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Improving the dialogue technique to teach oral expression at the junior level of Burundi secondary schools

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UNIVERSITY OF BURUNDI

INSTITUTE FOR APPLIED PEDAGOGY

ENGLISH-KIRUNDI DEPARTMENT

IMPROVING THE DIALOGUE TECHNIQUE TO TEACH ORAL EXPRESSION AT THE JUNIOR LEVEL OF BURUNDI SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

By

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of the Degree **"Licencié en Pédagogie Appliquée, Agrégé de l'Enseignement Secondaire en Anglais "**

Bujumbura, March 2008

DEDICATION

To the Almighty God,
To you, dearest mother, may this work be
your pride and consolation;
to you, dear brothers and sisters;
to you, relatives and true friends;

I warmly dedicate these few pages.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work is a realization of many people's contribution to whom I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude. It is unfortunate, however, that we cannot list them all here, but some of them deserve a particular attention.

First and foremost, I am especially indebted to Mrs Bernadette Bizimana, Lecturer at the University of Burundi, in the Institute for Applied Pedagogy (I.A.P) in English and Kirundi Department who kindly accepted to supervise this work.

I also express my thanks to all the teachers in the English and Kirundi Department for the fruitful, moral, intellectual training and all the profitable time I spent with them in the English-Kirundi Department.

I would like to express my gratitude to the English teachers and pupils of the junior level in Burundi for their willingness in answering the questionnaires, and especially to the teachers who allowed me to attend their lessons for classroom observations.

All my thanks are also due to all teachers who contributed, in a way or another, to my education, with special regard to all teachers who taught me at the primary school.

Last but not least, I owe more than I can express to a number of friends and relatives whose moral and material support greatly contributed to the achievement of this work.

ABSTRACT

Communication is not a matter of delivering speech only. Rather, it requires other different elements for the message to be fully transmitted. Before one communicates a message, he must have an idea in mind. From the moment he has that idea, he needs to find away to transmit it to his interlocutor.

The same is true when learners are acting out a dialogue. The people who are role-playing a dialogue, must understand the vocabulary of the language they are using in order to communicate successfully. That is why understanding the formal vocabulary of the language is very important in conversation.

The purpose of this work is to improve the dialogue technique used by English teachers while teaching at the junior level. In this study, non-linguistic elements have been focused on to improve oral expression at the junior level.

To carry out our research, classroom observation was used on the one hand. This aimed at getting first-hand and reliable information, as teachers and learners could not tell us all about themselves. On the other hand, two questionnaires were addressed to both teachers and learners of the junior level.

By the end of our research, we found out that more non-linguistic elements used in acting out dialogues at the junior level are negative ones. In other words, the number of pupils who used non-linguistic elements while acting out dialogues was smaller. This allowed us to say that certain junior level teachers do not teach dialogues appropriately because they ignore the use of non-linguistic elements.

All in all, it is suggested that teachers, by being aware of non-linguistic elements, and by explaining the vocabulary items contained in the dialogue-text, may improve the teaching of dialogues at the junior level.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

DEDICATION..... i

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS..... ii

ABSTRACT..... iii

TABLE OF CONTENTS iv

CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION..... 1

I.1. Introduction 1

I.2. Background Information..... 3

I.3. Statement of the Problem..... 7

I.4. Purpose of the Study..... 10

I.5. Research Hypotheses..... 10

I.6. Research Questions..... 11

I.7. Scope and Delimitation of the Study..... 12

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE..... 14

II.1. Techniques of Teaching Vocabulary..... 14

II.1.1. Realia..... 15

II.1.2. Pictures..... 15

II.1.3. Mime, Actions and Gestures..... 15

II.1.4. Contrast..... 16

II.1.5. Enumeration..... 16

II.1.6. Explanation..... 16

II.1.7. Translation..... 17

II.2. Principles of Vocabulary Learning and Teaching..... 17

II.2.1. Quantity..... 17

II.2.2. Need..... 18

II.2.3. Meaningful presentation..... 18

II.3. The Use of Non-Linguistic Elements or Cues..... 19
II.3.1. Eye-Contact..... 19
II.3.2. Gestures and Facial Expressions..... 20
II.4. Defining Non-Verbal Immediacy Behaviours..... 21
II.4.1. Immediacy Behaviours Are Approach Behaviours..... 21
II.4.2. Immediacy Behaviours Signal Availability to Communicate..... 21
II.4.3. Immediacy Behaviours Increase Sensory Stimulation..... 21
II.4.4. Immediacy Behaviours Communicate Interpersonal Closeness and Warmth..... 22
II.5. Non-Verbal Immediacy Behaviours..... 22
II.5.1. Proxemics..... 22
II.5.2. Vocalics..... 23
II.5.3. Kinesics..... 23
II.5.4. Oculesics..... 24
II.5.5. Chronemics..... 25
II.6. Approaches to Language Teaching..... 25
II.6.1. The Audiolingual Method..... 27
II.6.2. The Communicative Language Teaching..... 31
II.7. Techniques Used to Teach Dialogues..... 37
II.7.1. Making the Form Available..... 37
II.7.2. Imitation..... 38
II.7.3. Props..... 38
II.7.4. Individual Recitation Before Choral Recitation..... 39
II.7.5. Both Individual and Group Recitation..... 39
II.7.6. Putting the Meaning Across..... 39
II.7.7. Practising recall..... 40
II.7.8. Cultural Notes..... 41

CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY..... 42
III.1. Data Collection Procedure..... 42
III.1.1. Subjects..... 42
III.1.2. Questionnaire..... 44
III.2. Data Analysis Procedure..... 45

CHAPTER IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS..... 48
IV.0. Introduction..... 48
IV.1. Presenting and Analysing the Data..... 48
IV.1.1. Analysis of Pupils' Answers..... 48
IV.1.2. Analysis of Teachers' Answers..... 57
IV.1.3. Analysis of Data from Classroom Observation..... 70
IV.1.3.1. The Pupils..... 70
IV.1.3.2. The Teachers..... 71
IV.2. Findings..... 72
IV.2.0. Introduction..... 72
IV.2.1. Teachers' incompetence..... 73
IV.2.2. Neglecting Vocabulary Items..... 73
IV.2.3. Pupils' Incapacity to Express Themselves..... 74

CHAPTER V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS..... 75
V.1. Conclusion..... 75
V.2. Recommendations..... 77
V.2.1. Teachers of English at the Junior Level..... 77
V.2.2. The Curriculum Designers (BEPES)..... 78
V.2.3. The Government..... 79
V.2.4. The Ministry of Education..... 79

BIBLIOGRAPHY 80

APPENDICES 82

1. Letter and Questionnaire to Pupils of the Junior Level 83
2. Letter and Questionnaire to Teachers of the Junior Level 86

CHAPTER I. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

I.1. Introduction

Nowadays, English has become a very important language in the world. In countries where it is used as a foreign language, people are very interested in learning it because they use it in many domains such as business, education, politics, medicine, science, etc. Since English is widely used, there is a great need to teach it successfully.

In English as in other languages, we have four communicative skills namely speaking, writing, reading and listening. All the four skills are equally important. They are used in everyday communication to allow people to exchange ideas and thoughts.

Nevertheless, every language all over the world is first of all spoken before being written or read. That is why I chose to put the emphasis on the speaking skill because it is the first stage of communication. In the act of communication, speaking cannot be separated from listening since they are interrelated. In fact, communication requires a minimum of two people, a speaker and a listener. One cannot exist in the absence of the other.

In Burundi today, English has no vital role to play in communication. It is not frequent to hear people speaking it because very few people studied it in school. And even those who studied it, have very few opportunities of using it. Moreover, the linguistic environment of Burundi does not permit them to use English freely. When some Burundians meet another Burundian speaking English, they consider him boastful; and because of that, the person in question is discouraged and gives up speaking English.

Generally, people learn English in order to communicate with other English speakers within or outside for job opportunities since they can be radio-workers or translators and interpreters. Teachers of English need to motivate their learners at an early stage of learning English so that they could be interested in learning it, successfully. It is up to the teacher then to see what can motivate his learners and how he can interest them by making his lessons not boring. At this point, Donn Byrne (1976:41) says: "The task of a teacher is to create the best conditions for learning. In a sense then, a teacher is a means to an end: an instrument to see that learning takes place."

In Burundi, spoken English is exclusively limited to class. Outside the classroom, we cannot hear a person speaking English except in very rare occasions where we can meet English speakers in parties like churches, between teachers of English, when some people telephone or in other meetings which can gather many people.

Normally, learners of English who wish to develop their communicative abilities, need to be aided by teachers of English in a very suitable way so that they can hold real conversations in English, express their ideas without any problem when they get the chance of going abroad either to follow their studies or for other purposes.

However, we all know that the act of communication is not as easy as we think. One can have a message in his mind but being able to transmit it correctly may sometimes be difficult. It is important to mention that whenever one transmits a message, it does not always get across, i.e, communication can sometimes fail.

I.2. Background Information

In our country, English is taught as a foreign language (E.F.L). It is introduced in 8th for the first time in secondary school, in public and private. Then, it is intensively taught at the university level in some faculties, i.e the Institute for Applied Pedagogy (I.A.P) and the Department of English and Literature.

Apart from secondary schools and, to a lower extent, other faculties and institutes, there are some local centres which teach English to people who wish to attend evening classes. Among those centres, we can mention for example the English Language Centre (E.L.C).

It is also worth noting that the majority of English teachers are not well-qualified. Many of them have only the intermediate level. Others did not finish their secondary schools; which means that, they themselves have very little knowledge in English; and as we know, a teacher can only give what he possesses.

Since well qualified English teachers are very few and cannot satisfy the great need of English teachers in many secondary schools, a good number of secondary schools are compelled to use even teachers who have low levels. Given the fact that these teachers do not have enough knowledge, their teaching is not successful and the pupils whom they teach will grow with very little knowledge because they have not been taught adequately. Consequently, this is going to affect the future generation because these pupils, at a certain time, will be blocked and unable to continue their studies.

It is worth mentioning that the majority of pupils in our country start learning English without knowing a single English word which means that teachers of English will have to deploy much effort to teach those learners. It is up to the teacher then to see which ways he can use to promote learning easily and rapidly.

However, what has been noticed is that, a number of teachers make little effort while teaching. They rely only on the textbooks because they do not want to be tired. At this point, Peter Stevens (1977:31) says:

> The very best teachers rely rather little upon materials prepared by other people, often making their own improvements or replacements and using the prescribed textbooks only as a general guide. The poorest teachers, on the other hand, rely totally on the teaching materials and are only as effective as the textbooks permit to be.

From 6th Form till 4th Form, much emphasis is given to the speaking skill through the use of the textbook materials. At this level, pupils are encouraged to play dialogues and games and other sorts of oral activities. The speaking skill is taught together with the listening skill at this stage because they are two inseparable skills.

From 3rd Form to 1st Form of the secondary school, much emphasis is put on the two remaining skills: writing and reading. At this senior level, pupils are supposed to have acquired some English and are given texts for exploitation. Here, too, English teachers initiate pupils in how to write social letters or friendly letters in order to check what they are able to produce.

After 10th Form, there are many sections in which pupils may be strained and the time allocated to English learning depends on the section. The sections are the following: Arts sections, Economic sections, Teacher Training sections, Technical sections and Scientific sections. Each other section, has got its specific textbook, except the Scientific section and the Teacher Training section, and the Economic sections who use the same kind of textbook, Project Aftermath.

As far as I am concerned, my interest in this study comes from the fact that most teachers put an emphasis on the skills that they enjoy the most, leaving out the other skills. A teacher who enjoys writing will tend to insist on writing. A teacher who enjoys listening will tend to focus on listening putting aside other skills. At this point, my observation was that, very few teachers give emphasis to speaking whereas it is one of he basic skills.

It would be unfair for teachers to teach skills that they like only. In fact, it is also important to deal with all the skills because one skill cannot help to acquire a language. As a matter fact, to be able to communicate efficiently, one needs to speak. In order to develop the speaking skill, the use of "dialogues" was proven to be the most important technique to promote the spoken English.

Unfortunately, it has been noticed that some teachers do not give enough attention to teaching dialogues adequately. That is why we have already noticed certain cases of pupils who even reach the university level without being able to express themselves in English or who express themselves very awkwardly. Normally, after a period of six years, pupils are supposed to be fluent in English; but this is not always the case. It is of course a dreadful situation to see a pupil who arrives at the university, and who is still hesitant in expressing his ideas, when he is asked to perform a given task.

Let us also mention that being able to speak a given language does not only mean to master its vocabulary or its grammatical structures; but also the oral use of the language in as many situations as possible. Teachers should not view the ability to communicate only in terms of knowing grammar, but also in terms of vocabulary.

In the same way, English teachers should try to find out ways to promote the learning of English through the use of a variety of methods and techniques that they consider to be more helpful to their learners. Taking the case of the use of dialogues for instance, English teachers should focus on them and ask pupils to go in front of the class and perform them. In so doing, pupils will be accustomed to talking in front of an audience without shyness, and thereby gain confidence while communicating in English.

Normally, a good teacher is not the one who relies only on the textbook; rather, he is the one who undertakes necessary modifications and additions. At this point, Peter Strevens (1977:31) says the following:

> The very best teachers rely rather little upon materials prepared by other people, often making their own improvements or replacements and using the prescribed textbooks only as a general guide. The poorest teachers, on the other hand, rely totally on the teaching materials and are only as effective as the textbooks permit to be."

In fact, if a teacher realizes that besides the material that the textbook provides, pupils need more information, he needs to supply it. If, on the other hand, the teacher notices that the information that the textbook provides does not suit the pupils' level, he has to adapt it.

Likewise, a good teacher should be up-to-date since technology advances so quickly. At the same time, he should be informed on what is happening elsewhere so that he can go forward with his learners. If for instance, a new technique of teaching is put forward, the teacher should be aware of that in order to make necessary adjustments to adapt the old textbook to the new method.

Given the fact that there is no ideal textbook for every situation, teachers should give basic activities and frequent exercises to their learners in order to practise the language orally during the lesson and outside the English classes; so as to help them be familiar with the language, i.e to acquire some fluency in the language.

I.3. Statement of the Problem

Many techniques are used to teach languages so as to be mastered by the learners. When a pupil goes to study a given language, the first objective that he has in mind is how to communicate in that language, and to be able to communicate with others (local people) or converse with native speakers if he meets them. He also wants to be able to perform different functions in it. But of course, this will depend on the way he has acquired that language.

Unfortunately, the way English skills are taught here in Burundi, especially the oral skill, seems to be inappropriate, both at the junior and senior levels. On one hand, some teachers think that they have taught well when they have said as many words as possible. They enjoy talking, and forget to give to pupils opportunities to talk. On the other hand, teachers neglect the adequacy of teaching the oral skills. That is why we can find a good number of pupils who

arrive at the university after six years of secondary school without being able to express themselves correctly in English.

This is a real problem because pupils will go to teach a language that they themselves do not master; and this is going to affect the following generations which will lead to a continuous vicious cycle of problems.

In this research, my interest will be focussed on one area of the speaking skill (oral expression, which is "improving the dialogue-technique to teach oral expression at the junior level." The reason behind carrying out this study is that I have noticed that a number of English teachers teach dialogues at random; often without real purposes. During this research, I intend to make a contribution on how the dialogue technique should be improved in order to teach oral expression adequately. In so doing, I am going to suggest ways of improving it and then I will formulate recommendations.

Most teachers think that teaching dialogues is just giving the dialogue-text to the pupils for memorization. When pupils happen to memorize it, they are glad that they have taught it successfully and they forget that pupils may sometimes memorize things that they do not even understand.

To memorize the dialogue-text is of course no harm in itself during the performance. But there are other aspects that need to be taken into consideration such as eye-contact, mimes, gestures, facial expressions, body movements, stress, pronunciation, pause-fillers and other extra-linguistic elements to add flavour to the dialogue.

As far as eye-contact is concerned, many pupils do not look at one another when they are acting out a given dialogue. This is due to the fact that some are afraid of the audience, others are simply shy and holding a conversation in front

of others becomes difficult. We all know how embarrassing and difficult it is to talk to someone who never looks at us or who looks at us in the eyes all the time. Eye-contact is very important in acting out a dialogue because when your interlocutor is not looking into your eyes, it seems that he is not interested in what you say or that what you are saying has no value at all.

In fact, eye-contact establishes the attention that your interlocutor pays to what you say. This proves that he is following the discussion so that when it will be the time to react to what you said, he does not miss the opportunity. In this case, the rapport between the speaker and the listener is established. For this reason, teachers of English should get their pupils accustomed to look at one another while acting out a dialogue or when making a conversation so as to make the dialogue effective.

These extra-linguistic elements are very necessary in conveying messages. Unfortunately, they are not used by learners when they are acting out dialogues in class or when they are playing any other games. When one is speaking, he needs to support his arguments by the use of gestures. If you want to clarify your arguments or ideas, you have to make use of these non-linguistic elements mentioned above to prove that you really understand what you are saying.

Teachers of English should insist on their use because they are also part of the language. If you agree or disagree with someone, there are appropriate gestures or body movements that you can use. But, what has been noticed is that, many teachers do not insist on them or they neglect deliberately their use and this becomes a serious handicap for language-learning, especially in the area of teaching dialogues for the improvement of oral expression.

I.4. Purpose of the Study

The objective of this work is to investigate on how dialogues are taught at the junior level, materials used to teach them, the methods and techniques applied by teachers to develop oral expression. During the course of this study, I will suggest ways of improving the dialogue-technique in order to promote the teaching of oral expression at the junior level. Another concern will be to find out the reason behind pupils' incapacity to express themselves outside English classes. We hope to provide the reader of this work, especially the programme designers, with a framework for analysing and improving oral expression activities. For teachers of English who want to promote English, it will be an opportunity to adopt, create, improve and select authentic materials, suitable to dialogue improvement.

I.5. Research Hypotheses

In the domain of teaching, there must be close relationship between learners and teachers. Generally speaking, learners become what their teachers want them to be. Most teachers of English in secondary schools are Burundians. They are non-native speakers of English and they got their degrees either from Institute for Applied Pedagogy or from the Department of English Language and Literature at the University of Burundi. The future teacher of English is supposed to provide sufficient help to his junior level learners once teaching in secondary schools.

However, the current reality is that, although English is taught from an early stage of secondary schools, many learners still have difficulties in communicating, particularly while speaking. This is seen when pupils are asked questions which require to express themselves in English, be it in the classroom

or outside the classroom. This weakness in speaking can also be observed even for pupils who finish their secondary studies.

Taking into account the learners' performance in oral communication, three hypotheses can be formulated:

Firstly, teachers of English teach dialogues at random. This implies that learners are not well prepared to express themselves orally.

Secondly, teachers of English do not exploit vocabulary items contained in the dialogue-texts. As a consequence, pupils memorize things they do not understand.

Thirdly, a number of pupils finish their junior level without being able to express themselves in English because they are not trained to communicate right from the beginning.

I.6. Research Questions

In my research, there are a number of questions that need to be answered:

1. Why do may pupils finish their junior level without being able to express themselves in English? Is it because their teachers are not well qualified and so they teach things they do not master? Or, is it because learners are not interested in learning this language?

2. Why is a number of pupils in most secondary schools unable to act out a given dialogue adequately?

3. Why does a good number of pupils fail at speaking English correctly? Is English difficult to learn in comparison with other languages? Or is it neglected by pupils?

These are questions that I will try to clarify during this research. I will carry out investigations in some secondary schools and communal colleges of junior levels. A number of questions will be addressed to both teachers of English and their learners.

I.7. Scope and Delimitation of the Study

My study is about **"Improving the dialogue-technique to teach oral expression at junior level"**. This study is going to be carried out through an investigation in classes of different secondary schools and communal colleges at the junior level; in order to verify how a given sample of teachers of English are teaching *dialogues* in their classes. The study also intends to carry out an investigation on the techniques and strategies used; in order to make adjustments and improvements in English teaching and learning.

I will also visit some secondary schools and communal colleges in Bururi province. It is a place which lacks well-qualified teachers, especially English teachers because a good number died during this Burundi war; and the government was found in the obligation of hiring even unqualified teachers to cope with this problem.

Although teaching a language involves teaching the four skills, we focused only on speaking especially the use of dialogues because we found it to be the most neglected skill.

During this research, we will try to visit respectively 6th Form, 5th Form and 4th Form classes in Bururi province. The reason of choosing this area is because, first of all we teach there and so it is much easier to visit other neighbouring schools in the area. Secondly, it is an area which does not benefit from advantages that pupils in town enjoy like clubs, films, English training centres and many opportunities to meet people speaking English.

In the course of this research, I intend to find out to what extent the goal of teaching dialogues is achieved by English teachers.

CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The process of language learning and teaching is very complex. Many years ago, people have been trying to set out methods and approaches to make tense languages more learnable. However, as Harmer (1983:29) points out, "No one knows exactly how people learn language although a great deal of research has been done into the subject."

Our study seeks to check how to improve the techniques of teaching dialogues at the junior level, i.e to analyse the suitability of the techniques used by teachers of English in Burundi secondary schools. We focused our study on the techniques and strategies used to teach dialogues in secondary schools.

In this chapter, five items will be dealt with namely: techniques of teaching vocabulary, the use of non-linguistic elements, defining non-verbal immediacy behaviours, approaches to language teaching and methods used to teach dialogues.

II.1. Techniques of Teaching Vocabulary

Teaching vocabulary is not an easy task. Sometimes one may not have a dictionary at his disposal or any informant at hand it may depend on the teacher's immediate needs to use it. At this point, J.Harmer (1983:24) said: "Frequently, the teacher will find it necessary to explain the meaning of the word or short phrases." The teacher's aim here will be to explain the new words as quickly and efficiently as possible and the following aids can help to do this:

II.1.1. Realia

This is the word we use to refer to the use of real objects in the classroom. For example, the words pen, ruler, ball, postcard, etc. can be easily explained by showing the students a pen, a ball or a ruler, etc. This is clearly satisfactory for certain single words, but the use of realia is limited to things that can easily be taken into the classroom.

II.1.2. Pictures

Pictures are clearly indispensable for the language teaching since they can be used in so many ways. By pictures we mean blackboard drawings, wall pictures, charts, flash-cards and any other non-technical visual representation. Pictures can be used to explain the meaning of vocabulary items. The teacher might draw pens, rulers and balls on the blackboard or bring magazine pictures of cars, bicycles, and trains stuck onto cardboard. The teacher might bring in a wall picture showing the meaning of the sentence 'There are three people in the room?'.

II.1.3. Mime, Action and Gestures

It is often impossible to explain the meaning of words and grammar either through the use of realia or pictures. Actions in particular can probably be better explained by mimes. Thus, concepts like running and smoking are easy to explain if the teacher pretends to run or take a drug on an imaginary cigarette. Gesture is also useful for explaining words like 'from', 'to', etc. or indicating that the past is being talked about (the teacher gestures backwards over his shoulder.

II.1.4. Contrast

Sometimes, a visual element (e.g relia, picture, mime, etc.) may not be sufficient to explain. Meaning and contrast can be used. Thus, the meaning of 'full' is better understood in the contrast of 'empty', 'big' in the contrast of 'small', etc. Contrasting it with the past simple. e.g: 'I was having a bath when the telephone rang'.

II.1.5. Enumeration

The word 'vegetable' is a difficult word to explain visually. If, however, the teacher rapidly lists (enumerates) a number of vegetables such as tomatoes, lettuce, cabbage, etc., the meaning will become clear. The same is true for a word like 'clothes'. e.g: shirts, skirts, coats, etc.

II.1.6. Explanation

Explaining the vocabulary items can be extremely difficult just as grammatical explanation can be especially at elementary levels. It will be important if giving such explanations, to make sure that the explanation includes information about when the item can be used. It would be unsatisfactory just to say that 'mate' is a word for 'friend' unless you also point out that it is colloquial informal English and only used in certain contexts. 'Do' means 'to perform', but information would have to be given about what words it is used with (as opposed to 'make').

II.1.7. Translation

Translation is not always good in language learning. Sometimes, it may hinder the students' learning since pupils would be expecting everything to be translated in their mother tongue. At this point, Harmer (1983:34) said: "For many years, translation went out of fashion, and was considered as something of sin. Clearly, if a teacher is always translating, this will impede students' learning since they want to hear and use the target language, not their own. But it seems silly not to translate if by doing so, a lot of time is saved."

If the students do not understand a word, and the teacher cannot think how to explain it, he could quickly translate it; the same is true in principles of a piece of grammar. The big danger, though, is that not all words and phrase can be easily translated from one language to another, and it takes a communicatively efficient speaker of both languages to translate well. Translation, then, seems a useful technique if used sparingly, but should be used with caution. The aids and measures may be very useful for explaining the meaning of a word or a sentence.

In this same second chapter, many writers express themselves on the notion of vocabulary. Wallace (1984:22) for example, gives some principles of vocabulary learning and teaching.

II.2. Principles of Vocabulary Teaching

II.2.1. Quantity

How many new words in a lesson can a learner learn? One estimate puts the number as low as around five to seven new words. Clearly, the actual

number will depend on a number of factors varying from class to class, and learner to learner.

If there are too many new words, the learner may become confused, discouraged and frustrated.

II.2.2. Need

Control of the amount of vocabulary inevitably needs choice as to the specific items to be taught. In most cases, the choice will be made for the teacher by the course-book or syllabus he is using. In any case, one would hope that the choice of vocabulary will relate to the aims of the course and the obligations of individual lessons.

II.2.4. Meaningful Presentation

As well as the form of the word, the learner must have a clear and specific understanding of what it denotes or refers to, that is, its meaning. This requires that the word be presented in such a way that its denotation or reference is perfectly clear and unambiguous.

II.2.5. Presentation in Context

Words very seldom occur in isolation. It is important for the learner to know the usual collocations that the word occurs in. So, from the very beginning, the word must appear in its natural environment as it were, among the words it normally collocates with.

In the same way, Allen (1983:21) expresses his views about some techniques of learning and teaching vocabulary.

When learning vocabulary, it is never enough to learn only words and their meanings. It is true that in some classrooms, sentence construction has been given little attention. It is also true that students will make mistakes if they learn the meanings of many words without learning how to put words together in sentences. Furthermore, through experience with situations in which a language is used by speakers or writers, we learn that many of the meanings of a word do not correspond to the meanings of its so-called equivalent in another language. Since full understanding of a word often requires knowing how native speakers feel about what the word represents, some meanings cannot be found in the dictionary.

In the same light, Allen (1983:22) adds:

> Success in learning often depends on the number of senses which are used in the learning process. When students can touch something, in addition to hearing and seeing the word that names it, there is a stronger chance that the word will be learned. Even if there are practical reasons why each learner cannot touch the object, just seeing it while hearing its name is helpful.

√ II.3. The Use of Non-Linguistic Elements or Cues

III.3.1. Eye-Contact

We all know how difficult it is to talk to someone who never looks at us or someone who looks at us in the eye all the time. Similarly, we know how

important eye-contact is in signalling such message as 'I want to speak to you' or 'I'm addressing this remark to you'. Roger Gower and Steve Walters (1983:23) suggests the following importance in encouraging the students to look at one another:

> Confidence is gained and shyness lost through eye-contact. In addition, a student who has difficulty understanding is more likely to understand if his eyes are on the speaker's face than if they are on the ground. So, when students ask each other questions, or help and correct each other whether in pair work or student to student across the class, they should look at each other. It might be better to move their chairs to make it easier.

II.3.2. Gestures and Facial Expressions

Roger Gower and Steve Walters (1983:25) say the following about gestures and facial expressions:

> Gestures and facial expressions are an integral part of any communication where people listen and speak to each other. They help us get across what we want to say. For example, when we give directions in the street to a stranger, we not only use our voice to give special emphasis to the important points, but we often use our hands to make things clearer as well.

If we are deprived of what the body can express, for example when we talk on the phone, or listen to the radio, we are forced to use our imagination and try to extract all the meaning from the inflections of the voice or words themselves. With direct contact, we often look at the other person's face to

guess what their real feelings or attitudes are. The use of gestures is one way of conveying the meaning of language.

II.4. Defining non-verbal immediacy behaviours

Non-verbal immediacy or intimacy behaviours are non-linguistic actions which send four simultaneous complementary messages.

II.4.1. Immediacy behaviours are approach behaviours

Mehrabian (1971) quoted by Barker (1982:24) said the following:

> Immediacy in behaviour comes across in a number of abbreviated forms of approaches as opposed to avoidance. For example, a wave of the hand is an abbreviated grasp or handshake, and a pat on the back is an abbreviated hug

II.4.2. Immediacy behaviours signal availability for communication

Goffman (1984) quoted by Barker (1982:10) said that these behaviours generally come in sets which signal social accessibility. For example, moving close to someone, facing them and establishing eye-contact, are immediacy behaviours and signal to another person that communication is about to take place.

II.4.3. Immediacy behaviours increase sensory stimulation

Patterson (1961) quoted by Barker (1982:12) reports that physiological and psychological arousal result from immediacy behaviours such as reduced distance, touching or eye-contact. Mehrabian (1971) quoted by Barker (1982:9)

suggests that immediacy behaviour involve an increase in overall sensory stimulation and are typically multichannelled.

II.4.4. Immediacy behaviours communicate interpersonal closeness and warmth

A number of researchers: Anderson (1979), Exline (1959), Winters (1965), Mehrabian (1971) quoted by Barker (1982:15) have noted that immediacy behaviours produce interpersonal closeness and reduce psychological distance in positive relationships.

II.5. Non-verbal immediacy behaviours

Now that the general definition of immediacy has been discussed, our intention will focus on specific non-verbal behaviours that communicate immediacy.

II.5.1. Proxemics

'Proxemics' is the use of interpersonal space and distance. Whenever anyone communicates, their distance and angle from the receiver communicate powerful messages, including varying degrees of warmth or immediacy. At least two proxemic cues are thought to signal immediacy during communication: physical distance and the angle or orientation of communicators.

II.5.2. Vocalics

Vocalic or paralinguistic communication deals with non-verbal elements of the human voice. When people talk, they communicate verbally or linguistically through the way in which the words are spoken. Additionally, various non-verbal vocal utterances (for example uh, huh, mm, etc.) have meaning even though these utterances are not accompanied by any verbal communication.

Generally, communicators who vary pitch, loudness and tempo of their speech, are viewed as more immediate. In an imaginative study, Schever (1979) quoted by Barker (1982:17) used a moog synthesizer to electronically vary pitch, amplitude, duration and speed (tempo) of non-verbal sounds. The results showed that the best emotional and effective cues were the result of changes in pitch and tempo. In a sense of studies, Mehrabian (1971) and Ferris (1967) quoted by Barker (1982:21), it was discovered that interpersonal liking is in large part of function of vocal cues. Andersen and Jensen (1979) quoted Barker (1982:23) found vocal expressiveness to be an important part of communicated immediacy. Voices which are expressive, enthusiastic and varied (particularly in pitch and tempo) seem to convey the most immediacy.

II.5.3. Kinesics

Kinesics is communication that occurs via body movement and most likely the richest source of immediacy cues. Kinesics includes all body movements that have meaning of receivers, including overall body tension, walking, leaning, head position and movements, facial expression and hand gestures. Another kinesic behaviour that communicates immediacy is head nods. Dittemann (1972) quoted by Backer (1982:25) said:

> This research indicated that head nods tended to be used to increase communication or friendliness and tended to be just the opposite of threat or dominance displays.

Head nods are used by effective classroom teachers to communicate immediacy and to provide reinforcement to the students. These nods also provide students with feedback that the teacher is listening to them and understanding their communication.

II.5.4. Oculesics

The study of messages sent by the eyes is called *oculesics*. Eye-contact is an invitation to communicate a powerful immediacy cue. Communicators spend a large percentage of time looking at one another in both interpersonal and teaching contexts.

Numerous researchers have shown eye-contact and gaze to be an important component of immediacy. Argyle (1972) quoted by Barker (1982:27) found that perceptions of intimacy were in part, a function of increased eye-contact. Recently, Andersen and Jenson (1979) quoted by Barker (1982:29) found that more eye-contact is an important part of interpersonal immediacy and teacher immediacy. Eye-contact performs an important monitoring function which communicates to another person that you are taking him into account.. Kendon (1967) quoted by Barker (1982:36) explains that eye-contact is a necessary behaviour in communicating involvement. They maintain that absence of much visual attention is perceived as unwillingness to become involved with another. Similarly, Goffman (1964) quoted by Barker (1982:35) maintains that eye-contact is an important indicator of social accessibility.

II.5.5. Chronemics

Chronemics is the study of time and what it communicates to other persons. Time is viewed as a commodity in America. In our rhetoric, time is spoken of as being wasted, saved, spent, and used much as if it were money, food, or some other valuable resource. Spending time with someone communicates closer psychological distance, more availability and mutuality of communication. In short, spending time with someone is an immediacy behaviour.

Mehrabian (1967) quoted by Barker (1982:38) indicates that an important part of immediacy is use of time. He maintains that communication which is ongoing rather than past or present is more immediate. Similarly, spending a great duration of time with someone communicates more immediacy. Arriving late probably communicates less immediacy as well. Baxter and Ward (1975) quoted by Barker (1982:41) found secretaries considered late arrivers to be incompetent, lacking in composure, and communicating less friendliness and sociability. Likewise, teachers who arrive late or spend little time with students, are increasing psychological distance and decreasing immediacy. A teacher's time is a scarce and valuable commodity for students in this culture.

II.6. Approaches to Language Teaching

Nowadays, the second and foreign language teaching is mostly characterised by a huge proliferation of approaches and methods. To some observers, this constitutes the major strength of language teaching. To others, however, the wide variety of methods is rather confusing than comforting. The former sees in the current changes of methods and/or teaching the commitment to finding more appropriate and effective ways of teaching language.

As a matter of fact, everyone is now free to choose methods and materials according to the students' needs, the teacher's suggestions or the constraints of the school or any education setting. The latter, that is those who meet discomfort and confusion in the existence of varied methods, base their restlessness on the back of a common agreement about what a language is and how it is learned. Therefore, some proposed classroom techniques or practice become unfamiliar and strange, whereas others are described in materials that are hard to locate and difficult to understand. What is more, the practitioner is often embarrassed by the lack of any comprehensive theory of what approaches and methods are.

According to Richards and Rodgers (1986:14-29), "method" is viewed as the cover term for all language teaching, from theory to practice. "Approach" is divided into theories of language and theories of learning. On its parts 'designing' comprises terms such as syllabus design and contents, roles of materials, roles of learners and roles of teacher. 'Procedure' is referred to as specific activities that are actually in the classroom.

In the course of history of language teaching, various methods have been proposed and all reflected the progressive changes in the theories of the nature of language and language learning. Today's controversies reflect contemporary responses to questions that have been raised and each method is an attempt to cover a portion of problems.

Richards and Rodgers (1986:34-38) distinguish various methods such as the grammar-translation method, the oral approach, and situational language teaching, the audio-lingual method, the communicative language teaching, to name but a few. In this section, we discuss the audio-lingual method and the

communicative language teaching as the methodological approach that we intend to propose for a successful language learning and teaching.

II.6.1. The Audiolingual Method

According to Richards and Rodgers (1986:44-61), the entry of the USA into World War II gave a significant effect on language teaching. In order to supply the U.S government with fluent personnel in almost all languages – whose speakers were involved in the war – that is people who could work as interpreters, code-room assistants or translators, all the academic staff proposed the Army Specialized Training Program (A.S.T.P) to fulfil such demands.

Many linguists invested themselves in the new methodology that apparently gave successful results. The main innovation relied in the terms of procedures used and the intensity of teaching, rather than in terms of underlying theory.

However, many linguists and applied linguists were convinced of the value of an oral-based approach to the learning of a foreign language. Finally, by the mid fifties, they came up with the American approach to English as second language which had become audiolingualism.

In it, Charles Fries (1945:47-48) developed and applied the principles of structural linguistics to language teaching and rejected the direct method in which learners are exposed to language, use it and gradually master its grammatical patterns. For Fries and his colleagues, grammar must be the starting point of any language learning and teaching. Systematic attention to pronunciation and intensive oral drilling characterize such teaching.

Quoting Hockett's claim (159:47), Richards and Rodgers (1986:46) point out the importance of the pattern practice as a basic classroom technique:

> It is these basic patterns that constitute the learners' task. They require drill, drill and more drill, and only enough vocabulary to make such drills possible.

The approach was variously known as the oral approach, the aural-oral approach or the structural approach which led to audiolingualism. Richards and Rodgers (1986:47) note:

> It was advocated aural training first, then pronunciation, reading and writing. Language was identified with speech, and speech was approached to structure.

Richards and Rodgers (1986:35-40) repeated that the audiolingual method resulted from the increased attention given to foreign language teaching in USA towards the end of the 1950s because the US government recognized the need for a more intensive effort to teach foreign languages in order to prevent Americans from becoming isolated from scientific advances made in other countries.

While the theory of language in audiolingualism was based on structural linguistics, its theory of learning originated from the behaviourist view. In his verbal behaviour, Skinner (1957:10) proposed a theory that should be applied to foreign language learning:

> We have no reason to assume... that behaviour differs in any fundamental respect from non-verbal behaviour, or that any new principles must be involved to account for it.

Any application of behaviourism to language learning is to identify the organism as the foreign language learner, the behaviour as verbal behaviour, the stimulus and the reinforcement as the extrinsic approval and praise of the teacher and students or the intrinsic self-satisfaction to get language use. Language mastery is seen as an acquisition of appropriate stimulus – response chains.

A number of learning principles came to be known as the psychological foundations of audiolingualism and therefore, they came to shape its methodological practices. Rivers (1964:19-22) distinguishes four practices.

First, foreign language learning is basically viewed as a process of mechanical habit formation. Good habits are acquired through correct responses. Being considered as verbal behaviour, language can then be acquired or learned by inducing the students to repeat after the teacher.

Second, language skills are learned more effectively if 'new' language is presented orally rather than in written form. The aural-oral training is considered as the foundation of the development to other language skills.

Third, analogy is recognized to provide a better foundation for language learning than analysis. Therefore, practices of discrimination and generalization are more frequent. Furthermore, the teaching of grammar is thought to be inductive rather than deductive. That is, it is expressed through a use of drills and patterns. The material used helps the teacher to develop mastery of language in the learner, as Richards and Rodgers (1986:57) observe:

> Instructional materials in the audiolingual method assist the teacher to develop language mastery in the learner. They are primarily teacher oriented. A student text is often not used in

> the elementary phrases, a course where students are primarily listening, repeating and responding.

In short, instructional materials allow the teacher to accomplish fairly his job and students are rarely permitted to use their text-book in order to find dialogues and cues needed for drills and exercises. The teacher is free to use the teacher's guide that normally contains models of lessons to be followed and other classroom activities.

Later on, the audiolingual method was attacked in its theoretical foundations as being unsound both in terms of language theory and learning theory. Furthermore, practitioners found that practical results did not meet students' expectations. As Richards and Rodgers (1986:59) point out:

> Students were often found to be unable to transfer skills acquired through audiolingualism to real communication outside the classroom, and many found experience of studying through audio-lingual procedures to be boring and unsatisfying.

Fourth, Rivers thinks that the meaning of words that a language has for native speakers can be learned only in a linguistic and cultural context but not in isolation. Therefore, any teaching of foreign language involves a knowledge of some aspects of the cultural systems in the target language. Given these foundations for audiolingualism, it is worth mentioning that the foreign language curriculum must have a complete orientation. Prominents writers of this approach advocated a return to speech-based instruction with the primary objective of oral proficiency.

Consequently, the study of grammar or literature can no more be considered as goals of foreign language teaching. Textbooks have to insist on practice in composition of sentences and give less attention to the ways in which those sentences are used for the purposes of communication:

> The assumption is that, once the grammatical system has been learned, the student will know how to put the system to use in producing sentences of his own, without the need for any further instruction. (Byrne,1976:45).

Since audiolingualism depend very much on the use of intensive drills, the starting point is a linguistic syllabus which contains key items of phonology, morphology and syntax of the language. A lexical syllabus of vocabulary is also provided. Grammatical patterns are presented one by one, and the student is asked to finish them before he moves onto the next, the ultimate aim being the establishment of automatic speech habits. As a matter of fact, the teaching focuses on external manifestations of learning rather than on internal processes. Learners are not at all encouraged to use communicatively the language in order to avoid mistakes. Therefore, audiolingualism is a teacher-dominated method in which the teacher's role is central and active.

II.6.2. The communicative language teaching

The communicative language teaching originated in the changes that occurred particularly in the British language teaching tradition. It has been developed as a reaction against grammar-based approaches such as the aural-oral approach (or audiolingualism). As Richards and Rodgers (1986:68) put it while quoting Savignon (1973: 28), this approach aims at a communicative use of the target language, somehow like Montaigne learned Latin through daily conversation : "Without methods, without a book, without grammar or rules,

without a whip and without tears, I had learned a Latin as proper as that of my schoolmaster."

Jeremy Harmer (1983:38), one of the best prominent figures in communicative language teaching, asserts that:

> The communicative approach is an umbrella term to describe methodology, which teaches students how to communicate effectively and which also lays emphasis on the teaching of communicative value and, in some cases, the teaching of language functions.

This approach is considered as the one whose main goals in language teaching are the communicative competence and the development of procedures intended to teaching and the mastery of the four language skills.

According to Richards and Rodgers (1986:71), language is primarily a system used to express meanings. Next, its main function is for interaction and communication, and its structure reflects its functional and communicative uses. Last, the primary units of language are not merely its grammatical and structural features, but categories of functional and communicative meaning as exemplified in discourse.

Likewise, the approach of communicative language teaching draws its theory of learning from three principles:

First, the communicative principle holds that all activities that involve real communication promote learning.

Second, the task principle recognizes that activities in which language is used for carrying out meaningful tasks promote learning.

The third principle is related to meaningfulness. It claims that language that is meaningful to the learner supports the learning process (Richards and Rodgers, 1986:72).

Littlewood (1984:74) considers the acquisition of communicative competence in a language as an example of skill development which takes into account both cognitive and behavioural aspect. According to him, the cognitive aspect implies an internalisation of plans for creating appropriate behaviour whereas the behavioural aspect involves the automation of these plans so that they could be converted into fluent practice in real time.

Harmer (1983:20-21) suggests that syllabus designers in communicative language teaching must take into account three major components such as needs, situation and students. Concerning needs, it is clear that an air traffic controller and a medical student do not use the same materials. Where groups of students are not homogenous, that is, do not have the same needs or the same level, it is not always easy to take decisions about the language and content to teach in class. This can be illustrated by some schools where general English is taught because students have varied interests and occupations. In such situations, the best solution could be to teach the four major linguistic skills and the designers is required not only to produce materials that satisfy the greatest majority of students but also to think about the minority needs within the group.

In addition to needs, the situation in which the teaching takes place is another important factor in communicative language teaching. A sufficiently equipped class with a reasonable number of pupils is expected to achieve more

than a poor one which is under daily noise because of many pupils. Furthermore, the type of classroom and the materials available determine significantly the students' achievement. For instance, privileged classes within modern technology can not be compared with pupils who can hardly afford a textbook.

As far as situation is concerned, let us also say that objectives of the institution and its attitude towards the learning of language, exercise a strong influence on the decisions about what and where emphasis should be in teaching.

Finally, the time allotted to the language class and how classes are sequenced, reveal how far students can be expected to learn successfully the language.

Any communicative language teaching of English must consider the student himself. Although there are many reasons for learning English according to Harmer (1983:72), the most important things to take into account are the students' level and age. Their educational background is very significant while determining an appropriate language content to teach. Also, a preliminary description of the students' needs could be of great help. However interesting these needs could be, we can argue with Littlewood's words that "the development of communicative skills can only take place if learners have motivation and opportunity to express their own identity and to relate with people around them (1981:93).

Very briefly, instructional materials in communicative language teaching are viewed as a means to influence the quality of classroom interaction and

language use. Therefore, their primary objective is to promote a communicative use of language.

Unlike audiolingualism which is teacher-centred, the communicative language teaching is a student-centred method in which the teacher acts simply as a counsellor, needs analyst and group process manager. Breen and Candlin (1980:99) want the teacher to be a facilitator of the communication between students. Therefore, he must motivate enough his students and pay attention to all their problems in order to avoid possible psychological resistance to learning. Varied activities and choice of interesting topics help achieve his role of facilitator and group process manager (Richards and Rodgers (1981:93).

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

Harmer does not agree with Littlewood or Richards and Rodgers. In addition to the previous criteria and behaviours, he suggests that the teacher must be equipped with ability to be both adaptable and flexible (1983:39). Adaptability requires the teacher's ability to choose and adapt his programme on the basis of different groups he is teaching. Here, students' motivational differences are likely to influence the teacher in his choice of materials in the class and his ability to be sensitive to changing needs of the group as the lesson progresses.

In a word, the teacher must be able to adapt and alter his plan if this proves to be necessary.

In the history of language teaching and learning, the major problem has always been to get an elegant model that could be applied. Most of methodolo-

gical approaches have been judged either inappropriate or misleading. Even the communicative language teaching that sounds more effective has been criticized.

Richards and Rodgers (1986:83) affirm that "it is good to recognize that "the adoption of a communicative approach raises important issues for teacher training, material development and testing and evaluation."

Quoting Swam (1985), Kadeghe (1990:3) is not less critical when he asserts that

> there is nothing so creative as good dogma... and yet a dogma remains a dogma and in this respect the "communicative revolution". Communicative approach unfortunately has most of the typical vices of an intellectual revolution, i.e overgeneralizes valid but limited insights until they become virtually meaningless; it makes exaggerated claims for the power and novelty of its doctrines, it is often characterized by serious intellectual confusion...

Apart from its gaps, the communicative approach to language teaching offers elements that account for its use. First of all, it enables to give the students a better and more complete picture than before of how a language is used. The boring and endless mechanical drills disappeared to be replaced by a splendid variety of exciting and engaging practice activities.

We assume that being able to communicate effectively in English entails the acquisition of proficiency in various skills involved in the communication process. This is more important than being able to perform in each of the four linguistic skills separately.

In fact, the ability to use skills effectively in various combinations according to the nature of the interactions seems to be far more interesting. It is also the main goal of language teaching, that is to help learners to reach the point where they can use English in an autonomous fashion for their own activities.

II.7. Techniques used to teach dialogues

According to Robert Lado (1964:21-25), teaching a dialogue involves the following methods:

(1) Making the form of each sentence available as a response.

(2) Putting across the meaning.

(3) Practicing the association of form and meaning so that when the meaning is recalled, the form is also recalled and produced with ease, and when the form is heard, the meaning is instantly remembered. The students do not learn a dialogue by merely learning it in a meaningful situation. The task is a difficult one, and the teacher has to break it down into partial tasks. These partial tasks are taught by "imitation" and with aid of props.

II.7.1. Making the form available

Getting the students to speak the sentence with ease is more difficult than attaching the meaning to the form. Traditionally, too much effort was put on attaching the meaning to a form that the students could not speak. And not enough effort was put on learning to speak the form. Psychological research shows that it is more effective to practice the form until it is familiar and then to attach a familiar meaning to it than to practice attaching the familiar meaning to an unavailable form.

II.7.2. Imitation

The first step is to let the students hear a sentence from the dialogue and to ask them to repeat it as soon as they can. It is usually necessary to let the students hear the sentence several times. This is the mimicry part of mimicry-memorization technique. Say the sentence three times and then motion to the class to repeat after you. If the sentence is long, break it up into phrases and say each phrase two or three times before motioning to the class to repeat.

When the students fail to imitate well the complete phrases because the ability to do so is not within their initial capacity, the teacher should break up the difficult phrases into words, syllables, or individual sounds until the class can imitate successfully. This is, of course, much less than full use of the language. Imitating the form alone is a partial experience. Breaking a sentence into phrases, words, syllables, and individual sounds further, reduces the task so that the attention of the student, which would normally be on the meaning, is on an individual sound, or sequence of sounds. When the students succeed in imitating the parts, combine these into a larger stretch until the class can imitate the entire sentence readily. Imitation of parts of sentences is often not enough to elicit good pronunciation from the class. The teacher can further reduce the task by showing down the model.

II.7.3. Props

When imitation is not enough, try props. The most effective prop is an articulatory hint, not a full description of the sound. The student has already made an attempt, based on his native language habit, and has produced a distortion. The articulatory hint should then be a minimal comment directed at a specific distortion introduced by the student. Since the teacher knows before

hand what the difficult items will be, a facial diagram can be ready at hand to show the proper articulation of these items.

II.7.4. Individual recitation before choral recitation

Begin with group or choral recitation, and when the class has made some successful repetitions, that is, when you cannot detect any gross dissonances in the group responses, move to the individual recitations. Group recitation offers clear advantages at the beginning of a drill. The pupil is less inhibited in group responses; he recites more readily, and everyone has a chance to practice every sentence.

II.7.5. Both individual and group recitation

Like all other class drills, individual and group recitation must be lively in pace and varied in speed, volume, attitude and order for best results. No matter how carefully prepared the dialogue and drill, a slow uninterested pace and tone on the part of the teacher will kill the interest of any class.

A lively pace and an interested tone by the teacher will enliven even poor material. With a small class, you may use a fixed order for individual recitations. You are within conversation distance of all the students, and all can be kept fully attentive to each recitation. Long individual responses, fashioned while the class sits passively, do not constitute an effective way to teach.

II.7.6. Putting the meaning across

In most cases, putting the meaning across is a minor part of teaching a dialogue. Most linguists simply supply a roughly equivalent utterance in the

native language. This is often printed side by side with the dialogue in the target language. The student can read this meaning to himself, and the class is still conducted in the target language. Another way to provide the meaning is to work with a composite picture or a series of pictures. The dialogue or the picture is explained in the native language.

The target language is then learned and associated with the pictures. Since it is desirable that the students associate the target language with the teacher as well as with particular meanings, we favor giving the meaning in writing, not on the same page but in an appendix where it will not be associated sentence by sentence with the target language.

Further, we would not practice the dialogue with the native language as the stimulus, but would use instead a composite picture or series of pictures or a key word or phrase to indicate which dialogue is to be practiced. Context and dramatization can be trusted to supply a good deal of meaning. No harm will result if the student does not grasp every detail of the meaning of the dialogue as long as he can say it with ease and accuracy.

II.7.7. Practising recall

Pictures with numbers to indicate the sequence of sentences in the dialogue or series of pictures tied to the utterance are a powerful aid to recall basic sentences in the dialogue. The human brain seems to have an extraordinary capacity to recall utterances associated with particular objects, persons or drawings.

Once the picture has been labelled, it will elicit the label even if there is only a remote resemblance between the meaning of the utterance and the subject

of the drawing. Ultimately, the dialogue exercises closest to a total experience is a recitation between two students completely from memory.

II.7.8. Cultural notes

It is difficult to present much of a dialogue without getting into matters of cultural context. If these matters are not clarified at the time, the student will assume that they are the same as in his own culture and may, as a result, misunderstand what is said and done. Matters of cultural context can be handled by brief cultural notes in the simplest of terms, preferably in the target language. A more comprehensive treatment of culture requires advanced knowledge of the language.

CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY

The present chapter aims at showing how the study has been conducted. The work under study is entitled "Improving the dialogue – technique to teach oral expression at the junior level". In this study, the researcher is interested in finding out how dialogues are taught at different schools; and also how pupils of junior levels perform these dialogues.

Questionnaires and classroom observation are the methods that have been used to carry out the research because they fit it correctly. In the following lines, we present the choice of subjects, the description of the questionnaires and the data analysis procedures. We will try to point out the deficiencies observed about the way dialogues are acted out by pupils from different schools and then to provide some suggestions for improvement.

III.1. Data Collection Procedures

III.1.1. Subjects

The selection of respondents for the questions has been done among teachers of English at junior level and also learners of English at the same level. Our target population are teachers of English at junior level and pupils of those classes. The following schools have been visited during our research: Lycée Rutovu, Communal Lycée of Gitobo, Communal College of Bigomogomo, Communal College of Mutangaro, Communal College of Kajondi, Communal College of Kivoga, Lycée of Matana, Lycée of Rubanga, Communal College of Kiryama and Communal College of Gitandu. Teachers of the schools mentioned above answered the questionnaire.

Junior level pupils were visited in their classrooms during the second term of the school year 2006-2007. It was possible to get complete information from almost all lycées and communal colleges.

Before the formal questionnaire, I carried out a pilot study in February and in March 2007. First, I presented the questionnaire for teachers to some English teachers of Bururi province in order to get their opinions about how dialogues are taught at the junior level and how they are acted out by their pupils. The conclusions led me to think that a larger study was worth being conducted.

Then, a group of twenty-five pupils from 6th Form from Rutovu commune got the questionnaire. The aim was to check whether the questions fit the pupils' level and to get some information about the way they act out the dialogues. The choice of these pupils was done at random but almost all schools from Rutovu got representatives.

The questionnaires were distributed to both English teachers teaching at the junior level and pupils studying at the same level from ten schools. In each school, twenty-five pupils answered the questionnaire. The number of schools selected is significant in the sense that I visited ten schools from two communes (Rutovu and Matana) whereas there are 16 schools in those two communes. The choice of those schools was made for practical reasons.

In the course of this study, my ambition was to visit as many schools as possible. Nevertheless, there were some teachers and headmasters who were not very co-operative. That is why some of my questionnaires were lost. For example, I did not get any response to questionnaires that were sent to the communal colleges of Nyagihotora and Bitezi. Also, because of financial means,

I did not get answers from pupils from two communal colleges even though teachers answered the questionnaires.

III.1.2. Questionnaire

Two types of questionnaire have been used during this research, one for teachers and another for pupils. Concerning the teachers' questionnaire, I addressed it to them to inquire about the way they teach dialogues at the junior level, that is, to check whether or not dialogues are successfully taught. Their answers will then help me to get an idea of what should be done in the future to improve the teaching and learning of dialogues.

As far as the pupils' questionnaire is concerned, pupils were asked whether or not they liked to express themselves in English and also whether or not they liked acting out dialogues or any other English plays which require them to speak English.

In either kinds of questionnaire, the main objective was to satisfy the pupils' needs, to detect where further improvements should be done both on the pupils' and on the teachers' side.

The results gave us an opportunity to know how English teachers and their pupils feel with the way dialogues are acted out.

Finally, in this study, we intended to check if our worries about acting out dialogues at the junior level were felt by both teachers and pupils in order to suggest ways for improvement.

Figure n°1: Distribution of the research population (pupils) and Teachers

Schools	Number of 6th form pupils	Number of 5th form pupils	Number of 4th form pupils	Teachers
1. Rutovu Lycée	25	30	35	1
2. Comunal Lycée of Gitobo	28	32	30	1
3. Communal College of Bigomogomo	30	36	24	1
4. Communal College of Mutangaro	35	30	25	1
5. Communal College Kajondi	30	30	30	1
6. Communal College Kigova	31	29	30	1
7. Matana Lycée	34	26	30	1
8. Rubanga Lycée	27	27	36	1
9. Communal College of Kiryama	30	34	26	1
10. Communal College of Gitandu	28	32	30	1
11. Communal College of Bitezi	32	29	29	1
12. Communal College of Nyagihotora	34	30	26	1
Total number: 12	**Total: 1080**			**Total : 12**

II.2. Data Analysis Procedures

Concerning the data analysis procedures, quantitative approach will be used by means of percentages and the results will be given in tables. In this section, answers given by both teachers and pupils will be analysed.

The teachers' questionnaires have three main parts. The first part tries to get information about the pupils' needs for dialogue improvement. The second is about teachers' views on the way dialogues are taught and acted out. The third part deals with the final results on the teaching of dialogues.

As mentioned earlier, the ultimate goal of this study is to check whether or not dialogues are successfully taught and acted out by pupils.

To be able to identify the pupils' needs requires first of all to know who they are. Actually, pupils at the junior lever are still adolescents and the answers they give are related to their age. Our questions about the pupils' needs will be related to the real situations in which pupils think they will need to use English. That is, the kind of English needed and the linguistic skills which are to be emphasized on more than others.

In the sense that junior level pupils need general English, special emphasis will be put on some skills that should be given more priority than others. At this point, pupils are asked among the four skills, which ones interest them more and why they should be given more priority. Also, they will be asked whether they are interested in acting out dialogues and what they gain in doing that.

Moreover, pupils expressed themselves on whether they were satisfied with the way dialogues were taught or whether there should be some changes. We were also concerned by the type of language used in classrooms, whether the language used in class is simple or complex and whether vocabulary and grammar were more and more complex whenever new units were introduced.

At this point, pupils were also asked whether they were required to use extra-linguistic elements of the language such as eye-contact, body movements, gestures and facial expressions, etc. while acting out dialogues.

As far as the teachers' questionnaire was concerned, I needed to know their views about the way dialogues are taught at secondary schools. That is, whether or not they are successfully taught especially at the junior level. Here also, teachers of English are asked if the language type used in English skills textbooks is relevant to the pupils' level. Teachers at the junior level are asked if

English learners are keen or reluctant to learn it. Similarly, I also wanted to know if the time allotted to teach the four English skills is the same or if they spend more time teaching skills of their preference.

In the same perspectives, teachers were required to say whether the cultural context would not be a kind of hindrance for total understanding of the dialogue, since the dialogues written in English skills textbooks, do not necessarily display Burundian culture. At this point, English teachers were asked whether it would not be a good idea for English teachers to create themselves their own dialogues in order to fit the pupils' cultural environment and therefore to facilitate the memorization of the dialogue.

Finally, I asked teachers to say whether they are satisfied with the units provided in the textbooks or if these units needed to be readjusted.

The third part of the questionnaire deals with a conclusion. On one hand, pupils have to say whether dialogues are good for languages teaching or if some changes needed to be made. If any changes needed to be operated, the pupils themselves would make suggestions to improve the teaching of dialogues.

On the other hand, teachers were asked if they would recommend for their pupils to continue acting out dialogues in the same way as they act them out or if some adjustments needed to be made.

To conclude, the results will help us to determine whether dialogues should be acted out as they are now or whether there is a need for improvement.

CHAPTER IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

IV.0. Introduction

As it has been mentioned in the Methodology chapter, this research is based on the data collected from different respondents to the questionnaires, i.e teachers and learners of English at the junior level. This chapter aims at analysing data from respondents. For this matter, tables have been used in order to allow a clear reading of the results.

In addition, this chapter will help me to verify to what extent these data match my hypotheses and also my research questions.

IV.1. Presenting and analysing the data

IV.1.1. Analysis of pupils' answers

Question 1: Do you like acting out dialogues? Why? Yes ☐ No ☐

Table 1: Presentation of data for question 1

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	20	33.33
No	40	66.67
Total	60	100

From the above table, we can see that the number of pupils who like to act out dialogues is very low (33.33%). Whereas the number of pupils who do not like it is very high (66.67%).

As to the reason they gave, some pupils do not like acting out dialogues because sometimes they contain difficult words and they are not able to repeat those words. In addition, they said that they hate any task which demands them to go in front of the class because they feel shy. Other pupils said that they are not been on acting out dialogues because some of their classmates laugh at them when they say a mistake. Considering these views, something really needs to be done on the part of the junior level teachers.

Question 2: Do you speak English outside English classes? Yes ☐ No ☐

Table 2: Presentation of data for question 2

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	15	25
No	45	75
Total	60	100

From table 2 above, we can see that the number of pupils who speak English outside English classes is very low (25%). The number of pupils who do not speak English outside English classes is very high (75%).

According to the learners investigated, the reason why a good number does not speak English outside English classes is that they do not know enough vocabulary items that can allow them to talk easily. Besides, the environment in which they live is hostile to them. Many of these pupils said that when their neighbours hear them speaking English on their way home, they conclude that their children are becoming more and more boastful.

Another reason which pushes some pupils not to speak English outside classroom environment is that, most of their classmates are not willing to

converse in it. They said: "If you invite your friend to chat with you in English, he does not respond". The problem is that he will have to make much effort in finding out words to express himself in English, and he just chooses to stop chatting with you. If you go on provoking him in English, he becomes angry and you are obliged to leave him alone.

Question 3: Do you think dialogue can help you express yourself in English? ? Yes ☐ No ☐

Table 3: Presentation of data for question 3

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	25	41.67
No	35	58.33
Total	60	100

From table 3 above, we can see that the number of pupils who think that dialogues can help them to express themselves in English is low (41.66%) whereas the number of pupils who think the opposite is high (58.33%). This shows that pupils are not aware of the importance of dialogues for oral expression improvement. When pupils were asked why dialogues cannot help them to express themselves, they said that dialogues contain hard vocabulary words.

Pupils who agree that dialogues can help them to express themselves in English, said the following: "Dialogues help us to express ourselves in English. They create an opportunity for us to express what we think."

Question 4: Do English skills text-books help you so much in learning English?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Table 4: Presentation of data for question 4

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	32	53.33
No	28	46.67
Total	60	100

The data analysis for this question shows that 53.33% of the respondents acknowledge that English skills textbooks help them in learning English. However, 46.67% of the correspondents said no, because first and foremost, the English skills textbooks are very few. You can have just 5 books in a class. At least eight pupils share one book. The conditions of studying become deplorable then. Second, dialogues which are in these books are more artificial than natural. For example, in unit six of 6th Form, pupils' book "We work at school", the language is not natural. Here is a part of the dialogue set as an example:

A1: Peter, you have to pick up rubbish.

B1: Kathy, you have to sweep the room.

B2: I want to work on the playground.

In the passage above, the requests are alike (same).

A1: Peter, you have...
A2: Kathy, you have... } This is a turn-taking.

Pupils also complained about the vocabulary in these English skills textbooks. They said that it does not suit their level. In addition to that, the dialogues and exercises that the textbooks contain, are always the same and they

cause the pupils to get bored since they are always repeating the same thing as in churches.

Question 5: What are your needs for studying English?

Presentation of data for question 5

For this question, pupils' answers were varied. To begin with, pupils noticed that English is a language which is spreading throughout the world. Therefore, in the near future, it will be imperative to communicate in English. Today, English seems to be a language of science and technology. Many researches are conducted and published in English.

These days, many books, journals, magazines and other written materials are published in English. Therefore, translation and interpretation become more and more important. Any domain of life requires the mastery of English to some extent.

In the near future, English will be needed for studies. Apart from English teaching, pupils are likely to use English in foreign offices, especially when they will be working with some world organizations such as U.N.O, O.A.U, UNESCO, etc., and also when they will be applying for jobs in order to work in non-governmental organisations such as World Vision, I.R.C, etc.

From the data provided by pupils, we can see that the needs for studying English are numberless. They have many different purposes to learn English.

Question 6: Do you look at one another when you are acting out dialogues? i.e, do you look into one another's eyes when you are acting out dialogues? Yes ☐ No ☐

Table 5: Presentation of data for question 6

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	23	38.33
No	37	61.67
Total	60	100

When we analyse the answers provided by the respondents, we find out that the percentage of pupils who answered that they look at one another when they are acting out dialogues is low (38.33%). On the contrary, the number of pupils who answered by no is very high (61.67%), which means that, a good number of pupils act out dialogues anyhow. At this point, teachers of English really have to do something for learners because it is a real problem.

Question 7: Do you use gestures when you are acting out dialogues?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Table 6: Presentation of data for question 7

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	24	40
No	36	60
Total	60	100

The above table shows that the number of pupils who use body movements, facial expressions and mimes is very low (40%). On the contrary, the number of pupils who do not use them is high (60%). This proves that these extra-linguistic elements are neglected by most learners whereas they are important in conveying messages, and teachers of English do not care about their use.

Question 8: Do you think eye-contact, facial expressions, body movements, gestures and mimes, etc. can help to convey a message when acting out a dialogue? Yes ☐ No ☐
If not, explain why.

Table 7: Presentation of data for question 8

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	29	48.33
No	31	51.67
Total	60	100

According to the data provided by the pupils, the difference in percentage is not very significant (3.33%). As the table above indicates, we see that the number of pupils who said that the language used in English skills textbooks pupils who find the language complex is relatively high (51.67%).

Since the difference in percentage is slightly low, we can see that the language used in English skills textbooks does not present a great problem. However, a small number still complain about its vocabulary and culture traits which do not always reveal Burundian realities.

Question 9: Does your teacher explain the vocabulary items contained in the dialogue-text? Yes ☐ No ☐

Table 8: Presentation of data for question 9

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	19	31.67
No	41	68.33
Total	60	100

Many of the respondents (68.33%) claim that their teachers do not explain the vocabulary items contained in the dialogue-text. Few of them (31.66%) asserted that their teachers do explain.

From the answers provided by the respondents then, we realize that there is a real problem on the part of some English teachers who forget or neglect such an important step.

Question 10: Does your teacher give you time to express yourself in English lessons? Yes ☐ No ☐

Table 9: Presentation of data for question 10

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	21	35
No	39	65
Total	60	100

The analysis of the data above, shows that the majority of learners are not given much opportunity to speak English during the lesson (65%), only a low

percentage accepted that their teacher gives them time to practice English during lessons (35%).

However, pupils need to talk in class. It is the teacher's duty to give time to their learners to speak in order to check the extent to which they perform the language by using the learner-centred method.

Question 11: Do you feel shy when you are asked to go and act out a dialogue in front of others? Yes ☐ No ☐

Table 10: Presentation of data for question 11

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	51	85
No	9	15
Total	60	100

Table 10 shows that the majority of the pupils questioned (85%) acknowledged that they feel shy when they are asked to go in front of others to act out a given dialogue. This is true because even myself, I got an occasion to witness this fact in the classes I visited.

Only 15% of the respondents argued that they do not feel shy while in front of others. Those who felt shy were asked to give reasons and they responded that they fear to make mistakes while playing dialogues. Others said that they were frightened by the audience. At this point, it is necessary to point out that teachers in general and teachers of English in particular, should initiate junior level pupils to speak in public to help them fight against shyness.

Question 12: What suggestions can you make for dialogue improvement?

Learners who answered this question pointed out that in order to improve the learning of dialogues, teachers should teach the dialogue-text before hand, i.e, they should teach the vocabulary items which hinder understanding. Others said that teachers should train pupils to speak in public because most of them are scared by the public. After the analysis of the pupils' answers, we realized that some adjustments need to be made to improve the teaching and learning of dialogues at the junior level.

IV.1.2. Analysis of teachers' answers

Question 1: Supply an order of priority for the different language skills that your pupils need when learning English?

Table 11: Presentation of data for question 1

Answers	Frequency	%
Speaking	5	41.66
Listening	4	33.33
Reading	2	16.66
Writing	1	8.33
Total	12	100

From the Table 11 above, we notice that the number of teachers who classify the speaking skill in the first position is high (41.66). In the second position, we have the listening skill with a percentage of 33.33%. In the third position comes the reading skill with a percentage of 16.66%. The writing skill comes in the last position with a percentage of 8.33%.

This shows that most teachers favour more productive skills than receptive ones, which is a good thing. By asking such a question, I was expecting that there might be teachers who would classify another language skill in the first position, but a good number agreed that the speaking skill must take the first position since any language all over the world is first spoken before being read, written or listened to. So, I was satisfied with the classification they made.

Question 2: According to you, what is the percentage of class time that should be given to these different skills?

Table 12: Presentation of data for question 2

Skills	Percentages given by English teachers											
	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T12
Speaking	40	28.5	25	40	45	15	13	40	20	43	30	25
Listening	20	30.5	40	20	30	25	27	25	40	27.5	30	30
Reading	25	17	10	20	10	30	25	10	20	11	10	30
Writing	15	24	25	20	15	30	35	25	20	18.5	30	15
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

If we try to analyse table 12 above, we find out that some skills such as speaking and listening are given high percentages in comparison with reading and writing. However, all teachers agree that all the four skills should actually be given the same amount of class time. This is because all the four skills are integrated. They cannot be taught separately. In this respect, Harmer (1983:47) comments that "it is ridiculous to concentrate exclusively on one skill and change the following days."

First, it is difficult to perform one skill in isolation. Second, people use different skills when dealing with the same topic. For example, it is impossible to act out a given dialogue if you do not listen as well. Similarly, the act of writing involves also reading.

Question 3: Do you sometimes teach dialogues to your pupils?

Table 13: Presentation of data for question 3

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	7	58.33
No	5	41.67
Total	12	100

The table above shows that the percentage of teachers who answered 'yes' is high (58.33%). On the contrary, the percentage of teachers who answered 'no' is low (41.67%). We were very surprised to see that there are teachers who do not teach dialogues although they are in their textbooks.

Question 4: In what ways are dialogues helpful for oral expression improvement?

Answers provided by the respondents

Some teachers (7 out of 12), representing 58.33% said that dialogues are very important for beginners in many ways. First, they help pupils feel free when speaking English. Pupils become more interested than in other English activities. When pupils are acting out dialogues, they are more motivated and also very creative. After they have finished acting out the dialogue, pupils feel

that they have learnt something, and little by little, they become self-confident when expressing themselves orally.

On the teachers' behalf, dialogues do not ask them much energy because they are easy to prepare. In addition, dialogues can help to deal with many activities at the same time. At this point, Roger Gower at al (1983:35) supports that "dialogues provide a context and a topic for another activity, such as a discussion or a role-play."

Another category of teachers, (5 out of 12) representing 41.66% said that dialogues are not more important than other activities.

Question 5: Do your pupils use extra-linguistic elements such as gestures, eye-contact, facial expressions, body movements and mimes when acting out dialogues?

Table 14: Presentation of data for question 5

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	5	41.67
No	7	58.33
Total	12	100

The analysis of data for this question shows that the majority of teachers said that pupils do not use extralinguistic elements when acting out dialogues (58.33%). Only few teachers (41.67%) agreed that their pupils use extra-linguistic elements when acting out dialogues. However, the classroom observations proved that the majority of pupils do not use them.

Question 6: If ever your pupils use these extra-linguistic elements, are they used adequately? Yes ☐ No ☐

Table 15: Presentation of data for question 6

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	4	33.33
No	8	66.67
Total	12	100

From the above table, we can see that the percentage of teachers who answered 'yes' is very low (33.33%) which means that they acknowledged that their pupils do not use extra-linguistic elements adequately. However, the majority of teachers answered by 'no' (66.67%). When the respondents were asked the reason why their pupils do not use them adequately, they answered that it is because many of them do not know enough vocabulary words; and then memorized dialogues without understanding the context.

Question 7: Do you always teach vocabulary items that are found in the dialogue-text before pupils act it out? Yes ☐ No ☐

Table 16: Presentation of data for question 7

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	6	50
No	6	50
Total	12	100

From table 16, we read that 50% of teachers answered by 'yes' whereas another group of teachers answered by 'no'. This group represents also 50%.

Since half of the teachers acknowledged not teaching vocabulary items contained in the dialogue-text, we realize that something needs to be done in that domain.

When teachers were asked why they do not teach vocabulary words contained in the dialogue-text, they replied that it is time-consuming since pupils need explanation of every word; which takes too much time.

Question 8: Among the visual aids, which ones do you use to teach dialogues?

Table 17: Presentation of data for question 8

Answers	Frequency	%
Drawings	2	16.67
Maps	3	25
English skills textbooks	6	50
Pictures	0	0
Recorded dialogues	1	8.33
Total	12	100

The above table displays that 50% of the teachers use English skills textbooks, 25% use maps and 16.67% of teachers use drawings. None of them use pictures to teach dialogues; and only 8.33% use recorded dialogues.

From the answers provided by teachers, we can see that most of them rely only on English Skills textbooks, pictures and recorded dialogues being almost totally forgotten.

Question 9: Are you satisfied with English skills textbooks for language development? Yes ☐ No ☐

Table 18: Presentation of data for question 9

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	6	50
No	6	50
Total	12	100

The analysis of data shows that half of the respondents, i.e 50% are satisfied with English skills textbooks whereas the other half is not. These teachers have expressed their views on those books.

On the positive side, the textbook contains interesting units (dialogues) which can create motivation for the pupils. The dialogues are also presented in a good order, i.e from the most simple to the most complex.

On the other side, the textbook is old-fashioned and it causes pupils to get bored since they are always repeating the same things. The curriculum planners should improve the book by inserting other units. Moreover, teachers complained about the number of hours allocated to the programme. They said that 2 or 3 hours per week are not sufficient for oral expression development. They proposed that some extra hours should be given to the programme in addition to those already existing. This is to say, the time used to practice dialogues is not sufficient at all.

Another negative criticism is that, the texts of the dialogues in English skills textbooks are not natural but artificial, and not lively.

Finally, English skills textbooks, according to them, provide very few English words and expressions to increase pupils' repertoire. The vocabulary that the textbook contains does not always fit the pupils' level; and this may sometimes prevent them from understanding.

Question 10: What types of problems do you often meet when teaching dialogues?

For this question, a good number of teachers (8/12) representing 66.67% agreed that they really face problems when teaching dialogues to beginners. First, pupils say that they do not understand words from the dialogues; and therefore would wish that teachers translate the whole dialogue from English into their native language (Kirundi).

Another problem they encounter is related to interference of languages. Since English is taught after French, pupils seem to take French as the referent language to pronounce English words. Besides, they frequently think in French and express themselves in English.

Furthermore, some pupils have biases that English is difficult. Then, they do not make any effort when performing in it.

The last problem is that, given the fact that some schools are so poor, teaching materials are lacking or insufficient. That is why you may see a group of seven pupils sharing one book in a class.

Question 11: What kind of methods and techniques do you use to teach dialogues?

As far as this question is concerned, half of the respondents (6/12) representing 50% start by explaining the vocabulary items contained in the dialogue-text in order to facilitate pupils' understanding.

Then, they read the dialogue and pupils repeat after them. When pupils make errors of pronunciation or any other errors, they get an opportunity to correct them immediately.

The next step consists of sending a couple of pupils in front of the class to act out the dialogue. Meanwhile, other pupils follow attentively what is going on. If the couple does not use extra-linguistic elements such as eye-contact, gestures, facial expressions or body movements, etc., they have to signal the next couple of pupils to use these ones.

Finally, pupils take turns until all of them have practiced the entire dialogue.

Another half of the respondents, i.e 6/12 do not explain the vocabulary items found in the dialogue-text. According to them, to explain vocabulary items is time consuming. Since they have got very large classes, they cannot indulge themselves in explaining every single English word and find time for each couple to practice the dialogue. Pupils are so many that teachers cannot follow each individual.

Concerning methods and techniques, they use the participative and simulation method. In this method, teachers invite pupils to simulate what the people in the dialogue do, using imitation and repetition drills.

Question 12: Do you believe that using recorded dialogues would help beginners to improve oral expressions? Yes ☐ No ☐

Table 19: Presentation of data for question 12

Answers	Frequency	%
Yes	5	41.67
No	7	58.33
Total	12	100

The analysis of the data shows that the number of teachers who answered 'yes' is low (41.67%) whereas the number of those who answered 'no' is high (58.33%). This proves that many teachers do not believe that using recorded dialogues would be helpful for beginners in order to improve oral expression. According to them, recorded dialogues cannot help to improve oral expression in any way since beginners are not able to catch what native speakers of English say. The use of recorded dialogues for beginners would be a waste of time.

On the contrary, a small number (44.66%) believe that recorded dialogues would help beginners to improve oral expression. According to them, pupils could hear how native speakers pronounce English words and they can therefore try to imitate them even outside classrooms. In addition, recorded dialogues provide a variety of accents, i.e female accents differ from male accents, British accents differ from American accents, etc. Pupils may get accustomed to many accents and they can use them in their everyday communication through imitation. In addition, given that recorded dialogues provide a standard pronunciation, it would be a good idea to let beginners get accustomed to it.

Question 13: According to you, why do many pupils finish their junior level without being able to express themselves in English?

Table 20: Presentation of data for question 13

Answers	Frequency	%
Pupils are not aware of the importance of English	5	41.66
Their teachers are not qualified	7	58.33
Total	12	100

The analysis of data shows us that a high percentage of respondents (58.33%) believe that the reason which causes many pupils to finish their junior level without being able to express themselves in English, is that their teachers are not qualified. Another non-negligible percentage (41.66%) explain this situation by the fact that pupils are not aware of the importance of English.

In this respect, the respondents mentioned that the fact that everyone who is jobless, applies for a teaching career without being qualified, is a big problem. In some secondary schools, there are teachers who qualified in mathematics but who teach English as well because of the lack of English teachers. In other schools, there are history and geography teachers who teach English at the same time. At this point, one can imagine what kind of English is being taught by these teachers. This is the Ministry of Education's responsibility.

Question 14: What is your qualification?

Teachers of English to whom we gave our questionnaires were not all qualified for teaching English. Some of them hold a diploma of General Humanities (three years after the 4th Form of secondary school). Others hold a secondary teacher's training school diploma. Actually, these diplomas are supposed to be hold by teachers of elementary levels. Few of them had the required degree.

Table 21: Presentation of data for question 14

Answers	Frequency	%
B.A	10	27.02
L.A	3	8.10
I.P.A III	5	13.51
I.P	2	5.40
G.H	17	45.94
Total	37	100

Note:

B.A: Bachelor of Arts.

L.A: Licence Agrégée

I.P.A: Institut de Pédagogie Appliquée (Institute for Applied Pedagogy).

G.H : General Humanities.

The analysis of data shows that the percentage of teachers holding a B.A diploma, L.A diploma, I.P.A III and I.P diploma, is very low (27.02%, 8.10%, 13.51% , 5.40%). On the contrary, the percentage of teachers holding a G.H diploma, is very high (45.94%).

From this, we can deduce that the majority of teachers from the schools I visited had a G.H diploma, which means that their degree is not the required one. According to what they said, they have been teaching English for such a long time. They are now very well experienced in the subject matter. But, with a level like this, we doubt that their teaching is really giving fruitful results. In its proper terms, teaching needs a skilled teacher, who has professional competence. In fact, you cannot give what you do not have. So, pupils cannot expect to be helped in a satisfactory way if things stay like that.

In fact, pupils themselves comment on their teachers' qualifications: "Our teacher of English speaks and knows English well" or "our teacher does not know English." Here we have to remember that pupils are good at observing and judging. Normally, a pupil will be what his teacher wants him to be. If the teaching and learning process fails at an early stage, there is no doubt that there could be lack of mastery of language. Since pupils might be taught about the language not the language.

Question 15: What suggestions can you make for dialogue-teaching improvement at junior level?

As far as this question is concerned, teachers of English questioned gave the following suggestions.

First and foremost, teachers of English should develop awareness for their job in order to achieve their goals. This idea was sustained by 83.33% of the respondents, i.e 10/12 of the total number.

Secondly, Teachers should also provide suitable and interesting topics adapted and related to their students' everyday situations.

Thirdly, right from the beginning, teachers of English should actually train their learners to speak English in public. If learners are trained to speak at an early stage, it helps to avoid shyness once in public.

Fourthly, difficult vocabulary frequently found in English skills textbooks, should be explained in advance so as to facilitate the learners' understanding.

Fifthly, teachers should train their learners to use gestures and mines when talking to someone. Gestures are very important in a discussion as well as in a dialogue. Not only they show that the speaker is sure of what he is saying, but they also help to support the speaker's ideas.

IV.1.3. Analysis of data from classroom observation

IV.1.3.1. The pupils

During the research, I visited twelve schools: Lycée of Matana, Communal college of Gitobo, Communal College of Bigomogomo, Communal College of Kajondi, Communal College of Kivoga, Communal College of Mutangaro, Lycée of Rutovu, Lycée of Rubanga, Communal College of Matana, Communal College of Nyagihotora, Communal College of Bitezi and Communal college of Rwasanga.

I mainly visited 6th Form classes, but 4th Form classes were visited most frequently. Our main objective in visiting these junior level classes was to

witness how pupils of the different classes act out dialogues, i.e to see with our proper eyes what goes on in classes. Our ambition was also to see how teachers of English handle the dialogues.

As far as pupils are concerned, I found out that they did not play dialogues well. When 2 pupils were asked to go in front to act out a dialogue, they could not play it successfully. Extra-linguistic elements such as eye-contact, gestures, facial expressions, body movements and mimes were almost not used.

Because of shyness, pupils could not look at one another while acting out a dialogue. As a consequence the dialogue was lifeless.

Sometimes, gestures were wrongly used. For example, in the course of a dialogue, one pupil told his interlocutor to listen to the bell and showed a watch on her left hand. So, the gesture was incorrect.

During the observation, I also noticed that a good number of pupils memorized words that they did not understand. As a proof, it could happen that pupils had their flow of words cut. In addition, the distance which separated the speakers was sometimes too big or too small. I could also realize an interruption of 2 to 3 minutes before the other pupils took their turn to speak.

IV.1.3.2. The teachers

In the course of this research, I got an opportunity to witness how teachers of English teach dialogues to their learners. I was shocked to see that a big number of teachers taught dialogues anyhow (66.66%), i.e 8/12 of teachers. Very few explained the vocabulary items found in the dialogue-text (33.33%), i.e (4/12 of teachers). This is a real problem because when role-play time comes,

they won't do it successfully. They will just be wasting their time since they will memorize without understanding. This was proved when pupils were asked to answer questions related to the dialogue.

I also realised that some teachers took it as an opportunity to take a rest when pupils were acting out a dialogue. They were very passive and did not even follow what was going on in their classes. The only task seemed to designate pupils' turn to act out. After pupils' performance, no corrections were made by these teachers.

Very often, pupils could make errors of pronunciation or of grammar, but teachers rarely intervened to correct them. By analysing what was going on in different classrooms, I noticed that many teachers were not motivated and had no calling for teaching. Many of them taught because they were obliged to do so or did not have anywhere else to go. I finally concluded that the government really has to do something to motivate teachers.

IV.2. Findings

IV.2.0. Introduction

The previous sections in this chapter show how far the data collected reveal realities from classroom observation both on the side of English teachers and on that of the learners. This section intends to relate the results from these realities to the research hypotheses formulated in the first chapter of this work. First and foremost, let us remind our readers about our research hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Teachers of English teach dialogues at random. Consequently, dialogues are not well performed is not well performed.

Hypothesis 2: Teachers of English do not teach the vocabulary items contained in the dialogue texts. This is the reason why pupils memorize things they do not master.

Hypothesis 3: A number of pupils finish their secondary school without being able to express themselves in English because they are not well trained to speak in public right from the beginning.

IV.2.1. Teachers' incompetence

For the first hypothesis, through classroom observation, we witnessed that many teachers (45.09%) are not well qualified. This was proven by the answers we got from question 16, which investigated about teachers' qualifications. Since many of them hold "Diplôme d'humanités générales", it is obvious that they do not teach English appropriately because they are not qualified to teach. A teacher can only give what he possesses. From this, we can deduce that our first hypothesis was totally confirmed.

IV.2.2. Neglect of vocabulary items

For the second hypothesis, we found out that many teachers of English directly go straight the dialogue-texts without explaining the difficult words in them. This is proven by answers we got from question 8 and question 13, which investigated about knowing whether or not teachers of English always teach the vocabulary words contained in the dialogue-texts. The answers revealed that only 50% of teachers explained the meaning of the vocabulary items. Another 50% of teachers did not explain. Therefore, my second hypothesis was proven right.

IV.2.3. Pupils' incapacity to express themselves

Concerning the third hypothesis, we found that a good number of junior level pupils are unable to hold real conversations. According to what they said, they admitted not to be given many opportunities to speak in public. Therefore, they cannot fight against their shyness, which is the principal cause of their incapacity to express themselves. This was proven by answers got from question 14 addressed to pupils; which investigated about whether or not their teachers of English gave them enough time to speak in an English lesson. The answers they provided revealed that many teachers of English (65%) did not give their learners enough time to speak in class. This of course led to pupils' incapacity to hold genuine conversations. So, my third hypothesis was confirmed as well.

CHAPTER V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

V.1. Conclusion

When I first chose to work on the topic "Improving the dialogue-technique to teach oral expression at the junior level", my intention was to answer the following research questions:

1° Why do many pupils finish their junior level without being able to express themselves in English? Is it because they are not interested in learning this language or is it because their teachers are not well qualified and so teach things that they do not master?

2° Why is a good number of pupils in most secondary schools not able to act out a dialogue adequately? Do their teachers show them how dialogues should be acted out? Do they really do their tasks or is it the pupils who neglect them?

3° Why does a good number of pupils fail to speak English? Is it because English is difficult to learn in comparison with other languages, and pupils find it hard to learn it? Is it given enough emphasis when teaching it?

These questions have been successfully answered. This has been possible through the answers we got from the pupils' and teachers' questionnaires as well as from classroom observation we conducted in some secondary schools and communal colleges of Bururi province.

Firstly, pupils were found unable to express themselves in English; not because they are not interested in learning this language, but because a good number of their teachers are not qualified. What we observed in the classroom

allowed us to conclude that junior level learners are unable to express themselves because they are taught by unqualified teachers.

Secondly, pupils were found unable to act out a given dialogue adequately not just because they neglect it but because their teachers of English do not train them adequately. From what we observed, many teachers do not follow the steps of teaching dialogues. From this, we can conclude that the pupils' inability to act out a given dialogue appropriately is due to teachers' ignorance of the techniques.

Thirdly, dialogues were proven to be a good technique to develop pupils' oral expression since it helps all learners get involved in the task. Moreover, dialogues create motivation on the part of the learners and every learner becomes self-confident about language use. However, this technique is not mastered by all teachers. For example, some teachers of English are not aware of the necessity of extra-linguistic elements when acting out dialogues. Through classroom observation, we noticed that many teachers still hesitate on teaching dialogues.

Fourthly, through classroom observation and answers we got from teachers' questionnaire, pupils fail to speak English because some of them are biased that English is a difficult language to learn in comparison with other languages such as Kiswahili and French. From what we witnessed on the field, many pupils are weak in English. They lack initiatives and remain passive and avoid participation. At this point, Hubbard et al (1983:293) say the following:

> We are well aware that many classes around the world do not fall into the category of "average". There are classes composed entirely of "weak" learners, who may be generally low in intellectual to learn a foreign language;

there are very large classes of 45-60 pupils; and there are mixed ability, or even multi-level classes where the differences between the "top" and the "bottom" may be very great indeed.

V.2. Recommendations

Despite its limitations, this research should be relevant to teachers of English at junior level, to the curriculum designers (BEPES), to the government as well as to the Ministry of Education. The following recommendations are made towards:

V.2.1. English teachers at the junior level

To better improve the dialogue-technique, teachers of English should first of all explain the vocabulary items contained in the dialogue-text to facilitate the learners' understanding, before they act out a dialogue. This is recommended because some teachers do not do that.

Secondly, as leaders of their classes, teachers should supervise that non-linguistic elements such as eye-contact, gestures, body movements, mimes, facial expressions, etc. take place when pupils are acting out a dialogue. And for this purpose, they should show the student which gestures to use, when and where to use them in the dialogue.

Thirdly, teachers should try to get hold of some recorded dialogues (cassettes) and use them immediately after pupils have finished to act out a dialogue. This is very important because pupils hear how native speakers model

standard English. Then, they will develop a tendency to imitate them; which is rather good.

Fourthly, teachers should avoid being slaves of textbooks by creating their own dialogues or looking for dialogues from other sources.

Fifthly, to successfully enhance oral expression, teachers of English should actually vary activities whenever possible; otherwise, pupils lose motivation when they are always repeating the same activity.

Lastly, teachers should try to be more familiar with their learners in order to develop co-operation. Many pupils are scared of their teachers because the latter create a big distance towards their learners; in this case, when they are asked to perform a given task, they begin to tremble and are unable to perform adequately. In this respect, teachers should try to create good conditions of learning in order to let the learning take place naturally.

V.2.2. The curriculum designers (BEPES)

To better promote oral expression, the curriculum designers should first of all equip schools with enough English skills textbooks since there is a shortage of books in many schools. Here, a supply of tapes accompanying these English skills textbooks would be more than helpful.

Secondly, the number of hours allocated to the English course at the junior level, should be increased in order to develop oral expression successfully.

Mainly, the curriculum designers should elaborate textbooks in such a way that the language be natural but not artificial. More to this, they should take into consideration the pupils' level and needs when elaborating programs.

V.2.3. The government

First of all, the government should treat teachers well by improving their living conditions, and by increasing their salaries in order to motivate them. This is because many of them are now demotivated and teach anyhow. In this case, children become victims of a situation they are not responsible of.

Second, in order to have successful results in the domain of teaching, the government should make sure that teachers just teach what they have studied and nothing else. This is because a Geography teacher can now teach English at a school where there is no English teacher. A Mathematics teacher can teach Biology if the school does not have one.

V.2.4. The Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education could first of all do its best to make the teaching of English more appropriate. This is to say, to allow only qualified teachers teach English. Frankly speaking, the number of people who are qualified in English is enough, but because they see that they are badly treated and badly paid in this domain, they prefer to go and work in other domains where they can feel much better. Even those who embrace the teaching career just go there because of constraints. It is up to the government to take this situation into its hands.

Second, the Ministry of Education should favour and sponsor seminars for training unqualified teachers in general and unqualified teachers of English in particular in order to enhance their knowledge. This will also be an opportunity to get different opinions about the teaching of dialogues in general.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Letter and questionnaire to pupils of the junior level

Bujumbura, le 4/04/2007

HATUNGIMANA Richard
Institut de Pédagogie Appliquée (I.P.A)
Département d'Anglais-Kirundi

Cher/chère élève

Bonjour,

Je voudrais par la présente, vous solliciter de répondre au questionnaire annexé à cette lettre.

En effet, je suis en train de faire une enquête sur un sujet intitulé ***« Improving the dialogue –technique to teach oral expression at junior level »*** ceci dans le cadre de mon travail de fin d'études supérieures.

Votre initiative me sera d'une très grande utilité. Je compte sur votre franche collaboration.

HATUNGIMANA Richard.

Questionnaire to pupils of junior level

1. Do you like acting out dialogues? Why?

   Yes☐ No ☐

2. Do you speak English outside the classroom?

   Yes☐ No ☐

3. Do you think dialogues can help you to express yourself in English?

   Yes☐ No ☐

4. Do English skills text books help you so much in learning English?

   Yes☐ No ☐

5. What are your needs for studying English?

6. Do you look into one another's eyes when you are acting out dialogues?

   (i.e Do you look at one another into the eyes when you are acting out dialogues?

   Yes☐ No ☐

7. Do you use gestures when you are acting out dialogues?

   Yes☐ No ☐

8. Do you use body movements, facial expressions and mimes when you are acting out dialogues?

   Yes☐ No ☐

9. Do you think eye-contact, the use of facial expressions, body movements, gestures and mimes, etc., are very important when you are acting out dialogues?

   Yes☐ No ☐

10. Is the language used in English Skills text books simple or complex?

    Yes☐ No ☐

11. Does your English teacher explain the vocabulary items contained in the dialogue-text?

    Yes☐ No ☐

12. Does your English teacher give you time to speak during the English lesson?

Yes☐ No ☐

13. Do you feel shy when you are asked by your English teacher to go and act out a dialogue in front of others?

Yes☐ No ☐

14. What suggestions can you make for dialogue improvement?

Appendix 2

Letter and questionnaire to teachers of English at the junior level

Bujumbura, le 4/4/2007

HATUNGIMANA Richard
Institut de Pédagogie Appliquée (I.P.A)
Département d'Anglais-Kirundi

Cher/Chère professeur,

Bonjour,

Je voudrais, par la présente, vous solliciter de répondre au questionnaire annexé à cette lettre.

En effet, je suis en train de faire une enquête sur un sujet intitulé : *« Improving the dialogue – technique to teach oral expression at junior level »*, ceci dans le cadre de mon travail de fin d'études supérieures.

Votre appréciation me sera d'une très grande utilité. Je compte sur votre franche collaboration.

HATUNGIMANA Richard

Questionnaire to teachers of English at junior level

1. Supply an order of priority for the different language skills that your pupils need when learning English

   A……..B……C……D……

2. According to you, what is the percentage of class time that should be given to these different skills?

   A……% B……% C……%C ……%

3. Do you sometimes teach dialogue to your pupils?

   Yes☐ No ☐

4. In what ways are dialogues helpful for oral expression improvement?
5. Do your pupils use extra-linguistic elements such as gestures, eye-contact, facial expressions, body movements and mimes when acting out dialogues?
6. If ever your pupils use these extra-linguistic elements, are they used adequately?

   Yes☐ No ☐

7. Do you always teach vocabulary items that are in the dialogue-text before pupils act it out?

   Yes☐ No ☐

8. Among the following teaching materials, which ones do you use to teach dialogues?
9. Are you satisfied with what *English skills* text book provides for language development?

   Yes☐ No ☐

10. What types of problems do you often meet when teaching dialogues?
11. What kinds of methods and techniques do you use to teach dialogues?
12. Do you believe that using recorded dialogues would be helpful for beginners in order to improve oral expression?

    Yes☐ No ☐

13. According to you why do many pupils finish their junior level without being able to express themselves in English?
14. What is your qualification?
15. What suggestions can you make for dialogue-teaching at the junior level?