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Difficulties encountered by adult learners of english as a foreign language : case of the international language centre of Bujumbura

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

DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED BY ADULT LEARNERS OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE : CASE OF THE INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE CENTRE OF BUJUMBURA

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for the Award of the Degree **Licence en Langues et Littérature Anglaises.**

Bujumbura, August 2008

DEDICATION

To God Almighty;

To my late parents, who passed away too early
to see the fruit of their effort;

To my beloved husband, Léonidas Niyokindi;

To my cherished daughters,

Mirna Iragaba Mirore and;

Garna Chérise Ihorekungoma;

I warmly dedicate this work.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The completion of this work is a result of much appreciated contribution received from many people. I sincerely acknowledge their support.

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I am greatly indebted to my younger sisters and brothers for the sense of respect and encouragement they always showed me.

My beloved husband, Mr. Léonidas Niyokindi (Muzungu) deserves a word of warm thanks for his love, understanding, patience, and assistance. May God bless him.

I also wish to register my gratitude to the families of J. Paul Kazungu and Cyprien Hakiza for their various forms of support they have rendered me.

Last but not least I wish to acknowledge my dept to all my classmates, whom I consulted from time to time for advice, encouragement, and support.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

--**I.L.C:** International Language Centre

-**N.G.O**: Non Governmental Organisation

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CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the Study

English is the most widely used language throughout the world. It can be considered as an international language firmly established in the English speaking world, but extending much further to all the corners of the globe. If we consider the status of English around the world, it is the world-language which facilitates communication among different official languages. It is also a language of international trade. Many Burundians wish to get at least, some degree of oral proficiency so as to be able to communicate in it. Knowledge of English offers opportunities for higher education, better employment, easy trade, and rise of one's status. As such, many people show a great need to learn it, and centres for teaching English as a foreign language are then emerging.

The clients of centres wish to develop oral skills and then achieve English language proficiency. They attend centres because of the major need to communicate with the rest of the world. This is why they need materials which emphasize the communicative ability of the learners.

In addition, English seems to be one of the prerequisites for job opportunities in NGOs, regional, and international organisations etc; and adults find themselves in need of learning it. It follows that in order to succeed, one must have a working knowledge in English.

As a matter of fact, if one has been speaking a language for sometimes, his vocal organs will no longer be easily flexible enough to articulate the sounds of the new language. The occupation one has and the kind of people one interacts with will

influence one's learning because it is from what we do and those we meet that we draw our experience.

Furthermore, a workshop manual *Understanding the Adult Learners (1991:8)* suggests that,

> *if we accept that the adult is different from a child,*
> *then we must recognize the adult learners require*
> *different instructional strategies.*

It follows therefore, that, the teaching of a foreign language to adults must be different from the way it is taught to children in schools. The teaching of adults is normally referred to as "andragogy" rather than "pedagogy" which is applied when teaching children. This is to say that adults will require different teaching methods, that are likely to assure protection of their individual freedom, and their identity.

Brumfit (1983:27), states that adult learners learn throughout their lifetime, and that past experiences should be respected by the teachers. Their experiences should be directly applied to current situations for good educative effect. In addition, their individual abilities also play a vital role in their learning tasks; one's age may affect one's learning of language in that adults have developed self-identity and responsibilities which may interfere with the learning.

It is also common knowledge that in order for one to learn a language, one needs to be able to speak freely in social interactions so as to be able to practise the new language. This is in accordance with the English saying that "practice makes perfect. However, in Burundi, English is less used than French and Kirundi. As

such, Burundian English learners face the problem of appropriate environment for practice.

While adults' knowledge of a first and or a second language may be an advantage, it can also be a hindrance to easy learning of a foreign language. In addition, not all learners in centres have the same profession or age. Hence, handling them in the same classrooms in terms of methods or techniques may be hindrance for some since these factors affect the teaching of a foreign language. Teaching materials are also of great importance.

My task, as a researcher, is to attempt an analysis of the difficulties that adult foreign learners of English face while learning it in centres, in a study entitled "DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED BY ADULT FOREIGN LEARNERS OF ENGLISH: CASE OF THE INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE CENTRE".

Let me note though that I am not the first to work on language centres .There are previous researchers who investigated on language centres and the most interesting to note are Bimenyimana (2003) and Uwimana (2004). In his study, Bimenyimana (2003) realised that teaching-learning process at I.L.C. is quite well conducted. But he pointed out some shortcomings that call for improvement measures.

He structured his work around three points, namely, methodology, materials, and content of the course. He found that the method and materials are not sufficient. Indeed, the teacher has to adopt a method and materials that impart to learners, communicative competence. He noted that the lack of a library at the I.L.C. and the insufficiency of books among other things, hamper the teaching-learning process.

Concerning the content of the course, he realised that it does not match with the learners' needs and purposes. He also noted that the time allotted to learning programme per day is insufficient.

For further research, he suggested:

- Undertaking an appraisal of the text book used in teaching English at the I.L.C. or any other centre,
- Conducting a comparative study on two or more teaching centres as far as the area of emphasis is concerned,
- Assessing factors that lead to lower achievement when we learn a foreign language at an adult age.

In her work of evaluating the coursebook, Uwimana (2004), found that the New Headway Pre-Intermediate is adequate to the Burundian teaching context. Indeed, both teachers and learners are satisfied with the coursebook as their objectives and needs are met through it.

She noted however some shortcomings with the book if not well used by a skilled teacher. There are topics which are not adapted to the Burundian social environment. Thus, for her, what remains to be done is the total adaptation of such topics to the prevailing situation.

Thus, there is still a room for investigation as it showed and my work is within the perspective of completing former researchers who have investigated other aspects of adult teaching-learning activity, and then propose solutions to some of the problems.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

As mentioned earlier, Burundians show great interest in learning English, which is motivated by its growing importance worldwide in general and in Burundi in particular. To cope with today's needs, English is taught not only in the public sector (state owned schools), but also and with more emphasis in private institutions (language centres for example).

Though Burundian people show great need to learn and teach English privately, there are factors that influence the foreign language learning and which hinder the achievement of proficiency in it. The exact problem is that even at the end of their learning programme, learners still have difficulties to communicate effectively. Thus, following this, undertaking a research whose aims are the subject of the next section is relevant.

1.3. Aims, Research Question and Hypothesis

This study seeks to identify the factors that hinder the achievement of proficiency of adult learners of English at the I.L.C. in this language. Indeed, as stated above, adult learners still have problems as far as communicating effectively is concerned even after their training at the centre. This is a sign that there are problems somewhere; and stated otherwise, this study aims at investigating the major difficulties that these adult learners of English encounter. By doing so, the following question will be answered: What are the major difficulties that adult learners of English at the I.L.C. encounter?

My assumption here is that age, inappropriate linguistic environment; inadequate teaching methods are the main difficulties that adult learners of English at the I.L.C. are faced with. Thus, age, linguistic environment, and teaching methods are the variables of this research.

1.4. Motivation

The choice of this topic was guided by the importance that is given to English in the world today. In fact, the motivation behind this study is the realisation of communication problems through dialogues and oral conversation, with some of my neighbours who had been following the learning programme in centres. Their low proficiency even at the end of the learning programme prompted me to analyse its causes in order to propose solutions.

1.5. Scope and Delimitation

This study will be conducted at the International Language Centre (I.L.C.). I prefer to work on this centre because previous researchers who have worked on centres showed their contributions. One of them suggested for further research: assessing factors that lead to lower achievement when we learn a foreign language at an adult age. Then, I felt interested to work on this topic.

Nevertheless, I am not going through all the difficulties, I am going to concentrate on age, environment, and teaching methods. I am aware of the fact that many factors come into play as far as learning a foreign language is concerned though I cannot deal with all of them; it is an approach to some of them.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. Introduction

The preceding chapter described the research objectives and the problem that will be solved at the end of this research. The present one deals with the literature related to this work. Indeed, a number of researchers is worth presenting and evaluating some of their major findings.

2.2. The Nature of Adult Learning

Smith (1982:33) has identified some general observations concerning the nature of adult learning:

> *It is lifelong, it is personal, it involves change,*
> *It is partially a function of human development,*
> *it pertains to experience and is partially intuitive.*

This view is also supported by Broomfield (op cit: 30) who says that, adults have multiple roles and responsibilities, and this results in a different orientation to learning from that of children and adolescents.

Smith (1982:41) further identified certain conditions suitable for learning, he states that,

> *adults learn best when they feel the need to learn and they*
> *haven sense of r responsibility for what, why and how they*

> *learn. He goes on saying that adults will learn best in the atmosphere that is non-threatening and supportive of experimentation and in which different learning styles are recognized.*

The teaching of adults requires so much attention as far as methods are concerned. The characteristics of adult learners that are already known pose challenges to providers of adult learning especially when it comes to the task of choosing the type of approach to use when preparing learning activities for adult learners.

2.3. Characteristics of Adult Learners

Brumfit (1984:42) says that *adult learners pass through a number of developmental phases which cause changes in their lifetime.* They pass through physiological, psychological and social spheres of life.

The first adult learners' development phase is physiological. The changes which they bring make up for their characteristics. Knox (1981:39) recognizes the impact of their characteristics on learning when he says that,

> *physiological conditions and physical health affect learning and cognition in various ways. Sensory impairment, such as a poor vision or hearing less, can restrict sensory input. Ina dequate cerebral circulation or stress can impair memory. He adds that ill health can restrict attention given to external events.*

The second phase, through which adult learners pass in their development, is psychological. Cole (1977) cited in Lal and olu, (1979:107) states that,

> *adult learners may have painful memories of schools they passed through and may think that education has no relevance to their live And they may be afraid that they have lost the capacity to learn.*

Psychological and physical developments have effects on adults thinking and the way they look at the things.

The third adult learners' development phase is the social sphere. Adults have multiple roles and responsibilities and these result in a different orientation to learning which is different from that of children.
Smith (1982) cited in Brumfit (1984:46) says that they have accumulated life experience which result in *distinct preferences for modes of learning and learning styles.*

The physical, psychological and social spheres through which adult learners pass in their development are responsible for their decision to come to learn which they do for different motives.

Adults learn for different motives that depend on physical, psychological, and social spheres of their lives; they are likely to have different attitudes vis-à -vis the learning activity.

As it has been showed by many researchers, the learning of adults depends on different motives. They are likely to have different attitudes as far as the learning activity is concerned, and these ones contribute in success or failure of the learning

activity. Thus, the teaching of adults requires so much attention as far as teaching methods are concerned. Motivating methods are of great importance. The characteristics of adults that have been given pose challenges to providers of adult learning especially when it comes to the task of choosing the type of approach to use when preparing learning activities for adult learners.

2.4. Attitudes and Problems of Adult Learners

A factor which affects the teaching of English yet, which many people tend to ignore, is the learners' attitudes towards the subject. Learning a language is affected by complex psychological factors and it only occurs more easily if the learner displays positive attitudes towards the language and the community that speaks it. In relation to this, Littlewood (1984:56) says the following:

> *One of the factors influencing how we experiment the process of the learning is our attitude towards the foreign culture itself. If this attitude is negative, there may be strong internal barriers against learning; and if the learning has to take place because of the external compulsion, it may proceed only to minimum level required by the external demands.*

Under attitude there are closely-related factors which have strong effect on the success or failure in language learning in spite of the teachers' effects when teaching. Favourable attitudes reinforce the teaching and learning of English and of the language in general. For example, motivation encourages somebody to make efforts to learn something. Harmer (1986: 96) points out that motivated students do significantly better than their peers who are not, asserting that,

if for some reason, his motivation is limited, he will not put as much energy and enthusiasm into his learning as when he is strongly motivated and the resulting learning will be slow and inefficient.

Motivation which is closely interlinked with attitudes is very important if success in learning is to be attained. Considering the learners' attitudes towards English in Burundi, a general positive attitude can be detected if we consider the evening classes for adults mushrooming here and there in the city of Bujumbura and the efforts of the Government and private initiative to promote the English at the primary level.

The conditions for adult learning that have been given may only be fulfilled when the other factors which help to bring about adult learning are in place. Adults need to be motivated.

2.5. The Conditions for Adult Learning

Several conditions for adult learning have been given by scholars. They are about situations that are necessary before a learning process takes place by adult learners. They are also about situations that should exist during and after learners' episodes. Through assessments of learning efforts, scholars have also been able to state conditions for adult learning.

In this discussion of conditions for ad ult learning, Smith (1982: 286) states that,

> *Adults use experience as a source in learning so the learning content and process must bear a perceived and meaningful relationship to past experience. What is to be learned should be related to the individual' s developmental changes and life tasks.*

Brumfit (1984:48) supports Smith (1982:347) when he says that *past experience of adults affect their current learning, sometimes serving as an enhancement, sometimes as a hindrance.* So, those who are responsible for adult learning must create a condition that takes into account adult learners' experiences when they prepare for a learning encounter. Learning must therefore be experience-centred and the experiences must be meaningful to the learner.

Before an adult learner come on a learning situation he or she must have a reason to come to learn. The learner however, must be aware of inadequacy of his present behaviour.

Cole (1977) cited in Lal & Olu (1979:43) says that he must have a *clear picture of the behaviours required.* He must be aware of the gap which when filled with skills and knowledge will make him achieve his desired goal.

The characteristics of adult learners that are given are useful to providers of adult learning especially while choosing the type of approach to be used. Providing agencies must fulfil such a condition for learning to be able to take place.

Cole (1977) also states as a condition cited in Lal and Olu (1979 :46) that,

adult teachers should plan learning programmes together with adult learners so that they have a joint view of its objectives which should be spelt out clearly and as much detail as possible.

Freedom to look at experiences during a learning session is one of the conditions adult learners need in order to be able to learn. This can be done when past experiences of adult learners are respected by adult teachers.

Cole (1977) cited in Lal & Olu (1979:51) says that learning is possible when there is "a friendly atmosphere and free exchange between the teacher and the learners and among learners. He adds that these are motivating factors in adult learning. Motivation is a condition for an adult learning.

Adult learners must be adequately motivated to change their behaviour. For Brumfield (1986:52) adult learners *are strongly motivated to learn in areas relevant to their current developmental tasks, social roles, life crises and transition periods".* Knox (1981:426) states the following in this respect:

Recent role changes that call for adaptation, urging by significant Others to obtain more education and optimism regarding a future job promotion help increase awareness of needs for increased competence and encourage educative activity. The typical result is greater motivation to engage and persist in learning activities

The condition of motivation is accompanied by other conditions. Cole (1977) cited in Lal & Olu (1979:55) states that *an adult must find interest, enjoyment, relevance, and use in what he is learning.*

In connection with this, Brumfit (1984:143) says that during a learning session *a certain degree of arousal is necessary for learning to occur, whereas stress acts as a major block to learning.*

After a learning session, Rodgers (1990:23) is of the view that,

> *adults learn best when they do not have to rely on memorizing*
> *but can learn through activity at their own pace with material*
> *that seem relevant to their daily lives and uses their own experience.*

Smith (1982) cited in Brumfield (1986:49) gives another dimension when he says that, *adults learn best when they feel the need to learn and when they have a sense of responsibility for what, why and how they learn.* He, however, adds that *"the learning method used will faster, to different degrees, the adults' exercise of autonomy".*

The conditions for adult learning that scholars have given may only be fulfilled when other factors which help to bring about adult learning are in place. The factors are: providing institutions of adult learning activities, adults' teachers, facilities for adult learning, and methods of teaching adults.

2.6. Age and Foreign Language Learning

The discussion on the role of age in second and foreign language learning has been largely confined to the question of optimal age; in other words to the questions of the effect of age on learning outcomes.

There is an assumption among people that young children respond more readily and intuitively to language acquisition in social and communicative situations. While adult learners can learn languages more readily by means of cognitive and academic approaches.

In relation to this, Strevens (1983:43) says that, age is an important variable, especially in respect of brain, of emotional development, and of social experience. All these taken together with the increased total experience of language that accompanies age, affect the learning of foreign language.

In addition, Vanels (1977:105) mentions that it is argued that children have a greater emphatic capacity than adults, that children have not yet developed inhibitions about their self-identity and are therefore not afraid to sound ridiculous and are prepared to take risks when experimenting with them as yet far from perfect second knowledge.

This then implies that children are not hampered in the foreign language learning by negative attitudes which may hamper adult learning. It also means that children approach the learning task with an open attitude unlike adults. These studies then and observations are then aimed at helping adult teacher to help the adult learner overcome inhibitions to foreign language learning, and the linguistic environment is also believed to play a key role with regard to language learning.

2.7. Linguistic Environment and Foreign Language Learning

Linguistics distinguishes between formal and informal learning environments by stating their main characteristics and their respective contributions to second or foreign language learning.

As Krashen (1988:40) puts it,

> *two sorts of linguistic environments are contrasted:*
> *artificial or formal environments, found for the most part*
> *in the classroom and natural or informal environments.*

Formal environments are characterised by artificial methods for programmed input which could be based on an improvised syllabus or could be determined by the teacher. In fact, one of the reasons of failure in language learning is the fear of the learner to make mistakes.

Besides, such environments lack adequate exposure as the learners have fewer chances of interactive learning. In fact, the only possible chance of interaction is the classroom; and this may not be optimally utilized as there could be one person who is a teacher and he is the only one to impact knowledge and the learners are normally on the receiving end. Sometimes they are not allowed enough expressive or communicative activities.

As far as informal environment are concerned, they are naturalistic and interactive in nature. In such environments, input is not programmed by any teacher or any

syllabus designing authority. It is just natural discourses and these ones correct the grammar in the learners' speech.

This kind of learning allows adequate exposure especially when either proficient speakers of the target language are involved. If this is coupled with the learner's positive attitude towards the target language and the out group, it will certainly lead to successful learning and acquisition.

From what precedes, one can assert that informal learning environments are better than formal learning environments since they allow adequate exposure, and it is evident that the more we are exposed to the language, the more we learn it.

In connection to this, Krashen (1988:40) states that several studies suggest that adults can not only increase their second language proficiency in informal environments, but may do as well as better than learners who have spent a comparable amount of time in formal situations. Although there no teaching methods required in an informal environment setting, the formal setting requires them, and they are influential as vis-à-vis the foreign language learning.

2.8. Major Foreign Language Teaching Methods

2.8.1. Pedagogy and Andragogy

In the teaching of children, there exists the term pedagogy which literally means the art and science of teaching children, (Knowles 1990: 6).

European adult educators needed a term parallel to pedagogy in order to provide a label for the growing body of knowledge and technology in regard to adult

learning and that was being defined as "the art and science of helping adult learn. The term coined was Andragogy, (Knowles 1990:6).

Knowles (1990:7) states that it does not mean that adults learn only through the andragonical model, both andragogy and pedagogy methods can support each other. For example, it was found that even young people can learn better when the andragonical model is applied.

2.8.2. Pedagogical Model

Some assumptions about learners inherent in the pedagogical model as observed by Knowles (1990) include the following:

Firstly, the teacher has full responsibility for making all the decisions about what should be learned, how and when it should be learned, and whether it has been learned. The only role of a learner therefore is that of submissively carrying out the teacher's directions.

Secondly, learners enter into an educational activity with little experience that is of much value as a resource for learning. It is experience of the teacher and the textbook writer that counts. Accordingly, the backbone of pedagogical methodology is transmission techniques.

Thirdly, students become ready to learn what they are told that they have to learn in order to advantage to the next stage. Regarding the orientation to learning; students enter into an educational activity with subject-centred orientation.

Consequently, the curriculum is organised according to content units and is sequenced according to the logic of the subject matter.

2.8.3. Andragonical Methods

In contrast, Knowles (1990:8) states that for andragonical model for learning, the learner is self-directing for he/she will choose what to learn how to learn and for what purposes.

Regarding the learner's experience, the andragonical model assumes that adults enter into an educational activity with both a greater volume and a different quality of experience occurs because adults perform different roles from young people. However, adults experience can also be a hindrance to learning; because of their experience, adults often develop habitual ways of thinking and doing (Knowles, 1990).

For readiness to learn, the andragonical model assumes that adults become ready to learn when they experience a need to know or do something in order to perform more effectively in some aspect of their lives (Knowles, 1990:19).

Regarding orientation to learning, because adults are motivated to learn after they experience a need in their life situation, they enter an educational activity with a life-centred, taste-oriented or problem centred orientation to learning (Knowles, 1990:22).

As for motivation, although even adult can respond to some external motivators such as better job, a salary increase, and the life, the andragonical model predicates

that the more potent motivators are internal such as self-esteem, recognition, better quality of life, greater confidence and self-actualisation (Maslow 1970:63).

2.9. Methods of Teaching Oral Skills in English

The need for English language both within the county and outside it has great implications to the teaching of English as a foreign language. While the teacher should be constantly reminded of the importance of English in the curriculum, the learner is expected to exhibit a higher level of mastery of the language. A student's good performance and hence mastery of the language depends, among other things, on the methods and techniques his teacher employs when teaching him. Wilkins (1977:51) emphasizes that, *Successful learning depends upon Language teaching techniques*

Similarly, Agard (1984:97) draws attention to the fact that teacher's methods will determine the manner of reception of that subject and the rate at which it is absorbed. The implication of these two observations is that wrong application of methods or techniques may interfere with the learning process.

For effective learning to take place, therefore, the teacher must be well armed with tools that he knows how to use. These tools include the methods and techniques required to communicate to the learner and the content to be dealt with.

Expressing the same view, Rivers (1984:82) stresses the fact that teachers need methods and techniques that work with specific objectives that are meaningful to the kind of students they have in class. This, in itself, calls for teacher's awareness

of the objectives of the course, which is of paramount important in a language teaching situation, and his awareness of the needs of his learners.

Byrne (1976:72) assets that the main objectives of teaching oral skills is to develop oral accuracy and to train learners in oral skills should aim at making the learner able to use the language for communicative purposes. If this is to be achieved the learner will need the constant practice in the language.

Consequent to this, recent researchers have suggested a number of methods through which oral skills can be developed. Such methods include the use of discussions as in group and pair work, individual approach, the use of drama as in role play, simulation and mime, the use of games etc.
Paulston (1976:76) observes the following:

> *Language practice is most effective, when conducted in a responsive environment in which what is said by one learner matters to another or other learners, because they might in turn, have to respond to it.*

This implies that opportunities for such communication have to be provided by the teacher. The learner should be motivated through activities and tasks set by the teacher to use language for communication. Such activities are embedded in the methods that the teacher uses.

Language games and role play are very important in the development of oral fluency because they provide opportunities to practice under conditions as close as possible to those in normal communication. This view is echoed by Byrne (1976) who argues that dramatic activities which involve role play, simulation and mime,

provide yet another range of opportunities for learners to develop fluency skills. He explains that through these activities learners are made to use the language freely, purposefully, and creatively.

Research finding in Spain by Cuenca and Carmon (1987:44) reveal that drama enables the students to use language spontaneously and this aids in developing free expression. In view of the above findings, drama as a method should be used often because through it the students not only gains understanding of the language structure, but also experiences the dramatic use of the language in real life situation. Similarly, language games have been found to aid oral fluency.
In the same way, research finding have established that pair work and group work as methods make the whole class involved so that even weaker students get absorbed in the learning.

Ur (1988:113) encourages the use of pair and group work. He maintains that these methods erase inhibition because students freer to talk to associates. It is, therefore, the teacher's duty to provide an environment in which the student can communicate freely and work together meaningfully and independently. This is possible thanks to the teaching materials.

2.10. Teaching Materials

Teaching and learning always go hand in hand; I cannot then ignore the teaching aspect. In fact, teaching and learning are two intertwined aspects. Moreover, I have mentioned in the previous pages that a formal learning environment usually takes place in a classroom where there is a teacher who imparts knowledge in the learners.

Therefore, an effective teaching leads to a better learning. This effective teaching is conditioned by the use of adequate teaching materials and aids together with appropriate teaching methods. In the following section therefore, I discuss various teaching materials and aids and the major foreign language teaching methods that facilitate and enhance foreign language learning and teaching.

Rivers (1978: 9) stresses the role of the teacher of English as a foreign language by saying that,

> *the teacher of English as a second or foreign language is*
> *a professional who must diagnose and select according to*
> *the particular situation of a specific class of student*
> *and adapt materials and techniques accordingly.*

Through Rivers' observation, it is clear that materials and techniques used are very important. They are chosen considering the situation and the type of students. For some, materials are like a ladder that teachers and learners use to get access to knowledge. The teacher's training itself is not enough when they do not have constructional materials to support the teaching-learning process.

However, the term *materials* does not mean the textbooks only, but also refers to a wide range of aids that facilitate the teacher's work and enable students understand and communicate. Materials therefore include course-books, visual aids of many kinds, recordings, films, short stories, newspapers, poems, magazines, etc.

The materials may be of a wide range and not focusing on the same area. The teacher then has the task to choose from among this range of materials the ones

which are useful to his teaching objectives and learners' needs and level of proficiency. Materials do not only serve the teacher, they also play a great role to the learners.

In this respect, Wright (1976:42), states that the main function of materials is that of guarding student from using his store of the foreign language to communicate his ideas and opinions. The choice of materials is a decisive step which determines the extent to which the teaching-learning process will be effective.

However, materials as any other resource supporting the teaching of a language should be constructed in accordance with teacher's aims and objective as well as the learners' needs. Selection of materials should be related to learners' purposes.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

When doing a study, a researcher has to put himself/ herself in the place of his /her readers and then see the questions that can come into their minds. This chapter on methodology comes with the intention of removing doubts that the readers would have about the reality of this study. In order to achieve this, I present to my readers the population and the sampling techniques that have been used to investigate the major difficulties that adult learners of English at the I.L.C. encounter, and also account for the use of instruments like classroom observations and questionnaires in the data collection and the data analyses procedures.

3.2. Data Collection Procedures

3.2.1. Subjects and Sampling

To collect my research data, I made recourse to two groups of subjects that is a group of learners following the learning programme at the I.L.C. chosen randomly in all the 3 levels divided by the I.LC. The first one is beginning, which is composed by lower and upper levels; the second is intermediate, which is also made of lower and upper levels; and advanced, made of lower and upper levels as well.

As far as learners are concerned, I took randomly half of the class at each level. In fact, learners were requested to write their names on small sheets of paper. Those sheets of paper were mixed. Thereafter, depending on the total number of the class, names corresponding to the half of the class were randomly selected. This resulted

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in 48 subjects, respectively 9, 7, 8, 9, 7, 8, in lower beginning, upper beginning, lower intermediate, upper intermediate, lower advanced, and upper advanced.

As far as teachers are concerned, 6 teachers of the classes investigated were chosen. Thus, the total sample consists of 48 learners and 6 teachers. To collect the data, classroom observations were made and a questionnaire for both selected learners and teachers were designed.

3.2.2. Classroom Observations

Before administering questionnaires to learners and teachers, I made classroom observations in all the levels of the I.L.C. These classroom observations were motivated by the fact that they give information by a direct contact with the learners and the teachers. By these classroom observations, I saw what happens myself.

The classroom observations helped me to assess the teaching method, used by the teachers among other things. Let me note that the things I intended to observe were also subject of both learners' and teachers' questionnaires.

3.2.3. Questionnaires for the I.L.C. Learners

It is true that classroom observations cannot reveal everything for me to be able to answer the research questions which are mainly related to the learning difficulties faced by foreign learners of English as well as their potential causes. I found out that classroom observations should be completed by questionnaires that were delivered physically so as:

a) to minimise the risk of loss of the questionnaires;
b) to get the required answers in time; and
c) to help in some clarification of ambiguous items or difficult questions for some subjects.

The learners' questionnaire was directed to them so as to get from them the kinds of problems they face. Indeed, being the ones who encounter these problems, they are in a good position to identify them. They are learners and they know best the problems they are faced with. The questionnaire which comprises 9 questions was distributed to the 48 learners of the I.L.C.

3.2.4. Questionnaire for the I. L.C. Teachers

The teachers' questionnaire does not differ much from the learners' questionnaire since a great number of the questions are almost alike. The teachers were invited to express what they actually do or think about the difficulties met by the learners and what their suggestions are so as to solve these problems. The questionnaire was also an attempt to get their suggestions as to how to improve English language learning in their centre.

Unlike the learners' questionnaire however, the teachers' questionnaire comprises 10 questions.

3.3. Rationale of the Questions

With regard to the questionnaires, I have already stated that the learners' questionnaire and the teachers' do not differ much and therefore questions from both questionnaires that aim at finding about the same thing were taken together to show their raison- d'être. The questionnaires are in a statement form and subjects are given options to tick.

The statements, 'I communicate effectively in English' and 'My learners communicate effectively in English', sought to know how learners and teachers appreciate the learners' oral fluency in English. The teachers are well placed to tell it.

The statements 'The environment where I live is not appropriate for practising my English', and 'My learners get appropriate environment for English practice'; 'The time given to me in class for practising English is not enough', and 'I give my learners sufficient time to practise English' and 'I speak English outside the class', sought to know from both learners and teachers if learners get enough opportunities to practise English since practising is the main tool to success in a foreign language learning.

The statements 'I use group-work and pair-work while teaching', 'I favour communicative activity –based methods while teaching', 'The communicative activity-based methods are favoured while teaching me', 'I evaluate my learners at the end of each lesson', 'I am evaluated at the end of each lesson', sought to show the methods that are used. With the ninth question from teachers' questionnaire, 'what is your main teaching method'? I have the same objectives of knowing the used methods.

The statements 'There are some learners who feel ridiculous when they make mistakes', and 'Age accounts for this?', are used to check age' contribution in the achievement of proficiency in English.

Through the last questions from both questionnaires, I sought from my informants their propositions and suggestions as to how to improve the situation.

Then, answers to these questions helped me to confirm or refuse that age, inappropriate linguistic environment, and inadequate teaching methods are the main difficulties that adult learners of English at the I.L.C are faced with.

3.4. Data Analysis Procedures

The analysis was based on the data got from the three kinds of data collection procedures referred to in the previous section, namely, the classroom observation, the learners' questionnaire, and the teachers' questionnaire.

With regard to questionnaires, the frequency of answers was reported in percentage so as to make their analysis easier. Then, on the basis of how frequent a factor was raised by learners and teachers as being a difficulty, I validated it and listed it among the difficulties encountered; referring to the observations I made, it could be strengthened or not. In addition, this helped me conclude and make useful recommendations to decision making bodies as well as to the teachers themselves.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter deals with findings gathered during the data collection stage. Its main purpose is to find answers to the research questions already raised in the first chapter of this study and to see the extent to which the research questions which this study sought to investigate has been confirmed or not. I recall that this work aims at investigating the major difficulties encountered in learning English in centres, and thereby identifying factors that hinder achievement of English language proficiency in centres.

Achieving this aim would be answering the research question as raised earlier. Before relating the data collected to the research question through the analysis, the data were first presented. The data from classroom observations were presented first; then followed the data from learners' answers to the questionnaire, which were followed by teachers' answers to the questionnaire, both of which presented in tables. Thereafter, they were analysed and interpreted in relation to the research question of this work.

4.2. Data Presentation

4.2.1. Data from Classroom Observations

For the sake of certainty, I decided to visit some classes of the I.L.C. in order to get an idea about the way classes are conducted. I devoted enough time to this, attending classes while sitting among learners. Therefore, the visits that I made at

the I.L.C. were of great help since they allowed me to get information about the methods that are used by the teachers while teaching and to see the areas that present weaknesses.

Indeed, with regard to the way classes are conducted, I found it a bit satisfactory because the course itself bears the communicative aspect.

However, though the textbook is based on communicative activities, learners are taught more vocabulary than anything else and it is worse to see that they speak less than the teacher does in some cases. This is so, probably because the learners often arrive with a delay and the teacher rushes in order to finish what he has prepared and then students are not given enough time to practise.

During my classroom observations, I found the following with regard to teaching nethods:

- Giving cues to learners and asking them to utter the required sentence loudly;
- Offering a model of pronunciation and asking learners to repeat ;
- Showing objects and asking learners to name them;
- Showing images and asking learners to name them; and
- Proposing dialogues to act out.

4. 2.2. Data from Learners' Questionnaire

As described earlier, learners' answers to the questionnaire are presented in tables. This is preceded by a table showing the questionnaires that were returned to me.

Table 1: Number of Learners' Responses Collected

Level		Number of copies distributed	Number of copies collected
Beginning	Lower beginning	9	7
	Upper beginning	7	7
Intermediate	Lower intermediate	8	8
	Upper intermediate	9	9
Advanced	Lower advanced	8	8
	Upper advanced	8	8
Total		48	46

Reading this table, we find that the total number of respondents is 48, but the number of copies that were returned to me is 46. This is because two of the learners did not answer~~ed~~ the questionnaire. One of the learners of the Lower Beginning level was not able to answer; she did not even understand the questionnaire. I was about to explain and she told me" Nta nakimwe ndamenya Madame". The other had forgotten his pair of glasses and could not see without them.

In the table below that presents the learners answers, the first column presents questions; the second column presents suggested answers; the third column

presents the number of respondents; while the last column reports the frequency of each suggested answer in percentages.

Table 2: Learners' Answers to the Questionnaire

Questions	Answers	Number of respondents	Percentage %
1. I communicate effectively in English	Strongly agree	0	0
	Agree	31	67
	Disagree	13	28
	Strongly disagree	2	4
	No answer/Neutral	0	0
2.The environment where I live is not appropriate for practising my English	Strongly agree	29	63
	Agree	11	24
	Disagree	4	9
	Strongly disagree	2	4
	No answer/Neutral	0	0
3. The time given to me in class for practising English is not enough	Strongly agree	0	0
	Agree	9	20
	Disagree	33	72
	Strongly disagree	4	9
	No answer/Neutral	0	0
4. I am afraid of making mistakes and then I don't practise my English	Strongly agree	9	20
	Agree	7	15
	Disagree	26	57
	Strongly disagree	4	9
	No answer/Neutral	0	0
5. I speak English outside the class	Strongly agree	0	0
	Agree	8	17
	Disagree	34	74
	Strongly disagree	4	9
	No answer/Neutral	0	0
6. The communicative activity-based methods are favoured while teaching me	Strongly agree	2	4
	Agree	30	65
	Disagree	4	9
	Strongly disagree	2	4
	No answer/Neutral	8	17

7. The methods used are learner-centred	Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree No answer/Neutral	6 24 16 0 0	13 52 35 0 0
8. I am evaluated at the end of each lesson	Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree No answer/Neutral	0 0 12 30 4	0 0 26 65 9
9. What can you suggest for better language learning in centres?			

From the above table, it can be noticed that the answers of the ninth question are not reported; it is an open question and the respondents' views and comments are presented below in a form of a brief inventory of difficulties affecting language proficiency in language centre. They are classified according to their order of importance as raised by the learners and it is what they suggest as solution.

1. Adequate linguistic environment for English practice;
2. Up-to-date teaching materials ; (computers, new books, internet) ;
3. Better co-operation between the teaching staff and the learners in order to collect learners' suggestions.

4.2.3. Data from Teachers' Questionnaire

Questions	Answers	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
1. My learners effectively communicate in English	Strongly Agree	0	0
	Agree	5	83
	Disagree	1	16
	Strongly disagree	0	0
	No Answer/neutral	0	0
2. My learners get appropriate environment for English practice.	Strongly Agree	0	0
	Agree	0	0
	Disagree	0	0
	Strongly disagree	2	33
	No Answer/neutral	4	67
3. I use the group-work and pair-work while teaching	Strongly Agree	5	83
	Agree	1	16
	Disagree	0	0
	Strongly disagree	0	0
	No Answer/neutral	0	0
4. There are some learners who feel ridiculous when they make mistakes.	Strongly Agree	0	0
	Agree	4	67
	Disagree	1	16
	Strongly disagree	1	16
	No Answer/neutral	0	0

5.Age accounts for this	Strongly Agree	1	17
	Agree	2	33
	Disagree	2	33
	Strongly disagree	1	17
	No Answer/neutral	0	0
6. I favour communicative activity-based methods	Strongly Agree	5	83
	Agree	1	16
	Disagree	0	0
	Strongly disagree	0	0
	No Answer/neutral	0	0
7. I evaluate my learners at the end of each lesson.	Strongly Agree	0	0
	Agree	1	16
	Disagree	1	16
	Strongly disagree	4	67
	No Answer/neutral	0	0
8.I give my learners sufficient time to practise English in class	Strongly Agree	6	100
	Agree	0	0
	Disagree	0	0
	Strongly disagree	0	0
	No Answer/neutral	0	0
ⁱ. What is your main ɛaching method?			
ɔ. What can you suggest ɔr better language arning in language ntre?			

For the ninth question 'What is your main teaching methods?', the teachers' answers to the questionnaire are not reported, it is an open question. On this question, 4 out of 6 teachers responded that they use communicative methods 'pair work and group work activities and class discussion'.

With regard to the tenth question, 'What can you suggest for better language learning in centres?', the teachers' responses are not reported in percentage, it is an open question as well. The suggested answers are presented below:

For them, the lack of environment for practice should be analysed carefully and alternative solutions proposed (for example training in an English speaking country, modern teaching materials should be provided and co-operation between the staff and the learners should be encouraged).

4.3. Difficulties Encountered by Adult Learners of English at I.L.C.

4.3.1. Inappropriate Linguistic Environment

Among the factors hindering language proficiency as they have been evoked by the I.L.C. learners and teachers, the lack of environment for practice has been proven to be the major one. This is well illustrated through learners and teachers' answers to the questionnaires.

To start with, the second statement from learners' questionnaire 'the environment where I live is not appropriate for practising my English', 63% of respondents strongly agreed and 24% agreed, tells it all.

This is to say that learners find that at 87%, the linguistic environment does not allow them to practise English. This reflects the reality that learners do not find an appropriate environment for practising their English outside the class. Even during break times, my observation was that they use their mother tongue.

This was also the case inside the class once the teacher was out of the classroom. Indeed, learners would shift to Kirundi, their mother tongue. Needless to say that, from the linguistic environment in general, Burundians use Kirundi so often.

This statement resembles the second one from the teacher's questionnaire; 2 teachers strongly disagreed and four were neutral. This shows that 33% of the teachers believe that the linguistic environment does not allow the learners to practise English.

Regarding the fifth question from learners' questionnaire 'I speak English outside the class;' 74 % of respondents put ticks on 'disagree' while 9% ticked strongly disagree. This shows that outside the class, many (83%) do not get opportunities to speak English. It is the truth that the majority of learners do not practise English outside the class, which comes to strengthen the idea that the linguistic environment in Burundi is inadequate for practising English.

In addition, the fact that learners disagreed (72% and 9%°, respectively 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree') with the third statement saying that the time given to them in class for practising English is not enough, is a proof that the formal linguistic environment is good; and then, we can blame the informal linguistic environment. This is backed by the teachers' answers to statement three. Indeed, 83% of teachers

strongly agreed and 16% agreed that they use group-work and pair-work while teaching.

The learners' responses to the ninth question that they need environment where only English is spoken, is a further argument in favour of the above.

In brief, it is unfortunate to see that the linguistic environment of Burundi does not favour practising English inspite of its importance. This is supported by Krashen (1988:40) who states that,

> *Several studies suggest that adults can, not only increase their second language proficiency in informal environments, but may do as well as or better than learners who have spent a comparable amount of time in formal situations.*

Krashen's view above brings on additional support to the linguistic environment as a factor greatly influencing proficiency in language. Therefore, inappropriate linguistic environment hinder the I.T.C. adult learners' proficiency in English.

4.3.2. Age Hinders English Proficiency

Another factor detected during classroom observations and evoked by some of the learners and the teachers is learning a foreign language at an adult age. There are some characteristics of adults which hinder the achievement of language proficiency.

his is backed by answers from the fourth statement on the teachers' questionnaire. he statement is 'There are some learners who feel ridiculous when they make istakes', and 67 % of the teachers put the ticks next to 'Agree'. But as far as the easons are concerned, the responses to the fifth statement 'Age accounts for this' nows that, 2 teachers out of 6 put ticks next to 'disagree', 2 next to 'agree',1 next to trongly agree', and another to 'strongly disagree'. Then 50% of teachers find that ge account, for this, whereas the other 50% does not think so.

After looking into this issue, I can not totally accept that age does not account for eing afraid of making mistakes. Even though teachers' responses to the uestionnaire do not show so many things, the classroom observations showed me nat while in class, young learners are the most active and are the ones who spond when the teacher asks a question.

earners who are older in age remain silent; they only reacted when the teacher ed them to answer. They never raised their hands. One can imagine that the tivation behind this is that they are afraid of making mistakes in front of young ple. Most likely, they are afraid of being laughed at and then losing their self ıtity and in this case, they miss the only chance at hand for practising.

answers to the fourth question on the learners' questionnaire also bring ments that age constitutes a hindrance to English proficiency of adult learners I.L.C. 20% of the respondents who strongly agreed and 15% who agreed are fifty years old. Within this respect, Wilkins (1978:187) agrees states that,

the other thing is that inhibition is a very severe handicap to language learning. The primary age child usually lacks all self-consciousness of older learner and is altogether more prepared to submit to the norms of a new language and to perform in it without feeling a risk of making a fool of him.

With reference to the above arguments, I can assert that an early start in foreign language learning is of great help, thereby confirming age as hindering English proficiency of adult learners at the I.L.C.

4.3.3. Lack of Adequate Teaching Materials

The respondents evoked the lack of modern materials. Teachers said that there are no appropriate books for adult learners. This causes a big handicap to the achievement of language proficiency.

Indeed, to the question that inquired about learners' suggestions for a better language learning in language centres, 82% of the respondents claimed for the equipment of their centres in new books, computers, record players, video cassette players, internet etc. We know from the answers to the ninth and the tenth questions from learners and teachers respectively that modern materials are just rare.

It becomes a great obstacle for teachers to achieve their objectives. Finally, we can say that there is a long way to go in centres in terms of suitable and sufficient materials facilitating the learning of English. Then, I can rightly blame the lack of proficiency of the adult learners at the I.L.C. partly on inadequate teaching materials.

4.3.4. Teaching methods and I.L.C. Learners' Performance

Teaching methods, which are converged on by a number of scholars are very determining as far as increasing learners' motivation towards a language is concerned.. Although my assumption at the beginning of this work was that inadequate teaching methods are among the difficulties encountered by adult learners of English at I.L.C., results show that this is not the case.

Indeed, learners' answers to statement 6 inquiring whether communicative activity-based methods are favoured while teaching them show that 69% of the learners agreed (4% and 65% respectively, ' strongly agreed' and 'agree'). This proves that learners are satisfied with the teaching methods which favour communicative activity. They also agreed that the methods used are learner-centred (52%).

This also finds support in learners' answers to statement 3 with which 72% of the learners' disagreed. 9% strongly disagreed with the statement. In other words, 83% of learners are satisfied with the time that is given to them for practice while in class, which implies that the methods are very relevant.

This is backed by the teachers' position when asked about the methods they use while teaching. They agreed at 100% that group- work and pair-work are used statement 3); this is also the case with statement 6 where teachers agreed at 100% 83% and 16% respectively) 'strongly agree' and 'agree' that they favour ommunicative activity-based methods. The classroom observations that I made vith regard to methods as discussed in section 4.2.1. Constitute a further argument hat teaching methods are relevant.

Then on the basis of the above discussion, I can say that the hypothesis claiming the inadequate teaching methods are among the difficulties encountered by adult learners at the I.L.C. is refuted.

4.3.5. Lack of co- operation from the Staff and the Learners

Co-operation from the teaching staff and the learners is of great importance to collect learners' suggestions. Its absence constitutes a big handicap. Learners do not get opportunities to express themselves about how they see the conduction of classes or to know if they are satisfied with the methods and the course itself. Teachers' answers to the questionnaire reveal that there are learners who still complain because they are not satisfied with the materials that are used to teach them.

They also say that they are disappointed while coming to the learning programme because the content of the course does not match with their expectation. If there were co-operation from the staff and the learners, the content would be elaborated taking into account all the learners' needs. This was given by both teachers and learners when asked about what can be done for better language learning in centres (tenth question).

4.4. Summary.

All along this chapter, I was been concerned with data presentation and analysis of the findings. In fact, as stated earlier, the data was collected mainly using three methods, namely classroom observation, a questionnaire for learners and a

questionnaire for teachers. I remind the reader that the attempt to determine the factors of leaning difficulties faced by learners in centres constitutes the issue my work set up to investigate. Bu before other things, we should agree on the fact that there does not exist only one factor, but a combination of interrelated factors which create such an unpleasant situation.

Indeed, as discussed in the sections above, the lack of appropriate linguistic environment for English practice was fund to be one of the major factors causing difficulties in English learning with regard to the I.L.C. learners. This converged on by both learners and teachers; my observations also confirm this. It can then be concluded that the linguistic environment for learning English in Burundi is not appropriate enough for a better learning.

Learning English is only based on classroom environment that is the learner is only exposed to English during classes. In learning a language, the classroom environment needs to be completed with an informal environment whereby a learner gets opportunities to practise English outside the class by interacting with native speakers even non-native speakers in real social situations.

Apart from the lack of environment for English practice, age was also found to be a factor hindering English learning. In fact, adult learners have some characteristics for example getting afraid of sounding ridiculous once mistaken, which is a hindrance to their learning process.

Another factor widely evoked by both learners and teachers is the lack of adequate teaching materials. This is also another handicap for better English learning. All

respondents to the teachers' questionnaire suggested the equipment of the centre in new books, internet, computers, etc.

However, teaching methods though assumed as constituting one of the difficulties should not be included. Indeed, both teachers and learners converge on the factor that the methods used are good, which I myself witnessed through classroom observations.

Moreover, the results from teachers' questionnaire revealed lack of co-operation between the staff and the learners which could help to know every learner's need so as to take them into account while elaborating teaching programmes.

Thus, the attempt to determine factors of learning difficulties faced by learners of the I.L.C. find an answer in the above; and I can confirm that the aim of this work has been achieved. The hypothesis claiming that inappropriate linguistic environment; age; and inadequate teaching methods; is confirmed except the latter aspect.

In addition, lack of adequate teaching materials and lack of co-operation between the learners and the I.L.C. staff are found to be ones of the difficulties as raised by both learners and teachers.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Conclusion

All along this study, my goal was to point out difficulties encountered by adult foreign learners at the International Language Centre.

To reach this goal, the study was structured into five chapters. The first chapter describes the problems faced in teaching adult learners in English Language Centres and the motivation and aims behind conducting this study.

The second chapter describes and evaluates the literature available in this area of research. Though it is impossible to go through all of it, at least the major findings by scholars in the area are presented.

The third chapter presents and describes the techniques used to gather and to analyse the data. The classroom observations, a questionnaire for learners and a questionnaire for teachers were distributed to selected learners and teachers for data collection. Their answers were quantified and interpreted in relation to the hypothesis and the results were presented in the fourth chapter.

Indeed, the latter consists of data presentation, analysis, and interpretation in relation to what the study aims at. I was satisfied to find out that my research hypothesis has got suitable answers. To begin with, the lack of adequate linguistic environment for English practice, age, the lack of adequate teaching material, and the absence of co-operation between the staff and the learners as evoked by both categories of respondents, constitute a barrier to the learners' English performance.

However, the teaching methods were found to be relevant, which refutes the aspect of the hypothesis including them among the major difficulties that learners of English at the I.L.C. are faced with.

This was found thanks to the learners and teachers who participated in answering the questionnaires; the classroom observations that I made also contributed a lot.

The results of this study illustrate for me an achievement of the set aim and I am satisfied about it; however, it is regrettable to see that the learners' proficiency in this language that they wish to improve is handicapped. It is on the basis of these findings that recommendations were made; they are presented in the fifth chapter together with a conclusion that consists of a brief review of what the whole work is about.

5.2. Recommendations

In the light of the findings that I came up with in this research, I formulated the following recommendations:

1. English is taught as a foreign language at the I.L.C., learners of this centre learn it for communication. Teachers should favour speech work which helps the learners' ability to use the language by encouraging them to get involved in speaking, so as to find an alternate to the linguistic environment that is not appropriate at all.

2. The Centre organisers should hold meetings with the learners in order to create and to maintain co-operation between them and the learners. It would be an

occasion for I.LC. Managers to elaborate programmes that satisfy best the learners' needs.

3. The Centre organisers should also always keep in mind what language is for and provide their Centre with teaching materials which are not only up-to-date, but which will also help equip learners with everything they need, to use the language effectively.

4. An English Teaching Centre is supposed to possess a wide range of materials among which the teacher chooses some, which can complete the course-book. This is why I.L.C. have to enrich their library. This would be useful to both teachers and learners.

5. The Centre organisers should bear in mind the necessity of learners' trainings in countries which use English as a medium of communication to help them improve it.

6. Learners should create their own favourable linguistic environment; they should develop the habit of speaking English outside the class and at home and/ or workplace.

7. For further research, one should:

- Evaluate the effect of the period one has been exposed to a formal education before coming to the centre.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A: LEARNER'S QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear sir/Madam,

I am a research student at the University of Burundi, and at the moment I am conducting a research on LEARNING DIFFICULTIES BY ADULT LEARNERS.

Enclosed to this is a questionnaire designed for teachers of language centres and my purpose is to gather data that would help me to carry out successfully my research entitled: DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED BY ADULT LEARNERS OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE: Case of the International Language Centre of Bujumbura.

I would be grateful if you answer this questionnaire as faithfully as you can. In addition, I promise you that your answer will be treated solely for the completion of my research.

Yours faithfully

NDIKUMWAMI Florence.

Note: For the questions where you are given options, put a tick (x) next the right options.

For open questions give brief and precise answers.

1. I communicate effectively in English

   □ strongly agree
   □ Agree
   □ Disagree
   □ strongly disagree
   □ Non answer/ neutral

2. The environment where I live is not appropriate for practicing my English

   □ strongly agree
   □ Agree
   □ Disagree
   □ strongly disagree
   □ Non answer/ neutral

3. The time given to me in class for practising English is not enough

   □ strongly agree
   □ Agree
   □ Disagree
   □ strongly disagree
   □ Non answer/ neutral

4. I am afraid of making mistakes and then I don't practice my English

   □ strongly agree
   □ Agree
   □ Disagree
   □ strongly disagree
   □ Non answer/ neutral

5. I speak English outside the class

   □ strongly agree

□ Agree
□ Disagree
□ strongly disagree
□ Non answer/ neutral

6. The communicative activity-based methods are favoured while teaching me

□ strongly agree
□ Agree
□ Disagree
□ strongly disagree
□ Non answer/ neutral

7. The methods used are learner centred

□ strongly agree
□ Agree
□ Disagree
□ strongly disagree
□ Non answer/ neutral

8. I am evaluated at the end of each lesson

□ strongly agree
□ Agree
□ Disagree
□ strongly disagree
□ Non answer/ neutral

9. What can you suggest for a better language learning in language centres.

APPENDIX B: TEACHER'S QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear sir/Madam,

I am a research student at the University of Burundi, and at the moment I am conducting a research on LEARNING DIFFICULTIES BY ADULT LEARNERS.

Enclosed to this is a questionnaire designed for teachers of language centres and my purpose is to gather data that would help me to carry out successfully my research entitled: DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED BY ADULT LEARNERS OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE: Case of the International Language Centre of Bujumbura.

I would be grateful if you answer this questionnaire as faithfully as you can. In addition, I promise you that your answer will be treated solely for the completion of my research.

Yours faithfully

NDIKUMWAMI Florence.

Note: For the questions where you are given options, put a tick next the right options.

For open questions give brief and precise answers.

1. My learners effectively communicate in English

□ strongly agree
□ Agree
□ Disagree
□ strongly disagree
□ Non answer/ neutral

2. My learners get appropriate environment for English practice

□ strongly agree
□ Agree
□ Disagree
□ strongly disagree
□ Non answer/ neutral

3. I use the group-work and pair- work while teaching

□ strongly agree
□ Agree
□ Disagree
□ strongly disagree
□ Non answer/ neutral

4. There are some learners who feel ridiculous when they make mistakes

□ strongly agree
□ Agree
□ Disagree
□ strongly disagree
□ Non answer/ neutral

5. Age accounts for this

□ strongly agree
□ Agree
□ Disagree
□ strongly disagree
□ Non answer/ neutral

6. I favour communicative activity-based methods

□ strongly agree
□ Agree
□ Disagree
□ strongly disagree
□ Non answer/ neutral

7. I evaluate my learners at the end of each lesson

□ strongly agree
□ Agree
□ Disagree
□ strongly disagree
□ Non answer/ neutral

8. I give my learners sufficient time to practice English in class

□ strongly agree
□ Agree
□ Disagree
□ strongly disagree
□ Non answer/ neutral

9. What is your main teaching method?

10. What can you suggest for better language learning in language centres?