 2020-2030 to have educated citizens in Malawi (Malawi Government, 2017).

4.3.1.3 IPTE Programme's Capability of Supporting Student Teachers'

Development of Classroom Interactional Competence

(a) IPTE Programme's Knowledge Construction on CIC

The data that was gathered under this theme pointed at the IPTE programme's construction of knowledge on CIC on the student teachers. This is in relation to the content of the IPTE curriculum and what activities and strategies the lecturers use in English classrooms. It was discovered in the study through lesson observation, interviews and document analysis that the following factors had a bearing on student teachers knowledge about Classroom Interactional Competence. The factors are; use of target language, teaching and learning environment and influence of teacher education philosophy.

(i) Use of Target language

The study revealed through lesson observations that some lecturers and student teachers were using vernacular language (Chichewa), which is not the target language the students needed to master during the process of teaching and learning. On one hand, the lecturers were seen speaking Chichewa when giving instructions, explaining concepts or during demonstrations. On the other hand, student teachers could respond to the lecturers' questions and give comments in the same language. Moreover, the students could also discuss the work given to them by the lecturers in Chichewa and only spoke English during presentations. This was happening despite the fact that the lecturers were supervising the students' work and never, at any point, discouraged them from using their mother tongue. So, the students were learning English language and how to teach it in primary schools but they did not use it or communicate in it.

The following lesson extracts are examples of parts of English lessons done mostly in Chichewa. As Richardson (2016) argues that “what we can do with discourse analysis is more than providing adequate descriptions of text and context. That is, we expect more from discourse analysis as the study of real language use, by real speakers in real situations, than we expect from the study of abstract syntax or formal semantics.” The participants in each extract are identified by their initials: L for the *lecturer*, S for *students* in the English speaking class.

Extract 3

1. L : *Akhala akuganizira* about what will happen next, *tikumvana koma?*
2. S : Yes!
3. L : *Ee, akhala akuganizira nkumadzifunsa kut chingachitike ndi chani. Kuwauza ana kuti ndimayenda pamsewu ndinakumana ndi njoka zikudyana. Mwayimva bwinobwino pamenepo nkhaniyo?*
4. S : *Eeeee*
5. L : Just imagine *njoka zikutani?*
6. S : *Zikudyana* (laughs)
7. L : (Laughter). *Zikudyana njoka. Kaya nzikuluzikulu kaya nzing'onozing'ono, koma njokazo zikudyana. Now with that story, you give them time to think kuti, 'aaa, ndiye zimadyana? Eee?*
8. S : *Eya, koma zoopsatu sir.* (laughter).
11. L : *Eya, ndiye kumadzifunsa kuti, njoka zimadyana, ndiye panatsala chani apa?*
12. S : (Laughter).

Extract 4

1. S : What about for future career?
2. L : *Akunena za future careers. Imeneyo nnaisungiranso nde mwandidyeransotu (laughs).*
3. S : (laughter).
4. L : For future careers, *tatipatsani chitsanzo?*
5. S : Lawyers, *umafuna kuwerenga kwambiri.*
6. L : *Amafuna kuwerenga kwambiri inde, apart from that, tiyeni, zili common..*
7. S : Journalists, *nawonso amafuna akhale owerenga kwambiri.*
8. L : Journalist, radio presenters, *tikumvana bwinobwino koma? Zikulowa m'mutumo?*
9. S : Yes!
10. L : They will all depend.....*eeee, mwati bwanji pamenepo?*
11. S : Teachers, even us teachers!
12. L : Even you teachers, *nanunso mumafuna kuwerenga kwambiri?*
13. S : Yes!
14. L : Oh, *sindimadziwa ine nthawi yonseyi...*
15. S : (laughter).
16. L : *Ndithu, sindimadziwa ine mwandikumbutsa ndinu. oky, now, let us look at these ones now. Tikunena kuti text books in primary schools are insufficient, tili limodzi koma?*
17. S : Yes sir!
18. L : *Munali kwina kwake pa sukulu pamavuta mabuku eti?*
19. S : Yes.

So, as can be seen in the lesson extracts 2 and 3, the lecturers used vernacular language to initiate the talk in the English lessons and students followed suit by responding in the same language making most of the classroom business to be done in Chichewa. There is much interaction in the lessons between the lecturers and the students but the interactants are not mostly using the target language which the other party (student teachers) need most to master and be competent in using it with their learners in the primary schools.

From the findings, engaging students in a lesson without the force of the use of target language to the students has negative impacts on the students' mastery of classroom interaction which they will need most in the classes they will manage once deployed in primary schools. According to DBEM (2013), teachers may demonstrate CIC through their ability to use language which is both convergent to the pedagogic goal of the moment and which is appropriate to the learners. This means that language use and pedagogic goals must work together. Therefore, any evidence of CIC must therefore demonstrate that interlocutors are using discourse which is both appropriate to specific pedagogic goals within a social interactive context. Hence, this will conform to the principles of professional competence which agrees with the views that interaction as an educational tool that mediate and assist in learning.

According to Franchi (2016), interaction also allows learners to be kinaesthetic in practicing what they have learned and to experience what they are learning while they are engaged in constructing knowledge. This therefore, helps student teachers to truly understand what CIC is and use such knowledge in their future classes. That way, there will be no passive learning in the primary schools as it is the case now.

These results suggest that the IPTE programme support in the development of teachers' CIC but there are gaps that need to be filled. Firstly, the use of vernacular language in larger parts of English lessons by the lecturers and students may be hard to promote the development of teachers' CIC. Though mother tongue (L1) is sometimes used as a linguistic resource aimed at making learners understand some concepts and keep the lesson flowing, it does not mean that almost the whole English lesson should be in vernacular language (Franchi, 2016). This is because it is the target language which the students should master. Thus, English is the target language because it is the one used in the teaching and learning of all the subjects except for Chichewa. So, according to Hussain (2018), what English lecturers do by not using it in the lessons hinder their students from mastery of the same. As a result, the students will be teaching English subject in vernacular languages at their disposal wherever they will be after the programme, hence, no classroom interaction in the target language and therefore, affect the learning negatively.

As argued by Potter (2015), in English lesson, students should have maximum exposure to the target language through encounter with a variety of spoken and written texts, allowing for incidental acquisition of English. Consequently, teachers should provide learners with opportunities to acquire vocabulary and other language features incidentally by speaking in the classroom and by providing a language rich-environment with a variety of verbal and visual stimuli. In agreement to this is DBEM (2013), who suggests that one of the purposes of learning language is for communication. So, there are some ways for keeping students' opportunities to the exposure of the target language. That is, the teacher should speak English for the majority of the time so that the students are constantly exposed to how English sounds and what it feels like" (Richardson, 2016). To this effect, lecturers should use English language in the lessons

and enforce the use of the same to the students in their group discussions because this is where interaction is mostly done due to the interactive activities provided to them by the lecturers.

Moreover, students should speak whatever English that comes their way and through such practice and corrections by their peers and the lecturers, they will become conversant with it.

As argued by Çelik (2016), professional competence in language teaching requires that teachers use the language designed for students learning. This is based on the reason that teaching is closely associated with the quality of the language used to help students learn. Therefore, students' mastery of both the oral and written of that language is essential a cultural heritage for the students. Then, the teachers' personal competency resides in their ability to do this. This kind of help by the teacher will then make them interact with their peers as well as the lecturer and if the trend continues, the student teachers may gain knowledge of classroom interaction and therefore, help to revive the classroom interaction in the primary schools which is almost dead now.

(ii) Teaching and Learning Environment

The study, through lesson observation discovered a number of issues in relation to teaching and learning environment that would affect classroom interaction either positively or negatively. So, in the study, it was found out that some classrooms were well organised with pre-arranged groups, good lecturer-student relationship and general student positive discipline throughout the lessons. During some lessons especially in which students were highly involved, there was interaction with printed teaching materials such as books and drawings. These made the lessons to be learner centred and therefore, enhanced classroom interaction between the lecturers and the students since there was active participation and engagement by the students.

Additionally, there was no any record of unnecessary noise or movement during the teaching and learning process in most of the classes the observer visited. Generally, these aforementioned aspects created room for smooth lessons and good communication between the lecturers and the student teachers.

Besides, there was verbal scaffolding witnessed in most of the lessons observed. The lecturers could be seen correcting students' pronunciations by repeating students' responses, slowing speech, increasing pauses among others. This was good because at some points, it assisted students to reach their learning potential in using the target language, which in this case is English. Below is an extract of verbal scaffolding witnessed in one of the lessons that was observed and video recorded. In the extract, L stands for *Lecturer*, S for *student* and Ss stands for *Students*. Students' names are represented by pseudo names, *Sekawo (female)* and *Makani (male)*.

Extract 5

1. L : Yes! And I said we have monothongs and dipthongs. What are monothongs? What are dipthongs? Remember, we are just revising this. Yes Makani. Define the two terms.
2. S : Monothongs are vowels which have two distinct sounds while dipthongs are vowels which have one distinct sound.
3. L : Thank you, but is he right?
4. Ss : No! (laughter)
5. L : can someone who knows assist him?Yes (pointing).
6. S : Monothongs are vowels which have one distinct sound whereas dipthongs are vowels with two distinct sounds.

7. L : Thank you. Monothongs are vowels which have one distinct sound whereas diphthongs are vowels with two distinct sounds. Makani, what has Sekawo said?
8. S : Monothongs are vowels which have one distinct sound whereas diphthongs are vowel with two distinct sounds.
9. L : Good! Monothongs are vowels, not vowel, which have one distinct sound whereas diphthongs are those with two distinct sounds.

In the above extract, the lecturer in lines 7 and 9 has repeated the students' responses as a matter of confirming to the respondents the correctness of their answers and at the same time making sure that the first student (in line 2), who had difficulties in defining (or differentiating between) monothongs and diphthongs should master the concepts. Additionally, the student who failed to define the terms and made wrong pronunciation (line 8) had been helped by a fellow student and the lecturer who are more knowledgeable than him.

However, the classrooms observed fell short of visual scaffolding in form of power points, videos and simulations that would support and enrich the students' imagination in the teaching of the second language. The teacher educators heavily relied on text books as teaching resources. As posited by Richardson (2016), visual representations enhance the communicative competence of the students as they talk about what they see and explain their understanding in their own words giving their own perspectives. Moreover, the power point also activate the right hemisphere of the brain, which allows students to interpret, expound and engage with what they are seeing. This consequently gives room to the students for their language use and interaction with the lecturers as well as their peers.

In the findings, good classroom management, use of verbal scaffolding by the lecturers and positive classroom discipline by the students shows that the teaching and learning environment was good for promoting CIC in students. On the contrary, the absence of visual scaffolding in the classrooms means that to some extent, the learning environment was not conducive for the learning of English language (Hussain, 2018). Therefore, in such situation, CIC cannot be enhanced in the student teachers. As contended by Çelik (2016), the pre-arrangement of the groups in some classes and the good lecturer-student relationships makes the teaching and learning environment for both the lecturers and students to be conducive and therefore allowed for classroom interaction to manifest itself in such classrooms. This is agreed by Alake-Tuenter et al. (2018), who shares that some competences are best developed in the students via conducive teaching and learning environment where all necessary teaching and learning protocols are strictly observed.

Additionally, DBEM (2013) advances that classroom interaction is better boosted by creating a safe, inviting and inspiring classroom environment for effective teaching and learning". Thus, the appearance and physical layout of the classroom speaks volumes about the teacher's teaching style, level of organisation and the values he or she holds. This, according to Kim (2020), is critical to learning as it incorporates a variety of stimuli and awakens the curiosity of learners and encourages them to take risks with their learning and behave accordingly in respect to the classroom rules and regulations. In compliance with this statement is Maxwell (2018), who contends that the classroom seating should be organised in a way that learners can face each other and allow them to feel that they are on the same level. Actually, Hussain (2018), affirms that learners seated in groups become skilled at cooperating with others, and express their own opinions, ideas, and feelings guided by the teacher and it promotes classroom

discipline. They also learn how to solve language problems in a systematic way and decide what language to use in the different situations that their teacher presents in the class.

On the use of verbal scaffolding, it reveals that learning had taken place and knowledge had been gained by the student(s) involved in the scaffolding process. As indicated by Kim (2020), such an approach assists students to reach their learning potential in using the target language, which in this case is English. Additionally, as posited by (Hussain, 2018), verbal scaffolding done in the form of thinking aloud, providing correct punctuation by repeating learner's responses, slowing speech, speaking in phrases, and increasing pauses aids student with language input. Therefore, it is good to use scaffolding in English lessons for students to gain and use the target language needed for classroom interaction. Wesselink and Wals (2011) agree to this and points out that one way to prepare teachers to incorporate competency based teaching in their classrooms is to incorporate it into teacher education courses.

Additionally, Hussain (2018), states that when competence based pedagogy is at play, and becomes part of the classroom dynamics, classrooms become active places with lecturers willing to help students in becoming competent in the target competence. Therefore, student teachers need to experience this for themselves for them to be competent in creating this type of learning environment in their own classrooms (Oonk et al., 2011). This way, there will be classroom interaction in the primary schools in which these students will be teaching because they will become competent in it.

On the missing of visual scaffolding in the classrooms, it means that the learning environment was not health for language learning and therefore making it hard for it to develop CIC in the student teachers. This argument is supported by Goddard and Evans (2018) who state that

power point, posters and pictures enhance the communicative competence of the students as they talk about what they see and explain their understanding in their own words giving their own perspectives. Moreover, the poster also allows learners to focus on the theme chosen for the lesson therefore, allowing them to learn at their own pace and bring different views to the lesson, hence, giving room to the students for their language use and interaction with the lectures as well as their peers.

On the same, as advanced by Mulder et al. (2009), the professional competence theory under competence-based education calls for practitioners to take their time in making sure that their classrooms have what are known as “practicing enforcers.” Examples of such are power points, textbooks, posters, drawings, pictures, among others. So, basing on their argument, the mentioned items should be attractive so as to enforce interest among students to interact with them. Thus, visual scaffolding is necessary in English classroom for the alluded benefits (Nurul, 2012). This in the end will make the student to copy the same and implement them in their primary schools and contribute to the much needed classroom interaction in the lessons.

(iii) Influence of Teacher Education Philosophy

Through interviews with lecturers and students and analysis of teaching content across the Malawian IPTE English curriculum, the study discovered that some classroom behaviours and decisions by both the student teachers and the lecturers were driven by what is called “Teacher Education Philosophy” which guided the process and implementation of the curriculum. The said philosophy states: *"To produce a reflective, autonomous lifelong learning teacher, able to display moral values and embrace learners' diversity"* (Malawi Institute of Education, 2013. p.10). So, as already reported in the previous sub themes, the interactive activities and strategies are falling short in the IPTE curriculum and that some lecturers reported that they resort to use

critical thinking teaching methods and adopted activities from Expressive arts department. This is done in an effort to make their lessons interactive enough for the better learning of the student teachers as stipulated in the IPTE programme English curriculum which states,

“The purpose of primary teacher education is to produce and continually develop competent and responsive teachers who effectively deliver quality education to all learners under prevailing conditions and demands in primary schools and promote their desire for life-long learning. IPTE endeavours to educate teachers in sufficient numbers, continually develop their professionalism so that they are able to effectively and efficiently deliver quality and relevant education to primary school learners” (MIE, 2013).

Therefore, interactive activities such as fish bowl, incident process and buzz session and critical thinking methods like jig-saw, revolutionary method, hot seat and author’s chair were observed being used by other lecturers in the English lessons and were also mentioned during interviews with lecturers and students. For instance, a student at TTC-C (FGD, 27th April, 2022) said, *“Most of the times, we are told to search on the internet some teaching and learning strategies that may suit our activities in different topics.”* Another student at TTC-B (FGD, 22nd April, 2022) reported that, *“But currently, many lecturers prefer to use what we call critical thinking strategies. These are found on the internet. We are also encouraged to master and use them when teaching our learners. However, the problem with us, students is data bundle for internet accessibility”*.

On her part, a lecturer at TTC-A, lecturer Maka (20th April, 2022) stated that,

“With the coming in of the ICT, we need to improve in one way or the other. We cannot sit down and complain that there are insufficient teaching strategies in

the modules when we have internet at our disposal. We use the internet to search for better strategies and even activities for our lessons.”

Another lecturer at TTC-C, was on record saying, “*Sometimes, we search some of the strategies on the internet, proving that they are not enough. Because had it been that they are enough, we wouldn’t other ourselves to search others on the internet (Zani, 27th April, 2022).*” The responses by the lecturers and student teachers confirm their effort in finding the best interactive teaching strategies on the internet as a complement to those few available in the curriculum. Thus, though they sometimes have challenges with internet accessibility due to lack of such services in the colleges, with their own money, they try to access it via their gadgets.

Additionally, it is mentioned often times in the English curriculum that lecturers and students should use Information Communication Technologies (ICT) tools such as computers and smart phones to easily access additional credible internet resources such as teaching materials and methods on particular topics in English. Thus, the production of the reflective, autonomous lifelong learning teacher as stated in the teacher education philosophy is made possible with the engagement of students in being responsible for their own learning. This is done by exposing them to critical thinking teaching methods and engaged in searching relevant and useful information on the internet and use as required by the task given by their lecturers.

Furthermore, the part of the teacher education philosophy which says, “*...able to display moral values*”, seems to have helped the student teachers in maintaining positive discipline in the classrooms during the English lessons as reported in the preceding sub theme. This resulted

into successful lessons and where interactive activities and strategies were employed, there was active participation by the student teachers.

Basing on the findings, the general behaviour of the lecturers and students and the contents of the IPTE English curriculum which was designed under the guidance of teacher education philosophy revealed in the study show that the IPTE programme to some extent, support teachers' development of CIC and to a lesser extent not. To begin with, the short fall of the interactive teaching and learning activities and strategies in all the English modules (whole curriculum) is well covered by the use of critical thinking interactive strategies by the lecturers.

In addition, the lecturers together with students are engaged in searching for additional interactive activities and strategies to be used in English lessons in college and primary schools respectively. What this entails is that the curriculum through its founding philosophy and the mission statement all encourage the lecturers and students to be hard workers in pursuit of fulfilling their respective roles and responsibilities in the process of teaching and learning of English, which is a second language. This helps them to be learning each passing day and therefore, improve their skills. In line with this assertion is Papert and Harel (2019) who propose that two fundamental processes that help teachers improve their skills are reflection and collaboration. Teachers need to use reflection to evaluate and inform their practices and use collaboration to learn to negotiate effective interactions among themselves and the students. (Askill-Williams et al., 2019).

Furthermore, Israel Ministry of Education (2018), states that in initial teacher education, the intent is to help teachers to develop quality and effectiveness in their practice and in their roles as teachers more generally. Besides, it is also intended to help the student teachers in subject

leadership, knowledge and equitable delivery of the same. In other words, the curriculum aims at producing teachers who are very knowledgeable and independent in thinking so as to solve problems they encounter in teaching of English without waiting for others. Nurul (2012), concurs with this and states that any studies of the curriculum for Initial Teacher Education may therefore need to pay attention to the skills and knowledge of those who deliver it. Moreover, the curriculum for Initial Teacher Education must deal with these interacting components.

Additionally, Mulder (2017), indicates that, Initial Teacher Education programme is most competent-based and successful by including in the curriculum, subject knowledge content and pedagogical skills and knowledge, and encompass ideas and practices relating to these overlapping layers of knowledge and understanding. All these will help English lecturers to prepare for and approach English lessons in an interactive manner and therefore making students acquire the competencies displayed by the lecturers and then do the same with their learners in the primary schools. In this way, there will be no passive learning in the schools as both teachers and learners will be active in the teaching and learning processes.

According to Ahuja (2019), professional competence theory stresses that the central figures in the educational process are teachers. This then follows that the success of training and education depends on their preparation, erudition and performance quality. This therefore, means that teachers as professionals need a wide range of competencies in order to face the complex demands of today's world for them to be able to perform in the classrooms. So, their training programme need to encourage social interaction for them to learn creative methods to solve complex problems. In line with these views, Jonassen (2017), contends that teachers, like students, can effectively improve their learning skills by frequently discussing the dynamics of

their classroom with peers experiencing the same challenges. The author adds that good teachers are highly motivated to improve the content of their curricula for their students. Moreover, they take time to communicate with others when they see the value in the communication and they will promptly commit to educational activities they think will help them improve their instruction (Jonassen, (2017).

(c) Insufficient Interactive Content across the IPTE English Curriculum

However, the study noticed that some other key teaching strategies that aid classroom interaction which were missing in the modules were mentioned and used by some lecturers in their lessons. Thus, interaction strategies like, hot seat, authors chair, revolutionary, walk and talk around, pens in the middle, among other good interactive strategies are not in all the four modules and across the curriculum but were used by some lecturers. Nevertheless, when asked if they felt that the strategies in the modules are enough to promote CIC in the student teachers, some lecturers registered their dissatisfaction and indicated that in order to maximise classroom interaction between them and the student teachers, they used critical thinking teaching strategies. For instance, lecturer Bak (20th April, 2022) of TTC-A said,

“No, the strategies are not enough though some of them are effective. However, we also use what we call critical thinking strategies like jig-saw, discussion web and one stay one stray. So these are the ones that assist us to deliver our content and also for the students to learn effectively in an interactive manner.”

Another lecturer at TTC-B, lecturer Sozi (22nd April, 2022), reported that,

“The teaching methods in the modules across the topics are not enough but those available are effective. Therefore, because of this, people are coming up with new methods. For example, am looking at Expressive Arts as a source of

teaching methods not as a learning area because we borrow some concepts from it like traditional songs and use them in English lessons....”

On the same, lecturer of TTC-D indicated that,

“The interactive teaching methods in the curriculum are not enough, but the good thing is that currently, most of the lecturers have resorted to what we call critical thinking strategies. This is done to complement the list of interactive strategies in the curriculum” (Fesna, 13th May, 2022).

The responses above are lecturers’ sentiments confirming that the interactive teaching strategies in the IPTE English curriculum are insufficient but those available are very effective. So, to close the gap, the lecturers sometimes opt for others on the internet which are not stipulated in the curriculum documents. They call such kind of interactive strategies “critical thinking strategies.”

(d) IPTE Programme’s Stand on the Development of Teachers’ CIC

The study, through face to face interviews with lecturers and student teachers gathered information that showed a mix bag of responses on whether the IPTE programme develops CIC or not. So, with some lectures and students claiming that the said programme develops CIC, others presented contrary views that the programme does not develop teachers’ CIC. In addition, there were others whose views were neutral in nature as they said that the programme on one hand develops teachers’ CIC while on the other hand it does not. For example, lecturer of TTC-C said, *“Yes, it develops teachers CIC. This is because it encourages students to actively take part since in the modules, there are some strategies that forces students to take part in the lesson.”* (Zani, 27th April, 2022). On the same, at TTC D, lecturer Dupi indicated

that, *“No, it does not promote CIC development since the modules have some topics that do not contain interaction activities and teaching methodologies. So, variation of activities and strategies during English lessons by lecturers is limited”* (13th May, 2022).

On the similar question, student teacher at TTC-B said, *“No, it does not promote teachers CIC because when lecturers give us a task to search for information in the modules, we find that the material that is there is just shallow and it makes us to search for the same on the internet* (FDG, 22nd April, 2022). Additionally, student teacher at TTC-A had this to say, *“Yes, it develops, and no, it does not. I am saying this because most of the activities in the modules and those we do here are both participatory and non-participatory ones. Sometimes, our lecturers use teacher centered teaching methods, limiting interaction with him and among ourselves”* (FDG, 20th April, 2022).

The views above by both lecturers and student teachers shows that the IPTE programme in Malawian TTCs lacks the capacity to fully develop teachers’ Classroom Interactional Competence. This is because the curriculum has a shortfall in interactive content and that some lecturers employ non-participatory teaching methods during English lessons.

The shortfall in interactive content in the IPTE English curriculum limit teacher educators’ choice of appropriate teaching activities and methodologies to suit different topics. According to Mulder (2017), in teacher education programs, the curriculum should not limit lecturers to prepare activities that build students’ confidence during their daily classroom interaction. In other words, the curriculum is the basis for lecturers’ professional guidance and knowledge for students’ development of CIC. Supporting the argument is Hussain (2018), who indicates that it is the teacher’s task to create opportunities for this development by taking into account the

different types of interactive activities and methodologies in different areas of the curriculum. On the same, as noted by Turner (2020), competence based pedagogy puts emphasis on a teacher education curriculum with student involving teaching strategies and classroom activities which allow the students to depend on themselves and think critically. This leads to learning by doing for the sake of achieving the learning outcomes and in the process promotes Classroom Interactional Competence in them.

Further, Mulder (2017), posits that competence-based teaching activities and strategies integrate goals and status of the subjects being taught. That is, the status of English as a second language and an official language for wider communication and the goals of teaching it for people's communication may be realised only if the curriculum has enough and effective interactive activities and strategies that will reinforce the target competencies, which one of them is interactional competence. Hence, when such activities and strategies are used by the teachers, students should actively take part for their practice of the target language. Consequently, that will result in producing teachers who are competent in classroom interaction and thereby making a difference with the current status quo in the primary schools in as far as classroom interaction is concerned.

4.4. Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented the findings and discussion of the research findings in relation to the objectives of the study as outlined in Chapter One. The discussion and analysis has been made in line with the Professional competence theory that guided this study. It has also compared the findings of other researchers on related issues to the current study. The findings are in two categories; specific and general. The specific finding have looked at interactive content of the Malawian IPTE programme English Curriculum while the general findings have

provided information on what transpired in the four Teacher Training Colleges pertaining to the issues that were explored. The next chapter presents the summary of findings, conclusion and implication.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Chapter Overview

This final chapter presents a summary of the main findings of the study, general conclusion of the study and how the theoretical frame work has assisted to structure the study. The chapter also presents recommendations of the researcher and gives some suggestions to which further research should be concentrated on.

5.2 Summary of Major Findings

The aim of the study was to explore the extent to which the Initial Primary Teacher Education programme in Malawi develops teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence in TTCs. It used Professional Competence theoretical framework as a lens for perceiving the problem on the ground. The specific questions that the study aimed to answer were: How does the Initial primary teacher educators in Malawian Teacher Training Colleges understand Classroom Interactional Competence? How does the Initial Primary Teacher Education programme support the development of teachers' Classroom Interaction Competence? What strategies do initial primary teacher educators employ to promote the development of teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence when teaching English?

Generally, the study's argument is that the TTC English lecturers and IPTE English programme curriculum are falling short of knowledge and a better understanding of CIC and interactive content respectively. This section gives the major findings of the study. The summary of findings have been presented in the order which the presentation and discussion of findings in chapter four were done.

5.2.1 *How does the Initial primary teacher educators in Malawian Teacher Training Colleges understand Classroom Interactional Competence?*

The study has revealed that though the English teacher educators were unable to describe Classroom Interactional Competence properly, some of them managed to come up with the right activities that can promote CIC in the student teachers. This was evidenced with their display of different CIC activities that pointed to their role and responsibilities of being facilitators and as guides (trainers) to students in an interactive English classroom. Thus, they were general supervisors of learning, who coordinated the activities in a way that ensured clear lesson development. They also acted as trainers (teachers) and organized and appraised the use of English language by correcting students' mistakes.

Additionally, they used non-verbal communication in the lessons and varied the interactive activities and methodologies. This made them able to make student teachers participate actively in the lessons since they were given various opportunities to speak in the lessons. Moreover, the lecturers described correctly the advantages of CIC such as instilling speaking confidence in the student teachers as well as helping the teacher educators to effectively give feedback to the students.

However, the study on the other hand, established that some lecturers and student teachers were using vernacular language (Chichewa) in English lessons. This was not the target language the students needed to master during the process of teaching and learning and beyond. This therefore means that the lessons lacked an element of full verbal scaffolding because that could only be done if the lessons were in target language. So, with that revelation, it shows that some teacher educators do not fully understand what Classroom Interactional Competence is.

5.2.2 *How does the Initial primary teacher education programme support the Development of teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence?*

The study, through IPTE English curriculum document analysis and interviews with lecturers and student teachers, discovered that there are interaction activities and teaching strategies outlined in the IPTE English curriculum that would assist student teachers in developing CIC if properly used by the lecturers in lessons. However, some key interactive activities and strategies were deemed not available across the whole English curriculum. Thus, the IPTE English curriculum has insufficient interactive content that can help student teachers to fully develop Classroom Interactional Competence.

5.2.3 *What strategies do initial primary teacher educators employ to promote the development of teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence when teaching English?*

Lastly, the study discovered two categories of teaching methods that the lecturers used in the English lessons. The teacher educators thus, used participatory and non-participatory teaching methods. Thus, while some lecturers involved their students in the lessons via various strategies and activities, others did not. They used teacher-centred teaching approach. This influenced the way learning was conducted. With participatory teaching strategies making student teachers actively socialising and talking using English in the classroom while lecturing method prohibiting student teachers from interacting with each other and the lecturers and therefore, remaining passive in the lessons, no practice of the much needed target language, English.

Additionally, the study found that some lecturers were using vernacular language in English lessons, a practice which did not allow students to interact in the target language, English for their development of Classroom Interactional Competence. However, the teaching

environment was discovered to be supportive in enhancing classroom interaction. This was for the reason that some classrooms were well organised with pre-arranged groups, good lecturer-student relationship and general student positive discipline throughout the lessons. Besides, there was verbal scaffolding witnessed in most of the lessons observed. The lecturers thus, made effort to correct students' pronunciations in various ways such as repeating students' responses, slowing speech, increasing pauses among others. Nevertheless, the classroom lessons were not conducive enough for the teaching and learning of English because they had no visual scaffolding in form of power points, videos and simulations.

The study also discovered that interactive content in the IPTE English curriculum is not enough as there are gaps in both interactive activities as well as interactive strategies. This forced lecturers and student teachers, to search for more activities and strategies on the internet or within their local environment in an effort to make their lessons more interactive. Thus, they had no wider choice of the interactive content and they are forced to repeat the same or using non-participatory teaching methods.

Moreover, the study established that the teacher education philosophy factored in the curriculum documents helped both the teacher educators and the student teachers to be innovative, positive disciplined and inquisitive towards the teaching of English as a L2.

Lastly, the study established that the shortfalls in both the IPTE curriculum in interactive content and lecturers' interactive pedagogical competencies renders the Malawian Initial Primary Teacher education Programme to partially develop teachers' CIC.

5.4 Conclusion

For active learning to manifest itself in Malawian primary school classrooms, the Initial Primary Teacher Education programme, which trains teachers for the schools need to fully develop teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence. Though the IPTE programme, through English lecturers and the IPTE English curriculum strive to mould student teachers to become competent ones in Classroom Interactional Competence in their lessons, the study has established that the lecturers lack enough knowledge and understanding of CIC and the interactivities and interaction strategies factored in the curriculum are insufficient enough to support the development of teachers' CIC. Therefore, the Malawian IPTE programme partially develops teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence.

5.5 Implications

Based on the major findings and conclusions, the study recommends that the Ministry of Education and other relevant stakeholders should provide IPTE programme English teacher educators and curriculum material developers with refresher courses on the interactive teaching of English in TTC classrooms. The Ministry should also conduct frequent supervision and inspection for English teacher educators to appreciate what is happening in the TTCs pertaining to the teaching and learning of English. It should likewise ensure that free internet services are available in all the public TTCs for lecturers' and students' easy access of up to date information regarding the teaching of English in the colleges and primary schools. Moreover, The Ministry of Education, through the Malawi Institute of Education should consider reviewing the IPTE English curriculum with special emphasis on fusing in additional up to date interactive activities and interactive teaching strategies. Lastly, the TTCs with the help of other concerned stakeholders should establish Communities of Practice (CP) where English teacher

educators can collaborate with colleagues and share experiences of English teaching within the TTCs.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Study

Firstly, the study has established that teacher educators have little knowledge and understanding of Classroom Interactional Competence. However, the study has not disclosed the reasons for their little knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon. It is therefore proper to explore on how the programmes in institutions that train TTC English lecturers develop teacher educators' Classroom Interactional Competence. This will help the institutions to review their training approaches.

In addition, this study has found out that there are some areas in the IPTE programme that hinder the development of teachers' CIC in the public TTCs. Since the study was done in public TTCs only, a similar one can be done covering both public and private TTCs to ensure variety and see how English teacher educators in private primary TTCs approach their lessons in an effort to promote the development of teachers' CIC.

Lastly, this study concentrated on Classroom Interactional Competence in English lessons only and not in other subjects taught in the TTCs. Therefore, doing a similar study in a different learning area in the TTCs can as well be good to explore on how the IPTE programme in Malawi support the development of CIC in the lessons of those subjects.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Clearance letter from Mzuzu University Research Ethics Committee to collect data.



MZUZU UNIVERSITY

DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH

Mzuzu University
Private Bag 201
L u w i n g a
M z u z u 2
M A L A W I
TEL: 01 320 722

MZUZU UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (MZUNIREC)

Ref No: MZUNIREC/DOR/22/22 28/03/22

Geoffrey Subuhana,

Mzuzu University,

P/Bag 201,

Mzuzu.

Dear Mr. Subuhana,

**RESEARCH ETHICS AND REGULATORY APPROVAL AND PERMIT
FOR PROTOCOL REF NO: MZUNIREC/DOR/22/22: AN EXPLORATION OF THE
INITIAL PRIMARY TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN DEVELOPING
TEACHERS' CLASSROOM INTERACTIONAL COMPETENCE**

Having satisfied all the relevant ethical and regulatory requirements, I am pleased to inform you that the above referred research protocol has officially been approved. You are now permitted to proceed with its implementation. Should there be any amendments to the approved protocol in the course of implementing it, you shall be required to seek approval of such amendments before implementation of the same.

This approval is valid for one year from the date of issuance of this approval. If the study goes beyond one year, an annual approval for continuation shall be required to be sought from the Mzuzu University Research Ethics Committee (MZUNIREC) in a format that is available at the Secretariat. Once the study is finalised, you are required to furnish the Committee with a final report of the study. The Committee reserves the right to carry out compliance inspection

of this. As such, you are expected to properly maintain all study documents including consent forms.

Wishing you a successful implementation of your study.

Yours Sincerely,



Gift Mbwele

MZUZU UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATOR

For: CHAIRMAN OF MZUNIREC

Address:

***Secretariat, Mzuzu University Research Ethics Committee, P/Bag 201, Luwinga,
Mzuzu 2; Email address: mzunirec@mzuni.ac.mw***

2: Letter of Introduction from Mzuzu University



MZUZU UNIVERSITY

**Department of Teaching, Learning and
Curriculum Studies**

30th March 2022

Mzuzu University
Private Bag 2

M A L A W I

Tel: (265) 01 320 575/722

Fax: (265) 01 320 568

mdolo.mm@mzuni.ac.mw

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION: MR GEOFFREY SUBUHANA

Mr Geoffrey Subuhana is a registered Master of Education (Teacher Education) Program student at Mzuzu University. He has been cleared by the Mzuzu University Research Ethics Committee (MZUNIREC) to collect data for the research study he is conducting as a requirement for the program.

Kindly assist him accordingly.

Yours faithfully,

Dr Margaret M. Mdolo

Programme Coordinator

Appendix 3: Sample letter requesting for permission to collect Research data in TTCs

Geoffrey Subuhana
Sadzi C. D. S. S.
Post Office Box 566
Zomba
1st April, 2022.

The Director
Directorate of Teacher Education and Development (DTED)
Post Office Box 215
Lilongwe.

Dear Sir,

ASKING FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA IN TTCs FOR AN ACADEMIC
RESEARCH PROJECT

I write for the above captioned subject.

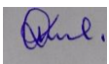
I am Geoffrey Subuhana, a teacher at the above named secondary school. I am studying Master of Education (Teacher Education) at Mzuzu University, with a bias in Language Education. Currently, I am in my second year and therefore, at a stage of conducting research. My topic is, **“Exploring the Extent to which the Initial Primary Teacher Education Programme in Malawi Develops Teachers’ Classroom Interactional Competence.”**

I intend to have interviews with English lecturers and student teachers in 5 TTCs, from both public and private categories in the Central, Southern and Eastern regions. Additionally, the study requires that I observe and record two English lessons from each TTC.

I have already been cleared by the Mzuzu University Research Committee and a letter of introduction from the Masters Degree programme coordinator has already been issued.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,



Geoffrey Subuhana (MEDTE 2820).

**Appendix 4: Clearance letter from Directorate of Teacher Education and Development
to collect data in TTCs**

Telegrams: MINED Lilongwe
Telephone: +265 1 789422/01788961
Fax: +265 1 788064/184

In reply please quote No.....



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
PRIVATE BAG 328,
CAPITAL CITY
LILONGWE 3
MALAWI

Ref.NO DTED/ADMIN/22/22

4th April, 2022

The Principal : Blantyre TTC,
: Chiradzulu TTC,
: Phalombe TTC,
: Maryam TTC,
: DAPP Chilangoma TTC,

Dear Sir/ Madam,

CLEARANCE FOR MR. GEOFFREY SUBUHANA TO COLLECT DATA FOR HIS MASTER OF EDUCATION STUDIES

I write to certify that Mr. Geoffrey Subuhana, a bonafide officer of the Ministry of Education, who is currently studying with Mzuzu University for a Master of Education (Teacher Education) has been granted permission by the Directorate of Teacher Education and Development (DTED) to carry out research in public and private Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs).

His research project is titled: **An Exploration of the Initial Primary Teacher Education Programme in developing Teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence: A Case Study of Selected Teacher Training Colleges in Malawi.**

I will be grateful for your assistance.


pp Rose Kalizang'oma (Mrs)
DEPUTY DIRECTOR-DTED

Appendix 5: Dates when Data was collected

TTC name	Dates	Methods employed
TTC-A	20 th April, 2022	Interviews and observations
	21 st April, 2022	Focus group discussions and document analysis
TTC-B	22 nd April, 2022	Interviews and observations
	23 th April, 2022	Focus group discussions and document analysis
TTC-C	27 th April, 2022	Interviews and observations
	28 th April, 2022	Focus group discussions and document analysis
TTC-D	13 th May, 2022	Interviews and observations
	14 th May, 2022	Focus group discussions and document analysis

Source: Field Data, 2022

Appendix 5: Interview Guide for English Lecturers

EXPLORING THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE INITIAL PRIMARY TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN MALAWI DEVELOPS TEACHER'S CLASSROOM INTERACTIONAL COMPETENCE

Interviewee gender : _____

Qualification : _____

Institution name : _____

Working experience : _____

Interview duration : from _____ to _____

Date : _____

1. Lecturer's understanding of classroom interaction competence

- What do you know about Classroom Interactional Competence?
- What is your role in an English classroom?
- What are the responsibilities of student teachers in an English lesson?
- What do you think are the advantages of Classroom Interactional Competence to both lecturers and student teachers?

2. How the Initial Primary Teacher Education Programme Support teachers'

Development of CIC

- What interactive activities are found in IPTE English modules (Curriculum)?

- What interactive teaching strategies are found in IPTE English modules (Curriculum)?

3. Strategies English Teacher Educators Employ to Develop Teachers' CIC

- What teaching and learning strategies do you use in the English lessons?
- What activities do you engage your students in during English lessons?
- How do the student teachers respond to these strategies?
- Do you think the strategies you use are enough and effective? How?
- Do you think the IPTE programme develops teachers' CIC? How?

END OF QUESTIONS, THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

Appendix 6: Interview Guide for Student Teachers

EXPLORING THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE INITIAL PRIMARY TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN MALAWI DEVELOPS TEACHER'S CLASSROOM INTERACTIONAL COMPETENCE

Institution name : _____

Number of males : _____ Number of females : _____

Academic year : _____

Interview duration : from _____ to _____

Date : _____

1. Lecturer's Understanding of Classroom Interactional Competence

- What is your role in an English classroom?
- What are the responsibilities of your English lecturer in an English lesson?
- What does your lecturers do in order to promote and sustain classroom interaction in English lessons?

2. How the Initial Primary Teacher Education Programme Support Teachers'

Development of CIC

- What interactive activities are found in IPTE English modules (Curriculum)?
- What interactive teaching strategies are found in IPTE English modules (Curriculum)?

3. Strategies IPTE English Teacher Educators Employ to Develop Teachers' CIC

- Do you think the IPTE programme moulds you to be competent teachers in classroom interaction? Why is that so?
- What activities does your lecturer engage you in during English lessons?
- From the classroom activities you have mentioned, which ones enhances interaction in the English lessons?
- What teaching and learning strategies does your lecturer use in the English lessons?
- Do you think the strategies are enough? Why?
- Do you take part in the lessons? How?

END OF QUESTIONS, THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

Appendix 7: Classroom Observation Form

EXPLORING THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE INITIAL PRIMARY TEACHER
EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN MALAWI DEVELOPS TEACHERS' CLASSROOM
INTERACTIONAL COMPETENCE

Lecturer's gender : _____

Qualification : _____

Working experience : _____

College : _____

Class : _____ Number of students: _____

Subject : _____

Topic : _____

Date : _____

Time : from _____ to _____

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

Lecturer's Understanding of Classroom Interactional Competence			
Interaction feature	Yes	No	Comment
Does the lecturer provide opportunity for all students to speak? (participants' turn distribution)			

Are the activities arousing interest in the students?			
Do the student teachers utilise the various opportunities to speak?			
Is the atmosphere created by the lecturer friendly to all students? (tone)			
Is the accent or language used able to sustain interaction in the classroom?			
Is the language used standard?			
IPTE programme's support in developing teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence			
Interaction Feature	Yes	No	Comment
Is there any time when student teachers are allowed to work cooperatively?			
Are social interactions mostly positive to enhance professional competence?			
Does the teacher appear relaxed and confident when interacting with the children?			

Does the lecturer find time for frequent personal comments to individual student teachers during the lesson?			
Are student teachers assigned to listen and converse in a large group setting?			
Are student teachers given opportunities to interact with modules or any printed material?			
Are there opportunities for student teachers to interact socially?			
<p>Strategies Initial Primary English teacher educators employ to develop teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence when teaching English</p>			
Interaction feature	Yes	No	Comment
Are there language learning centres in the classroom?			
Does the lecturer use thinking aloud, paraphrasing, and provision of correct punctuation?			

Does the lecturer repeat learner's responses, reinforcing definitions in context, slowing speech, speak in phrases, and increase pauses?			
Does the lecturer display drawings or photographs that allow learners to hear English words and connect them to the visual images being displayed?			
Does the lecturer use script writing as a strategy for enhancing classroom communication?			
Has role-play been used for students to paraphrase or construct their own ideas?			
Does the lecturer use authentic materials prepared to let students learn by seeing, touching, talking and by doing?			

Appendix 8: Document Analysis Checklist

EXPLORING THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE INITIAL PRIMARY TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN MALAWI DEVELOPS TEACHERS' CLASSROOM INTERACTIONAL COMPETENCE

Document name : _____

Author : _____

Date of analysis : _____

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS CHECKLIST

Interaction feature	Available (tick)	Not available (tick)	Comment
1. Interactivities			
Discussion work			
Story telling;			
Role-play			
Fish bowl			
Multiple technique work			
Reading aloud			
Debates.			
Three part song			
Quiz			
Dialogue			

Rounded dialogue			
Others			
2. Interaction strategies			
Use of learning centres			
Use of Verbal scaffolding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinking aloud • Paraphrasing • Correcting punctuations • Repetition of learner's responses • Reinforcing definitions in context • Slowing speech • Speaking in phrases • Increasing of pauses. 			
Visual scaffolding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display of drawings or photographs 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Script writing 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role-playing 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of posters 			

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use of one point grab.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Use of diaries			
Others			

THE END

Appendix 9: Informed consent for lecturers and student teachers

**EXPLORING THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE INITIAL PRIMARY TEACHER
EDUCATION PROGRAMME DEVELOPS TEACHERS' CLASSROOM
INTERACTIONAL COMPETENCE**

By signing below, I _____ agree to take part in a research study entitled, **Exploring the Extent to which the Initial Primary Teacher Education Programme in Malawi develops Teachers' Classroom Interactional Competence**, which is being conducted by Mr. Geoffrey Subuhana, a Master of Education (M.Ed.) in Teacher Education student of Mzuzu University.

I declare that:

I understand that the information I will give will be used strictly for academic purposes only and that such information will be treated with the highest level of confidentiality.

I understand that my name and that of my school will remain anonymous throughout the research findings and presentation of findings and even in the final document. Instead, the researcher will use pseudonyms.

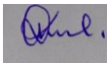
I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressurized to take part.

I understand that there are no direct benefits, financial or otherwise, from this study.

I understand that I am free to inform the researcher of my intention to withdraw from the study at any point in time, I feel so doing, and that such act will not lead to any negative repercussions.

I have read and understood the information pertaining to the study as given herein. My questions have fully been addressed.

Participant Signature:Date: Place.....

Interviewer's Signature:  Date -----

Print name: Geoffrey Subuhana.