Nurturing Professional Development in TESOL: A Community of Practice Perspective

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A R T I C L E I N F O	A B S T R A C T
Keywords: Community of Practice, Lifelong Learning, Professional Development, Sustainable Education, TESOL. *Received* : 18 April 2024 *Revised* : 13 September 2024 *Accepted* : 11 November 2024	The focus of this paper was to explore the challenges facing the effectiveness of teaching the English Language in TESOL and assess the role of communities of practice groups in overcoming challenges facing the effectiveness of teaching the English Language in East and West Africa. The study employed qualitative research through a virtual ethnography approach. Data were collected through participative observation and interviews in communities of practices and platforms online. Findings established that lack of teaching materials, poor teaching environment, and lack of opportunities for a Community of Practice and professional development were among the challenges that have been hindering the effectiveness of teaching the English Language in the field of TESOL in East and West Africa. Online professional development offered by Community of Practice groups, sharing English teaching materials, and opportunities to support school-based teacher education and training were among the strategies revealed by Community of Practice used by teachers to improve their teaching in TESOL. As a result, the study recommends that cultivating communities of practice and sharing professional development opportunities provide a continuous learning support system for updating English teaching strategies and providing effective skill acquisition in a sustainable and inclusive educational system.

INTRODUCTION

For 21st-century educational systems around the world, the processes of globalization present a new host of challenges and opportunities for the promotion of citizenship education and human well-being from an intercultural communication perspective (Schugurensky and Wolhuter, 2020; Pereira, 2023). This situation requires the integration of lifelong learning into (in) formal education institutions to support knowledge dissemination, global values (Equity, inclusion, tolerance, etc.), and soft skills for everyone for a sustainable way of life through communities of practice (CoP) or inquiry (Farnsworth et al., 2016). It is really a common concern due to the globalization of trends and interdependence among countries in an interconnected digitalized world. This fact increases continuously the size of knowledge available online through the techno-pedagogical platforms supporting 21st-century skills adoption (Lütge, 2023). Therefore, lifelong learning is crucial to provide inclusive educational opportunities that empower educators and learners to contribute actively to sustainable development whatever the daily environment (Schugurensky and Wolhuter, 2020; Ojó, 2022).

In this same trend, English is the lingua franca of globalization as a means of internationalization and communication in the world in sort that both native and non-native English countries promote this language in their education system to empower their citizens. It means that effective Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) is crucial for the effectiveness of whole the educative system and the success of the learners as the next generation of global citizens (Lütge, 2019; Schugurensky and Wolhuter, 2020; Norris, 2019). However, the diversity of pedagogy and teaching

environment in native and non-native countries results in challenges affecting English learners' proficiency and educator's well-being. Face this situation, governments, and educative stakeholders (Ministries, Institutions, Communities, partners, funders, and similar things) offer continuous Professional Development (CPD) activities facilitated by specialists or peers (teachers/ educators) to overcome these challenges (Al-Balushi, 2017).

According to Chehimi and Alameddine (2022), lifelong learning and CPDs are important in helping teachers rethink their practices for enhancing the language proficiency of their learners in various English teaching environments. These CPDs aimed to provide best teaching practices to support TESOL Professionals (Teachers and Educators) in their activities for more inclusion, equity, and equality in the TESOL field through Communities of Practice (CoP). Indeed, in both developed and developing countries, these communities of practice groups, have been essential in exchanging resources and experiences about effective teaching practices (Antonio de Carvalho-Filho et al., 2019; Kong, 2018; Tam 2015). CoP offers a robust strategy for professional learning, knowing that learning is part of work, not separate from it (Opeifa et al., 2022; Farnsworth et al., 2016; Kong, 2018). The members can enhance their competencies to develop teaching skills and get professional development. (Huynh 2022; Bragg, Walsh & Heyeres, 2021).

However, in many educative contexts, English teachers still encounter challenges, and the lack of activities or involvement in Communities of Practice results in failure and low educative outcomes. Therefore, to empower TESOL professionals and their well-being, nurturing Professional Development in TESOL through Community of Practice Perspectives is an important topic of reflection for updating teacher-based skills for effective English language teaching performance in various contexts. The focus of this paper was to describe the English Language teaching challenges in the TESOL field and assess how they could be overcome by creating Community of Practice (CoP) groups.

This study is motivated by the theory of Learning. According to Farnsworth et al., 2016 (2016) Communities of Practice (CoP) present a theory of learning that starts with this assumption: engagement in social practice is the fundamental process by which we learn and so become who we are.

Therefore, for Tam (2015) learning is social and comes largely from our experience of participating in daily life through a process of engagement in a community of peers related to the Professional Learning Community (PLC) paradigm. The primary unit of analysis is neither the individual nor social institutions but rather the informal "communities of practice" that people form as they pursue shared enterprises over time. According to the author, Communities of Practices is a sociocultural perspective, arguing that people construct and develop their identities and understandings through their active participation and engagement with others in cultural practices that are situated in particular social communities, such as teacher education. In other words, it is a group of people, such as English teachers, who are learning from each other how to become better at their jobs, how to learn from each other, and how to mentor each other.

Moreover, in every context, according to Plastina, (2009), building a Community of Practice (CoP) consists of five stages of development: 1. Potential (people cope with similar issues, although they do not benefit from shared practice); 2. Coalescing (shared interest and mutual engagement bind them together in a social identity or joint enterprise for the CoP); 3. Active (developing a practice, sharing a repertoire of ideas to engaging in complex activities and projects, or creating artifacts, tools, and documents as reified products); 4. Dispersed (members are no longer actively committed, but remain in contact); 5. Memorable (The CoP becomes a memorable experience when it no longer occupies a central role in people's lives, although they recall it as a significant part of their identity through story-telling, and by preserving reified products).

For Antonio de Carvalho-Filho et al., (2019), CoP can be sustainable communities with tailored activities, both formal and informal, that can reflect the reality of daily practice and go beyond the traditional approaches of a field development based on time-limited training, courses, or workshops. Consequently, CoP connects people (as in TESOL), provides a shared context, enables dialogue between

their members, introduces collaborative processes, stimulates learning, captures and diffuses knowledge, and helps get people organized (Antonio de Carvalho-Filho et al. 2019; Angelo and Hudson, 2020; Bragg, Walsh and Heyeres, 2021; Huynh, 2022). Specifically, there are many benefits for English teachers and educators through their Communities of Practices at local; national, and international levels as professional development opportunities including getting a support network from members, sharing knowledge, and building better practices to avoid previous mistakes (Holmqvist, and Lelinge, 2021).

As a contribution to the scientific debate, the question of Communities of Practice in TESOL remains useful through an investigation in West and East Africa. It focused on how nurturing communities of practice, in the active stage (Plastina, 2009), can support local teaching and learning methods about the best practices, influencing positively TESOL effectiveness in various contexts.

METHODS
Research Design

This qualitative study aims to describe the English Language teaching challenges in the TESOL field and assess how they could be overcome by creating Community of Practice (CoP) groups through a multisite ethnography research design (Kusuma, 2020). The choice of this research design allowed to application of reliable inclusive/ exclusive research criteria.

Firstly, this approach takes into consideration participants engaged in local and international Communities of Practices as English teachers, educators, and TESOL Professionals. Secondly, the investigation was focused on participants' teaching experiences underlining their challenges and social representation of CoP in their respective countries to overcome effective teaching issues through online and in-person professional development initiatives. This research design helped to collect their views from their experience and avoid bias. Consequently, according to the research design and inclusion/exclusion criterion chosen, the researchers investigated in Tanzanian English Language Teachers' Association (TELTA) and West Africa TESOL Association to get more insight into the diversity of challenges encountered by English

teachers in these two regions and to identify these international Communities of Practice members points of view on the outcomes of TELTA and WAT membership in the field. As mentioned, this multisite ethnography research design offered the opportunity to investigate in an international and local context simultaneously and used both online and offline data from participants.

Participants

Validity and reliability increase transparency and decrease opportunities to insert researcher bias in qualitative research (Singh, 2014; Mohajan, 2017; Ahmed and Ishtiaq, 2021; Kotronoulas et al., 2023 Amorim et al, 2021). In this study, the participant population gathered diverse English language teachers and educators from a variety of teaching contexts, such as public, private, vocational, and independent workplaces in Africa. Due to the diverse countries and areas of the participants connected through the digital platform to exchange during the COVID lockdown, researchers opted for a convenience sampling that doesn't require a formal statistic of samples (Stratton, 2021; Scholtz, 2021). Even if they are from different English teaching contexts, language backgrounds, or ethnic groups from East and West Africa, participants' points of view are reliable to take into consideration different English Teaching experiences from these two different regions (Mwangi et al., 2024; Wolf, 2020). Moreover, it fosters the understanding of the global challenges and CoP practices to overcome the English language issues for an effective educative system and stakeholders' well-being. Consequently, the researchers selected participants by purposely taking into consideration the Communities of Practice where they were members to get the data easily and investigate clearly. According to the research ethics, we obtained the agreement of these Communities Head before collecting the data online, while the interviews with local teachers were easy by taking into consideration the local schools.

As a result, the studies involved a total of 473 English teachers and educators. The investigation online took into consideration the data presented by 200 members (in TELTA) and 248 participants (in WAT) engaged in these two West and East Africa Communities of Practice groups from September 2021 to December 2022. The research considered

the various professional development activities done in these Communities of Practice groups to support professional development and lifelong learning in these two regions.
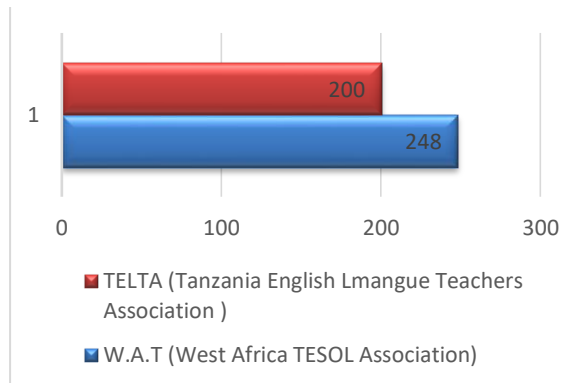

Figure 1. Communities of Practice Members on WhatsApp and Facebook

Then a convenient sample of 25 teachers and educators in Tanzania and Cote d'Ivoire was selected for the interviews. In brief, this sampling choice and sample allowed us to build a reliable procedure to overcome research validity and reliability issues to validate the data from an investigation in online and offline English language Communities of Practice contexts in West and East Africa (Karekezi, 2022). Consequently, this research sampling procedure allowed a replication of this method across different populations selection according to validity and reliability principles (Mohajan, 2017). (Mohajan, 2017; Ahmed and Ishtiaq, 2021; Amorim et al., 2021).

Data Collection

The researchers used a multisite ethnography to collect and analyse the data from West and East Africa English teachers Communities of practice professional development activities settled in various contexts. Firstly, an exploratory assessment related to present teaching challenges was submitted to nine West African TESOL convention attendants in a West Africa TESOL 2021 mentoring group to identify the challenges facing teachers in teaching the English language in West Africa in March 2021. Secondly, the interview of 25 English teachers, educators, and TESOL professionals working in Tanzania and Cote d'Ivoire from March to November 2022 allowed us to enrich the assessment data. This open guide interview used questions focused on the various challenges facing teaching the English language in TESOL and the ways forward in Communities of Practices initiatives for

an effective TESOL outcome in Africa. Thirdly, a participatory observation allowed us to record the dynamic of teachers' activities in WAT and TELTA Communities of Practice groups. The observation took place on the WhatsApp and Facebook pages of this CoP to record and describe the professional development and interactive exchange of tips between members. Then, it took into consideration recordings of workshops, comments, resources shared, and conversations on these platforms.

Data Analysis

The data in this study were processed in categories. NVIVO software was used to process and analyze the data. According to Clayman and Gill (2023), Zhang (2018), and Zawacki-Richter (2017), content analysis is appropriate to reveal the impact and views of the participants about their perceptions through writing and multiset supports. Firstly, the content analysis of the interview verbatim transcripts and corpus from the interviewees in Tanzania and Cote d'Ivoire. Secondly, this data analysis focused on the comments, texts, and answers of the participants during the interactive activities on the WAT and TELTA platforms (Facebook and WhatsApp).

Finally, the diversity of contexts and data analysis methods allowed researchers to get insights and organize findings according to two sections: 1) Challenges facing the effectiveness of teaching the English Language in TESOL; 2) The role of communities of practice in overcoming challenges facing the effectiveness of teaching the English Language in TESOL.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Challenges Facing the Effectiveness of Teaching English Language in TESOL

The ability of teachers to manage the learners' engagement and involvement in the acquisition of language skills is influenced by the teaching environment, teaching approaches, and continuous professional development encountered by English teachers in their various teaching contexts. However, many challenges face the effectiveness of teaching language among teachers in the school context. According to participants in TELTA and WAT Communities of Practice, findings underlined the views below.

1. Environment challenge

The teaching environment, according to participants has been a big challenge that has been facing their teaching practices' effectiveness in promoting language skills in both the native English context and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages. One of the teachers reported that: "My school is located in a village where all people speak Kiswahili and other local languages. The children do not interact with people who can speak English in their homes. Even after we teach the children in the classroom, most of them don't practice English because they are affected by the language that is spoken in the village" (Interview 16).

Another participant demonstrated that "the poor infrastructure system in our workplace has been a challenge that has affected negatively our teaching. Traveling to another school for academic and teaching exchange has not been effectively done due to poor infrastructures such as roads most of which are impassable in the local areas, yet communications are not effective due to the lack of network" (Interviewee 9). Another TESOL Professional expressed that: "Teaching the English language is not easy in our schools because these schools are in the area where electricity is not yet installed. So, we don't use technology and other innovative teaching techniques due to the lack of electricity and internet connection to access online resources" (Interviewee 4).

The learning environment impacts the educative outcomes. According to the participants, area linguistic background influences English Language teaching and learners proficiency. Indeed, the social, cultural, and linguistic issues to foreground teaching English were a predominant use of Swahili as a lingua franca in East Africa, a Pidgin English and colonial official language (as French) in West Africa (Wolf, 2020; Shuaibu, 2022). This environment can be a source of barriers related to the active practice of English at school and in learners' communities as pupils, students, and adults. This situation is underlined in Haufiku (2022) study states that everyone learns through interaction, and the lack of an English-speaking environment becomes a significant issue. In this environment, often, learners do not develop speaking and listening skills in English, which are crucial for effective communication. Consequently, in TESOL, participants of our investigation

encountered this fact as a challenge reducing learners' motivation to practice English as it is not really compulsory in their daily communication in communities and with parents. It results in low English proficiency and for teachers, this linguistic environment correlated with a lack of educative infrastructures to support activities English language learning affects students' mastery at all levels of the educative system (Donroe, 2020). Similarly, this is mentioned in Hsieh, Ionescu, and Ho, (2018) study, which states that teachers encounter five major challenges: (1) mother tongue interference, (2) students' attitudes toward English; (3) lack of usefulness of the English language in the community; (4) resource constraints; and (5) diverse student backgrounds. This fact is similar in various teaching contexts, and both TESOL practitioners in developed and developing countries must be aware of these challenges because of the diversity of the teaching context. Therefore, the findings obtained indicate teaching environment challenges as a possible negative factor in improving teaching and learning the English language in West and East Africa.

2. Large class size

The class size is an important factor influencing educative system effectiveness particularly foreign language learning in every context. In West and East Africa, English teachers mentioned this fact as a challenge due to the lack of infrastructure and overcrowded classrooms affected English language teaching and learners' proficiency

One of the English teachers pointed out that: "How can I develop groups in a class of more than 80 students and be able to teach all the groups in 40 or 80 minutes. The larger number of students in the class leads us to apply other teaching approaches to help all students in the classroom to learn. Therefore, the effectiveness of teaching the English language in TESOL cannot be achieved in overcrowded classrooms" (Interviewee 18). Moreover, another Teacher mentioned the effect of class size on English Language learners' outcomes: "Lack of will and confidence are caused by large classes limiting peer-reviewed interactive activities involving speaking due to too much noise and it also involves a lot of paperwork" (Interviewee 2).

Findings indicate that the larger number of students in the class affects the effectiveness of teaching the English language. The larger the class

is, the less each student gets to make individual contributions in a communicative approach because of the teaching environment. As a result, it is difficult to make learning participatory and communicative in a pedagogy approach to attaining inclusive cooperative education. Therefore, teaching the English language is very difficult for teachers /educators because of overcrowded classrooms which interaction between the teacher and learners, and learner engagement is minimal (Mahmoud, 2018). This finding is similar to Haufiku (2022) and stated that teaching English in an overcrowded classroom is stressful, overwhelming, and discouraging. For the author, overcrowded classrooms in schools have sadly become the new normal, noting a combination of an increasing population and a decrease in infrastructure (Meador, 2019). Consequently, the application of communicative-centered pedagogy in this context is limited and teachers encounter challenges in assessing all learners correctly due to the overloaded papers and tasks to motivate them. Yet, these challenges are also related to a lack of teaching materials as it is mentioned in the next section.

3. Lack of teaching materials

In Africa as in many countries around the world, it is not always easy to have the most recent teaching resources in the classroom. The teacher's ability to manage the class is affected as a result of the lack of materials for effective language teaching. "Teaching material, resources, timing, and syllabus design are lacking. Inability to make the Photostat of the students' book and integrate technology in the class due to lack of power, listening material, Internet, and mastery. The usage of new technology in the classroom is impossible because of the lack of materials, technology, or usage of mobile phones by students at school. Using tech tools at school and in class must be facilitated by the school administration" (Interviewee 22).

According to participants, lack of teaching material is a big challenge in English classrooms. This reality is common in developed and developing countries where education for the English language encounters restrictions in textbooks, teaching materials, and resources that affect both learners' and teachers' effectiveness. In West and East Africa particularly, this situation led to teachers' stress and learners' demotivation in a

low-income context. This challenge requires specific tools and know-how to empower learners and use effective English class management. It is a common concern with the findings mentioned by Van Wyk and Mostert (2016), which established that most English language teachers encounter the challenge of resources, especially in developing countries and other non-English speaking countries where the number of learners enrolled in government schools will be too high as compared to the number of textbooks available.

4. Teaching approaches

Applying an effective approach to teaching English in a multilingual context is an enormous challenge for English teachers due to linguistic diversity in the classrooms, as mentioned by many participants and underlined in the corpus below: "In today's realities, the curricula are not adequate. Gap to evaluate correct speaking, writing, grammar, and listening skills due to balancing diverse learning needs (mixed ability classes) by student assessment. Lack of time for planning (overloaded hours) respecting expectations from school administration by teachers. And lack of teaching skills mastery or curricula designs for good class management in the challenged context related to teacher educators (Class of 60-120 students)" (Interviewee 14).

According to all participants, in this context, the application of innovative student-oriented-centered approaches or another communicative teaching strategy can often be very difficult, knowing that both teachers and educators in this field have to apply a different governmental approach. Therefore, in an urban or rural environment, it is not easy to follow the same instructions and produce effective teaching. Similarly, according to Febiana (2019) and John et al. (2020), these challenges result in low English proficiency skill acquisition and a knowledge gap in the teaching approach adopted by the teacher's educators in order to empower learners.

5. Lack of opportunities to engage in community practice groups and professional development

Most of the participants underlined a lack of opportunities for practice in a professional development program or community. This fact is expressed in this English teacher statement: "Teachers work and profiles are affected by lack of training and opportunities of practice. The field is led by beginners, intermediate, and expert English

teachers. However, we need to learn again to apply the successive teaching policy from the Education Ministry and international partners. Lack of collaboration between English teachers is often seen about CPD opportunities. Supports from training are needed in our schools. It is a foreign language teaching and we encounter too many challenges daily to improve the learners' engagement, motivation, and practice of English in their environment, in class and at home" (Interviewee 6).

According to participants, the teacher's role is important, for effective English language teaching that aims to achieve learners' proficiency and promote education for all right humans for good language acquisition. Particularly, Africa is multicultural and most Africans grow up to be multilingual English language teaching needs to use local language as support of disseminated English language in the respect of local cultures through an appropriate teaching approach. However, for English teachers and educators, there is often a shortage of teacher training that impacts negatively on the effectiveness of the English teaching profession. These are issues for many teachers (Hsieh, Ionescu, and Ho, 2018). Consequently, the need for professional development plays an important function in reaching this goal (Tam, 2015; Huynh, 2022).

In brief, all these challenges result in low English proficiency skill acquisition and a knowledge gap in the teaching approach adopted by teacher educators to empower learners (John et al., 2020; Ojó, 2022). Therefore, this also included how nurturing Communities of Practice could help to overcome all these challenges and provide professional development in TESOL.

The Role of Communities of Practice in Overcoming Challenges Facing the Effectiveness of Teaching English Language in TESOL

This paper's focus is to assess the role of communities of practice groups in overcoming challenges facing the effectiveness of teaching the English Language in East and West Africa. Therefore, this section shares solutions offered by WAT and TELTA as Communities of Practice to support English Teachers and educators during various on-site and online activities. The following were the findings provided by the participants on how Community of Practice groups contribute to

overcoming challenges facing teaching the English language in their schools.

1. Teaching environment mitigation tips

Depending on the English teaching context, sociocultural and linguistic realities were presented as challenges by the research participants. However, they mentioned that CoP contributes to overcoming these difficulties by sharing ideas and strategies to use local language as support to empower learners during English language Class.

For a Senior English teacher in Cote d'Ivoire, "In our country, we have several ethnicities and French is the official language. In our high school, the English teacher community decided to apply more reflexive activities in writing and discussion taking into consideration local customs to teach English and motivate learners to practice and learn their own culture through teamwork activities. This helped me a lot to connect the teaching with the cultural background" (Interviewee 10).

Another Teacher in Senegal mentioned that: "Multilingualism is not a challenge to learn English because, in our Community of Teachers (ATES), it was recommended to give matching between local words connected with the English language. So often, I ask my students to translate the words given in English to their local mother tongue as break-ace activities. It is very funny and students' vocabulary and speaking in English was better through this intercultural communicative approach" (Interviewee 15).

According to the participant, Communities of Practices offered professional development opportunities to manage multilingualism and sociocultural background as ways to support English students and learners' proficiency in schools. Whatever the context, this fact is to connect the foreign language vocabulary with local concepts used by the learners in their family or community increasing learners' motivation to participate and communicate during the English class activities. It means that nurturing local, national, and international Communities of Practice for English teachers plays the role of equipping them with new teaching skills and overcoming the apparent issues related to the mother tongue being overused in English class.

Consequently, Communities of Practice empowered teachers with the best teaching practices in their context for effective learners' proficiency in

speaking, listening, writing, and vocabulary. It contributes to enhancing learners' values through these intercultural communication activities led during the English Class. For example, the bilingual class where English and another language (such as Spanish, or French) are used simultaneously from kinder school reveals that a sociolinguistic background can be an opportunity to learn English and develop global citizenship value skills. This great aspect is mentioned by Pereira (2023) and Plastina (2009) studies stating that Multilanguage contexts are an opportunity to teach a foreign language as a means to disseminate both linguistic skills and global citizenship values (tolerance, Peace, Critical thinking, intercultural communication) for more inclusion, diversity and equity in education matching with TESOL International values.

2. Class management Tips dissemination

According to participants, a large class is a big challenge. Then, the investigation in WAT and TELTA Communities of Practice shared mitigation ways. It was mentioned by the findings below from the TELTA Facebook page: "Do you teach a large class? Some teachers have a class of 50-100 students, how do you do it? What ways can you use to manage such a large class? Mark your calendar and don't miss our 24th September webinar where Raphael Shenenga will present on large classroom management. See you this Saturday 4 PM GMT/07 PM EAT". Similarly, a conversation between two teachers on the WAT WhatsApp group revealed this mutual mentoring offered by communities of practice whatever the distance through technology and networking:
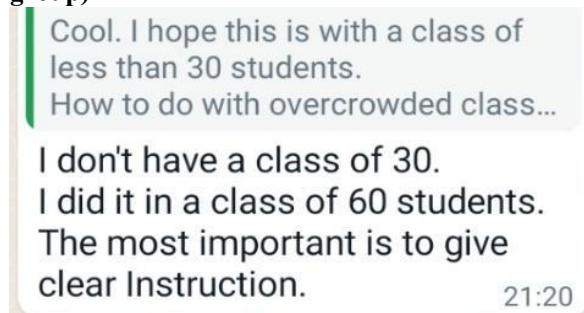
25 October 2021, 21:20· (WAT WhatsApp group)

Figure 2. Sharing of experience and tips for large class management

According to these observations and content analysis, Communities of Practice in West and East Africa played an important role in empowering teachers with class management and mutual mentoring. Nurturing these kinds of activities offers the opportunity for TESOL practitioners to be empowered and increase their effectiveness in a large class environment during mentoring and sharing of English teachers' experience as professional development opportunities in the CoP activities. These activities took place online and in schools to provide best practices related to international and national trends to support English teachers' efforts and learners' proficiency in the field. This finding is common in Plastina (2009), Kong (2018), and Pereira (2023) studies mentioning that through active implication and mutual mentoring Communities of Practice, every educative institution and TESOL practitioners can benefit from customized tips sharing for various classrooms and context where English language is taught. Moreover, the conversation and tips exchanged between colleagues increase the English learners' skills in daily teaching contexts whether in urban, or rural environments.

3. Sharing Teaching Materials

The lack of teaching resources can be an obstacle to the English Language Learning effectiveness in various teaching environments. According to the observation and interactions on the WAT and TELTA platforms, the mutual sharing of materials by teachers /educators to support English Teaching outcomes is illustrated by the extract below from the WAT WhatsApp group:

Hi everyone, here are some teaching resources available in English and French: https://www.open.edu/openlearncreate/course/index.php?categoryid=47

Similarly, on 27 August 2022, 22:31 during *TELTA webinar series session 6*, the event coordinator shared the following message in the group: *Some screenshots from today's presentation by Ovin Nyakango on the topic "Teaching English Using Flipped Classroom Approach". The presenter talked about the importance of flipping…"*

On WhatsApp, community members share resources of their findings daily to empower each other's. This continuous sharing of materials allowed them to overcome the lack of resources perceived as challenges and improve the learning

experience wherever the context. It means that during the personal and online interaction, the CoP Continuous professional development initiatives offered contextual solutions to overcome the teaching materials' lack of Open Educational Resources (OER) like textbooks, activity sheets, and assessments for the well-being of both teachers and learners. This fact reduces the workload and allows adapting OER in each teaching context. This fact is mentioned in Zhang (2018) study as this teaching material sharing allowed to improve the accessibility of best teaching resources for an effective communicative pedagogy in English classrooms. This choice helps teachers to implement effective class management and increase English language learners' proficiency.

4. Teaching approaches continuous up-to-date

Whatever the challenges in English language teaching, it is essential to empower English Language teachers and educators' pedagogy. In a CoP, this aspect is underlined by the various activities observed on WAT and TELTA virtual communities below:

We're excited to announce an upcoming facilitated MOOC! 💥

Our "Content-Based Instruction" course will prepare ELT educators for future decision-making and problem-solving in the area of CBI**, in which content… Plus (math, history, etc.) is taught in a language that students are still learning. Enrollment is open now, and the course begins on April 18th. Learn more: https://www.openenglishprograms.org/MOOC. CBI is similar to CLIL, content and language integrated learning, and EMI, English as the medium of instruction. (22 March 2022, 22:57· (WAT WhatsApp group)**.**

Moreover, there was another training that was organized by TELTA on 24 September 2022, 14:24. The lead coordinator posted that: "This is happening today. Don't miss Simon's session on 21st century skills specifically on critical thinking and problem solving skills. Come learn and help your students to develop critical thinking skills which will help them solve their problems" (TELTA lead coordinator).

In a changing world, the integration of 21st-century pedagogy and innovative approaches is required to up-to-date English teachers' and educators' practices in classrooms (CBI, PBL,

Student-centered, and similar strategies). The integration of the best pedagogy in English teaching calls to cultivate CPD and Communities of Practice at every level to empower teachers and offer more effective interactive activities designed in the English class. The analysis of the content on the TELTA WhatsApp group underlined the continuous professional development offered by Communities of practice through online and offline activities. Moreover, according to the observation of this study, CPD is vital. The workshops, training, mentoring, online courses, and various initiatives provide professional skills and strategies to help teachers teach effectively in their classrooms. Consequently, the Professional development programs are nurtured to empower English educators for an Effective TESOL practice in various contexts. Therefore the promotion of MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) related to the teaching field, is promoted as a means of CPD and lifelong learning to support TESOL effectiveness in various teaching contexts. In this perspective, participants from WAT and TELTA stated that the Community of Practice is perceived as the core of effective English pedagogy to empower both teachers and learners for a sustainable language skills acquisition (Al-Balushi, 2021). For Norris (2019), and Kong (2018) the pedagogical transformation in TESOL through lifelong learning and Communities of Practice offers opportunities to improve the curriculum design and teachers' pedagogy approaches. This fact is a source of innovation taking into consideration the integration of 21st-century pedagogy skills and technology in all educative systems as in the case of the TESOL field.

5. Nurturing Communities of practice to support TESOL Practitioners with Professional development skills

From this study's findings, Community of Practice groups provide an opportunity for teachers to acquire professional development skills. On 3 October 2021, during the lockdown, as an example, WAT contributed to continuous professional development online for every English teacher through the message posted by the coordinator:

Here is *a great professional development opportunity that we can highly recommend: If you want to improve your ability to plan and conduct successful learning events for ELT*

educators, enrol in our free "Professional Development for Teacher Trainers" MOOC today. Learn more and register: http://bit.ly/TeacherTrainersMOOC

Another publication shows the significance of lifelong learning and training to empower English teachers as mentioned on the TELTA Facebook page from 9 July 2022, 14:37: *TELTA Kilimanjaro chapter organized a successful workshop. Where by 30 English language teachers from 2 secondary schools benefited from the event. Teachers learned and shared knowledge of large classroom management, and motivation with young learners, This event was followed by English club activities from two secondary schools as they presented public speech and the art of speaking, reciting poems, songs, and impromptu speeches. They also had activities and games for making interactive and active classes.*

According to these findings, participants' experience shared undefined that nurturing Communities of practice activities online and on-site is required to support TESOL Practitioners with Professional development skills in every context. Even if it is a virtual or in-person Community of Practice, these communities offer great opportunities to increase English teachers' mastery as seen in West and East Africa regions. For example, the preceding text highlighted the activities of TELTA chapters in other teaching institutions such as secondary schools to empower English-speaking teachers regardless of their teaching context. Therefore, in TESOL fields influenced by transformative trends, transformative pedagogy, and lifelong learning are required to empower the teacher educators and stakeholders for effective teaching and learning. In other words, whatever the context, the need for knowledge has been increasing significantly, and the educative system requires lifelong learning through professional development initiatives to support human well-being and resilience to innovate, empower their stakeholders (learners, teachers, decision-makers, and so on) and overcome contextual challenges. Consequently, it is important for a resilient educative system to cultivate communities of Practice in schools, educative institutions, and all TESOL professional environments to sustain teacher educator practice effectiveness in various English teaching contexts.

Moreover, Communities of practice develop soft skills such as networking and confidence, organizations, and human values in the retention of talent and innovation, among other benefits. It is similar to Tam (2015) and Killion (2019) papers mentioning that in English language teaching, Communities of practice help to get a support network from members, accelerate professional development, share knowledge and build better practices, hire and build capability, meet regularly in a chatroom or other tool and so on to empower each other for an effective English teaching outcomes. It is a way of doing "reciprocal learning", an endeavor built on solid, respectful relationships through "community engagement" (Angelo and Hudson, 2020). In this light, the process of teaching the English language requires particular attention from practitioners in local and international communities to solve the problems encountered in the field and develop new policies for excellent results in formal and informal teaching institutions by nurturing Communities of Practice.

CONCLUSION

The focus of this study was to describe the English Language teaching challenges in the TESOL field and assess how they could be overcome by creating Community of Practice (CoP) groups. Through a qualitative research design and multisite ethnography approach, the investigation used an exploratory assessment, interviews, observation, and content analysis to investigate two active West and East Africa Communities of Practice groups from September 2021 to December 2022. Findings have proved that teachers in TESOL specifically in East and West Africa have been facing several challenges in Teaching the English language. These challenges have affected the teaching of English language learning negatively in native and non-native English countries. Thus the challenges encountered by English teachers and educators in these particular teaching contexts, findings, underlined that communities of practice offer solutions to support the education system, particularly in the TESOL field. Therefore, nurturing active CoP plays an important role in Continuous Professional Development (CPDs) opportunities as an interactive place of learning to offer in-person and online professional development for best practices integration in various English

teaching contexts from the experience of peers in the world for inclusion, equity and equality in enhancing the English language teaching profession effectiveness everywhere. Thus, every teacher needs to participate in Community of Practice groups even if it is in person or online to develop his or her profession as a vital strategy for teaching effectiveness and innovation.

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