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Developing the speaking skill in centres for teaching english as a foreign language to adults in burundi : a case study conducted on advanced level learnrs at ELC

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2004
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UNIVERSITY OF BURUNDI

FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE
AND LITTERATURE

DEVELOPING THE SPEAKING SKILL IN CENTRES FOR TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE TO ADULTS IN BURUNDI: A Case Study Conducted On Advanced Level Learners at ELC

By

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree **"LICENCIE EN LANGUE ET LITTERATURE ANGLAISES"**

Bujumbura, June 2004

DEDICATION

To my late grandparents Gabriel BARICANA and Constance BARAGAHORANA for their unfailing love,

To my parents, brothers and sisters

I do dedicate these pages.

ACKNOWLEGEMENT

The accomplishment of the present work was possible thanks to the help of some people to whom I would like to express gratitude.

First and foremost, my special thanks are addressed to Doctor RWANTABAGU Herménégilde, Supervisor of this thesis, who kindly accepted to supervise this work from its earliest steps to its last shape. It would not have been completed had not been his suggestions and criticism.

My deepest acknowledgments are also due to Mr. Benjamin NDAYISABA, Lecturer in the Department of English Language and Literature whose comments and corrections were vital to the completion of this work.

My sincere gratitude goes directly to all the teachers in primary and secondary schools and Lecturers of the Departments of English Language and Literature who provided me with fruitful training.

I also would like to thank a number of teachers and learners at ELC for their cooperation and availability in answering in my research questionnaires.

I particular owe more than I can express to my uncle Vincent BARICANA and his family who kindly offered means to type this work. Sincerely, my heartfelt thanks are expressed to him

All my thanks are addressed to my uncles and aunts with special regards to Martin BARICANA for all that he has done since my childhood up to the present time.

I would be ungrateful on my part not to express thanks to the secretaries Fidès GAPFASONI and Jeanine NDAYIKENGURUKIYE for their endeavour and patience in typing this work.

Last but not least, I would like to acknowledge my debt of gratitude to my cousins, other relatives and friends for their moral and material support in need.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BBC	: British Broadcasting Corporation
EFL	: English as Foreign Language
ESL	: English as Second Language
ETC	: English Teaching Centre
f.eg	: For example
i.e	: Id Est (that is)
UNDP	: United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	: United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	: United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
WFP	: World Food Program
WHO	: World Health Organisation

ABSTRACT

Throughout this study, **Developing the Speaking Skill of Adults Learners** has been main concern. In fact, when I noticed a rapid proliferation of centresdealing with thé English Language Teaching, I asked myself the reason for that situation. I also noticed that the demands from adults for English Language instruction had increased beyond all expectations. This situation is rather justified in this sense that the combination of political influence and technological superiority acquired through the British imperialism in the 19thCentury and the economic influence of the USA has given English an advantage over other major imperial languages such as French and Spanish.I therefore asked myself whether those teaching centres could really meet the learners' expectations of being good communicatiors in the English Language.

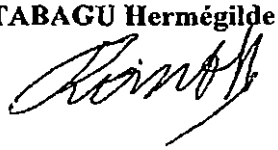
In addition,improvement in telecommunication and faster methods of transport have apparently shortened distances between nations and people feel an urgent need to interact. That is the reason why Burundians need to learn other languagesto break geographical barriersimposed by foreign languages.

In this logic I thought of giving my contribution in searching ways to improve the speaking skill teachingto adults learners by suggesting modern teaching methods to use throughout this study: « **DEVELOPING THE SPEAKING SKILL IN CENTRES FOR TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE TO ADULTS IN BURUNDI: A Study Conducted on Advanced Level Learners at ELC.** »

To achieve that aim, I used 3 methods: Classroom Observations, Questionnaires for teachers and learners and Interview.Afterwards, I proceeded with the Data Analysis Procedure. I came up with conclusions concerning the problems whichhamper success in English language teaching in general and the speaking skill in particular.

Finally, I suggested some recommendations to course designers , teachers, learners and the government for the sake of the success of the English skill teaching/ learning processand hence for effective communication among people from all the parts of the world.

Dr. RWANTABAGU Hermégilde (Directeur de mémoire)



Prosper BARUTWANAYO

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, there is evidence of world progress in various domains. As a matter of fact, improvement in telecommunications has had important effects in the world. For instance, thanks to modern electronic system people can communicate and keep in touch with others who are thousands of kilometres away. Also, with the help of electronic mail and fax machines it is possible to send a message from one continent to another in the shortest possible time.

Moreover, faster methods of transport have apparently shortened distances between nations and people have come much closer to one another. Today, people claim to belong to one international community. Thus, once people are brought closer they feel an urgent need to interact. They need to help one another in solving some problems, to do commerce and keep good relationship among them. But this goal of interactions cannot be achieved when they do not speak the same language. People then feel a strong desire to learn languages other than their own. It has been noticed that countries which are politically and economically powerful impose their languages throughout the world. Therefore, English is the most widely learned and spoken language (as a second foreign language) in the world.

Obviously, however, Speech is our close concern throughout our lives. Therefore, for the sake of effective communication and goods relationships among people, we need a developed speaking ability in a foreign language and this should basically be considered in teaching EFL. In this connection, GATELL quoted by YONKORO (1977: 4) notes:

> *Speech is the most important part of the language and instruction should be based on the patterns of spoken English.*

In addition, a developed ability in foreign language is even more important than any other skills namely listening, reading and writing in this sense that, apart from its social and academic advantages, it provides the learner with the faculty to learn, to read and write in it.

To stress this, ROBERT, L. (1961: 239) says:

> *The ability to speak a foreign language is without doubt the most highly prized language skill, and rightly so, he who can speak a language well and can also understand it and can learn to read it with relative ease unless it happens to be a language like Chinese or Japanese, whose writing systems constitute major learning problems of their own. Also, the ability to speak a language will greatly expedite and facilitate to write it.*

In other words, the speaking skill is of paramount importance in communication. Hence, it needs a prominent place in foreign language teaching. Then Researchers should continually seek ways to improve the speaking skill of adult learners by suggesting modern teaching methods to use. In this perspective, I hope to give my contribution in this research work entitled: **DEVELOPING THE SPEAKING SKILL IN CENTRES FOR TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE TO ADULT IN BURUNDI: A Study Conducted on Advanced Level Learners at ELC.**

This study is divided into four chapters as follows: Following the general introduction, chapter one deals with the Problem, Chapter two focuses on Literature Review, Chapter three concerns Methodology while Chapter four is about Data Analysis and Findings. Then, General Conclusion and Recommendations close this study.

CHAPTER 1: THE PROBLEM

1.1. Background to the Problem

The English language has by necessity become a means of communication between many nations. We need not reminding that English is the native language of the most powerful country, the USA; and also Canada; Britain; Australia, and New Zealand. Moreover, it is the common tongue in India, Pakistan and many of the emergent African nations like South Africa, Nigeria and many others.

It is the first world language in international commerce and science. This shows that English is the most widely used language throughout the world. Even the most reticent countries like China, Russia …known to be much sticking to their cultures and languages have decided to acquire English. The reason of that situation can be that in many books today including most new reference books are a celebration of English language. There is much to celebrate because English has established itself as a lingua franca throughout the world, so that Chinese airline pilots overflying Eastern Siberia communicate with soviet ground controllers in English…

In addition, as BRUMFIT, C.J (1985) claims it,

> *The predominance of English is mainly the result of two periods of world domination by English speaking countries: British imperialism in the 19th century and the economic influence of the USA in the 20th century.*

The combination of political influence and technological superiority acquired through these two successive movements has given English advantage over other major imperial languages such as French and Spanish.

But to return to the situation as it exists in Burundi today, it is well known that the demands from adults for language instruction have increased beyond all expectations these days. The reasons are various.

First of all, most Burundi's neighbouring countries use English as an official language. Such countries are Tanzania, Rwanda, Kenya, Zambia and Uganda. So, it is important for Burundians to know English for the sake of communicating with

neighbours. Also, the pressure of the need for foreign language learning is being built up in another way namely through the general expansion of international communications. Needless to recall the role of powerful radio stations like BBC, VOA...in informing people about the world. In addition, there has been the growth of international agencies such as UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP,...and other organs of technical aid like WFP, WHO, ...and there is an increasing number of people needing a practical ability in English to apply for jobs in those international agencies. Besides, some people may need English for business purposes; some others because they may be ambitious to go abroad where English is used as a means of communication.

In all cases, all those categories of people mentioned above need a practical knowledge of English in relation to their various needs and objectives and they are constantly increasing in number.

Consequently, to face this situation, many centres dealing with the teaching of English language have been created. Very few of them are legally recognized but others are not. Most of people prefer non-registered places because they are cheap. Learners pay less money than those in officially recognized places like ELC.

However, in most cases, such places do not have qualified teachers or well-designed syllabuses to follow.

Mostly, people who attend classes at those different places are out of school adult learners who did not have the chance to study English at school or who would like to improve their speaking ability. So we understand that the emphasis should be mainly put on the teaching of speaking skill.

In short, the English language having become a medium of communication most widely used in the world; it is a major requirement for all citizens in Burundi. It is very important to emphasize it whenever possible for all Burundians to benefit from whatever opportunities English offers and more importantly the speaking skill deserves a prominent place in language learning for communication purposes.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Since English has come to dominate other languages in the world almost in all domains namely science, literature, commerce, politics, ...people need to learn it.

Thus, it is not surprising that here in Burundi a decision has been taken recently to start the teaching of English in primary schools.

Moreover, apart from scholars and students, there is a large number of people out of school needing to learn English. Then they go to attend classes in various places where English is taught.

The main purpose for such people is to be able to use English in conversational situations. They need to be able to express themselves without any significant problems. Then the speaking skill is emphasized in those places.

Nevertheless, this does not mean that at the end of the course we get the type of learners we initially expected, that is, a good fluent English speaker. We notice that problems in oral expression are still common place.

This situation leads us to ask ourselves the cause of that failure to speak English fluently and naturally.

Among the recurrent reasons that hamper the adult learners'speaking skill development we can mention the insufficient time for teaching oral expression, that is the time allocated to speak practice, little practice out of the classroom, lack of adequate and appropriate teaching materials such as cassette players, unqualified teachers,....

To confirm those possible reasons, here are some research questions to be answered:

- Which of the language skills deserves the most prominent place in modern language teaching?
- What are the factors which interfere with the speaking skill development in adult learners?
- What are the methods and strategies to adopt to face those problems for effective oral communication?
- Does the course material actually offer enough practice to learners?
- Does the content match with the needs of learners and their general age category?

1.3. Justification of the Study

As I mentioned it earlier, the English language is the most widespread medium international communication. Here are some statistics concerning its users. According to STREVENS, P. (1980: V)

> *.....it is estimated that the number of those who use English now exceed 600 million, of whom about 300millions are native speakers while another 300 million are users who have "picked up" the language or have learned it through formal instruction to a level where they can use it for a purpose.*

These statistics were obtained around 1970 and it is absolutely sure that both the native and non-native speakers of English have since enormously increased in number.

Moreover, it is observable that many scientists and technologists whose languages are not learned and used at the international level routinely report their works in English.

In addition, we are aware of the inadequacies of current English language teaching in Burundi. Too much emphasis is laid on the teaching of forms of English rather than the use of English.

Thus, with respect to the great importance of English language in world communication, all Burundian citizens both young and adult should learn it. This would help them to break the geographical barriers and hence get access to wider information and knowledge.

Therefore, of the four skills-listening, speaking, reading and writing – the speaking skill should come in the first position in language teaching, as it is the most crucial in communication.

In the same line, HAVERY, B. (1968: 2) claims that too many have found mastering the basic skills of reading and writing correctly and intelligibly so difficult as to cause boredom and frustration". He further says:

> *It is being realized that the development of oracy is much more valuable for the lives of those who will never travel far along the academic road.*

This view fits our study provided that adult learners here in Burundi aim at mainly oral communicative objectives and not the academic ones.

For this reason, researchers should continually seek ways of overcoming that difficulty in the teaching of the speaking skill and hence help learners speak English naturally and fluently for communication purposes.

Briefly speaking, English speaking is a major requirement for many Burundian citizens and the speaking skill should be paramount in language teaching for communicative and educational objectives but also for the sake of our country's development and interactions with the rest of the world.

1.4. Motivation

Today, I notice a rapid proliferation of centres dealing with the English language teaching. This leads to ask myself the reasons for that situation.

Furthermore, I notice that few Burundians can speak English fluently. Even at the university level in the English Department, I noticed that students still have serious problems in oral expression though they spent many years studying English. Now the question is to know how teachers at those centres manage to develop the speaking ability of their learners to the point of becoming good communicators in a so short time. Do they really achieve that goal?

In addition, those adult learners attend classes with different needs and objectives. Then the question is to know the extent to which the teachers manage to provide each one of the learners with enough needed knowledge which matches with his/ her initial needs and objectives.

In short, as one can realize it, I was motivated by personal curiously. It was the search for answers to those questions that motivated me to carry out a study on this topic.

1.5. Purpose of the Study

As I mentioned it earlier, people learn a foreign language mainly because they want to communicate in it. The foreign language learners need a developed speaking ability to enable them to cope with everyday situations. For this reason, foreign language learners should put much emphasis on fluency.

To emphasize this idea of the importance of fluency in language teaching, ELLIS, R. & TOMLISON, B. (1980: 16) wrote:

> *... it is important to encourage fluency in natural conversation. Oral work should help the pupils to speak smoothly, with confidence using real speech forms which are situationally appropriate. The emphasis should be on referential (i.e the ability to communicate meaning clearly and naturally) rather than on correctness.*

Thus, the main aim of this work is to help the English adult learners to communicate effectively in real situations by suggesting activities and modern teaching methods and techniques which the teachers may use while teaching English as a foreign language. To achieve this goal, I will have to find out some possible problems which interfere with the real development of those adult learnrs' speaking skill for which possible solutions will be suggested.

1.6. Method Used

For the collection of the data, there were two questionnaires: one for the teachers another one for learners.

Questionnaires were given to all the learners and teachers. Afterwards, the analysis and interpretation of the answers would follow.

Moreover, I gathered the data using classroom observations method. I visited some teaching classes in relation to my research topic. In so doing, I became aware of the problems that make the adult learners to fail to communicate effectively and naturally in English.

Furthermore, I used the method of interview. In asking some oral questions the learners I could become aware of their views on the problems they encounter in acquisition of speaking skills.

Finally, various readings have helped me to gather information concerning my research topic.

Briefly speaking, to collect the data, I used questionnaires, interview, classroom observations and information from various books about learning and teaching.

1.7. Theoretical Framework

This study is constructed around four general main principles. They are suggested by CUNNINGSWORTH, A. (1984) and based on good language teaching practice.

1) Keep your learner's learning needs in mind

Needs are not limited solely to considerations of the language. Learners have also intellectual and emotional needs.

According to CUNNINGSWORH, A. (1984: 6):

> *Learners particularly adult ones need to feel that the material from which they are learning has relevance to the real world and at the same time relates positively to aspects of their inner make-up such as age, social attitudes, intellectual ability and level of emotional maturity.*

Therefore, teachers are encouraged to make use of the knowledge and interests of the learners so that the classroom activities become relevant.

2) Relate the teaching materials to your aims and objectives

As CUNNINGSWORTH, A. (1984: 5) said:

> *It is very important that the teaching materials used should take the learners forward as directly as possible towards his objectives. The objectives*

> *should be decided first, in line with the overall aim of the teaching program, and the materials should be sought which can be related to those objectives. The aims of the teaching program should determine the course materials to be used and not vice versa.*

In other words, we set the objectives of the teaching materials in line with the learners' needs and interests.

CUNNINGSWORTH, A. (1984: 8) further indicated that the language he learns will be useful and have communicative potential, but it will also be structurally simple and will be graded as the course progresses with the increasing complexity.

In other words, he meant clearly that a dish of grammar is necessary to complete a plate of language functions for the sake of communicative effectiveness.

3) Be aware of what languages is for and make learning activities relevant and purposeful

Teaching must have as its base a consideration of what the learners need to learn, that is, what they will do with English on completing their course.

My main concern is the English used primary for communicative interaction. There is a space in English teaching for the drill and language functions and, indeed that space will often be a large one.

Nevertheless, I stress that the real aim of English is to bring the learner to a point where he can use the English language for his own purposes, and this goes far beyond manipulating structural drills.

4) Consider the relationship between language, the learning process and the learner

As many writers agree on it, the language, the learning process and the learner are all three vital aspects of language teaching and it is essential that the teaching materials should keep all the three constantly in view and never become so preoccupied with one whereas others are left behind.

Consequently, the learning activities must be interesting and enjoyable to the learner but they will not be of much help if they are not presented and practiced systematically so that the new language items can easily be assimilated by the learner.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Background to the Teaching Skill in Foreign Language Teaching

2.1.1 Historical Context

Although the teaching of the speaking skill has a long history, it has only made a decisive impact on foreign language teaching after Second World War. Initially, much attention was devoted to the teaching of pronunciation, listening to and repeating vowels and intonation patterns.

During the last three decades, however, horizons for most foreign language teachers have widened. The old goals have been broadened to include spoken communication, and the understanding of native speakers on the widest range of human interests.

Many writers including LADO, R. (1961:7) claim:

> *Language teaching must proceed to teach language in use.*

This sudden change of goals resulted in the fact that the public became painfully aware of the failure of the language teaching profession to train students in communicative oral abilities.

In fact, with the advent of World War II, the United States realized the necessity to have different languages which could be understood by the military to be able to interact with allies.

They then developed a program "The Army Specialized Training Program" with the purpose of getting learners who could attain conversational proficiency. The claim is that methods in which learners never engage in real communication cannot be expected to produce students able to communicate using the language they learn.

The schools were reported to be greatly successful as students learned to communicate in a wide variety of languages and the goals of the military were met.

This new methodology came to be known as AUDIOLINGUALISM in which the emphasis was to be on oral-aural activities with dialogue practicing, dialogues constructed around real life situation. Its expansion was fast.

Later, however, Audiolingualism came under strong criticism from theoretical linguists. Teachers and learners found the specific practices excruciatingly boring. While there were serious problems with audiolingual practices, the shortcomings of the approach have been exaggerated by its opponents. One of the problems was the insistence on the development of oral skills with no use of print materials.

The claim that learners learned oral skills without reference to the written material, and the written code of the native language would supposedly cause interference in learning the target language, resulting in the transfer of the native language habits of pronunciation into the target language. Another criticism was that students simply repeated the drills without understanding what they were saying being focused neither on the meaning of the sentence nor on the new rules they contained.

An even more serious criticism was that such drills were no real communication since they transmitted no real messages.

So, other methods were invented like "COGNITIVISM" which emphasizes the conscious understanding of the rules being practiced as a way of reaching communicative proficiency. Other methods flourished. Let use admit, however, that "THE COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH" seemed to have achieved consensus as successful in the teaching of spoken language. I will explain this approach in detail in the followings pages. Nevertheless, it is still clear that is no scientific, evidence that the teaching of spoken English is a secure, tried-and-tested approach to lean upon. Teachers are free to choose and use what method has been successful. It is not, however, our purpose to write a history of methodology, but to place the teaching of spoken English in its historical context.

2.1.2 Problems and Theories in Spoken Language Teaching

In spite of the emphasis over the past free decades on oral-aural teaching in language teaching, and despite the sophisticated hardware to facilitate such approaches, many advanced learners are considerably more capable of reading and

writing and understanding the spoken language. There are people who even after years of studying English native speaker when they try to speak they are characteristically hesitant, inarticulate, imprecise and incoherent though they may have a good performance in written English.

There many reasons for that imbalance. Many writers including DICKINSON, L. & MACKIN, R. (1970: 33) say:

> *Learning to comprehend the target spoken language and learning to speak it are notoriously difficult than leaning to read and write it.*

Moreover, most of cases, time is unequally imparted to skills. Curricula concentrate more on literacy skills (reading and writing) than on oral skills (speaking and listening). It follows consequently that learners master those skills upon which the curricula concentrate more.

Apart from that, modern teaching theorists agree that foreign language is difficult. HARVERY, B. (1968: ix) claims that "the foreign language teacher is at serious disadvantage compared with colleagues who teach the mother tongue". He works, according to the same author, under a fourfold handicap: first he is usually given a very limited time table.

Second there can be lack of motivation for learners. No one will of course deny that we learn best what we want to learn. However, this problem is rarely met with adult learners because they willingly come with personal objectives.

Third, for adult learners, foreign language learning being at the stage when their powers of imitation are at their weakest point. Lastly, we start teaching a foreign language when what is called interference has become a positive hindrance.

In addition, as also noticed by DICKSON, L. & MACKIN, R. (1970: 33), while there are unlimited opportunities for students to gain a practice in reading and writing the target language, the opportunities to practice conversation in the target language with native speakers are generally few.

Despite these difficulties, however, we are much more ambitious and we go so far as hope that we achieve the results in a foreign language comparable with those we

achieve in our own language. Is there a way of overcoming those obstacles, of reaching that objective in a reasonable time? In every teaching situation, there are three basic factors: the pupil, the teacher and the method including the material to be taught. Indeed, to ensure success in teaching, there must be willingness of learners and teachers. In addition, the materials and the method used must be appropriate.

According to HARVERY, B. (1968: 2) "Success depends very largely on how suitable the method is for the teacher and on how well the teacher can adapt himself to the learner". He also states (1968: 3):

> *The learner is what he is and we must accept him as he is. The teacher must have the proper training to be prepared for his formidable task so that he improve his proficiency. Like an engineer, he must always be bringing his knowledge and skill up to date.*

And finally, the same author indicates that the method is one most open to improvement. This means that the method which is described in books can be changed or modified according to such factors as size of the classroom, the number of learners, KRASHEN, D. &T. (1988: 65) wrote:

> *A decision on methods and materials to be used in a course is possible once the goals of that courses have been set according to the needs of the students and their particular interests*

Therefore, the relative importance given to the language study and to the language learning of various skills will necessarily vary according to the needs of students. Hence, it is evident that goals and aims of any course are specified on the basics of the needs of learners.

Besides, researchers in teaching field found out another important factor - motivation- that counts for failure or success in spoken production and suggested ways to improve it. According to CUNNINGSWORTH, A. (1984: 59), "Motivation is the most important single factor for success or failure in language learning. A well-motivated student badly taught will probably do better than a poorly-motivated students well taught".

CUNNINGSWORTH, A. (1985: 59) further suggested that motivation can be improved. He states this:

> *We should look for the teaching materials which have variety and pace, attractive appearance and activities leading to personal involvement in the learning process, and activities with a competitive or problems-solving element item. A course book that is going to interest the learner should contain something that he wants to learn about or involve himself in, quite apart from the language itself.*

He then indicates that interaction in the classroom is as realistic as possible, or better, real in the full sense of the word, because the students are using English to express what they actually think and feel and so are using English realistically.

It follows that we should encourage our learners to, talk about themselves and other real people and to discuss real topics that are of immediate interest.

In the same line of raising motivation among learners, CUNNGSWORTH, A.(1980: 60) point out that the materials should allow the students to draw on present realities as on distant future goals. He also claims that a good deal of emphasis is placed on the expression of feelings and attitudes on the part of leaner, together with a sense of sharing and supportiveness in the class as whole.

In brief, we can say that motivation along with needs for learners constitute an important factor for success in teaching and learning communication in a foreign language.

2.1.3. EFL / ESL

Another important point we need to consider relates to the distinction between a foreign and a second language because they have an effect on teaching/learning processes.

According to some scholars these two terms are different.

To make the distinction between the two terms, DUBIN, F. & OLSHTAIN, E. (1977: 2):

> *The term EFL (English as a Foreign Language) and ESL (English as a Second Language) are used to differentiate between the teaching of English as a subject area alone (EFL) as contrasted with teaching of English as a language along with its use as a medium of instruction.*

The view of STREVENS, P. (1980: 20) is not different from the one above. He states that the second language situation exists where the language has special language status in the community (usually for historical reasons) as an official language in the courts, as the medium of instruction in some sectors of public education, etc. He also asserts that when the language being learnt is a foreign language, no such favourable external circumstances exist, and the language is on a par with all others that are taught.

Furthermore, viewed in the angle of teaching practice, ELLIS, R. and TOMLINSON, B. (1980) claim that the same methods cannot be used to teach ELS and EFL. In fact, the learners of EFL probably know hardly any English at all before he receives his first English lesson; on the other hand, the learner of ESL will have picked up some English before he has his first English lesson but in most cases he will have attained only a low level of competence.

In the same line, the same authors (1980: 2) put this way:

> *Most of the methods of teaching EFL (i.e TEFL) are inappropriate for teaching ESL (i.e TESL). Some methods of EFL are useful. In general the*

> *teacher of EFL should adopt and work out methods of teaching suitable for the language background and level of competence in English of his own particular learners.*

In short, there is a different between EFL and ESL and this has implication on the English teaching practice. Besides, in accordance with the different views of the writers above, I can say that English is learnt as foreign language here in Burundi.

2.2. The Speaking Skill

2.2.1. Skills Order and Primacy

As many writers including LADO, R. (1961: 24) wrote:

> *Proficiency in target language includes the four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing*

Translation and interpretation are excluded because, as they said, "they are separate professional skills which are essential to the interpreters and not for the language teachers". It follows then that the approach in general language courses is to try to develop those four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing).

Which of the skills should receive prominence?

According to DUBIN, F. & OLSHTAIN, E. (1977:58),

> *The fact that reading and writing are learned after the speech skills in the native language is often used to justify the general accepted sequence in foreign language courses: listening, speaking, reading and writing.*

In fact, no one disagrees that a child first learns to listen and speak his mother tongue. Reading and writing come later when he can fully control this muscles activity skilfully.

In addition, no one disagrees either that we all spend far more time in speaking than we do in reading and writing. Speech with listening is our close concerns through our lives.

It follows that then that proper kind of education in speech is very important provided that our learners are adult people willing to learn English to use it in spoken situations and not for academic purposes.

2.2.2. Relationship with Other Skills.

As I pointed out earlier, proficiency in a language involves the knowledge of the four skills namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. However, as CUNNINGSWORTH, A. (1984: 43) claims it,

> *Being able to communicate effectively in English means being proficient in the various language skills. Involved in communication process but it means more than being able to perform in each of the four skills separately. It also means being able to use the skills effectively in various combinations depending on the nature of the interaction.*

As he goes on arguing, conversation for instance, involves the use of the speaking and listening skills not independent of each other but in very close combination.

Hence, it is evident that the speaking skill is sometimes interwoven with other skills. It is thus worthy to analyse them.

2.2.2.1. Speaking versus Listening

In a conversation, speaking and listening are not separate, unrelated activities which happen to occur at the same time and in the same place. What one participant in the conversation say will to some extent be determined by what he hears from the other participant.

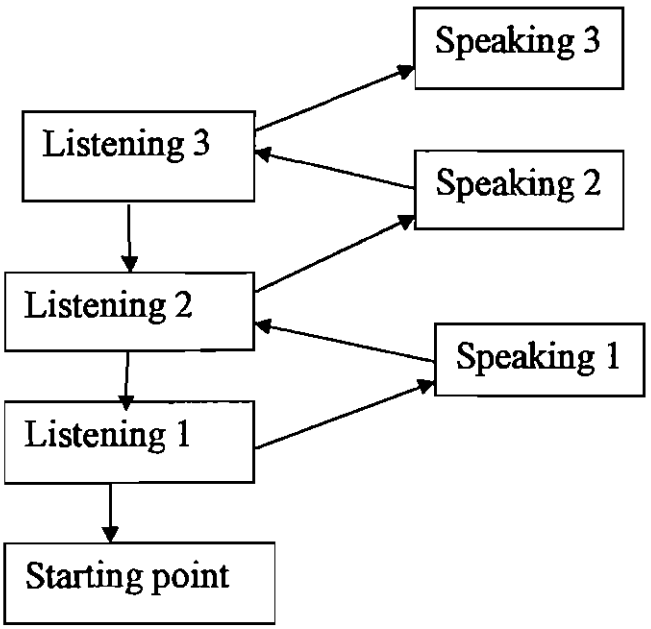
HARVEY, B. (1968: 9) claims that training in spoken English implies then, training in listening. According to him, a good listener is alert, sympathetic and

critical. He is concentrated not only to take in the meaning in the sense of intellectual content but also to respond to the emotive overtones.

Moreover, a good listener has to communicate and is prepared to respond and to make allowances for those hesitations, uncertainties, imprecision, ... in free speech, he will be aware of the tones of voice that are inappropriate to the subject matter and fail to convey the full meaning.

As far as the view of DUBIN, F. & OLSHTAIN, E. (1977: 56) is concerned, the listening and speaking skills are reciprocal. One reinforces the other. The learner starts at receiver's and experience being the speaker as well.

The following diagram shows the mutual reinforcement that takes place during this early stage of mastering the listening and speaking skills.



DUBIN, F. & OLSHTAIN, E. (1977: 77) summarize this relationship as "you begin to hear it after you have tried to say it; you say it better after you have learned to hear it".

In short, I can say that the listening and speaking skills are very closely interrelated and complementary in speech situations.

2.2.2.2. Speaking versus Reading

In one case, Speaking differs from reading as there are many people who can communicate well without being able to read. In another case, speech and reading activities are associated.

When reading a newspaper or a book, it is uncommon to read it out or paraphrase a short article or extract; or comment on a newspaper or a story to someone sitting nearby. That person is likely to respond with at the very least a brief comment to acknowledge what has been said. Therefore, one can realize that a reading activity may well involve speaking and understanding speech as associated activities.

In addition, there are cases of homonyms as well, for instance: "bear" (to carry) versus "bear" (animal) where spelling does not help us to make a distinction.

It is during the early stage of the teaching of the mechanics of reading that we want to take advantage of the correspondence between orthography and sounds. In this way, the speaking and reading skills, at this early stage reinforce each other. Moreover, it will be easier for the pupils to recognise the difference in sound between "cap" and "cape" or "pen" and "pan" to learn the graphic distinctions pertaining to such pairs.

2.2.2.3. Speaking versus Writing

On one hand, the speaking skill is different from writing skill because people can have the speaking ability without the writing skill. On the other hand, the two skills are complementary in that we can misunderstand something until we see the written form. Examples: plane: plain, they are books: their books, the sun's rays meet: the sons raise meat...

Nevertheless, one can confirm that the spoken language is the most needed form in communication because we all spend much more time in speaking than we do in writing. This situation is also noticed by BRUMFIT, C.J. (1985: 43-4) who states:

> *.....reading and writing are partial skills and exercising them constitutes partial language experiences, whereas speaking and listening are total language experiences.*

Thus, we should never confuse a language with its writing system. Learning a writing system differs basically from meaning to speak or understand a language.

To conclude, any learner or person should be proficient in all the skills listening, speaking, writing and reading- for communication purposes but more importantly proficiency in the speaking skills is to come first because our lives are bound to oral skills. The teacher must take advantage of the mutual reinforcement that one skill provides for learning the other.

2.2.3 Fluency and Accuracy

Still another distinction I would like to make because of its effect on the spoken language is between fluency and accuracy.

Accuracy reflects a concern that has always been strong in the story of language teaching which will result in usage, rather than use of language.

According to BRUMFIT, C.J. (1985: 52), the term "accuracy" refers to a focus by the user on formal factors or issues of appropriacy of a language. It refers to a focus on syntactic and morphological and lexical aspects of the language.

As far as the term "fluency" is concerned BRUMFIT, C.J. (1985: 42) claims that it is to be regarded as the natural language use whether or not it results in native-speaker-like language comprehension or production. He also defines it as the ability to fill the time with talk, to talk without significant pauses for an extended period.

The analysis of the definition of the word "accuracy" shows that no situational interaction is taken into account. What is important for them is a mastery of the fundamental rules of a language.

The analysis of the term "fluency" point out that apart from the need for interaction with other people, speed is necessary, to avoid along pauses in talking. Teachers and methodologists agree on the fact that fluency is very important in communication.

Besides, teachers and many researchers consider fluency as matter of speeding up what has always been mastered accurately, others think that fluency is necessary to enable learners to use language accurately.

Nevertheless, BRUMFIT, C.J. (1985: 53), indicates that the distinction is not between what is good and bad in language teaching. He claims that "there is a role for accuracy work in language teaching but that its function is quite different from that of fluency work, and its over-use will impede successful language development".

Generally speaking, with respect to the initial goal which is effective communication among people "teacher must allow fluency work an important position.

However, for the necessity of these two goals in language development, they have to consider some activities to promote accuracy but the main emphasis shall be put especially on fluency work for the sake of interactional communication. YULE, G. & BROW, G. (1983: 289):

> *A more reasonable approach would seem to be one where a much more relaxed attitude to "correctness" is adopted, and many more students can attain success.*

It follows than that the accuracy of information-transmission is at a premium.

2.2.4. The Role of Grammar and Lexis

Teachers of English as a foreign language know that learners expect and need a dish of grammar and vocabulary. This thesis, however, is not to study the field of English grammar and lexis because the work would be too broad.

However, because serious poverty, in grammar and vocabulary can bring about total failure in communication, they deserve to be considered.

In setting communication goals, I do not expect the learners at the end of a particular course to have acquired a certain group of structures or topics in a given situation. I do not organise the activities of the class about a grammatical syllabus.

This situation is also accepted by CUNNINGSWORTH, A. (1984: 22) who puts this way:

> *To the average student, "making requests for information" means more than "interrogative form of modal verbs followed by infinitive".*

Nevertheless, in embracing a "communication" aspect, I am not rejecting the idea that learners need to learn a great deal of grammar. I am convinced that grammar is immensely important because it is a system of rules for the formation of correct sentences and it is essential that learners are able to both understand and use the rules of grammar.

In order to create the language which expresses what we want to says, a learner must be able to use the rules of grammar and correct vocabulary. For example, if learners are to learn how to order meals in restaurant, they must know some appropriate food and restaurant-related vocabulary but they must also be able to link the appropriate lexical rules. Thus by aiming at communicational effectiveness, I am aiming at subtle uses of language.

Along this objective, some researchers including HUBBARD, P. et al. (1983: 247) assert:

> *It might be simpler to aim at more accessible objectives and simply provide our learners with the minimum equipment (i.e the basic grammar and lexis) to enable them to cope with most communication tasks, however inappropriate their language might be. Here the amount of teaching time available becomes of crucial importance.*

Simply stated, we have to aim at communication tasks first and secondary at basic grammar and lexis but for the sake of effective communication to take place, we have to devote much time to practice tasks.

Similarly, KRASHEN, D. &TERREL D., T. (1988: 57) wrote:

> *Grammar use should be restricted to situations where it will not interfere with communication. We should not expect our students to be concerned*

with fine points of grammar while they are speaking in free conversation.

The same authors also note that grammar is more necessary in writing and in prepared speech.

All in all, I can conclude that no researcher disagrees about the relative importance of grammar and vocabulary in teaching communication. However, it is evident that by aiming at communicational effectiveness, we should focus more on activities allowing students to express themselves immediately in terms of their needs but grammar should not be the priority.

2.3. Developing the Speaking Skill of Adult Learners of English: Recent Approaches

2.3.1. Opposing Views on the Development of the Speaking Skill

According to the RIVERS, W. & TEMPERLY, M., S. (1978:6), there are two different views:

- The progressive development view
- The immediate communication view

According to the "progressive development" view, the ability to speak a language derives from a systematic study of grammar, phonology and lexicon.

This is the approach **of grammar-translation texts**, where it is assumed that accuracy in expressing oneself orally is dependent on prior study of language forms through reading and writing exercises; **of audio-lingal or oral-aural texts** where oral imitation, memorization and drilling techniques precede attempts to speak spontaneously; and **of texts** which begin with native narrative and conversational reading passages.

Concerning "the immediate communication" view, the speaking skill is developed from the first contact with language. Students may be encouraged to express themselves in simple ways under the guidance of the table.

Alternatively, in a simulation of the total immersion experience of the foreign in another culture the learners can be expected to use for expression of their own

messages anything they have acquired from the language by hearing it, supplemented by gestures, or the showing of objects, with the teacher suggesting words and expressions only when the students falter.

RIVERS, W., M. & TEMPERLY, M., S. (1978: 6), take the middle position between these two approaches advocating that:

> *Students should be encouraged to express themselves freely in the language from the beginning through experiences and activities which provide them with a fame work for spontaneous communicative creation, while presupposing they will use what they have been learning through an orderly progression of study and practice.*

Therefore, these two views are complementary.

2.3.2. Hints to the Development of Adults' Speaking Skill

According to DUBIN, F. & OLSHTAIN, E. (1977:53); "mastering the language skills, like mastering any kind of skill, requires a considerable amount of practice". This must be the goal of language teaching and by the gradual reduction of control in exercises; we should bring our learners to the point where they can use English in an autonomous fashion for their own purposes. The further assert that" learners must be given practice and be exposed to modes of the communicative strategies necessary for effective communication".

Along the same lines, CUNNIGSWORTH, A. (1984-42) puts this way:

> *In order to achieve a degree of communicative ability, the learner needs practice in coping with a communicative situation involving the realistic integration of language skills and the development of cognitive strategies, example how to deal with the problems of real-time responses and unpredictability in normal conversation.*

He further indicated that communicative activities do not have to be totally authentic, but they must be representative of and modelled on the processes that take place in language use.

As for RIVERS, W.M. (1968: 200), he agrees that learners must be given practice for effective oral communication purposes but he goes further in providing us with the way we would deal with practice:

> *For sheer practice in selection, the learner should be given the opportunity to chat on subjects of his own choice, where the production of ideas is effortless and most of his attention is on the process of selection.*

As the learner, he should be encouraged to practice talking to himself and thinking in the foreign language as often as possible: describing himself the thing he sees on the way to his job, recounting himself what he has done, ...in this way he will give himself some of the practice he would have in a foreign country because most what he passes for communication in everyday life is merely egocentric monologue.

As for DUBIN, F. & OLSHTAIN, E.(1977:19),

> *The key to facilitating language learning is to begin with the learner's needs. The quest is not to look for a single, elusive method but rather to help students to discover ways to learn themselves ... Both WHAT and subject content and HOW or technique, must be adapted to the needs of WHO, the learner.*

Therefore, simply stated, the functions are selected and sequenced according to their usefulness to the learner, the extent to which they meet the learner's intellectual, personal communicative needs. So, the earliest items in the syllabus will be those that the learner will need most in the situation in which he will use English.

The approach used is called the **learner-centred approach** and it aims at encouraging the teacher to make use of the knowledge and interests of the students so that the classroom activities become "relevant and spontaneous".

However, the learner intellectual and emotional needs, too. Thus, the learner must be encouraged and motivated because learning a foreign language difficult and demanding. The subject matter should be intellectually stimulating and to which the learners can relate personally.

In short, as CUNNINGSWOTH, A. (1984: 46) mentions,

> *Our teaching must have as its basis a consideration of what our learners need to learn that is what they will do with English on completing their course. The goals of the course should be determined on the basis of the needs and the course materials and program is to be determined on the basis of the goals and not vice versa.*

Another important view which has to be taken into account in teaching adult learners spoken English concerns the way we handle activities in the classroom. HARMER, J. (1991: 40) states that we can divide classroom activities into two categories: those that give the students language input and those which encourage them to produce language output.

Moreover, HARMER, J. (1991: 41) tried to sum up a methodological approach of the learning of the language which takes in account the categories of "input" and "output". This refers to stages at which the learners are receiving language (language is in some way put into the students) and to the stages at which learners are provided with opportunities of them to activate this knowledge for it is only when they are producing language that they can select from the input they have received. He also indicates that this production of language can be divided into two distinct categories: practice and communicative output. Practice refers to stage when the learners are asked to use new items in different context and communicative output refers to activities in which learners use language as a

vehicle for communication because their main purpose is to complete some kind of communicative tasks.

He further fond a "Balanced activities approach" which takes into account categories of input and output. Because of the focus on communicative activities and the concentration on language as means of communication such an approach has been called THE COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH. Here, the importance of stages where there is an emphasis on tasks and the learner's own responsibilities and the responsibility for their own learning has to go together with more formal language work, and that is where the status of communicative approach is called into question.

This approach has a more human aspect which is bound up with the concerns of intrinsic motivation. By presenting the students with a variety of activities we can ensure their continuing interest and involvement in the language program.

Classes which continually have the same activities are not likely to sustain interest, particular when the learners have no extrinsic motivation and do not perceive any clear long-term goal.

Moreover, as the same author goes on arguing, another component of the balanced activities approach is the teacher's willingness to be both adaptable and flexible. Adaptability refers to the teacher's ability to adapt the program on the basis of the different learners. Flexibility to be sensitive to the changing needs of the group, as the lesson progresses. Therefore, teachers should not hesitate to alter their lesson objectives whenever there is necessity.

This approach sees the students and their continuing interest and involvement in the learning process as being the necessary dominant factor in language teaching.

Generally speaking, it has repeatedly been shown that both learners and teachers feel that being able to speak and understand the foreign language is an important aim in a general course. Nevertheless, though much research has been conducted on the effective teaching strategies to achieve the aim, we still lack one scientific method to use. Teaches are free to experiment and use whatever methods have proved to be successful.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Population

This study was conducted at ELC on advanced level learners. In choosing this sample population, I assumed that they could be able to answer to my research questions thanks to their longer experience in English learning than others (Beginning and intermediate levels). Therefore, they are supposed to be able to express their opinions in a clear and more confident way.

In addition, Centres dealing with English teaching to adults are few in number in Burundi. I, therefore, chose ELC not only because it is legally registered but also because of a longer period of existence. My sample population comprised 19 learners but only 18 accepted to cooperate with me in answering to my questions. The number of teachers at ELC who accepted to cooperate with me in my research was 4.

3.2. Data Collection Procedure

To collect the data, three methods were used: Classroom observations, Questionnaires, Interview.

3.2.1. Classroom Observations

The visits intended to get information concerning the different activities dealt with in the classroom, the teaching methods and the materials used. In so doing, I hoped to know the origin of the problems which are the hindering of success in speaking skill teaching / learning and the eventual learners'communication problems.

3.2.2. Questionnaires

This method involves the distribution of questionnaires. Thus, two types of questionnaires were prepared: one was designed for teachers another for learners.

a. Questionnaire for Teachers

In elaborating the teachers' questionnaire, I assumed that they are in the best position to know the origin of the learners' communication problems as he is directly confronted with the task daily.

He may, therefore, come to some conclusions concerning the factor which affect negatively or positively the speaking skill teaching.

Hence, 18 questions were prepared for teachers. The questions intended to get information concerning the place devoted to the speaking skill in English language teaching, the methods used, the teaching materials, the different topics and activities dealt with, the problems encountered in the teaching process. Besides, the questionnaire gave the teacher an opportunity to comment and make proposals for improvement in the teaching of the speaking skill.

b. Questionnaire for Learners

The second type of questionnaire was prepared for learners. In fact, learners experience different problems in learning and thus, can express their opinions concerning the reasons of their failure to speak English naturally and effectively.

Thus, 14 questions were prepared for learners and they meant to know the most needed skill, the attitude of learners towards the oral classes, the materials used and the proposals for improvement in the speaking skill teaching.

3.2.3. Interview

I had prepared a set of simple questions to get familiar with the learners, how they get on with English, but the interview was mainly centred on the teachers' strike. We held conversations every day for some minutes before and after classes. I had a tape to record their speech and this helped to get enough time to analyse systematically and not hastily their speech as far oral communication problems are concerned.

Furthermore, spoken language involves such features as intonation, accent, pronunciation... However, my main aim was to see if the learners could convey their massages successfully and in a reasonable amount of time. In other words, if they could convey appropriate and precise messages, if the hesitations were not too many to hamper good comprehension, then there was success in communication.

BYRNE, D. (1989:39) comments on the same point by saying:

> *Unacceptable or inappropriate language prevents the learner from interacting or communicating*

> *satisfactorily with other members of the community. He may fail to achieve his ends, he may fail to communicate or be misunderstood, he may give offense or make himself ridiculous.*

Therefore, it implies that all that is important is to make oneself heard and understood. In the same line, may aim was to see if the learners could achieve success in communication through English language; good intonation, accent, correctness of speech matter less.

3.3. Data Analysis Procedure

After collecting the data category by category, analysis and interpretation followed. In so doing, I was able to draw conclusions concerning the problems which hamper success in English language teaching in general and the speaking skill in particular. To enhance the presentation of data, the latter is presented in tables where appropriate. These tables are established question by question and on the basic of the areas assessed namely learners 'needs in terms of the four skills, the appropriateness of teaching materials, and the activities dealt with in classroom. Then, I proceeded with analysis and interpretation.

CHAP 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1. Analysis of Data from Classroom Observations

In attended classes related to the speaking skill teaching. Concerning the activities related to oral ability, the mostly used were:

4.1.1

1° Conversation, Discussion Activities and Debates on Topics

- Whole class conversations;
- Small group conversations;
- Giving opinions about specified issues and topics;
- Whole class discussions to solve problems requiring the resolution of conflicting information;
- Giving an unprepared oral presentation on familiar topic.

4-1-2

2° Listening Comprehension Activities

- Answering to comprehension questions;
- Giving a free opinion about the story listened to.

Table n°1: Table illustrating the above activities and the number of Frequencies.

Activities	**Frequencies**	**%**
1° Conversation, discussion activities and debate on topics. -Whole class conversation; - Small group conversation; - Give opinion about specified issues and topics - Whole class discussions to solve problems requiring the resolution of conflicting information; - Give an unprepared oral presentation on familiar topics	10	71.42
2° Listening comprehension activities - Answering to comprehension questions; - Giving a free opinion about the story listened to.	4	28.57
Total	**14**	**100**

According to these data the mostly activities dealt with are conversations, discussions and debates on topics (71.42%) but also to a lesser extent the listening comprehension activities (28.57%).

Besides, I noticed that the teachers met their tasks correctly as ELLIS, R. &TOMLINSON, B. (1980:221) claim it:

> *To encourage fluent and meaningful discussion, the teacher must ensure that:*
>
> *a. The learners have some knowledge of the topics chosen;*

The same authors further indicated that the language should aim to achieve:

- Maximum student activity;
- Maximum cooperation and communication between students;
- Freedom from anxiety and tension on the part of learners, a relaxed atmosphere. NORMAN, D. & ANDERS, I., H. (1986:10)

Therefore, the teachers meet their task correctly because they maximize the learner talking time which improves fluency in speech. Moreover, they encourage cooperation and communication between learners and this fact reduces shyness on the side of learners.

However, I noticed a major problem among learners. Some learners are shy when asked to speak. They are afraid of making mistakes and be laughed at by their peers. Here, teachers should do their best to reduce their anxiety telling them that it is by making mistakes that a person improves his or her skills.

Concerning the teaching materials used, there are syllabuses for learners, teachers' guides and tapes. Nevertheless, I noticed that the textbooks used are the same every year. This is a negative fact in this sense that needs and objectives change with learners. Therefore, the program coordinators should make efforts to prepare syllabuses specific to each category of learners they have. In other words, needs analysis should be dealt with every year and should precede the design of a syllabus.

Generally speaking, the classroom observations revealed to me that the speaking skill is given its right place. This is important particularly for the adult learners because they mainly need a foreign language for oral communication.

4.2. Analysis of Data from Questionnaires

4.2.1. Analysis of the Teachers' Answers

Question 1: Does the speaking activity take more amount of time in teaching as that taken by listening, reading and writing activities? Yes - No - Comment

Table n°2: Presentation of data for question 1

Answers	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	4	100
No	0	0
Total	4	100

As it can be seen through this table, all the teachers (100%) agree that the speaking skill takes more time than other skills. The comments reveal that most of activities are centred on oral practice. This shows that oral communication is given more importance and this is what many Burundian adult learners want to acquire or improve.

Question 2: How much time does the speaking skill teaching take compared to other skills? 100%, 90%, 80%, 70%, 60%, 50%, 40%, 30%, 20%, 10%, 0%.

Table n°3: Presentation of data concerning the amount of time taken by the speaking skill in teaching compared to other skills.

Answers	Frequency	Percentage
100	0	0
90	1	25
80	3	75
70	0	0
60	0	0
50	0	0
40	0	0
30	0	0
20	0	0
10	0	0
Total	4	100

Concerning the percentage of time taken by the speaking skill, 25% of the respondents claim that it takes 90%; 75% think that 80 is the percentage of time allocated to speaking skill teaching. On the average, the answers indicate that 80 is the percentage given to the speaking skill by the majority of the respondents.

Therefore, I believe that this is good particularly because the learners need English mostly for oral purposes and much practice in speech brings about improvement in oral communication.

Question 3: From the most important to the least, rank the following skills to show how much emphasis you put on one of them. Writing - speaking-reading - listening.

Table n°4: Presentation of data concerning the skills order

First	Second	Third	Fourth	Frequency	%
Speaking	Listening	Reading	Writing	3	75
Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	1	25
Total				4	100

According to this table, 75% of the informants state that the speaking skill should come first and followed by listening, reading and writing skills.
A close analysis of these answers indicate that if the speaking skill is not given the first place, it has the second and after the listening skill. Therefore the speaking skill is quite emphasised in those centres. However, the respondents acknowledge that naturally you need to listen before speaking although they put great emphasis on speaking as the basis of communication.

Question 4: What strategies do you use when dealing with the adult learners' speaking skill in teaching?

One of my informants' view summarises all the others. He puts in this way:

> *You try to encourage them to speak telling them that to know a language is to speak it. You tell them to make some conversations or dialogues on free topics.*

This is a good thing as they encourage practice in speech which is itself a key to successful learning.

This strategy meets the view of Mary FINNOCHIARRO, M. & BRUMFIT, C. (1985:142) who state:

> *The crucial responsibility of the teacher is to allow learners to use the language as freely as possible, so that the classroom becomes a genuine language using community.*

Consequently, if the teachers encourage learners to use the language freely, it is very beneficial because, as English people say, **Practice makes perfect**

Question 5: Do all learners get enough time to practice?

Yes. **No.** **Why?**

Table n°5: presentation of data for question 5

Answers	**Frequency**	**%**
Yes	4	100
No	0	0
Total	4	100

As shown on this table, all the teachers (100%) indicate that the learners get enough time to practice speech. They give this reason that it is possible thanks to the small number of learners as this teacher mentions it:

> *As our classrooms are not overpopulated, all the learners get enough time to practice speaking.*

In addition, they claim that it is difficult to deal with individual oral practice when there are so many learners in the classroom.

All in all, the practice in speaking contributes greatly to the improvement of the learners 'ability in speech and this is very important because it is given priority in the teaching process.

Question 6: Do you find that they are motivated? Yes - No. Comment.

Table n°6: Presentation of data concerning motivation for learners

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	4	100
No	0	0
Total	4	100

According to this table, all the teachers (100%) agree that the learners are motivated. They claim that it is quite understandable because the learners come willingly with a strong desire to know English maybe as a result of a pressure to travel abroad or to get a more lucrative job where English is required or to do business with people from foreign countries using English as a means of communication.

Therefore, I find it quite understandable that the learners are motivated because they are even motivated before coming to learn English.

Question 7: Are there enough topics to discus about when practicing speaking? Yes. No. Comment

Table n07: Presentation of data question n07

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	4	100
No	0	0
Total	4	100

As shown on this table, al the teachers (100%) agree that the topics are sufficient and of many kinds and this is the justification on their learners 'motivation. I fact, as HARMER, J. (1991: 42) puts it:

> *By presenting students with a variety of activities we can ensure their continuing interest and involvement in the language in classes.... A program that presents a variety of activities, on the other hand, is far more likely to continually engage the students 'interest.*

Therefore, I believe that sufficient and different topics interest and motivate the learners but insufficient and monotonous topics end up boring them.

Question 8: Do you rigorously follow the course plan? Yes. No. Comment

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	1	25
No	3	75
Total	4	100

According to above data, 25% of my informants agree that they follow rigorously the course plan while 75% do not. Those who follow the course plan rigorously give as reason that they are afraid of moving away from the initial objective of the lesson. Those who do not follow it rigorously claim that sometimes they come across situations crucial for the learners and stop to deal with them.

Nevertheless, as HARMER, J. (1991: 42) notes it:

> *The teachers should be willing to adapt the program on the basis of different disciplines he is teaching but also he should be sensitive to the different needs of learners.*

He further recommended (1991:42):

> *.....the decisions taken before the lesson about what is going to happen are not sacred. Good*

Communication only takes place when we make use of sentences to perform a variety of different acts of an essentially social nature. Thus, we do not communicate by composing sentences, but by using sentences to make statement of different kinds, to record, to classify, and so on, or to ask questions, make requests, give orders.

Question 13: How often do you test the speaking skill?

Always Often sometimes seldom never

Table n^0 13: Presentation of data for question 13

Answers	Frequency	%
Always	3	75
Often	1	25
Sometimes	0	0
Seldom	0	0
Never	0	0
Total	4	100

The answers reveal that 75% of teachers always test the speaking skill. 25% indicate that they often test it. However, the majority of the teachers agreed that the speaking skill is always tested. This fact is positive and contributes to the improvement of the learners' oral proficiency because weak areas are continually identified and get more attention.

Question 14: Are the materials (course books; tapes, teacher's Guide,...) available? Yes. No

Table n^{0}12: Presentation of data concerning the availability of materials

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	4	100
No	0	0
Total	4	100

The above data indicate that all the teachers, claim that the materials are sufficient and available. This is very important for the lack of enough materials affects negatively the success of the language teaching / learning.

I believe that the availability of sufficient teaching materials contributes positively to language proficiency. Besides, most of the materials needed to develop the speaking skill are available.

Question 15: Do you think the content of materials is relevant to your learners'needs? Yes. No. Why?

Table n0 13: Presentation of data concerning the relevance of the material contents to the needs of learners.

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	4	100
No	0	0
Total	4	100

The answers show that 100% of the informants agree that the content is relevant to the needs of learners. This also important because the learners come to learn with personal needs in mind. They give as reasons that the programmer and objectives are set on the basis of the needs of learners.

In other words, the needs analysis precedes the decisions on the program content and objectives.

Therefore, this fact arouses interest and motivation on the part of learners and consequently ensures success in language learning / teaching. In so doing, the role of the materials fits this view of CUNNINGSWORTH, A (1984: 57):

> *We need to see that the materials which are adopted make use of language in order to convey information, expresses opinions, etc. Which are genuine intrinsic interest to the learners.*

In order word, what is important is that the content of the materials fit everyday communicative functions which are the case in ELC.

Question 16: As a teacher, what do you think are the causes of failure to communicate without any problem in English language for those adult learners?

- **Lack of practice outside of classroom**
- **Shyness**
- **Interference from Kirundi and French**

The respondents expressed many reasons which can be summarised as follows:

Table 14

Answers	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of practice	4	100
Shyness	3	75
Interference	2	50

Hence, all the teachers (100%) mention the lack of practice outside of classroom as the main cause. I assume that the teachers are right because a language can be forgotten or some vocabulary items may disappear if it is not continually spoken.

communication among people. The majority of teachers (80%) pointed out that learners do not have enough time to practice speaking outside of the classroom. In addition, the French-Kirundi environment and shyness affect negatively the development of oral ability. As for proposals for improvement, they recommend the creation of clubs where English speakers would meet regularly and practice speaking. Finally, they also request assistance from various agencies as they are doing a very useful work.

4.2.2. Analysis of the Learners' Answers

Question n°1: According to you, what form of English do you need more?

Spoken or written?

Table n° 16: Presentation of data for question 1

Answers	Frequency	%
Spoken	18	100
Written	0	0
Total	18	100

This table shows that 100% of the learners need the spoken language.

Therefore, with respect to geographical situation of our country and the status of English in the world, I find it quite understandable. As a matter of fact, learners are interested in spoken English because they need to interact with English speaking people in Burundi and outside when they travel to neighbouring countries in Eastern or Southern Africa or beyond.

Question 2: how much time does the speaking activity take in classroom compared to others such as reading, listening and writing?

Give the percentage and comment.

Table n° 17: Presentation of data for question 2

Answers	Frequency	%
100	0	0
90	2	11,11
80	13	72,22
70	3	16,66
60	0	0
50	0	0
40	0	0
30	0	0
20	0	0
10	0	0
Total	18	100

Concerning the percentage of time taken by the speaking compared to other skills (Listening, Reading, Writing), the analysis of the answers shows that 11,11% of the informants think that the speaking skill takes 90% of the teaching time; 72,22% think that it takes 80% whereas 16,66% claim that it takes 70% of the time.

A close analysis of the answers shows that the majority of learners mention that the speaking skill takes 80% of the teaching time. In fact the learners'comments claim that speech is emphasized because most of activities are about conversations, discussions and debates.

Questions 3: How much time should the speaking activity occupy in teaching English? 100%-90%-80%-70%-60%-50%-40%-30%-20%-10%-0%

Table n° 18%: Presentation of Data for question 3

Answers	Frequency	%
100	1	5,55
90	14	77,77
80	3	16,66
70	0	0
60	0	0
50	0	0
40	0	0
30	0	0
20	0	0
10	0	0
Total	18	100

The answers in this table indicate that 5,55% of the respondents want the speaking skill to take 100% of the time; 77,77% would prefer the speaking skill to occupy 90% of the total teaching time while 16,66% would like it to take 80% of the teaching time. As it can be seen through the table above no one would like the speaking skill to take less than 80% of the time in teaching.

On the whole, we can see that the most of learners have come to learn English with a strong need to be able to use it in oral communicative situations. It is, therefore, understandable that the majority of learners claim that the speaking skill should be focused on for the primary purpose of learning a foreign language in improving communication.

Question 4: After obtaining your certificate, in what contexts or situations do you think you will need to use English?

Learners gave the following situations:

- Communicating with other people (100%)
- Travelling abroad (68, 42%)
- Business (31, 47%)
- Application for jobs where English is basic requirement (42, 1%)
- Listening to and understanding news on radios and televisions and reading newspapers, articles, or books written in English (21, 05%)

A close analysis of the answers shows that the overwhelming majority (100%) would like to know English to communicate with other English Speakers.

This is, then, the justification of the emphasis on the speaking skill in teaching.

Question 5: According to you, are you well prepared to be able to communicate in those contexts? Does the knowledge you have got suit your initial learning objectives?

Yes No More or Less Comment

Table n° 19: Presentation of data for questions 5

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	16	88,88
No	O	15
More or Less	2	11,11
Total	18	100

These data indicate that 11, 11% of the respondents say that they are more or less satisfied while 88, 88% of them claim that they are satisfied with the knowledge they have got as one of them claim:

Now, I can communicate in English easily, I am happy for that.

From these data, not a single learner expresses disappointment. This is a positive fact that learners do not complain about the results; it implies that teachers do their job correctly and syllabuses are relevant to the needs of learners.

Question 6: Do you get enough opportunities to practice speaking in Classroom? Yes No More or less Comment

Table n° 20: Presentation of data for question 6

Answers	frequency	%
Yes	18	100
No	0	0
More or Less	0	0
Total	18	100

As it can be seen on this table, all the learners (100%) agree that they get enough time to practice speaking. This is due to the fact that they do not have a big number of learners in one classroom. Indeed, this situation would make individual practice more difficult. Thus, adequate time for practice enhances the development of speaking ability.

In short, learners must practice regularly speech in order to develop the speaking skill and it is a good thing that speech is emphasized in those English teaching centres.

Question 7: How do you like the topics you discuss about in classroom? Interesting - Boring. Why?

Table 21: Presentation of data for question 7

Answers	Frequency	%
Interesting	18	100
Boring	0	0
Total	18	100

According to this table, 100% of the respondents find the topics interesting. They give as the reason that sometimes they are asked to make themselves propositions concerning topics interesting for them to discuss or debate about. This element brings about motivation on the part of learners which is itself a key to successful leaning.

Question 8: Are those topics enough and varied? Yes - No. Comment

Table n°22: Presentation of answers for question 8.

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	18	100
No	0	0
Total	18	100

As it can be seen on this table, all the learners (100%) agree that the topics are enough and varied. Therefore, as I have mentioned it earlier, this is a positive fact in that the same activities continually dealt will end up becoming boring to learners and consequently disinterest them. I do believe that enough and varied topics interest learners and bring about motivation for leaning among them.

Question 9: How do you like the way you are taught oral expression in classroom? Very good Good Bad

Table n°23: Presentation of data for question 9

Answers	Frequency	%
Very good	18	100
Good	0	0
Bad	0	0
Total	18	100

The table indicates that all the learners are satisfied with the way they are taught oral expression as this informant claim:

> *I like it. We make discussions and conversions on interesting subjects and the teacher helps to guide the debate.*

In short, no one complains about the teaching strategies, another fact which creates a good environment for leaning and hence success in developing the speaking skill.

Question 10: Would you prefer the program to be kept as such?
Yes –No. If your answer is NO, what are your suggestions concerning the eventual desired modification?

Table n°24: Presentation of data for question 10

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	18	100
No	0	0
Total	18	100

According to this table, all the learners (100%) do not see any problem in the program. They appreciate positively the way they are taught and the syllabus

contents. However, teachers should continually seek better methods and strategies to teach the speaking skill for the sake of better communication among people.

Question 11: Are there any other topics that you would like to be included in the course design? Yes. No. Explain.

Table n°25: Presentation of data for question 11

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	0	100
No	18	0
Total	18	100

The above data reveal that all learners (100%) agreed that the topics tackled in classroom are enough and nothing needs to be added to the curriculum. They explained that sometimes they are involved in choosing topics for discussions as this learner mentions it:

> *The topics are very many. Teachers ask us sometime to make free suggestions on topics we want. So, we are not limited in topics. We touch all domains.*

The meaning of the message from this respondent is that the topics are quite enough. Therefore, we consider this fact to be important in that the learners can make choices or suggestions about what they want to learn. It sustains and increases motivation among learners.

Question 12: What is your attitude towards an oral expression class?

Very enthusiastic – enthusiastic - not enthusiastic. Comment.

Table n°26: Presentation of data concerning the attitude of learners toward an oral expression class

Answers	Frequency	%
Very enthusiastic	18	100
Enthusiastic	0	0
not enthusiastic	0	0
Total	18	100

According to the table above, all the learners (100%) say that they have a very enthusiastic attitude towards a lesson on oral expression. Therefore, this is also an important element which accounts for success or failure of language leaning / teaching. This enhances success in language leaning.

KRASHEN, S. & TERREL, D.T (1987:17), support that idea:

> *All human can acquire additional languages but they must have the desire or the need to acquire that language and the opportunities to use the language they study for real communicative purposes*

In addition to the desire to learn, KRASHEN and TERREL stress the use of language in real situations.

Question 13: Do you think ELC answers satisfactorily to your needs?

Yes More or less No

Table n°13: Presentation of data for question 13

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	18	100
More or Less	0	0
No	0	0
Total	18	100

According to these data all the learners (100%) agreed that the ELC answers satisfactorily to their needs. This is very positive because, as I pointed it out before, good teaching must have as its basis the needs and interests of learners. Thus, I believe that the work of the teacher is well done as recommended by LITTERWOOD, W. (1981:93):

> *The teacher must subordinate his teaching behaviour to the learning needs of his students sometimes to the extent of withdrawing completely from an activity once it is in progress.*

In short, the learners are satisfied as their initial learning needs are basically taken into consideration in teaching.

Question 14: Comment on anything you wish concerning the English language teaching / learning process at your centre and give proposals for improvement

The learners'comments can be summarized as follows: the learners accept that they learn English in very good conditions and that they are satisfied by the results as far as the oral ability is concerned. However, I noticed that they regret the fact that the field of practice is too narrow. In fact, there are not many persons who can speak English to interact with.

Moreover, according to them, it sounds snobbish in the eyes of Burundians when a person is speaking English and in most of cases they prefer Kirundi.

Therefore, learners lack a favourable environment to practice speaking because of this Kirundi-French environment we live in and, this fact affects negatively their speaking skill development. Thus, they propose the creation of more centres and clubs for all the learners to meet and socialize in English.

Summary of the Leaners' Answers.

The first question was about the learners'needs in terms of the four skills (Listening-Speaking-Reading and Writing). All the learners (100%) said clearly that they need more the speaking skill to enable then to communicate with other people.

The second question asked how much time is devoted to the speaking skill in the teaching process. The majority of learners (68, 42%) revealed that it is given 80% of the teaching time.

The third question purported to know the opinions of learners concerning the time they want to be allocated to the speaking skill in teaching. The majority of learners (73, 68%) said that the speaking skill should be given (90%) of the teaching time.

The fourth question intended to know the contexts in which the learners need to use English. The answers indicated that the most cited contexts are communication with other people (100%), travelling abroad (68, 42%) and application for jobs (42,1%) and business (42,1%) but also to a lesser degree listening to news and reading and writing messages(21,05%).

The fifth question aimed at finding out if the learners feel that they are well prepared to communicate in those contexts. The majority of learners (84,21%) said that they are satisfied with the results as far as the speaking ability is concerned but regret the fact that the ground for practicing speech is too narrow.

The following set of questions (6-7) sought to know the materials'contents and activities dealt with in the classroom. I realized from the learners' answers (100%) that most of the activities intended to develop the oral ability of learners and that the topics are diversified and interesting for learners.

The set of questions (10-13) that follows aimed at finding out the learners' attitude towards the teaching process.

In fact a negative attitude of learners towards the teaching and activities dealt with in the classroom brings about failure in learning. However, all the learners (100%) revealed that they have a positive attitude towards the teaching process. Therefore, I assume that this fact contributes positively to the teaching of the speaking skill to adult learners.

The last question intended to get information about proposals for improvements as far as the speaking skill teaching is concerned. The learners reiterated the importance of English as a foreign Language for people and for country in general.

However, all the learners (100%) revealed that they still lack a favourable environment for practice outside the classroom because people who can speak English are still very few. Therefore, some of them (21,05%) suggested the instruction of English teaching (2 or 3 hours per week) in public and private services not only to widen the opportunities of speech practice but also to enhance friendly relations with other parts of the world using English as a means of communication. Some others also requested the support of the government and off NGOS to the English Teaching Centres for the sake of improving communication among people of world.

4.3. Analysis of Data from Interview

The interview was one of the methods used to collect the data. It aimed at finding out the extent to which the learners could express themselves in real situations. Therefore, I realized that their language was good in that I could understand the message quite easily. Nevertheless, let me mention that the speech contained some mistakes related to grammar, to interference from French, and to the lack of appropriate vocabulary words. Among the grammar-related problems, are the subject-verb agreement and plural-noun formation. For example, a learner gave his opinion concerning the teachers'strike this way:

> *He (the President) have to put in practice what he have promised. He signed, so a good man must honor his engagement.*

In this sentence, there are mistakes of verb concord (he have instead of he has).

Moreover, there is influence of French in what he said (....a good man must honor his engagement). He would be more appropriate if he said "A good man keeps his promise or fulfills his commitment".

Furthermore, the learners have problems with the use of "do" in asking questions. They prefer to change the intonation in rise to the use of "do" when they want to ask questions. For example, one learner asked me: "you study at University? This question would be asked in this way: "Do you study at the University?" Besides, their speech contains hesitations and pauses but they are not so significant as to cause boredom or distraction to the listener.

All in all, the analysis of the data from the Interview showed me that learners have problems in oral speech. Some are related to grammar, others to interference from French while others are related to the lack of appropriate vocabulary items and the latter cause incomprehension on the part of the audience. Nevertheless, the learners should do their best to widen the room of practice outside of the classroom for the sake of success in communication.

GENERAL CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. GENERAL CONCLUSION

Throughout this study, **Developing the Speaking Skill of Adult Learners** has been my main concern. To achieve this aim, I conducted an investigation at ELC operating in Bujumbura Municipality.

To collect the data, I used three procedures: classroom observations, Questionnaires for teachers and learners and Interview with learners.

After collecting the data, I proceeded with the analysis and interpretation of the data to find out whether they respond to my initial expectations as far as my research questions are concerned. Let me mention them once again:

- Which of the skills deserves the most prominent place in modern language teaching?
- What are the factors which interfere with the speaking skill development among adult learners?
- What are the methods and strategies to adopt to face up to those problems for effective oral communication?
- Does the course materials actually offer enough practice to learners?
- Does the content match with the needs of learners and their age category?

Concerning the first question about the skill which deserves the most prominent place in language teaching, the answers indicated clearly that the most prominent place should be given to the speaking skill given that our lives are concerned more with oral than reading and writing activities. As for the factors which may interfere with the adult learners'speaking skill development, I could mention the lack of motivation of learners, a negative attitude towards English, insufficient time allocated to the speaking skill in teaching programs, lack of adequate materials,...

Nevertheless, the answers from the learners and teachers point a shyness because learners are afraid of making mistakes and being laughed at by their peers. In addition, there is lack of practice outside the classroom because there are still too few people to interact with in English.

As far as the methods and strategies used are concerned, the teachers try to encourage the learners to speak and ask everyone to give his or her opinion concerning a given topic, continuing a story, solving problems, etc... This is good in this sense that the teachers encourage practice in speaking which is itself a key to successful language learning.

Concerning the materials, they are good because they offer enough practice in speaking to learners. In fact they contain topics for discussion or debates, problems solving activities. There are students' Books containing text scripts and their tapes. Thus, the learners can go on practicing listening at home and this fact eases the acquisition of communication skills.

As for the contents of the materials, the different units in the books match the needs of learners. As a matter of fact, they contain such universally known communication functions as greetings, requests, apologies, suggestions, wishes, and topics for discussion or debates to enhance practice in spoken language. Moreover, the topics are suitable to adult people. The topics are chosen with respect to the present life situations and they are relevant to the real world.

All in all, all the research questions have received answers. Thus, **Developing the Speaking Skill** is well handled except that the space for speech practice is too narrow given the small number of persons who speak English here in Burundi.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

My recommendations go directly to course designers or the managers of the English Teaching Centres, to the learners, teachers and the government especially the Ministry of Education.

1° Recommendations to Course Designers

They should continually look for up-to-date teaching materials and consequently shape new syllabuses on the basis of the constantly changing socio-economic needs of learners and to some extend by taking into account linguistic concerns. The syllabuses should have in their contents contemporary issues such as AIDS, Alcohol, drug and sexual abuses, political conflicts, corruption...

Indeed, if the contents are relevant to the real world, they raise motivation among learners and every learner feels eager to express his or her opinions.

Furthermore, most people in creating centres for adult education shave one ambition in mind: to make as much money as possible but they should always bear in mind that the learners and nation 's interests come before the individual ones for the reasons already mentioned in this work. Therefore, they have to hire qualified and experienced teachers though they may be costly.

2° Recommendations to Teachers

As far as teaching is concerned, and as I pointed it out earlier, it is a very demanding job. It is extremely difficult as teachers have to deal with adult learners whose mother tongue becomes a sizeable hindrance to progress. Therefore, he needs to develop certain qualities.

In fact the job may prove to be more boring and tiring than initially expected. Thus, teachers need patience. They should do their best to be and remain enthusiastic and all their energy to make the job successful. They also have to keep informed on various matters to answer satisfactory needs or learner.

3° Recommendations to Learners

Indeed, some learners have the intention of giving up learning when they realize that it is difficult. Nevertheless, they should persevere and be courageous. Thus, learners should create clubs or associations to practice spoken English through dialogue, conversations, debates, etc.

4° Recommendations to the Government

The Government of Burundi and especially the Ministry of Education is requested to be aware of the problem of teaching English as a foreign language here in Burundi. A clear policy in favour of the promotion of the teaching of English in and out of the school system should be adopted.

In addition, the Ministry of Education should provide English teaching materials such as TV sets, audiovisual materials; books,... for they ensure quality in the teaching and learning of English.

Finally, the Government should keep a constant eye on those English Teaching Centres to make sure that they respect their commitments and oblige them to comply with the required standards. To this end, the Government needs a body which would have to ensure that course books and other materials of the necessary kinds are available for the sake of success in English language learning / teaching.

They should also have to check the qualifications of Teachers appointed to work and prevent the unregistered centres from working.

All in all, this work is not exhaustive. Researchers in the field of language teaching have been using this or that approach or method to improve success in teaching and learning and until now research still continues because they have not yet come up with one agreed method or approach to base the speaking skill teaching on. Similarly, something can be added to my study which is nothing but a step to a broader research. I do invite other researchers to continue this work for the sake of effective communication among people from all the parts of the world.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

Classroom Observation Guide

- The teaching methods
- The teaching materials
- Activities related to the speaking skill

APPENDIX II

The teachers' questionnaire

Dear sir/Madam,

I am research student at the University of Burundi and, at present, I am carrying out a research on teaching English adult learners.

The following is a questionnaire designed for teachers of English in ELC. It aims at investigating the way the speaking skill teaching of adult learners is dealt with in those centres. If objectively answered, this questionnaire is of a paramount importance to the completion of my study which is entitled "**Developing the Speaking Skill in Centres for Teaching English as a Foreign Language to Adults in Burundi: A Study Conducted on Advanced Level Learners at ELC**". Therefore, I would appreciate if you could answer as much honestly and sincerely as possible to the following questions.

Thank you for your cooperation

Prosper BARUTWANAYO

Informant's particulars

- Name:
- Surname:
- Gender:
- Present occupation:
- Projected occupation:
- Date of birth:
- Native language:
- Experience in teaching:
- Other spoken languages:

1. Does the speaking activity take the same amount of time in teaching as that taken by listening, reading and writing activities?
   Yes - No. Comment.

2. How much time does the speaking skill teaching take in classroom compared to other skills?

100%	70%	40%	10%
90%	60%	30%	
80%	50%	20%	

3. From the most important to the least, rank the following skills to show how much emphasis you put on one of them.

   Writing – Speaking – Reading – Listening

4. What strategies do you use when dealing with the adult learners' speaking skill teaching?
5. Do all learners get enough time to practice speaking? Yes – No. Why?
6. Do you find that they are motivated? Yes – No. Comment
7. Are there enough topics to discuss about when practicing speaking? Yes – No. Comment
8. Do you rigorously follow the course plan? Yes – No. Comment
9. Do you find the learners interested in those topics? Yes – No. Why?
10. If your answer to the question no 9 is No, what do you think are the reasons?
11. When teaching the speaking skill, do you mainly focus on fluency or accuracy? Yes – No. Comment
12. What are your reactions to the problems of inaccuracy of learners?
13. How often do you test the speaking skill?

- Always	-Often	-Seldom
-Sometimes	-Never	

14. Are the materials (course books, tapes, teacher's guide) available?

15. Do you think the content of materials is relevant to your learners' needs?

    Yes – No. Why?

16. As a teacher, what do you think are the causes of failure to communicate without any problem is English language for those adult learners?

17. According to you, what can be the solutions?

18. Do you think the course designers have to modify in a way or another, the syllabus content to suit effectively the adult learners' needs? Yes – No. Explain

19. Comment on anything you wish concerning the teaching / learning process and give proposals for improvement.

APPENDIX III

The learners' questionnaire

Dear sir/Madam,

I am research student at the University of Burundi and, at present, I am carrying out a research on teaching English adult learners.

The following is a questionnaire designed for learners of English in ELC. It aims at investigating the way the speaking skill teaching of adult learners is dealt with in those centres. If objectively answered, this questionnaire is of a paramount importance to the completion of my study which is entitled "**Developing the Speaking Skill in Centres for Teaching English as a Foreign Language to Adults in Burundi: A Study Conducted on Advanced Level Learners at ETC".** Therefore, I would appreciate if you could answer as much honestly and sincerely as possible to the following questions.

Thank you for your cooperation

Prosper BARUTWANAYO

The questionnaire

Informant's particulars

Name:

Surname:

Gender:

Present occupation:

Projected occupation:

Date of birth:

Native language:

Other spoken languages:

Question 1: According to you, what form of English do you need more Spoken or written?

Question 2: How much time does the speaking activity take in the classroom compared to others such as reading, listening and writing? Give the percentage and comment.

Question 3: How much time should the speaking activity occupy in teaching English?

100% - 90% - 80% - 70% - 60% - 50% - 40% - 30% - 20% - 10% - 0%

Question 4: After obtaining your certificate, in what contexts or situations do you think you will need to use English?

Question 5: According to you, are you well prepared to be able to communicate in those context Does the knowledge you have got suit your initial learning objectives?

Yes	No	More or less	Comment

Question 6: Do you get enough opportunities to practice speaking in the classroom?

Yes No More or less Comment

Question 7: How do you like the topics you discuss about in classroom?

Interesting Boring ? Why?

Question 8: Are those topics enough and varied? Yes or No? Comment

Question 9: How do you like the way you are taught oral expression in classroom?

Very good Good Bad.

Question 10: Would you prefer the programme to be kept as such? Yes – No.

What are you suggestions concerning the eventual desired modifications?

Question 11: Are there any other topics that you would like to be included in the course design? Yes - No. Explain

Question 12: What is your attitude towards an oral expression class?

Very enthusiastic – enthusiastic – not enthusiastic. Comment

Question 13: Do you think ELC answers satisfactorily to your needs?

Yes More or less No

Question 14: Comment on anything you wish concerning the English language teaching process at your centre and give proposals for improvement.