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# Attitudes of burundian students towards the use of english as a mediium of instruction : case of university lumiere de Bujumbura ( ULBU )

Niyontwari, Crescent

UB, FLSH

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

THE EFFECT OF LINGUISTIC ENVIRONMENT ON  
THE DEVELOPMENT OF ORAL EXPRESSION IN  
ENGLISH: CASE OF FIRST FORM ARTS SECTION  
PUPILS OF SOME SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN  
RUTANA PROVINCE

By  
Benoît Nizigiyimana

**Supervisor:**

Ildéphonse Horicubonye  
Senior Lecturer at University of  
Burundi

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Fulfilment of the Requirements for  
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en Langue et Littérature  
Anglaises**”

## **DEDICATION**

To my parents,

To my sisters and brothers,

To my aunt,

To my late uncle,

these pages are warmly dedicated.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank the lord so much for giving me the life to go through this course without any breakdown. It is also worthy and fitting that I thank my parents, my sisters and brothers, my late uncle and his wife, my aunt for all the love and support they have always given me while I was pursuing my academic ventures.

I thank my supervisor Dr Ildephonse Horicubonye for his tireless efforts in seeing that the topic is formulated into a researchable one.

My special thanks also go to my colleagues with whom we shared numerous academic problems.

May all those mentioned here and those left out due to lack of space be rewarded abundantly.

## ABSTRACT

Effect acquisition of oral expression in a language is a challenging task. This requires learners to be exposed to as much of the language as possible. So the study was undertaken first of all to investigate whether learners have enough opportunities to practice the speaking skill; secondly it was to find out the attitude of Burundians towards other Burundians who are speaking English.

Respondents were students from First Form Arts Section pupils. They were from three secondary schools in Rutana Province. The systematic List Sampling Technique was used to select the respondents. A questionnaire was used to collect data. Data were mainly subjected to a descriptive analysis whereby they were organised and described.

The findings led to the following conclusions: The learners do not have enough opportunities to practice their oral expression in English. It was also concluded that the attitude of Burundians towards other Burundians who are speaking English is negative because learners of English do not initiate conversations in English both in and outside the classroom for fear of making mistakes and being laughed at.

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## **CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Introduction**

Language is the most common system of communication. It allows people to talk to each other, to express their thoughts, and ideas. Wherever there is a human society, there is language. Most forms of human activities depend on the co-operation of two or more people through the use of language. Around six thousand languages are spoken in the world and one of the most widely spoken is English. Quirk (1968:17) says the following about the English language: “Millions of men and women in the four continents have it as their native language, and further millions in every part of the world use it as a second or foreign language.”

The current progress of the English language towards world language is also recognised by Crystal (2001:359) when he says that today English is the main contender for the position of the world lingua franca. It is used in all corners of the world. Commonly referred to as the emerging international language, many people all over the world are trying to learn it for various purposes. Burundian learners both in public and private schools are not excluded from those endeavouring to learn the English language. The learners of English in Burundi find themselves unable to develop their oral expression in it.



This work is to investigate the effect of linguistic environment on the development of oral expression in English in order to find out why learners cannot express themselves effectively. So, the expression ‘Oral Expression’ does not imply speaking for the sake of speaking. Mackey (1965:266) says the following about it: “Oral Expression involves not only (...) the use of the right sounds in the right patterns and intonation, but also the choice of words and inflections in the right order to convey the right meaning.”

## **1.2. Background to the problem**

The frequent use of Kirundi (Burundians’ only mother tongue), and to some extent of French and Kiswahili among Burundians makes one wonder whether the English language is really spoken in Burundi. However, Kirundi, French, English and Kiswahili are the four languages that are used in Burundi. Kirundi is the official language; French is adopted by the government for international communication. English, on the other hand, is a foreign language introduced as a school subject from the early years of Primary School. It lacks an official status, but is used by some institutions such as banks, industries, hotels and education. A lot of research has been done on English teaching. The concern was mainly the problems related to the non-mastering of grammatical structures. The contribution was to suggest what should be done to improve the teaching of English rules in Burundian secondary schools, but why the English language is not effectively spoken by its learners was not investigated.

### **1.3. Statement of problem**

In Burundi Educational System, English is learnt as a foreign language. It is not a gift of nature. It is now taught from the early years of primary school. From this stage, learners are exposed to English vocabulary. As learners move from class to class up to secondary school, they are introduced to grammatical rules, readings, and presentations in English. All this is done to enable English learners to be effective communicators in English. However, there is lack of achievement in the English language learning field in Burundi in general and in Rutana province in particular. Learners cannot really communicate as effectively as they are supposed to. This work seeks to find out the effect of linguistic environment- related factors on the development of Oral Expression in English referring to English learners of First Form Arts Section in some schools of Rutana province (school Year: 2011-2012).

### **1.4. Motivation**

By choosing this topic, I was motivated by the fact that the English language is really not effectively spoken by its learners despite their several years of its learning. It is acknowledged that a language exists when it is spoken; then, if learners learn a language without using it, they will not be able to communicate effectively in that language. This work is to examine the effect of linguistic environment on the development of oral expression in English.

### **1.5. Objectives of the study**

Being aware of the effect of linguistic environment on the development of Oral Expression in English will be an important step in the context of English language teaching. The study was based on the following objectives:

- a) To investigate whether learners of English have enough opportunities to practice the speaking skill;
- b) To find out the attitude of Burundians towards other Burundians are speaking English.

### **1.6. Hypotheses**

English is a powerful language all over the world. In Burundi, the language is taught as a foreign language; but its learners do not actually use it. The following hypotheses are stated to guide the study:

- a) The Burundian English language learners have few opportunities to practice the speaking skill;
- b) The Burundians' attitude towards other Burundians who are speaking English is negative.

These hypotheses as assumptions to our study will be confirmed or refuted after investigations.

### **1.7. Research Questions**

To carry out our research, we shall deal with the following questions:

- a) How often do the Burundian learners of English speak English either in or out of it?
- b) What is the attitude of the Burundians towards other Burundians who are speaking English?

These questions clarify what we wanted to bring out in our study.

### **1.6. Justification and Importance of the study**

Before choosing the topic, we considered the importance of English language all over the world in general and in Burundi in particular. We got inspiration from Strevens (1980:1) when he says that the current status of English has turned a significant percentage of the world population into part time users and learners of English. In the same light, Quirk and Widdowson (1985: 24) state that English is more widely spread and is the chief language of more countries than any other language is and ever has been. The point in the above quotations is that the English Language is expanding very rapidly all over the world. In other words, the English language is the dominant language or the required international language of communication. With regard to this status of English language throughout the world, I was incited to focus my study on the analysis of the development of oral expression in English.

Throughout this work, the reader is expected to be aware of the findings related to the linguistic environment-related challenges that learners of English encounter. Syllabus designers, teachers and learners of English, after reading

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this work shall try to solve the challenges raised in order to improve the English language teaching. Thus, various opportunities for practicing English shall be given enough attention, listening materials provided, English clubs established and equipped in order to maximise exposure to English language. Learners will no longer rely on writing and reading when learning English.

### **1.7. Scope and Delimitation of the study**

People can communicate through different ways such as writing, speaking, and communication by gestures, facial expression and body movement to name but a few. Our study is to investigate the effect of the linguistic environment- related challenges on the development of oral expression. This investigation is to be done in Rutana province. The population to work with is the students of last year (First Form Arts Section) of three secondary schools: Lycée Rutana, Lycée Communal Gifunzo and Lycée Communal Bukemba.

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## **CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **2.1. Introduction**

In this chapter, the researcher reviewed some of the works carried out on matters related to the factors preventing learners from improving their oral expression in English. This was done under the following headings: one dealing with challenges of learning the speaking skill; and another focusing on fear of making mistakes and being laughed at.

### **2.2. Challenges of teaching and learning the speaking skill**

According to Brown and Yule (1983:25) spoken language or learning to talk in a foreign language is often considered to be one of the most difficult aspects of language learning for the teachers to help the students with. In the same light, Bygate (1983:3) asserts that one of the problems of foreign language learning is to prepare learners to use the language. He further says that speaking is in many ways an undervalued skill. Speaking is however a skill which deserves more attention.

Learners need to be able to speak with confidence in order to carry out many of their most basic transactions. Speaking is a skill by which learners are most frequently judged and through which they make or lose friends. It is the vehicle per excellence of social solidarity, of social ranking, of professional advancement and business. Therefore, the teaching of speaking merits more

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thought. The implication here is that the learners need to be given plenty of opportunities to practise the speaking skill. The more language learners use language, the better they become at communicating. Learners cannot utilize the opportunities to learn spoken English unless the opportunities are provided.

Olar Odur (1990:25) points out that the English language syllabus by the Syllabus Designers is not clearly defined. They simply recommend textbooks and leave upon the teachers to develop their own syllabi. As a result, teachers depend too much on textbooks which put more emphasis on the use of grammatical rules at the expense of situational communicative language teaching.

Wilkins (1976:7) concludes that one of the problems faced with in teaching language is the lack of material related to day-to-day language use because the textbooks are poorly designed. He adds that one of the reasons for questioning adequacy of grammatical syllabus lies in the fact that even when we have described the grammatical meaning of a structure, we still have not accounted for the way in which it is used as an utterance. For example, one might imagine that the imperative mood is an unequivocal indicator of the act of commanding but, consider these instances of the imperative: "Forgive us our trespasses."

"Come to dinner tomorrow." The first one is a prayer and the second is an invitation. He further acknowledges that when learning a language as a foreign

language, there is little likelihood of extensive exposure to the language. He wrote that:

*A foreign language learning is one in which the target language is not the mother tongue of any group within the country where it is being learned and has no internal communicative function either. The aim of teaching the language is to increase ease contact with the foreign language speakers outside.*

Jo MC Donough and Christopher Shaw (1999:20) mention that it is important to give students opportunities for thorough and meaningful rehearsal of the English they will need for effective communication.

Meyerhoff (2005:5) states that everyone can modify the way they speak depending on who they are talking to or what the situation is. For example; as Richards and Rodgers (2001:70) say; we may say: “what” to a friend we have not understood; but we would be advised to say; “pardon” to the boss; “shut the door, will you?” to a classmate; but “Excuse me would you mind closing the door?” to a stranger on a train .The implication here is that students must know what language is appropriate in context and real life situations .They must be equipped with knowledge which will enable them to communicate intelligently and appropriately. Without this; learners are restricted to learning rules and patterns without having opportunities to operate the language they have learned.



Quick and Widdowson (1985:2) observe that exposure need not, of course, be limited to school settings. What happens outside the classroom may be important. The same issue is raised by Rivers (1983:110) when he says that if we wish to develop natural language use, we take the language out of class room.

Stern (1983:340) observes that if the language is learnt in class language, that is, in non-supportive environment, instruction is likely to be the major or even the only source of the target language. He emphasises that if the language learning is confined to the walls of classroom, there will be lack of exposure to the target language in its natural setting.

### **2.2.1. Teaching the listening skill**

Brown and Yule (1983:124) observe that most foreign language learners will not acquire a comfortable ability to listen to the foreign language as spoken by natives if they only listen to their teachers and classmates. They further say that listening comprehension ought to be naturally acquired. The reason they give is that the student is taught to speak slowly and clearly and the teacher addresses the class in public style which is also slow and clear. Most of the time, native speakers don't speak slowly or particularly clearly.

Wilkins (1976:79) says that learners who have followed conventional language courses and who may have developed a classroom competence find that when

they come into contact with native speakers of the language they meet serious problems in comprehension. They may be able to perform adequately themselves in speech, but they frequently cannot understand what native speakers say to them. The implication is that learners need to be exposed to various accents of the language they are learning in order to understand various speakers.

Zzimbe (2006:20) specifically points out that teaching and learning of English for proficiency should include Received Pronunciation (RP) with emphasis on stress and intonation. He further says that our purpose in teaching English is to equip students with quality pronunciation which will enable them to communicate intelligibly and appropriately. Stern (1984:34) on the other hand is of the view that teachers should not push their learners to attain complete proficiency because in his observation, it is hardly ever reached by second language learners and that it would be wasteful and perhaps an undesirable attempt to reach it. The implication here is that teachers should ensure that learners are able to communicate intelligibly and appropriately in English.

Candlin (1978:54) concludes that we have to bring in audio-visual means of communication so that the learners' interpretative and expressive ability can be developed. He adds that films offer the opportunities of authentic language in context. Through films learners can see who the speakers are, how they look,

how they are dressed, how old they are, and how their gestures support or contrast what they are saying. Audio-visual aids introduce students to the foreign language and its people.

In short, such materials will be the means by which they can bridge the gap between classroom language and an effective capacity to participate in real language events.

Thus, being exposed to audio-visual means of communication is of great importance to the learners. This is so because speaking and listening go hand in hand as Widdowson (1957:58) comments: "What is said is dependent on an understanding of what else has been said in the interaction."

According to Harmer (1983:308), there are many good reasons for encouraging students to watch while they listen. This allows them to see a whole lot of paralinguistic behaviour. For example, they can see how intonation matches facial expression, and what gestures accompany certain phases (e.g. shrugged shoulders) and they can pick a range of cross-cultural clues. Films allow students entry into a whole range of communicative worlds: they see how different people stand when they talk to each other (how close they are for example) or what sort of food people eat. Unspoken rules of behaviour in social and business situation are easier to see on film than to describe in a book or hear on an audio track. He proceeds to suggest that in language courses, more

attention needs to be paid to the acquisition of receptive competence and that an important feature of materials designed to produce such competence would be authentic language materials.

By this, he means materials which have not been specifically recorded for the foreign language learner, but which were originally directed at a native-speaking audience. He did not forget to include that listening opportunities provide the learners with perfect opportunities to hear voices other than the teachers'. They also enable students to acquire good speaking habits, as a result of the spoken language they absorb and this helps to improve the pronunciation.

In the same regard, Kathleen (2005:8) declares that through films, learners will be aware of sign language or gestures used by speakers of the language they are learning. To illustrate this, he says that the 'ok' sign used in United States, (formed by making a circle with the thumb and the forefinger) means that something is worthless in France. This implies that learners must be exposed to audio-visual means of communication in order to watch while they listen which will enable them to discover paralinguistic features associated with speakers of the language they are learning.

#### **2.4. Fear of making mistakes and being laughed at.**

Richards (1974:129) points out that you cannot speak a language you are learning without goofing. Learners need to know that mistakes are inevitable

when learners are using a language they are learning. Supporting the same idea, Riddel (2001:141) states that if you are trying to use a language you are learning, you will inevitably make mistakes.

Harmer (1983:16) concludes that even native speakers constantly make mistakes when they are speaking. They hesitate and say the same thing in different ways, and they often change the subject of what they are saying in mid-sentence. For example, a person might ask someone to dinner by saying: "I wonder...I mean, I was wondering...if you would like to come to dinner?" The message is an invitation to dinner; much of what was said did not help to communicate that message and was therefore unnecessary. The implication here is that learners should not fear to make mistakes when speaking a language they are learning in order to get more opportunities for practice.

Bright (1970:1) indicates that teachers should avoid being rude when correcting students' mistakes. In trying to help students overcome their learning mistakes, teachers are to be patient with their learners. The utterances that the teachers should avoid include: "How many times have I got to tell you?", "I'm always telling them but they go on making the same mistakes", "What on earth does that mean?" because nobody ever wants to be wrong. He further stresses that the only solution is to encourage learners to accept their responses and improve upon them. However, he advises that the teachers should give their students as much opportunities as possible to make mistakes. Learners on their part should

do a lot of practice and success will come with careful and regular practice and imitation.

For Willis (1981:2), neither teachers nor learners should worry too much about mistakes. The important thing is that learners understand and be understood. Both learners and teachers have to play their part. Thus, teachers should encourage learners not to worry about being wrong. By doing so, learners will achieve quality spoken language that is desired. He adds that when teaching English correction of mistakes should be kept to a minimum or your students will lose confidence and give up. The implication here is that if teachers make too much correction, learners will feel ashamed of their mistakes and they will give up.

Through the whole literature review presented above, different authors focus on matters related to learning oral language in general and learning oral English in particular. ❀

Our work is different in that it shall deal with the effect of the linguistic environment-related factors on the development of oral expression in English.

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## **CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1. Introduction**

The effect of linguistic environment on the development of oral expression is the concern of our study. We used a number of strategies to come out with a solution to our problem. The method we used to collect data is 'Questionnaire'.

The population from whom the data were collected comprised some secondary school pupils from the following schools: Lycée Rutana; Lycée Communal Gifunzo; Lycée Communal Bukemba.

Samples were selected through 'Systematic List Sampling' method which will be explained in detail under sampling section.

### **3.2. Population**

To carry out our research, the target population we chose to work with was the students of First Form Arts Section from three secondary schools in Rutana province. We chose these pupils because they are supposed to have had more opportunities of exposure to the English language than other pupils from other sections. So, they are supposed to be effective users of English language in Burundian secondary schools.

### 3.3. Sampling Techniques

We could have carried out the research using all the pupils. But since it was not easy or even possible samples were taken.

The systematic List Sampling method was used. We proceeded by asking the teachers how many pupils were in their classes. We then made a long list of numbers from one up to the number corresponding to the size of the class. The total number of the pupils was divided by fourteen, since we wanted to use fourteen pupils from each class. The result after the division constituted the interval.

To get the fourteen pupils we needed for the sample, we went down the number list, starting by any number inferior or equal to the interval. This was the number corresponding to the first pupil to whom the questionnaire was administered. We went ahead by adding the interval until we had fourteen pupils, the size of our sample. No names of pupils were mentioned on the list.

To be clearer, let us take for example, a class of forty-two pupils. To have the interval, we took forty-two and divided by fourteen. The result was three. The number corresponding to the first pupil is inferior or equal to three; that is, 1, 2, 3. We then took the chosen number to which we added the interval to have the number corresponding to the second pupil. This was done systematically until we had the fourteen numbers.



Then we asked the teachers to look for fourteen pupils corresponding to the numbers we gave them, since pupils were alphabetically numbered.

Finally, a questionnaire was administered to the chosen pupils one by one.

### **3. 4. Data collection procedures**

The data collection was done with the help of a questionnaire. A number of questions were put to the informants. We used both open-ended and close-ended questions. An open-ended question means a question in which the respondents can decide what to say and how to say it. Close-ended question, on the other hand, means a question in which the range of possible responses is determined by the researcher.

A number of techniques were used to make our respondents feel valued. To start with, friendly greetings were presented. A letter requesting contribution was also read to them. Some explanations about the questions were provided to the respondents so that they could feel at ease and deliver good information. The questions were formulated in a way that allowed the researcher to keep his main goal of the work. Then we handed out the questionnaire followed by a reading of the questions that the respondents answered freely.

### **3. 5. Data analysis procedures**

The data collected in this study were mainly quantitative in nature, that is, they were detailed. They were then organised, analysed, and presented in an

understandable form. The data were handled through tabulation and interpretation as shown in the data analysis section.

In the analysis of the answers from the informants, we saw that they contained a lot of mistakes which could hamper the understanding of the message. This is why they were summarised in the table forms through well-structured and understandable sentences. Then a short interpretation of data was made after each question before the findings were presented. The conclusions to be drawn from the analysis were to be used in confirming or refuting the hypotheses upon which the study was based.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS**

### **4. 1. Introduction**

This chapter deals with the data analysis and findings of the present study.

Through it are mentioned the answers given by the respondents. These answers are analysed one by one and interpreted .The forty-two answers for each question, that is, answers from fourteen pupils from each of the three schools were analysed at the same time.

Once again, the data were collected from the first form Arts section pupils of three secondary schools in Rutana Province. The research questions that the study seeks to answer were the following:

- a) Do the Burundian learners of English have enough opportunities to practice the speaking skill?
- b) What the attitude of Burundians towards other Burundians who are speaking English?

### **4. 2. Data analysis**

From the questions presented to the informants, we expect to get answers to our questions. The following subsection shows the answers given by the informants to the same question school after school.

**Question One: Which language do you use most of your time?**

**Summary of the answers given to question one by all our informants from all the three Schools under our study.**

|           | Lycée Rutana |            | Lycée communal Gifunzo |            | Lycée Communal Bukemba |            |
|-----------|--------------|------------|------------------------|------------|------------------------|------------|
|           | Number       | Percentage | Number                 | Percentage | Number                 | Percentage |
| Kirundi   | 11           | 79         | 11                     | 79         | 8                      | 57         |
| Kiswahili | 1            | 7          | 0                      | 0          | 6                      | 43         |
| French    | 2            | 14         | 3                      | 21         | 0                      | 0          |
| Total     | 14           | 100        | 14                     | 100        | 14                     | 100        |

The above results indicate that the majority of our informants, 11 out of 14 (about 79%) at Lycée Rutana, 11 out of 14 (about 79%) at Lycée Communal Gifunzo, 8 out of 14 (about 57%) at Lycée Communal Bukemba do not use English in their everyday life. The answers given show that Kirundi is the language used by our respondents most of their time. This lack of opportunities to practise English language makes them be shy and be afraid of making mistakes which causes them to be unable to develop their oral expression in English.

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**Question Two: Do you have churches whose service is conducted in English?**

**Summary of the answers given to question two by all our informants from all the three schools under our study.**

|       | <b>Lycée Rutana</b> |            | <b>Lycée communal<br/>Gifunzo</b> |            | <b>Lycée Communal<br/>Bukemba</b> |            |
|-------|---------------------|------------|-----------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------|------------|
|       | Number              | Percentage | Number                            | Percentage | Number                            | Percentage |
| Yes   | 0                   | 0          | 0                                 | 0          | 0                                 | 0          |
| No    | 14                  | 100        | 14                                | 100        | 14                                | 100        |
| Total | 14                  | 100        | 14                                | 100        | 14                                | 100        |

Looking at all the responses given by our informants to the second question they all answered that they do not have churches where they can follow the service in English. This decreases their chances of listening to spoken English which can provide them with opportunities to absorb appropriate spoken forms.

**Question Three: Do you have English clubs where you speak English freely?**

**Summary of answers given to question three by all our informants from all the three schools under our study.**

|       | <b>Lycée Rutana</b> |            | <b>Lycée communal<br/>Gifunzo</b> |            | <b>Lycée Communal<br/>Bukemba</b> |            |
|-------|---------------------|------------|-----------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------|------------|
|       | Number              | Percentage | Number                            | Percentage | Number                            | Percentage |
| Yes   | 0                   | 0          | 0                                 | 0          | 0                                 | 0          |
| No    | 14                  | 100        | 14                                | 100        | 14                                | 100        |
| Total | 14                  | 100        | 14                                | 100        | 14                                | 100        |

The answers given by our informants to the third question reveal that all our informants do not have English clubs in their schools. This partly prevents them from getting opportunities to practise their speaking skills.

**Question Four: Do you watch plays presented in English?**

**Summary of answers given to question four by all our informants from all the three schools under our study.**

|       | Lycée Rutana |            | Lycée communal<br>Gifunzo |            | Lycée Communal<br>Bukemba |            |
|-------|--------------|------------|---------------------------|------------|---------------------------|------------|
|       | Number       | Percentage | Number                    | Percentage | Number                    | Percentage |
| Yes   | 0            | 0          | 0                         | 0          | 0                         | 0          |
| No    | 14           | 100        | 14                        | 100        | 14                        | 100        |
| Total | 14           | 100        | 14                        | 100        | 14                        | 100        |

From the above results it was observed that learners of English in Rutana province never watch plays performed in English. This is a big challenge since watching plays may expose learners to various accents and different spoken forms of the language they are learning.

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**Question Five: How often do they show you movies in English?**

**Summary of answers given to question five by all our informants from all the three schools under our study.**

|           | Lycée Rutana |            | Lycée communal Gifunzo |            | Lycée Communal Bukemba |            |
|-----------|--------------|------------|------------------------|------------|------------------------|------------|
|           | Number       | Percentage | Number                 | Percentage | Number                 | Percentage |
| Never     | 13           | 93         | 9                      | 64         | 8                      | 57         |
| sometimes | 1            | 7          | 5                      | 36         | 6                      | 43         |
| Always    | 0            | 0          | 0                      | 0          | 0                      | 0          |
| Total     | 14           | 100        | 14                     | 100        | 14                     | 100        |

The above results reveal that the majority of our respondents, 13 out of 14 (about 93%) at Lycée Rutana, 9 out of 14 (about 64%) at Lycée communal Gifunzo, 8 out of 14 (about 57%) at Lycée Communal Bukemba are not shown movies in English. This makes them miss ample opportunities to be exposed to various accents and pronunciation which may enable them to understand speakers from different English-speaking regions.

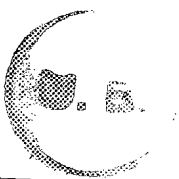
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### Question Six: Do you listen to BBC or Voice of America?

Summary of answers given to question six by all our informants from all the three schools under our study

|       | Lycée Rutana |            | Lycée communal Gifunzo |            | Lycée Communal Bukemba |            |
|-------|--------------|------------|------------------------|------------|------------------------|------------|
|       | Number       | Percentage | Number                 | Percentage | Number                 | Percentage |
| Yes   | 5            | 36         | 4                      | 29         | 1                      | 7          |
| No    | 9            | 64         | 10                     | 71         | 13                     | 93         |
| Total | 14           | 100        | 14                     | 100        | 14                     | 100        |

Looking at the answers given to question six, it is revealed that the majority of English learners 9 out of 14 (about 64%) at Lycée Rutana, 10 out of 14 (about 71%) at Lycée communal Gifunzo, 13 out 14 (about 93%) at Lycée Communal Bukemba, do not listen to BBC or Voice of America (V.O.A). As is the case with question 5, learners do not get enough opportunities to be exposed to various listening opportunities. This makes them be unable to understand some English speakers who have accents and pronunciation they are not familiar with.





**Questions Seven: Do you often initiate conversations in English with your classmates?**

| School              | Answers                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Lycée Rutana</b> | <p>P1)No,I fear mistakes</p> <p>P2)No,they will laugh at me</p> <p>P3)Yes, I try sometimes</p> <p>P4)No they can say I am arrogant</p> <p>P5)Yes,with some friends</p> <p>P6)No,they say speak Kirundi</p> <p>P7)No,I am afraid</p> <p>P8)Yes,I speak with my friends</p> <p>P9)Yes,I can speak sometimes</p> <p>P10)No, they will laugh my mistakes</p> <p>P11)No, I fear</p> <p>P12)No,I am afraid</p> <p>P13)No, they can laugh</p> <p>P14)No,they all speak kirundi</p> |

| School                            | Answers                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Lycée Communal<br/>Gifunzo</b> | <p>P1)Yes,I try</p> <p>P2)No,they laugh at me</p> <p>P3)No,they don't like to speak English</p> <p>P4)Yes, with my friends</p> <p>P5)No</p> <p>P6)No,I am afraid</p> <p>P7)No,I fear mistakes</p> <p>P8)No,they laugh at my mistakes</p> <p>P9)No,I am afraid</p> <p>P10)No, we speak kirundi</p> <p>P11)Yes with my friends when reading notes</p> <p>P12)Yes</p> <p>P13)Yes</p> <p>P14)Yes, I try</p> |

| School                        | Answers                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Lycée Communal Bukemba</b> | <p>P1)No,I am afraid</p> <p>P2)Yes,I can speak with my friends</p> <p>P3)No,they don`t like to speak English</p> <p>P4)Yes, with my friends</p> <p>P5)No</p> <p>P6)No,I am afraid</p> <p>P7)No,I fear mistakes</p> <p>P8)No,they laugh at my mistakes</p> <p>P9)No,I am afraid</p> <p>P10)Yes, when going home with my friends</p> <p>P11)No</p> <p>P12)Yes</p> <p>P13)No</p> <p>P14)No</p> |

From the above results, it was observed that a vast majority of our respondents, 10 out of 14 (about 71%) at Lycée Rutana, 8 out of 14 (about 57%) at Lycée Communal Gifunzo, 9 out of 14 (about 64%) at Lycée Communal Bukemba, do not initiate conversations in English with their classmates. Reasons are various. Some say that they fear to make mistakes and be laughed at. Others say that they don't want to be taken for boastful.

**Question Eight: Do you feel free to speak English when there are people around who do not speak it?**

| School       | Answers                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Lycée Rutana | <p>P1)No,I am afraid</p> <p>P2)No,they will laugh at me</p> <p>P3)Yes,I try</p> <p>P4)No,they say I am arrogant</p> <p>P5)Yes</p> <p>P6)No,I am afraid</p> <p>P7)No,I fear mistakes</p> <p>P8)Yes,I sometimes speak with my friends</p> <p>P9)Yes,I can sometimes speak</p> <p>P10)No.They will laugh</p> <p>P11)No</p> <p>P12)No.I am afraid</p> <p>P13)No</p> <p>P14)No</p> |

| School                            | Answers                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Lycée Communal<br/>Gifunzo</b> | <p>P1)No,I am afraid</p> <p>P2)Yes,I can speak with my friends</p> <p>P3)No,they don`t like to speak English</p> <p>P4)Yes, with my friends</p> <p>P5)No</p> <p>P6)No,I am afraid</p> <p>P7)No,I fear mistakes</p> <p>P8)No,they laugh at my mistakes</p> <p>P9)No,I am afraid</p> <p>P10)Yes, when going home with my friends</p> <p>P11)No</p> <p>P12)Yes</p> <p>P13)No</p> <p>P14)No</p> |

| School                        | Answers                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Lycée Communal Bukemba</b> | <p>P1)Yes,I try t</p> <p>P2)No,they laugh at me</p> <p>P3)No,they don` t like to speak English</p> <p>P4)Yes, with my friends</p> <p>P5)No.They are angry and they say “I am arrogant.”</p> <p>P6)No,I am afraid</p> <p>P7)No,I fear mistakes</p> <p>P8)No,they laugh at my mistakes</p> <p>P9)No,I am afraid</p> <p>P10)No, we speak kirundi</p> <p>P11)Yes with my friends when reading notes</p> <p>P12)Yes</p> <p>P13)Yes</p> <p>P14)Yes,I try</p> |

The above results revealed that learners do not speak English outside the classroom. Reasons are various and they are the same as those given when answering question seven. Some say they are afraid of making mistakes. Others say they fear to be considered arrogant or boastful.

### **Question Nine: What do you think should be done to improve your Oral Expression?**

**Summary of answers given to question nine by all our informants from all the three schools under our study.**

|                    | Lycée Rutana |            | Lycée communal Gifunzo |            | Lycée Communal Bukemba |            |
|--------------------|--------------|------------|------------------------|------------|------------------------|------------|
|                    | Number       | Percentage | Number                 | Percentage | Number                 | Percentage |
| Films              | 3            | 21         | 4                      | 29         | 3                      | 21         |
| Radios             | 3            | 21         | 3                      | 21         | 4                      | 29         |
| English Clubs      | 4            | 29         | 4                      | 29         | 4                      | 29         |
| Oral presentations | 4            | 29         | 3                      | 21         | 3                      | 21         |
| Total              | 14           | 100        | 14                     | 100        | 14                     | 100        |

From the answers to question nine, many things are to be done to improve learners' Oral Expression in English. Our respondents gave a number of suggestions which revealed what they think should be done to improve their Oral Expression in English: establishing English Clubs, being shown films in English, allowing pupils to own radios, encouraging oral presentations in classroom, are the many remedies to cope with the problems faced in English learning in general and in speaking skill in particular.

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### **4. 3. Findings**

Throughout this section, comments on the collected data and points of view of the researcher are presented. This part is important since it relates the answers given by the informants to the questions put to them, all of which stem from the objectives of the work. The salient findings of the study are presented below.

#### **4. 3. 1. Opportunities to practice the speaking skill.**

This heading deals with matters related to practicing the speaking skill and conclusions will be related to the first hypothesis which is: “ The Burundian English learners have few opportunities to practice the speaking skill.”

##### **4. 3. 1. 1. Absence of opportunities to practise the speaking skill.**

Burundian pupils learn English but do not have enough opportunities to speak it. Our respondents also share this point of view by indicating that they most of the time speak English in classroom and rarely out of it. Answers given to questions One, Three and Seven are typical to this issue. For example, 30 informants out of 42 (about 73%) said that Kirundi is the language they use most of the time. This demonstrates that the English language is learned in classroom, but is not spoken out of it, that is, in social life. Out-of-school activities which can involve learners of English in real and realistic communication are inexistent.

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It is obvious that the development of oral expression for Burundian learners is still a big challenge. This phenomenon implies that they will not be able to express themselves as stated by Kyeyune (1991:23) when he says that: “Pupils should demonstrate their understanding of the spoken word and the capacity to express themselves in a variety of speaking activities.” Thus, oral practice is to be given enough attention because it helps to practise pronunciation and be spontaneous during conversations.

It is also evident that learners of English in Rutana province do not have audio-visual materials which can provide the only opportunity to discover the forms that people actually use, to meet the forms of language current in speech, and to provide the learners with many paralinguistic features associated with the language they are learning.

Opportunities to practise the speaking and listening skills help learners to practise pronunciation, to be spontaneous, to be familiar with accents other than the teacher's and discover nonverbal behaviour connected with the language being learned. This may enable the learners to communicate effectively and freely with various speakers of English.

So far, the hypothesis one which is “The Burundian English language learners have few opportunities to practice the speaking skill” has been confirmed.

Note that learners of English in Rutana Province do not get enough opportunities to practice the speaking skill.

#### **4. 3. 2. Attitude of Burundians towards other Burundians who are speaking English.**

Through the answers given by informants, it is evident that learners fear to make mistakes and be laughed at. They also fear to be taken for boastful. This demonstrates that Burundians have a negative attitude towards other Burundians who are speaking English. This may be due to the status of English in the environment. The language is taught as a school subject .It is not used as a medium of instruction in schools nor a language of communication outside the classroom. This is one of the main problems encountered Burundians who are learning English. Answers to questions7 and 8 support this idea. Let us quote Pupil 10 from Lycée Rutana answering question 7: “No. they will laugh at my mistakes.” Likewise, pupil 5 from Lycée Communal Bukemba when answering question 8 is also illustrative: “No. They are angry and they say “I am arrogant.” Looking at the above quotations of the answers given by the informants to question 7 and 8, hypothesis 2 which is “The Burundian English learners of English fear to make mistakes and be laughed at”; has been confirmed.

Learners, inevitably, tend to refrain from speaking. This will delay or hinder the development of Oral Expression. Learners need to understand that mistakes are

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inevitable when one is using a language one is learning. Through practice learners can improve their oral expression as stated by the English proverb, “practice makes perfect.” It is implied here that learners need to practice more to be better. Everybody can improve even if they have no great talent for language. Through the answers provided by our respondents, one can conclude that learners fear to initiate conversations in English because they are afraid of making mistakes and being laughed at.

This chapter was the core of this work. It is really the main part of this study since it handled the “Data Analysis” and “Findings.” Through it the data were presented and analysed in an understandable way. It is divided into two sections, that is, “Data Analysis” and “Findings”.

## **CHAPTER FIVE:**

### **GENERAL CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5. 1. General Conclusion**

This chapter is concerned with the general conclusions and some recommendations that would help solve the problems faced by Burundian learners of English while developing their oral expression. Through this present work, we have undertaken a research on the effect of linguistic environment on the development of oral expression. The focus has been put on spoken English by secondary school pupils of upper level, that is, First Arts Section. A language is not only a matter of reading and writing correctly, it is also a matter of appropriate speaking. The most important aspect of a language is speaking because people speak far more often than they write and read.

This study was divided into five chapters. The first chapter was concerned with the general introduction. Through it, the following information has been given: background of the problem, statement of the problem, motivation, objectives of the study, hypotheses, research questions, scope and delimitation of the study and justification and importance of the study.

The second chapter dealt with a review of literature related to this study. It emphasised the views of other researchers who had dealt with spoken language in general and spoken English in particular. It has equally shown the interests

drawn from the literature and the difference between previous studies and the present study.

In the third chapter, emphasis was put on the methodology used in connection with how data were collected and analysed. Actually, when someone has to do something, the procedures that are used are not always the same as the ones used by others. We used a 'questionnaire' to collect data. The sampling of subjects to work with through 'systematic list sampling' was considered to be as objective as possible.

The fourth chapter led us to the analysis of the data collected. It is the core of this work since it handled the presentation of the answers provided by our informants their analysis and interpretation as well as the findings.

The fifth chapter which is the last and not the least dealt with the general conclusion and recommendations that would allow learners to overcome the problems they face when it comes to improving their oral expression in English. From the findings, it is obvious that Burundian learners of English in Burundi in general and in Rutana province in particular, face a number of problems if one considers the answers given by our informants. They do not have opportunities to practice English as often as possible. They do not initiate conversations in English for fear of making mistakes and being laughed at since many Burundians take other Burundians who are speaking English for boastful people.

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All in all, we cannot say that we have completely exhausted the topic. But we think our objectives have been attained considering the results obtained.

Two conclusions were drawn:

- a) The development of Oral Expression is negatively affected by the linguistic environment surrounding the learners. Learners do not have opportunities to practise the speaking skill. Due to the lack of these opportunities, learners rarely speak English in their everyday life. This undoubtedly hindered the learners' acquisition of the speaking skill.
- b) Learners fear to initiate conversations because they are afraid of making mistakes and be laughed at and being taken for boastful.

### **5. 1. Recommendations**

As the answers provided by our respondents reveal it, English learners of Rutana province face a number of challenges. To attempt to overcome them, some recommendations have been made:

- a) Teachers of English in Secondary Schools should create English Clubs and strengthen the use of interactive activities such as group discussions, debates, role plays, topics for discussion and story-telling to encourage learners to use language orally.
- b) Teachers should attend refresher courses, seminars, workshops to perfect their speaking as well as learn new techniques and methods of teaching English skills in general and the speaking skill in particular.

- c) Classrooms should be equipped with audio-visual aids: recorded BBC tapes, radios, films, cassette players, tape recorders, DVD players.

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## APPENDIX

### Questionnaire to the respondents

Please give the answer that best suits your opinion.

1. Which language do you speak most of the time in your daily communication?

- a) Kirundi      b) Kiswahili      c) English      d) French

2 . Do you have churches whose service is conducted in English ?

- a) Yes      b) No

3. Do you have English clubs where you can speak English freely ?

- a) Yes      b) No

4 . Do you often watch plays performed in English ?

- a) Yes      b) No

5. How often are you shown movies in English ?

- a) never      b) sometimes      c) always

6. Do you listen to BBC or V.O.A?

- a) Yes      b) No

7. Do you often initiate conversations in English with your classmates?

- a) Yes      b) No

If no, why ?

8. Do you feel free to speak English when there are people around you who don't speak it ?

- a) Yes      b) No

If no, why?

9. What do you think should be done to make you improve your oral expression?