COMPETENCY BASED APPROACH AND INTEGRATION PEDAGOGY

The change in the basic school programs and the implementation of new approach are necessary by those in charge of educational systems to include the integration pedagogy sometimes called the competency- based approach. This reform does not concern only students but also teachers, school inspectors, Teacher instructors, textbook writers. The lower secondary school curriculum in Uganda is already built around integration pedagogy. In order to help the teachers in implementation of this approach, teachers need practical examples. Note this reform does not fully transform classroom practices. It involves gradual evolution of the teaching methods.

- The teacher needs to identify 2 or 3 competencies in each discipline the students must have developed by the end of the school year.
- Based on these competencies define what the student needs to acquire the resources (Knowledge, know-how and know being). To the teacher this becomes the course objectives and activities.
- Show the students what this knowledge is good for. For example, patterns in mathematics are not studied just for the sake of it but because it is necessary to make predictions based on our observations, allow us to see relationships and develop generalizations, designers use patterns for beautifying their work. This can motivate the student once he/she gets to know the reason behind what is taught in schools.
- Finally challenge the student with complex situations to put into practice what has been learned. The situations should be related to everyday life of the student.
- What is so special is about this approach is that the students discover, systematize, and apply to new situations.

Competence should not be confused with performance or competition

To be a performer is to be the best, to compete with others at the risk of overrunning the other participants. To be competent is by no means a threat to others as people get competent at different times. Therefore, to be competent is to know how to deal with daily –life problems. For students to do this the teachers must provide students with the necessary resources and how to use them to solve a problem.

INTEGRATION PEDAGOGY

a) It builds on the learning process step by step to enable the students to deal with any daily life situation.
b) Integration only happens if the student has necessary resources: Knowledge, the know – how, and the know being,
c) Integration only happens if the student re-invests his/ her acquisitions in a new context. Eg A new problem situation; this situation is more complex and richer than classroom application. The situation requires several pieces of knowledge and knowhow.
d) Integration only occurs if a student involves him / herself personally in a resolution of the problem situation. The student must find and decide by him/herself which are the pieces of knowledge and know- how that must be activated and articulated to solve the problem.

HOW TO PLAN FOR INTEGRATION ACTIVITIES
The student will best integrate his/her knowledge if he/she is regularly exposed to problem situations. To do this, the teacher may include in the course annual program five–six times earmarked for integration of knowledge.

1. Anticipate the final evaluation period at the end of the year
2. Schedule time at the end of the year for the students to solve problem situations. These problem situations must make the students to put into practice the basic competencies included in the national curriculum. These basic competencies must be enable the students to achieve the integration objective for the year.
3. Schedule time period, early in the school year, for revision of the basic competencies of the previous year. This is to allow the teacher to correct the students’ main gaps.
4. Schedule throughout the year sequentially the learning platforms. These are defined in terms of the set of knowledge, know-how and know-being
5. Schedule at the end of each level a time period for integration activities and training evaluation.