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Appraisal of vocabulary teaching in some private primary schools of Bujumbura : the case of the 5th year pupils

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UNIVERSITY OF BURUNDI
FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

APPRAISAL OF VOCABULARY TEACHING IN SOME PRIVATE PRIMARY SCHOOLS OF BUJUMBURA :
THE CASE OF THE 5th YEAR PUPILS.

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A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of the Degree "LICENCE EN LANGUE ET LITTERATURE ANGLAISES"

Bujumbura, April 2005

DEDICATION

In memory of my late parents,
To my brothers and Sisters,
To my nephews and nieces,
Especially Merveille IRAKOZE,
To all of you who are dear to me,
Especially Prosper BIMENYIMANA,

I warmly dedicate this work.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The completion of this work is a result of a collective effort from a number of people, to whom I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude.

First and foremost, I owe deepest and greatest gratitude to Mrs. Beatrice EKANJUME, the supervisor of this work and professor at the University of Burundi, for her much appreciated and invaluable assistance to bring this work to its present state.

I address my thanks to all teachers who taught me from Primary school to University, with special regard to the staff of the Department of English Language and Literature for the moral and academic education they have inculcated in me.

I owe a debt of gratitude to the private primary school teachers and learners who received me during my research and provided me with all the information needed as the cornerstone of this work.

I am also indebted to my dearest uncle, brothers, sisters and cousins for their permanent encouragement, their moral and financial support during my studies.

I wish to express special thanks to my elder brother Gedéon NSAVYIMANA for having been more than a brother in looking after me all along my studies.

I would be ungrateful not to thank all the people who assisted me in a way or another, with special regard to Mathilde MWEGAMIRA, Jean-Baptiste SIMBARE, and Prosper BIMENYIMANA for more than a reason. Last but not least, I am very thankful to all friends from whom I received and still receive sympathy whether in joy or sorrow.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

B.A : Bachelor of Arts

B.E.R. : Bureau de l'Education Rurale

et al : et alii (Latin):and others

F.L : Foreign Language

F.L : Foreign Language

INC : Incorporated

L_2 : Second Language

Ltd : Limited

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CHAPTER 1 : GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Information

During the very early times of the world, there were some "old wives tales" about young children. These tales were misinterpretations of nature of the young child. These people thought that the children's mind was just a smaller mind than the adults'mind and that one could use the same methods of teaching young children as those used for the adults.

During the industrial revolution of the eighteeth and nineteenth century, this attitude about children began to change. Early philosophers began to study the nature of young children and the best methods for their learning. These early philosophers discovered that the child's mind is quite different from that of an adult. So, methods for teaching young children are very different and quite as unique as children are.

Froebel (1782 –1852) was one of the earliest philosophers and founders of Early Childhood Education. He was a German philosopher who believed that educating children was similar to cultivating plants. He invented the term "Kindergaten" which means a garden of plants. He advocated that teaching young children is like watering them with rich experiences as they naturally grow up on their own. Froebel set up a kindergaten school for young children where he experimented his ideas on the methods of teaching them.

Another philosopher and founder of Early Childhood Education was Comenius. He is called the father of Early Childhood Education because of his many ideas on the teaching of Early Childhood Education. Fong et al (1980) explain that Comenius advocated that children learn through their senses. He called these senses gateways used for learning ; the more gateways that are used , the more effective the learning will be.

Maria Montessori (1980) was an Italian doctor and one of the founders of Early Childhood Education. In 1904, Montessori found the house of childhood. In her view, children were not supposed to do activities which are similar to adult activities.

John Locke is another founder of Early Childhood Education. His famous view of "Tabula Rosa' is still held even up to today. This was an idea that a child is born with a 'blank slate' of mind. The environment he lives in becomes the source of ideas which begin to be registered on the 'blank slate' as the child grows.

However, it is very important to begin with vocabulary while teaching or learning a foreign language since it is the basis of communication. Harmer (1991 : 159)states the following :

> *Language structures make up skeleton of a language, then it is vocabulary that provides the vital organs and the flesh.*

Content words are means of communication that people use to transmit messages, ideas, thoughts, ...
Huxley (1940) cited in HAYAKWA (1968) affirms :

Words have power to mould men's thinking, to canalise their feelings. Conduct and characters are largely determined by words we currently use to discuss ourselves and the world around us.

Then, the teacher's role is to develop the learner's ability to take part in the process of communicating through languages. So, the failure in vocabulary may be a main handicap in language competence and performance. This study admits that the success of the teaching/learning of a new language depends upon both the teacher's appropriate methods, the will of the learner and the adequacy of the teaching materials.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The main concern of this work is to analyse problems met by teachers and learners in teaching or learning English Vocabulary. English teachers are not adequately prepared to teach young children of primary classes. Teachers then use difficult method for children. These methods make young children's brain get tired and stunt. Young children learn best through the playway methods of teaching and learning. There is an outcry by parents and the concerned stakeholders especially educationists, that difficult methods of learning used by primary teachers block children's imaginations.

This method does not allow for discovered and innovativeness which help to children's learning. At the end of the course, the young

learner will have a lot of facts crammed but will not be able to think and invent new ideas for himself.

For example, pupils of 5th year level are asked to memorise recitations, dialogues through drilling activities but the pupils will tend to use the English language in mechanical or meaningless ways. The situation becomes more unprofitable in vocabulary acquisition since the teacher keeps on having his pupils repeat over and over the different units without thinking of expanding the student's lexical field.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

This study is aimed at proposing ways through which success in teaching and learning a foreign language can be achieved. It makes teachers and learners aware of the importance of teaching or learning the English language in general and teaching vocabulary in particular.

The current work is also aimed at identifying adequate methods used in teaching young children in order to make the teaching-learning of foreign language successful and fruitful. The goal is to suggest to educational institutions the way they should expose teachers to a variety of methods in the skills of speaking, listening, reading and vocabulary considering the importance given to the latter skill.

I.4 Importance of the Study

This work is important in that it is going to reveal and highlight the weaknesses in the methodology used in teaching young children in primary schools. By doing so, it will create awareness of the need to improve the training of primary school teachers.

This work will equally be of importance in that it is going to give some recommendations as to show how the teaching/learning process in primary school can be handled. This will help the teachers to know exactly what to do and as such make the teaching/learning process in the primary school smooth and enjoyable. Finally, this work will be of benefit to the pupil as a result of improved techniques in methodology.

1.5 Justification of the Study

I preferred to deal with teaching English in private primary schools because I discovered that the public primary schools curriculum of English course is not elaborated. Private schools are chosen since the English course begins by the first year of the studies and I realised that the teachers as well as the learners met problems in the learning and the teaching of the foreign language.

Many researchers have dealt with the problems met by teachers and students in secondary schools but I put emphasis on the primary schools to show the importance of an early learning of foreign language early.

1.6 Hypothesis

As pointed out earlier, the main concern of this study is to analyse the factors underlying the undevelopment of English vocabulary skills, that is, the problems met by teachers and pupils while teaching and learning vocabulary.

It is real that young pupils of private primary schools are learning English language. The assumption is that most of them speak it fluently without knowing exactly the meaning of what they say.

In learning songs, poems and recitations, pupils become good at pronunciation but they fail in vocabulary comprehension. Such problematic situation has led me to base my research work on the following postulates :

1° In private primary schools (fifth year level) there is no appropriate method used for an easy understanding of English vocabulary meanings.

2° No particular emphasis is put on the contextualisation of English words when teaching vocabulary. Many items are taught through songs, dialogues, recitation to name but a few.

3° There is no availability of sufficient materials of teaching.

1.7 Research Questions

This study evaluates the teachers' methods and techniques on one hand and on the other hand the pupils' creativity and the ability of using context words while speaking or writing. We hope that this work can help teachers to increase the proficiency of the pupils to communicate in English language. This work is going to find answers to the following questions :

1° Are the teachers of private primary schools qualified to teach young children ?

2° Do Teachers lay emphasis on contextualisation of English words while teaching vocabulary ?

3° Are there enough teaching materials in private primary schools ?

4° Is the method used in teaching vocabulary in private primary schools appropriate ?

1.8. Scope of the Study

This study is mainly centred on the analysis of the vocabulary teaching and the facilities available in the teaching of vocabulary in primary schools.

The study is conducted in some private primary schools of Bujumbura but only five of them are selected : "Saint Michel Archange,

Lycée Central Saint Gabriel, S.O.S, Ecole Indépendante, Arc-en-ciel and Only fifth year pupils of those schools are involved.

1.9. Structure of the Work.

The study is divided into four chapters : Chapter one presents the general introduction, in this chapter, we define each of research problems. It contains also the motivation for the choice of the topic, its aims, its importance, its scope and its structure.

Chapter two is concerned with the review of related literature which contains different theories related to teaching and methods used in teaching.

Chapter three, methodology, outlines ways used in collecting data, the challenges and solutions.

Chapter four, data analysis and findings, is the most important part of the research. It applies theories mentioned in the literature review to the data collected during the classroom observations and data from questionnaires.

This research is rounded up by prouding a general conclusion and recommendations for a better learning and teaching of vocabulary in private primary schools.

1.10. Definitions of Key Terms

Vocabulary : It refers to words or groups of words which convey meaning in a language. It is more useful to think of words to refer to lexical items.

Lexical items consist of more than one word but some words represent more than one item. For example, the words like "bank", "saw" can refer to different things.

Ellis et al (1980) define vocabulary as : "words used in particular utterances in verbs, adjectives, nouns etc.

Method : It is an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material, no part of which contradicts and all of which is based upon the selected approach (Antony 1988) via Richards & Rodgers (1986 :15)

Technique : It is an implementation which actually takes place in a classroom. It is a particular trick stratagem or contrivance used to accomplish an immediate objective (Antony 1963) via Richards & Rodgers (1985 :15)

Second langages (L2) acquisition

> Burt and krashen (1982 :10) defined it as the process of learning another language after the basics of the first have been acquired, starting at about five years of age and thereafter.

Sometimes, researchers refer to this process as sequential language acquisition to differentiate it from simultaneous or bilingual acquisition which is the acquisition of two languages simultaneously.

Visual aids : Weaver (1963 : 18) defines it as any specially prepared drawing, illustration, motion picture or other device that will expedite learning through the sense of vision.

CHAPTER 2 : REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

All over the world, people need to communicate with each other. Language is the only means used to express thoughts, feelings and to satisfy human needs. A good communication requires a good understanding since there are various languages in the world. That is why the teaching and learning of languages is extended throughout the world. Our ability to understand other people's speech is a result of understanding lexical items. Michael J. Wallace (1982 : 43) points out :

> *It has often been remarked how strange it is that comparatively little has been written on the teaching and learning of foreign language vocabulary, because there is a sense in which learning a foreign language is basically a matter of learning the vocabulary of that language.*

In fact, teaching a foreign language in primary school is a hard task, it requires strategies from teachers. They have to know about their learners ; the psychological state of the learner, his level, his age, his likes and his dislikes. In the present chapter, some theories related to teaching will be reviewed, the effect of age on learning a foreign language as a child, and some methods used in teaching a foreign language to beginners.

2.2 Theories Related to Language Teaching / Learning

It is difficult to know exactly how people learn languages even if a great deal of research has been done on this issue. Some theories have a great influence upon the practice of language teaching despite the fact that they have often originated in studies of how people learn their first language. There are : the behaviourist and the cognitivist. These theories have been dealt with by two scholars : Chomsky (1957) and Skinner (1950). As a psychologist, Skinner wrote a book called Verbal Behaviour. According to him, language is a result of habit formation, that is why his theory is called "behaviourism".

Chomsky (1957) challenged skinner's view that a language is a form of behaviour, and he rather advocates that it an intricate – rule – based system, and a large part of language acquisition in the learning of the system. His theory is called "cognitivism"

Harmer (1991) argues that these theories have a great influence on the choice of approaches in the teaching – learning of a foreign language.

2.2.1. Behaviourist Theory

Skinner, in his book entitled Verbal Behaviour, applies the theory of conditioning to the way humans acquire their mother-tongue. He suggests that language is a form of behaviour in much the same way as the rat pressing the bar exhibits a form of behaviour. It is because we are concerned with a form of behaviour that this theory is called behaviourism. He argued that the model of stimulus – response – reinforcement accounts for how a human baby learns a language.

As far as behaviourism is concerned, it was a psychological theory which was adopted for some time by language teaching methodologists particularly in America and the result was the audio-lingual method still used in many parts of the world today.

This method makes the constant drilling of the students followed by positive or negative reinforcement, a major focus of classroom activity. The approach is not exclusively devoted to repetition, but the stimulus – response –reinforcement model makes the basis of methodology.

According to the behaviourist view, it was not really necessary for learners to internalise rules, instead, they should learn the right patterns of linguistic behaviour and acquire the correct habit.

2.2.2. Cognitivist Theory

This theory was published by Chomsky in 1957 to challenge skinner's theory. Cunningsworth (1984 : 31) supports Chomsky's view when he says that :

> *For many years up to the 1960 learning had been as a cognitive activity, that is to say, as an activity which engaged conscious mental processes such as analysing and understanding, and involved learning and applying explicitly formulated rules.*

During 1960, the grammar – translation method was dominant. This method is cognitive in the sense that it requires a clear understanding of rules and the ability to apply given rules to new example of a language. The problem of the method lies in its too limited concept of what is involved in learning and using a language.

Harmer (1991 :32) argues that

> *We can appreciate the rejection of the behaviourist view by the asking of questions : How is it possible that adults all through their lives say things they have never said before ? How is it possible that a new sentence in the mouth of a four-year-old child is the result of conditioning ?*

Chomsky (1957) completely refused the view that a language is a form of behaviour and advocates that the teaching and learning of a language is based on his model of competence and performance.

Harmer (1991 : 31) adds that :

> *It is competence that a child gradually acquires and it is his language competence that allows children to be creative as a language users (example, experimenting and saying things they have not said before).*

This theory has influenced many teaching techniques and methodologies. Pupils are often encouraged to use rules to create sentences of their own.

2.3 Inductive and Deductive Language Learning

These two learning strategies are different even if it would be one-sided to say that one of them is better than the other. Mackey (1965 :7) supports the view by saying that :

> *If the inductive theorist of a language imitates the sciences of observation, the deductive theorist follows the theoretical sciences.*

In both types of learning, we are concerned with rule formation and use by a learner. The difference lies in the point of entry and the process involved.

2.3.1 Inductive Learning/Teaching

In this learning strategy, the learner gives many examples which contain the rule and by identifying similarities between those examples, he hypotheses what he thinks the rule might be and tries it out, seeking confirmation of hypothesis. This system is the one preferred for children who acquire their mother-tongue. Cunningsworth (1984 : 32) supports this view and says that :

> *This is the way children are taught to acquire their native language although children, unlike the foreign language learner, will be exposed to fairly random bits of language.*

Therefore, the second language learner's task is to some extent complicated in this respect as the examples presented will be systematic and fully representative of the rule which is to be learned. The important thing there is that, from examples of language, the learner induces the rule and then uses it.

Mackey (1965 : 7) states the following :

> *The only valid statements about languages are those arrived at by observing linguistic facts, classifying them and making generalizations on what is observed and classified. The linguist is to collect specimens of acts of speech, observe them and classify differences.*

2.3.2. Deductive Learning/Teaching

Here, the process is the reverse of what we have seen in the precedent strategy : a teacher gives explanation of the rule of the learner in an analytical way ; after, he is expected to apply the rule and provide his own instances maybe guided by an example or two.

Mackey (1965 : 7) says the following :

> *If the inductive theorist of language imitates the sciences of observation, the deductive theorist follows the theoretical sciences. He perceives a pattern, constructs a theoretical model, and tests to see how much can be deduced from it.*

Suppose you want to teach question tags in the present tense on the model such as :

You like cassava bread, don't you ?

In teaching inductively, you have to provide many examples which follow the same model such as :

You like coffee, don't you ?
You learn Japanese, don't you ?
You like lemonades, don't you ?

Then, the teacher must encourage his learners to produce their own examples based on the model.

In fact, in using a deductive approach, it is good to explain the rule in e xplicit w ay a long the lines. So, from the rule, the learners have to deduce correct instances of language.

Cunningsworth (1984 : 33) points out that :

> *Either route to learn is acceptable and often the sequence of inductive learning reinforced by deductive learning proves to be the most effective, particularly with adults. Children learn inductively, having better developed analytical capacities, can better understand and use abstract rules.*

What we have to know is that a real language – learning process in the full sense of the word, takes place when learners go through the motions of learning sentences, dialogues.

Cunningsworth (1984 : 33) adds that teaching is a pragmatic process and one should use whatever method which brings the best result. But all methods are not appropriate for young children.

2.4 Effect of Age on Learning a Foreign Language

2.4.1. Is it Good to learn a Foreign Language as a Child ?

Many researchers have suggested to start the teaching and learning of foreign languages at early primary school age. This has probably to do with the fact that in most countries it is at primary school that children begin their studies.

Stephen (1979 : 43) says that :

> *... Age itself is a predictor of second proficiency, that young acquirers are better at second language acquisition than older acquirers.*

Stephen's view is good but age is not the only predictor of second language attainment, as there are other obstacles which reduce the quantity of comprehensible input and the level of the affective filter.

Krashen et al (1979) reviewed the empirical research on the effect of age and Second Language Acquisition and concluded that all published studies were consistent with the following generalizations :

1. Adults proceed through the early stages of second language development faster than children do (where time, exposure are held constant)
2. Older children acquire faster than younger children (time and exposure are held constant)

3. Acquirers who begin natural exposure to second Language during childhood generally achieve higher Second Language proficiency than those beginning as adults.

For them, the young one is not the better learner, they admit that children are superior to adults only in the long run. However, other writers support the view that young children are better than adults in learning a Second Language Acquisition.

To support this, Burt et al (1982) add:

> *Children acquiring English as a Second Language also show a natural order for grammatical morphemes, regardless of their first language*

When learning a Second Language at an early age, the problems caused by the mother-tongue differ from the mother – tongue interference in adolescence and adulthood, since a child's intellect and his ability is still developing.

According to Piaget (1954 :44), the intellectual development has reached the stage concrete, operations, objects can be early differentiated because they exist in the mind whether or not they are in sight.

2.4.2. Why Begin Learning an L2 Early ?

According to the "Critical period" hypothesis, puberty is the time when difficulties in a language learning begin. Foreign accents cannot be overcome easily anymore after this time and a more or less natural acquisition from mere exposure to a foreign language disappears (Lenneberg, 1967)

We can admit that when an adult learns a foreign language, there is always a mother –tongue interference. Neurophysiologists explain these changes by biological causes especially the maturation of the brain that becomes fixed at that time. Even if this view is not accepted by the majority of researchers, puberty remains the time in life when difficulties in the acquisition of a foreign language begin.

According to Curran (1967), children acquire foreign language faster than adults because they are less threatened by the sounds of a new language, since children are willing to depend on others for support in learning.

Then, if puberty is the time when problems in foreign language acquisition start, an early start in learning will give children the opportunity to acquire the phonetic system on a limited number of structures and vocabulary.

Generally, children are excellent imitators of the foreign phonetic systems and they can overcome this difficulty with ease if they are provided with good models to imitate.

Freudenstein (1979 :16) sustains this view by saying the following :

> *The near–native pronunciation that is easily acquired at this age can have a life – long beneficial effect, as it gives the learners a feeling of self-confidence and security which in turn acts as strong motivation to continue learning.*

To this regard, we can say that the age of Second Language Acquisition is a powerful determinant of ultimate success in accent acquisition and all confirm that puberty is an important stage with respect to this aspect of language learning.

Scovel (1977) conducted a different kind of study with the question of age and the acquisition of phonology, he found an interesting relationship between age and the ability to distinguish native from non-native English. His subjects were asked to listen to tapes of native and non-native speakers of English. The non-natives, were pre-selected, only those with "excellent pronunciation" were used and to indicate whether the speakers were native speakers of English.

Scovel found that his adults subjects were nearly completely successful while his children subjects got better with age.

We can admit that children are better at language acquisition than adults ;children acquiring Second language in natural environments are more likely to sound like native speakers than adults are ; adults make progress initially but children always surpass them. Children under ten

succeed easily in attaining native like proficiency while children over fifteen rarely do, so.

2.5 Vocabulary Teaching

This study is based on vocabulary teaching since it is an issue that is the backbone of any Language teaching/learning. This view is supported by many writers such as Hockett, Maley and so on.

Hockett (1983) cited by Byrne (1983 : 20) says:

> *Language learning cannot go without vocabulary and only with vocabulary can one learn a language.*

According to him, vocabulary is a part of the language ; the speaker of a language thinks of the language largely in terms of vocabulary because it is the only in connection with vocabulary that he has further language learning to do. So, he concludes in saying that knowing a language means knowing lexical items which make it.

Wallace(1982 : 9) argues that :

> *"... Learning a language is basically a matter of learning vocabulary of that language.»*

Morgan et al (1986 : 3) assert that words are essential in a language learning.

By combining the view of these writers, we can say that vocabulary is an important aspect of language recognition.

Harmer (1991 : 154) differentiates the value given to vocabulary in the ancient time and nowadays. He asserts that in the ancient time, vocabulary was seen as incidental to the main purpose of language teaching called the Acquisition of grammatical knowledge about the Language. According to him, vocabulary was a lesson used to give students something to hang on to when learning structures but was frequently not a main focus. But recently, methodologists and linguists have given value to vocabulary.

Now the acquisition of vocabulary is on the same level as the acquisition of grammar. The two are interdependent and teachers should have the same kind of expertise in the teaching of vocabulary as they do in the teaching of structure.

Therefore, when teaching vocabulary, teachers have to consider the learner's level. For example, young learners are taught concrete words such as 'chair', 'door', 'blackboard', 'chalk' etc because the things that these words represent are in front of learners and then it is very easy to explain them. However words like 'peace, charity, love' cannot be physically represented in the classroom and are very difficult to explain to children.

2.5.1 Meaning as the Problematic Case in Teaching Vocabulary

Mackey (1965 : 74) defines meanings :

i) As abstractions of our experience
ii) As a chain of verbal abstractions made from the content of reality.
iii) As a relationship between content and expression.

Mackey (1965 :74) adds that it may be an imputed and conventional relationship between a referent of content and a symbol of expression, mediated by an act of reference.

Generally, many vocabulary items have more than one meaning. Then it is dangerous when a teacher gives one or two meanings to a concept since the learner will internalise just those two meanings.

Lado (1961 : 84) points out that :

> *Many words have multiple meanings, metaphorical uses of words can produce new meanings*

For example, the word 'book' we use to read from is defined as a set of pages tied together inside a cover as a thing to be read according to one dictionary. But the same dictionary goes on to list eight other meaning of 'book' as a noun, two meanings of 'book' as a verb and three meanings of 'book' where 'book' added a preposition make phrasal verbs. So, the word 'book' means a number of things.



So, when we are teaching young children, we only focus on denotative meaning of the word otherwise they may be confused since their level does not allow them to distinguish the meanings.

In fact, when we come across a word, we try to imagine its meaning considering the context in which it is used. For example, if a person utters the following sentence at the ticket office :

'*But I booked my ticket two weeks ago.*'

Here, we can understand the meaning of the verb to book according to the context. The meaning of this verb is not the same in the following context :

A policeman says this to his colleague :

'*We booked him for speeding*'

Therefore, the same word can be used in different contexts.

Sim et al (1984:25) assert that :

> *It is of course possible to know a word, without necessary knowing how to use it in all its various forms.*

According to Harmer (1991), there are other facts about meaning too. Sometimes, words have meanings in relation to other words.

Therefore, in learning, learners need to know the meaning of 'vegetable' as a word used to describe anyone of a number of other things like potatoes, carrots, cabbages and so on. The word "potatoes" has a specific meaning while "vegetable" has a general meaning.

To support this, Harmer (1991 : 156) states the following :

> *As far as meaning goes, then students need to know about meaning in context and they need to know about sense relations*

As earlier said, word meaning can be used differently : Idiomatically, metaphorically and so on.

Harmer (1991 : 156) argues that :

> *Word meaning is frequently stretched through the use of metaphor and idiom.*

For example, the word 'hiss' describes the noise that snakes make but we can attribute its meaning to describe the way the people talk to each other.

Someone can say this following sentence :

"Don't move or you will die", she hissed.

In this sentence, "hiss" is used metaphorically.

We can also talk of treacherous people as snakes.

Example :

John is a real snake in the grass

'Snake in the grass' is a fixed phrase which became an idiom like countless phrases such as 'raining cats and dogs', 'putting the cat among the pigeons', straight from the horse's mouth and so on.

Harmer (1991 :157) asserts that word meaning is also governed by collocation, that is which words go with each other.

For example, there are some nouns which collocate with this morpheme – ache but others do not.

We can have 'headache', 'tootache', 'stomache' or 'earache' but we cannot have a 'throatache' or a 'legache'.

When learning vocabulary, it is good to differenciate formal and informal speech.

Harmer (1991 :157) says the following :

> *We often use words only in certain social and topical contexts. What we say is governed by the style and register we are in.*

For example, while making a conversation, if you want to tell someone you are angry, you will choose carefully between the neutral expression of this fact :

'I am angry' and the informal expression of this is : "I am really pissed off"

The latter would certainly seem rude to listeners in certain contexts.

So, learners of vocabulary have to recognise metaphorical language use and they have to know how words collocate. Moreover they also need to understand what stylistic and topical contexts words and expressions occur in.

2.6 Teaching a Foreign Language to Beginners of Primary School.

Teaching a Foreign Language to beginners is all owesome and a challenging job and sometimes frustrating. This suggests that primary classes require teachers who are very dynamic and are willing to use all possible ways in order to make children's learning a happy and an effective time through the use of the play way methods of teaching.

Yusseu et al (1982 : 82) suggested methods of teaching children according to their senses. They experimented and found that, the more gateway to learning is, the more effective the learning of the child will be. They agreed with the Chinese saying that :

When I hear, I forget.
When I see, I remember
When I do, I understand

In order for the primary school teacher to be able to implement the school curriculum effectively, he or she needs to be thoroughly trained in methodology of teaching young children.

According to Montessori (1980), the primary role of the teacher of young children is to guide children. Therefore, according to her, this could be accomplished through these means :

1. To present materials to children in designated way, according to their developmental stage when they have indicated the readiness for their use.

2. The teacher to organise the learning environment for the child in order to experiment and discover concept for himself.

Mwebe (1975) reports that when children play, they intermingle with things and people. Indeed, play is so crucial in the child's life. It is a very strong characteristic through which they learn harmoniously. In this case, children try to make an effort of speaking what they need, discussing or saying what they see.

According to Leeke (1986 : 201), the younger the child is, the more difficult it is to teach him or her.

A teacher who is well trained to pedagogical skills of teaching young children and has the knowledge of educational psychology of the young children is able to understand the children he or she teaches. In addition, young children's teacher should be trained in playway methods of teaching because children's learning is centred around play. The teacher should be trained in play related materials.

Hudspelth (1984 :123) asserts that :

> *Instructional materials aid the children to understand and remember what they have learnt.*

Therefore, a teacher of young children should be trained in different skills of using attractive materials in order to make the lesson interesting and to create favourable conductive environment for learning.

Grant (1978 : 81)adds that the teaching of young children requires special techniques and training and is not just a simplified form of senior teaching as many people suppose.

Thus, the teacher of young children should be resourceful and able to collect and use a lot of play materials in children's learning,to increase:

a) Vocabulary
b) Concept formation
c) Logical thinking

d) Association of ideas

e) Imagination

These skills form a firm foundation for all later learning for the children and will assist them to learn with understanding and interest because they are the pre-requisites for learning.

If teachers continue to teach young children without developing their potentials, our country will have so many doctors, engineers, lawyers, scientists who will die unknown because these important skills will lay and remain dormant and undeveloped inside them.

The foundation stage in life is very crucial because it is the time for habit formation. In learning, children can be helped to develop proper learning habits from the time they are young.

Hudspelth (1984 : 64) writes that to be a teacher of children of 3 – 11 years, one must have love for the children, young children learn best through play.

Piaget (1971) sees play as a medium that helps advance the child's cognitive development. It allows the child to practice competencies and acquired skills in a relaxed and pleasurable way. Children learn actively not passively. Hartly et al (1979 : 64) explains that in a play, a child is engaged not only in self expression but also in self discovery, exploring, experimenting with sensations, movements and relationships through which he gets to know himself and form his own concepts of the world.

According to Richard et al (1986), instructional materials provide stimulus and content for pupils to talk or write about. This implies that for good teaching to take place, the teachers require to be tactful in the distribution and use of materials.

Nalasco et al (1988 : 172) state that poor instructions and materials leave students confused and uncertain.
He adds that this situation is magnified in large classes and may even cause indiscipline.

According to Wragg (1981 : 11), studies of teachers in large classes shows that fewer instructional materials cause indiscipline in the class.

Therefore, plays and instructional materials are very important in the teaching of young children.

Throughout this chapter, I have been concerned with the main literature regarding the field of teaching with particular application to the teaching of young learners.

Therefore, the first part concentrated on the theories and strategies concerning the art of teaching with special attention to the teaching of a very important skill that is English vocabulary. It has been shown that the vocabulary skill is an activity very crucial in learning a foreign language.

The following part was devoted to looking the effect of age in learning a second language.

What has been developed in this chapter of "Literature Review" is of paramount importance. It should be considered as an important and an indispensable step, if not a prerequisite for the understanding of the following chapters about 'Methodology' and 'findings'.

CHAPTER 3 : METHODOLOGY

This chapter shows details about data to be analysed in the next chapter and the way they will be interpreted. It has two main points namely data collection procedures and the data analysis procedures.

3. 1. Data Collection Procedures

The collection of data was made on the basis of both classroom observations and questionnaires for pupils and teachers of some primary schools. Three ways were used to carry out effectively the research:

- establishing a questionnaire for the teachers of 5th primary level
- establishing another for 5th form pupils
- comparison of methods used in those classes during classroom observations.

The two questionnaires were designed in order to know the teachers' and learners' point of view about the methods used in teaching English vocabulary to young pupil.

3.1.1. Research Population

The subjects used in the study for the learners' questionnaire were from Primary school of SOS, St Gabriel, Indépendante, St Michel Archange and Arc-en-Ciel. Their teachers were equally given a questionnaire.

These schools were chosen because they are private primary schools which are the ones under study. They were limited in number because it was not possible to visit all the schools of Burundi. In addition, the great number of private primary schools are concentrated in Bujumbura mayorship.

Some p rivate p rimary s chools are found in countryside but there was the problem of financial means to cover them. Thus, it was impossible to conduct my research in the schools located outside the capital city.

People who are involved in my study are learners of 5th year level and their teachers. The 5th class was chosen particularly because pupils are in their 5th year of English learning and have acquired some knowledge that can help them to express themselves in English.

In fact, the study was based on 125 learners and 5 teachers of the above schools.

3.1.2. Research Questionnaire

Two types of questionnaire were given in those private primary schools, one designed for teachers another for pupils who are respectively teaching and learning in 5th form. I was seeking to know the following:

a. If teachers and learners are aware of the importance of vocabulary in Foreign Language Learning process.

b. If the methods used by teachers in teaching English vocabulary are appropriate for young pupils.
c. If the schools provide learning facilities for English vocabulary lessons.

Concerning the teachers' category, 5 questionnaires were distributed and answered by 5 teachers.

For the learner's category, 125 questionnaires were distributed to a sample of 25 pupils in each class.

Furthermore, to complete and understand some teachers' answers, some extra questions were put as interviews.

Finally, the data were collected, thanks to all those primary English teachers and 5th form learners who accepted to respond to the questionnaires in spite of their duties. Additional information was gotten from classroom observation.

3.1.3 Corpus.

The classroom observations were aimed at seeing how English vocabulary lessons are handled. The teachers' questionnaire as well as the learners' were made of series of questions related the availability of materials, methods and their use in vocabulary teaching.

a. Classroom Observations

Before collecting the teachers' and the learners' questionnaires, I had to observe the teaching and the learning of vocabulary lessons. Classroom observations are important in a research concerning language teaching. The first reason which pushed me to observe the teaching of vocabulary is that there was a need of giving an account of what really happens in vocabulary lessons. That is why I went 6 times in each class.

The other reason supporting the classroom observations is explained by Wallace (1982 : 62) who talks about direct observation which has to take place during a lesson, as seen in the following lines.

> *Such a kind of observation is extremely valuable since certain aspects of the action will be too clear to the observer in a way that they cannot be to the teacher.*

In addition, classroom observations help the researcher to establish a relation between the presentation of the materials by the teacher and the results of learning.

Briefly, classroom observations are a necessary step in a research belonging to the field of language teaching so far as they allow the researcher to discover realities which could not be answered by either the teacher or the learner about the teaching/learning process. For this work, classroom observations were based on the following criteria:

- the teaching and the learning environment that is the setting and the size of the class.
- Learners' attitude towards vocabulary lessons, whether they are motivated or not.
- Activities during the lesson as well as materials supporting the teaching and the learning of the skill.

b. Teachers' Questionnaire

Before dealing with questions about the methods used in English teaching, a section concerning the teacher was put.

In this section, my informants were asked to tell how many years they have been teaching and the number of hours they have per week. The response received helped me to know if the quality of teaching could be raised or lowered due to the factors. Then, teachers were required to answer some questions which had to do with their attitude towards the teaching techniques. Those questions helped me to know about the materials used in classroom, the training in language teaching, the advantages and disadvantages of those materials.

Moreover, many other questions related to vocabulary teaching were put to have an idea of the place and the importance it is given when teaching young pupils. By those questions, I needed to see their conciousness about the importance of games and visual aids in vocabulary teaching.

c. Learners' Questionnaire

Like teachers, learners were also asked questions related to methods and materials used in vocabulary lessons. But before, I wanted to know whether the learners like the English language and if they were aware of the importance of studying it.

In addition, pupils were asked methods used by their teachers during vocabulary lessons. They were also asked if they appreciate the way of teaching used by their teachers.

From there, I could realise if learners really appreciate the way they are taught English lessons or not. However, learners' questionnaire was translated in French so that learners could understand it.

3.2 Data Analysis Technique

Concerning the analysis procedure, I preferred to bring together and compare the various answers on each questionnaire in order to have a general interpretation on all the steps of the investigation. Moreover, I tried to check all the problems, advice, needs and desires provided by the two categories of respondents. This enabled me to state the last chapter of Conclusion and Recommendations. On questions where tables could better clarify the answers, a chart was presented ; general comments were given where necessary.

In short, in this chapter, three main steps were put at hand in data collection: Classroom observations, Teachers' questionnaires and the learners' questionnaire. The chapter equally revealed how the data

collected was analyzed or interpreted. The following chapter will analyze the data received from these sources.

CHAPTER 4. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4. 1 Introduction

This chapter is aimed at presenting and discussing the data collected during this research. It seeks to find answers to the research questions already presented by the first chapter of this work. This is a crucial step that comes up with the relevance of the study given the answers provided by my respondents.

As already said in the Research Methodology, data in this chapter are of two sources: classroom observations and questionnaires. On the first hand, I proceeded by classroom observations. In this regard, I took care of attending classes for a whole month so as to be able to asses how the lessons are conducted, the learners' motivation, the setting and the teachers' methods of teaching English. On the other hand, I made questionnaires devised in accordance with what I realized during classroom observations and the research questions.

4.2 Analysis and Findings from Classroom Observations

I attended classes with the purpose of having an overview of how the teaching – learning activity is handled. This step is very important when one wants to get fresh and reliable information. As admitted by BIMENYIMANA(2003: 53) by the kirundi saying : « *Inkuru mbarirano irutwa n'iyo wiboneye* » that is « *What you have seen yourself is better than what you are told about* », I realised that without classroom observations, the work would lack its aspect of genuineness.

4.2.1 The Teaching Methods

Before, I visited the classes that were concerned with this research, I had in my mind the idea that teachers have a knowledge of a number of different methods among which they choose the best one that fits the teaching of vocabulary to young learners.

However, I realized that some teachers are bound to using their syllabus and spend time on explaining concepts on the blackboard. They devote little time to teaching through plays, songs and visual aids.

Richard et al (1986 : 104) agree that visual aids and plays provide stimulus and content for pupils to talk or write about.

Nonetheless, others introduce the lesson by a song or a play before they set on writing on the blackboard. Here, the pupils first get used to uttering the new items before they are shown their spelling form. What is worse is that not many teachers take care of using visual aids.

Normally, for any new vocabulary item that denotes something that is not abstract, the teacher should bring in class the object that it denotes or at least draw it on the blackboard and afterwards ask pupils to draw it in their copybooks.

It is also worth noticing that some teachers are hard on pupils who do not repeat correctly whereas we know that the more we yell at a pupil who fails, the less he performs or gets motivated to speak in class.

This also alters the interaction between the teacher and the learner, a factor of failure.

In a nutshell, it was learned during classroom observations that teachers do not have the same and unique method of teaching vocabulary. Each of them chooses a method that he/she finds suitable and in most cases, the methods overlap.

4.2.2 The Learners' Motivation

As BIMENYIMANA(2003: 54) states, learners' motivation is quite related to the teacher – learner interaction as well as the way the teacher handles the lesson. During the time of observations, I realized that the teacher plays a vital role in motivating pupils to learn new linguistic items which are used in a spoken form.

Therefore, it is real that some teachers involve pupils learning new vocabulary items through games and songs. The latter revealed themselves very determinant in increasing learners' motivation to learn and practice the language. Songs and games are pupils' need to use the newly learned item outside class. Teachers have to know that young learners are easily motivated, and so too, can they be easily demotivated.

The way a teacher addresses a pupil, the reinforcement he/she makes after a pupil's answer, the way he/she addresses inattentive pupils, can increase or kill the rate of motivation. It was unfortunately learned that teachers who yell at pupils reduce their motivation to learn more.

Pupils who like their teachers also like what they teach them. It was also learned that teachers who are friendly to pupils and use games and songs sharpen their pupils' motivation in learning new linguistic items since they learn by doing it in an enjoyable and untiresome way. HayCraft (1978: 15) and Mc Arthur (1983: 82) show that motivation and consequently success are the realization of the teacher and his personality.

4.2.3. The setting

The setting is very important for any teaching-learning activity. Here, by setting we mean the classroom and its surroundings. The rooms are wide enough for a class of fifty pupils. There is enough space between the blackboard and the first raw desks ; this space may serve for games. There are enough desks for two pupils on each desk and there is also space between raws of desks. The blackboard is large and clear. There is not much noise from outside since most of the classrooms are not exposed near streets. The setting is safe for the teaching/ learning process.

4.2.4. Materials

Regarding materials that are used in the teaching-learning activity, I found out that only some teachers have course books. Though, these teachers have books which help them to prepare lessons, I realized that those books are not of the same kind. Each teacher manages to find a book that may guide him/her. There is no uniform manual used for

teaching English in primary school since there is no program of English course in Primary school. Other teachers prepare their lessons without books; they prepare what they judge is important in the learning process. The data collected during the observation phase guided me in designing questionnaires which were aimed at having teachers' and learners' view point on the teaching of vocabulary.

4.3 Analysis and Findings from Teachers' Questionnaire

As already said in the chapter of Methodology, I carried out my research in five schools and this implies five teachers of English for five classes. Hence, the questionnaire was given to five teachers and all of them, that is 100% teachers, handed back the questionnaire after it had been answered. The questions addressed to the five teachers were as follows.

Question n° 1: What is your degree or qualification?

In asking such a question, the researcher would like to check if teachers are equipped to teach English, that is, if they have got a training that enables them to teach English. Fortunately, all five (5) respondents, that is 100% said that they have been qualified in English at university, they all have a B.A degree. This implies that teachers have the required level for teaching English.

It is very important to know if a teacher's level in English allows him/her to teach it because a teacher is like a feeder; he/she cannot give more than he/she has.

Question n° 2: How long have you been teaching in Primary school?

I decided to ask this question in order to have an idea on the experience of each teacher. A teacher who is familiar with teaching young learners is not like someone who is new in the teaching profession. If we shift from teaching adult learners to teaching young learners or vice versa, we face problems of inexperience. Therefore, experience plays a crucial role in any job particularly teaching. If I analyse answers of my respondents to this question, I find that 5 out of 5, that is, 100% are new in the teaching profession. They all admitted that they are new in that job. They also told me that they are not full time teachers and that is why they consider it as a part time while they are waiting for another job. I realized that this activity of teaching English to young learners is not given much care because anything that is done as a hobby always lacks seriousness. With inexperienced teachers who teach pupils as a hobby, there is a room for doubting on the outcome of the teaching-learning process. The authorities of those schools should try to change the situation because a teacher is the very determinant factor of pupils' success.

Question n° 3: How often do you teach English per week?

Once ☐
Twice ☐
Thrice ☐
Four times ☐
Other ☐

Table 1: Presentation of answers for question n° 3

Answers	Frequency	%
Once	0	0
Twice	3	60
Thrice	2	40
Four times	0	0
TOTAL	5	100

If we read and analyze the answers in the table above, we find that 3 out of 5 teachers (i.e is 60%) of the respondents admit that they teach English twice a week while 2 teachers out of 5, that is, 40% agree that they teach English three times a week. I realize that two times per week for a foreign language teaching is not sufficient because most pupils get the opportunity of speaking English only in class and not outside class. As such, they should be exposed to it in class as often as possible.

When I asked this question, I was expecting to find that English is taught at least four times per week because a teacher should normally work four times out of five per week for the sake of effectiveness.

Ellis et al (1980: 64) support the view by saying the following

> *The aim of vocabulary teaching is to increase the number of lexical items which the learner can understand and use in everyday life.*

However, with whatever method we use to teach a language, it must take enough time to be effective.

Question n° 4: How long is each English lesson?

a. 15 minutes ☐

b. 20 minutes ☐

c. 30 minutes ☐

d. 45 minutes ☐

e. other ☐ specify

Table 2: Presentation of data for question n° 4

Answers	Frequency	%
15 minutes	0	0
20 minutes	0	0
30 minutes	0	0
45 minutes	2	40
1 hour	3	60
TOTAL	5	100

The scores in the table above show that 3 teachers out of 5, that is 60% organize a one-hour-lesson while 2 teachers out of 5, that is 40% take only 45 minutes to conduct an English lesson.
If 60% take one hour and 40% use only 45 minutes, who may be effective among them?

One may probably think that they use different methods of teaching. As far as time is concerned, we think that teaching adult learners is different from teaching young learners since young learners do not have many references as adults do.

Therefore, one hour is enough for teaching young learners especially when we use games and songs because the latter are time consuming when we want to make all pupils participate either individually or in groups. This factor of time highly causes the teaching- learning effectiveness since a teacher can realize that pupils have not understood and subsequently take care of explaining again and this implies additional time.

Question n° 5: In the following language skills, where do you put more emphasis?

Listening ☐

Speaking ☐

Reading ☐

Writing ☐

Table 3: Presentation of data for question n° 5

Answers	Frequency	%
Listening	1	20
Speaking	3	60
Reading	0	0
Writing	1	20
TOTAL	5	100

The table above shows that activities related to the speaking skill are mostly preferred. If we read the scores above, we find that 3 teachers out of 5, that is 60% put more emphasis on activities that develop the speaking skills while the teaching activities developing listening and writing skills are ascribed 20%. This means that the speaking ability is fundamental to language learning and should be developed before any other language skill.

Therefore, teachers should put emphasis on activities that develop learners' communicative ability because a language is mainly learned for communication purposes.

Question n° 6: Do you always take care of teaching vocabulary in each lesson?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Table 4: Presentation of data for question n° 6

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	5	100
No	0	0
TOTAL	5	100

Regarding the vocabulary enlargement in each lesson, all the teachers, that is, 100% agree that for each lesson there is an activity of vocabulary enlargement.

Normally young learners always need to know more vocabulary of the new language and most of the time whatever is said is new to them, that is why the teacher needs to explain all the time new items by means of visual aids, games and songs.

Question n° 7: What techniques do you use to teach vocabulary to young learners?

a. I use songs ☐

b. I use games ☐

c. I use visual aids ☐

d. I explain on the blackboard ☐

e. I use all of them ☐

f. Others ☐ specify

Table 5: Presentation of data for question n° 7

Answers	Frequency	%
I use songs	1	20
I use games	1	20
I use visual aids	0	0
I explain on the blackboard	0	0
I use all of them	3	60

Reading the answers provided by respondents to this question, we find that 3 teachers out of 5 use games, songs, visual aids and sometimes explain new words on the blackboard. However, we find that only 1 teacher out of 5, that is 20% uses only songs while another

teacher; 20% uses solely games to teach new vocabulary items. Actually, there is no single method that may be taken as ideal for the teaching of English in general and vocabulary in particular. Teachers should choose one of the above means according to the delicacy of what is aimed at. Thus, they should vary methods with regard to the context in which the new words may be understood easily. That is why one day a teacher can use songs and prefers to use a game or visual aids the following day. All this depends on the effectiveness that each of these means predicts. To support this, Gurrey (1960:2) says that :

> *To handle this complexity efficiently, a teacher needs to have a dozen different methods at his fingertips and a number of skills at his command. He needs to know how different aspects of language teaching can be handled by bringing changes on the methods he has at his disposal.*

Question n° 8: Do you have materials to teach vocabulary to young learners?

Yes ☐ No ☐ If no, how do you manage?

Table 6: Presentation of data for question n° 8

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	0	0
No	5	100
TOTAL	5	100

In asking a question of this nature, I was interested in checking if the course is supplied with enough materials. This is motivated by the fact that any teaching-learning process without enough materials specific to each language skill is invalid.

Therefore, if I read the scores in the table above, we realize that all the teachers answered that they do not have materials to teach vocabulary to their pupils because the school itself does not possess any English material. They informed me that even the books that they use are theirs. They try to do their best to find an English book that can help them to teach.

For other materials other than books (like audio materials, pictures, etc), they admitted that the school has never made an attempt to find them. According to them, it seems that school authorities do not attach importance to the teaching of English. Below, one of my respondent said the following.

> *We try to find books from friends. Sometimes we get them, sometimes we find ones which are not suitable to the level of pupils or the course objectives. We try to get out of the mess helplessly because even our authorities are not very sensitized on the importance of English .*

Here, school authorities should know that any course has to be supported by enough and suitable materials and a teacher without teaching materials is simply ineffective.

Question n° 9: Is there any program for the teaching of English in primary school?

Yes ☐

No ☐

If No, how do you manage to teach your class?

Table n° 7: Presentation of data for question n° 9

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	0	0
No	5	100
TOTAL	5	100

The table above shows that all the teachers say that there is no program for the teaching of English. This is somehow dangerous on the part of those schools which have adopted to teach English because pupils can be taught much or little according to their level and this has a bad impact on later learning. If there is no program, it implies that there is no materials as said above.

Teachers are also not guided on the methods to put in operation for a given lesson because if there is a program, materials are accordingly designed. Then, if there is no program, there is no teacher 's guide.
The ministry of Education should first acknowledge the importance of teaching English in Primary school and design a program for schools which teach it before making it compulsory in all Burundi Primary schools.

Question n°10: According to you, what do you think would help your pupils learn more vocabulary? List from the most to the least important.

a. Games ☐

b. Repetitions ☐

c. Songs ☐

d. Poems ☐

e. Memorizing ☐

f. Others ☐ specify

Table n° 8: Presentation of data for question n° 10

Answers	Teachers' ordering					Order
	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	
Games	1	2	1	1	1	1
Repetitions	5	4	4	3	4	4
Songs	2	1	2	2	2	2
Poems	4	3	5	4	3	3
Memorizing	3	5	3	5	5	5
TOTAL	15	15	15	15	15	-

N.B: T = teacher (T1 = Teacher n° 1)

If we read how the majority of teachers have ordered the activities above according to the importance they give in teaching of vocabulary to young learners, games are considered as the most helpful method and should be given priority. They help pupils to develop their fluency and they engage pupils in a learning by doing enjoyable work.

Though the order of preference differs from one respondent to another all teachers admitted that the above activities sharpen the pupils' ability to communicate except the last activity.

Question n° 11: What difficulties do you encounter when you are teaching vocabulary to your Learners?

The question above was left open-ended in order to let teachers reveal all problems they face in teaching vocabulary as exhaustively as

possible. The first difficulty encountered is that of language interference. When pupils learn a new item, it is difficult to pronounce it. They are tempted to assimilate it to kirundi or French language. Also, when they do not understand the explanation provided, they request the teacher to give the meaning in Kirundi or French.

The other difficulty is related to pupils' age, they sometimes take the game or the song for a joke. They do not realize that they are learning and disturbances are likely to occur. If the teacher is not careful, the lesson can turn into a mess.

There is also the problem of materials to be used in teaching the skill. One of my respondent acknowledged the following:

" Even the ones that we can find are not at their level and are not designed to teaching young learners of 5 th form low grade."

The school should look for teaching materials among which the teacher can choose ones which best suits for teaching his/her pupils because the teaching-learning process has to be supported by enough and suitable materials.

Question n° 12: Do you find your learners motivated when they are learning vocabulary?

Yes ☐ No ☐ More or less ☐

If no, what do you do to motivate them?

Table n° 9: Presentation of data for question n° 12

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	2	40
No	0	0
More or less	3	60
TOTAL	5	100

In asking the question above, I wanted to know the rate of learners' motivation when they are learning vocabulary.
The results in the table above show that 2 teachers out of 5, that is, 40% find that their learners are motivated when they are learning vocabulary while 3 teachers out 5, that is, 60% find that they are more or less motivated.

In general, we have to know that the teaching activity is a very delicate task and the teacher has to keep or raise the extent to which his/her learners are interested.

Here, the teacher should involve pupils in activities that favour the learnability of vocabulary items and increase their will to continue learning more in an enjoyable context.

Question n° 13: What do you think are the causes of learners' failure to use the new Vocabulary items outside class?

Here, the researcher would like to have a more or less exhaustive list of elements that prevent the learner from practising the newly learned vocabulary items after class. Most teachers converged on the environmental factor. Our country uses French as official language and kirundi as Mother Tongue. Then, since there is no English speaking community, pupils do not find people with whom they can communicate in English after class.

Question n° 14: What do you think would improve the teaching of English in primary school in general and the teaching of vocabulary in particular?

In asking this question, I wanted to know their suggestions which could make a successful teaching of English in primary school. All teachers answered that the Ministry of Education is the only body to improve the teaching of English in primary school; they agreed on the following views:

1. Program designers should recognize the importance of the teaching English in primary School
2. They should elaborate the same program in all primary schools
3. They should provide enough materials which could help and guide the teachers
4. They should organize seminars, trainings of teaching young learners

This section discussed and analyzed the information received from the teachers of primary schools. The following section with data from learners' Questionnaire.

4.3. Analysis and Findings from Learners' Questionnaire

Since I had a sample of 125 pupils in a population of 253 pupils (that is nearly half of each of the five classes concerned in my research), 125 questionnaires were distributed.
However, not all the questionnaires were handed back after having been answered, only 113 questionnaires were collected and thank God teachers helped me to sensitize pupils to consider the questionnaire as a homework if not I would have missed more copies.

As the pupils of 5th year were not able to respond in English, I translate the questionnaire into French.

Question n°1: Do you like studying English?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Table n°10: Presentation of data for question n°1

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	109	96.5
No	4	3.5
TOTAL	113	100

In asking such a question, my interest was to check if really pupils of primary school enjoy studying English. This is because when someone has an interest in doing something, it is another expression of motivation.

Regarding the results in the table above, we find that 109 pupils out of 113 (that is 96,5%) agreed that they like studying English. This implies that they already have this intrinsic motivation to study English. This is a very important factor that determines the extent to which the pupils learn the language.

Therefore, whatever activity that is planned has to be organized in a way that can keep or increase this level of interest with which the pupils start learning English.

Question n°2: How do you find English lessons?

a. Difficult ☐

b. Easy ☐

c. Interesting ☐

d. Boring ☐

Table n°11: Presentation of data for question n°2

Answers	Frequency	%
Difficult	13	11.5
Easy	9	8
Interesting	88	78
Boring	3	2.5
TOTAL	113	100

In asking this question, I wanted to know how the pupils view English lessons that they are taught. From the table above, it is revealed that 88 pupils out of 113 (78%) find English lessons interesting, while 3 pupils out of 113 (2.5%) find them boring. On the other hand, 13 pupils out of 113 (11.5%) find English lessons very difficult, whereas only 9 out of 113 (8%) consider that they are easy.

The interpretation that we can make from the data above is that young learners always have good appreciation of the new language learned when, of course, they are exposed to interesting work. Even when the new language seems difficult to some of the learners, the teacher's task is to make it enjoyable through interesting activities. Here teachers should know that young learners can be easily motivated as they can be easily demotivated. Therefore, learning a new and foreign language is not very easy but a teacher can make it so when it is interestingly taught. It is not surprising that pupils who are not interested are also bored by the lesson.

Question n°3: Between the following English lessons, which of them is interesting?

a. Grammar ☐

b. Vocabulary ☐

Table n°12: Presentation of data for question n°3

Answers	Frequency	%
Grammar	16	14
Vocabulary	97	86
TOTAL	113	100

When I asked this question, I sought to know which of the two is interesting to the learners. Then, if we analyze the results in the table above, we find that pupils prefer to learn more vocabulary than grammar. If 86% (that is 97 respondents out of 113) find that they are interested by vocabulary, it implies that the teacher should devote enough time and materials to this activity.

Also, the low score for grammar (that is 14%) shows that pupils should be bordered with so many grammatical structures. Though it is necessary to teach them some elementary grammar, pupils do not like being overloaded by learning much grammar, because this may be boring and may make them lose motivation. Even the slight grammatical structures that are taught should be handled in a communicative approach.

Question n°4: Does your teacher use games to teach you new vocabulary?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Table n°13: Presentation of data for question n°4

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	67	59.3
No	46	40.7
TOTAL	113	100

Games are a very important communicative approach in teaching a language to young learners like those of primary school. Learners are taught the new language by doing. However, the result above are not very satisfying because a very significant number of pupils (that is 40.7%) admitted that their teachers do not use games in teaching English. This percentage (40.7%) may correspond with the number of respondents from two classes (two schools in other words). This leads us to deduce that 2 teachers out of 5 do not use games.

Question n°5: Does your teacher use songs to teach you new vocabulary?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Table n°14: Presentation of data for question n°5

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	64	56.6
No	49	43.4
TOTAL	113	100

My purpose in asking this question is similar to the aim of the preceding question. Songs being a communicative activity that helps young learners become acquainted with the new way of uttering new syllables in an amusing context, the learner will have facilities in repeating the same words with the right pronunciation in his speech. Nonetheless, the scores above show that only 56.6% of learners admit that their teachers use songs to teach them the new language, whereas 43.4% deny that their teachers never use songs. This percentage corresponds to 49 learners out of 113 who responded; nearly an equivalent of respondents from two classes.

Here, the conclusion seems to the same as that made on the preceding question. We can therefore deduce that an overage of 2 teachers out of 5 do not use songs in teaching the new vocabulary items. Teachers should base their teaching on the play way method like using games and songs in order to develop learners' speaking ability.

Question n°6: Does your teacher give you some poems for recitation?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Table n°15: Presentation of data for question n°6

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	0	0
No	113	100
TOTAL	113	100

The scores in the table above show that no teacher uses poems to teach the new language vocabulary. Though poems develop learners' tone and stress, we also admit that this kind of activity requires adequate materials to clarify the meaning. However, teachers are not to be blamed since they raised the problem of lack of teaching materials. Therefore, the school authorities should try to find enough and varied materials that may support any learning activity.

Question n°7: Does your teacher show you pictures or drawings on the blackboard before telling you what they mean?

Yes ☐ No ☐

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APPENDICES

Appendix A : Letter to the teachers

UNIVERSITY OF BURUNDI
FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTEMENT OF ENGLISH
LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Dear Sir/Madam

I am a research student at the University of Burundi and at the moment, I am undertaking a research on TEACHING.

Enclosed to this, are questionnaires designed to teachers and learners of private primary schools and my purpose is to gather data that would help me to carry out successfully my research entitled:

"APPRAISAL OF VOCABULARY TEACHING IN SOME PRIVATE PRIMARY SCHOOLS OF BUJUMBURA: THE CASE OF 5th YEAR PUPILS."

The answers I expect from you are vital to the realisation of my study and I would then be grateful if you answer as sincerely and clearly as possible. In addition, I promise you that answers will be treated solely for the completion of my research and I beg you not to mention your name.

Expecting good cooperation from you, I express my thanks in advance and please I remain.

Yours faithfully
Aura NDAYISENGA

Appendix B : Teachers' Questionnaire

Instructions and comments

- Put a cross (x) before the right answer
- Try to give answers as objectively as possible.

1. What is your degree or qualification?
2. How long have you been teaching English in primary school?
3. How often do you teach English per week?
4. How long is each English lesson?
   a. 15 minutes ☐
   b. 20 minutes ☐
   c. 30 minutes ☐
   d. 45 minutes ☐
   e. other ☐ specify
5. In the following language skills, where do you put more emphasis?
   a. Listening ☐
   b. speaking ☐
   c. reading ☐
   d. Writing ☐
6. How much time do you allocated to teaching vocabulary?
7. What is the method you use to teach vocabulary to young learners?
   a. I use songs ☐
   b. I use games ☐
   c. I use visual aids ☐
   d. I use a story ☐
   e. I explain on the blackboard ☐
   f. Others ☐ specify
8. Do you have enough materials to teach vocabulary to young learners?
   Yes ☐ No ☐
   If no, how do you teach them?

9. Is there any program for the teaching of English in, Primary school?
   Yes ☐ No ☐
   If no, how do you manage to your class?
10. According to you, what do you think would help your pupils learn more vocabulary?

    a. Games ☐

    b. Repetitions ☐

    c. Songs ☐

    d. Poems ☐

    e. Memorising ☐

    f. Others ☐ specify

11. What difficulties do you encounter when you are teaching vocabulary to your learners?
12. Do you find your learners motivated when they are learning vocabulary?

    Yes ☐ No ☐ More or less ☐

    If no, what do you do to motivate them?

13. What do you think are the causes of learners' failure to use the new vocabulary items outside class?

14. What do you think would improve the teaching of English in primary school in general and the teaching of vocabulary in primary school in particular?

Appendix C: Learner's Questionnaire

Instructions and comments

- Put a cross (x) before the right answer
- Try to give answers as objectively as possible.

As the 5th year pupils cannot express themselves easily in English, the learner's questionnaire was translate in French in order to have good answers.

1. Do you like studying English?

Yes ☐ No ☐

2. How do you find English lessons?

a. Difficult ☐
b. Easy ☐
c. Interesting ☐
d. Boring ☐

3. Among your following English lessons, which of them is interesting?

a. Grammar ☐
b. Vocabulary ☐
c. Listening ☐

4. Does your teacher use games to teach you new words?

Yes ☐ No ☐

5. Does your teacher use songs to teach you new words?

Yes ☐ No ☐

6. Does your teacher give you some poems for recitation?

Yes ☐ No ☐

7. Does your teacher show you some pictures or drawings on the blackboard before telling
you what they mean in English?

Yes ☐ No ☐

8. Do you have learner's English books?

Yes ☐ No ☐

9. What are the difficulties that prevent you from speaking English after class?

a. I forget what I have studied ☐

b. I feel shy to speak English ☐

c. Other children laugh at me if I make mistake ☐

d. I do not find anyone to talk to in English in my family ☐

e. We don't practice in class, so that I can be able to speak ☐

f. Others ☐ specify

10. How do you appreciate your teacher's way of teaching English vocabulary?

a. Motivating ☐
b. Good ☐
c. Boring ☐