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The impact of environment on students' proficiency in english as a foreign language : case of some schools in Mukike Commune, 5th form

Ngiye, Pascal; Sous la direction du : Pr. Hermenegilde Rwantabagu

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UNIVERSITY OF BURUNDI



FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

THE IMPACT OF ENVIRONMENT ON STUDENTS' PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE: Case of some schools in Mukike commune,5th Form

By

Pascal NGIYE

Supervisor:

Pr. Herménégilde RWANTABAGU

Lecturer at the University of Burundi

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of the Degree "Licencié en Langue et Littérature Anglaises"

BUJUMBURA, July 2017

DEDICATION

To my late father;

To my beloved mother;

To my brothers and sisters

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The completion of this work has been thanks to the contribution of many people to whom I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude.

My deepest appreciation goes to Pr Herménégilde RWANTABAGU who accepted to supervise my work in spite of his many other obligations. His kind comments and suggestions have been considerably important to me.

I would like to express my gratitude to all the teachers from primary school to University with special regards to all the lecturers in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Department of English Language and Literature, for their assistance in my academic training.

My thanks are also addressed to my family, relatives and friends. Sincere and profound thanks go to the NKURUNZIZA Jean Bosco family for their support.

Last but not least, all my heartfelt gratitude is addressed to my mother's untiring pieces of advice and financial support. To all of you, may God bless you.

Pascal NGIYE

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

C.C	: Communal College
C.L	: Communal Lycée
Etc	: Et Caetera : and so on
ESF	: Expansion Scientifique Française
FL	: Foreign Language
i.e.	:Id est (Latin): this means; that is
L1	: First language
L2	: Second Language
M.Ed	: Master of Education
MIT	: Massachusetts Institute of Technology

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Sample of schools, teachers and pupils used as informants 20
Table 2: The reaction of neighbors when students speak English 27
Table 3: Having or not having English clubs at school 29
Table 4: The fact of having English books at home 30
Table 5: Having access to television or not 32
Table 6: How often students listen to English programs? 33
Table 7: Expressing opinion in English 36
Table 8: The subject liked by students 38
Table 9 : The language skill liked by the students 39
Table 10: The reaction of students' classmates when they (students) speak English outside the classroom. 41

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate on the relationships between the environment and students' proficiency in English. It sought to know the impact of mother tongue or first language on the target language. It also shows whether or not the language spoken in the environment hampers the effective use of The English language. This study was carried out with 156 respondents that is 150 students and 6 teachers in selected secondary schools in Mukike commune.

The study is based on three research questions. The first research question investigates the extent to which the environment contributes to students' performance in English. The second question explores the extent to which the language spoken in the environment of students have an impact on their performance in English. The last research question examines if Kirundi and French have a negative impact on learning of English. Thus, to collect data, to instruments were used, that is classroom observation, teachers' questionnaire and learner's questionnaire. The questionnaires were distributed to the 5th form level teachers in some selected schools in Mukike Commune. The findings showed that the environment hampers the students' performance in English. Since it has been proven that a poor learning environment militatesagainst satisfactory learning achievement. As solution, some recommendations were formulated to all education partners in order to improve learner's performance in English. Moreover, there is a suggestion that other researchers should carry out the basis further research in order to explore the problem in the other parts of the country.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION ..... **i**
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ..... **ii**
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS ..... **iii**
LIST OF TABLES ..... **iv**
ABSTRACT ..... **v**
TABLE OF CONTENTS ..... **vi**
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION **1**
I.1. Background to the study 1
I.2. Statement of the problem 2
I.3. Research questions 2
I.4. Research Hypotheses 3
I.5. Motivation 3
I.6. Purpose of the study 3
I.7. Scope and delimitation of the study 4
I.8. Significance of the study 4
I.9. Definition of key terms 4
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW **6**
II.1. Introduction 6
II.2. Home environment 6
II.3. Home environment and language performance 7
II.4. Materials used in teaching English 8
II.5. Motivation in foreign language learning 9
II.6. Translation 11
II.7. Informal environment and factors causing its inadequacy in learning English. 12
II.8. Language at home, school and in the community 13
II.9. The linguistic environment of the learner 14
II.10. Formal language environment in second/foreign language learning 16
II.11. Informal language environment and language learning 17
CHAPTER III.METHODOLOGY **18**
III.1. Introduction 18
III.2. Description of the area of the study 18
III.3. Population 19

III.4. Sampling 19
III.5. Data collection instruments 21
III.5.1. Classroom observation 21
III.5.2. Research questionnaires 21
III.6. Data collection procedure 22
III. 6.1. Pilot study 22
III.6.2. Administration of students' questionnaire 23
III.6.3. Administration of teachers' questionnaire 23
III.7. Data analysis procedure 23
III.8. Encountered difficulties 23
CHAPTER IV. DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS 25
IV.0. Introduction 25
IV.1. Data presentation and analysis 25
IV.1.1. Presentation and analysis of data from classroom observation 25
IV.1.2. Presentation and analysis of data from questionnaires 25
IV.1.2.1. Presentation and analysis of data from students' questionnaire 26
IV.1.2.2. Data analysis from the teachers' questionnaire 43
IV.2. FINDINGS 48
CHAPTER V: GENERAL CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS 50
V.1. GENERAL CONCLUSION 50
V.2. RECOMMENDATIONS 50
BIBLIOGRAPHY 52
APPENDICES 54

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

I.1. Background to the study

Burundi is a country in which linguistic diversity is observed since the arrival of Arabs, Africans and Europeans in the late 19th century. Kirundi is used in commercial places for buying and selling different articles. People look at someone who does not speak Kirundi as if he were from another country.

Kirundi is spoken all over the country; only a few people speak Kiswahili. Very few people speak English in Bujumbura and in the countryside. Kiswahili was introduced by Arab traders in the late 1800s. It was originally spoken in places where these Arabs lived while arriving in Burundi. It was also spoken by people from Pakistan and India who have come to Burundi for commercial activities.

Later on, in the 19th century, some European languages were introduced in Burundi by missionaries and colonizers. These languages were German, Flemish and French. Among those languages which have been introduced in Burundi, French was adopted as a second language and official language. In the Burundian educational system, French was taught from the third year of primary school.

The situation changed later on, and French is now taught from the first year of primary school. English was introduced from sixth form of secondary school from 1959; but today it is from the first year of primary school. The fact of starting to learn at advanced age hampers the effective use of that language by Burundians. The acquisition of second language (L2) is different from the acquisition of a foreign language (FL). The L2 is facilitated because it is spoken in the surrounding environment, but the FL is only spoken while the teacher is interacting with his students.

The fluency is lower in the FL than in the L2. Students learn English in class because they want to get marks by memorizing the structures given by the teacher while evaluating an English lesson, but they will not be able to express themselves outside the classroom because the language spoken within the environment is different from English.

As a matter of fact, students find themselves in total confusion because they face many languages per day and, the target language is not among those languages which will be heard. While in the classroom, they learn English and French; English is taught as

subject among others whereas French is the language of instruction in schools and it is an official language. Students speak English while in class whereas Kirundi is spoken immediately after English lessons. Even French, which is the language of instruction in almost all subjects, is not spoken. This is a hindrance to the performance of students because they need an environment which facilitates their speaking of the language.

Normally, students may do their best to master English if they hear it being spoken by other people. But since they will rarely hear the language out of the classroom they will behave as if they did not study English at all. Students need to be told the importance of English because some consider it as a simple subject whereas it is very important since nowadays it is an international language.

It is used for communication especially when presently Burundi is a member of the East African Community whose members use English to communicate. All this should help students to pay much attention to learning English. The situation may change because it is nowadays being taught from primary school and students will become more and more familiar with it. If the number of speakers increases, the interaction is greater and the language performance is improved. It is by speaking a language that it is learnt and this is facilitated by the environment.

I.2. Statement of the problem

English is an international language of communication, business, politics, science, social life and information. English has been an important language all over the world including Burundi country which is located in the East Central Africa where the neighboring countries most of them speak English language. Unfortunately, many secondary school students perform poorly in English. Their performance does not justify the fact that they learn English. To learn a language many factors interplay. Among those factors is the environment of the learners. This has attracted my attention and that is the reason why I conducted this study to investigate whether the environment has an impact on students' performance in English.

I.3. Research questions

Research questions consist of a number of questions which help the researcher to conduct his study. They guiding questions to which researcher tries to find answers by the end of his/her in this topic the following questions will be raised to which a researcher tries to find answers such as:

1. To what extent does the environment contribute to Students' performance in English?

2. To what extent does the language spoken in the environment of students have an impact on their performance in English?

3. Do Kirundi and French have a negative impact on the learning of English?

I.4. Research Hypotheses

- The environment does not contribute to the performance of students in English.
- The languages spoken in the students' environment has an impact on their performance in English.
- Kirundi and French have a negative impact on learning and speaking English.

I.5. Motivation

As far as motivation for choosing this topic is concerned, the researcher was motivated by the difficulties observed when students are asked to express themselves in English. When someone asks those students some questions they tell him that they understand what he asks them but the problem is how to express themselves. The researcher realized that there are difficulties in expressing themselves in English. This is what gave the researcher the motivation to find out if this weakness has anything to do with the environment.

I.6. Purpose of the study

This work results from the awareness that a language which is spoken at school only and nowhere else is not acquired. This study tries to show the importance of the environment in which one acquires a language. In other words it is an investigation on the relationship between the environment and students' performance in English.

The work explores the ways in which the environment affects students' performance either positively or negatively. After the findings, some recommendations will be addressed to the authorities such as policy makers, teachers and students in order to help in the promotion of English in Burundi.

I.7. Scope and delimitation of the study

This work has its basic idea that the language which is not spoken in the environment in which the learner is cannot be well mastered. This study focuses on students of some secondary schools in Mukike commune in order to see whether the environment enhances or hinders students' proficiency in English. It is true that they learn what they have to learn in English but does it permit them to be fluent in English and therefore achieve real proficiency?

Indeed, the research is focused on the study of the impact of some secondary schools in Mukike because the researcher knows the language spoken in that area and wishes to know if that language has any impact on the target language. He would have liked to cover at least the whole province Bujumbura-Rural but due to time and financial constraints, he limited his study to some selected schools in Mukike commune because he knows the locality of all those schools, and any place mentioned outside Mukike commune may be for the purpose of illustration. The researcher wants to find out the role of the environment on language learning.

I.8. Significance of the study

The significance of this work cannot be overemphasized when one looks at it from the point of view of the contributions it makes to the body of existing knowledge in the field of teaching of English as a foreign language. The work reminds teachers of the fact that the teaching of English does not happen in the classroom alone and that a learner does not say that he masters a language because he learned it in the classroom. Rather he/she should be able to use the language outside the classroom. In the same vein, to be able to master the language, the students realize through this work that they have to practice speaking English always. Moreover, readers see that importance of the environment in language learning is not only theoretical but also real. Finally, future researchers will find this work a useful source of reference.

I.9. Definition of key terms

Some words in this study need to be defined simplify them for whoever would read and /or use this work: These are the following:

1. Environment: according to the Advanced Learners Dictionary, environment is the conditions in a place that affect the behavior and development of somebody or something.
2. First language: the language that you first learn to speak when you are a child.
3. Second language: the language which is not a native language in a country but which is widely used as a medium of communication.
4. Foreign language: the language which is studied primary to enable one to communicate with native speakers of that language.

These definitions have been found in Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary 14th edition and Longman Dictionary.

This chapter was about the presentation of general introduction where it points out many points that explain what it dealt with in this study, namely: the background to the study, research questions, research hypotheses, motivation, purpose of the study, scope and delimitation of the study, significance of the study, as well as definition of key terms. The following chapter concerns the review of related literature.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

II.1. Introduction

The knowledge of English like that other language requires the mastery of four skills known as listening, speaking, reading and writing. The spoken language is of great importance since many writers have dealt with the teaching and learning of this skill. They tried to identify the difficulties met and the facilities needed in the teaching and learning of English in order to advise curriculum designers to take decisions concerning the improvement of its teaching and learning.

Consequently, this chapter aims at reviewing and evaluating what other researchers have written on the learning of English. It concentrates on different views about the learning of the English language in general.

The existing conflict within learners with regard to the first language (mother tongue) and the foreign language is an interference which is naturally expected since the two languages may not be similar. If the learners do not think in their mother tongue or L2, it will be difficult for them to say something in FL.

In Burundi, a learner will rely inevitably on a second language throughout his school life because the Burundi educational system gives the latter great importance. But, since Kirundi (mother tongue) is spoken throughout the country, few students will think in the L2 considering how this matter is understood or used by students. This means that the performance English may be hampered by many factors particularly the interference due to the L1 and L2.

II.2. Home environment

It is important to define and analyze the two concepts in the expression "Home environment" "Home" according to the Advanced Learners' Dictionary, is a place where someone grows or a place where something flourishes or from which it originated. Home can also be defined in general, as the basic social unit of society having two or more adults together and cooperating in the bringing up of children. "The environment" as defined in the same dictionary is the surrounding or conditions in which a person, animal or plant lives or operates. Generally, it can be defined as the natural physical and material environment, especially during childhood and youth that forms an individual's character, personality and cultural make up.

Boocock (1980:17) estimates that the family environment explains close to one half of the variation in educational attainments.

Regarding parents' encouragement and its influence on children's attitudes towards education, Boocock (1980:82) says:

> *Most of children and their parents value success and recognize formal education there is a difference among families in their evaluation of achievement. As important strategies for reaching them? Parents of school achievers not only expect more and communicate this to their children but they also teach them the behavior needed to fulfill expectations.*

Keeping in mind that families equally value achievement as important, the study intends to investigate on the various patterns of language performance among different home environments and how the family environment affects the intellectual development and academic achievement of children from different social circumstances. Therefore, the emphasis in this work is on the role of the environment and the students' effort towards effective language performance in everyday conversation, and the consequent academic achievement.

Namakula-Mukiibi (1989:34) explains that the child' family stays where it does due to its socio-economic status and it is this vicindy that determines the school facilities and scholastic attention the child gets from his/her parents and so Lavin concludes that academic achievement is greatly related to the child's home environment.

II.3. Home environment and language performance

"Home environment plays an important role in determining the pattern of language used in everyday conversation and consequently academic achievement" Ezewu (1983:84).

The above view is supported by Boocock (1980:131) through his sociological theory in stating that learning differences are better explained by causes which originate from outside the school system (like effects of students' family environment or of society as a whole) or causes that originate from inside the school (such as the effect of teachers behavior or of the teaching material).

Also, Gardener (1985:120) suggested that in households where parents actively encourage their children in language study to the point of sending them to other communities for a brief stay, this attitude helps those children to develop their language skills.

Wallace (1976:3) suggested that for many children, literary awareness begins before they go to school. He goes further to say that there is considerable evidence that good, young learner-readers see reading in a social context that is they are aware that certain kinds of reading behavior characterize certain situations. For young children, the most important context is home or family. Besides that, school environment plays an important role.

II.4. Materials used in teaching English

The availability of materials and other resources to supplement the classroom activities of language teaching does affect the ability of students to perform in a language. Wright (1976:109) says:

> *Whatever other functions the material may have providing interested, fun, cultural setting, book and so on, the main objective is that of guiding the student to use his/her store of foreign language to communicate his/her ideas and opinions.*

Teachers should be careful in using materials. In the teaching of a language, the purpose of material usage should be to facilitate input integration in language learning. If not, the result would be a total distraction and therefore rendering the teaching/learning null. Books are not only the materials to reach a better performance; they include magazines, periodicals, newspapers, short stories, charts, plays, poems, journals, individuals, articles films, maps, photographs, tape recorder and video. Materials facilitate the acquisition of a large vocabulary within the classroom. They also provide opportunities for independent study and self-evaluation.

The advocates of performance in a language emphasize on the use of authentic or life materials in the classroom, but unfortunately, plenty of secondary schools in Burundi are without novels or any good literature books for English students. This problem is compounded by the absence of authentic materials and literature that reflect students' cultural experiences and needs. We lack a series of magazines especially written for schools.

Equally lacking are visual materials like tables, pictures diagrams and maps. The materials are useful in situationarising the language needed to express the learners' experience. The limited materials available are of foreign origin, depicting foreign culture and experiences that are of little if any relevance for students. It can be said with certainty that one of the things one must have to teach English in secondary schools is plenty of books. Through reading literature the learner benefits from the clearest, most significant and most appropriate use of words. In Burundi schools that have libraries are stocked with limited foreign materials which cannot adequately cater for the large number of students found in secondary schools.

Note that some classes are often very large with as many as a hundred or more students with limited materials to use. In such classes, there is often lack of space for free movement and this almost makes it impossible for the teacher to organize and reorganize the class for group activities. Though teachers of English would improvise other reading materials for the class, it would be economically expensive to secure enough materials for such large classes. Usually the teacher and his class depend on one book, which is too often shared between two to four students at a sitting.

The absence of literature materials would be compensated for by materials related to other subjects in the school syllabus, up-to-date scientific and technical materials, magazines and anthologies. Materials should not be too challenging or too easy. If it contains a very difficult language, it will frustrate the students and demotivate them. Care should be taken, when choosing materials for students and teachers to supply materials that students feels they want. Lack of materials in secondary schools is beyond the schools' ability because of financial problems. It is believed that one of the things one must have to teach English in secondary school is plenty of books for the language of good literature produces more distinct and vivid description, narrative and dialogue and consequently and surely is impressed on the mind. Reading experience guides the learner to fullest and richest meanings of the words and how they can be arranged and rearranged for effective communication. Therefore in schools materials should be a priority over other things.

II.5. Motivation in foreign language learning

When a learner wishes to learner a foreign language, there is a motivation which pushes the latter to learn that language. Motivation can be defined as the factor that determines one's desire to do something. To learn a second or foreign language,

students may be interested in many things. Students may learn a language hoping that the latter will help them to get a job, read a foreign newspaper, and pass an examination. He may learn also a foreign language to communicate with people of another culture who speak it.

Motivation stimulates one to pursue a course of action as Harmer (1983:3) thinks that motivated students do significantly better than their peers who are not motivated to pursue a course of action. It is said that if you perceive a goal and if that goal is sufficiently attractive, you will be strongly motivated to do whatever is necessary to reach that goal.

Moreover, it is argued that language learners who are motivated also perceive goals of various types and we make a distinction between two important goals: short-term and long term goals. Long term goals have to do with a student's wish to get a better job or become a member of a target language community and short term goals include such things as the urge to pass an exam in class. Motivation for most psychologists concerns factors that energize behavior and give it a direction. It is generally accepted that human motives to engage in a particular activity are based on underlying expectations.

Psychology makes a distinction between extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is generally defined as motivation which is directed by the task itself in which one is engaged, whereas extrinsic motivation is said to be guided by external stimuli such as parental approval offer of a reward, threat of punishment, a good grade. The concepts of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation are applied in language learning. Extrinsic motivation is concerned with factors outside the classroom. On the one hand, a student's attitude will be strongly influenced by those around him. For instance, if a young student's parents are much against the culture of the community which uses the target language, it is possible that this will negatively affect the student's attitude.

On the other hand, a positive attitude among parents might have a positive effect on that student. Intrinsic motivation is concerned with what takes place in the classroom. It is worth noting for example that the physical conditions have a great effect on learning and can change a student's motivation either negatively or positively.

Harmer (1991:4) identifies two main types of motivation, students are motivated by the culture of the target language community, they wish to integrated motivation as follows: A student is said to be integrative motivated if he wishes to learn more about

the other culture community because he is interested in it to the point of eventually being accepted as member of that group. The preceding statement explains that a student wants to be integratively motivated he must go deep into the culture of the country speaking the target language.

The instrumental motivation is used to describe a situation in which the student considers the target language as an instrument in order to get a better job or position especially when the learner reaches the step of mastering that target language. It is also said that there are other factors which have an impact on the students' level and most of these depend on students' attitude towards the language. This in turn will affect his/her motivation in a negative way. If they are very much in favor of the language, this might have the opposite effect.

Elst. V et al. (1984:117) say that a student is instrumentally motivated if the purpose of language reflects the more utilitarian value of linguistic achievement such as getting ahead in one's occupation. Equally important to note is the fact that intrinsic motivation plays a vital role in the success or failure of most students as language learners. What happens in the classroom will be of paramount importance in determining their attitude to the language and in raising motivation which is a vital component in successful language learning. Harmer (1991:4) proposes physical conditions, methods, the teacher and success as factors affecting intrinsic motivation as it is shown below.

First of all, physical conditions have a great effect on learning. For example, the blackboard has a great role to play in learning. The seats too are of paramount importance because when one does not sit comfortably, the learning will not have a positive effect than it should have been if the seats were comfortable.

II.6. Translation

The third suggestion as to why students make errors is perhaps the most common. Translation word by word of idiomatic expressions in the learner's first language can produce classic howlers: German speakers, for example, may say "it makes me nothing out" (instead of it is about to start)

According to Norrish (1983:26) it should be made clear at this point that the distinction between interference and translation from the first language as causes of

students' errors is clear one. The implication of the term "interference" is that what takes place is largely unconscious in the mind of the learner.

Let us consider the possible reasons why a learner may try to translate a familiar expression into the language he is learning. One of the most typical situations is when a learner has been asked to communicate something, let us say in writing, but is aware that he does not know the appropriate expression or structure. He may even be unwaring that an appropriate one exists. Naturally, as he wishes to communicate his idea, he will fall back on the language system with which he is familiar, in this case that of his mother tongue.

II.7. Informal environment and factors causing its inadequacy in learning English.

Informal linguistic environments on the other hand are outside the classroom. They are naturalistic and interactive in nature. In such environments, input is not programmed by any teacher or any syllabus designing authority. Rule isolation and correction are not programmed, Krashen, (1988:40) clarifies this view. "These features such as rule isolation and feedback environment do not seem to be present in an informal environment"

It is a kind of learning which allows adequate exposure especially when proficient speakers of the target language are involved. If this is added to the learners' positive attitude towards the target language, it will lead to successful learning.

Unfortunately, the Burundi linguistic environment lacks that sort of learning environment. The informal linguistic environment is quite inexistent in Burundi. This is a lack of an English speaking community in which to live. In connection with that Wilkins (1972:156) says that:

The society in which second and foreign language learners live will not normally provide then with any contact with a native speaker of that language. The foreign language learner will not use the language at all in his own country without any contact with native speakers. From that, one would think that there is no way for Burundi students to perform in English effectively in the absence of an English speaking community. Thus as has been mentioned, the local environment is an obstacle to the mastery of English by secondary school learners.

II.8. Language at home, school and in the community

Romaine (1984:167) asserts that children do not acquire language all by themselves. They learn to talk by interacting with others. It is generally taken for granted that the child's primary conventional partners are his parents and in most cases mothers.

This study investigates on the relationship between language spoken at home and that spoken at school and in the community and how the two are related to the general pattern of the students' language performance.

On the role of the language spoken at home, at school, and in the wider community in influencing language development, Namakula-Mukiibi (1989:34) points out that one of the embedded variables which might influence language acquisition and development is the frequency and quality of the linguistic environment to which the child is exposed.

Thus, the environment is of paramount importance during the child's language acquisition process, and parents have a great role to play.

Pride (1979:174) asserts that parents are responsible for speech problems of the socially disadvantaged children. He says:

> *(...) a deficiency in auditory discrimination may result from failure to correct mistakes in spoken language, owing either to sheer indifference (...). Correct speech is learnt through imitating in the home and elsewhere. Many parents of socially disadvantaged children do not realize that their speech is incorrect and that their children's poor speech patterns are formed in the home. In school corrective help is given but time is too short for much progress and when the child returns home, he is confronted again with the inferior speech.*

One the one hand, children and adolescents also belong to peer-groups who exert influence on individual members and many peer-groups influences affect the school performance of members. Romaine (1984:182-183) asserts that transition from home to school bring children into a wider sphere of social activity and involves learning new styles of speaking and writing to cope with new communicative tasks and functions. She continues that the child's main input at this stage may have come mostly from other family members with whom he has developed a way of speaking and various routines. Besides family and peer group influence children are also

influenced by media children who watch television are influenced by it in their behavior and in school performance. Scatter et al (1991:118) say that:

> *(...) both school and television are curricula, curriculum being a specially constructed system whose purpose in its totality is to influence, teach, train or cultivate the mind and character of youth and television is a more pervasive, more powerful curriculum than the school.*

Therefore, to get good language acquisition depends upon the linguistic environment to which children are exposed such as the home environment, the school environment and wider community

II.9. The linguistic environment of the learner

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

The quality of the language environment is of paramount importance as far as the success of the language learning is concerned. Lado (1964:59) stresses on the importance of the setting where one learns a language in stating that:

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

This makes us understand that each the setting should have its appropriate tutoring methodology and programme.

The setting where the language is not spoken and one where the language is spoken-influence differently the learner of the new language.Upshur cited by Krashen (1988:41) carried out studies where he compared three groups of ten adult ESL students enrolled in a special summer session for Low students at the University of

Michigan. The first group which scored highest on the entrance test attended seminars and classes during the seven week period that were conducted in English, but had no extra ESL classes and had one hour daily of English in addition.

The third group scored lowest on the pre-test and had two hours of ELS daily in addition to law classes. At the end of the summer, an alternate from the pre-test was given. While all three groups showed some improvement in the performance, Upshur's statistical analysis revealed no significant effect of the language of instruction and concluded that foreign causes may be a less effective means for producing language learning than the use of language in other activities.

The Upshur's study may lead the reader to discredit language courses but this is not true since foreign language courses are a foundation and the cornerstone of the foreign language. Krashen (1985:13) sustained the courses' role, but he draws some limits when he says that:

> *Language classes help when they are the primary source of comprehensive input. This is especially true for beginners who find "Real world" input too complex to understand. Language classes are less helpful when the students are already advanced enough to understand some input from the outside world and this input is available them.*

The implication of this is that English classes are still necessary in Burundi even when students are advanced because outside world input is not available. To offset that, language classes must be organized in a way that they reflect the natural learning by properly decorating the classroom. The language environment may be linguistically deprived if it offers very few opportunities for language usage. Such an environment may be illustrated by the second language acquisition in a second language speaking country. Some African countries such as Uganda, Kenya South Africa and Nigeria are a reflection of the latter where everything encountered (shop signs, newspapers, T.V programs, road signs…) is in English.

English learners in these countries are surrounded by language input which helps them in the learning process. In other countries such Burundi, DRC, English input available for English language learners is very poor.

In anyway, the quality of the language environment is of paramount importance as far as the success of a second language acquisition is concerned. A good learning

environment stimulates interest and motivation thus procuring competence. On the other hand, if an environment is poor, it hinders the learning process as stated by Smith (1990:39) where he states that: "poor learning environment depresses and militates against satisfactory learning.

What is said above brings the researcher to understand that scholars have already distinguished two types of language environments. This distinction is between formal language environment and informal language environment and they have already traced their main characteristics and their respective contributions to second or foreign language learning/ acquisition.

II.10. Formal language environment in second/foreign language learning

A formal language environment is characterized by artificially tutored methods of programmed input. This could be bases on an improvised syllabus that could be determined by the teacher. This environment emphasizes the conscious acquisition of rules and forms. Although such an environment leads to learns' competence, it is surely limited to producing speakers who are able to communicate naturally and effectively. In such an environment, a kind of feedback is expected which is manifested in error identification and correction. As the learner is oriented towards linguistic data, this appraisal does not necessarily lead to adequate learning.

As research has shown, this conscious knowledge of the rules appears to play the role of hindering the learners' acquisition or the use of the language. Dulay (1982:16) has shown it in the following terms: learning is equivalent to a kinesiology course for athletes. It may be useful to know which muscles are involved in certain activities.

One improves his tennis by playing it, by exercising in the game as one learns to drive by driving. Similarly, we learn to speak by speaking, that is by using the language. This is then what lacks in an informal learning environment because the only setting for interaction is the classroom and the modeling person is the teacher only. This place does not let freedom to the learners to speak. Laying emphasize on rules could be a hindrance rather than a facility since the learner will be more concerned with a strict follow-up of the linguistic rules. For many learners, one of the reasons for failure in language learning is the fear of the learner to make mistakes. Anyway, as the classroom is the only interactive setting, learners should have the opportunity to optimally utilize the language and practice it through expressive and communicative activities.

Lado (1964:59) proposes to create the atmosphere of second culture through proper decoration of the classroom, a lounge, and/or when possible, a house.

II.11. Informal language environment and language learning

The Language environment is said to be natural when the focus is on the content of communication. As such, environmental inputs are not planned by any teaching authority. This is the case of an ordinary conversation. Conversation does not motivate the interlocutors to care about language structures such as grammar. In natural conversation, there is no need to care about the formal rules of the language in which people are conversing, and very rarely people correct the grammar in the learners' speech.

They simply care about giving and receiving information with no awareness of the structures of the language they are using. It is a learning environment which stimulates interest and motivation thus generating competence. To talk about the learning environment, we also have to talk about the home of the learner as one which contributes to success in the learning process. Although formal and informal learning environments are both necessary and crucial in learning language, they do not allow the same exposure to the language. Success in learning in the different environments is consequently not the same. For taking a position, one could assert that informal learning environments. The letter allows adequate exposure to the language and it is evident that the more we are exposed to a language the more we learn it. To show the supremacy of the informal environment over the formal in learning a language, Krashen (1988:40) states that;

> *Several studies suggest that adults cannot increase their second language proficiency in an informal environment, but they do as well or better than the learners who have learnt the language in a formal environment when they are motivated.*

In short, in this chapter, our concern was to collect what others scholars have said or done in relation to our topic. We highlight the role that some authors attribute to impact of environment and factors hindering language performance. The following chapter is about methodology used in collecting and analyzing data.

CHAPTER III.METHODOLOGY

III.1. Introduction

In every scientific study, there must be fixed objectives which a researcher wants to achieve. In fact, in such a study, so many questions are planned. The main question in this study is to find out whether environment has an impact on the students' performance of English as foreign language.

This chapter is made of data collection data analysis procedures. It has to do with methods used while collecting data and it also deals with the source of data used in this work. Besides it describes the population used for the study and consequently the research sample. Data analysis procedures when analyzing the data collected. Briefly, this section is mainly concerned with sampling instruments data collection and procedures.

III.2. Description of the area of the study

This investigation was carried out in Bujumbura-Rural province in general and Mukike commune in particular where there is a concentration of schools and the researcher conducted his research in that commune because he is a native of that area. Thus, Mukike commune has 11 secondary schools Lycée of Bikanka, Basic school of Kigozi, Communal college of Kirinzi, Basic school of Mayuyu, Communal Lycée of Mukike, Communal college of Musinzira, Basic school of Muzi, Communal Lycée of Rukina, Communal college of Rurambira, Basic school of Ruzibazi and Basic school of Rwiyago. Among those schools only 6 have 5thform.Those are: Communal Lycée of Mukike, Communal Kirinzi, Communal Lycée of Bikanka, Communal Lycée of Rurambira, Communal College of Musinzira, Communal Lycée of Rukina

This investigation was conducted in junior level especially in 5th form because at this level students make the choice of sections between either Arts or science. The schools visited are the following.

1. Communal Lycée of Mukike

2. Communal of Kirinzi

3. Communal Lycée of Bikanka

4. Communal Lycée of Rurambira

5. Communal college of Musinzira

6. Communal Lycée of Rukina

III.3. Population

To collect research data, the researcher had recourse to two groups of subjects namely English teachers and pupils of 5th form ready to choose sections i.e. arts or science sections. Thus, since teachers are in regular contact with pupils, they are supposed to know their pupils' abilities well, that is their strengths and weaknesses in English. Since this study deals with the role of the environment in the students' performance in English their opinions cannot be neglected. As a matter of fact, the researcher visited 6 schools having 5th form classes.

III.4. Sampling

As it has been said about the population with whom the researcher worked, the latter dealt with schools having fifth form classes. That is 5thform students and teachers of English in selected schools. In the selection of the subjects, Muchielli (1971:75) helped the researcher to determine the sample to study.

> *Echantillonner consiste à limiter l'enquête à un petit nombre de personne soit 1/10, 1/5, 1/2000, etc. qui formera l'échantillon de l'extérieur de la population d'enquête.*

Translated as:

> *To sample is to limit the inquiry to a small number of people that is1/10, 1/5, 1/2000, and so on which will constitute the same sample inside a population under study.*

As far as Muchielli's technique is concerned, it was used to select subjects to be surveyed through the questionnaires. Therefore, from 6 schools and among 750 students, 150 students and 6 teachers were chosen. That is 1/5 of students were chosen from the total number of students that is A&B 5th form. For teachers, there is no technique used since each class is taught by one teacher. Below, is a table showing schools and respondents:

Table 1: Sample of schools, teachers and pupils used as informants

Schools 'name	Total number of pupils	Total number of teachers	Total number of pupils sampled
Communal Lycée of Mukike	127	1	25
Communal collège of Kirinzi	125	1	25
Communal Lycée of Bikanka	129	1	25
Communal collège of Rurambira	130	1	25
Communal collège of Musinzira	126	1	25
Communal Lycée of Rukina	128	1	25
Total	764	6	150

The respondents the researcher used are 156. That is 150 students and 6 teachers.

A sample of 150 students was selected from 5thform from the selected schools. A simple random sampling choice was made: 25 students were selected from each class. In this technique, every subject of the population had the same chance of being selected. The researcher wrote names of all students on similar pieces of papers, folded them and shuffled them. After, he put those pieces of papers in a basket. Then, he chose one at a time until he had the required number of students. A reason which motivated the researcher to work with students of fifth form is that at this level, students make the choice to go into either Arts or science sections.

There is no technique used to choose teachers since each 5th form among the schools visited is taught by one teacher. The teachers were chosen because they were supposed to know their pupils' abilities well, that is, their strengths and weaknesses in English. Equally, teachers who teach English in fifth form were selected because they are of great importance in promoting students' proficiency in the English language. Teachers can motivate their students to like English, but they can also discourage students so that the latter may dislike English language as a subject. This is because teachers are always with students in the classroom and they hear how the students express themselves in English. They see problems students have in English. Teachers know how each student pronounces English words. So, the teacher is a partner of students in

the business of language teaching and learning and that is why teachers are included in this study.

III.5. Data collection instruments

In order to collect the data on "The impact of environment on the student's performance of English as foreign Language: case of some schools in Mukike commune 5th form" the study was made using the following instruments: classroom observation, teachers questionnaire and learners' questionnaire.

III.5.1. Classroom observation

To carry out this study, the researcher found it necessary to observe informants in the classroom setting. This classroom observation was motivated by the fact that it gives first-hand information by a direct contact with the pupils and the teachers. As stated by Wallace (1982:62) when he says:

> *This kind of observation is also extremely valuable since certain aspects of action will be to the teachers. In sport there is a saying that the spectator sees most of the game.*

This makes it clear the reader understands that this observation is very useful since what you see for yourself is better than what you are told. The classroom observation had the following aims:

- To have an overview of how teaching-learning takes place and how classroom are equipped with teaching learning materials.
- To get firsthand information on how expressive pupils are when speaking in the classroom or outside the classroom.
- To see the interaction between the teacher and the learners.

In addition, they helped the researcher to design an appropriate questionnaire for the pupils.

III.5.2. Research questionnaires

A questionnaire is defined by Richterich and Chancerel (1980:52) as the structured instrument for the collection of data. Those questionnaires were used to gather as much information as possible from the informants. The questionnaire was designed in such a way that questions would induce pupils to express their opinion or give facts

that the researcher expected to know about. Thus, the questionnaire was made of open-ended and closed-ended items. To get the whole information, the researcher elaborated two types of questionnaires: one for students, the other one for teachers. As the research questions have been formulated, the researcher wanted to look at the students' environment and its contribution to their proficiency in English. In the formulation of the questionnaire, the researcher wanted to see whether the environment hampers or promotes the performance of students in English.

III.6. Data collection procedure

Before starting data collection, the researcher was introduced to the schools leaders after showing the letter of introduction signed by the Dean of Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. Then, he made frequent visits to the selected schools where he could meet teachers and learners of 5th form.

Two written questionnaires were used. Thus, one questionnaire was given to 5th form teachers. Another questionnaire was given to students of 5th form, and the researcher tried to clarify the questionnaire. Thanks to their understanding and cooperation the researcher recuperated all the copies without any problem.

III. 6.1. Pilot study

Before conducting the field study, I started by making the pilot study, which is of paramount importance in any scientific study due to advantages it presents. It permits mainly a preliminary tasting of hypotheses that leads to establish more precise hypotheses for the main study. In addition, it greatly reduces the number of errors because unforeseen problems revealed in the pilot study may be overcome in the redesigning the questionnaires. Furthermore, it is possible to get feed-back from research subjects and other persons involved that leads to important improvement in the study design. In fact, I presented the questionnaire to a limited number of teachers (5) and made an interview with (13) pupils; and after analyzing the data, I concluded some of the questions were not going to contribute enough as far as my topic is concerned. Then, this pushes me to delete them whereas other questions needed some clarification and modification

III.6.2. Administration of students' questionnaire

The researcher administered the questionnaire to the students himself. This was due to the fact that there were some clarifications which the researcher had to make himself. He explained the content of the questionnaire to the students and showed them how to complete the questionnaire correctly. The researcher explained to the students that the exercise was to make their studies easier and more effective. All questionnaires were answered and returned.

III.6.3. Administration of teachers' questionnaire

Before giving the questionnaire to the teachers, the researcher explained to them that it was important that they complete questionnaire honestly and sincerely to make the work valid. He further told them that by completing the questionnaire sincerely and appropriately they would be advancing the cause of effective teaching and learning of English in our secondary schools.

III.7. Data analysis procedure

This section describes the way the collected data were analyzed. The analysis of the data was based on the data collected through the questionnaires and observation. Tables were drawn in order to see how questions were answered question by question and data analysis was done.

III.8. Encountered difficulties

To carry out this study, the researcher faced some challenges. When the researcher was going to begin the research, exams in secondary schools started and it was not possible to visit the respondents. During the research, some schools (communal college of Kirinzi, Communal Lycée of Rurambira) were almost not accessible especially when it has rained. It was very difficult for the researcher to reach such places. As a result of this, the distribution of the questionnaires took much time. The researcher was supposed to visit the areas of the study many times but due to the above hindrances he could not do so.

This chapter indicated strategies used to collect data from the informants. To get data, two instruments were used namely classroom observation, and students' questionnaire and teachers' questionnaire. An observation was done in 5th Form and questionnaire

was distributed to learners and teachers of 5th Form. The next chapter's goal is, to present, analyze and interpret data and to discuss the findings

CHAPTER IV. DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

IV.0. Introduction

This chapter contains the analysis of data collected and the obtained results. Moreover, it shows the extent to which the research questions have been answered. Since all the questions contained in the questionnaire had to verify whether the environment promotes or hinders the performance of students in English, this chapter shows what takes place in different parts of Mukike commune. The chapter sets outs to assess the language spoken by students in various contexts, especially the language spoken at home, at school and in the wider community.

IV.1. Data presentation and analysis

This section is concerned with the presentation and analysis of the data that the researcher obtained from different respondents of selected secondary schools in Mukike Commune. The total number of respondents given the questionnaire was 156 i.e.150 students and 6teachers from selected schools.

IV.1.1. Presentation and analysis of data from classroom observation

Classroom observations were centered on the following items: the speaking lesson, the materials and the state of the learners. The research of this topic had led me to some schools in Mukike Commune in order to see myself what is going on there. Speaking skill which is the base of a good performance in language was neglected by the teachers and also by the learners. In fact, learners do not have enough time to express themselves. They speak English only when they are answering teacher's questions about exercises they are doing. Then, they do what they are told to do but not out of their own production. In addition to that those schools do not have teaching materials. The classroom observations were carried out to ensure whether data from teacher's and students' questionnaires would match what I observed.

IV.1.2. Presentation and analysis of data from questionnaires

As already mentioned, the questionnaire consisted of two sets: one for the students and the other one for the teachers. The questionnaire for the students is made of twelve questions whereas the one for the teachers contained eight questions.

IV.1.2.1. Presentation and analysis of data from students' questionnaire

- ✓ **Students' questionnaire**

In this section, the researcher interprets and analyses the student's answers to questions contained in the questionnaire in order to reach a reliable conclusion about the contribution of the environment to the students' performance in English.

Question1. How do your neighbors react whenever you speak English?

a. They are happy ☐

b. They are angry ☐

c. They laugh at me ☐

Presentation of data for question1

Table 2: The reaction of neighbors when students speak English

Schools / Answers	C.L of Mukike		C.C of Kirinzi		C.L of Bikanka		C.C of Rurambira		C.C of Musinzira		C.L of Rukina	
	Resp	%	Resp	%	Resp	%	Resp	%	Resp	%	Resp	%
They are happy	21	84	15	60	18	72	15	60	8	32	19	76
They are angry	3	12	6	24	5	20	5	20	6	24	3	12
They laugh at me	1	4	4	16	2	8	5	20	11	44	3	12
Total	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100

The table above shows how the neighbors react when they hear students speak English. At the Communal Lycée of Mukike, 21 respondents representing (84%) say their neighbors are happy whenever they hear them speak English. 3 respondents, representing 12% say their neighbors are angry when they hear them speak English, while 1 respondent representing 4% says his neighbors laugh at him/her when he/she speaks English.

On the other hand at communal college of Kirinzi, 15 respondents representing 60% say their neighbors are happy whenever they hear them speak English, while 4 respondents (16%) say their neighbors laugh at them (students) whenever they (neighbors) hear them speak English.

At Communal Lycée of Bikanka, 18 respondents (72%) say that their neighbors are happy whenever they hear them speak English. 5 respondents (20%) say that their neighbors are angry when they hear them speak English, while 2 students (8%) say neighbors laugh at them whenever they hear them speak English.

The case is slightly different at Communal College of Rurambira where 15 students (60%) say that their neighbors are happy whenever they hear them speak English. 5 students (20%) say their neighbors are angry when they hear them speak English.

At Communal College of Musinzira, 8 respondents representing (32%) say their neighbors are happy whenever they hear them speak English. 6 respondents, it means (24%), say that their neighbors are angry when they hear them speak English, while 11 respondents representing (44%) say their neighbors laugh (students) whenever they hear them speak English. This shows that they are not interested in English language.

At the Communal College of Rukina, 19 students (76%) say that their neighbors are happy whenever they hear them speak English.3 students (12%) say that their neighbors are angry whenever they speak English, while 3 students (12%) say their neighbors laugh at them whenever they hear them speak English.

From the analysis so far it is clear that most of the respondents agree that their neighbors are happy whenever they hear them speak English, put together, their percentages are significant. Then, if you compare these percentages in the table, we realize that many persons are happy when one speaks English. Otherwise there are interested in English.

Question2. Do you have any English club in your school?

a. Yes ☐

b. No ☐

Presentation of data for question 2

Table 3: Having or not having English clubs at school

Schools / Answers	C.L of Mukike		C.C of Kirinzi		C.L of Bikanka		C.C of Rurambira		C.C of Musinzira		C.C of Rukina	
	Resp	%	Resp	%	Resp	%	Resp	%	Resp	%	Resp	%
Yes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100
Total	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100

The table above is concerned with the fact of having English language clubs in schools. In all the schools visited by the researcher, no single school had an English language club. Therefore, all the respondents (100%) answered "No" to the question. When analyzing the percentages in the table we see that the linguistic environment is not favorable to the development of English language. But, a good learning environment stimulates interest and motivation thus procuring competence. On the other hand, if an environment is poor, it hinders the learning process as stated by Smith (1990: 39) where he states that "poor learning environment depresses and militates against satisfactory learning".

Question 3: Do you have any English books at home?

a. Yes ☐

b. No ☐

Presentation of the data for question3

Table 4: The fact of having English books at home

Schools / Answers	C.L of Mukike		C.C of Kirinzi		C.L of Bikanka		C.C of Rurambira		C.C of Musinzira		C.C of Rukina	
	Resp	%	Resp	%	Resp	%	Resp	%	Resp	%	Resp	%
Yes	10	40	3	12	9	36	1	4	5	20	5	20
No	15	60	22	88	16	64	24	96	20	80	20	80
Total	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100

From the table, it can be seen that in each of the schools sampled, a small number of students have books at home.

At the Communal Lycée of Mukike, out of the 25 students surveyed, only 10 (40%) have books at home whereas 15 of them (60%) do not have books at home. In the same vein at the Communal College of Kirinzi, out of the 25 students sampled, only 3 of them (12%) have books at home, while 22 (88%) do not have books at home.

The situation is slightly different at the Communal Lycée of Bikanka: out of the 25 students sampled, 9 of them (36%) have books at home, whereas 16 students (64%) do not have books at home. At the Communal College of Rurambira, out of the 25 students sampled, only 1 (4%) has books at home, while 24 (96%) do not have books at home.

At Communal college of Musinzira, out of the 25 students sampled, only 5 (20%) have books at home, while 20 (80%) do not have books at home. The situation is the same at the Communal Lycée of Rukina: out of the 25 students sampled, 5 (20%) has books at home, while 20, (80%), do not have books at home.

From the analysis above, it is clear that most of the respondents agree that they do not have English books at home. Even though some respondents say that they have English books at home, their percentage is not statistically significant. Briefly, this

table shows that very few students have English books at home and this situation is common to all the schools sampled by the researcher. According to Wright (1976:109)

> *Whatever other functions the material may have providing interest, fun cultural setting, and the main objective is that of guiding the students to use his/her ideas and opinions.*

Unfortunately students have limited materials to use and the lack of materials is beyond schools and families' abilities because of financial problems.

Question 4: Which language is mostly spoken in your village?

a. Kirundi ☐

b. French ☐

c. English ☐

d. Kiswahili ☐

For this question, all the respondents say that the language which is mostly spoken in the student's village is Kirundi. Since the students have grown in an environments where Kirundi which is the mother language and the most spoken, there are more influenced by the environment speaking that language. Consequently, other languages such as French, Swahili and English are not given the room although; these languages are learnt at school. Therefore, the environment plays an important role in hindering or promoting language learning. This is supported by Ezewu (1983:83) when he says that home environment plays an important role in determining the pattern of a language used in every day conversation and consequently academic achievement.

Question 5: Do you have access to television

a. Yes ☐

b. No ☐

Presentation of data for question 5

Table 5: Having access to television or not

Schools / Answers	C.L of Mukike		C.C of Kirinzi		C.L of Bikanka		C.C of Rurambira		C.C of Musinzira		C.C of Rukina	
	Resp	%	Resp	%	Resp	%	Resp	%	Resp	%	Resp	%
Yes	11	44	2	8	5	20	0	0	1	4	3	12
No	14	56	23	92	20	80	25	100	24	96	22	88
Total	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100

The table above shows how many students have access to television. At the Communal Lycée of Mukike, out of 25 students sampled, 11, (44%) say that they have access to television; 14 students, 56%, say that they do not have access to television. At communal college of Kirinzi, 2 students, 8%, say that they have access to television; while 23 students, (92%) say that they do not have access to television.

Out of 25 students sampled at the Communal Lycée of Bikanka, 5 (20%) say that they do not have access to television and 20 students, (80%), say that they do not have access to television.

There is a difference at the Communal college of Rurambira where out of the sample, 25 students; all of them (100%) say that they do not have access to television. This means that no single student has access to television at home.

At the Communal College of Musinzira, 1 student, (4%) says that he/she has access to television; while 24 students, (96%), say that they do not have access to television.

At the Communal Lycée of Rukina, out of 25 students sampled, 3, (12%) say that they have access to television; while 22 students, (88%), say that they do not have access to television.

From the analysis above, it is obvious that among the students sampled, many of them do not have access to television. Even though some schools have some students who have access to television, material which plays an important role in learning a target language. As said by Scatter et al (1991: 118):

(...) both school and television are curricula, curriculum being a specially constructed system whose purpose in its totality is to influence, teach, train or cultivate the mind and character of youth and television is a more pervasive, more powerful curriculum than the school.

Question 6: If your answer to question 5 is "yes", how often do you listen to English programs?

a. Sometimes ☐

b. Rarely ☐

c. Never ☐

Presentation of data for question 6

Table 6: How often students listen to English programs?

Schools / Answers	C.L of Mukike		C.C of Kirinzi		C.L of Bikanka		C.C of Musinzira		C.C of Rukina	
	Resp	%	Resp	%	Resp	%	Resp	%	Resp	%
Sometimes	7	64	2	100	4	80	0	0	3	100
Rarely	4	36	0	0	0	0	1	100	0	0
Never	0	0	0	0	1	20	0	0	0	0
Total	11	100	2	100	5	100	1	100	3	100

In this table, the total number of students has decreased because question 6 is linked question 5.

Question 5 asked whether students have access to television or not and question 6 asked students who have access to television how frequent they listen to English programs. At communal Lycée of Mukike out of 11 students who have access to television, 7 students (64%) sometimes listen to English programs, while 4 students, or 36%, say that they rarely listen to English programs. No one says he/she never listens to English programs.

At the Communal College of Kirinzi, out of the 2 students who have access to television, both of them (100%) say that they sometimes listen to English programs. No one of them, (0%), says he/she rarely or never listens to English programs.

At the Communal Lycée of Bikanka 4 students, (80%) say that they sometimes listen to English programs. No one says he/she listens to English programs; while 1 student, (4%) says that he/she never listens to English programs. At the Communal College of Musinzira, only 1 student (100%) has access to television at home and this respondent rarely listens to English programs. In the same vein, the Communal Lycée of Rukina has 3 students who have access to television and all of them sometimes listen to English programs. From the analysis above, it is clear that most of the students who have access to television sometimes listen to English programs. Although some students say that they rarely or never listen to English programs, their percentage is not statistically significant.

Question 7: Which language do your parents speak?

a. Kirundi ☐

b. French ☐

c. English ☐

d. Kiswahili ☐

This question is concerned with the language the students' parent speak. All those respondents answer that their parents speak Kirundi no one among them says that his parent speak French, Swahili or English as main language. Three of these respondents whose parents are intellectuals, say that they sometimes hear their parents using French words especially when they are holding a conversation with other intellectuals. But at home, those students say that their parents use Kirundi language. Most of those parents were born and have grown in the same area and the language spoken is Kirundi. Therefore, it is well understandable that either parents or students speak Kirundi as main language. Consequently those students must speak Kirundi since they have grown in an environment speaking only Kirundi languages.

Question 8: Which language do you often use when you are at home?

a. Kirundi ☐

b. French ☐

c. English ☐

d. Kiswahili ☐

For this question, all the respondents say that the language often used when they are at home is Kirundi. The same language used also by their parents. Romaine (1984:167) asserts that children do not acquire language all by themselves. They learn to talk by interacting with others. It is generally taken for granted that the child's primary conventional partners are his parents and in most cases mothers.

Question 9: How do you express your opinion in English? Read the sentences below and choose the one that suits your situation.

a. I Think in Kirundi, after I translate my opinion in French, and then I translate into English ☐

b. Kirundi and French vocabulary come first into my mind and limit my expression ☐

c. I think in English and express my opinion immediately ☐

Presentation of data for question 9

Presentation of data for question 9

Table 7: Expressing opinion in English

Schools	C.L of Mukike		C.C of Kirinzi		C.L of Bikanka		C.C of Rurambira		C.C of Musinzira		C.C of Rukina	
Answers	Resp	%	Resp	%	Resp	%	Resp	%	Resp	%	Resp	%
I Think in Kirundi, aft I translate m opinion in French, and then I translate in English	8	32	16	64	14	56	17	68	18	72	10	40
Kirundi and French vocabularies come first into my mind and limit my expression	11	44	4	16	5	20	7	28	5	20	13	52
I think in English and express my opinion	6	24	5	20	6	24	1	4	2	8	2	8

immediately												
Total	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100

Question 9: How do you express your opinion in English? Read the sentences below and choose the one that suits your situation.

The table above shows how students proceed in order to express themselves in English. At the Communal Lycée of Mukike, out of the 25 students sampled, 12 respondents (48%), say they think in Kirundi, after, they translate into English. 11 respondents (44%), say Kirundi and French vocabulary comes first into their mind and limits their expression, while 2 respondents (8%), they think in English and express their opinions immediately.

At the Communal College of Kirinzi, 18respondents (72%), say they think in Kirundi, after, they translate their opinions into French and then they translate into English. 4 respondents (16%), say that Kirundi and French vocabulary comes first in their mind and limit their expression, while 5 respondents (20%), say they think in English and express their opinions immediately.

At the Communal Lycée of Bikanka, 18 respondents (72%), say they think in Kirundi, after, they translate their opinions into French and then they translate into English. 5 respondents (20%), say that Kirundi and French vocabulary comes first into their mind and limits their expression, while 2 respondents (8%), say they think in English and express their opinions immediately.

At Communal College of Rurambira, out of 25 students sampled, 17 respondents (68%), say they think in Kirundi, after, they translate their opinions in French, and then they translate into English. 7 respondents (28%), say that Kirundi and French vocabulary comes first into their mind and limits their expression, while 1 respondent (4%), says he/she thinks in English and expresses his/her opinion immediately.

At the Communal College of Musinzira, out of the sampled students, 18 (72%) say they think in Kirundi, after, they translate their opinions into French and then they translate into English. 5 respondents (20%), say that Kirundi and French vocabulary comes first in their mind and limits their expression; while 2 respondents (8%), say they think in English and express their opinions immediately.

At the Communal Lycée of Rukina, out of 25 sampled students, 18 respondents; (72%), say they think in Kirundi, after, they translate their opinions into French and then they translate into English. 4 respondents, (16%) say that Kirundi and French vocabulary comes first in their mind and limits their expression, while 3 respondents; (12%), say they think in English and express their opinions immediately.

From the above analysis, it is clear that most of the students think in Kirundi, after, they translate their opinions into French and then they translate into English. It is also seen that for some students, Kirundi and French vocabulary comes first to their mind and limits their expression; and others think in English and express their opinions immediately.

Question 10: Which subject do you like most?

a. Kirundi ☐

b. French ☐

c. English ☐

Presentation of data for question 10

Table 8: The subject liked by students

Schools / Answers	C.L of Mukike		C.C of Kirinzi		C.L of Bikanka		C.C of Rurambira		C.C of Musinzira		C.C of Rukina	
	Resp	%	Resp	%	Resp	%	Resp	%	Resp	%	Resp	%
Kirundi	5	20	7	28	2	8	12	48	1	4	1	4
French	10	40	4	16	12	48	3	12	2	8	12	48
English	10	40	14	56	11	44	10	40	22	88	12	48
Total	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100

The table above shows the subject which the students of the selected schools like most. At the Communal Lycée of Mukike, out of the 25 students sampled, 5 respondents (20%), say they like Kirundi. 10 respondents, (40%), say they like French; while 10 respondents, (40%), say they like English. At Communal College of Kirinzi; 7 respondents (28%), say they like Kirundi. 4respondents, (16%), say they like French; while 14 respondents, (56%), say they like English.

At the Communal Lycée of Bikanka, among the students sampled, 2 respondents (8%), say they like Kirundi. 12 respondents, (48%), say they like French; while 11 respondents, (44%), say they like English. At the Communal College of Rurambira; 12 respondents (48%), say they like Kirundi, 3 respondents (12 %) say they like French while 10 respondents, (40%), say they like English.

At the Communal College of Musinzira; 1 respondent (4%), says he/she likes Kirundi. 2 respondents, (8%), say they like French; while 22 respondents, (88%) since their English teacher encourages those with good results, say they like English. At the Communal Lycée of Rukina; 1 respondent (4%), says he/she likes Kirundi. 12 respondents, (48%), say they like French; while 12 respondents, (48%), say they like English. From the analysis so far, it is clear that concerning the subject, the students like most English comes first, French comes second and then Kirundi follows.

Question 11: Which of the language skills do you like most?

a. **Speaking** ☐
b. **Reading** ☐
c. **Listening** ☐
d. **Writing** ☐

Presentation of the data for question 11

Table 9: The language skill liked by the students

Schools / Answers	C.L of Mukike		C.C of Kirinzi		C.L of Bikanka		C.C of Rurambira		C.C of Musinzira		C.L of Rukina	
	Rep	%	Rep	%	Rep	%	Rep	%	Rep	%	Rep	%
Speaking	20	80	19	76	13	52	18	72	15	60	15	60
Reading	2	8	2	8	8	32	1	4	5	20	4	16
Listening	3	12	2	8	2	8	3	12	2	8	2	8
Writing	0	0	2	8	2	8	3	12	3	12	4	16
Total	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100

The table above shows the English language skill which the students of the selected schools like most.

At the Communal Lycée of Mukike, 20 respondents, (80%), say they like the speaking skill most. 3 respondents, (12%) say they like the listening skill most; while 2 respondents, (8%), say the like the reading skill most.

At the Communal College of Kirinzi 19 respondents (76%),say they like the speaking skill most. 2 respondents (8%), say the like the reading skill most. While2 respondents, (8%) say they like the writing skill most.

At the Communal Lycée of Bikanka 13 respondents (52%), say they like the speaking most. 8 respondents, (8%) say they like the listening skill most; while 2 respondents, (8%) say they like the writing skill most.

At the Communal College of Rurambira 18 respondents, (72%), say they like the speaking skill most. 1 respondents, (4%), say he /she likes the reading skill most. 3 respondents (12%), say they like the writing skill most.

At the Communal College of Musinzira 15 respondents (60%), say they like the speaking most, 5 respondents, (20%) say the like the reading skill most. 2 respondents (8%) say they like the listening skill most, and 3 respondents, (12%), say they like the writing skill most.

At the Communal Lycée of Rukina, 15 respondents, (60%) say they like the speaking skill most. 4 respondents, (16%) say they like the reading skill most. 2 respondents (8%) , say they like the writing skill most.

From the analysis so far, it is clear that among the four English skills, speaking is the most liked by the sampled students.

Even though some students say they like reading, listening and writing skills, their percentage are lower than the one for speaking skill.

Question 12: How do your classmates react whenever you speak English outside the classroom?

a. **They are astonished** ☐
b. **They encourage me** ☐
c. **They are a mused** ☐
d. **They laugh at me** ☐

Presentation of the data for question12.

Table 10: The reaction of students' classmates when they (students) speak English outside the classroom.

Answers / Schools	C.L of Mukike		C.C of Kirinzi		C.L of Bikanka		C.C of Rurambira		C.C of Musinzira		C.L of Rukina	
	Resp	%	Resp	%	Resp	%	Resp	%	Resp	%	Resp	%
They astonished	3	12	6	24	4	16	1	4	12	48	0	0
They encourage me	14	56	9	36	13	52	16	64	9	36	14	56
They are a mused	8	32	7	28	3	12	2	8	3	12	1	4
They laugh at me	0	0	3	12	5	20	6	24	1	4	10	40
Total	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100

The table above shows how the students' classmates react when they hear them (the students) speak English outside the classroom.

At the Communal Lycée of Mukike, out of the 25 students sampled, 3 respondents (12%), say that their classmates are astonished when they hear them speak English outside the classroom. 14 respondents, (56%) say that their classmates encourage them whenever they hear them speak English outside the classroom. 8 respondents, (32%) say that their classmate are amused when they hear them speak English outside classroom; no one is laughed at when he (she) speaks English outside the classroom.

At the Communal College of Kirinzi, 6 respondents (24%), say their classmates are astonished when they hear them speak English outside the classroom.9 respondents, (36%), say their classmates encourage them whenever they hear them speak English outside the classroom.

7 respondents (28%) say their classmates are amused whenever they hear them speak English outside the classroom; while 3 respondents, (12%), say their classmates laugh at them when they speak English outside the classroom.

At the Communal Lycée of Bikanka, 4 respondents, (16%), say their classmates are astonished whenever they hear them speak English outside the classroom. 13 students, (52%), say their classmates encourage them whenever they hear them speak English outside the classroom, while 5 respondents, (20%) say their classmates laugh at them whenever they hear them speak English outside the classroom.

At the Communal College of Rurambira 1 respondents, (4%), says his/her classmates are astonished whenever they hear him/her speak English outside the classroom. 16 respondents (64%), say their classmates encourage them whenever they hear them speak English outside the classroom. 2 respondents, (8%), say their classmates are amused whenever they hear them speak English; while 6 respondents (24%), say their classmates laugh at them whenever they hear them speak English outside the classroom.

At the Communal College of Musinzira, 12 respondents , (48%) say their classmates are astonished whenever they hear them speak English outside the classroom. 9 respondents, (36%), say their classmates encourage them whenever they hear them speak English outside the classroom. 3 respondents , (12%), say their classmates are amused whenever they hear them speak English outside the classroom; while 1 respondent, (4%), say his/her classmates laugh at him (her) whenever they hear him/her speak English outside the classroom.

At the Communal College of Rukina, no respondent, (0%) says his/her classmates are astonished whenever they hear him/her speak English outside the classroom. 14 respondents (56%), say their classmates encourage them whenever they hear them speak English outside the classroom. 1 respondent (4%), says his/her classmates are amused whenever they hear him/her speak English outside the classroom; while 10 respondents, (40%) , say their classmates laugh at them whenever they hear them speak English outside the classroom.

From analysis above, it is clear that most of the students are encouraged by their classmates whenever they hear them speak English outside the classroom. This is seen through the percentages of each school concerning the act of encouraging students whenever they speak English outside the classroom. Though some classmates are

astonished, others are amused others laugh at those who speak English outside the classroom, their percentages are not statistically significant.

IV.1.2.2. Data analysis from the teachers' questionnaire

As the researcher distributed the questionnaire to the students in order to find out how the environment enhances or inhibits their performance in English, he also distributed the questionnaire to the teachers for the same purpose.

The teachers were given the questionnaire because they play a vital role in enhancing the students' performance in English. They know how the students express themselves since they are partners in the business of teaching and learning.

- ✓ **Teachers' Questionnaire**

Question 1: Do your students ask for English books to read from you?

a. **Yes** ☐
b. **Non** ☐

The question seeks to know the number of teachers whose students ask for English books to read.

At the Communal Lycée of Mukike, Communal College of Kirinzi, Communal College of Rurambira and Communal Lycée of Rukina, no single student asks for an English book to read from his/her teachers.

The situation is different at the Communal Lycée of Bikanka and the Communal College of Musinzira, where the students request for English books to read from teachers.

From the above analysis, it is clear that in the schools selected by the researcher, most of the students do not ask their teachers for English books to read. Though there are 2 teachers whose students ask for English books to read, they are in a minority statistically. We can conclude that students do not have a willing to know English.

Question 2: Do you sometimes lend English books to your students to read?

Yes ☐

No ☐

The question searches to know how many of the sampled English language teachers sometimes lend their students English books to read. Out of 6 teachers of the schools under investigation, only 2 teachers lend their students English books to read: The Communal Lycée of Mukike and the teacher from the Communal Lycée of Bikanka. On the other hand, the teachers of the remaining schools do not lend their students English books to read.

From the analysis above it is seen that only 2 teachers lend their students English books to read, while 4 teachers do not. The number of teachers who lend their students books to read is statically insignificant. This shows that teachers who were though to promote the language do not do it.

Question 3: How often do you give homework to your students?

Sometimes ☐

Rarely ☐

Never ☐

This question tries to find out how often teachers of the schools under investigation give a homework to their students. As it has been seen, the teachers of Communal Lycée of Mukike, Communal College of Rurambira and Communal Lycée of Rukina sometimes give a homework to their students.

The teachers of Communal College of Kirinzi, Communal Lycée of Bikanka and that of Communal College of Musinzira rarely give their students a homework. No single teacher says he never gives a homework to his students.

From the analysis above, it is clear that 3 teachers sometimes give homework to their students, while 3 teachers rarely give homework to their students. No single teacher says he never gives homework to his students. Thus, the fact of not giving to students many homework's indicates that even teachers do not contribute so much in the students proficiency

Question 4: Do your students do the homeworks you give them?

a. Yes ☐

b. No ☐

To this question, all the sampled teachers, (100%) of the schools under study say that their students do the homeworks they give them. Thus, relying on teachers' responses that they do not give many homework to their students we realize that students would improve their profesciency in English. This is because all students do homeworks given by their teachers and no single teacher says his students do not do the homeworks he gives them.

Question 5: Do your students express themselves in English while answering or asking questions?

Yes ☐

No ☐

This question sought to know whether or not the students express themselves in English while answering or asking questions. All the 6 teachers (100%) answered positively. It means that the students express themselves in English while answering, or asking questions. However, some teachers, especially the one the Communal College of Musinzira wrote a short comment saying that even though his students express themselves in English while answering or asking questions, they have problems with expressions and word use.

Question 6: Do you notice the influence of Kirundi on English when your Students are speaking English?

Yes ☐

No ☐

If yes, what kind of influence do you notice?

For this question, all the six teachers, (100%), answered affirmatively. This means that they notice the influence of Kirundi on English spoken by their students

Concerning the question on the kind of the influence they notice each teacher answered according to the kind he noticed. The teacher of English at Communal Lycée of Mukike said that his students think in Kirundi and make the translation into English. The teacher at the Communal College of Kirinzi said that his own students try

to pronounce English words as if they were Kirundi words. The teacher of Communal Lycée of Bikanka said that they think in Kirundi or in French and they turn the words into English. The teacher of English at the Communal Lycée of Rurambira said that his students think in Kirundi and then they translate into English. At the Communal College of Musinzira, the teacher said that his students think in Kirundi and speak English which is mixed with the same French words. The English teacher at Communal Lycée of Rukina said that his students' pronunciation tends to be slow for every English word they read or say.

From these different answers, it is clear that in all the schools under study, there is the influence of Kirundi on the English spoken by the students in one way or another.

Question 7: In which language do your students express themselves whenever they speak with you?

Kirundi ☐

French ☐

English ☐

The question above is concerned with the language the students use while speaking with their teachers. All the sampled teachers answered that their students speak English while speaking with them. No teachers said that his students speak Kirundi when addressing him. However, some teachers made a comment that although their students use English while addressing them, there are some students who speak a mixture of French and English because they lack the appropriate expression to use or think the word they use is an English word whereas it is French.

Question 8: How often do you speak English outside the classroom

a. **Sometimes** ☐

b. **Rarely** ☐

c. **Never** ☐

This question searches to know how often the sampled teachers speak English outside the classroom. Indeed, out of the 6 teachers sampled 2 of them that is, the teacher at communal Lycée of Bikanka and at Communal Lycée of Rukina sometimes speak English outside the classroom.

3 out of the sampled 6 teachers, that is, the teacher at Communal Lycée of Mukike, that of Communal College of Kirinzi and the one at Communal of Rurambira rarely speak English outside the classroom. However 1 teacher out of 6 teachers, that is, the teacher at the Communal Lycée of Rukina never speaks English outside the classroom.

IV.2. FINDINGS

In this chapter, the researcher task is to show on the basis of the information obtained from the questionnaire; to what extent the research questions have been answered. This section is important for this study.

Before this investigation, three research questions that were formulated are the following:

1. To what extent does the environment contribute to students' performance in English?
2. To what extent does the language spoken in the environment of students has an impact on their performance in English?
3. Do Kirundi and French have a negative impact on the learning of English?

To answer to these questions, the researcher analyzed the result from the questionnaire and the hypothesis was confirmed. Thus, for the first question, the answer was found in questions 2,3,5,6 in student questionnaire and 1, 2 in teacher's questionnaire. Considering the answers given by informants, in the students 'environment there are no television, books radio program in English which could enhance their performance in that language. In all schools visited by the researcher, no single school had an English language club. Not only that very few students have English books at home. And 80%of respondents that they do not have access to television. The teachers who lend their students English book to read is statically insignificant. Therefore, most of them show the problem that environment presents hindering their performance in English language.

For the research question2, the answer is found in the question7, 8 in students' questionnaire and 8 in teacher's questionnaire. And hypothesis was proven right. The researcher has found that the majority of parent of student (96%) speak Kirundi. Consequently, the same language is often used by students when they are at home although they learn English. English is rarely used in the students' environments. The teachers who are expected to serve as models to the students may not be heard speaking English until they go back the classroom. The result of these poor environmental condition is the poor performance of students in English language.

For the research question 3, the answer can be found in the question 9 in the student questionnaire. The hypothesis was confirmed right. Most of the respondents (72%) say that they think in Kirundi, and after they translate their opinions in French and then, they translate in English. Otherwise, the Burundian English learners think in Kirundi or French first and then look for the equivalent in English. This is due to the fact that in this environment almost the whole population speaks the Kirundi language. In addition, at school, French is the language of instruction where all courses except are learned in French. (So Kirundi and French have negative impact on learning and speaking of English).

All in all, when interpreting and analyzing responses from respondents, it can be concluded that many factors such as environment, language spoken in the environment hinder English language performance. Thus, the many views expressed by respondent and findings from this chapter, helped to draw conclusion and to make recommendation.

CHAPTER V: GENERAL CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

V.1. GENERAL CONCLUSION

The major purpose of this work was to find out whether the environment can have on impact on the English learners success or failure. This was done using the questionnaires administered to teachers and learners in order to check the reality on this issue. Besides the pupil's questionnaire, there was informal oral test which helped the researcher to assess the effect of the family environment of the learners. We did also observe in the classroom in order to get a view on what happened in classrooms. This work is subdivided into five chapters which are worth to be reminded about.

The first chapter clarified the topic. It clearly stated the problem indicated to a large extent its background. The second chapter was titled "Review of Related Literate" and showed and evaluated the literature from the previous researchers who worked on the domain under study. Concerning the third chapter which is entitled "methodology" it mainly concerned the description of research area as well as the techniques used to collect data.

The fourth chapter is the core of the study. It mainly sought to relate the data analyzed to the research hypotheses to see if they are confirmed or not in order to conclude and formulate recommendations. In general, this chapter set out to investigate on the impact of the environment on the English learning process. In few words the hypotheses in this study have been confirmed since it has been proven that a poor learning environment militates against efficient learning.

V.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the findings, some recommendations are formulated and directed learners, teachers, government and finally to further researchers.

a. To teachers

English teachers should decorate the classroom with various learning materials. In addition to this, teachers should equip themselves with a good command of the language in preparing the lessons to teach.

b. To the Government

The Government should adopt policies for English speaking development in the short run and the long run. The government should also organize national and international competition in speaking skill to enhance the latter in addition the government should provide enough reading material.

c. To the students

The students should know that we learn English by speaking it frequently and always both in and outside the classroom. They should ask teachers to help them to create English clubs therefore try and speak English as frequently as possible to attain a high level of proficiency in it. They should read materials in English both extensively and intensively.

It is expected that if all the above stated recommendations are taken into consideration by those concerned, they will go a long way in enhancing students' performance in English.

d. To further researchers

We cannot claim to have covered all areas of the present study. More research to complete this is still necessary in the English language for a better implementation of it in Burundi given that this research is not exhaustive. That is why we invite further researchers to conduct their study for instance on "The impact of Burundi's integration into the East African Community on English Expansion in Burundi"

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Letter to students

Dear students,

I am a student at the University of Burundi, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences in the Department of English Language and Literature.
I am doing research on: "The impact of environment on the students' performance of English as a foreign language: case of some school in Mukike commune, 5th Form"

Your contribution by answering this questionnaire will be useful for the research and would allow me to get the appropriate information.

I will be grateful if you could provide answers to the following questions as honestly as you can.
The information you give will be processed with high anonymity.

Yours Faith fully
Pascal Ngiye

APPENDIX B: classroom observation protocol

Area	Items observed
Teaching materials	- Amount of materials - Quality and relevance
State of the learners	-Participation -Interest -Mood in class
Speaking lesson	Opportunity

APPENDIX C.

1. Student's questionnaire

Instructions

- Put a cross (x) against the right answer
- Do not write your name
- Try to give answers as objectively as possible.

1. How do your neighbors react whenever you speak English?
   a. They are happy ☐
   b. They are angry ☐
   c. They laugh at me ☐
2. Do you have an English club in your school?
   a. Yes ☐
   b. No ☐
3. Do you have any English books at homes?
   a. Yes ☐
   b. No ☐
4. Which language is mostly spoken in your environment?
   a. Kirundi ☐
   b. French ☐
   c. English ☐
   d. Kiswahili ☐
5. Do you have access to television?
   a. Yes ☐
   b. No ☐
6. If your answer to question 5 is "yes" how do you often listen to English programs?
   a. Sometimes ☐
   b. Rarely ☐
   c. Never ☐
7. Which language do your parents speak?
   a. Kirundi ☐
   b. French ☐
   c. English ☐

d. Kiswahili ☐

8. Which language do you often use when you are at home?
   - Kirundi ☐
   - French ☐
   - English ☐
   - Kiswahili ☐
9. How do you express youropinions in English? Read the sentences below and chose the one that suits your situation.
   a. I think in Kirundi, after, I translate my opinion in French and then I translate into English ☐
   b. Kirundi and French vocabulary comes first into my mind and limits my expression ☐
   c. I think in English and express my opinion immediately ☐
10. Which subject do you like most?
    a. Kirundi ☐
    b. French ☐
    c. English ☐
11. Which of the language skills do you like most?
    a. Speaking ☐
    b. Reading ☐
    c. Listening ☐
    d. Writing ☐
12. How do your classmates react whenever you speak English outside the classroom?
    a. They are astonished ☐
    b. They encourage me ☐
    c. They are amused ☐
    d. They laugh at me ☐

APPENDIX D

Letters to teachers

Dear sir (Madam .....

I am a student at the University of Burundi, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences in the Department of English Language and Literature.
I am doing research on: "The impact of environment on the students' performance of English as a foreign language: case of some school in Mukike commune, 5th Form"

Your contribution by answering this questionnaire will be useful for the research and would allow me to get the appropriate information.

I will be grateful if you could provide answers to the following questions as honestly as you can.
The information you give will be processed with high anonymity.

Yours Faith fully
Pascal Ngiye

APPENDIX E

2. Teachers' questionnaire.

Instructions

- Put a cross (x) before the right answer
- Try to give answers as objectively as possible.
- If there is not enough space, turn over the page and write your answers, indicating the question number.
- Do not write your name.

1. Do your students ask for English books to read from you?
   a. Yes ☐
   b. No ☐
2. Do you sometimes lend English books to your students to read?

   Yes ☐
   No ☐
3. How often do you give a homework to your students?
   Sometimes
   Rarely ☐
   Never ☐
4. Do your students do the homework you give them?
   a. Yes ☐
   b. No ☐
5. Do your students express themselves in English while answering or asking questions?
   Yes ☐
   No ☐
6. Do you notice any influence of Kirundi when your students are speaking English?
   Yes ☐
   No ☐

7. In which language do your students express themselves whenever they speak with you?
   Kirundi ☐

French ☐

English ☐

8. How often do you speak English outside the classroom?

   a. Sometimes

   b. Rarely ☐

   c. Never ☐