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Problems encountered by teachers and learners in developing english performance in speaking skill : case of first post-basic language language classes in Mutaho Commune

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UNIVERSITY OF BURUNDI



INSTITUTE FOR APPLIED PEDAGOGY

ENGLISH-KIRUNDI DEPARTMENT

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY TEACHERS AND LEARNERS IN DEVELOPING ENGLISH PERFORMANCE IN SPEAKING SKILL: Case of First Post-Basic Language Classes in Mutaho Commune.

By

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Bujumbura, June 2018

DEDICATION

To my late father who did not have the opportunity to see this work

To my beloved mother,

To my beloved wife Emma Irangarukiye,

To my brothers and sisters for their patience and the warmth we share at home,

To my grand brother Marcel Ntibazonkiza,

To Mr. Cyprien Nsabayubusa,

To my grand sister Cécile Ndimwizinga,

I dedicate this memoire.

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My deepest and greatest acknowledgments are also expressed to the teachers from primary school till University who have provided me with trustful trainings.

My greatest debt is also due to teachers and students of the year understudy for their valuable information during the data collection.

A special word of thanks is extended to my parents, brothers and sisters particularly my mother Christelie Bankuwunguka, for the motherly guidance she has extended to me from my birthday until now. May God bless her.

The contribution of all my colleagues, friends and relatives cannot be overlooked. To all these people, to so many others who helped me in one way or another for the success of this work, my sincere thanks to all of them.

Emmanuel Njebarikanuye

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BEPEPF : Bureau d'Etudes des Programmes de l'enseignement Post Fondamental (Post Basic curriculum development Bureau)

D_6 : Diplôme d'Instituteur Adjoint (Teacher's Assistant Diploma)

D_7 : Diplôme d'Instituteur (Institutor Diploma)

DRC : Democratic Republic of Congo

EAC : East African community

EFL : English as a Foreign Language

ENS : Ecole Normale Supérieure (Senior Teacher Training School)

i.e : id est (latin) i.e, to say

IPA/IAP :Institut de Pédagogie Appliquée (Institute for Applied Pedagogy)

P. : Page

TL : Target Language

L1 : First Language

L2 : Second Language

Op.Cit : Opera Citato meaning already cited

% : Percentage

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ABSTRACT

This study is an investigation of problems encountered by learners in developing English performance in speaking skill. The study was guided by the following research hypotheses: 1) Teachers of English in Burundi Post-Basic schools do not teach all aspects of the speaking skill to develop the learners' ability in spoken English; 2) Techniques and activities used by teachers hardly develop the learners' performance in spoken English; 3) The problems that hamper learners' speaking performance are insufficient speaking opportunities, lack of linguistic environment, lack of vocabulary and other languages interference; 4) The course materials used while teaching are not sufficient and relevant to enable learners to communicate effectively in spoken English. The study was carried out with 88 respondents out of 234, i.e, 76 learners and 12 teachers of selected post-basic schools in Mutaho commune. To collect the data, the researcher used classroom observation and teachers' and learners' questionnaire. The collected data were analyzed quantitatively question by question by using tables. After an analysis of the results, it was found out that the speaking skill is not given a good place in the teaching/ learning process and that the few oral activities given to learners are not appropriate. Also, the teaching materials used do not provide enough help to teachers and learners and they are not sufficient for an effective teaching/learning of the speaking skill. Those weaknesses pushed the researcher to suggest some solutions to adopt such as try to find audio-visual materials, to reserve time for speaking lessons and organize oral competitions at schools for pupils to improve their oral speaking.

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CHAPTER I: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the study

In everyday life and at any moment, people need to communicate. To do this language must be used. That is to mean that it is the main means of communication. People talk about all things they want such as their relationships, health, economy, and even their feelings and needs through language. This means that the language is part of human life. People and language cannot be separated because no one can express one's thoughts, emotions and opinions without it.

Many languages are spoken in the world and one of the widely spoken languages is English. This is shown by Quirk (1968:17) when he says the following about the English language:

> *Millions of men and women in the four continents have it as their native language, and further millions in every part of the world use it as second or foreign language.*

According to this quotation, it is obvious that English is today a language which is spoken almost everywhere in the world and in many domains, particularly in education, and technology, etc. In fact, it facilitates the circulation of knowledge.

As far as the status of a language is concerned, if a language is not used as a native or a mother tongue, it is used as a second or a foreign language, learnt at school as a subject, or in the community one lives in. In Burundi, English is taught only in formal places known as a classrooms. We do not have a natural environment where we can easily learn it. This shows that Burundians are not native speakers, nor do they use English as a second language.

It is therefore clear that the spoken language facilities are almost absent even though many linguists assert that spoken language is the starting point in the process of teaching English. According to Lado (1961:48):

> *The ability to speak a foreign language is without doubt the mostly highly prized language skill and rightly so, because who can speak a language well can also understand it and can learn to read it with relative ease [...]. Also, the ability to speak a language will greatly expedite and facilitate learning to write.*

This is true, because one who can speak easily a language, is able and competent to understand it, read it and write it. In Burundi, English language comes after Kirundi and French. In the Burundian education system, English is taught from primary schools (nowadays basic schools) until the university level, especially at the Institute for Applied Pedagogy (IAP) where is an English Department, and in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, especially in the English department. But, if we analyze the use of English by learners in Burundi, it is very limited except during the teacher-student exchange where it is spoken. And this is because of many problems faced by learners of English in Burundi.

Some are due to instructional factors, others to social and environmental factors. On one hand, intellectual problems are identified in learners' lack of English competence (English structural rules), lack of fluency, of appropriate vocabulary and structures. Problems are also connected with the size of the class, and the insufficiency of pedagogical materials, the other hand, the Burundian society does not give enough considerations to the English language. It is not a good environment where English speakers feel proud of their language, because they do not use it much in their everyday life. They always use Kirundi, which they sometimes mix with French and Kiswahili.

Since the importance of language is to communicate, it is important to learn English because it will enable the learners to use it to communicate effectively. As Rivers (1968:160) points it out: *"English language learning will have achieved its goal when it will enable its learners to be able to communicate expressively with anybody."* If we agree with Rivers' statement, we can assert that communication with the outside world is the almost objective of the teaching /learning process of English in Burundi secondary schools in general, and in first post-basic classes languages in particular.

Through this research, the researcher, expect to find out different problems faced by learners in in spoken English and attempt some solutions by proposing new strategies to adopt in order to improve the speaking skill of the learners especially those in first post-basic classes languages in particular.

1.2. Statement of the problem

First Post-Basic learners are expected to be able to communicate with English speaking partners, that is, talking to them and understanding what they are speaking. But, it is apparent that the majority of those learners who reach this level are almost unable to speak English and understand what people who are speaking it mean. The question about problems encountered while teaching/learning speaking skill in Post-Basic Schools has so far not been addressed although First Past-Basic learners have been taught English from low level of basic schools. It still notices that Post-Basic School learners as well as those who are in second year are still unable to express themselves appropriately in spoken English.

What is surprising here is the fact that, after being taught English from low level of schools, a great number of learners are still unable to express themselves or their daily life. The researcher's view is that there must be a number of problems which could have been the causes of the poor performance of the learners.

The issue is therefore to investigate the possible causes of the problems and afterwards suggest reasonable solutions to deal with them.

1.3. Aims of the study

The aim of this study is to investigate or identify the problems encountered by teachers and learners in developing English performance in speaking skill. The research is expected to reveal to the teachers, learners and any other educational partners, possible reasons for the English low performance in speaking.

Then Burundian learners, being aware of the problems which hamper their speaking performance, will struggle to overcome them, and this will help them to be able to communicate effectively in their daily situation, since we know that principal function of a language is to communicate.

1.4. Motivation

In this research, the researcher have been motivated by the fact that the performance in English speaking is effective since we know that English is taught from the first year of schools. As we have seen that the primary function of a language is to communicate the message, oral performance should be one of the main elements to be developed. Even though, there are many language teachers, speaking performance is not well developed. In fact, from this situation therefore, one may ask oneself what are the real causes of this inability in speaking.

Likewise, one may ask whether or out speaking skill is taught of given less consideration, and how it is taught, etc. There is no doubt that the quality of course materials are concerned. In addition, the researcher have also been motivated by the fact that some researchers have focused on finding ways of teaching the speaking skill, without considering deeply the problems learners encounter when developing their oral performance.

To say more, this topic is interesting in as far as the researcher would give a contribution to promote English language among our generation in order to make Burundi of tomorrow an English speaking country in the real sense of term. This is more important given the fact that Kirundi, our native language is only spoken in Burundi. So, we need to be proficient and communicative in other languages especially English which is spoken in our region, the EAC. The choice of this area was based on the fact that the researcher lived in Mutaho commune. It is also because Mutaho is a commune which is undergoing an uprising development in all domains, especially in education. It is a commune where many schools are being built. Then the researcher wanted to show the impact of this educational uprising situation.

1.5. Research questions

Trough out this work, some important questions need to be answered:

1. To what extent do teachers of English in Post-basic schools in Burundi teach all aspects of spoken language to develop the learners' speaking ability?
2. How far do the techniques/activities used in teaching improve the learners' performance in speaking skill?
3. What are the problems that hamper the learners' speaking performance?
4. Are the course materials sufficient and relevant to the learners' needs to help them to develop their speaking ability?

1.6. Research hypotheses

To carry out the study, we have formulated a number of hypotheses that we will prove right or wrong after the analysis of the data.

1. Teachers of English in Burundi Post-basic schools do not teach all aspects of the speaking skill to develop the learners' ability in spoken English.

2. Techniques and activities used by teachers hardly develop the learners' performance in spoken English.
3. The problems that hamper learners' speaking performance are insufficient speaking opportunities, lack of vocabulary, lack of linguistic environment and other languages interference.
4. The course materials used while teaching are not sufficient and relevant to enable learners to communicate effectively in spoken English.

1.7. Scope and delimitation of the study

This research focuses firstly on problems encountered by teachers and learners in developing English performance in speaking skill. It concerns burundian learners of the First post-basic languages and their teachers in Mutaho commune. The first Post-Basic learners were chosen because they are already expected to be familiar with spoken English. Thus, the research was carried out in six post-basic schools among the twelve schools located in Mutaho commune and they are :

Lycée Sainte Marie Auxiliatrice de Gitongo, Lycée Islamique de Mutaho, Lycée Communal Mutaho, Lycée Communal Masango, Lycée des amis Dee Choatte de Mutaho and Lycée Communal Muzenga. These schools were selected simply because they have a first post-basic language section.

1.8. Definition of Key terms

In this work, some words or phrases which are going to be used in the study may be confusing to the reader since we know two or more similar words can have different meanings. The may have a meaning different from the reader's interpretation. Then, the definition of key terms is very important in the since that it helps the reader to have the same interpretation as the author or writer.

1. **Speaking skill**

- **Speaking:** Advanced learner's Dictionary defines "**speaking**" as the ability to use a language to express oneself

- **Skill:** the same dictionary defines "**skill**" as the ability to do something well.

Wallace (1980), Pattison (1987) and Rivers (1981) agreed on the definition of the **"skill"** as the ability to use one's knowledge effectively and readily in execution of performance.

The three definitions combined allow the researcher to define "speaking skill" as the ability of expressing oneself effectively.

2. Performance (noun),

According to Collins English Dictionary (1987), the term performance is defined as the ability to do something well and successfully. According to the Oxford Advanced Learners'Dictionary, the word "performance" is defined as "how well or badly you do something or how well or badly something works". In short, performance in a language is how a person does rather than knows in using the language in the communication process.

1.9. Conclusion

This study is made up of five related chapters. The first consists of a general introduction dealing water statement, aims of the study with focus on speaking skill. A part from these, not only the motivation that urged the researcher to carry out the study is discussed in this chapter but also the delimitation was death with.

CHAPITER II: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0. Introduction

English is a language which is spoken in many places in the world. Many researchers have identified the principles of the learning of languages in general. Some of them put out problems related to the learning /teaching of English, but we still encounter different problems when developing the speaking ability in social life. Learners do not communicate effectively in English. Some researchs have been done in the domain of English learning/teaching in Burundian schools. Some of them have been already carried out. We will review references from those which are related to our study.

2.1. The aims of teaching English as a foreign language

Burundians do not have many occasions to speak English because of the lack of natural linguistic environment. Even, learners speak it mostly in classrooms during English lessons. In a country like Burundi, the aim of teaching English is to improve the learners' ability to express their ideas, their feelings or their opinions. This is emphasized by Widdowsom (1978: 60) quoted by Niyitunga (2010:10) when he says:

> *It will be readily agreed that where the aims of language course is to develop an ability to handle spoken language, what learners need ultimately to acquire is an awareness of how the language being learned is used for talking.*

From the quotation above, we should underline that the role of the teacher is to adopt new habits of the target language in order to help learners to understand, and express themselves more effectively. Then, this gives the idea that, when teaching English; teachers should focus on situations related to the learners'

everyday life, in order to facilitate their effective and appropriate oral communication.

According to Morris (1959:13) it is said:

> *We teach how the language can be spoken in various ways: how one by speech conveys his thoughts, feelings, his personality to another person, how he can by speech, conceal his thoughts and reproduce other persons' thoughts, feelings and personality.*

Through this quotation, we agree that the knowledge of a language is primarly shown by the fact of understanding others' expressions and feelings and being understood when communicating orally. This is supported by Bazikamwe (1991: 3) in his idea:

> *Ancient and modern writers have put on an emphasis on the overriding function of the spoken language. It is also assumed that speakers of a given language need to communicate their ideas. From this view, writers have advocated that all foreign language learners who wish to learn the spoken language need to know to express themselves effectively.*

Even if the purpose of a language is to express one's ideas effectively, Burundian learners have a great number of difficulties when developing their speaking performance due to deficiency related to materials, lack of language model, students' motivation, methods and techniques, without forgetting teachers' availability and their experience.

In few words, the teaching/learning process to foreigners should aim at developing the oral interaction with other language speakers.

2.2. The role of English in Burundi

To learn a language, people have a purpose to achieve. As far as English is concerned, in Burundi, people learn it because of many different reasons. According to Nduwingoma (2008:5), most people learn English because:

- They want to become English teachers
- It will help them to acquire new ideas and broaden their horizons
- It makes them to feel that they belong to the whole world
- They want to learn about English culture
- They want to go and live in the English societies. So to know English may enable them to adapt easily to the life in the host country. In fact, the language enables them to mix well with foreign people whom they work together.
- People may find themselves living either temporary or permanently in the target language community. In this case, they strive to speak the language to live actively in that country. In general, people learn a language because they are motivated by many specific reasons.

As far as Burundi is concerned, English is used as a foreign language and it is taught in classrooms. Today a good number of Burundians are eager to know English.

Furthermore, many English centers have been created for the benefits of Burundians who want to learn English. Moreover, the Burundian government like other various developing countries, use language by introducing it at all levels of its educational systems. Since 2005, primary schools (nowadays basic schools) started learning English beginning from the first grade while in the previous years, English was introduced from the second year of secondary schools.

Recently, learners of basic schools learn English in addition to Kirundi, Kiswahili, and French. Kirundi is the mother tongue in Burundi, while French is the official language and English and Kiswahili are foreign languages.

However, it should be noted that Burundians do not have any natural environment favorable to speaking English. Therefore, teaching that language is not an easy task. It is very demanding and for this reason, the government has done its best in creating pedagogical institutions to train teachers in general, and those of English in particular. This is shown by the creation of two pedagogical institutes namely: ENS (Ecole Normale Supérieure: Senior Teacher Training School) and IPA (Institut de Pédagogie Appliquée: Institute for Applied Pedagogy) which train future teachers of English in secondary. In addition to this, the government through the ministry of education has increased the hours of teaching English in post-basic language sections in order to help learners to get possible opportunities to develop their English speaking ability.

2.3. The roles of a language teacher in speaking

A teacher is very important to learners in the classroom. He/she is asked to provide the best conditions for learning. As far as the speaking skill is concerned, he is called to provide enough opportunities to learners to speak in order to develop their fluency in oral communication.

This is pointed out by Littlewood (1991) when he says:

> *We must provide learners with ample opportunities to use the language for communication purpose. We must also remember that we are concerned with developing the learners' ability to take part in the process of communicating through the language rather than the mastery of individual structure.*

Learning a language requires intensive speech practice on the part of learners. Morris (1959:20) agrees with this point when he states that: "*since speech must be spontaneous, intensive practice is a sine qua non.*" We should thus attribute to the teacher many roles at different stages of the learning process.

Manariyo (2004:30) gives eight roles to play in classroom:

> *First of all, the teacher is a controller: he stands at the front of the class and controls everything. He also controls movements of pupils.*
> *Second, the teacher is an assessor: he assesses students 'work to see how they are performing with what they have already learnt.*
>
> *Third, the teacher is an organizer: the main aim of the teacher when he is organizing an activity is to tell the students what they are going to see. He has to give them clear instructions about their talk and organize feedback when it is over.*
>
> *Fourth, the teacher is the prompter: the teacher needs to encourage students to participate and to make suggestions about how students may do in an activity. Fifth the teacher is a participant: the teacher should participate in activity to encourage his students(...).*

A teacher plays a very important role in a classroom. We cannot have a classroom without a teacher, a classroom cannot be separated with a teacher.
A teacher is the only one to see that learning takes place, and that is why a teacher must be very intelligent and must also be very confident of himself. A teacher should be a master of different techniques and try to invite the learners in talking as well as in stimulating and motivating their participation. In few words, there must be interaction between teacher and learners.

2.4. Difficulties in teaching/learning a foreign language

2.4.1. Class size

One of the different reasons which explain difficulties related to learning a foreign language is largeness of the class. Knowing the different roles of the teacher as a controller and assessor, it becomes more difficult to the teacher to control or assess what is done by his learners in a large class of seventy or more learners. Thus, it is a problem to the learners' development in language performance. This is supported by Sesnan (1992:101) quoted by Kwizera (2009:10):

> *The biggest obstacle to effective teaching of language is the size of the classes. This is so because training courses and school textbooks assume classes of 30-40 pupils.*

Through this quotation, we get the idea that the size of the class has a big influence on the performance of learners. Also, it has a bad influence on the classroom management and interaction among learners. This is pointed out by Nalasco and Arthur (1990: 5) when they say: "*There are too many physical constraints such as the many rows of desks and chairs in the room making free movements impossible.*"

According to Locastro (1989:19), performance of learners in large classes is affected because of:

> *Difficulty in monitoring work and giving feedback; problems in individualizing work; difficulties in setting up communicative tasks, providing opportunities to speak, practice (by the teachers) of avoiding activities that are demanding to implement*

This shows that class size should be revised to have a positive influence on learners' performance because in case of large classes, it is difficult to the teacher to be effective as a tutor of learners' work, and to give the necessary feedback the class.

2.4.2. Teaching methods of the speaking skill in English

Commonly agreed, the purpose of teaching a language is to bring learners to get the ability to use the language taught effectively. In so doing, a teacher uses different methods and techniques. If the teacher uses these different methods and techniques in a good way, the learners will perform well and they will achieve their objective, because the mastery of a language depends on the ways the language is taught. This is supported by Wilkins (1973:152) when he states:

> *Successful learning depends upon language teaching techniques. For effective learning to take place, the teacher must be well armed with tools that he knows to use. These tools include methods and techniques required to communicate to the learners and the context to be dealt with.*

This is to show that teacher must have enough capacity related to the fact of knowing different techniques and even knowing what he is going to teach. It is also up to the teacher to contextualize it in real life of the learners. If not, they will not have achieved the goal of being able to express themselves.

Another problem is that there are some teachers who focus only their attention on grammar. According to Nida (1957:21), grammar is taught as the easy way out of (formality) respecting or relying on traditional demands without introducing the learners to the language itself. This will lead learners to be indifferent in learning to speak. He goes on to say that language should begin by speaking before reading, as seen in the following words:

> *Another mistake of language learning is the habit of placing reading ahead of speaking. Undoubtedly there is much to be gained by reading but printed symbols are only graphic symbols standing for acoustic (sounds) symbols, and to learn a language we must make primary use of the primary system of symbolization, i.e. the spoken form of the language.*

Through the quotation above, it is understood that a speaking skill has a paramount importance to the learning of a given language. And thus language teachers should strongly focus on the speaking skill before other skills. Talking of language learning, we should use the communicative (oral) approach to problems of teaching and learning languages. Nasr (1972:4) says that *"the oral approach is based on the principle that the spoken language is the basis of writing and not the other way around"*. It stipulates that hearing should come before speaking, speaking before reading and reading before writing. The oral approach suggests that the student should come into contact with the spoken form before he sees a written form.

2.4.3. Teaching materials

When talking about teaching materials, we refer to textbooks, to libraries, syllabuses and to any other instructional materials (audio visual aids). In other words, we want to talk about every needed equipment that can influence well the learners' performance; we refer also to their quality and quantity. Both a teacher and a learner need enough materials i.e materials which are adequate and sufficient to facilitate the teaching/learning of a given subject in general and of English in particular. But, the problem is that many schools do not have required materials, whereas they have much influence on the teaching/learning activity.

In this connection, Wright (1976:42) puts that:

> *Whatever other functions the material may have, providing interest, fun, cultural setting and so on, the main function is that of guarding the student to use this store of the foreign language to communicate his ideas and opinions.*

This means that instructional materials, including audio-visual aids and printed materials assist teaching and learning. They are needed qualitatively and qualitatively to make successful the process of teaching/learning. For they have a great importance in motivating and encouraging learners.

In Burundi the course materials refer to textbooks, accompanied by documents like teachers' guides' and syllabuses, and any written materials used by the teachers. However, many schools in Burundi do not have libraries where teachers can draw some new knowledge about what to teach. It is another problem which hampers the teaching of a language. And even where they have libraries, they are stocked with old and limited materials which cannot be sufficient for a large number of students attending in post-basic schools.

Barindogo (1994:15) notes that:

> *Some classes are often very large with as many as a hundred or more students with limited materials used in such classes, there is also the problem of the lack of space for free movement and they almost make it impossible for the teacher to organize and reorganize the class for group activities.*

When we talk about teaching materials we cannot ignore the quality and the quantity of the textbooks used in Burundi. If we try to analyze the textbooks used in English in post-basic classes in general, and in first post-basic language in particular, we notice that they are not adequate to motivate the learners' oral activity. They are a mixture of technical terms and literature terms. For example, we can see texts about geography and farming. In addition the textbooks are not sufficient because we can find that in many schools, a large class of fifty or more learners share one textbook. This will not motivate learners in post-basic to be encouraged in English learning and thus, the lack of oral performance.

To sum up, teaching materials should be basically a priority in the teaching/learning process considering their usefulness, for both teacher and learners. The teacher may loose the starting point and the continuation of his lessons if he does not have any teaching materials to resource in.

2.4.4. Interference with Kirundi, French and Kiswahili languages

Among many difficulties in foreign language learning is the interference of other languages learnt before in Burundi. Kirundi (mother tongue), French and Kiswahili can be mentioned. The interference can influence greatly the learning process of a new language to be taught. Reibel (1971:87) considers that interference is another difficulty in language for adults learners when he says that:

> *While the child as a tabula rasa, needs to consider only the primary linguistic data of one language, the adult has the idiosyncratic features of his first language as part of his intellectual make-up, and cannot extricate them from the stimulus system to which they function as responses. Hence, interference phenomena arise inevitably.*

To learn a first language (L1) is easier than to learn a second language (L2), since the adults who learn the second language will have intellectual make-up from L1 which will disturb the easy input of the features of L2.

Ndaro (1977:38) gives one problem faced by Burundi learners of English, he says that the problem resides in that English is taught very late, when Kirundi and French are already fixed in the pupils' mind as he expresses it in the following lines:

> *But, there is a problem: those young people-at least thirteen years old-begin to study English when they have the structure of Kirundi already fixed in their minds, and when they are able to speak French more or less frequently. The first mistake they will make is to try to adapt their new language they are learning to French, the only foreign language they already know.*

Ndaro (op.cit:41) gives an example of the unfamiliarity with the use of the third person singular of English verbs. A Burundian English learner will say for instance 'he eat bananas' instead of 'he eats bananas' because French ignores the morpheme 's' in the third person singular of the verb. Also, I can give another example of interference about the negative form in English. A Burundian English learner will say 'come not' in the place of 'do not come' because he refers to Kirundi form which does not need an auxiliary verb 'ntuze'. But, all these above are the matter of a habit. Ndaro (Op.Cit: 41) goes on to say, "*so speaking a language is a matter of habit, that is why most of the classroom work should consist of repetitions, conversations, pattern practices and the like.*"

This to mean that if learners were given enough communicative practice after teachers have provided them with adequate input, they would acquire the different rules of English and no longer commit mistakes.

2.4.5. The learners' attitude towards English

A number of studies have shown that a persons' attitude has an effect on his achievement. In this connection Wilkins (1977:177) said:
"*Success in learning a foreign language through instruction will vary from individual to individual ... no matter how achievement is measured and no matter how the language is taught.*" According to this quotation, the learners' success depends largely on how they like or do not like English. In the same sense, Sandra (1983:110) said: "*Ultimate success in learning to use a second language would most likely be seen to depend on the attitude of the student.*"

Another argument that supports attitude as a motor of learning a foreign language is from Candlin (1981: 45): "*...the most highly correlated prerequisites for the variables of language performance is that of the attitude taken by the students to the subject.*" In the same way, Richards (1985: 21) supports that language attitude may reflect impressions of linguistic difficulty or simplicity, ease or difficulty of learning, degree of importance, elegance, social status, etc. From the above quotations, the role of the attitude of an individual in learning a foreign language is of paramount importance. It is evident that learners try to learn what seems to them to be easy. That is why we find some who are much attracted to sciences, other to arts. A positive attitude towards a subject leads to effort whereas a negative one hampers learning.

2.4.6. The learners' motivation towards English

Besides attitude there comes another element which is motivation. The *Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics.* (1985: 185) defines motivation as "*the factor that determines a person's desire to do something*". Also, Harmer (1983:3) asserts that motivation is some kind of internal drive that encourages somebody to pursue a course of action.

Harmer subdivides motivation into two main types:

> *Intrinsic motivation which is concerned with what text plays in the classroom; and extrinsic motivation which is concerned with factors outside the classroom. He continues saying that if we perceive a goal and if that goal is sufficiently attractive, we will be strongly motivated to whatever necessary to reach that goal. Here goals are in two categories:*
>
> *- Short-term goals which include things as the urge to pass an end of a term or semester examination;*
>
> *- Long-term goals might have something to do with a student wish to get a job or become a member of the target community.*

Harmer (2010:34) identifies two types of motivation which are:

1. *Integrative motivation where the students are attracted by the culture of the target language community and wish to integrate themselves into that culture. So it is quite clear that for an integrated student during his learning process, a heavy emphasis is put on long-term objective which helps him to know the culture and language of other people, thereby, he can converse with them at ease.*
2. *Instrumental motivation is described as a situation in which a student believes that mastery of the target language will be instrumental in getting a good job, or status. The instrument is their attainment of such a goal. The extrinsic motivation is peculiar to adult learners and it has a vital influence on learners' success.*

Concerning intrinsic motivation, Harmer (1991:4) states that intrinsic motivation is concerned with that takes place in the classroom and may motivate or demotivate a learner in the learning activity. Intrinsic motivation may therefore be affected by different conditions, methods, teachers and success.

The first physical condition concerns mainly the classroom. This can alter a student, motivation either negatively or positively. A classroom which is overcrowded can be demotivating. The teaching method, I mean how learners are taught affects also their motivation. If students find the methods deadly boring they will probably become demotivated whereas if they are confident in the method they will be motivated.

Also it is good for the teacher to have a non-discouraging personality and have an adequate command of the language he is teaching. From these conditions above and others that learners can face or not, the language learning can get a good success or a failure. Other researchers like Els et al, (1984:17) on their turn define integrative motivation as follows:

> *A student is said to be integratively motivated if he wishes to learn more about the other culture community because he is interested in it to the point of eventually being accepted as a member of that other group.*

This integrative motivation appeals the learner to learn the target language in its entirely cultural world and consequently enters the target social group as one of its member. Gardener (1976:205) quoted by Basabose (2010:35) on his part states that, "*The motivation to learn a second language has been conceptualized as a combination of a positive attitude desire to learn the language and effort expended in that direction.*" This shows that a considerable desire and determination are important tools leading to success in a language learning process.

In few words learners' success in learning a language depends on many conditions or aspects which attitudes and motivation are forces to achieve success. This will play a paramount role since even though all good conditions are accomplished for a better learning process, without it, failure is likely to be experienced rather than success.

2.4.7. Linguistic Learning environment

The language environment encompasses everything the language learner hears or sees in the new language. It may include a wide variety of the situations: Exchanges in restaurants, conversations with friends, watching TV emissions, reading street signs, reading newspapers, listening to radio news, etc. as well as classroom activities-or it may be very important including only language classroom activities, a few books and records.

The quality of the language environment is of paramount importance as far as a success of the language learning is concerned.

Lado (1964: 59) focuses on the importance of the setting where one learns a language in stating that:

> *The setting influences what can be taught and what needs to be taught. In the country where the language is spoken, students will need to use it for ordinary communication in addition to whatever goals have been set up.*
>
> *When teaching in a setting where the second language is not spoken, all experiences and practices will have to be provided by the class and the teacher.*

This is to explain why Burundian learners are not able to express themselves orally since Burundi is not a good environment to English learning. The language environment may be linguistically deprived, i.e one which offers very few opportunities for language usage. Such environment may be the case illustrated by the second language acquisition in a second language non speaking country, as opposed to learning a second language in a second language speaking country.

Some African countries like Tanzania, Kenya, South of Africa and Nigeria are the reflection of the latter where everything encountered (shop signs, newspapers, TV programs, road signs ...) is in English. English learners in these countries are surrounded by language input which helps in the learning process. In other countries like Burundi, DRC, English input available for the English language learners is very poor.

In any way, the quality of the language environment is of a paramount importance as far as the success of a second language acquisition is concerned. A good learning environment stimulates interest and motivation, thus procuring oral competence. Besides this, if an environment is poor, it hinders the learning as stated by Smith (1990:39) when he states that: "*Poor learning environment depresses and militates against satisfactory learning.*"

This implies the almost absence of spoken English in Burundian learners in general, and learners of Mutaho commune in particular. In fact after classes, they do not have any opportunities to speak again English, they speak only Kirundi, their mother tongue.

2.5. Importance of the speaking skill in language learning

Anyone who knows a language or about a language will be judged by his/her ways of speaking that language. The main purpose of language is to communicate and communication is done through language, for the most time. Ndaro (1977: 37) says, "*we can then assert that speaking is quite necessary since it is the most natural means of communication*" To improve one's language learning, we need insistence on speaking the foreign language with his teacher on every possible occasion.

As far as the role of the teacher is concerned in language teaching and learning, Nasr (1972) gives certain things that a teacher can do to help his learners to learn English.

According to him, the teacher must give his learners a good model to copy, that is in a reading class. For instance, the teacher should choose the books that contain the kind of English the learners are going to need in the future. Almost all learners will need stories which give practice with everyday English. He gives a remark that the learners needs a model for the spoken language, since a learner cannot learn English pronunciation from a book. The teacher must also make things clear for his learners. The same teacher must read good books on the teaching of English and spend many hours trying to work out explanations that are at the same time clear and correct.

Nida (1957: 47) says that conversation with the tutor should be planned. For example, the learners should insist on that the tutor answers questions about his home, his family, and his travels in the target language. Using the language in this way is worth much more than the mechanical recitation of rules or the correcting of copy-book sentences. When speaking a language, the speaker should not be afraid or ashamed of making errors and mistakes in the spoken language, because, it is from mistakes that we know to speak a given language. Even native speakers commit mistakes. Allwright (1977) quoted by Niragira (2001:25), states that the spoken language is often accompanied by so many examples of slips, errors and completeness.

Even native speakers do not speak perfect language, as he puts it in the following words:

> *Native speakers constantly make mistakes when they are speaking. They hesitate and say the same thing in different ways, and they often change the subject of that they are saying in mid sentences. Except in formal situation, this is considered normal and acceptable behavior.*

So, when speaking, even in our language, we sometimes make mistakes; these are so minor and so common that the listener is not even aware of them. Then the spoken form is better than writing one.

To conclude, through the whole literature review presented above, different authors focused on the difficulties related to learning language in general and learning English in particular.

2.6. Conclusion

Inthe second chapter, the researcher reviewed and consulted different written works related to our study. The researcher consulted some books related researcher's study but there could be many that the researcher did not consult and which were in relation with our topic may be because of the time which was very short. However, we think that this chapter has given a picture of works already done in relation to our topic.



CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

Problems faced by Burundian English language learners while speaking English constitute the main concern of this study. The researcher used a number of different procedures that helped him to come up with some solutions to his study. The methods the researcher used to collect the data are classroom observation, questionnaires for teachers and learners who are the main subjects of the study. This work is a survey research, that is, a research which deals with an investigation to provide exact information. The researcher chose to use this method because he judged it convenient to the topic, which deals with the problems of speaking.

3.2. Area of the study

As the title shows, the researcher is concerned with the fact that post-basic schools learners encounter many problems in the speaking skill in English. In the researchers investigation, on those problems which may be possible causes of the lack of speaking proficiency, the researcher referred to six post-basic schools of Mutaho commune which are Lycée islamique de Mutaho, Lycée Sainte Marie Auxiliatrice de Gitongo, Lycée communal de Mutaho, Lycée communal de Muzenga, Lycée de Masango, Lycée des amis Dee Choate de Mutaho.

3.3. Sampling techniques

a. Sample population

in Mutaho commune, there are twelve Post-Basic Language Schools with thirty six English teachers and 444 first language year learners. The research could have been carried out in all the first post-basic classes of Burundi.

But the researcher realized that it was not easy or even possible to carry such a broad research. All Burundian learners could not be questioned and observed considering the researcher's economical situation and the time alloted to the research.

To carry out this research, the subjects of the research, the researcher preferred to work with are pupils of some Mutaho post-basic school in first post-basic classes. These learners were chosen because they are expected to be somehow good at English language speaking since they began to study English from the first year of primary school. Also they are chosen because they have just been sent into language section to improve their performance in different languages including English, meaning that they like English and want to learn it deeply.

b. Sample selection

Concerning the number of learners and teachers the researcher worked with, a sample was done. Among 222 learners, 76 learners were chosen to represent others. But the problem was to know if the sample number is representative enough. Then, the researcher divided total number of class by 3 randomly. The number the researcher got after dividing was taken as representative sample. After getting the sample number, the researcher distributed the questionnaire randomly until the researcher reached the sample needed.

Besides 10, teachers of English in first post-basic languages in selected schools constituted also his research population because they know the reality of what happens in their classes. They know the learners' weaknesses and strength and what is missing in order to promote the speaking skill. That is why the role of teachers in this study is of a great importance. However, not only the English teachers who were still teaching in the first basic languages were asked, but also 2 teachers who have been promoted (headmasters) but who taught English before in the concern classes. The table below shows the population and the sample of learners and teachers from the six schools.

3.4. Research instruments

a. Teachers' Questionnaire

Thirteen questions were addressed to teachers. Those teachers were grouped into two groups. First group included ten teachers who were still teaching in first post-basic languages and the second group included two teachers who are no longer English teachers but who taught it before being promoted like headmasters and so on. These teachers were questioned to get information regarding the methods they used for teaching speaking skill and materials they used and as well the impact of class size on learners performance without forgetting learners' attitude and motivation. It also helps to find out how much time is spent on teaching of the speaking skill. Also, we cannot forget that through it we have identified different problems faced by learners and different solutions to them.

b. Learners' questionnaire

Here, fourteen questions were addressed to learners. The researcher questioned the learners to collect the information about their opinions on how learning techniques/activities were organized to improve their oral ability. It was also meant to find out how much practice they had in the speaking skill as well as at outside school. Before distributing the questionnaire to the whole population, the researcher first carried on a pilot study.

Table 1: Table of Research Population and Sample

Schools	Number of first post-basic year languages learners	Sample of learners	Number of English teachers
Lycée Islamique Mutaho	39	13	2
Lycée Sainte Marie Auxiliatrice de Gitongo	40	14	2
Lycée communal de Mutaho	35	12	2
Lycée des amis DEE CHOATE de Mutaho	32	11	1
Lycée communal Muzenga	42	14	2
Lycée communal Masango	34	12	1
Total	222	76	10+2=12

3.5. Pilot study

For the success of a research, the instruments to use have to be checked before being used. That is why testing the validity, relevance and coherence of the questionnaire is of a paramount importance. In this connection, a pilot study was conducted in three schools chosen randomly among the six schools selected among the twelve post-basic schools of Mutaho commune.

Those schools are: Lycée Islamique Mutaho, Lycée communal de Mutaho and Lycée Sainte Marie Auxiliatrice de Gitongo. As far as sampling is concerned, three learners in each selected school were chosen randomly. All together, the questionnaire was given to nine learners who had to hand it back during the following lesson. The questionnaire was based on the following themes:

- Teaching/learning methods (techniques)
- Teaching materials
- Number of lessons on speaking
- Language interference

All the questions were answered correctly. Before administrating questionnaire, the terminology was adapted to the level of the learner understudy. There were no difficult words which could be misunderstood. That is why we confirmed the validity, relevance and coherence of the questionnaire and judged it worth to be distributed to the whole research population.

3.6. Classroom observation

Classroom observation had a paramount importance in the sense that it helped us to get reliable information and we thought that information we got from our informants in written form were not sufficient or could mislead us. There are some aspects of the spoken language which cannot be detected and which require someone' s presence as participant.

Direct observation allows the researcher to see the truth of what is happening at the field because the information the researcher gets may be more valuable than the one held from the informant. Wallace (1991:62) argues in favor of what he said above and puts it in the following words: *"In sport, there is a saying that the spectator sees most the game."* This means that if you are present when actors are playing you observe everything and you draw a moral lesson from the study. The observation was concerned with the speaking skill.

It was also concerned with the teaching/ learning materials, different techniques, the place of speaking activities and how much time learners got the opportunity to express themselves. The 12 lessons were observed from six schools of Mutaho Commune. i. e. Lycée Islamique Mutaho Lycée communal Mutaho, Lycée Sainte Marie Auxiliatrice de Gitongo, Lycée Communal de Masango, Lycée Communal de Muzenga and Lycée des Amis Dee Choate de Mutaho.
The researcher chosed these schools in Mutaho commune because he teaches there and he knows not only the learners' weaknesses during class time but also their capacity out of classes, i. e, in their everyday life.

3.7. Data analysis procedures

The importance of this part is to analyze the results of the observation made in classroom and the teachers' and the students' responses from the questionnaires in order to determine the level of learners' speaking performance. To do this, the results were handled through tables by using frequency and percentage. After, it was made an interpretation of each table as it was shown in the data analysis section.

3.7.1. Data from the classroom observation

The analysis of classroom observation consisted in assessing how teachers teach the speaking skill, how learners speak English in the class, how they answer their teachers. The researcher analysed also the avaibility and quality of teaching materials (audio visual aids), without forgetting other languages interference.

3.7.2. Data from the questionnaire

After collecting the teachers' answers, the researcher tried to analyze them deeply and he interpreted them quantitavely by using tables, question by question. The data were treated in such a way that from answers given by teachers and learners, the teachers would draw an objective conclusion. The

researcher analyzed them separately in order to verify if they gave answers to the research questions and hypothesis formulated before carrying out his research.

3.8. Encountered difficulties

While carrying out the research on the field, we faced number of difficulties. In the first time, it was at the end of second stage; teachers were rushing to cover the program allocated to the stage. In the second time, learners were not interested in dealing with the task as they were preparing their first exams. For this reason, some of them answered the questions without paying much attention. However, through patience and perseverance, the questionnaire has been filled and then collected some reliable data.

3.9. Conclusion

This chapter of methodology was a description of the different procedures the researcher undertook to come up with the data for this research. It shows the main steps of data collection and how they were proceeded.

Also, it pointed out the procedures of data analysis. In the next chapter, we dealt with an analysis of the data collected, and draw findings of the research.

CHAPTER IV: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4. 1. Introduction

In this chapter the researcher describes how the collected data have been analyzed and verify to what extent the findings of the research instruments match with the hypotheses formulated earlier in this work. In fact, the researcher discussed the results from classroom observation and from teachers' and learners' questionnaires in the schools where the research was carried out. This chapter comprises two sections namely data presentation, analysis and findings. The first section deals with the presentation and analysis of the results from the classroom observations carried out in different first post-basic classes year, and from the answers to the teachers' and learners' questionnaires in those classes.

The second section entitled "Findings" is centered on the results from questionnaires and the classroom observation. It discusses and deduces the possible factors that have been identified to be causes of the learners' low performance in English in general, and the problems in the teaching/learning of the speaking skill in particular.

4.2. Data presentation analysis

4.2.1. Data presentation for classroom observation

This classroom observation section consists in assessing how teachers teach the speaking skill. It consists in carrying out if language functions are taught. It shows different teaching methods and techniques, and teaching materials used during the speaking lessons.

Table 2 shows the classroom observation results "v" stands for yes, i.e this item was observed, and " - " stands for: this item was not observed.

Table 2: Classroom observation results

		Schools						Sum of item and percentage			
Item observed		L.I Mutaho	L.C Mutaho	LSMA Gitongo	LCO Masango	LCO Muzenga	L. A Mutaho	Observed	%	Not oberseved	%
Language functions	Grammar component	v	v	V	v	v	v	6	100	0	0
	Socio-cultural component	v	-	V	-	-	-	2	33.3	4	66.7
	Sound component	v	v	-	v	v	-	4	66.7	2	33.3
	Paralinguistic component	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	6	100
Techniques to oral teaching	Writing	v	v	V	v	v	v	6	100	0	0
	Telling story	v	-	-	-	-	-	1	16.7	5	83.3
	Dramatization	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	6	100
	Reading aloud	v	v	V	v	-	v	5	83.3	1	16.7
	Games	v	-	V	-	-	-	2	33.3	4	66.7

Number of speaking lessons	1 lesson	v	v	-	-	-	-	2	33.3	4	66.7
	2lessons	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	6	100
	3 lessons	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	6	100
	4 lessons	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	6	100
Teaching materials	Books	-	-	V	-	-	-	1	16.7	5	83.3
	Cassette	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	6	100
	Video-cassette player	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	6	100
	Pictures charts	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	6	100
	Dictionaries	-	-	V	-	-	-	1	16.7	5	83.3

Before interpreting the results from table 2 of classroom observation, let us make a classification of different elements of language aspects. According to Njejimana (2009:5), the various oral sub-skills under concern are classified under each component as follows:

1) Grammar component:

- Word formation
- Use of words in correct sentences
- Responding in complete sentences, etc.

2) Socio-cultural component

They appropriate language to social situation (language functions):

- How to take part in a conversation
- How to thank, to advise and to apologize,...

3) Sound component:

- Pronunciation
- Intonation
- Stress pattern

4) Paralinguistic component

- Visual gestures
- Verbal gestures

Then, from classroom observation, it has been remarked that the elements classified in the language functions were the most often taught. In six out of the six classes visited, the researcher found that teachers taught mostly grammar, while socio-cultural component, focus of our study, was taught in a low percentage that is 33.3%. The paralinguistic component on its part was never taught during the twelve lessons observed. This situation proves that in post-basic schools, teachers do not teach all aspects of the speaking skill to develop learners' oral performance. As far as communicative techniques/activities are concerned, teachers did not pay much attention to communicative activities related to language speaking.

The teachers' tendency was focused on writing and reading. Only 2 English speaking lessons the researchers observed, that is 33,3%

In all classes observed, it has been noted that no single teacher has devised his own dialogue or topic to add to the ones presented in the course book. Besides, no teacher has introduced his lesson by means of activities like telling story, games, role play, dramatization or any other activities which could create a relaxed atmosphere in the classroom. Among the six schools visited, the researcher saw only two teachers teaching their own pair of discussion lessons. This was appropriated in the sense that such an activity contribute to promoting learners' interaction. However, the topics dealt with did not match the real situations where language functions could be performed. They took one topic about agriculture among the ones suggested in the course book after each reading text. In this way, one can conclude that it is one of reasons why post-basic school learners in Burundi lack solid communicative performance.

When analyzing the result for the table 2 (classroom observation results) , it was clear that the time of speaking lessons or activities has a low frequency. From the classroom observation, the researcher has assisted only two lessons in each school among the six schools visited, i.e, 33.3% of schools visited. Here, it is clear that the time allocated to speaking skill is not sufficient. As consequence, all language aspects are not taught enough.

Concerning materials, table 2 reveals that teaching materials are not enough whereas they provide a vital importance in teaching and learning importance. The kind of text book, supplementary materials and teaching/learning aids used as well as the attention put on then may influence the teaching of languages.

However, as appearing in the table 2, the learners in some schools do not have any books. For example, at Lycée communal Muzenga, Lycée communal Masango and Lycée communal des amis Dee Choate de Mutaho, only teachers

had books. Even the 3 other schools did not have enough books. They tried to make photocopies of the main texts only or copied the text on blackboard before dealing with it. The question on how the exercises were taught was asked to the teachers. As could be expected, thy responded that they normally copied them on the blackboard, but they acknowledged this was a time consuming procedure.

Seeing this situation, the researcher asked whether they had any supplementary texts' books or dictionaries. Eleven teachers said no, because there were no libraries in which they could fetch new knowledge to support their teaching.
Concerning the teaching/learning aids, the situation was worse because in the twelve lessons observed, no single teaching/learning aid was used. In fact, teachers strictly depend on the course books. One may conclude that in most Burundi post-basic schools, teachers are not aware of the importance of teaching/learning aids. Also teaching English, they neglected oral sub-skills, whereas communicative functions are of great necessity.

4.2.2. Data analysis from Learners' questionnaire

The learners' questionnaire comprises 14 questions. Those questions were centered on different themes namely teaching materials, effective practice of speaking activities, time allocated to speaking activities, teaching methods and techniques to improve the speaking skill, and other languages interference. The answers are presented here after in tables and percentage (%) for easy interpretation of the reader.

Question 1 : How often do you speak English at school?

Table 3: Frequency of speaking English at school

Circumstances	Frequency	percentage
All the time	11	14.4
When I am in class	15	19.7
When someone talks to me in English	50	65.7
Never	0	0
Any other	0	0
Total	76	100%

From the table above, we notice that 50 learners, i.e, 65.7% responded that they speak English only when they are spoken to in English, 15 learners (19.7) said that they speak English only when they are in class whereas 11 learners (14.4%) responded that they speak English all the time when they are at school. None of them said they never speak English.

From the findings presented in this table, one can conclude that in Burundi post-basic schools, learners do not really get extra opportunities to develop their communicative abilities in the target language. This lack of opportunities to practise English may cause them to be shy and make many repetitive mistakes during speech. They may thus be afraid of speaking English avoiding to make themselves ridiculous and be laughed at.

Question 2: Do you speak English at home?

Yes ☐ no ☐

Comment.....

Table 4: Frequency of speaking English at home

Answer	Frequency	percentage
Yes	20	26.3
No	56	73.7
Total	76	100%

From this table, 56 learners (73.7) of the respondents answered by no. whereas 20 learners (26.3%) answered by yes. However, even those who said yes have hidden the truth because the researcher knows that they do not speak English when they are at home or in another place different from schools. In the comments, the respondents said that they do not speak English at home because their parents do not know it and even in the neighborhood, they are few people who can speak English.

In addition, the researcher am a full-time teacher at Lycée Islamique Mutaho and I have never heard learners interacting in English; they sometimes mix Kirundi and French and Kiswahili in their interactions. In reality, this has proved that English is not spoken outside English lessons in the classroom in the schools visited, and this maybe the case in other post-basic schools. We cannot therefore expect from our learners any improvement in English since they do not practise it. Apparently, most of the teachers do not encourage their learners to practice English both in classroom and outside class. Looking at this situation, one can conclude that English language is rarely spoken in Burundi neighborhood. Burundian learners of English speak it only when they are learning, not outside the classes. The opportunities and interlocutors for speaking of English are limited in number, space and time because of the lack of speech community.

Question 3: Which language skill do you mostly learn during the English lesson?

Table 5: Skill mostly learnt during English lessons

Answer	Frequency	percentage
Speaking	11	14.4
Listening	0	0
Reading	25	32.8
Writing	40	52.6
Total	76	100

When we look at the above table, we find that learners of English are mostly taught writing elements, i.e, 40 respondents (52.6%) and reading elements (32.8%). Speaking, i.e, 11 respondents (14.4 %) and listening with zero percentage are ignored whereas they are the important skills to develop the learners' communicative performance. This implies that English learners will develop bad attitude to speaking due to the lack of the opportunities on self production which is related to the language functions.

Question 4: How often do you learn these sub-skills?

Table 6: Frequency of different sub-skills

Answer	Frequency			
	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Pronunciation	39 (51.3%)	34 (44.7%)	3 (3.9%)	0
Grammar aspects	36 (47.3)	38 (50%)	1 (1.3%)	1 (1.3%)
Language functions e.g: thanking, apologizing, etc.	4 (5.3%)	10 (13.1%)	17 (22.3%)	45 (59.2%)
Responding in complete sentences	50 (65.8)	26 (34.2%)	0	0

From the table above, one notices that communicative functions are hardly taught. Out of 76 learners asked, 45 learners (59.3%) responded that communicative functions are never taught. The sub-skills often taught are related responding to questions (65.8%), pronunciation (51.3%) and so on.

We can conclude that the teaching of language functions in post-basic schools especially in first year languages does not have a paramount significance. The results show that the teachers focus on sub-skills related to grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation while various oral sub-skills such as communicative functions, cultural ways of life, etc. which should help learners to express themselves in English are completely neglected.

Question 5: How often does your teacher ask you to practise the following activities?

Table 7: Frequency of communicative activities

Communicative activities	Answers	Frequency	Percentage
Answering questions orally	Often	52	68.5
	Sometimes	23	30.2
	Never	1	1.3
Practicing dialogues, poems...	Often	12	15.8
	Sometimes	19	25
	Never	45	59.2
Group work dramatization	Often	8	10.6
	Sometimes	13	17.1
	Never	55	72.3
Games	Often	10	13.1
	Sometimes	16	21.1
	Never	50	65.8

Through this table about the question which tests how the learners participate in oral practice activities, my respondents revealed that practising dialogues, poems, etc. is sometimes used, but the rate is not satisfactory, only 25% of learners, i.e, 19 respondents out of 76. The activity about answering orally is the most popular. Indeed, 55 learners say that group work dramatization, games, and practising dialogues, poems, etc. are never used, the rate is very high. i.e, 72.3%, 65.7% and 59.2% respectively.

Through the table above, we notice that the majority of learners affirmed that the activities that could help learners to develop their communicative ability are not used.

From the table above, one notices that the speaking activities are not given enough time per week. This is shown by the results from the informants. Out of 76 respondents, 46 (60.6%) responded by zero lessons per week, 20 (26.3%) responded by one lesson, and 10 (13.1%) responded by two lessons while none responded by more than two lessons per week. The table reveals therefore that oral activities are given little emphasis in the teaching process. This proves that much time is devoted to teaching language structures whereas oral activities are the least practised.

Question10: What kind of examinations are you accustomed to do?

Table 12: Types of examinations learners do

Answer	Frequency	percentage
Written	72	94.7
Oral	0	0
Mixture of the two	4	5.3
Others	0	0
Total	76	100%

To this question which tested the kind of examinations that are set for learners, 72 respondents out of 76 said that only written examination are set for them. This represents 94.7%, whereas 4 respondents said that they do a mixture of written and oral examinations. As findings it is noticed that English learners are not motivated in speaking because their opportunities of spoken activities are not so many, and there is no exam to be done in that skill.

Question 11. What do you think are the causes of your poor performance in spoken English?

The respondents have enumerated many different causes of the poor performance among which:

- Lack of full time teachers;

- Lack of enough teaching materials and aids;
- Large classes;
- Lack of English linguistic environment;
- Interference of other languages;
- Lack of textbooks adapted to the speaking skill;
- Insufficient time allocated to the speaking lessons.

Question 12: What are the major problems you have when speaking English?

Table 13: Types of problems related to speaking

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of vocabulary	39	51.3
Mispronunciation	1	1.3
Fear of being laughed at	2	2.7
Fear of being misunderstood by the society	34	44.7
Others	0	0
Total	76	100%

From this table, we find that the major problem encountered when speaking English is the lack of vocabulary, i.e 39 out of 76 respondents (51.3%), 34 respondents (44.7%) responded that they fear to be misunderstood by Burundian society which is not a good English environment.

As far the remaining respondents are concerned, 2 (2.7%) said that they fear to be laughed at while one respondent (1.3%) confused that he had a problem of mispronunciation.

Question 13: How do you feel when you are learning English?

Table 14: Attitudes of learners while learning English

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Very interested	20	26.3
Interested	30	39.4
Not interested	26	34.3
Total	76	100%

Concerning the results from this table, it is noticed that 30 learners (39.4%) responded that they are interested in speaking English, 26 (34.3%) are not interested in, while 20 learners (26.3%) responded that they are very interested. From this situation, one concludes that all post-basic learners are not totally interested in English.

Question 14: Do Kirundi, Kiswahili and French have an impact on the learning and speaking of English?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

Table 15: Interference of other languages on the learning of English

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	72	94.8
No	4	5.2
Total	76	100%

This table shows how important is the impact of different languages spoken in Burundi on the learning and speaking of English.

Out of 76 respondents, 72 learners (94.8%) responded by yes, while only 4 learners said no. This shows that there is interference of other languages due to many causes including the lack of language community and so on. Interference is experienced mainly with French language. As an example, during classroom observation, one learner at lycée Islamique Mutaho was asked to give two sorts

grains and he said: "Beans and small weighters". smallweighters standing for 'peas'.In fact, interference happened in learner's thought. As far as the learner thought in French and acted in English when he translated the French word "petit poids" into"small weighters".

Question 15: According to you, what should be done to improve the learning of the speaking skill?

To respond to this question, the respondents have proposed many alternatives of what should be done. A great number of respondents proposed the following:

- To bring enough teaching materials (textbooks and teaching aids) ;
- To increase the number of full time teachers;
- The teacher should give much importance to the speaking skill and insist on it. Teachers should also oral skills;
- There should be a creation of English clubs without forgetting that teachers should increase the number of oral English activities;
- Teacher should reserve time for speaking lesson.

4.2.3. Teachers' questionnaire

Question 1: What is your qualification as an English teacher?

Table 16:The teachers' degree in English

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
IPA_5/ENS_5	8	66.7
IPA_3/ENS_3	2	16.6
Bachelor	2	16.6
D_7	0	0
D_6	0	0
Others	0	0
Total	12	100%

The data above reveal the qualifications of the teaching staff in the schools under research. We note that all teachers have a University degree, which means all teachers at post-basic level in Mutaho commune are competent to contribute to the good teaching of English in general and improvement of the speaking ability of learners in particular.

Question 2: Are you a full-time or part-time teacher?

Table17: Whether the teacher is full-time or part-time

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Part-time	8	66.7
Full-time	4	33.3
Total	12	100%

This table reveals that out of 12 teachers questioned, 8 (66.7%) respondents were part-time, while only 4 (33.3%) respondents were full-time teachers.

We deduce that teachers do not have enough time to focus on speaking activities since we know that the speaking activities need much time especially for preparation. Because speaking activities need much time, part-time teachers will not concentrate on them. As consequence, learners will deconsider the speaking forms of English.

Question 3: How long have you been teaching English?

Table 18: Experience in teaching experience

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Less than one year	3	25
One year	5	41.7
2-5 years	3	25
More than 5 years	1	8.3
Others	0	0
Total	12	100%

The intention of question 3 was to find out the teachers' experience in teaching English. The above results show that 5 out of 12 (41.7%) teachers have one year of experience, 3 (25%) teachers between 2-5 years and 3 (25%) teachers less than one year, only one has more than 5 years of experience.

All in all, we note that many of the sampled teachers are not enough experienced in teaching English. Then, this lack of teaching experience may also be one of the many different causes of the poor performance in speaking English.

Question 4: Which language skill do you mostly teach during your English lessons?

Table 19: Preference of the skills while teaching

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Writing	6	50
Listening	0	0
Speaking	1	8.3
Reading	5	41.7
Total	12	100%

This question intended to check the place given to speaking in English teaching process. From the above table, it is found that 6 teachers (50%) out of 12 prefer writing, 5 teachers (41.7%) prefer reading, one teacher (8.3%) prefers speaking while no one preferred listening. These results coincide with those from learners' ones which revealed that learners are mostly exposed to writing and reading, neglecting speaking and listening. That is why the learners will not be motivated in speaking. They are going to focus more on writing and reading elements, the drills often evaluated in tests.

Question 5: How often do you teach the following sub-skills?

Table 20: Frequency of teaching some sub-skills

Sub-skills	Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Pronunciation of individual sounds or words	Often	5	41.7
	Sometimes	6	50
	Rarely	1	8.3
	Never	0	0
Teaching grammar orally	Often	9	75
	Sometimes	3	25
	Rarely	0	0
	Never	0	0
Responding en complete sentence	Often	8	66.7
	Sometimes	4	33.3
	Rarely	0	0
	Never	0	0
Language functions (thanking, advising, apologizing…)	Often	0	0
	Sometimes	3	25
	Rarely	0	0
	Never	9	75

From the table, one notices that the language functions are given little emphasis. In fact, 9 teachers out of 12 (75%) said that they never taught language functions. Surprisingly however, it is noticed that most of the teachers often emphasize on teaching grammar, responding in complete sentences that is 9 (75%) and 8 (66.7%) respectively. While 5 (41.7%) often teach pronunciation.

These findings prove that sound and grammar aspects are privileged while social culture and paralinguistic ones like oral aspects are almost ignored. Comparing the teachers' and learners' answers, it can be concluded that teachers do not give the same attention to all sub-skills.

Question 6: How often do you use the oral communicative activities?

Table 21: Frequency of using communicative activities

Communicative activities	Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Individual oral response	Often	8	66.7
	Sometimes	4	33.3
	Never	0	0
Reading aloud	Often	10	83.3
	Sometimes	2	16.7
	Never	0	0
Pair or group dramatization	Often	4	33.3
	Sometimes	6	50
	Never	2	16.7
Games	Often	0	0
	Sometimes	2	16.7
	Never	10	83.3

One reads from the table above that reading aloud and individual reading response are the most frequently used techniques. Over 60% of teachers asked, said that each of these techniques is often used. However, pair or group dramatization and other techniques are rarely used. In fact, only 4 teachers, (33.3%) said they often use pair of group dramatization.

From these findings, one can conclude that the techniques/ activities that should be used by the teachers to develop learners' oral performance are not given sufficient emphasis.

Question 7: What types of examinations do you give to your learners?

Table 22: Types of examinations given to learners

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Oral	1	8.3
Written	8	66.8
Listening	1	8.3
Reading	2	16.6
Total	12	100%

Question 7 reveals what many teachers do while examining. 8 out of 12 teachers (66.8%) assert that they often give written examinations. Reading is used by 2 teachers (16.6%) while oral and listening examinations are done by 1teacher out of 12 that is 8.3%.

Question 8: Do you have enough materials for teaching the speaking skill? (textbooks, dictionaries, teaching aids, ...)

Yes ☐ **no** ☐

Table 23: Availability of teaching materials for the speaking skill

Answer	Frequency	percentage
Yes	0	0
No	12	100
Total	12	100%

From the table above, all teachers responded that they do not have enough materials for teaching speaking. In fact, they have said earlier that textbooks are not only sufficient but also inadequate to learners' level of first year languages and no dictionaries and no teaching aids (video-cassette, radio-cassette, pictures,...).

From the findings, the researcher deduced that the lack of materials is another hindrance to good performance of learners in English.

Question 9: Which teaching aids do you often use during the teaching of the speaking skill?

Table 24: Use of teaching aids in speaking lessons

Answer	Frequency	percentage
Video-cassette	0	0
Radio-cassette	0	0
Players	0	0
TV. Program	0	0
Telephone conversation	0	0
Pictures or charts	0	0
Others (drawings on the blackboard)	12	100
None of them	0	0
Total	12	100

From the table above, one notices that all the teaching or learning aids identified are non-existent, so, never used. The only teaching/learning aid used are drawings done by the teachers on blackboard. This situation is explained as resulting from some of the following causes:

- Most of teaching/learning aids are expensive. For example TV, radio-cassette...

- There are no language labs in Burundi.
- Pictures and charts are available in the course books but the course books are in a very small quantity and learners are exposed to them.

Question 10: Does your school have a library?

Yes ☐ **no** ☐

Table 25: Availability of libraries at school

Answer	Frequency	percentage
Yes	1	8.3
No	11	91.7
Total	12	100%

Concerning libraries, only one teacher (8.3%) out of twelve questioned said that he has a library. The school which has the library is only Lycée Sainte Marie Auxiliatrice de Gitongo. Then, the availability of libraries is no more enough.

Question 11: How much time do you allocate to the speaking activities per week?

Table 26: Frequency of speaking activities per week

Answer	Frequency	percentage
0 lesson	6	50
1 lesson	5	41.7
2 lessons	1	8.3
More than 2 lessons	0	0
Others	0	0
Total	12	100%

From the table above, one notices that speaking activities are not given sufficient time per week. This is shown by the results from questioned teachers. 6 out of 12 teachers said that they do not give any speaking lesson in the week, 5 out of twelve teachers give one lesson, only one teacher gives two lessons whereas no one gives more than two lessons. We notice that teachers do not give enough opportunities to learners to practise and be familiar with speaking activities, which is another cause of poor performance in peaking English.

Question 12: What are the major problems you encounter in teaching English oral skill?

Table 27: Teachers problems in teaching oral skills.

Answer	Frequency	percentage
English is difficult to be understood by our learners because of poor background.	3	25
Learners are passive and fear to make mistakes	1	8.3
Most of learners do not like English and are not involved because of a low level	1	8.3
Lack of adequate teaching materials	3	25
Lack of vocabulary	3	25
I am part-time teacher, I do not have enough time to prepare oral lessons	1	8.3
Total	12	100%

From the table above, one notices that, 3 English teachers out of 12 that is 25% responded respectfully that lack of adequate teaching materials as well as the lack of vocabulary and English is difficult to be understood by our learners because of poor background are the major problems while 1 teacher (8.3%) responded by saying that the major problems are learners are passive and fear to make mistakes, most of learners do not like English and are not involved

because of a low level and I am part-time teacher, I do not have enough time to prepare oral lessons.

The above table reveals that lack of adequate materials, lack of vocabulary, lack of linguistic environment, learners' passivity and shyness and the fact of being part-time teacher are the most main problems encountered by teachers in speaking teaching. Thus, it is evident that Burundian learners of English are afraid of making mistakes and being laughed at. These different problems identified by teachers are consequently among the barriers against the improvement of English among Burundians.

Question 13: What should be done to improve the teaching of the speaking skill?

Table 28: Suggestions to improve the speaking skill

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Recruit new teachers to increase teaching staff	3	25
Bring suitable materials and audio-visual materials	3	25
Reserve time for speaking lessons and give speaking test	2	16.6
Organize oral competitions at schools	2	16.6
Encourage learners to read many books	2	16.6
Total	12	100%

From the table above, the researcher noticed that 3 teachers out of 12that is 25% suggested respectfully to recruit new teachers to increase teaching staff, to bring suitable materials and audio visual materials are the good ways to improve the speaking skill. Only 2 teachers out 12, that is 16,6% suggested respectfuliy that to reserve time for speaking lessons and give speaking tests, organize oral

competitions at schools and encourage learners to read many books are the good ways to improve speaking skill. .

According to the teachers, recruiting new teachers, providing suitable materials, reserving time for speaking lessons, organizing oral competition and reading many books are some of the solution to improve the speaking skill.

4.3. Findings

This section is based on the results obtained from the instruments used to collect the data which are classroom observation made in the selected schools, learners' and teachers' questionnaire. As a matter of fact, there are many causes of low fluency and all of them cannot be discussed here.

To begin with, considering all data collected through classroom observations, learners' and teachers' questionnaire, the findings of this research prove that sound and grammar components are privileged, while speaking lessons or activities are almost ignored.

This situation shows that teachers do not teach all language aspects. English teachers concentrate only on sub-skill such as grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation while various oral sub-skills such as communicative functions which should help learners to express themselves in English competently are neglected. Hence, hypothesis one, i.e, "Teachers of English in Burundi post-basic schools do not teach all language aspects of the speaking skill to develop the learners' ability in spoken English" is confirmed.

The researcher would also like to mention that the techniques that should be used to teach the speaking skill are not efficiently used. Oral sub-skills are not well taught in Mutaho commune. According to the classroom observation date, the learners' and teachers' questionnaires, it was revealed that pair or group dramatizations, language functions, games, story telling,... are given little consideration, whereas they are the best methods to develop the speaking skill.

To clarify this idea, the researcher considered the number of teachers who used suggested techniques to improve oral skill. The result from teachers' questionnaire, question 5 and 6, and from learners' questionnaire, questions 4 and 5 showed that reading aloud, teaching grammar, teaching pronunciation, individual response,... are the only techniques and activities used to teach the speaking skill, whereas games, group dramatization, discussions, dialogues... are not given much consideration although they are the best ways to teach speaking.

In regards to the uneffectiveness of the latter techniques, one can conclude that the methods used by teachers are not appropriate to improve oral skills. So, the hypothesis 2, which stated that "Techniques and activities used by teachers hardly develop the learners performance in spoken English" is also proven right.

Another problem is the lack of linguistic environment which can have a negative or positive influence on the learning process of a foreign language in general, and of the speaking skill in particular. Post-basic schools learners in Mutaho have little field where they can practise speaking English. In their neighborhood, they cannot speak English to fear to be considered as boastful by the society. They do not have speech community and this explain their poor performance. To support this idea, Frazer (1963: 15) states: *"Home environment affects school achievement"*. And Campbell (1963: 30) asserts that: *"Home environment was more closely related to education attainment than intelligence."* From these quotations, it is very difficult to perform well in language speaking without a good language environment. Then, the hypothesis 3 which is "The speaking opportunities given in classroom are not enough to develop reasonable speaking performance of learners" is proven. Learners speak English when they are in the English class at school only. Outside the school, it is time for Kirundi or some words of French and sometimes words of Kiswahili.

At this level, there is even a further problem due to the interference between languages. Furthermore, speaking skill during the English lessons. The results of classroom observation, learners' and teachers' questionnaires have revealed that another handicap to speaking English is related to the time given to it. Here, the hypothesis 3 is also confirmed.

Moreover, the lack of enough and adequate teaching materials such as teaching aids and books related to speaking,... is another handicap to good teaching of English language learning in general, and learning of speaking in particular. This was proved by learners' and teachers' answers to questions 8 and 9 from teachers' questionnaire and 6 and 7 from learners' questionnaire in relation to the availability of adequate teaching materials.

Both respondents said that they don't have enough books. In the same line, there are no other supplementary materials except unrelevant textbooks also in a small quantity. Therefore, teachers and learners cannot enrich their knowledge, and learners cannot improve their performance. Then, hypothesis 4 which stated that "the course materials used while teaching do not enable do not enable learners to communicate effectively spoken in English" is confirmed as well.

4.4. Conclusion

As a conclusion to this section, we could say that learning a language is a process that relies on a number of factors in order to be a success. Therefore, the causes mentioned above are some among many others which were identified as the main ones causing problems to the learners of English in first years of post-basic schools in language section. In the next chapter, we draw or conclusion to the study and formulate some recommendation to the different partners in the domain of education.

CHAPTER V. CO NCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Conclusion

When the researcher chose to work on the topic, the purpose was to investigate on the different problems which can be the obstacles to oral performance in spoken English. This study attempted to answer the research questions.

We found that the different questions formulation in the first chapter have been totally answered. To prove them, we used answers from learners' and teachers' questionnaires as well as the classroom observations made in 6 schools in Mutaho commune. This study has revealed a number of facts:

First year language learners in Mutaho commune have a poor level in speaking English. This means that they have many problems in learning English among which the lack of vocabulary, the fact of not understanding English, mispronunciation, lack of adequate and enough teaching /learning materials/lack of a good language community and so on. This was noticed during classroom observations and through the answers to the questionnaire.

The findings also revealed that most of techniques used by teachers do not match with effective oral production. The study also revealed that those techniques affect negatively the learners' attitude in the learning of the speaking skill. That is why we assist poor quality of production by learners.

Thirdly, it was discovered through the study that the English learning environment does not favors good learning of English. The only classroom environment that our learners are exposed to is not enough. It should be completed by a non-classroom environment. In fact, these two learning environments should not be separated because they complete each other for efficient learning.

Fourth, it was said that the lack of English adequate teaching materials constitutes a barrier to better English language teaching/learning; these are of paramount value in foreign language teaching and learning.

Lastly, the research has revealed that the time allotted to speaking activities or lessons is not sufficient, as a result, learners fail in the use of spoken English.

To sum up, on the basis of the findings from the study, one would be right to say that the research hypotheses were confirmed and research questions got satisfying answers.

5.2. Recommendations

A number of problems that English learners encounter in their oral performance were pointed out in this study. In order to improve the teaching and learning of the oral skill, some recommendations are directed to a number of partners in the education domain:

a) To the Government in general and to the Ministry of Education in particular

I suggest that they should create a good environment for English learning by equipping schools with all kinds of teaching materials (books, cassettes, video,...)

The Ministry of education should also orginize many trainings for English teachers since they are facing a new educational system (PI: Pédagogie d'intégration= IP: Integration pedagogy).

English language should be introduced among official languages (like Kirundi and French). This should be done by teaching some of the courses in English. A great emphasis should be put on oral expression and listening comprehension aspects.

The Ministry should invest in building libraries at all Burundian schools and equipping them with appropriate and up to dated teaching materials.

b) To BEPEPF

They should supply suitable materials especially those needed in order to promote the speaking skill, such as tapes, radio-cassettes, videos, cassette players, pictures,... Books should be not only sufficient but also suitable to the level of learners.

c) To school directors and English teachers

They should create English clubs in their schools and encourage learners to practise English outside classroom. They should organize interclasses oral competitions to motivate the English learners to be eager to know more and perform like their seniors.

d)To learners,

They should be active during English lessons in order to imitate their teachers and after they should practice spoken English outside classes.

Learners should be aware of the importance of spoken English and of the major role of English today. They should participate in clubs, act in plays, organize and participate in competitions of all kinds.

e) To Examination Designers,

They should make effort to test the four basic skills of language. Because if the designers were to test all the four skills, teachers then would make effort to teach and to examine them as well.

Before ending this work, the researcher confesses that he has not exhausted the topic as his readers would expect. He hopes, however, that the ways for deeper investigation have been opened and cleared.

f) To the future researchers

They should investigate on other problems related to speaking expression in order to make a valuable contribution to the solution of those problems.

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APPENDICES

Letter to teachers

University of Burundi
Institute for Applied Pedagogy (IAP)
English-Kirundi Department

Dear Teacher,

I am currently involved in carrying out a research with official approval of the Institute for Applied Pedagogy, in English-Kirundi Department.

My research focuses on the topic: "Problems encountered by learners in developing their English performance in their speaking skill: case of first pos-basic language classes in Mutaho commune".

I would appreciate your contribution by answering the questions attached to the questionnaire. Please be assured that your answers will be treated with a close confidence.

Thank you in advance for your close cooperation.

Yours faithfully,

Emmanuel Njebarikanuye

Teachers' Questionnaire

1. What is your degree as English teacher?
   a) IPA5/ENS5 ☐
   b) IPA3/ENS3 ☐
   c) Bachelor ☐
2. Are you full-time or part-time teacher?
   a) Part-time ☐
   b) Full-time ☐
3. How long have you been teaching English?
   a) Less than one year ☐
   b) One year ☐
   c) 2-5 years ☐
   d) More than 5 years ☐
4. Which language skill do you mostly teach during the English class?
   a) Listening ☐
   b) Spiking ☐
   c) Reading ☐
   d) writing ☐
5. How often do you teach the following sub-skill (Use the following words: often, sometimes, never)?
   a) Pronunciation ☐
   b) Free communication ☐
   c) Grammar ☐
   d) Vocabulary ☐
   e) Selecting ☐
   f) Listening ☐
   g) Discourse competence ☐
   h) Others ☐

6. How often do you use the techniques/activities such as individual oral response (Use the following words: often, sometimes, never)?
   a) Individual oral response ☐
   b) Reading aloud ☐
   c) Dramatization ☐
   d) Group work dramatization ☐
   e) Pronunciation ☐
   f) Class debate? ☐
   g) Free communication ☐
   h) Others ☐
7. What king examination do you give to your learners?
   a) Oral ☐
   b) Written ☐
   c) Listening ☐
   d) Reading ☐
8. Do you have enough materials for teaching (Textbooks, Dictionaries, Libraries …)
   a) Yes ☐
   b) No ☐

9. Which teaching aids do you often use during the teaching of the speaking skill?
   a) Video-cassette ☐
   b) Radio-cassette players ☐
   c) TV program ☐
   d) Television conversation ☐
   e) Pictures or charts ☐
   f) Others ☐

g) None of them ☐

10. Does your school has a library

a) yes ☐

b) No ☐

11. How much time do you allocate to the speaking activities?

a) 0 lesson ☐

b) 1 lesson ☐

c) 2 lessons ☐

d) More than two lessons

12. What major problems do you encounter in teaching English oral skills?

.....

.....

13. What should be done to improve the teaching of speaking skill?

.....

.....

Letter to learners

University of Burundi
Institute for Applied Pedagogy (IAP)
English-Kirundi Department.

Dear student,

I am a student at the University of Burundi. This questionnaire is an attempt to investigate the problems hindering the teaching/learning of the speaking skill in post-basic classes of Burundi post basic schools. A case first post-basic language classes in Mutaho commune.

The results from this research could improve the quality of teaching and learning conditions for you and those coming after you. You have to be as honest as possible in giving your contribution by answering the questions in this questionnaire.

Please, be assured that your answers will be treated with a strict confidence and for academic purposes only. There is no need to mention your name.

Yours sincerely,

Emmanuel Njebarikanuye

Learners' Questionnaire

1. How often do you speak English at school?

- All the time ☐
- When I am in class ☐
- When someone talks to me in English ☐
- Never ☐

2. Do you speak English at home? Yes ☐ No ☐

Comment :.....

3. Which language skills to you mostly learn during the English lesson

a) Listening ☐
b) Speaking ☐
c) Reading ☐
d) Writing ☐

4. How often do you learn this sub-skills?

a) Pronunciation ☐
b) Free communicative ☐
c) Discourse competence (How to start a conversation, how to interrupt, etc.) ☐
d) Selecting listening ☐
e) Grammar ☐
f) Vocabulary ☐
g) Others ☐

5. When you are in class, how often does your teacher make you to do the following:

a) Answering to question orally ☐
b) Reading around ☐
c) Dramatizing (dialogues, texts, poems, ...) ☐
d) Discussing in group ☐
e) Discussion in pairs ☐

f) Debate in the classroom ☐

g) Language games ☐

h) others ☐

6. Does the course book you use help you to improve your speaking skill?

a) Yes ☐

b) No ☐

Why?

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7. Which teaching/learning aids do you often use in your learning speaking sub-skills?

a) Video-cassette ☐

b) Radio cassette players ☐

c) Television programs ☐

d) Telephone conversations ☐

e) Pictures or charts ☐

f) Others. ☐

8. Is the time devoted to speaking activities (skill) per week sufficient?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Why?

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9. How much time does your teacher allocate to speaking activities per week?

- One lesson ☐
- 2 lessons ☐
- More lessons ☐
- Zero lesson ☐

10. What kind of examinations are you accustomed to do?

- Written ☐

- Oral ☐

-A mixture of the two ☐

11. What are the causes of poor performance in spoken English?

-Lack of full-time teacher ☐

- Lack of enough teaching materials and aids ☐

- Large classes ☐

- Lack of English linguistic environment ☐

-Interference of other languages ☐

- Lack of adequate textbooks to speaking skill ☐

- Insufficient time allotted to speaking lessons ☐

12. What are the major problems you have when speaking English language?

- Lack of vocabulary ☐

- Pronunciation ☐

- Fear of being laughed at ☐

- Fear of being misunderstood by Burundian society ☐

- Others ☐

13. Do Kirundi, Kiswahili and French have a negative impact on the learning and speaking of English? Yes ☐ No ☐

14. According to you what should be done to improve the learning of speaking skill?

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Classroom observation guide

Items to observe	Appreciation
Language functions	
Teaching methods and techniques	
Interference of other languages	
Teaching materials	
Speaking lessons	