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Title: Towards A Pedagogical Framework for Using Wikis to Enhance the Teaching of English Language: A Design Based Perspective
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Abstract:
Traditional English language instruction methods are increasingly becoming inadequate in today's digital era, they fail to engage and empower learners with the essential language skills required for success in the 21st century. The consequences of this pedagogical stagnation are far-reaching, with learners struggling to navigate the complexities of English language. The urgent need for innovative instructional approaches has become paramount, as educators strive to bridge the gap between traditional English language teaching methods and the demands of the 21st-Century learners. This qualitative study aimed at addressing the need to improve English language instruction in Ugandan secondary schools, by providing a pedagogical framework for integrating technology-mediated instruction into teaching practices. Recognizing the inadequacy of existing English language pedagogy to meet 21st-century learners' needs, this research sought to equip English language practitioners, particularly teachers, with innovative instruction strategies to enhance student language outcomes and relevance in this digital era. Wenger's (1991) Communities of Practice theory underpinned this study as it advocates for collaborative learning and mutual engagement between learners and teachers. The study was guided by three research questions; What are the gaps in the traditional methods in the teaching of English language in secondary schools in Uganda? How can Wikis as a pedagogical tool bridge the gaps in the traditional methods of instruction in the teaching of English language in secondary schools in Uganda? What design principles can guide a framework for using Wikis as a pedagogical tool in the teaching of English language in secondary schools in Uganda? This investigation identified significant gaps in the traditional methods of instruction, including limited learner engagement, teacher-centeredness, failure to cater for all the four-language skill, and insufficient feedback mechanisms. Using Design-Based Research (DBR) approach by Reeves (2006), the research findings revealed that Wikis can effectively bridge these gaps by fostering collaborative learning, self-directed learning, and overall enhancing the learning of all the four language skills. The study yielded a set of design principles for a theory driven Wiki-based pedagogical framework, emphasizing student-centered learning and technological integration as a way of promoting blended learning to enhance the teaching of English language in Ugandan secondary schools. The study recommends that practitioners could consider developing and evaluating Wiki-integrated curricula for specific English language skills, particularly grammar and creative writing