THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE CURRICULUM FOR STATE PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN BURUNDI: AN APPRAISAL OF ITS ADEQUACY AND IMPLEMENTATION

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A Thesis Submitted in Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the School of Education, of Kenyatta University

NOVEMBER, 2015
DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university/institution for certification. The thesis has been complemented by referenced works dully acknowledged. Where text, data (including spoken words), graphics, pictures or tables have been borrowed from other works - including the Internet, their sources are specifically accredited through referencing in accordance with anti-plagiarism regulations.

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DEDICATION

To my children: Franck-Roland, Fred-Christian, and Fiona; and

To my old friend Elizabeth Dombori, in Kenya
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am most grateful to my supervisors, Dr A.M. Bwire and Dr S.M. Ndethiu, for guiding me through the process of doing scholarly research. To Dr Bwire, for her patience and whole-hearted encouragements; to Dr Ndethiu, for opening her door for me despite her many duties as Department Chair: your constructive criticisms, your questions, comments and suggestions have been an invaluable inspiration for my understanding of aspects of importance in scientific research.

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<tr>
<td>BEPEB</td>
<td>Bureau d’ Etude des Programmes de l’ Enseignement de Base (French for Bureau for Basic Education Curriculum Development)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEPES</td>
<td>Bureau d’ Etudes des Programmes de l’ Enseignement Secondaire (French for Bureau for Secondary School Curriculum Development)</td>
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<tr>
<td>BMD</td>
<td>Baccalauréat-Mastère-Doctorat. French for Bachelor’s-Master’s-Doctor’s degree</td>
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<tr>
<td>CLT</td>
<td>Communicative Language Teaching</td>
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<tr>
<td>COMESA</td>
<td>Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECFBSPS</td>
<td>English Curriculum for Burundi State Primary Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAC</td>
<td>East African Community</td>
</tr>
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<td>ELT</td>
<td>English Language Teaching</td>
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<td>ESL</td>
<td>English as a Second Language</td>
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<td>EF</td>
<td>English as a Foreign Language</td>
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<td>FL</td>
<td>Foreign Language</td>
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<td>IEC</td>
<td>Integrated English Curriculum</td>
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<tr>
<td>INSET</td>
<td>In-Service Teacher Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>KU</td>
<td>Kenyatta University</td>
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<tr>
<td>L1</td>
<td>A speaker’s first language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2</td>
<td>A speaker’s second language</td>
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<tr>
<td>MoE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>Presentation – Practice – Production</td>
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<tr>
<td>SB</td>
<td>Student’s Book (in this study: the Pupil’s Book)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SL</td>
<td>Second Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>SLEB</td>
<td>Syndicat Libre des Enseignants du Burundi (French)</td>
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<tr>
<td>TB</td>
<td>The Teacher’s Book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>TEFL</td>
<td>Teaching English as a Foreign Language</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
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Abstract

Burundi’s entry into the East African Community in 2005 led to English and Kiswahili languages being introduced in state primary schools so as to improve the population’s proficiencies in these two languages. The measure raised immediate concerns due to the lack of qualified teachers and adequate learning resources to teach these subjects. As far as English is concerned, although significant efforts have been deployed in the way of producing textbooks and training the practicing teachers, the efficiency of the proposed curriculum and its implementation in addressing the needs of the learners are yet to be established; hence the purpose of this study. The research objectives were: to analyze the textbooks; examine the resources and methods proposed for teaching and learning English; to assess the preparedness of teachers and school principals to implement the curriculum; to establish the effectiveness of the support provided to teachers implementing it; and to find out the challenges faced in actual teaching. The study drew on two theories, namely, the educational planning and policy theory, and the communicative approach for the 21st theory. It adopted a descriptive and exploratory design. Data was collected via a content analysis of all six Student’s Books and their accompanying Teacher’s Books, a classroom observation carried out in 5th and 6th grades, and questionnaires administered to a population sample of 371 teachers, 80 school principals in two provinces, one urban, and the other, rural, as well as to 8 curriculum developers for the primary school level. Both quantitative and qualitative data were obtained, which were analyzed descriptively using means, frequencies, and percentages; and presented in frequency tables, bar graphs, and pie charts. The findings established that the curriculum goals and objectives were not clearly spelt out to guide teaching; that curriculum contents were imbalanced with a tendency for more contents in the lower grades; and linguistic contents being irregularly distributed across the six syllabi. Also, the teaching approaches were found to lean toward the mastery of mainly vocabulary, paying little attention to meaning. It was further found that the in-service training programme had not reached all the teachers and school principals, and that the beneficiaries were generally not satisfied with its achievements. A rampant shortage of textbooks in the schools visited for classroom observation was also established. The recommendations were geared towards an improvement of the curriculum, based on the research findings, and an empowerment of teachers and curriculum designers so that they can better accomplish their interlinked duties of teaching, assessing, monitoring, and supporting implementation of the curriculum.
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

1.1.1 Recent educational reforms in Burundi and their implications.

Since the year 2000, the Burundi government has engaged in a series of educational reforms which have included the country’s commitments to Primary Education for All by 2015; free primary schooling; the restructuring of Tertiary Education into what is known in Burundi as the Bachelor’s-Master’s-Doctor’s Degrees system (BMD), and the introduction of three new subjects into state primary education. These new subjects were Kiswahili, English, and Civic Education; and they were set to begin simultaneously with the 2005/2006 school year. Officially, the former two were justified principally, although not exclusively, in terms of Burundi’s integration into the East African Community (EAC), the latter being linked to the peace and reconciliation agenda in the country. The latest reform is one initiated in September 2013 and which extended primary schooling – now preferred under the denomination of Basic Education or *Ecole Fondamentale* in French – to 9 years instead of 6 years previously. The stated intention for this reform, like for the BMD, was to facilitate integration of Burundi’s education system into other world education frameworks. A further goal of Basic Education has been put as the need to provide primary school leavers with solid foundations in literacy skills.

Most of these measures were instituted by the new government inaugurated in 2005, a context associated with the ending of almost two decades of socio-political turmoil. The expectations were such that all efforts were going to be focused on recovery in all sectors
of national life, since not one had been spared by the crisis. Educationally, these initiatives have necessitated an expansion of the schooling infrastructures to cope with the increase in school populations, and an in-depth restructuring of the system to accommodate the changes imposed on it by the bulk of measures in terms of new pedagogic instruments, human as well as financial capacities.

At the policy level, these initiatives have been accompanied with strong promises of quality education, a commitment which led to the creation of the Quality Assurance Board in 2009. In the eyes of many though, while these reforms might have been inevitable in a globalized world, their accumulation and timing, in a country with very limited resources, were seen as potential threats to their own successful implementation (Mivuba, 2009b; Rwantabagu, 2012).

1.1.2 Recent development of English in Burundi.

Burundi’s condition as a landlocked country and years of political unrest (1993-2005) have resulted in growing political and economic dependence on the East African sub region which brought with it renewed interest for the English language in particular. Emphasizing this condition, journalist Frazer for example, while reflecting on the impact of the 2007 post election violence in Kenya (The Sunday Nation 17th March, 2013) referred to “How important Kenya’s stability is to the economic prosperity of landlocked Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi” (p. 10). It is this dependence that has been presented by Burundi’s leaders as the driving force behind its formal adhesion to EAC in July 2007. As Burundi is a traditionally French-speaking country, its integration into EAC necessitated that the government, in conformity with Article 137 of EAC Treaty, review
the country’s language policies in order to accommodate the requirements establishing English and Kiswahili as the official languages of the Community.

The adherence of neighbouring Rwanda to the Commonwealth, the growing demands for proficiency in English in the labour market and in higher education, and the status of English as an international language have together combined with EAC to upgrade the English language in Burundi. A certain opinion would associate Burundi’s integration in EAC with “The beginning of English takeover as the country’s official language” (Mazunya & Habonimana, 2010, p.13).

The measure to introduce English and Kiswahili in Primary Education was generally met with positive attitudes, especially given the presence of children with a background in these two languages among the families returning from exile. For the first time in an English teaching curriculum, reference to communicative competence and the need to ‘speak’ the language were formally advocated, as this appears in the introductions of the Teacher’s Books for Grade 1 (MoE, 2006) and for Grades 3 & 4 (MoE, 2008). It is the “hasty character” of the measure (Mivuba, 2009a, p.5) and lack of consultations with those concerned which has been seen as a flaw in the process.

1.1.3 Language policies and status of English in Burundi.

Linguistically, Burundi has a monolingual population, with Kirundi as the native language. French is a language inherited from Belgian colonization (1919-1962), and it is spoken by the educated few (Nthalonkiriye et al, 2013). These two languages play the role of official language depending on audience and subject circumstances. English language
teaching (ELT) was introduced in the education system after the country’s achievement of independence in 1962 for strategic purposes of diplomacy and international affairs (Rwantabagu, 2011a). This has resulted in English remaining remote to the lives of the great majority of Burundians. Kiswahili is another language found in Burundi, but it is spoken in suburban areas and regions where trade is the general chief occupation (Mazunya & Habonimana, 2010). Apart from Kirundi, the status of the other languages either as ‘official’ or ‘foreign’ does not rest on any known legal basis due to vagueness of Article 5 of the constitution (2005) on the matter. As the proposed study develops then, English shall be held as a foreign language which is growing in Burundi, but with no recognized status beyond that of a subject on the curriculum.

1.1.4 An overview of the education system in Burundi.

Under the current constitution (2005), it is the state’s duty to organize and promote public education for all citizens (Article 53). Rwantabagu (2012), drawing on the Ministry of Education’s Sectoral Plan of the Development of Education and Training, gives the following translated version of the aims of the education system: “… developing the physical, moral and intellectual dimensions of the personality of children and young people … to enhance their adaptation … national culture … become responsible and productive members…” (p.5). These general aims are, however, arguably not clearly articulated in their level-by-level outlets.

Education is both centralized and state-sponsored for the most part (World Bank, 2007; Mivuba, 2009). A move to decentralize education supervision (primary and secondary) was initiated in 2010 through the creation of Provincial Directorates and Inspectorates of
Education; but the political nature of these positions (Decrees of 2010 & 2011) generally bind the holders to instructions from central administration. A common duty to both is to ensure ‘correct’ implementation of the curricula. The Provincial Director additionally serves as a recruitment bridge between employment seekers and the Ministry of Education (MoE) authority.

In Burundi, teaching is still dominated by the Transmission Models of instruction, with all that this implies with regard to learner and teacher roles, learning and teaching approaches, and the status of examinations. Speaking of the latter, national and annual examinations are used as a selection mechanism for those who proceed to secondary and tertiary education. They further play a role in teacher accountability, since performance is heavily integrated with a comparative system of examination results. As in most other countries, the system in Burundi comprises the four levels of pre-school, primary school, secondary school, and tertiary education.

**Pre-school**: pre-school is not state-supported, so it is generally confined to urban areas and private schools. Some English may be taught here, but only as a matter of school initiative.

**Primary Education**: since September 2013, this level was extended from 6 Grades to 9 Grades. The average entry age is six, while leaving age depends on success in the mandatory national Examination. Cases of 15-year-olds and over have been known to attend, subsequent to a disposition in The Arusha Peace Accord to facilitate general integration of refugee returnees.
Concerning the subjects, the primary curriculum from Grade 1 to Grade 6 comprises: Mathematics, French, Kirundi (core subjects), Environmental Studies, Physical Education, Music and Crafts, Agricultural Education (foundation subjects), Civic Education, Kiswahili, English, and Religious Education. Table1.1 gives an idea of how time allocation compares for language subjects at this stage and how it has improved for English, passing from 2 periods initially to 4 periods in 2013.

Table 1.1: Weekly time allocation for language subjects in Primary school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language subjects</th>
<th>Before 2005</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td>Grade 5</td>
<td>Grade 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirundi</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiswahili</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>In 2006 (Reform)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td>Grade 5</td>
<td>Grade 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirundi</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiswahili</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>In 2013</th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td>Grade 5</td>
<td>Grade 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirundi</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiswahili</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Department of Primary Education, Ministry of Education, Burundi (2013)
Two observations can be made here: one is that the increase in hours for English was not preceded by widespread consultations of teachers nor followed by connected changes in either content or guidelines, or both. The other is that French, being the instructional medium at secondary school, increases in time as pupils approach this level.

**Secondary education:** this level includes 3 streams: the general secondary which leads to tertiary education; the vocational secondary which, for the most, leads to professional life; and the pedagogical secondary where primary teachers are educated. For a long time unfortunately, this stream has been receiving the lowest achieving candidates in the end-of-junior-school National Test. Those with highest scores are sent into the general education stream which directly feeds into university. Candidates with medium scores are directed towards vocational education. Although ELT volume is largest at secondary level, it however remains low in the pedagogical stream, having passed from 2 hours per week to 4 hours only in September 2013. English is basically ‘general’ in all three streams.

**Tertiary level:** there are 2 state institutions of higher education in Burundi, namely the University of Burundi and the Higher Teacher Training College. This is where pre-service teacher education for the whole of secondary school is catered for. A controversial feature of teacher preparation has been the phenomenon of dualism which until 2012/13 consecrated teacher education into separate different programmes (offered within these two institutions), whereas the trainees were expected to teach the same curricula and class levels.
Competence wise, English as a foreign language (EFL) and curriculum development studies are among study areas that suffer because of a lack of qualified personnel, not having been ‘prioritized’ for study abroad where field specialization and postgraduate education generally take place. Equally important to mention at this point are the challenges for BMD in general to modernize the teaching and testing methods which are rooted in long traditions of ‘rote’ learning and teacher-centered approaches (Mivuba, 2009b; Rwantabagu, 2011b).

In the main, the education system has been weak in its provision for curriculum development and monitoring of the programmes. This has resulted in some curricula (for example, the English curricula for junior secondary and senior general secondary education) remaining in use for over 30 years with little or no update despite the changing needs of learners and new ideas in the areas of second and foreign language learning. Overall, if the period since 2005 has been fertile in new schools at different levels and higher enrolments, these efforts have not been matched with proportional efforts in the provision and development of appropriate resources. In effect, the possibility of standards further dropping is something that Quality Assurance needs to keep track of. Once this is fully recognized, maybe the next crucial step, also critical to its own existence and relevance, will be to confront the needs of the system from perspectives beyond the sole decisions of policy-makers.

1.1.5 English instruction and teacher education.

As a matter of policy, English instruction at primary and secondary levels is expected to draw on the strict respect of the official syllabi which will have been approved by the
Ministry of Education (MoE). Basically, these syllabi – usually in the form of textbooks – are designed locally, or else obtained through donations from foreign assistance projects within the MoE. It may be interesting to note that in the latter case, while the materials will offer better standards of the English language, they will generally be hardly relevant to the (Burundi) context and class levels. Notably, this is the case of the curricula in senior secondary school.

For a long time, public opinion in Burundi has been that secondary school constitutes the foundation and the most important setting for English language learning. This is because compared to university, secondary education provides a much longer period of exposure to English for learners, whereas English instruction at university is limited to the only teaching time for the ‘special’ English courses within different (non English) departments. Table 1.2 offers a view of how English, for example in the literary section (general secondary), compares with such core subjects as Mathematics, French and Kirundi – which are also subject to national testing.

At tertiary level, English teacher education is provided in three departments, two of which are attached to the University of Burundi, with the remaining being established within the Higher Teacher-Training College. One of the University’s departments – the Department of English Language and Literature – although not specializing in pedagogy, also participates in producing teachers of English. This is likely to affect quality of ELT in Burundi, and to a certain extent curriculum design.
Table 1.2 Weekly time allocation for core subjects in the literary section

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Junior Level</th>
<th>Senior Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Before 2005</td>
<td>In 2006 (Primary Reform)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Form 7</td>
<td>Form 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirundi</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Department of secondary education, Ministry of Education, Burundi (2013)

With a sense of realism, one observes that English is given due weight as a subject, in comparison to French, a major language in the literary section. If the learners’ speaking proficiency remains critically low including in the university departments where teachers of English are trained, this is to be blamed on the rather ‘passed’ teaching methods described above (Mivuba, 2008; Rwantabagu, 2009a), coupled with large classes, the
tendency to teach towards the examinations, and a somewhat ‘hostile’ practice environment. Together, they constitute the major reason why the English laureates embark on teaching with a critically low level of communication proficiency in English.

A second factor in the poor provision of quality instruction in English is the current textbooks’ tendency to emphasize the introduction of new language and subsequent intensive practice focused on controlled work which leaves little opportunity for learners to experience using the taught language creatively, or to discover its uses in instances of authentic situations. Given that teachers have to closely follow the procedures in the textbooks, the risk of routine and poor balance in the activities/methods becomes high.

Further impediments are expected to come from the recruitment into Primary teaching of candidates who fail the State Examination, a recent measure in addressing issues related to teacher insufficiency, the use of course books based on old-fashioned structural methods, and the scarcity or even lack of opportunities for teacher professional enhancement and development. The absence of a clear plan for teacher training (Mivuba, 2009b) together with instability in the leadership of the MoE caused by frequent politically-motivated reshuffles (Ndayisaba, 2010), may themselves have complicated execution of the ECFBSPS. The situation since 2005 points to 10 years of flawed implementation which deserves the attention of educational research; but like teaching, this component, too, is under-resourced in Burundi.
1.1.6 Professional development of practicing teachers.

The professional development and enhancement of teachers is an area that has remained a major challenge in the Burundi education system. Mivuba (2008) argues that in the few opportunities that are provided, professional development has generally been tied to the introduction of new curricula and/or to new teaching subjects, something that can be regarded as “the norm” (Tomlison, 2013) across the system.

The general trend has been for the MoE to organize seminars or workshops – generally lasting a week for the longest – and involving a number of teachers selected from the population of the teachers concerned. The activity, which does not follow from a needs survey of the prospective beneficiaries, so far has been the sole responsibility of the MoE through the curriculum development services with the help of the officials from the MoE central administration (planning department and inspectorate), and since recently, the Provincial and the Communal Directorates. Teachers are introduced to the new programs or teaching principles, then expected to exchange on them in the hope that this exposure and sharing will lead to a mastery of the newly introduced elements. Such processes are more focused on the MoE through the trainers fulfilling its own agenda rather than addressing the teachers’ concerns, a situation which contributes to the learning and knowledge enhancement of teachers remaining inadequate (Mivuba, 2008), and with it, a continuing decline in the learners’ proficiency in English.
1.1.7 Curriculum design.

There are two institutions for curriculum design in Burundi, known under the French acronyms BEPEB and BEPES, and which are both state-sponsored and administered. They are responsible for various teaching materials used in the public primary and secondary levels. The curricula for state education are generally written from the point of view of prescribing a particular practice, mainly due to the total dependence of curriculum services on the central administration authority, and partly due to lack of enough options for the designers.

No academic department in Burundi provides for curriculum development studies. Curriculum designers essentially rely on personal intuition and teaching background to do their job. In addition to the elaboration of materials, designers are charged with pedagogic visits to schools for curriculum follow up, and the organization of in-service teacher training (INSET). These duties are however not part of the pre-service education that they receive at university, that is, as prospective teachers. Teacher capacity-building may therefore sometimes be a responsibility beyond their own abilities.

So far, the major curricula designed locally are *English Skills* (first produced in 1983) and *Primary English Course* (Book 1 produced in 2006). The former is used in junior secondary school, and the latter in primary school. A common feature of the two texts is their heavy reliance on features of the audio-lingual method and grammatical approaches to ELT. This is so despite the age differences between the two materials, a situation which suggests that ELT in Burundi has been slow to innovate. It is worth noting that the
Primary English Course text is not backed by any known syllabus or curriculum statement to this day, which is why it is referred to as the ‘English curriculum’ in this study. For practical purposes, the acronym ECFBSPS was used throughout the study, standing for the English Curriculum For Burundi State Primary Schools.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Two serious challenges that immediately affected implementation of the ECFBSPS and which were voiced publicly include lack of competence and TEFL skills among teachers, and the poor provision of teaching/learning materials (Mazunya & Habonimana, 2010). Similar revelations were made in Mivuba’s (2009a) study which was carried out in 12 (out of 16) provinces and involved the diversity of curriculum stakeholders. Initial excitement over the initiative quickly paved the way to mixed feelings. On one hand, the English language curriculum was, according to public opinion, a major instrument in helping learners of English – in Burundi in general – improve on their communicative competence. On the other hand, there was a sense that the conditions of its implementation were not in place, especially with regard to teacher preparation and preparedness. These problems gained the most visibility with the Teachers’ Unions (e.g.: SLEB) denouncing the government’s move to undermine their complaints.

The appointment of a Support Committee comprising 5 members from Central Administration and 3 BEPEB designers (MoE, March 2006) task to “Identify the needs for an effective implementation of the ECFBSPS, plan and coordinate in-service training (INSET), and establish a time line for all needed activities” (MoE, 2006, p.1) did
not dissipate the problems. The first teacher training sessions, which later were extended to the school principals, were gradually organized, from which a sharing of knowledge and experience was expected between the trained teachers and their untrained colleagues in the schools. Clearly, these dispositions and the succession of events point to the unease and confusion that surrounded launch of the ECFBSPS, notwithstanding the little time that was available for its design.

No documented initiative known to this date has been taken by the education authority to establish the adequacy of the curriculum and the effectiveness of its implementation. The proposed mechanism whereby the in-serviced teachers and school principals would share their learning with their non-in serviced colleagues itself has not been investigated to know whether it has produced the desired learning outcomes, or not. This has been so despite the ECFBSPS not having been piloted, whilst being regarded as an important innovation in ELT in the country.

That problems may have continued to be experienced inside the classroom could have been expected. Indeed despite these interventions, problems have persisted which ought to be clearly identified and located to guide action and decisions around this programme. The researcher judged that it was only timely and necessary that a field investigation focused on the primary English language curriculum and its implementation be conducted in order to fill the gaps in the information held by the authorities; and this appraisal has been a step in this direction.
1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the research was to assess the public primary English language curriculum with a view to establishing the adequacy and suitability of the tools and resources necessary for an effective implementation of its stated goals: and the extent to which the latter are being achieved.

1.4 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this research were to:

a) analyze the objectives, the content, the methods and resources in the textbooks used to teach the English language in state primary schools;

b) establish the level of preparedness of the teachers, the school principals, and the curriculum designers to implement the English language curriculum;

c) establish the effectiveness of school administration and curriculum design as state support services to the implementing teachers;

d) investigate the challenges faced in teaching English in state primary schools.

1.5 Research Questions.

The research was guided by the following questions:

a) What are the goals, contents, methods and resources in the books used to teach the English language in Burundi primary schools?

b) What is the level of preparedness of the primary English language curriculum implementers?

c) What is the effectiveness of school administration and curriculum design as state support services for the primary level?

d) What are the challenges experienced in actual implementation?
1.6 Significance of the Study

This study is significant in several ways: firstly concerning the education authorities, it could bear for them insights into the need for a curriculum which emphasizes skills integration and communicative language teaching (CLT) generally as an ingredient for enhancing learner communicative proficiency. In this sense, it would be possible to apply similar reflection on other curricula used in the Burundi system. Secondly, it could trigger in them a more informed understanding of the benefits of curriculum appraisal as a multi-purpose instrument in monitoring the performance and possible impacts of educational innovations.

There are also benefits for teachers and school administrators, essentially based on the understanding that the teacher remains the common denominator between school improvement and learner success (Derewianka, 2013). Under this understanding, a possible assumption is that sound subject-awareness and training of the teachers in the present study is probably the investment most beneficial in scope, as this may form a knowledge base that can reshape their attitudes to and understanding of teacher education in the context of innovation or change.

Joint participation of teachers and school principals in the training programmes has even more benefits. It ought to be a strategic planning decision, considering that on one hand, if teachers are helped to perform better, the pupils will benefit in terms of language achievement, a situation which should strengthen the position of both the school and its administration – the principal in this study. On the other hand, if the school
administrators – who are generally promoted from a primary teaching position – understand the rationale for, and relevance of, the improvements suggested about key areas of the English curriculum, they will be in a good position to offer more efficient support for its implementation, not to mention the learning that they will derive from the challenges identified in the implementation and the recommendations made on them. Their further benefit lies with the study’s advocacy for collaborative use of appraisal, an exercise which not only could innovate the appraisal of teachers, but foster teacher learning and development through collegial supportive action.

Apart from teachers and school administrators, this study is potentially beneficial for the BEPEB, in that in addition to the above, it has clarified certain aspects of the EFL curriculum and syllabus design as well as INSET model from a different angle, especially taking account of the context. As such, it could provide a learning opportunity, knowledge from which they could integrate in their planning of future revisions of the ECFBSPS and/or INSET programmes.

The study could finally benefit the Quality Assurance Board in Burundi and in (former) francophone countries that are shifting towards inclusion of English in their national curricula for primary schools, or may be wondering whether to do it. Overall, appraisal stands chances of winning confidence as a permanent strategy at the service of educational planning, creating an important innovation in policy on education.
1.7 Study Assumptions

The assumptions underlying this study were that:

a) All state primary schools teach the English language using the state-provided curriculum
b) Primary school teachers receive in-service training on how to implement the curriculum
c) School principals and BEPEB offer support to implementing teachers.

1.8 Scope and Limitations of the Study

1.8.1 Scope.

The implementation of the English curriculum was done gradually grade by grade yearly (from 2005/2006) beginning with grade 1; so it has already reached grade 6. The study covered Grade 1 to Grade 6, but for purposes of manageability, it was limited to Reading and Writing skills when ‘observing’ for skills integration. The investigation involved primary school English teachers, school principals, and the English Unit staff at BEPEB. School selection included both urban and rural settings, and was limited to two districts only – Bujumbura Municipality (urban) and Mwaro province (rural).

1.8.2 Limitations.

The first limitation was the distance from the host university (KU) and Burundi, the place of data collection. The second limitation was related to security in reaching and staying in certain parts of Burundi at a time when already existing tension since the 2010 elections rose high at the dawn of new general elections (May-June 2015). Such concerns made the researcher take longer to collect data as care was to be taken to do it when it was reasonably safe to traverse the two areas. As seen later in their non-response to some
items, the possibility of some principals and teachers having a stake in the said curriculum could have influenced their objectivity in responding to the questionnaires. It may be necessary to point out that these constraints did not compromise the quality of the data collected, as it was limited to two districts.

A further limitation was the unexpected organization of the National Examination at completion of grade 6 instead of grade 9. This indeed resulted in teaching stopping earlier in grade 6, causing classroom observation to be confined to the only grade 5 level. As pupils are oldest at grade 6 (average age: 12/13 years), and given that this is where most teaching of reading is done, its unavailability led to classroom observation being narrower in scope, although the data collected was relevant. Finally, the scarcity of research on the ECFBSPS within Burundi meant that reference to previous studies and findings in the area would have to be confined to foreign sources.

1.9 Theoretical Framework
This study has drawn on a combination of two theories for its theoretical framework. These are the theory on Educational Planning and Policy (Wolf, 1976), and the theory on Communicative Language Teaching for the 21st century (Savignon, 2001). Wolf (1976) advances that educational planning can achieve its aim of being an aid to decision-making “only if it promotes programmes which are aligned to defined aims and has a clear strategy for action” (p.84). The author observes that non alignment with defined aims might result in wastage in terms of funds, time and energy on the part of curriculum stakeholders, while jeopardizing attainment of the expected outcomes. Wolf (1976) further underlines the interactive nature of the relationship between educational planning
and educational policy, which must be seen as an on-going process of mutual corrections. This thought is important to the present study in that it emphasizes the need for educational planning to continuously include research such as appraisal into curriculum selection and implementation in order to accommodate necessary changes and improvements, and do so both timely and inclusively.

The theory by Savignon (2001) on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) for the 21st century has contributed to a deeper understanding of the revolutionary nature of language teaching, but also of the complexities surrounding this teaching approach, which stands as the most recent innovation in EFL methodology. It has also guided the review of important factors of communicative competence as a goal assigned to the ECFBSPS, and an examination of its application in the context under study.

The author underlines the dynamic nature of language teaching, showing how CLT won its prominence over other teaching methods in the last quarter of the 20th century. She specifically points on the role played by its proclamation of the goal of communicative competence in its success over the previously dominant audio-lingual approach. Commenting on the latter method, she states, “… the shortcomings of the audio-lingual method are now acknowledged” (p.14). She also portrays the importance of learner communicative needs as a basis for goals setting and materials selection in curriculum development, suggesting a shift to teaching which is oriented towards realistic language use by the learner, and draws on techniques that are designed to foster his/her active involvement in the learning process. As such, CLT promotes learner-centered approaches and considers that while mastery of the forms is important in EFL, it is useful only to the extent that it is intended to help and allow the learner to make meaning of the (target)
language that he/she learns, tries to receive and produce – in other words, to function interactively in communication situations.

According to Savignon then, there are 3 elements that are essential to the application of CLT in the 21st century. They relate to an understanding of its principles, why it developed, and its varying interpretations; the needs and the goals of the learners; and the traditions of classroom teaching and the context or the situation in which teachers have to apply it. This is certainly awareness of the kind that would help ELT in Burundi adjust its approaches to keep pace with developments in this field which put value in practices that engage the learner in experiencing communicating meanings through the two processes of self expression and interpretation.

Combined, these two theories share two commonalities which are the need for any educational innovation to be preceded by careful planning, and to remain open to change, even if change may involve acceptance of criticism. The theories then led to the researcher setting out to assess, among other things, three important aspects of the research topic, namely, the extent of alignment of the primary English curriculum to the aims defined for the programme; the strategies and actions in the form of resources undertaken by the Burundi government to ensure viable support to its implementation; and the inclusion of key principles of CLT and their relevance in the English curriculum for the primary level.
1.10 Conceptual Framework

Figure 1.2 is a representation of the framework of the study, in which the key variables around the ECFBSPS and their relationships are presented.

**Figure 1.1**

**Conceptual framework for the appraisal of the adequacy and implementation of the English language curriculum for Burundi state primary schools**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent variables</th>
<th>Intervening variables</th>
<th>Dependent variables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Curriculum</strong></td>
<td><strong>Intervening variables</strong></td>
<td><strong>Outcome/effect:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Suggested content; learning goals; learning activities and teaching methods</td>
<td>- Teachers’ and pupils’ attitudes to the English language subject-</td>
<td>- Adequacy of curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Suggested resources</td>
<td>- Teachers’ and pupils’ background knowledge in English</td>
<td>- Improved implementation strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Teacher-preparation and professional support from school principals &amp; BEPEB</td>
<td>- The school environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This framework highlights three important areas which form the major concern of the appraisal exercise. They are: the curriculum, its implementation, and the expected outcome. At curriculum level, the appraisal involves the suggested goals; the learning content and activities; The appraisal also considers the teachers’ readiness and support to teach EFL to primary learners. The appraisal further looks at the teachers’ and learners ‘attitudes as well as their background knowledge, together with the role played by the
school environment in the implementation process. With regard to outcome, the appraisal is expected to trigger adjustments in the curriculum content, methods, and resources, as well as a rethinking of strategies for more effective teaching of the programme.
1.11 Operational Definition of Key Terms

Adequacy (Curriculum): the extent to which the English language curriculum in the proposed study addresses appropriate goals and fits the language needs of its learners.

Appraisal: the process of assessing the extent to which the contents in the ECFBSPS and the teaching techniques, together with actual instruction delivery, help achieve its goals.

Communicative competence: ability for the pupil to use English with meaning and to respond appropriately to context of use.

Curriculum: in the title: the programme of English as given in Primary English Course up to Book 6, Pupil’s Book and Teacher’s Guide.

Form: class level in Burundi secondary system of education. The first form in junior level is Form 7; the first in senior level is Form 3. Students graduate or go into university after Form 1.

Implementation: execution of the English curriculum in all 6 Grades of the primary level.

Literary section: one of 3 sections in general secondary school. It focuses on languages.

Rote learning: method of learning in which the learner equates his learning with the only knowledge provided by his teacher and may occasionally learn it through memorization.

Teacher performance: the teacher’s demonstrated ability to implement the curriculum, using efficient techniques in delivering, but also reinforcing instructional input.

Trained teacher or principal: who has attended the English primary in-service training
CHAPTER TWO
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter set to explore the available literature for critical insights in the development of themes of interest in the present study, presented under these subheadings: important considerations in EFL curriculum development; curriculum evaluation and appraisal; syllabus design for FL; programme implementation in EFL settings; teacher education for primary English instruction; appraisal in professional development and educational research; and issues and considerations in educational innovation.

2.2 Important Considerations in EFL Curriculum Development

2.2.1 Curriculum and syllabus: concepts and functions.

The terms curriculum and syllabus are often used with ambiguity (Nunan, 2001) in the literature; yet both teachers and curriculum developers need to be clear about which of curriculum or syllabus they have in mind at particular times of their professional transactions. Throwing some light on their underpinnings is not only part of the kind of broad awareness they need, but it should also facilitate shared understanding of subsequent discussions with a bearing on them. Confusion is, for example, illustrated in the definitions by Ross et al (1972), Nunan (2001), Ayot (1984), and Ahmad (2013). A close look at the most recent of these definitions may clarify the point: “Syllabus is sometimes equated with materials – in the sense of activities, exercises, passages and techniques designed to assist learning in a particular curriculum” (Ahmad, 2013). This statement is clear until the same author now states: “Curriculum can be a master, a
servant, an end, resources, teaching aids, a syllabus”. One cannot fail to notice the ambiguity that surrounds the bold-faced terms in the two definitions. In a few cases the two terms are used synonymously (Ross et al, 1972); but most definitions would suggest a relationship of hierarchy in which curriculum offers the framework on which the syllabus will draw. In this connection, Nunan (2001) indicates that “Curriculum development must answer questions related to syllabus design, methodology, assessment, and evaluation” (p. 55).

A blend of Harmer’s (1983) and Nunan’s (2001) definitions may be more comprehensive with syllabus if it is viewed as language content for a programme of study, which has been selected, sequenced, and justified for the purposes of teaching within a particular situation. Curriculum then will have the function of clarifying the goals/purposes of such a programme, the kinds of contents, teaching and evaluation approaches that will be utilized to achieve and assess attainment of those goals. Whereas these definitions may represent the widely held views of these 2 terms (or tools rather), the interpretation of curriculum in this study will conform to its operational definition as given in chapter one of this thesis. Other interpretations will conform to that contained in this same paragraph.

Considering that the meaning of either concept seems to be in the mind of the user, the implication or BEPEP and BEPES in the present context would be to create for their partners (teachers and education supervisors) common understanding of the functions entrusted with the instruments underlying the terms. This, too, should form part of the essential knowledge that is needed to proceed to the implementation of a particular
programme. Byrd (2001) maintains that when such guidance is made publicly known, it helps those with some responsibility for the programme to gain a complete picture of what resources exist (or not), and to integrate this knowledge in the planning of further work around the programme in question. For example, a teacher who knows that there exists a curriculum statement will use it to learn about the pedagogical goals of the programme, thus guiding his/her methodological practices. On the other hand, knowing that such a document does not exist might encourage the search for informal help by consulting with colleagues who are teaching the same course or those who have taught it before (Byrd, 2001). This seems to be an undervalued way of learning, though.

Finally, there is the need to caution against the dangers in the conceptualization of either instrument as a “master” or as an “end” as referred to by Ahmad (2013). In the former case, there is a risk that the curriculum may ‘enslave’ the individual teachers, killing any sense of creativity and flexibility in them; on the system’s level, the practice of ELT would continue to produce students who are good at textbook English, yet who are unable to communicate in it in the real world. Given the possibility of the curriculum and/or the syllabus being at the same time the textbook (Byrd, 2001), some insights may then come in handy for teachers operating in such contexts. Probably the guidance from Crookes and Chaudron (2001) is worth considering: “For the untrained teacher, a good textbook can stand in for a syllabus … training programme … experienced teacher … as an aid, adopting some parts, adapting others, … the utility … average textbook … typical present-day ESL/EFL course … unquestioned …” (p. 30).
2.2.2 The central role of needs assessment.

In modern EFL, successful teaching and syllabus design are seen to be inherent in learner purposes and perceived needs for learning English. CLT in particular, has not just revolutionized instructional methodologies; it also brought about a different approach to syllabus design through its consideration of learners’ needs or purposes for the target language as the starting point in curriculum development (Nunan, 2001). What this means is that learners’ goals will form the basis for the kinds of “spoken and written discourses that the learners will need to comprehend and to produce” (p.58). Of equal importance to note is that in proposing a needs analysis, the proponents of CLT had in fact shortened the process of having to identify every element of the target language that learners could possibly need to learn – a task that practically was judged rather tedious, if not impossible (Nunan, 2001).

A general trend in needs analysis is relating needs to learners’ occupations and interests (Harmer, 1983; Johns & Machado, 2001). Nunan (2001) cautions, however, that in situations involving General English or those involving young learners, it is not easy to put a finger on how exactly and where the learners will be using the English language once their studies are completed. Whereas this recognition is not useful in comprehensively guiding the work of syllabus design in these situations, it should neither imply precluding the learner needs issue from classroom or school-level discussions (even if only as a way of bringing the learners to have some idea of the rationale for their subject and its instructional requirements) nor undermine the search for what in the particular situation could reasonably explain the teaching/learning of English.
In the EFL situation of Burundi, for example, the EAC context can now be used to imagine foreseeable needs for English which may include discussing political/economic projects, studying in EAC member states, engaging/interacting with their peoples for business or trade, visiting friends who reside there, participating in sports events or cultural exhibits, employment, and so forth. Some of these purposes are increasingly being referred to in official speeches and ordinary talk by those in the public who have a grasp of the advantages associated with English in a rapidly changing world. They could then provide a realistic framework for a possible reappraisal of the curricula in current ELT in Burundi (Mivuba, 2009b; Rwantabagu, 2011b).

**2.2.3 Goals and objectives setting.**

A distinction between goals and objectives is especially necessary for teachers with poor pedagogic and EFL preparation. Such familiarization can be valued in terms of the capital it constitutes in the work of materials design and course supervision. Nunan (2001) defines *goals* as broad general purposes for language learning. Halliday (quoted in Nunan, 2001, p. 58) extrapolates, enlisting three major purposes as follows: “To obtain goods and services, to socialize with others, and to entertain and enjoy oneself”. According to Nunan (2001), these 3 broad goals/purposes may be translated into more elaborate and refined statements such as to:

1) Obtain goods and services through conversation and correspondence  
2) Discuss topics of interest  
3) Listen to or read information, process it, and use it in some way  
4) Participate in conversation for the pursuit of common activities with others  
5) Establish and maintain relationships through exchanging information, ideas, opinions, attitudes, feelings, experiences, and plans; and to
6) Give information orally or in writing, based on personal experience, and so on.

A moment’s thought about these few goal examples may inspire the classification of the goals in number 3, 4, and 5 as true of the students in most English classes, regardless of whether they learn English for general purposes or otherwise. Goals in number 1, 2, and 6 can easily apply to learners in Burundi in general, more so easily if they have reached a stage at which they are able to understand what the EAC is about, something that cannot be achieved by the sole teacher of English, let alone one in primary school. The perspectives that a needs survey provides for the formulation of goals and objectives cannot be overemphasized.

Some would argue against too much specification in goal/objective formulation (Nunan, 2001), for its threat to teacher flexibility; but counter arguments evoke the need for a system to set national standards for examinations purposes, to use goals as a way to encourage teacher accountability, to create a sense of security for the inexperienced teacher, especially where a prescribed textbook is used; and to provide the teacher with an opportunity to (learn how to) write his/her own additional objectives. Additionally, this exercise might force him/her to focus and reflect on his/her learners’ needs as he/she plans the lessons, adding purpose and meaning to the plan. This is, after all, an important exercise in the life of a teacher who aspires to grow professionally (Celce-Murcia, 2001; Harmer, 1983).

What precedes points to the risk for a curriculum not inspired by a needs assessment of its users resulting in instruments with inadequate goals and objectives; and with the risk,
the likelihood of the contents (methods and activities) not being suitable for their community of users. This on its turn might, if not inhibit objective appraisal or evaluation of the instruments, then complicate adoption of its outcomes for lack of informed foundations for them. Two final observations are worth making here: for one, the imbalance noted in much of EFL literature and which favours goals at the expense of objectives specification in terms of examples is not without consequences on their perceived status. For the other, the most vulnerable teacher who expects to equally derive from literature concrete examples of objective formulation is left at a loss by the very people who, speaking through the same literature, continuously recommend him/her to ‘read’ extensively to broaden or enhance his/her knowledge.

2.2.4 The goal of an EFL curriculum.

The description of Burundi as an EFL setting comes from the distinction generally made between what is known as environments where English is taught/learned as a foreign language (EFL) and those where English is taught/learned as a second language (ESL). Wilga Rivers in Arnold (1994), for example, offers the following distinction: “In the former setting, teachers are dealing with people who do not have a community speaking the language within which to interact extensively. In an ESL environment, a learner has a much greater opportunity for contact with the target language” (p.123). The EFL description suits the Burundi setting.

In the ELT field, competition of instructional methods and materials has been exacerbated by the surge and heterogeneity in the population learning English as a second language (SL) or as a foreign language (FL) around the world (Larsen-Freeman, 2012).
The surge has been found as attributable to the emergence of English as global language “Fuelled by mobility of populations in search of jobs and better living conditions and parents … their children to have opportunities … a knowledge of English will provide” (Larsen-Freeman, 2001, p. 24). To this reason could be added the growing initiatives by countries from different linguistic backgrounds around the world to integrate into regional communities. Such are the cases of EAC and COMESA in sub-Saharan Africa, as illustration. This situation has slowly, but steadily, influenced policies around ELT in countries traditionally ranked as EFL settings into adopting significant changes in their education systems. Nunan (2013), for example, enlists the teaching of English to young learners as one of two standout innovations in recent ELT, the other being technology-enhanced learning. Other typical changes have been observed in terms of added pressure to revise – or even change – the existing curricula in an effort to respond to new requirements and aspirations in the field (Ediger, 2001). This spirit has been observed in Burundi since the late 1990’s.

The expansion of English and the globalization process have entailed more contacts and interactions among people from both types of settings, hence making EFL a more meaningful practice than it once was. In this connection, the President of Burundi for example, in an address (2009) to local communities upon inauguration of schools built by the grassroots in different provinces, invited Burundians to “undertake active learning of English and Kiswahili” (p. 4). The arguments used emphasized what he called in Kirundi language “imigisha y’akazi no kwikorera ivyabo ata nkomanzi mu bihugu dusangiyi ishirahamwe EAC” [ foreseeable job and business opportunities within EAC member
states]. This is proof that, increasingly, the old view of English as a subject for analysis is paving the way for its utilitarian perception, and that Burundians in general have reached a point where they can realize the need and possibility for extensive practice of English – and Kiswahili. This should inspire teachers into encouraging learners to gradually view the teaching of English in association with goals beyond success in examinations – by trying to see themselves into the future. Their views may still be very embryonic at this stage; but the idea is to entice their intrinsic motivation towards why they are made to study English now. Harmer (1983) argues that intrinsic motivation is something largely in the hands of the teacher, as the person most responsible of the teaching method. Hahn (1994) concurs, saying: “No matter how poorly-motivated a learner … the aware and sensitive teacher can develop strategies to generate, harness, and sustain a motivational dynamic …” (p. 83).

The vision on English in Burundi was much different 20 years ago when English was confined to the classroom. In this perspective, there is reason to believe that Burundians, as learners of EFL, are most probably being driven by the same kind of aspirations as their counterparts in ESL settings. Concurring with this view, Savignon (2001) remarks that “Regardless of the various communicative activities in the ESL/EFL classroom, their purpose remains to prepare learners to use English in the world beyond the classroom” (p. 23). EAC, in the present case, is certainly beyond the classroom.

It therefore appears that the general wish underlying current curricular innovations in EFL – and thus the aim – is to have programmes of study geared toward equipping
learners with proficiency levels which should enable them to pursue an educational goal (for example, in a bilingual, or a well-reputed academic institution operating in English), and in the long run to become competitive (for example, on jobs which require good skills in English). This suggests a shift of focus from mastery of the language system being an end, to formal accuracy becoming a transition necessary to achieve the goal of developing learner abilities and skills in English. In Burundi for example, there has been growing interest in preparing prospective TOEFL-sitters to develop a range of abilities in English which are relevant to this test, but are not adequately catered for in the formal system. This has led to a rise in the private English catering structures, and more pressure on them to improve their English programmes by expanding them to the goal of succeeding in this test and later study in English abroad. These types of changes may not be easy in the state system, because of the practice of English having to conform to decisions of a political nature; generally determined at a level beyond the ELT sphere.

Assuming that the shift has been established, three critical functions are to be assigned to the EFL curriculum: to provide learners (and teachers) with a clear rationale for learning English in their situation, to impart in them the language knowledge (grammar, vocabulary, functions) necessary to understand and express themselves reasonably in English, and above all, to allow for substantial opportunities which help learners to start experiencing how English is used to make meaning.
2.2.5 Adequacy of a primary EFL curriculum.

Like any primary school subject, a TEFL programme for primary school must be guided by certain acknowledged criteria. Nunan (2013) stresses the importance of the findings from child psychology (Piaget, 1955) as a guiding principle in the teaching of children below 13 years of age – who happen to correspond to the age groups in the present study. Nunan holds that those findings offer an understanding of what children are able to do or not to do, and how they perceive the world around them, depending on their developmental stage. He recommends 4 questions to guide an appraisal of decisions around teaching and selecting materials for them: Is the curriculum age/developmentally appropriate? Are the teachers specifically trained to teach foreign languages to children? What is the intensity of instruction? Does the instruction cater for ALL of the learners’ needs: cognitive, physical, psychological, and social? Obviously, the second and fourth questions pertain more to the area of implementation than to the curriculum angle, which is the main area of the other questions. The overlap between the implementation and instructional materials seems naturally related to their close relationship in practice.

Using the above enlightenment, a number of characteristics can be drawn to determine the suitability of EFL materials for young learners. They must be both at the cognitive and language levels of the pupils. In other words, they should allow for a level of challenge that the children can afford. In this connection, Derewianka (2013) cautions that abstract concepts of grammar will prove fruitless with children who have not yet
reached the stage of formal operations (from 11 years). They must also cater for the knowledge needs of young children. Growing children are curious to know/learn things (Harmer, 1983), and they learn through social interactions involving someone who knows more; so, the materials must stimulate their curiosity, and also provide for acquisition of knowledge. Children are also known to learn through hands-on experiences (Sevik, 2012), so an ELT programme for children should also include opportunities for language learning alongside manipulative experiences. On an emphatic note, Linse (cited in Derewianka, 2013, p. 235) argues in favour of a “whole learner approach which appeals to all the learners’ senses”, so that children are steadily active.

The implication for curriculum design is an inclusion of varied, level-friendly activities, with a blend of fun attached to them, so that they provide the enjoyment and sense of success necessary to keep the learners motivated. Songs, games, and role-play are known for their power in achieving these purposes, with an inspired teacher (Bourne, 1994; Bennett, 1994). Another implication is the necessary inclusion and use of features (teaching aids) that meet the curiosity of children (Harmer, 1983; Ediger, 2001). Examples of these include colours, images or drawings, visuals, concrete things/objects (e.g.: boxes, toys). By seeing and handling objects, children feel facilitated, therefore less anxious, in trying to integrate new concepts.
2.3 Curriculum Evaluation and Appraisal

2.3.1 Rationale for teacher participation.

Many teaching situations involve teachers using a textbook. Whether the textbook is prescribed or can be approached with flexibility, its function is to “Provide content and teaching/learning activities that shape much of what happens in the particular classroom” (Byrd, 2001, p. 415). Yet to many teachers, use of a textbook will rarely have involved the process of its selection. This usually occurs in centralized systems of education where most decisions are taken in a top-down fashion (Karras & Wolhuter, 2010), leaving the teachers totally excluded from the administrative processes in their schools. This is notably the case in Burundi. Such tendency can be criticized for disregarding the potential of some experienced teachers to influence decision-making in the right direction.

Support for teacher participation in textbook selection/evaluation, or even preparation, derives from the rationale for the teacher to know about the efficiency of his/her textbook in attending to its instructional mission. Byrd (2001) argues that teachers who are aware of the criteria that led to the selection of their textbooks become more integrated in the larger systems in which they work. It seems equally arguable that these criteria can, in return, inspire the teachers’ planning of instructional strategies to serve the needs of their schools or systems. The same author recalls that textbooks are primarily meant for teachers and for students, and that any decisions about the books ought to pay attention to the provisions made for these two categories of users. In this light, integrating a component about how to analyze a textbook for implementation would add value to
INSET planned for the primary English teachers and principals. From the affective point of view, it can be purported that teachers whose participation in school work is expanded beyond routine teaching for sound purposes, feel more valued professionally, perhaps even more motivated than their counterparts whose participation is confined to teaching.

2.3.2 An exploration of the processes.

In spite of whether the teacher played a role or not in his/her textbook selection, he/she will be faced – at least morally – with catching the worth of the resources it offers. Appraisal then offers itself as a useful mechanism for this kind of monitoring. A clarification of *evaluation* and *appraisal* is perhaps useful to guide understanding of decisions that result from the two processes, and Byrd (2001) may here be helpful. The author suggests two guiding questions to be considered prior to any process, namely *Who decides?* and *What for?* The terminologies ‘Evaluation for Selection’ (ES) and ‘Analysis for Implementation’ (AI) are then proposed to distinguish the two activities. The same author explains that ES addresses three main issues which concern the fit between (a) the materials and the curriculum (b) the materials and the students (c) the materials and the teachers. The basic question here is *Does this book have the features that I want it to have so that we can adopt it?* A conclusion is drawn that “Evaluation is about making a judgment call – yes/no, buy it or do not buy it …” (p.417).

Turning to the AI process, Byrd (2001) explains that although the categories under consideration in the two exercises are the same, the purpose is however different. The basic question now becomes *How do I as a teacher working with particular students in a particular class in a particular programme make this book work to ensure effective and*
interesting lessons? It therefore appears that, contrary to evaluation, appraisal is textbook analysis in the implementation process. It does not aim to discredit the book, even though such a risk can never be totally avoided (Byrd, 2001). In appraising his/her textbook, the teacher is exploring what it offers, and working out ways of using it to deliver the best possible instruction with it. Similar views are expressed by Rea (1983), Wilson et al (1983), and Mattingly (2012), but it has to be observed that all three authors are more expressive about textbook evaluation. While they provide illustrative models for evaluation, they make no concrete suggestions for appraisal.

The above clarifications make it possible to view curriculum appraisal in the much wider context as having three targets which are: to improve quality and performance of what exists; to identify aspects and needs of the curriculum in real time; and to describe their actual effects, trying to propose what needs to be done in order to counter the undesired ones. These generalizations are notably echoed through Goddard and Emerson’s (1992) insights on school appraisal. The authors state: “Appraisal promotes quality by monitoring and improving the effectiveness of each individual teacher. . .” and that “An appraisal scheme starts with the assumption that teachers can improve their performance” (p.3). Resulting from these statements is a sense that appraisal is a process that demands objectivity in as much as possible, and to be seen in association with suggestions in the form of improvements to fill the gaps identified during the process.
2.3.3 The role of competence in textbook appraisal.

With the above exploration of the underpinnings of the two processes (curriculum evaluation/appraisal) in mind, a few considerations can be made. One is that ES and AI both require a broad awareness of factors that come into play in (the target language) teaching/learning and the dynamic nature of their interactions in different contexts of situations. Experience of textbook AI is another, and it certainly constitutes a strong asset on the part of the person tasked with either exercise (Rea, 1983; Harmer, 1983). This then provides a rationale for the third and last consideration which addresses educational planning. In a move to build a strong vision for (any) new curriculum initiatives, it seems justified, even desirable, to incorporate a materials-evaluation/appraisal component in the pre-service preparation courses of those responsible for its implementation and monitoring. In Burundi, for example, this component has its due place in both the secondary and tertiary levels of the system. The aim would be to ensure availability of competence for this responsibility if and when necessary.

2.4 Syllabus Design for English as a Foreign Language

2.4.1 An exploration of widely held views around the design process.

New developments in ESL/EFL have increasingly discredited conceptions of second/foreign language learning as habit formation or rule acquisition which have alternately been put forth over the past century (Fotos, 2001). The now acknowledged view of language as communication instead of as rules of usage (Widdowson, 1978), and the value given to learner language needs assessment in the elaboration of courses have
given rise to more use-oriented teaching approaches. (Celce-Murcia, 2001; Fotos, 2001). In this perspective, a more viable option for EFL curriculum design is seen to be one that strikes a good balance between grammatical competence and communicative competence (Fotos, 2001; Savignon, 2001; Kral, 1994). The importance of a balance between grammar and communication is captured in Fotos (2001) in these terms: “The best way to learn a language is not by treating it as an object of study, but by experiencing it meaningfully, as a tool for communication” (p.268). Referring to research findings, Fotos (2001) argues that “when learners receive only communicative lessons with no instruction on grammar points, their level of accuracy suffers” (p.268). Alternatively, the reverse might inhibit their fluency.

Recognition is generally made of Tyler’s four fundamental questions quoted in Nunan (2001) as a necessary first step for BEPEB (and BEPES) to embark on in their syllabus design processes, given their central role in ELT in Burundi. These questions are related to syllabus design, teaching methodology, assessment and evaluation. Their adaptation to the context under study could yield the following:

1) What are the purposes of ELT in Burundi and in primary school in particular?
2) What kind of linguistic and topical/thematic contents can be provided for the learners to attain those purposes?
3) What methods and techniques can be used to teach towards learner achievement of these purposes?
4) How can learner progress and attainment of these purposes be assessed?
Once this phase has been properly dealt with and all areas of perceivable learner needs have been explored, attention is to be given to the learning content, keeping in mind both the linguistic and thematic components, as well as the kind of learners.

Some opinion would suggest to suspend provision of the Teacher’s Guide to the personal situation of the teacher (Byrd, 2001). On a similar note, Crookes and Chaudron (2001) refer to situations where the teacher can even dispense with it completely. The realities of the ECFBSPS context, however, point to a strong need for this kind of manual, and indeed one which covers all of its components (Mivuba, 2009a). A comparative research involving learning achievements that were based on use or non-use of a Teacher’s Guide would be of much benefit in further guiding the debate.

2.4.2 The grammatical syllabus.

Recognition that the proliferation of approaches and methods in the past century has not produced “any single perfect method” (Celce-Murcia, 2001, p. 6) implies that in practice, the work of curriculum design may not be easy, even with eclecticism. For example, Nunan (2001) remarks that despite some differences at theory level, in practice, most syllabus proposals (at least 8 trends in last half of 20th century) ended up not being so different from the grammatical syllabus that they had come to replace. Nunan (2013) stresses that even in seemingly communicative commercial syllabi, there is still a predominance of language forms. He points out that the grammatical syllabus – just like the communicative one – is not restricted to TEFL, and that it enjoys popularity in many contemporary teaching settings. It still does in Burundi.
For its philosophy (Celce-Murcia, 2001), the grammatical syllabus was based on the assumption that language consists of a finite set of rules which can be combined in various ways to make meaning around grammatical structures and vocabulary items. The learner’s task was to master the rules which were then used to manipulate exercises such as substitution drills and pattern reproduction. Although this kind of syllabus was scrutinized for the emphasis that it placed on rules of usage and on the separation of language skills, the realization that successful communication was partly dependent on grammatical competence gave rise to Nunan’s (2001) idea for an integrated approach to syllabus design. Structural and functional features of the target language are here incorporated in a single design.

2.4.3 The communicative syllabus.

In trying to make a distinction between communicative and grammatical syllabuses, it is worth recalling the all too often caution against both the existence of a ‘communicative textbook’, and the exclusion of knowledge involving rules of syntax and discourse (Savignon, 2001; Larsen-Freeman, 2012). Savignon (2001) proposes, as a basis for the design of a communicative curriculum, five components which can successfully provide activities and opportunities for both language use and usage. They are:

i) **Language Arts:** in ELT, this category focuses on language analysis. Familiar activities such as translation, dictation, rote memorization, vocabulary explanation and expansion, as well as repetition exercises can be used.

ii) **Language for a Purpose or Language Experience:** *language experience* is the use of language for real and immediate communicative goals. Special emphasis here is to be put on opportunities for meaningful use of English rather than on target forms. In EFL
settings, learners need to be reassured that they are neither expected to understand every word nor to have all the words that they need to express themselves while responding or to speak with native like pronunciation. It will be important to recognize the need for a transitional period during which the old habits are paving the way for changes in attitudes (for example to error and working noise), different class arrangement (work in pairs for example), and during which the essential input is provided for the learners to start having ‘a go’ at using English.

iii) My Language Is Me: this implies respect for learners as they struggle to use English for self-expression. And respect requires, in addition to tactful error treatment (of formal errors that affect meaning), recognition that so-called ‘native like’ English is not the goal for learners.

iv) You Be, I'll Be: Theatre Arts: this component implies that the classroom is a stage where learners can enact various roles – sometimes improvised in fun fashion – to cater for language practice and use. With young children, this component is known to be an asset for self-discovery and growth.

v) Beyond the Classroom: this component is concerned with providing opportunities which prepare learners for language use outside the classroom, that is, ‘in the world beyond’. Different types of activities such as discussion groups and different channels of communication as for instance visuals, short messages, radio shows can be explored.

In the light of the complexity of learning and teaching circumstances of EFL, there is good reason to see a convenient place for an integrated approach inspired by relevant contributions from various schools of thought in ESL/EFL: In Celce-Murcia’s terms
(2001), “the only way to make wise decisions is learning more about the abundance of approaches and methods and find out which practices have proved successful” (p. 9). This also implies leaving room for flexibility and variety in the choices to be made at teaching level (Harmer, 1983). In the present study, some interest was put on understanding the nature of the approaches in the ECFBSPS.

2.5 Programme Implementation in EFL Settings

2.5.1 Theories and methods at work: the teacher as a resource.

The existence of diverse theories and methods in SL/FL language teaching and learning implies that the ability for teachers to implement any of the acknowledged methods for the most part depends on how knowledgeable one is about them. Yet in the light of the diversity of teaching environments and widening research in the ELT field, even the eclectic approach, as the most tempting trend in today’s EFL practice (Larsen-Freeman, 2001; Nunan, 2001) might still have to prove its presumed excellence over other methods before it can be recommended with confidence. Another factor of considerable importance in the success of implementation is attitude, as resulting from context-based teaching traditions (Crookes & Chaudron, 2001; Nunan, 2013). An example commonly referred to is teacher attitude to the textbook – or rather the TB in certain EFL situations where they can only afford a limited degree (if at all) of flexibility when they are teaching with a centrally-administered curriculum.

As guidance to implementation, Hudelson (1994) emphasizes the implementing teachers’ gains in taking time to explain their language-teaching method to their classes before
beginning actual teaching so as to build shared assumptions around the method in a bid to foster interest and cooperation. Deem it necessary to point out the importance of this being preceded by the teachers’ own move to gain a full understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the approaches that they are called to apply (Byrd, 2001). Waters’ and Vilches’ (2013) caution in this connection is worth considering. He posits that teachers should not assume students’ interest in pair work or other group activities designed to create an interactive environment, if they have been accustomed to teacher-fronted techniques. Drawing on his experience with Korean students, he observes that students here questioned the value of working with fellow students, because they viewed their teachers as authorities on correct English language. Likewise, teachers were found to meet some resistance when a new kind of activity was introduced because it disturbed their learning habits and expectations. With careful clarifications of how that could help them improve their English knowledge and skills, the barriers were successfully removed.

Beside these pre-requisites, there seem to be 2 elements of paramount importance to the implementation process in primary ELT in Burundi and from which others may follow. The first element is recognition and acceptance of learners’ errors as indicators of their efforts to try out using English, instead of as a sign of “their failure or weaknesses” (Savignon, 2001). It has to be emphasized that teachers of English need to be given clear, appropriate guidance about attitude to error, and the place of qualitative feedback, as part of their pre-service preparation. In order to bridge this gap in the current practices, the message has to be explicitly put across (including in the Teacher’s Manual) that if
teachers do not ‘welcome’ learners’ errors, it will be difficult to plan for opportunities that engage pupils in less teacher-controlled practice. Putting it in writing here is necessary in a context where teaching guidelines tend to be fully followed. For the same purpose, pupils need to be clarified – if need be, in writing – the meaning and function of mistakes in learning so that they, too, adjust their attitudes and move away from reticence to use English productively.

The second element offers the condition under which the above learning mistakes can occur, and it comes from our [EFL teachers] recognition that learners, in their capacity as human beings are able to initiate and to use English to make meanings which suit their own thoughts and interests, as they attend to our solicitations (Larsen-Freeman, 2012). An implication of this will be our further recognition that input alone, no matter how clear and comprehensible it may be, will not result in learner ability to communicate in English; and learners need this understanding – as part of their induction into the teacher’s general approach.

Teachers also need to know that progressive independence of the learners in using English is built with time, and that the output activities for self-expression are there to serve this goal. If need be, the teacher should clarify for them that this gradual independence, on its turn, will alleviate both our emphasis and their dependency on the teacher’s model, and perhaps rules as the most reliable ways to learners’ production of ‘correct’ spoken or written English. This calls for some changes in teacher attitudes to his/her own role as organizer of learning (2.4.3), so that appropriate conditions are
created (e.g.: interactional opportunities) to induce this kind of learning. The study sought to learn about the ability for teachers to deliver relevant instruction in English, and to organize their classes. In the process, attention was also given to the challenges that the teachers were facing as they were in action.

2.5.2 Key resources for the Burundi primary English curriculum.

Teachers of EFL are supported by various aids and resources in their teaching which, as in other subject areas, have to be prioritized. The valuable contribution of resources is probably best reported in Ayot (1984) where reference is made to an ancient proverb which holds that “If the teacher becomes the sole active passer of information while his pupils act as passive receivers, the pupils will soon forget most of what the teacher has said” (p. 134). Nzoma (2011), for example, having overviewed important learning resources, underlines the rich opportunities that they can offer to develop communication skills, and their power in making the learning experience more enjoyable and memorable. This power is seen as deriving from their capacity to involve a combination of senses during the learning process.

Ayot’s (1984) point was in relation to audio-visual aids in language learning, which are also relevant and necessary in the context under study. It is needless to mention that it can be extended to all other resources that assist the teacher in his/her delivery of instruction, assuming that both teacher and learners have the main textbook – and the TB in the teacher’s case. Since they cannot be detailed in the scope of this thesis, attention can be drawn on those with an immediate impact on the quality of instruction delivery.
Many visuals and realia, or other concrete objects are generally available in the teacher’s and children’s environments, and they can easily be relied on to aid teaching and learning. That teachers and learners involve themselves in providing them is only a matter of contributing to the success of their own undertakings, especially where other options may not be available. This brings in the financial power of the country as a determinant of not only the quality and quantity of resources to be supplied, but also the speed at which the supply will be made; hence the need to set priorities. Karras and Wolhuter (2010) cite systems of education in most sub-Saharan countries as the places where the situation is most critical, adding that some will simply opt for not recognizing the teachers’ legitimate concerns. Obviously, this is not in the interest of effective education; and although it may appear to be primarily an issue of planning (2.7), it seems that teachers and learners, as the primary beneficiaries would be better off if they were sensitized toward sharing some of the responsibility over inexpensive resources.

Setting priorities cannot be overemphasized in the Burundi context, perhaps in its extension to innovation support strategies. If parents – and teachers are among them – can afford contributions for school infrastructure works or teacher incentives, as this is increasingly the case, then similar efforts could be afforded for purchasing things like an English-French dictionary, posters, an audio tape or CD, a cassette or CD player, and others which are comparatively much less costly than say, a concrete wall around the school. But of course the emphasis here is on the importance of such resources in the implementation of the ECFBSPS. A good dictionary, for example, is a helpful tool in guiding pronunciation, spelling, and meaning (An important recommendation was made
to accord due attention to pronunciation in the primary English course!). In contexts where audio supports are lacking, the dictionary can help a great deal, even though it will not clarify all aspects such as tone and rhyme. Yet it has become common knowledge that deviant pronunciation can result in unintelligibility if non-native ‘Englieshes’ are left to deviate too much from the standard model (Bobda, 1994). The author reports cases of west African and Asian job seekers not meeting requirements of the English proficiency test because of deviant pronunciation.

Another useful resource for the primary programme, yet often neglected, is comprehensive methodology books; if they are availed for the teacher, they could fill some of the gaps existing in pre-service or INSET preparation, and perhaps in the textbooks as well (e.g.: exercise area).

2.5.3 EFL teaching and learning: a shared responsibility.

How participant responsibilities are shared in the learning process was an interesting aspect of implementation for the study because it is increasingly seen as a positive aspect of modern teaching in general. In the particular field of TEFL, a special call has been made for shared responsibility between teacher and learner, so that the latter is no longer ‘passively’ receiving knowledge, the former being at the other end – the ‘spoon-feeding’ end. Probably the image of this rather ‘passed’ process is better captured through Champeau de Lopéz’s (1994) description of the teacher’s role in an audio-lingual class: he/she was sometimes caricatured as “a combination drill sergeant and orchestra conductor” (p. 11). Notably, this is still happening in some teaching settings despite its decline in the 1960s (Larsen-Freeman, 2012). Perhaps what this analogy does not bring
out is the illusive sense of success or interest that some teachers of EFL may draw from, for example a big show of children’s hands looking for turns to repeat.

The major point, though, seems to be that successful teaching requires far more than a sound knowledge of English and some shallow training in the methodology en vogue. As illustrated in Figure 2.1, today’s language teaching is known to draw much, in addition to the subject matter, on other knowledge areas mainly psychology, sociology, and pedagogy (Champeau de Lopez, 1994; Bourne, 1994). Their input can help the teacher understand, for example, how children think and learn (Galton & Williamson, 1992), select appropriate materials and direct instruction toward efficient learning. Such understanding entails that the teacher is assuming diverse roles in which facilitating learning takes on prominence.

In Figure 2.1, a descriptive outline is made of the major areas of an EFL teacher’s knowledge, together with the set of sub roles that he/she has to perform as facilitator of learning in his/her classes.
In the main, what this diagramme suggests is that in playing his/her role as learning facilitator, he/she has to assume a set of related classroom sub-roles, and for which he/she is guided by knowledge of EFL supplemented by knowledge of his/her learner characteristics (also see 2.5; 2.3) and of the physical conditions and/or restrictions of his/her classroom context. These are influential in the choice of activities, techniques and management of instruction. In the perspective of ‘sharing’ responsibility with learners,
the teacher is expected to assume various sub roles aimed to facilitate learner self-involvement (Prodromou, 1994).

Sharing responsibility also assumes shared success, an important principle which for a long time in Burundi has been hindered by a system that holds the teacher accountable for learner success in examinations. According to constructivist learning models, the cooperative nature of language learning is such that the learner is viewed as “an agent in his/her own learning” (Bourne, 1994, p. 24). For example, Vygotsky (cited in Galton & Williamson, 1992) stresses the role of interaction in children’s learning. Bennet (1994), on his part, cites a research finding according to which learning is optimized when there is a sense of shared success in what has been learnt and accomplished. In primary school teaching, this conception emphasizes the importance of the teacher joining with the children to perform the activities (e.g.: singing).

What these new developments suggest, therefore, is that the teacher’s role has changed to that of facilitator of learning, from that of controller of knowledge (Crookes & Chaudron, 2001; Prodromou, 1994). The benefits resulting from such a switch of learners’ position to one where they assume some responsibility for their own learning are known to include, among other things, “relieving the teacher of the need to constantly supervise all students” and “an increased sense of relevance and achievement for the learner” (Crookes & Chaudron, 2001, p. 38). An integration of this viewing of classroom roles in primary EFL might take time to be achieved; but once again, a possible way to surmount this challenge may be for the curriculum designers to have
clear guidelines in the Student’s and the Teacher’s Books about the roles expected from
the teachers and the learners in today’s English classes.

2.5.4 Clues for teachers.

Time allocation for school subjects or even in-service training sessions may not always
allow for adequate understanding of important concepts in their theoretical exposure, yet
instrumental to their practical teaching. The clues offered in this section are intended to
clarify the concepts of functional teaching, language skills integration, and the meanings
of reading and writing in the context of young children. A few experiences of teaching of
children is further added.

2.5.4.1 A functional approach to language forms and skills.

The main agenda of a functional approach to language teaching is to develop in the
learners an understanding of the meaning of the language elements or features being
studied by locating them in the specific context in which they are occurring. Sometimes,
the context will be extended to the cultural setting in order for the language to take on a
complete meaning. As such, this approach differs from traditional grammatical models
which tend to give prominence to focus on describing the parts of speech and rules of
usage, paying little attention to how context affects meaning of form.

Clarifying context in its relation to a functional language model, Derewianka (2013) cites
its 3 characteristics, namely: the field, which refers to the domain of the topic being
developed (e.g.: technical, general); the tenor, which represents the social relations
between the interlocutors (e.g.: age, power); and the mode, representing the mode and the
medium used in the interaction (e.g.: written, visual). He then suggests that they form part
of the terminology that could guide the induction of teachers on TEFL oriented towards on a functional approach. In support of his suggestion, he refers to a personal experience which showed how an introduction of process, participants, and circumstances, and their relationships to text proved very helpful to primary teachers and learners in Australia who were experiencing functional teaching of English for the first time. As reported, they later admitted enjoying the changes that it had brought to their attitudes to English, this after they had received adequate support to implement the approach. This is an practical strategy that would certainly inspire teacher-education, materials design, and in-service training in Burundi.

With this understanding in mind, teaching of the language forms should be organized in a way that involves the students in discovering their meanings and their contextual uses, as well as in experimenting on how these dimensions interact in communication – assuming that their physical characteristics (e.g.: spelling) and their pronunciation are part of the input stage. This implies moving away from engaging learners in a good assimilation of language forms characteristic of most traditional views of language learning such as audiolingualism.

The output dimension, in particular, is often overlooked, or else dealt with superficially in Burundi despite its motivational potential for learning owing to established traditions and a culture of equating the ‘good’ learner with the ‘quiet’ or ‘listening’ one (Mivuba, 2009a). This is in disregard of the considerations precious to CLT that students can only learn to communicate by communicating, and that output is inherent in the learners’ need
and capacity to contribute to the learning process [additional knowledge] from their various background experiences, views, feelings and emotions (Savignon, 2001).

The tendency in many EFL classes to connect dialogue-learning with the mechanical objective of repetition and role-play as a memory exercise can serve as an example of the minimal interest placed on meaningful output. Language input could be enhanced by the teacher drawing attention to contextual use of specific linguistic features in the text, the circumstances of the interactions, and the qualities of the people involved in them, all before the repetition and memorization are done. It is generally expected that dialogues/conversations assume some characteristics of spoken (sometimes authentic) language which should be exploited for the interest of learning.

Beyond the meaning dimension, bringing these characteristics under learner attention should increase the likelihood of the text and learning around it being more engaging and enjoyable, given the opportunity created for learners to connect with language use in it, a way to possibly respond to children’s curiosity (Sevik, 2012; Derewianka, 2013). Children, in particular, will be likely to enjoy a functional approach if the topics and characters are appealing to their knowledge of the world, their interests, or else, if they have been properly introduced to them.

Complementarily, teachers of EFL involving older children such as the 12-13 year-olds in grade 6 in Burundi are called for to give output practice its due value, keeping in mind how precious classroom time is for learner exposure to English. What this means is
striking a balance between activities by ensuring that input comprehension is fostered along a communication continuum (Harmer, 1983). This may partly be achieved through the input and practice stages not always drawing on one context (for example the same that was used by the teacher during presentation) or through a diversification of working mode (oral, written), or still through an integration of skills at performance level. Harmer (1983) views this teaching as responding to learning goals beyond a single lesson, that is, planned for a unit or a set of units.

2.5.4.2 Listening and speaking skills in the primary level.

Some suggestions have been made which point to the area of linguistic content in many EFL textbooks suffering internal imbalance (Harmer, 1983; Nunan, 2013). Whereas efforts are generally deployed to ensure that there are grammatical and lexical elements and which are guided for their teaching, there however seems to be little provision on the teaching of language skills, especially in courses designed for young learners (Rea, 1983; Wilson et al, 1983) – and the ECFSBPS is no exception. This is a serious deficit considering the critical roles played by, for example, listening comprehension both as language input and in the learners’ reception of input (Sevik, 2012). Equally in participatory approaches, self-expression will be an important working mode. Similar efforts should be deployed in devising materials which can be used to facilitate the development of those skills and language-development strategies.

Essentially, most EFL textbooks, although they rely on the listening and speaking skills to introduce English in the first years of learning, have been lacking in providing a clear understanding of what is exactly being learned that is of relevance to their ability to use,
that is, to be functional in the 2 skills before they embark on reading and writing for example. It seems as though they were only learned as a transition to something else, for example the acquisition of grammar, or reading and writing. Sevik (2012) suggests emphasizing on meaning as a strategy to for the children to sharpen their listening comprehension, articulated and meaningful expression. Focus on listening and speaking skills here does not imply that reading and writing are not equally relevant skills at the primary level. They too have a place in the language content in the ECFBSPS. One of the purposes of this study was to establish whether curriculum design for the primary level had accounted for the linguistic content, and if this content is appropriate for its learners. Their neglect in the ECFBSPS has created a need in this study to provide some clues on how to tackle teaching them.

2.5.4.3 Teaching reading and writing skills at primary level: EFL setting.

The directive in the ECFBSPS is not to introduce the skills of reading and writing until the end of Grade 4 for reading, and the end of Grade 5 for writing, arguing that at this stage, children are not yet ready to produce their own stretches of text, or to interpret a given piece of text. While this may be partly true (Olshtain, 2001), it however raises questions about the new policy by the MoE on literacy as a fundamental component of basic education. Ediger (2001) observes that the growing move in EFL contexts to make ELT mandatory at a younger age entails that children “May not need to wait until they are orally fluent to begin to read and to write” (p.154). Partly, this is based on the curiosity naturally shown by children for print around them.
From a language teaching point of view, support for an early introduction and development of reading and writing comes from the wide recognition (Ediger, 2001; Kroll, 2001) of the importance of these 2 skills in academic contexts. Specifically, reading is seen as a valuable source of L2 input in some EFL contexts; writing on its turn constitutes a valuable means of communication for learners, especially within the framework of CLT. In this connection, Kroll (2001), for example, remarks that many ESL/EFL students are not highly skilled readers, having had limited opportunities to read extensively in English. Arguing for a cause-effect relationship between (non) proficiency in reading and the same in writing, Kroll (2001) concludes that “For this reason alone, ESL/EFL writing teachers are well advised to include a reading component in their writing classes” (p. 225). The argument can be pushed further if one considers the important place that writing enjoys in modern times with the advent of mobile telephony and the Internet – and young Burundians, too, are rapidly achieving this awareness.

With regard to how to develop reading and writing, Ediger (2001) proposes using comprehensive strategies which should focus on three goals: to enhance letter recognition, to practice sound spelling correspondences via all four language skills, and to help learners move from letters to words and meaningful sentences followed by larger units of discourse. Initially, the strategies may include exposing the students to many uses of print in their neighborhood, (for example: labels, notices, classroom chores, timetables), managing aspects of classroom business in writing, establishing a regular place to post announcements or messages or daily chores, and recording some of the classroom discussions in writing.
The major point being made here is that contrary to some ill advised opinion, it is possible to deal with literacy skills in elementary EFL classes, and do so in an integrated skills fashion. Teachers should, however, in addition to teaching their subjects, “Teach their learners how to learn” (Larsen-Freeman, 2012, p. 34). A simple example of why this is necessary is the tendency by some learners (and teachers) to equate the word-by-word, or sentence-by-sentence analysis of a text with efficient reading, ignoring the risk of poor reading habits being fossilized, if the process is prolonged (Mei-yun, 1994).

2.5.4.4 Integrating language skills in EFL: principle and rationale.

The focus put on reading and writing above does not imply less care for the other language skills. Strong arguments have indeed been expressed in favour of more effective teaching of listening and speaking at the primary level, considering the place they occupy in the young children’s learning process. For example, Sevik (2012) argues that listening tasks are “extremely important in the primary school setting, providing a rich source of data … This knowledge is a rich source that children draw on to produce language” (p. 11). He underlines the relevance of tasks in preventing boredom which is a common characteristic of audio-lingual mimicry activities. Their tendency to make children sit still (Larsen-Freeman, 2012; Celce-Murcia, 2001) has been criticized for creating boredom, which is contrary to the need for children to be active rather than passive in trying to construct their meanings of how language translates the world around them (Hudelson, 1994; Harmer, 1983).
If skills integration in EFL was revisited in this study, it was for its importance in CLT and for its position both as recommended and commendable principle for the ECFBSPS. It was felt that teachers need to be guided in their decisions to integrate it in their teaching, especially as many might not have encountered its operation even as students.

Educationally, the concept of is an emanation of the recognition that humans operate with their language abilities by combining, that is, by integrating them to suit their communication purposes (Celce-Murcia, 2001). These abilities include listening and understanding (as in listening to the radio), speaking (as in calling someone), reading and understanding (as in reading a letter), and writing (as in writing a text message). A central point to skills integration is that all four language skills involve language use because of the interaction between the performer and the context. This can be illustrated by referring to someone who is listening to the radio (listening) and hears some exciting news that he/she decides to tell a friend about on the phone by calling (speaking), or by texting (writing). What is perhaps more interesting for EFL teachers about this example is that all this time, the behavior involved the same subject and purpose. Through Harmer’s analysis, it is suggested that EFL teachers should try to reflect this natural use of language in their teaching practices.

Skills integration is possible even with more traditional types of textbooks where the tendency is to teach the skills separately in a prescribed order. The teacher can shift the lesson focus on (a) different skill(s) as soon as reasonable input in the particular skill of
the day’s lesson has been presented. The aim is to reinforce the initial input through the use of more realistic and purposeful practice activities which involve different skills.

Pedagogically, it is assumed that where skills integration is adopted as an EFL teaching principle, it will put variety in the habitual lessons (Savignon, 2001; Harmer, 1983; Sevik, 2012). This can be explored in an imaginary lesson as in this example: pronunciation drills could be integrated with written discrete-item drills in which pupils listen and identify the item said or not by the teacher (or the pupil assigned this responsibility). Alternatively, the pupils could be assigned to unscramble listed items into specific categories based on sound similarities. A further step could be for them to supply 1 or 2 additional items for the resulting categories. Assuming that the resulting lists are read for a pronunciation check, the number of skills integrated in this simple exercise will include listening, reading and writing and a touch of creativity and variety the pupils could enjoy.

Young learners, in particular, are known to easily lose motivation if they are faced with the same technique or activity at length, so that they need constant changes to maintain their concentration (Hudelson, 1994). One of the cornerstones of good planning is the use of variety, precisely to counter such risk of boredom. This study sought to establish the teachers’ awareness and implementation of this technique.

2.5.4.5 Exploration of some practical teaching experiences with children.

New teachers of EFL, especially in the case of primary schools in Burundi, need to be supported on how to use certain activities through some practical experiences of teaching
with children. They can take inspiration from the procedures used to develop their own practical strategies. Hudelson (1994) and Abe (1994) report experiences in which sequences of short competitive activities in the form of games were successfully used in an EFL class of young children. They cite the topic (Animals) as one of two key factors in the lessons' success because it was an area of child interest. The other factor was the organization of the topic into different but connected chunks/stretches of exercises, and which involved the children in collaborating and interacting to accomplish them. All along, they were drawing on little handouts with images on them (e.g.: animal body parts) or parts of words/sentences to cue their interaction as they were trying to find the matching parts. The interactive language had been pre-taught for the most. The handouts were teacher-self made.

Sevik (2012), for his part, explains how action songs can be made into exciting exercises in which a range of language input can be delivered in a manner that provides for the integration of all 4 language skills. His method included 4 main steps in which visuals illustrating something in the songs were first shown to present and/or elicit some target language (use of L1 was not excluded). Children were asked to write the words initiated on the blackboard, and to read them afterwards for a feedback on pronunciation. They then listened to the song for 2 times before they could look at the text while listening and proceed to read it after their teacher guidance. After the repetition phase, the teacher explained each line through using the Total Physical Response technique, combining language and actions, which the children were asked to imitate. The next stage was for the children and the teacher to sing the whole song while it was playing, ensuring to do
the accompanying actions. Teams were then formed and assigned a part of the song to sing/listen to and perform – competitively. In the final step, the teacher, then later some children, performed some actions which the children had to translate in words (naming, command), and correction was extended to classmates.

Sevik’s (2012) example demonstrates that it is possible to integrate language skills when using “Listen-an-Do Songs” (p. 10) which are carefully planned along a 4-stage sequence of pre-teaching activities, while-teaching activities, post-teaching activities, and follow-up activities. A note to be made about Sevik’s (2012) proposal, though, is that his working conditions were sufficiently resourced to allow optimal exploitation of his methodology (CD/tape, power, visuals, wide range of songs …). Nevertheless, the point remains that an inventive teacher can achieve a lot in providing balanced language input to children in EFL settings, using activities relevant to their levels. It is to be recalled, however, that both in his case and that of Hudelson (1994) and Abe (1994), it is only when learners know the purpose and expected outcome of the learning activities that they will try to commit to the goals specified for them. A teacher’s duty as facilitator then will be to direct their behaviours/roles using comprehensive clarifications: This is especially helpful when interactive techniques are used (Hudelson, 1994; Sevik, 2012).

What these few examples show is that teaching EFL to primary children should be engaging, appealing, and simple enough to keep the children busy, interested, and motivated (The same with the materials). It should also be focused on clearly identified and identifiable language features to avoid the risk of the language element being
neglected on the premise that the children are performing something (e.g.: a game) in English. There should be a coherent methodological approach capable of creating a sense of change within the steps or stages of the particular lesson. The task of planning can be daunting for the teacher, but with the above examples, there is a sense that it may be worth the effort.

2.6 Teacher Education for Primary English Teachers

2.6.1 Rationale for new impetus for teacher-education in Burundi context.

With the changes observed at local level (1.1.1 &1.1.2) in the viewing of English and fresh demands for better and diverse proficiencies being increasingly expressed in Burundi, this has meant that teachers of English can no longer satisfy themselves with what they are offered in their pre-service courses, or continue to wait patiently until desirable reforms are operated which will address the society’s current queries for a ‘functional’ English language model.

Recent literature on teacher education (TE) for TEFL seems to suggest that requisite knowledge of language learning theories, or new findings on them, have generally been neglected, causing a major gap in the design of professional development programmes for teachers (Wang et al., 2013). Derewianka (2013) for his part argues that a great deal of research in TE shows that primary teacher education in many contexts is likely to be the most ill-served when decisions are being taken regarding where (education level) and what (subject) to focus the priorities in TE, whether the preparation occurs at pre- or at in-service level.
Such has, unfortunately and for a long time, been the case for primary teachers in Burundi (Ndayisaba, 2010; Rwantabagu, 2009), with their initial graduation forecasting the end of training for the vast majority of them. This phenomenon seems rooted in the strong ties between in-service TE and changes in the curricula, which as was mentioned (1.1.6) has rather been rarely experienced in English. The most recent evidence for TE underrating can be seen in the move by the Burundi government to stage a series of INSET courses in support of teachers operating within the Basic Education System (Grade 7 to Grade 9 – all subjects) , yet being conscious of the ‘unfinished job’ of providing INSET to the large numbers of untrained teachers of Kiswahili, Civics, and English following the 2005 reform in primary education.

Considerable attention is drawn on the adverse effects of such a phenomenon on the quality of education (Wang, et al., 2011) , the most immediate in Burundi being loss by many primary dropping children of the chance to leave [primary] school with the essential literacy and numeracy skills that will sustain their survival in their ‘premature’ active lives (Johnson, 2013). The limited space in this study does not allow for a discussion of the possible effects of poor TE on education quality in general, but it will be clarified that the authors’ driving argument is that quality teaching consists of at least two dimensions: good and successful, a combination considered to form the ideal aspiration of all qualified teachers and all good schools. Good is seen in reference to “teaching practices that uphold some standards in the profession and are normative”; successful implies “teaching that yields learning” (Wang, et al., 2011, p. 333). In this
light then it can be suggested that while it is desirable for prospective EFL teachers to acquire sufficient knowledge of their subject matter/content and build up reasonable awareness of prominent approaches in the field, it is equally arguable that the process will be the more beneficial for learning if it is accompanied with a deliberate understanding of the role that such knowledge and awareness can play in achieving good and successful teaching.

In proposing a section on teacher education for TEFL in Burundi, the aim, therefore, was to provide both prospective and practicing teachers with some of this awareness. The hope is that such awareness may compensate for the gaps in their pre-service preparation and professional development/update. In practice, this ought to open a door for more knowledge of the kind they need to guide their decisions as they plan for methods, activities or techniques, strategies, and resources to address the needs underlying the current demands for English as an emerging language in Burundi

2.6.2 Components of an English education course for Burundi teachers.

The previous clarifications seem to suggest that for a different (kind of thinking around ELT in Burundi) English language teaching/learning model to be achieved, teachers’ awareness of EFL will not be complete or lead to rational teaching decisions on their part until they also have knowledge of the language learning underpinnings. The fact that ELT in Burundi teacher-training colleges focuses on a mastery of the language forms (1.1.5) – inspired by the still prevailing model of English as a subject to be assimilated – entails that the preparation of teachers (secondary level for example) has not been keen on/the relevance of a teachers’ understanding of and being given options in how to approach
TEFL. In consequence, rarely has the component on language learning theories been rationally related to the practical pedagogy of English in the country (Mivuba, 2009; Ndayisaba, 2010).

To address the basic need for essential knowledge of TEFL teachers in Burundi primary schools, the inclusion of an exploratory section on approaches/methods and language-learning theories that have marked and continue to influence ELT in Burundi was considered of great benefits to the teachers. In a bid to make the benefits from this section most profitable in aiding the teachers’ planning endeavours and assisting their actual teaching, the study further included a component on learner variables and another teaching/learning resources.

The idea should not imply that what is taught as a result of the current grammatical syllabuses is perfect and can continue unrevised before add-ons in the form of TEFL elements are included. Rather, what is being suggested is to start with some reflection on what body of knowledge may be needed by a teacher of English so that his/her capacities are improved to a level where he/she can work towards good and successful teaching as clarified above.

2.6.2.1 Influential theories in language teaching/learning.

Throughout the long history of SL/FL teaching, many fluctuations have been observed which resulted from differing views of language and language learning (Celce-Murcia, 2001). Those most referred to in contemporary ELT practice include behaviorism,
cognitivism, and language acquisition as opposed to language learning theories, as briefly described below.

1) **Behaviorism**: this was a psychology theory advocated by Watson and Raynor (1920), with the underlying idea that humans could be conditioned to acquire a SL or a FL (Harmer, 1983).

2) **Cognitivism**: this concept draws on Chomsky’s theory of competence and performance (quoted in Harmer, 1983) according to which native speakers of a language ‘possess’ an unconscious knowledge of the grammar of their language (competence) with which they continuously create new sentences (performance). Under cognitivism then, the teaching/learning assumption is that students need a mastery of the target language rules to be able to produce correct sentences and communicate in it. Put simply it refers to “methods in which students are asked to think rather than simply to repeat” (Harmer, 1983, p. 30).

3) **Language acquisition vs language learning**: this was a contrastive theory built around Krashen’s (1977) claim that language acquisition is a subconscious process which is similar to the way children learn their L1 (Harmer, 1983; Fotos, 2001), whereas learning is a conscious process which results in knowledge of certain features of the language as, for example, rules of grammar and spelling. The implication for ESL/EFL pedagogy was that “learners should be immersed with experiences of the target language in the form of communicative activities” (Harmer, 1983, p. 32) to promote knowledge of the language rather than about it. Of these theories, behaviorism has been said to have inspired
audiolingualism, while the other two have been at the rise of CLT (Derewianka, 2013). The study took an interest in both finding out which of the described theories may underlie the ECFBSPS and subsequently understanding their practical applications.

2.6.2.2 Some popular methods in second/foreign language teaching.

The last half of 20th century was rich with a proliferation of language teaching approaches and methods whose influence has been carried on into the 21st century TESL/EFL practices. Celce-Murcia (2001), for example, enlists nine methods, three of which in particular can claim to have made a lasting mark on the practice of ESF/EFL today. They include: the audio-lingual method, the communicative approach, and the eclectic method. Following is a brief review of their underpinnings and pedagogical implications.

i) The audio-lingual method: This method was essentially an application of the behaviorist theory. It rested on the principle that the learner should be provided maximum practice of target language patterns in which errors were carefully filtered and discouraged. Their meanings did not matter so much as the ‘correctness’ of the language used with them. Practice activities involved heavy ‘choral repetition’ of graded drills and dialogues that learners often had to memorize and recite. Advocates of the method assumed that the correct patterns mastered in the classroom would automatically transfer outside when ‘real communication’ would be involved. (Celce-Murcia, 2001).

The dominance of audiolingualism in ELT practice has been “acknowledged in the literature” (Larsen-Freeman, 2012, p. 34).
ii) **The communicative approach**: The approach was grounded on a view of language as first and foremost a system for interactive communication. The central position of the learner as no longer a recipient of knowledge, but as an active agent of learning (Larsen-Freeman, 2012; Savignon, 2001) was to be recognized as its greatest strength. Its advocates considered that all learning activities and tasks have to engage the learner in using the target language in both its spoken and its written forms. Celce-Murcia (2001), for example insisted on the learner being viewed as someone who “thinks, feels, and has something to say”. In this perspective, language skills integration, purposeful tasks, and interactive techniques were seen to be important ways of fostering language use as it happens in real life. Preference for the term *approach* or the umbrella phrase *communicative language teaching* to *method* was adopted because of the wide range of techniques generally used by teachers, depending on their personal interpretation of how communicative competence can be arrived at (Celce-Murcia, 2001).

The fact that various interpretations exist in itself is a major challenge to the application of the approach. But an even bigger challenge for teachers is that educational research has still to establish them descriptively, and investigate their root causes. Such would make it possible for teachers to adjust their own understanding, hence take appropriate stance for their contexts. Further, such differences require that specific guidance backed by educational research be given to teachers as to the order of hierarchy of the underlying principles, especially if their training did not cover this aspect, or even the approach. This is very likely in the case of the ECFBSPS.
iii) The eclectic approach: The concept has emerged from the fact that none of the ELT methods known today is practiced exclusively, and that many teachers choose to combine principles and techniques from various approaches in a “carefully reasoned manner” that Larsen-Freeman (2012, p.34) calls “principled eclecticism”. The point being made here is that even though the approach does not rest on any independent view of language, it has to be informed by relevant theories of language and language learning, such as those described above. The challenge facing most teachers with this approach lies with the extent to which education and training will have equipped them to make appropriate choices for their classes from the available approaches. Other terminologies associated with the approach include integrated approach (Nunan, 2001), balanced approach (Harmer, 1984), and eclecticism (Larsen-Freeman, 2012; Kral, 1994).

It would be of great help if teachers in their TE process were, in addition to theoretical exposure to the above, led into a participatory critical understanding of what they imply in practical teaching, especially in their own classes. If appropriate conditions are created for this kind of thinking to take place, the chances of relating such a process to their own job and situations will be greater. For example, rather than being presented with such an idea that, say, ‘grammatical approaches do not emphasize learner communication of realistic meanings’ (Celce-Murcia, 2001), they might feel better convinced of the meaning of such an idea if it has come from them, or from some kind of analysis of a micro lesson in which they have participated.
2.6.2.3 Influence of learner variables in TEFL.

How learner variables intervenes in teaching chiefly resides in the teacher’s decisions regarding the choice of materials, learning activities, teaching method/techniques and resources as well as in timing the duration of particular activities (Hudelson, 1994; Sevik, 2012; Nunan, 2013). It goes without saying that the instructional language that the teacher uses in terms of level also falls within what makes differences between particular learners. The most commonly cited classifications include child developmental stage, learner social background, learner educational/knowledge/background, learner gender, and learner motivation or attitude.(Nunan, 2013; Hudelson, 1994; Sevik, 2012).

The relevance of learner variables in SL/FL language education has principally been acknowledged since the publication of findings on learner developmental stages from research in child psychology (Piaget, 1955). They have then been explored for their possible implications for the teaching and learning of various subjects, among which ESL and EFL have occupied a prominent position (section … ). Beyond TE, a teacher’s awareness of these findings is crucial to this study in that the target learners are precisely within the 2 last (out of the 4) developmental stages determined by child psychology namely, the concrete operational stage (stage 3: 7-11 years) and the formal operational stage (stage 4: from 11 years). In terms of class level, these children in Burundi will be in grade 1 to grade 3 for those in stage 3, and in grades 5 and 6 for those in stage 4. It was therefore necessary to assess how some of these characteristics were accounted for both in the programme under study.
With reference to Nunan (2013), children in stage 3 are relatively able to think logically, but have a limited ability to make generalizations from concrete experiences. Their curiosity is growing. Children in stage 4 can make generalizations and even attempt abstract thinking which involves simple concepts, which are part of or perceivable in their universe.

From the TEFL perspective, Nunan (2013), for example, observes that using abstract grammatical explanations would be a waste of time with children below the formal operational stage. Green (1994) and Sevik (2012) stress the importance of motivation as a variable arguing that it is a drive towards voluntary participation in classroom work. This is on the premise that most children come to class out of compliance, and therefore, may have little or no intrinsic motivation for school. Harmer (1994) emphasizes this point arguing that for this reason, it is the teacher’s duty to ensure that everything possible is done to constantly create and sustain children’s motivation. A general framework for enhancing the motivation of young EFL learners comes suggests creating of a low/free anxiety atmosphere; allowing an appropriate lag between the receptive period and the productive practice; providing constructive feedback; and creating a sense of success in the children (Green, 1994; Crookes & Chaudron, 2001). It is, therefore, possible to argue that a knowledge of these characteristics puts the teacher in a good position to direct his/her teaching towards and most suitable approaches to the needs and types of learners in front of him/her. More than anything, the teacher has a useful base from which learner interest can be renewed, geared toward achieving even more success in their learning.
2.7 Appraisal in Professional Development and Educational Research

2.7.1 Selection of a model for in-service teacher training.

If principals and teachers can be expected to contribute fruitfully to teacher-appraisal, then it is essential that their preparation integrates this role with the process of TEFL knowledge/skills empowerment. In the ECFBSPS context for example, the INSET model may be a factor in the low achievements of the activity in its current practice. In this connection, Murdoch (1994, p.51), reflecting on “The normal structure of an in-service training course” presented in Table 2.1, criticizes it for laying emphasis on the trainers’ own agenda rather than on the real needs and problems of the trainees. This model is, in principle, the one followed in Burundi.

Table 2.1 The normal structure of an in-service training course

```
Trainer input
   ↓
Trainer’s model teaching
   ↓
Trainee observation
   ↓
Trainer feedback
   ↓
[Further input]
```

Murdoch (1994) further scrutinizes the model for the ‘passive’ role that the trainee teachers are seemingly given to play as they go through their training experience, and the likelihood of such an approach being reproduced by the teachers, for after all it will have “confirmed their former conceptions of the teacher-learner role relationship” (p. 50).
What trainee-teachers need in Murdoch (1994)’s view is, therefore, both the engaged and interested learner roles, and the opportunity to integrate the new awareness – to be raised through training input supported by ‘hands-on’ activities – with their previous experiences and knowledge; hence the proposition of an improved model as shown in Table 2.2 below.

Table 2.2 Structure of a trainee-centered in-service training model

Component skills/techniques-related activities
   ↓
Group discussion of principles/methods
   ↓
Peer-teaching tasks and presentations
   ↓
Group feedback on peer-teaching
   ↓
Trainer expansion → Classroom follow-up

The core element of the difference between this and the ‘normal’ model is the opportunity offered to the trainees to confront their previous experiences and knowledge with the novel ideas/techniques in mutually supportive environments generated by use of group discussions. Subsequent testing of the derived principles through microteaching with immediate feedback is, on its part, a good source of the experiential learning that should be yielded as the trainees think through the initial activities and react to the micro lessons. Integration of the new ideas is here facilitated by the efforts placed by the trainer on stimulating the sharing of understanding around the desired changes in professional behaviour and his/her creation of mutually-supportive conditions for the exchanges so-stimulated.
The centrality of the teacher in the above model is supported by Barnard (1995) in these terms: “Both the trainer and trainees need to understand that the sole agent of behavioral improvement is the teacher him/herself, and his/her attitude to any proposed change is critical” (p.22). Both the two authors caution, though, that this behavioral focus should not undermine the role of theory in a training programme. Barnard (1995) for example, finds that theory plays its role in helping integrate new data into one’s professional knowledge. Murdoch observes that teachers must be equipped with adequate knowledge about how to implement newly acquired procedures in their situations.

What Murdoch does not do is discuss the possible effect of either model with specific groups of trainees based on qualifications, for example. The problem of the model in Table 2.2 above being a bit ambitious where unqualified teachers are having their initial INSET can be anticipated which may not be fully settled by the creation of mutually supportive environments, for this itself is prior knowledge and trainer-dependent, and may be an additional ‘need’ inherent in the context, thus for INSET to address.

2.7.2 Contribution to EFL practicing teachers.

Teacher-appraisal (TA) in EFL is perceived in relation to the need for teachers to be continuously empowered so that they can both deliver quality education in their assigned subjects. In a general perspective, TA finds its rationale in the idea that “In all professions, in all walks of life, there needs to be a constant upgrading and updating of knowledge and skills” (Goddard & Emerson, 1992, p. 11). While this is valid for unqualified and qualified teachers indiscriminately, it carries even more truth for the ECFBSPS teachers who have to struggle with both the subject matter (content) and its
language of delivery (communication proficiency). Goddard and Emerson (1992) offer a framework of TA where a number of teaching challenges can be raised and/or identified, discussed, and probably be solved. Their Staff Development Model stipulates: “In teacher-appraisal, professionals are observed in the course of their work. This feature distinguishes … from most appraisal schemes … which rarely include planned observation of the employees …” (p. 3).

Under the Staff Development model, the aim is for the structures responsible for education delivery and supervision to collaborate in a deliberate effort to improve the effectiveness of individual teachers, thus raising the quality of learning. In this perspective, Goddard and Emerson (1992) see TA as a practice which integrates fellow teachers as “critical friends” (p.13) whose authoritative understanding of their professional difficulties can contribute much in the way of the kind of support needed to enhance teacher performance. Familiarity with their classes and their proximity to the syllabus puts them in a position to assist pedagogically in a way that school managers and inspectors with their too often inappropriate subject backgrounds cannot. Even curriculum monitors may not, given their likely remote experiences with the changes affecting their teaching environments. Most of all, teachers are thought to be an unequalled source of information on their true training needs, compared to, for example, school principals, end-of-term reports, parents, and other sources of feedback on teacher performance.
Teachers and their supervisors then need to conceptualize the practice so that they know how to maximize its benefits. In the context of EFL, more particularly where the practice is not familiar, the goal for TA need not be wide in scope (Rea, 1983). It may involve, for example, monitoring learner participation or the teacher’s execution of a certain technique in a given class in order to understand why certain aspects of the area observed were successful or not. The gathered understanding will then form the content of the observation feedback which is expected to induce the teacher’s professional growth.

Concerning feedback, it is preferable if it is given immediately after the observation so that the teacher can more easily relate to the lesson and comment on it (Goddard & Emerson, 1992). For its content, it is seen as essentially providing a combination of counseling, guidance, support, and praise, with emphasis on bringing the teacher to talk about his/her lesson – including the atmosphere in the classroom – and to discuss possible solutions to encountered or identified difficulties with the appraiser. Such a participatory approach is promising in its long-term benefits in that it is likely to equip the teacher with self-appraisal skills.

For an even more informed view of TA, a look may be worth taking at how it is generally organized and perceived in Burundi. At primary level, TA is conducted by school principals, BEPEB and the Inspectorate. The activity can be roughly described as one without a formal regulation, so disparities exist. School principals mainly use appraisal to grade teacher performance; BEPEB and the Inspectorate use it for curriculum implementation and control purposes respectively. On the whole, teachers despise
appraisal because of its historical association with purposes of discipline, dismissal, and advancement. This dislike, together with lack of a ‘code of conduct’ and low confidence for the ‘legitimacy’ (Goddard & Emerson, 1992) of the appraisers have combined to lower enthusiasm among appraisers and teachers alike. It is not rare for classroom visits and oral feedback to be avoided in favour of pedagogic meetings where specific teaching issues are discussed at school or regional levels, with principals being at the same time their teachers’ representatives and spokespersons. This of course is not favourable to the advancement of education and teachers, since the real teaching problems and their true causes will not gain contextual visibility; hence the risk of appraisers administering fake solutions.

A better practice of TA can be worked out if some thought is given to how the Staff Development Model (SDM) compares with its concurrent Accountability Model (AM) in terms of their benefits for in-service teacher-training. The former is said to support teachers in doing as well as possible, whereas the latter checks whether teachers are doing their jobs properly (Goddard & Emerson, 1992) – it is close to the one applied by principals and inspectors in Burundi. An important feature of the SDM is the positive attitude of the appraiser to the teacher’s potential to do better. It is built on a framework of mutual trust under which teacher observation is an agreed process between both parties and guided by the principle that “An appraisal scheme begins with the assumption that teachers can improve their performance” (Goddard & Emerson, 1992, p.10). This principle implies finding out the causes of a teacher’s weaknesses (with his/her help) and is distinguished in the 2 models by the appraiser’s intention. In the SDM, the emphasis is
on the teacher’s ability to do better if appropriately supported. In the AM, the emphasis is on finding evidence for disciplinary procedures.

As could be expected, the SDM presents itself as a commendable scheme in EFL for the sense of security that it provides for teachers with low self-confidence and its pursuit of their sustainable development. It captures the importance of mutual preparation of teachers and appraisers for the tasks of ‘monitoring’ and ‘analyzing’, so that their subsequent [shared] feedback is capable of advancing the teachers’ performance in the observed areas.

Assuming that appraiser quality is not questionable, the SDM – if adopted in Burundi – would offer even more benefits, thus reversing the negative attitudes to appraisal. One outstanding benefit for ELT at primary level is the creation of a formal context where teachers’ professional difficulties can be brought to light, reflected on, and tackled without teachers having to fear being exposed to scrutiny. Other benefits include the promotion of a culture of sharing on teaching problems and subsequent understanding of how administration and policy may interfere with a teacher’s job; the creation of more positive rapports and a new relationship of professional partnership; not forgetting the improvement of student overall learning quality resulting from the collaborative efforts of all involved in appraisal.

Having said this, however, it is to be recognized that teacher-appraisal is an exercise that requires competence in the subject matter and skills in lesson observation and critique,
themselves which must be nurtured. There would be not much use ‘visiting’ your colleague if you had nothing to offer which can benefit his/her teaching, based on the observed lesson. Goddard and Emerson (1992) criticize the fact of scrutinizing the legitimacy of appraisers in systems that do not cater for supervisory duties, hence arguing that one way to learn about it is through structured TA. According to the authors, the most common mistake made by many people appraising teachers is to focus on only the weaknesses, forgetting to equally pay attention to their positive performances. In this connection, Gebhard (1994) considers that while overemphasis on the ‘failures’ is counterproductive as an incentive for professional improvement, both observed teachers’ weaknesses and strengths constitute sources of learning.

At the same time, the possibility in certain cultures to deliberately avoid mentioning the ‘failures’ for fear of ‘inconveniencing’ the appraised cannot be ignored. An even worse scenario is when the appraiser refrains from confirming weaknesses self-identified by the appraised for the same reason. In the light of the negative impact that such attitude can bear upon the process and quality of feedback, it is important that such cultural dispositions be brought into discussion in right time. In Burundi, for example, there would be a need to encourage teachers into being introspective and inquisitive, yet at the same time showing commitment and ‘pushing themselves’ to be open-minded about observed weaknesses in particular.

2.7.3 A review of some appraisal-related studies.

The poor interest so far shown for the ECFBSPS by researchers in Burundi implies that the development of the present section had to draw from the only experiences of appraisal
and curriculum studies conducted in other settings. They, however, were insightful in shaping the present appraisal. Equally worth pointing out is that curriculum appraisal, as a research area, was found to not be as rich with publications as evaluation. Special focus was then put on the works by Ross et al (1972), Goddard and Emerson (1992), Omollo (1990), Magoma (2011), and Matere (2011), a choice that was guided by the educational orientation of their works.

The appraisal by Ross et al (1972), which had been ordered by the British Ministry of Education, aimed to produce “A guide to educational policy in a developing comprehensive system” (p.17). At the time, there was a need for the Government to replace the Selective System with a Comprehensive School Education (CSE) system. A working team was commissioned, made of education theorists and education practitioners working in two subgroups. The question around which the research evolved was “What are we trying to achieve in education?” (p.19). At the end of their survey – which included 12 out of the 385 already existing comprehensive schools, and used various research methods (questionnaires, tests, observation) – the team was able to arrive at a number of findings which, in a Joint Statement, informed on attitudes towards the new system, judgments in terms of attainments, and teacher resources for and aims of CSE among other things.

Two recommendations made were that the frequency and role of examinations had to be reviewed to reflect the needs of students and schools. At policy level, it was thought that the elaboration of CSE-based curricula could proceed according to Wheeler’s phases in
Ross et al. (1972, p. 164), that is (1) the selection of aims (2) the selection of learning experiences (3) the selection of content or subject matter (4) the organization and integration of language experiences, and (5) evaluation of effectiveness of all aspects of phases 2, 3, and 4 in attaining the goals detailed in phase 1.

It is important to notice that Ross et al.’s (1972) experience – which involves a different context, education area and period of time – still reveals the timeless value accorded to ensuring that any educational innovations are coherent with the goal of bringing meaningful improvements to the education system where they occur. One also notes the implicit value given to integrating language experiences and evaluation in curriculum development. Both points are valid for the ECFBSPS.

Goddard and Emerson’s study (1992) draws on long experiences of appraisal in Britain and their connection with the Accountability-in-Education Movement. As the authors indicate, appraisal, which was “punitive” (p. 6) in nature in the late 70’s, gradually became a head teachers’ and teachers’ (voluntary) responsibility to the extent that in the 80’s, self-evaluation/appraisal became an established practice in the schools, having gone through a pilot stage. The criteria used were agreed upon and regularly reviewed. The authors recommend that appraisal should benefit the teachers’ professional development rather than serve the purposes of discipline, advancement, or dismissal, and that it should occur within a climate of trust and mutual confidence.
Applied to the ECFBPS context, this model would strengthen the teachers’ knowledge of their work, train them in TA, and boost their self-esteem, thus creating an incentive for increased self-investment (Evans, 1992; Magoma, 2010). There can be no doubt that TA will come with new challenges for the teachers, especially in its early stages of peer-appraisal. This can, however, be eased out if teachers opt for Goddard and Emerson’s (1992) view that “New challenges offer a fresh stimulus to teachers, giving them a wider experience which enables them to see their main work in a new light” (p.14). This study sought to find ways in which implementers of the ECFBPPS could be supported to improve their performances with at least the materials at their disposal. It happened that TA was suggested, in the sense of a process intended to identify the teachers’ professional trouble spots and address them – if not, refer them for hierarchical examination – in a deliberate effort to improve the quality of education.

Omollo (1990), Matere (2011), and Magoma (2011) conducted research in the context of curriculum innovation on the implementation of the Integrated English Curriculum (IEC) in Kenya. The IEC was designed for secondary schools and it had been piloted prior to its adoption (Magoma, 2011), contrary to the ECFBPS. Also before Magoma’s study was undertaken, a second needs survey had been conducted among the stakeholders. All three authors used triangulation (questionnaires together with classroom observations and interviews) to gather information from teachers, heads of schools, heads of English departments, and officials from education supervisory institutions – though rather limited in number for the latter when they were involved.
Specifically, Omollo’s (1990) focus was on the extent of integration between English language and literature and the challenges that confronted the teachers. The researcher reported observing a low level of integration in actual teaching, and which was severely low in private schools due to lack of proper training on the new syllabus at either pre-service or in-service level. In certain schools, the teachers were found to be using a different programme, not having had official notification of the change or the resources to implement it. A further finding was the teachers’ dissatisfaction with gaps in the qualification and professional preparation of some among the in-servicing personnel, as well as with inadequate guidance from curriculum developers. In this study, these aspects were addressed in association with INSET quality. An important recommendation by Omollo (1990) intended for English supervisors, and which fed into the present study through an investigation of the TA practice under the ECFBSPS was that maintaining contacts with the teachers is strategic in monitoring and solving their problems.

Matere (2011) investigated the strategies employed by teachers to integrate English language and literature, the extent of this integration during teaching, and the roles played by heads of English departments in the IEC implementation. Overall, her findings report low strategies and a display of persistent ‘mishandling’ of integration in the lessons observed. This was because of the different training background of teachers coupled with lack of appropriate resources to explore certain methods such as role-play. Also reported was the heads’ frustration at lack of administrative support in terms of the provision of teachers and materials to cope with overpopulated classes as they tried to implement the policies. On the positive side, Matere (2011) reports the active role of the English
department heads in supporting the teachers (for example by clarifying the concept, and encouraging them to team up for assistance in areas of difficulty), as well as in promoting a reading culture in the schools. This study has made a strong case for an increased involvement of education supervisors in providing teachers of the ECFBSPS with timely professional support.

Magoma (2011) was interested to find out whether the teachers “Had clarity of the IEC as an innovation” (p.51), the kinds of problems they encountered, and how they were facilitated in resolving them. The findings report confusion over the concept of integration among many teachers, not having been properly prepared for the innovation. This combined with the lack of adequate sponsors for INSET to cause teacher frustration and a low level of integration.

A close reading of these 3 investigations reveal 2 commonalities which are relevant to the central issue in the proposed study. One is the consensus around the adequacy of this type of syllabus (the IEC). The second is the inadequate preparation of implementers and lack of or restricted resources (textbooks, supplement materials) and their adverse effects on achievement of the intended goal of integration. Together, these 3 studies point to the fact that the availability of a curriculum – be it adequate in nature – will not by itself suffice to render successful implementation of its goal (s) and content. The teacher remains at the centre stage of the implementation process (Matere, 2011). This is a critical aspect in the management of innovation which constituted an important parallel in the present study. It was necessary to recall that whereas the general situation of the ECFBSPS teachers and
resources had been somewhat documented after the teachers’ own early denouncement (Mivuba, 2009a; Mazunya & Habonimana, 2010), the level of its implementation and the quality of the INSET were not.

2.7.4 Towards a model for appraisal.

In the context of educational materials, a model that can provide teachers with sources of information and support as they analyze their textbook for implementation was drawn from Byrd (2001). These sources include the instructor’s manual and other official documents such as a curriculum statement and the course syllabi – depending on what is available (formal support). Mutual assistance and consultations among peer teachers are another reliable source (informal support), especially when one is teaching a course for the first time. Concerning the textbook, the model recommends that the teacher (1) read the whole book to gain full knowledge of its main features (2) gather information about its presentation/format, its content, the practice offered, the support intended for the teacher (3) analyze the textbook content in terms of its linguistic and thematic contents, and (4) analyze the exercises/tasks for their nature and instructional value. The aim should be to gain understanding of its pertinent as well as its weak features for a better planning of its use.

Appraisal being the core of this study, it goes without saying that the guidelines in Byrd’s (2001) model were of great help in assessing the adequacy of the ECFBSPS textbooks. It follows that Byrd’s grids for content and activity analysis for implementation (pp. 420-421) certainly constituted an important resource in the design of grids for the present study. This was despite their falling short of standard measurements to help establish with
confidence the relative levels of adequacy for categories of content. Further insights were
drawn from Bwire (2007) concerning the appraisal of categories of interest in content
analysis, especially when assessing the value and/or appropriateness of content features
identified in relation to a specific curriculum area.

In the context of teacher-appraisal, Goddard and Emerson (1992) offer a model that could
constructively guide those responsible for and interested in this activity at all levels of
education in Burundi. Its strength, as was mentioned earlier, rests on the emphasis laid on
staff development and on its extension to teacher self- and peer-appraisal. Three of its 6
features (p.11) were deemed worth mentioning for the purposes of this study, namely
that the model praises what the teacher is doing well, identifies areas where he/she may
be able to improve, and identifies the support and the in-service training that the teacher
requires to progress. Success of this model is likely to be hindered by supervisors’ limited
knowledge in the subject matter (EFL), and their persistent hold onto a superiority
attitude, likely to discourage the teachers from fully adhering to all its principles and
procedures.

2.8 Issues and Considerations in Educational Innovation
The goal of most educational reforms is generally to enhance the quality of education in
the given country, and it can be achieved by governments or institutions employing
various tools such as boosting the teacher force qualitatively or quantitatively, introd
ucing new course subjects, changing existing instructional materials, and so forth
(Hyland & Wong, eds., 2013). These mechanisms are not mutually exclusive, and it is
when they are integrated that innovations are seen to be more successful. This, though, requires coordinated planning on the part of the reformer (Wolf, 1976), especially in the case of new subjects.

Derewianka (2013) uses the case of the introduction of a new English curriculum in Australian primary schools to demonstrate the difficulty of dealing with curriculum reform and innovation in some countries. The innovation here was to move away from a view of English as a subject in order to incorporate 3 new areas, namely an informed appreciation of literature, an expansion of literacy practices, and an explicit knowledge of how language works. Officially, the teachers were mandated to give all three areas equal weight in the curriculum, and, although the aims of each of the three components had been outlined, the teachers had to design their own materials and activities. Derewianka (2013) explains the nervousness that characterized the teachers’ initial encounters with the programme as they had to grapple with understanding the concepts, selecting the appropriate elements of literature to introduce to their classes, leveraging and integrating the 3 components in a manner that would create a sense of teaching and learning English remaining the core business in their classrooms, not to mention their concerns with sustaining learner interest and motivation.

To address the challenge of confusion and uncertainty, the teachers determined to collaboratively work out teaching ideas for each of the 3 mandatory areas of the curriculum, having regrouped into separate working teams accordingly. Acknowledging the difficulties, the author of the Framing Paper for his part, determined to work closely
with groups of teachers within selected schools, offering support in the form of concept clarification, guidance on methodological orientation and research sites for content learning/knowledge, and so on. In the final report, the teachers expressed satisfaction with the programme, even though they recognized being frustrated at its beginning.

This example, which is taken from a context comparatively better-resourced than Burundi for example, sufficiently illustrates some of the struggles that primary teachers, of almost any subject, have to fight in order to get minimum preparation to see them through the implementation of changes affecting their school subjects (Derewianka, 2013). Surprisingly, it is no news that they are the teachers with the lowest level of schooling in the education ladder, and most generally too, with the least access to opportunities for self-enhancement due to logistical restrictions mainly. Lack of school libraries and internet access are loud illustrations of such restrictions in Burundi primary schools.

A lesson worth drawing from the case in Derewianka’s example is the dynamism with which those concerned (reformers and teachers) engaged in the finding of a sustainable solution, that is, one which would keep the curriculum implementation on course, with the teachers and the learners feeling confident in the changes to be operated. Therefore, it seems that in order to address the issues affecting the ECFBPS, it is precisely at management level that the search of a more viable solution can be initiated, but also facilitated. What is clear from the above experience is that the implementation of a new programme has greater chances of succeeding if teachers are involved in the search of the solution, and not expected to execute measures from policy-makers (Nias, 1989).
Scrutinizing change of a ‘mechanistic’ nature, Kennedy (2013) observes that they are likely to yield mismatches between the originators of the curriculum outside the classroom and the teachers, who are the implementers. According to Kennedy, this may essentially derive from the intervention not “taking account of teachers’ beliefs (acceptability), or their students’ needs and wants (relevance), and as a consequence, denying teachers’ ownership of the innovation” (p.17).

English as a new subject in Burundi primary education is an important project which necessitates good planning for several reasons. Firstly, its ‘recent’ introduction cannot afford the past view of a subject on the timetable just for didactic purposes. Its teaching must, and is expected, to reflect innovative ideas from the narrative that accompanied its introduction. In practical terms, its teaching must display some of the latest developments in EFL, as well as in the provision for youths evolving in today’s world. Secondly, selecting appropriate teaching/learning materials for its implementation may not be easy work. This requires both expertise in syllabus design as well as skills in materials evaluation (Byrd, 2001). The desired expertise may be unavailable locally, hence new challenges of a financial nature, and their possible effect on the quality of the materials to be designed by an external expert, which is often the case with commercial ones. Thirdly, for the teaching to be successful, there must be a sound policy for English in the country (Lo Bianco, 2013), backed by official documents with clearly defined aims (Wolf, 1976), all to guide and inspire syllabus design and implementation.

Wolf’s (1976) theory speaks in favour of desirable coherence between the programme (of study) proposed and its aims, themselves having been clearly defined. It stresses the
importance for a sense of a clear strategy for action to create the confidence and consensus necessary around the innovation. Above all, in an era when needs assessment has proven its efficiency in EFL education, and learning aspirations are rooted in the real world, any meaningful change (s) requires that educational planning incorporate this phase to mark a fresh turn in the establishment of responsive quality assurance.

Magoma (2001) emphasizes the relevance of a collaborative process of needs assessment in improving the planning stage arguing that “No curriculum planner or committee of planners is omniscient” (p.68). The experience of the MoE in Burundi being compelled to temporarily suspend English teaching in primary schools in order to train ‘reluctant’ teachers is sufficiently revealing about the need for planning to look ahead, not just into the chronological execution of what was planned, but to also recognize the need to continuously and dispassionately assess its feasibility and effects against commitments from quality assurance. Poor teaching – when it is occurring – unfortunately does not surface as quickly as, say, shortage of books, or programme coverage. Yet it is teaching which usually carries more profound impact on acquisition and learning than, for example, lack of a textbook or a missed unit in it. Evans (2004) warns against the risk of a reform achieving fear and frustration, but not achieving the intended innovation.

2.9 Chapter Summary of Concepts Reviewed and Gaps Identified
This chapter has reviewed the processes of textbook evaluation and appraisal so as to clarify their roles in TEFL. Both exercises have been presented as being essential in decisions regarding textbook selection and implementation. They have, however, been
found to be often challenged by lack of critical knowledge and practical experience on the part of those in charge. This is especially the case in under-resourced EFL contexts where much of the expertise required is lacking; but the same is thought to happen in systems with a tendency to exclude teachers from non-teaching responsibilities. Their importance to the work of EFL teachers, designers, and supervisors has inspired the inclusion in the chapter of components which deal with theories and methods of interest; major trends in current EFL practice; curriculum adequacy and implementation at primary level; learner characteristics; the contribution of teacher-appraisal to curriculum implementation; the role of some back up resources; as well as the challenges inherent in the Burundi setting. Such critical awareness was also seen as a necessary component to be integrated in the preparation of prospective teachers.

The reviewed literature made it possible to identify five major gaps of relevance to the study. The first gap is the lack of quantifiable measurements of relative levels of programme adequacy, or of categories of content. Although checklists for analysis (for implementation) are occasionally offered, they fall short of numerical guidance, leaving the possibility of speculation hanging over decisions on adequacy of material. The second relates to insufficient guidance on how ‘facilitating’ learning can be handled by teachers to overcome difficulties arising or resulting from beliefs held about teaching or cultural traditions. The third gap worth mentioning lies with lack of established findings on the achievements of eclecticism as a most convenient approach for TEFL. Fourthly, there are still gaps to be filled in the guidance of syllabus design for EFL contexts with hardly perceivable functional needs; and finally, the divergences in the interpretation of the road to communicative competence as well as their causes are left to be desired for its
harmonious application. The chapter has closed with a brief analysis of issues in the implementation of educational reforms, with a focus on EFL in Burundi.
CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology that was utilized in carrying out the study. Specifically, ten components were covered which included the research design and variables, location of the study, target population and sampling procedures, sample size, research instruments for data collection, piloting, data collection, data analysis procedures, and legal and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Design

The descriptive and exploratory survey design was used in conducting the research. Descriptive survey designs are concerned with gathering information, from people with relevant experience, on current conditions, processes, attitudes, beliefs, and opinions on the issue or phenomenon being investigated (Kothari, 2004; Creswell, 2012). The exploratory survey dimension sought to get more in-depth understanding of the same. This is for the most part what this study proposed to accomplish in relation to the ECFBSPS as a phenomenon. Such people in the present case included teachers of English (and to a limited extent the pupils in Grades 5 & 6) in state primary schools, school principals and curriculum designers for this level of schooling; and they were all involved in the survey. Their views and practices were considered critical for their role in complementing the findings from the content analysis guide.
3.2 Research Variables

The survey was centered around the following variables: the primary English language curriculum with a focus on the suggested content in terms of learning goals, activities, and teaching methods; the suggested resources; the preparation and training of teachers; and the professional support supplied to the teachers (Independent variables). Other elements under consideration included teacher and learner attitudes to the learning/teaching of English; their background knowledge; and the type of school environment (Intervening variables). The last element of interest was the outcome of the appraisal, whose possible effects were expected on the levels of curriculum adequacy, teacher performance, adequacy of resources, and strategies to improve curriculum implementation (Dependent variables).

3.3 Location of the Study

The study was conducted in Burundi where the schools are based. Geographically, Burundi is located south of Rwanda, east of Democratic Republic of Congo, and west of Tanzania. Its size amounts to 27,834km². The country is divided into 17 administrative provinces (Appendix A) with a Provincial Director of Education each who is appointed by presidential decree. The provinces are further divided into districts (129 in total). A Communal Education Director for each commune was recently appointed for devolution purposes (MoE, 2012). The two Directorates act as chief supervisors of education and human resources in their duty stations.
Although Burundi is small in size, accessing rural areas is not easy due to poor road infrastructure. Accessibility is further hampered by lack of intra and inter communal transport, so, certain rural areas may be difficult to reach. This study covered two geographical areas, namely Bujumbura Municipality and Mwaro Province, which also stand for Educational Directorates for the same provinces. Bujumbura Municipality, being the capital city, is urban; Mwaro is rural. The two provinces are respectively located in the west and the centre of Burundi, and they are about 100 km apart. The target populations are representative of the parent populations, both considering their characteristics and their size. These two locations offer practical advantages of accessibility in addition to Bujumbura being host to BEPEP office.

The choice of Burundi as the study location rested on 4 factors: one was its status as home to the research population; another reason was the researcher’s natural interest in an area of national importance but also of challenge, as an English teacher herself; the third reason was the call felt by the researcher to give her contribution to ELT in primary schools, a ‘novel’ area which has not been properly researched locally. The last and perhaps main reason was the fact that Burundi offers a unique situation where among East African countries, English has the status of (and is taught as) a foreign language; and there generally is an emerging interest in the English language.

3.4 Target Population

The study targeted 3 categories of population: all the teachers of English in primary schools from grade 1 to grade 6 in Bujumbura Municipality and Mwaro Province; and all
the primary school principals in the same locations (Table 3.1), as well as all the curriculum designers at BEPEB (Table 3.2). Due to unexpected circumstances clarified later (3.11), classroom observations were focused on teachers in grade 5 instead of both grades 5 and 6 as initially planned. The reason behind these 2 levels was twofold: first their upper levels assumed more English being used both by the teachers in delivering the lessons, and by the pupils in responding or reacting to some of the teachers’ solicitations. This possibility would then facilitate the researcher’s assessment of teacher proficiency in using the English language while communicating to the class, and the strategies used, for example, to ensure that the pupils’ language is growing. Second, the fact that reading and writing are both skills which are taught at grade 5 and grade 6 levels made these 2 classes more convenient for the assessment of how these 2 skills are integrated in actual teaching. Concerning the populations, the MoE’s records for 2012/13 put the numbers of teachers, principals and classes per province as indicated in Table 3.1.
Table 3.1 Number of teachers, school directorates, and some classes in state primary schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>School directorate</th>
<th>Total teachers</th>
<th>Gr. 5 teachers</th>
<th>Gr. 6 teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bubanza</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1363</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bujumbura R.</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>2080</td>
<td>509</td>
<td>494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bujumbura M.</strong></td>
<td><strong>62</strong></td>
<td><strong>882</strong></td>
<td><strong>347</strong></td>
<td><strong>352</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bururi</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>3540</td>
<td>754</td>
<td>708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cankuzo</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>959</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cibitoke</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>1558</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karusi</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>1320</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kayanza</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>1338</td>
<td>409</td>
<td>409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirundo</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>1572</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makamba</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>2134</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muramvya</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>876</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muyinga</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mwaro</strong></td>
<td><strong>110</strong></td>
<td><strong>910</strong></td>
<td><strong>294</strong></td>
<td><strong>309</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngozi</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>1742</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rutana</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>1347</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruyigi</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>1531</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,568</strong></td>
<td><strong>25,136</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,539</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,834</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Educational Planning Department, Ministry of Education, Burundi (2013)

The records that were availed for the researcher put the number of trained teachers so far at 43,783 but they did not show their distribution per province and per year. Information received from BEPEB during preliminary visits (Oct. 2013) put the staff members at 9.

The ECFBPPS comprises a total of 6 Teacher’s Books (TB) and 6 Pupil’s Books (SB).

3.5 Sampling Procedures and Sample Size

3.5.1 Sampling procedures.

Although random sampling was considered most convenient for the study, security concerns (3.11) necessitated adjustment of procedures and use of a combination of purposive sampling and snowballing (Tolmie, et al, 2011), which were applied to the populations of school principals in Bujumbura Municipality and Mwaro Education
Directorates. Such a decision was influenced by the potential difficulty to involve the Principals because of sensibilities around their positions nowadays, and their many administrative responsibilities. Likewise, the selection of teachers, too, had to be adapted to the changing circumstances as clarified in the section on Limitations (3.11).

Sampling for classroom observation was guided by Pearsall’s idea (quoted in Jones, 1985, p. 63) that “Observation is not appropriate with large populations and events of long durations … small groups, it is possible to see the people involved within reasonable time … feasible with people who want to put up with your presence” (p.63). To comply with this view – which is one of ethical concern – purposive sampling was used, resulting in 4 classes located in Mwaro and 6 classes located in Bujumbura. BEPEB designers being small in number, they were all selected in order to increase the chances of data collected being meaningful (Kothari, 2004).

3.5.2 Sample size.

The approach to sample size took inspiration from insights in the literature. Best and Kahn (2006), for example, recommend a sample size of 20% for survey research designs. Guy and Austin (2003) suggest 10% to 20%. Referring to limitations, Kothari (2004) underlines the possibility of cost considerations affecting both size and type of the sample, thus leading to non-probability sampling being used. With regard to the sampling of texts or materials for Content Analysis, all 6 SBs and 6 TBs, that is the pertinent material, were analyzed because they were considered manageable (Jones, 1985). Table 3.2 displays the research samples.
Table 3.2 Sampling grid

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target population</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bujumbura M.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Teachers</td>
<td>882</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Principals</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mwaro</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Teachers</td>
<td>920</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Principals</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEPEB*</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English materials</td>
<td>6 SBs</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 TBs</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation classes</td>
<td>641 grade 5 classes for Buj. M &amp; Mwaro</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: * BEPEB is solely based in Bujumbura

The sample size per category was then 371 teachers, 80 principals, 8 curriculum designers, and 12 texts. One designer from BEPEB could not be reached, being out of the country at the time. This did not impact on the data, considering that 8 out of the total population of 9 could be reached, and that this individual shared the same characteristics as the remaining 8. Teacher-focused classroom observation took place in 6 classes of grade 5 in Bujumbura Municipality and in 4 classes of grade 5 in Mwaro Province.

3.6 Research Instruments

Three types of instruments were used in the study: the questionnaire, a classroom observation guide, and a content analysis guide.
3.6.1 The questionnaire.

This instrument was used with teachers, school principals, and BEPEB. Each had a mix of multiple questions and a few open-ended questions; the open-ended questions were intended to offer an opportunity to the respondents to reveal their inner opinions about specified variables. Creswell (2012) considers that open-ended questions allow participants to create response options that did not occur to the researcher. In this light the questionnaire made it possible to obtain information regarding resources that teachers consider basic to their job (for example, dictionaries), and their perspectives for improving their implementation of the curriculum. Using a questionnaire was considered the most convenient tool for ensuring the privacy and anonymity of the respondents, given the controversies and mutual suspicions surrounding the 2005 reform. The questionnaire was also chosen for its advantage in facilitating coverage of larger population samples (such as the teachers) in shorter time and with less expenses (Best & Kahn, 2006).

3.6.1.1 The teacher’s questionnaire (Appendix D): this instrument focused on teachers’ assessment of the suggested curriculum contents, activities, exercises and methods, and their relationships to the stated goals. It also inquired about the guidance available in the Teacher’s Manual, as well as the gains from INSET and classroom appraisal.

3.6.1.2 The school principals’ questionnaire (Appendix C): this questionnaire collected views on their preparation for support to the implementation of the ECFBSPS. As primary providers of classroom supervision and appraisal, they were asked to clarify their practices and the resulting achievements for the English curriculum implementation.
3.6.1.3 The BEPEB designers’ questionnaire (Appendix B): this instrument solicited their assessment of the relationships between specified aspects/components of the curriculum and its goals, their eventual challenge to the teachers, and their feelings about teachers’ progress as resulting from INSET. Finally within their implementation follow-up responsibility, they were invited to express themselves on the approaches used and their effect in supporting the teachers.

3.6.2 The observation guide.

Classroom observation, as an efficient instrument in assessing teacher behavior in action, targeted the teachers’ ability to communicate in English during the lessons, and to implement the suggested methods and activities in the light of INSET received (or not). An observation guide (Appendix F) was used by the researcher for this purpose.

3.6.3 The content analysis guide.

Part of the rationale for this research was the researcher’s intention to fill the gap in the knowledge available for the Government/Ministry of Education about the quality of the ECFBSPS. Content analysis then offered itself as a useful instrument in the achievement of this aim. According to Jones (1985), often the only information one has about a particular issue or research question is in documentary form. In this particular case, data was gathered around explicit categories (Jones, 1985; Byrd, 2001) which had been established in a content analysis grid (Appendix E). They were drawn from the textbook Primary English Course (MoE, 2006 – 2010 ), and they included the goals, the linguistic contents, learning activities/exercises, teaching methods, teaching and testing guidance, as well as illustrations. Grid construction was guided by Byrd’s (2001) insights on analysis for implementation.
3.7 Piloting

Piloting was carried out by the researcher asking the four respondents selected for this purpose to fill in the questionnaires following the instructions appearing before each section. It had been clarified to them that neither the contents nor the form was going to be explained or discussed prior to the answering process; but that any unclear, ambiguous, or uneasy areas/items would be pointed out and discussed for fixing after the questionnaires were completed. Both the English and French versions of the Teacher’s Questionnaire and the Principal’s Questionnaire had been made available as it was not certain which they would feel more comfortable with. They chose the French version because it offered language facilitation.

Piloting the questionnaires helped to improve their quality through improvements suggested by the respondents. For example, beside a rewording of certain items, the teachers demanded that ‘qualification’ as a research item be removed because of it being considered as a sensitive issue by the unqualified teachers in particular. In the case of the Principals’ and BEPEB’s Questionnaires, the request was made to remove the last section seeking opinions on how to improve the implementation of the ECFBSPS. The argument was the likelihood of non-response. The researcher was not convinced partly because of the missing views from Mwaro, and partly because the question was only different from most items in its formulation. It was therefore maintained in the last versions. The individuals selected were not included in the actual field investigation. the plan was to involve 4 teachers and 2 principals spread over the 2 provinces, but it was changed due to practical limitations related to the organization of the National Examination and the
approaching end of school year. The change resulted in the exercise being limited to 2 teachers and 1 principal in Bujumbura, and 1 officer from BEPEB.

3.7.1 Validity.

In submitting the instruments to validity testing, the aim was to verify that the instruments were testing elements in line with the research objectives. In other words what was set to be investigated. Therefore, content validity was sought and ensured by checking that all possible dimensions of the primary English language curriculum were investigated. Their piloting and scrutinizing by the thesis supervisors also enhanced validity. The classroom observation guide was cross-checked by 2 senior lecturers in the Educational Psychology Department, University of Burundi. Advice was equally sought from the supervisors for their expertise on how to approach content analysis, and their ideas were integrated with the insights from literature, notably Bwire (2007), Rea (1983), and Wilson (1983) on the evaluation of educational materials. Triangulation, which was achieved using 3 kinds of research instruments, further helped to confirm or refute information gathered with each method separately (Jones, 1985).

3.7.2 Reliability.

The reliability test was aimed at minimizing as much as possible the occurrence of errors in the respondents’ answers. The questions were then written in clear, comprehensible language (French for the teachers and principals), and uneasy items were removed or worded to make them more appealing and accessible to the respondents. The split-half technique was used to measure reliability of the scores on the teachers’ and designers’ questionnaires. The items in each questionnaire were divided into two sets (halves) using the odd number-even number item grouping technique whereby their respective scores
are correlated (Jackson, 2009). The 2 halves were administered simultaneously to the same subjects. The general expectation was for the correlations between the scores to be high, given that both sets of items were held to measure the same element. The coefficient obtained after correlating the scores on items in the teachers’ case was 0.47 at first. In the case of BEPEB, the coefficient was even lower, that is 0.17. Both calculations were obtained using the Pearson Product Moment formula. Under the guidance that coefficients in the order of 0.05 are generally considered high in the case of small samples such as those used in the present study, it was then considered that the coefficients indicated low reliability of the scores, particularly in BEPEB case. This entailed the need to improve on the questionnaires in order to reduce bias in the answers and resubmit them to testing before they were administered on the field. This review resulted in higher coefficients of 0.70 and 0.78, thus reliable instruments.

Concerning the classroom observation guide, reliability was ensured by comparing the data produced by the researcher watching lessons in the same classes with the same teachers at two different times and watching them unfold as suggested by Weick (cited in Jones, 1985). For contents analysis, an acknowledged technique for reliability check is to have two or more people code the same portions of text (Jones, 1985). This technique was adapted by having the supervisors analyze the books to cross-check the researcher’s findings.
3.8 Data Collection Techniques and Procedures

Prior to using the instruments, contacts through personal visits were established with the Provincial Directors of Education (PDs) in the provinces sampled. The researcher gave them the research permit and the introductory letter requesting permission for the questionnaire administration. All the relevant authorities including the BEPEB director were briefed as necessary. The researcher formally wrote to each and attached copies of the relevant questionnaire in order to facilitate their understanding of the research purpose. Although the 2 weeks initially planned for distribution and collection were no longer available, in actual fact, compensation was obtained through the fast distribution process facilitated by the authorities. One and a half week was considered time enough to enable the respondents to reflect on the questionnaires and answer them, given the simplicity of the question topics and their format.

Classroom observation could not afford the two weeks initially projected either. Nevertheless, all 10 lessons necessitated by this study were observed, thanks to the good cooperation of the Principals and teachers in the schools concerned. It was estimated that 2 periods with each of the 10 selected teachers would be sufficient for the purpose of the research objectives. The number of periods to observe (2) had taken into account the fact that these were regular teachers, thus familiar with teaching. The activity was based in schools located within the same surroundings and easily accessible to the observer within reasonable time. This was necessary to increase the chances of observing all lessons in different schools before the examinations began.
Content analysis was done according to plan, by reading carefully the contents in each SB and every TB unit by unit, and identifying relevant information or details necessary for the research objective, then recording it in the guide (Appendix H) that had been prepared to this end. There was a guide per each of the 12 books (6 SBs & 6 TBs), so as to facilitate, for example, the tallying and comparison of certain features of the books.

3.9 Data Analysis

There were both a closed-ended and an open-ended sections in each of the three questionnaires, resulting in both quantitative and qualitative data being obtained. Prior to the analysis per se, the returned questionnaires were first sorted out and organized by their serial number as per category (teachers or principals) and province/location. Both the questionnaires and the envelopes containing them had been given matching numbers before they were sent out. Upon return, they were checked for their completeness after which those not completed at 50% were eliminated. The turnout rate was found to be higher in Bujumbura Municipality (100% for Principals & 88.1% for teachers) than in Mwaro (97.8% for Principals & 69.0% for teachers), probably due to problems of accessibility. The actual respondents’ rates were to be affected later by non-response to sections of the questionnaires from non in-serviced participants in the investigation. This led to the analysis considering Section 2 of the Teacher’s Questionnaire (Evaluation of INSET, Appendix D) for only the teachers who indicated that they had received INSET.

The raw data was of two types: quantitative data from the closed-ended items in the questionnaires and content analysis, and the qualitative data from the open-ended items
in the questionnaires, classroom observation, and content analysis guide. Quantitative data was analyzed using simple descriptive statistics (means, frequencies, percentages) to show the general tendencies in the data, as for example in the INSET’s achievements on teachers’ understanding of the recommended methodology, or their ability to teach pronunciation. Frequencies and percentages were systematically applied in the analyses of single variables, and presented through bar graphs or pie charts as deemed relevant.

Analysis of the qualitative data, on the other hand, was done by identifying categories or themes (Creswell, 2012) of information emerging from the respondents’ answers on the given variables or from the examination of various areas of the textbook materials, and establishing the patterns in them. The tallying technique was then used to count the frequencies of their occurrences. The frequencies were converted to percentages and tabulated to facilitate rank-order transparency and reading of the data. Bar graphs were further used selectively to emphasize the results from content analysis.

3.10 Logistical, Legal and Ethical Considerations

Observance was made of the principle not to coerce the respondents to participate in the study. (Creswell, 2012; Jones, 1985). The instruction had been made clear to the communal directors (CDs) and to the provincial directors (PDs) while briefing them. A precautionary measure was taken to include such a message in the introductory section of each type of Q. Part of it had information that their responses should be guided by adherence to the research purpose. The questionnaires were supplied together with return envelopes which the subjects were advised to seal or even staple at leisure. The observed
teachers had been introduced to the researcher by the respective principals. They were informed on the connection of the observation to the study. Deem it necessary to report that they and their principals showed a lot of enthusiasm at the news of such an investigation being undertaken. Explanations were given that the observation was not meant to judge them and that the principals expected no reports on them. Having proposed the schedules themselves, they knew when to expect the researcher. The focus of the observation was not communicated to them in order to minimize influence on their behavior, hence bias in the data being collected. During the process, the researcher was settled in the back of the class, ready with the observation guide and textbook. Personal measures were taken not to highlight her presence.

3.11 Limitations

The late arrival in the country owing to academic constraints relating to obtaining the research permit at KU and later in Burundi resulted in the impossibility to fit all planned steps in the time left in the school calendar. The researcher could not afford postponing the process of collection till the 3rd term of 2014/2015 due to it being an electoral period. Moreover, reading and writing are recommended for teaching in the 3rd term. A last minute extension of the school calendar following the unexpected sitting of the National Examination at Grade 6 (English was not concerned) came as a matter of good luck for the researcher (closure of the year on 12 July instead of 5 July). The Provincial Directors (PDs) and the Communal Directors (CDs) assisted the researcher by distributing and collecting the questionnaires – they are state-supported for their transportation. Thanks to their advice, the random sampling procedure was adapted by adding an extra 60
questionnaires to each of the initial samples and later randomly picking a number equal to the samples from the returned questionnaires. The end-result was that even the principals were randomly sampled. These additional questionnaires were distributed at the same time and in the same conditions as the initial ones. Their recipients (teachers and schools) had similar characteristics to the initial ones; they were all in the public system.
CHAPTER FOUR
DATA PRESENTATION, REPORTING AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses results from the data that was collected in line with the research objectives. It draws the major findings, thereby addressing the research questions. The data will be presented and analyzed as per each study objective.

4.2 Demographic information of the respondents

The respondents were requested to supply information regarding their gender, their experiences as teacher and/or as principal, as well as their in-service training (INSET) status. In the principals’ case, qualification as an investigation area was retained, as it had not raised any concern during piloting. An introduction to their gender follows.

4.2.1 Gender.

Gender composition in the sampled populations was as represented in Figure 4.1 below.

Figure 4.1 Gender compositions in the population samples
Reading the data in Figure 4.5, one notices a higher number of female respondents. This is a reflection of the general trend in Burundi primary schools. Male representation comes out higher within the principals than among the teachers in the samples (17.9% teachers in Buj. M and 52.6% teachers in Mwaro against 21.2% principals in Buj. M and 71.7% principals in Mwaro). This may be partly attributable to culture which favours men in authority positions; but the remote locations of some of the rural schools plays a role in that it often poses security threats to female principals. This may explain the high number of male principals in Mwaro. The study cannot discuss the effect of gender on the curriculum implementation, for lack of articulated research on the issue.

The researcher’s reasoning over gender non-specification in 37 cases is that teachers probably did not consider it an important detail to the research. It is to be recognized, though, that this phenomenon was only observed with teachers, and not with principals for unknown reasons.

4.2.2 Teachers’ professional experience and qualifications.

Tables 4.1 to 4.4 present details in relation to professional and educational background, as well as training opportunities to equip teachers of English and school principals with the know-how necessary to implement the English curriculum. Since ‘experience’ in the Principals’ case integrates teaching and administration, it was necessary for them to receive INSET as well.
Table 4.1 Principals’ experience in teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience as teacher</th>
<th>Buj,M frequency (%)</th>
<th>Mwaro frequency (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N=47</td>
<td>N=32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-4 years</td>
<td>2 (4.2%)</td>
<td>3 (9.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10 years</td>
<td>12 (25.5%)</td>
<td>14 (43.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-20 years</td>
<td>9 (19.1%)</td>
<td>8 (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 20 years</td>
<td>24 (51.0%)</td>
<td>7 (21.8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data indicates long teaching experiences, in the range of 5-10 years for the majority of respondents in the two samples (51.0% and 40.6%) followed by those in the range of 11 and more years (17.0% and 25%). This suggests that these teachers have sufficient familiarity with the primary English language curriculum and the issues around it.

Table 4.2 Principals’ experience as school managers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience as manager</th>
<th>Buj,M frequency (%)</th>
<th>Mwaro frequency (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N=47</td>
<td>N=32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 years</td>
<td>7 (14.8%)</td>
<td>7 (21.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4 years</td>
<td>8 (17.0%)</td>
<td>4 (12.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10 years</td>
<td>24 (51.0%)</td>
<td>13 (40.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 and more years</td>
<td>8 (17.0%)</td>
<td>8 (25%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Administration wise, the data shows a tendency towards spending long years in teaching before a teacher can hopefully accede to the position as Principal. For example, 24 cases of principals in Buj.M and 6 in Mwaro had taught for more than 20 years. It is further learned that the samples include members who have been Principal for up to 11 years and more (9 out of 47 or 19.1% in Buj.M) and 8 out of 32 or (25%) in Mwaro. With the largest groups being found in the range of 5-10 years, the data suggests that most of the principals in the samples are knowledgeable about the circumstances of the English language curriculum, even though they have not necessarily taught English, or were ever expected to teach it.
Table 4.3 Principals’ qualifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Buj.M frequency (%)</th>
<th>Mwaro frequency (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D4</td>
<td>9 (19.1%)</td>
<td>2 (6.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D6</td>
<td>28 (59.5%)</td>
<td>27 (84.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D7</td>
<td>8 (17.0%)</td>
<td>2 (6.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other qualifications</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>1 (3.1%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It emerges that the Principals hold a mix of diplomas which include D6, D7, and D4 (in which D stands for ‘diploma’), with the D6 being the most (59.5% in Buj.M and 84.3% in Mwaro). D4, which is the oldest and the lowest of the 3 categories, has paved the way to the current D6 which is the level held by the majority of primary school teachers nowadays. All three are qualifying diplomas for primary teaching, even though the D7 was initially issued for secondary school teaching before a ‘happy’ measure was taken to open tertiary education to them. The very few who did not embrace university have, with time, been relocated. They together with their D4 counterparts enjoy good professional reputation, despite the fact that their qualifications are considered rather ‘remote’. It can be drawn that although most school principals have high qualifications (84% and 59%), they lack the relevant skills to teach English. This is because not only the secondary programme they attended is negligible (1.1.4), but also it is not directed to preparing them for this [ELT] purpose.

Overall, the differences in the academic profiles may suggest differences in levels of English, and possibly in attitudes to it as an L2 that they have to learn for ‘survival’. The D4 and D7 categories, for example, have a remote experience of schooling, whereas school constitutes their major source of English. The implication for INSET is that
possession of the skills necessary for Principals to both improve their own teaching and offer adequate supervision becomes hard to achieve.

**Table 4.4 Teachers’ experience on the field**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers’ years of experience</th>
<th>Buj.M frequency N=166</th>
<th>Mvaro frequency N=136</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-4 years</td>
<td>102 (61.4%)</td>
<td>87 (64.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-7 years</td>
<td>43 (25.9%)</td>
<td>34 (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 years and more</td>
<td>16 (9.5 %)</td>
<td>13 (9.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>5 (3.0%)</td>
<td>2 (1.4%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers’ experience with various grades</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All 6 Grades</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most teachers (61.4% and 64.0%) appear to have a short experience with English language teaching, compared to those who are likely to have started with its introduction (25.9% & 25%). Another interesting finding is in relation to the grades taught. The data shows widespread experience with the different grades, with at least 1 teacher in the two locations having taught all 6 Grades. If more teachers are observed in the lower grades (grades1-3), this is due to the gradual introduction of the course in the primary ladder. An noteworthy feature of ‘younger’ teachers is their recent schooling which places them in the category of D6 diploma holders, with its possible implications for better levels of English comparatively. Overall, it can be considered that the teachers in the samples have relevant experiences to inspire expression of meaningful opinions.
4.2.3 The curriculum designers at BEPEB.

For practical purposes, the identification labels *Bep1, Bep2 …* were used for easier reference to the respondents. The participants were asked to tell their bio data, their qualification, as well as their familiarity with the ECFBSPS.

**Table 4.5 Designers’ backgrounds**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information sought</th>
<th>Bep1</th>
<th>Bep2</th>
<th>Bep3</th>
<th>Bep4</th>
<th>Bep5</th>
<th>Bep6</th>
<th>Bep7</th>
<th>Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>5F/1M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years in present position</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7 to 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualification/subject</td>
<td>IP/Eng -Ki</td>
<td>IP/Eng -Ki</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>IP/Eng -Ki</td>
<td>Bac/EL</td>
<td>Bac/E -F</td>
<td>Bac/EL L</td>
<td>3IP/3 Bac</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching experience</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3 to 37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other qualifications</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiar with ECFBSPS</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Everyone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: Bep = BEPEB; En.= English; Ki=Kirundi; IP (French abbrev) = Pedagogic Institute; Bac.= Bachelor; ? = no mention; - = none; ELL = English Language and Literature; E-F= English-French

*i) Experience and familiarity*: As appearing in Table 4.5, more than half of the curriculum designers (4 out of 7 or 57.1%) have at least 10 years’ experience. The shortest experience, that is, 5 years, was held by 1 designer. Overall, the information confirms their acknowledged familiarity with the curriculum in question, and suggests that they have pertinent views to offer on the primary English curriculum. The respondents show long years of teaching experience, too, with 5 out of the 7 (71.4%) having taught for between 14 and 37 years.

**ii) Qualification:** The data shows an almost equal distribution of respondents with a college Diploma and those holding Bachelor’s degree (42.8%) . What this means is that all members of the team are called to carry out the same duties despite their unequal
qualifications and different academic backgrounds (1.1.7). The Diploma is obtained from the Pedagogic Institute after a 2-year training. The Bachelor’s degree is awarded by the University of Burundi after 4 years of study. Professionally, this implies that neither category will have been recruited, based on their background in curriculum/syllabus development. It could thus be argued that some of the tasks they are charged with may require knowledge and skills beyond their competencies. Examples of these include materials design, and teacher-appraisal and support through efficient feedback.

4.2.4 Characteristics of the teachers, classes, and lessons observed.

The researcher observed 6 classes and 4 classes which were contributed by Bujumbura Municipality and Mwaro respectively. Table 4.6 introduces the schools, classes, and lessons observed. The first 6 teachers are from Bujumbura Municipality; the last 4 are from Mwaro.
Table 4.6 Summary of schools, classes, and lessons observed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher order &amp; gender</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Class (size)</th>
<th>Lesson topic*</th>
<th>SBs availability</th>
<th>Teaching aids other than blackboard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (F)</td>
<td>EP Q4</td>
<td>5A (52)</td>
<td>Days and months; Time expressions</td>
<td>¬</td>
<td>TB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (F)</td>
<td>EP Q4</td>
<td>5B (59)</td>
<td>Unfocused (random switches)</td>
<td>1 book for 3</td>
<td>TB &amp; Paper on desk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (F)</td>
<td>EP Q2/3</td>
<td>5A (65)</td>
<td>Domestic animals</td>
<td>Text pre-written on BB</td>
<td>TB (photocopy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (F)</td>
<td>EP Q2</td>
<td>5A (80)</td>
<td>Reading text: My country</td>
<td>Text pre-written on BB</td>
<td>TB (photocopy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 (F)</td>
<td>EP Q3</td>
<td>5A (62)</td>
<td>Provinces, communes, rivers …</td>
<td>¬</td>
<td>Map of Burundi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (F)</td>
<td>EP Q3</td>
<td>5B (60)</td>
<td>Provinces, communes, rivers …</td>
<td>¬</td>
<td>2 different maps of Burundi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 (M)</td>
<td>Kibumbu I</td>
<td>5B (60)</td>
<td>Reading text: My country</td>
<td>1 book for 3</td>
<td>TB (photocopy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 (F)</td>
<td>Kibumbu III</td>
<td>5th Gr. (46)</td>
<td>Time expressions: today, yesterday…</td>
<td>¬</td>
<td>TB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 (F)</td>
<td>Kibumbu I</td>
<td>5th Gr. (30)</td>
<td>Reading text: My country</td>
<td>1 for 2</td>
<td>TB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 (F)</td>
<td>Kibumbu II</td>
<td>5A (30)</td>
<td>Vocabulary related to text “My country”</td>
<td>¬</td>
<td>¬</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total: 10 : 1M, 9F</td>
<td>7 schools</td>
<td>19 lessons</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: F = female; M = Male; EP Q = Ecole Primaire du Quartier …; Gr.; Grade (The letters A, B, etc are used in Burundi system to distinguish between classes of the same level. In the case of one class (for example, with Kibumbu I & II), they are not used; ¬ means that the Book was not seen during the 2 lessons that were observed; * means that the details given in these two columns refer to the first lessons only.

The data provided information on a number of elements including gender, class size, lesson topics, availability and accessibility of books, as well as teaching aids.

Table 4.6 above shows a prevalence of females among the teachers in the sample (9 out of 10). Even if this aspect was not important to the Observation objective, it may be commented that this represents the general trend across Burundi primary schools.
Objective one sought to analyze the goals/objectives, the content, the methods and resources in the textbooks used to teach the English language in state primary schools.

4.3 The textbooks used to teach the English language in primary schools

Data in connection with this objective was obtained from the content analysis performed on Books 1-6 (Pupil’s Books and Teacher’s Books) which form both the English syllabus and curriculum for the primary level in Burundi. This level currently comprises six grades.

4.3.1 An overview of the Primary English Course series structural design.

Before an in-depth analysis of the materials in the textbooks is done, it is perhaps of benefit to the reader to have some general introduction to the structural design of the six textbooks, known to the teachers and designers in Burundi as the Primary English Course series. Table 4.7 below presents the series’ general characteristics.
Table 4.7 General characteristics of the English course books

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General characteristics</th>
<th>Bk.1</th>
<th>Bk.2</th>
<th>Bk.3</th>
<th>Bk.4</th>
<th>Bk.5</th>
<th>Bk.6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total units</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total pgs – PB</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pictorial content &amp; colour</td>
<td>+ red &amp; brown</td>
<td>+ red &amp; green</td>
<td>+ red &amp; brown</td>
<td>+ red &amp; brown</td>
<td>+ red &amp; brown</td>
<td>+ red &amp; brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancillary materials</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TB</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periods/week &amp; length</td>
<td>4 (30 min.)</td>
<td>4 (30min.)</td>
<td>4 (30 min.)</td>
<td>4 (30 min.)</td>
<td>4 (40 min.)</td>
<td>4 (40 min.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language(s) in the Books</td>
<td>English &amp; Fr. for TB; Eng. for PB</td>
<td>Eng. &amp; Fr. for TB; Eng. for PB</td>
<td>English &amp; Fr. for TB; Eng. for PB</td>
<td>Eng. &amp; Fr. for TB; Eng. for PB</td>
<td>Eng. &amp; Fr. for TB; Eng. for PB</td>
<td>Eng. &amp; Fr. for TB; Eng. for PB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other characteristics</td>
<td>One level</td>
<td>One level</td>
<td>2 levels in 1 book</td>
<td>2 levels in 1 book</td>
<td>2 levels in 1 book</td>
<td>2 levels in 1 book</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: + (available); – (Not available); Pref. (preface); Intr. (General Introduction); Guid. (teaching guidelines); Glos. (glossary); Pron. (Pronunciation guide); Eng. (English); Fr. (French)

A number of things can be learned from the table: firstly, *English Primary Course* has a Pupil’s Book (SB) and an accompanying Teacher’s Book (TB) for each of the 6 grades that it covers. The TB contains, in addition to the lesson guidelines, a couple of other sections and features intended to inform and assist teaching at that level. They include among other things: the preface, the introduction, a glossary section, and parallel use of French and English languages. The SB, for its part, contains visuals in addition to English lexical and structural items, as well as reading texts.

i) The preface: the preface is a unique page across the series. It sets the Burundi government’s rationale and perspective for the introduction of the English language in primary school (details in the goals section). It also stipulates the methodological
approaches recommended for implementation. It therefore constitutes another important section of the TB for the teachers.

**ii) The introduction:** this section provides a unique description of the ‘main’ and ‘specific’ objectives (Appendix L) of the English course. It further outlines the main procedures to apply in the teaching of specific areas and skills planned for the particular grade. This section, too, is crucial in guiding the teachers.

**iii) The instructional guidelines:** the guidelines in the Teacher’s Books comprise the steps and sometimes the direct instructional language for each lesson in a unit. They are given in both the French and the English languages, in two parallel columns. Occasionally, but rarely, mother tongue (Kirundi) is suggested, in addition to French, in the case of complicated concepts.

**iv) The glossary:** the glossary contains phonetic transcriptions and explanations of vocabulary words selected (and listed) as per unit. The explanations are given in English, followed by the French equivalents for the words listed. As such, this section presents itself as a useful tool in the teachers’ understanding of meaning and pronunciation. The possibility of two different pronunciations for a same word as given in the glossaries for Book 1, 2, and 3 may, however, confuse the teachers at this level.

**v) The visuals in the Student’s Books:** these visuals cover practically every type of content in the Student’s Books units. Such provisions are helpful to the facilitation of teaching/learning and for young learners’ motivation in particular. Nevertheless, the colour restriction to red and brown or green (Appendix M) entails that certain items will have to appear rather unnatural and using them a bit awkward. In this connection, a
comment may be worth making about Unit 4 in SB1 (Appendix N): the topic of this unit being “colours”, the fact that it happens to be the only *colourless* unit in the whole series is not only strange, but also contrary to the above-mentioned pedagogic contribution of visuals.

**vi) Use of French and English in the Teacher’s Books:** the use of the French language alongside English in the TBs (Appendix L) suggests the authority’s and designers’ consciousness of the teachers’ inability to interpret the curriculum, had it been printed in all-English language. Financial constraints may be at the origin of the incorporation of 2 syllabi in one book, like in the case of Book 3 & 4, and Book 5 & 6 (Appendix K) even though it must be recognized that the latter two might have been too thin to stand alone as textbooks. Size appreciation may be underlying the French term *livret* (booklet), as opposed to *livre* (book) in reference to the SB and the TB respectively, as was found out during classroom observation.

**vii) Content size:** in so far as the learning materials are concerned, differences in content size can be pointed out. The range is of 5 units for the smallest to 13 units for the largest book, as illustrated in Figure 4.1 above. The tendency is for more units to be found in the lower grades. For example, SB2, used in grade 2, has 13 units, which represents almost 3 times the SB for grade 5 (5 units), and more than double the SB for grade 6 (6 units). The point here is that the teaching time does not reflect these proportions. As can be observed in the table, English is taught at the same weekly rate of 4 lessons in all classes, and the periods are longer (40 minutes against 30 minutes) in the grades with less material.
Perhaps another characteristic of the textbooks worth remarking is the absence of audio support materials. Considering that we are in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) setting, and that the teachers’ competence in English is quite limited in the case under study, such a situation limits the pupils’ and teachers’ opportunities for additional input, but it may also not favour the acquisition of a standard model of English. The songs contained in the books cannot be fully enjoyed and exploited as they would, if the original music could be heard (Sevik, 2012). Some teachers may not be good at singing either. Moreover, the songs cannot be assumed as being known to every teacher.

In view of all these characteristics, a fair observation, which constitutes a finding, could be made that there was an effort towards using a comprehensive approach in the design of the series.; but there are discrepancies in the contents with regard to quantitative balance. A look at a typical unit in the programme may further support this thinking.

4.3.2 **Structure of a typical unit in the textbook series.**

A typical unit in each of the six books comprises 2 parts which cover the unit’s objectives and learning activities respectively. The learning activities are thoroughly presented and developed as per period in every unit of each TB (Table 4.4). A snapshot would offer the following view:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit order and title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.Objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.Learning Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period 1 <em>Review</em> (or the new item itself)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher: (…)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil: (…)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period 2 (e.g.: <em>His</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher: (…)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil: (…), etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period 4 <em>Reinforcement</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher: (…)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil: (…) and so on till the last period, generally devoted to <em>Memorization</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The objectives are formulated in terms of what the pupils are expected to achieve by the end of the unit. This is pedagogical practice recommended in communicative teaching. Indeed this approach is keen on the objectives targeting knowledge, abilities and skills to be acquired by the learner instead of focusing on teacher input (Savignon, 2001; Larsen-Freeman, 2012). Such practice benefits both the pupils’ learning and in the present case, the unqualified members of the teaching force who may find in it an opportunity to learn about objective formulation.

Another practical aspect of such arrangement for the teacher here is that the TB offers clear guidance for activity distribution. The learning activities and the teaching methods must, however, be aligned to the objectives if the intended learning is to successfully take place. Providing the instructional language for the teachers was necessary in the present context, but perhaps that a note indicating that it was not ‘the prescription’ would open a little room for some flexibility with the more capable teachers

4.3.3 Goals and objectives.

As clarified above, the English language curriculum goals and objectives are given in the preface to the TBs (Appendix L). A linkage appears to have been made between the introduction of English in Burundi state primary schools to three goals which can be summarized as follows:

a) To meet the Burundi Education needs

b) The need for the Burundian youth to speak English, and

c) To help reach the goal of regional integration.
These three aims are described in reference to considerations by the Burundi Government on the sociolinguistic and geographical environment of the country, and the development of technology on one hand, and its membership with some regional and international organizations on the other hand. Under the educational angle, the same page holds that the English programme integrates the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), and specifies their prioritization per level.

The objectives of the programme are presented and described in the general introduction as follows:

- **Main objectives:**
  
  a) The acquisition of the listening skill based on the oral comprehension by listening to the teacher
  
  b) The acquisition of the speaking skill which consists of reproducing the oral expression got from the teacher`s model, and
  
  c) The acquisition of the reading skill by repeating short texts or dialogues according to the instructions given by the teacher

- **Specific objectives:**
  
  a) To hear and understand the spoken language
  
  b) To understand what they (the pupils) read
  
  c) To speak, and
  
  c) To write.
A somewhat emphatic note follows these objectives stipulating that “Therefore, four skills must be developed: listening, speaking, reading, and writing”.

A first note could be made here that goals and objectives are held to be some of the chore elements in syllabus design for their role in guiding the work of contents selection. (Nunan, 2001). Their availability is therefore a positive aspect of the curriculum. Professional teachers will want to regularly consult the course goals and objectives in order to regulate their teaching practices. Nevertheless, a clear distinction between objective and technique or procedure in the formulation of main objectives is necessary in line with the comprehensive approach mentioned above. In other words, teaching and learning procedures are a matter of how the various skills are to be acquired rather than of why or for what purpose they are learned.

Secondly, it is not sufficient for the goals and objectives to be available; they should also be coherent with one another. The relationship between the stated goals and the objectives does not come out clearly. This is due to the fact that the “specific objectives” are stated in broad terms, whereas they should be related to some perceivable learning purpose within the framework of the goals. This is especially the case with the last two specific objectives. The critical issue that arises here is the possibility of mechanical teaching/learning resulting; and this would be in the interest of neither the achievement of the above stated goals nor of quality education.

Visibility of the goals in the books is a questionable aspect. The use of the term goal in singular form instead of in plural, and in sole relation to regional integration (Appendix L) is likely to overshadow the other two goals stated in the same page, particularly that its
host paragraph contains several items which are capitalized and typed in bold-face. The busy or inexperienced teacher might be caught up by the highlighted elements – here names of international and regional organizations like COMESA, UNICEF, EAC – and fail to pay attention to the rest of the paragraph. What needs doing here is reappraise the contrasts in print, draw out the goals and perhaps list them under a clear heading like the same was done for main objectives and specific objectives.

A barrier to clarity may be brought to light which derives from the curriculum designers taking the meanings behind the terms (or the possible linkages between them) for granted that they will be readily clear to the teachers. This was the case with ‘regional integration’, or even ‘the development of technology’. It is not to be assumed that the former will be obvious to all teachers of English in Burundi, let alone primary teachers. Indeed, it should be borne in mind that these teachers were never prepared to teach English. Both elements, therefore, require the teacher’s understanding of how they should be translated into English language teaching.

Likewise, ‘education needs’ (Appendix L) is a complex notion whose bearings on ELT in Burundi primary schools need to be comprehensively explicated with reference to situations perceivable by the textbooks users. For example, reference could be made to the need for pupils to be able to express their thoughts and feelings inside the classroom, to pass the primary school-leaving state examination, or still to prepare for following instruction solely given in English during the secondary English or at university. The emphasis put on goals for their influence on objective specification in the present discussion does in no way imply any attempt to ignore the ages and thus the
developmental levels attained by the pupils, which the curriculum designers have repeatedly called under attention in their Methodology and Teaching Techniques section.

Clarity of the instrumental terms is crucial, since some of the teachers were recruited, not having gone through proper pre-service education. This was so for those who had attended General Secondary school in particular. Given that English (at Secondary level) was taught as a subject to the now practicing teachers, the chances are that they did not encounter formal exposure to such seemingly familiar terms in the education field as goals, aims, objectives, activities and exercises. Clarifying them would only contribute to equipping the teachers pedagogically to implement the syllabus. That no attempts appear to have been made to clarify the education needs of the learners, just like those related to ‘speaking’ English and ‘regional integration’ is a gap in the awareness that both teachers and BEPEB need in order to have an informed vision of the goal of ELT in primary school as an innovation. Magoma (2011) comments on the role played by needs definition in the conception of the Integrated English Curriculum (IEC) in Kenya.

4.3.4 Teaching/learning contents.

Two main process were involved at this stage: analyzing the textbooks to identify the nature of the teaching/learning contents offered in them; and assessing these contents. In analyzing the textbooks, three central elements to curriculum efficiency were under focus:

(i) The range of knowledge and skills that pupils are benefiting through the facilitation of the methods and activities used to deliver the learning content,
(ii) The appropriateness of this knowledge and skills in the general framework of the goals and aims assigned to this language programme, and

(iii) The ‘usability’ of the materials by both the teachers and pupils. ‘Usability’ here is in relation to the teacher ability to understand and explain the content to learners; and to the appropriateness of the content with regard to pupil age, educational, and cultural background.

The assessment of the resources available in the books was guided by a set of questions:

- What resources are offered in the books?
- Do the TBS offer clear guidance about implementation?
- Does input show focus on language accuracy or on use?
- Are there opportunities for meaningful practice of the forms?
- What patterns of interaction do the activities display?
- Does the teacher expect the pupils to initiate language?
- What examples of questions are the teachers offered?
- Is the learner engaged actively or passively in language work?
- What abilities are developed through the methods and activities?
- What is the guidance on the use of illustrations?
- Are the methods conducive to skill switching/integration?
- Is there room for variety, creativity, and flexibility?

Other aspects relevant to the resources in the Pupil’s Books and the Teacher’s Books emerged in the course of the analysis and they were integrated in the discussion. The findings served as a base for the subsequent overall conclusions to be drawn and which
would make it possible to have a more objective outlook when assessing the adequacy of the programme.

In assessing content, attention here was concentrated on two types of material that tend to gather general consensus in ESL/EFL circles (Byrd, 2001), namely the **linguistic content** and the **thematic content**. Linguistic content covers elements such as grammar, vocabulary, and language skills; thematic content, on its part, relates to the topics or topical content used to present and practice the linguistic content. One other valuable element considered in appraisal of contents in modern ESL/EFL teaching is language functions; so, it was felt the researcher’s responsibility to assess this element under ‘content’.

**4.3.4.1 An overview of the overall coverage.**

Four broad pedagogical categories were identified which included the vocabulary or lexical category (e.g.: Classroom objects, In the house), the grammatical or structure category (e.g.: Tenses, Articles), the functional category (e.g.: Greetings, Introductions), and the skill/reading category (e.g.: Reading). Table 4.8 shows the results in units and corresponding percentages, after the quantification exercise applied to the textbooks. While Reading as a language skill is deliberately presented and catered for in the textbooks, the same was not found about the Listening and the Speaking skills. It is possible that they are integrated with the many oral drills that constitute the major learning activities in the series. While such exercises have their place in the classes of young learners, their sole use is not in the interest of the development of mastery of language forms with its facilitation of communication efficiency.
### Table 4.8 Coverage of the linguistic content in the various grades

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pedagogical subcategories</th>
<th>Bk.1 9 units</th>
<th>Bk.2 13 units</th>
<th>Bk.3 10 units</th>
<th>Bk.4 10 units</th>
<th>Bk.5 5 units</th>
<th>Bk.6 6 units</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lexical</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>53 (99.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammatical</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>25 (45.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functional</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>18 (32.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skill (Reading)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5 (9.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lex./Funct.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lex./Read.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: Lex.: lexical; Funct.: functional; Read.: reading

Some clarifications are necessary here to help interpret the data: firstly, although a unit may look or be functional by its title, its actual teaching methodology will be that of a lexical unit, thus impeding its pedagogical achievements. In fact, the general tendency is for the syllabus to lean more towards lexical items (45.2%) compared to the other linguistic skills. There appears to be little or no functional and reading use made of the linguistic skills. Secondly, in a few cases, a unit was found to combine both grammatical and lexical or functional features (for example, “Introductions and Some Commands”, grade 2, Unit 2). It was then listed under the functional category. Thirdly and lastly, the brackets were used for the counts of units in which the functional material or threading passage occupies a small portion of the teaching/learning content (such as 1 period out of a total of 3 or 4 periods in the unit). Where reading is the main activity, the unit was straightly counted as a category in its own right.

The data in Table 4.8 indicates that the learning content roughly goes increasing in amount by the order of functions, lexis, grammar, reading, from grade 1 to grade 6, and that in the individual grades, the learning content does not seem to follow a clear quantitative pattern of distribution. For example, whereas the tendency is descending...
from lexical to reading content in grade 1 to grade 3, it becomes irregularly ascending from Book 4, with some components like grammar and functions being most ill-served at the expense of others. Poor coverage together with random distribution of the contents may adversely affect the quality of learning through possible fragmentation of language input. Other information from the data, and which fits with the General Introduction, is that Reading begins at grade 5, while Writing is absent. The last category (Other) has mixed content; it was not counted in the total.

The space occupied by the various contents is perhaps better captured if they are represented graphically. Figure 4.2 has been used for this purpose.

**Figure 4.2 Total distribution of the linguistic contents**

If lexical content constitutes the largest content, this is traceable to the fact that at elementary level in the Burundi setting, most pupils are encountering the English for the first time. They therefore need to acquire an amount of words with which they can function in the lessons. The recurrence of the items should however be put at the service
of the practice of functions and reading in order to compensate for the little space given to these 2 subcategories in the course.

The sudden change to *not* introduce the writing skill at the primary school level is neither in harmony with the English curriculum goals and objectives, nor with the perspective of upgrading the literacy skills of primary school attendees proclaimed for the new Basic Education System. It is also important to keep in mind that the pupils, especially in the upper grades, are already accustomed to learning through writing (and reading); their expectations may therefore have been disregarded. It may be necessary to report that the teachers observed during classroom observation frequently used writing to explain certain things.

A gradual approach to writing is necessary and possible, especially in the upper grades. Olshtain (2001) demonstrates through a set of simple activities that practice of writing skills can be done in a meaningful way in the early stages of ESL/EFL, if care is taken to remain within the linguistic proficiency of the learners. The author maintains that once its *mechanics* are brought under control, the learners should slowly, but steadily, be engaged in organizational and purposeful activities. The fact is that the practice of Reading from grade 4 to grade 6 would imply that some ‘mechanics’ like letter, word and sentence recognition, basic use of punctuation, and to some extent paragraph recognition were already dealt with. The advantage of such an approach would be to promote learner awareness of the interaction that naturally exists between reading and writing (Olshtain, 2001).
4.3.4.2 Coverage of grammatical content.

In order to increase the reader’s understanding of the random character of linguistic content in the English curriculum, Figure 4.3 below has been used. It is focused on the grammatical content category and assesses it per each of the 6 PBs. The range of units is 5 to 13.

**Figure 4.3 Distribution of grammatical contents per grade**

![Bar chart showing distribution of grammatical contents per grade]

As can be seen in the graphical data, grammar is nil in Book 1 (Grade 1) and Book 6 (Grade 6). One would expect more grammar to be taught towards the end of the course. In line with the principle of sharing responsibility in modern EFL pedagogy (Champeau de Lopéz, 1994; Bourne, 1994), classes with older children, for example grade 6, should be not only given but also encouraged to seek for and respond positively to opportunities for communication in the classroom. Such an orientation is both possible and desirable because the philosophy and the recommended approaches support it. The readings in
these classes should further be used to explore how words can be combined to create meaningful structures and sentences.

A further illustration of the imbalanced distribution of linguistic content is given in Figure 4.4 with a special focus on the textbook for grade 4. As the chart indicates, the 10 units that make up the programme incorporate 8 grammatical units and 2 lexical units. The functional content is nil. Reading has been omitted both because it occupies negligible space in mainly lexical units, and chiefly because in the TBs, it is de-emphasized in favour of lexical content.

**Figure 4.4 Illustration of imbalance in linguistic content focused on grade 4**

Imbalance in favour of grammatical content is illustrated by the high number of units it occupies in this textbook (8 out of the 10 units or 80%). Bwire (2007) arrived at similar findings in content analyzing the Integrated English course book for Form 3 in Kenya for its coverage of the listening skill. The finding established a coverage of 2.5 units out of 21 or 9.52%, whereas coverage of other contents was 100% for grammar, 100% for
reading, and 85.71% for speaking. The subsequent conclusion was that the listening skill was inadequately covered in favour of other skills, and that this was unfavourable to the learners’ development of this skill. The same can be concluded about the lexical units in Book 4 or the 9.4% coverage for functions and reading in Table 4.2 above.

Such programming may suggest language components being seen to exist in separation of each other, with the likelihood of grammar in this case being taught in isolation. This causes a deficit in the acquisition of language use abilities. Another parallel consequence mentioned by Bwire (2007) was possible negative effect on the pupils’ motivation. In the present case, little variety is also likely. This is said in reference to young children’s pedagogy which advises teachers to remain conscious of children’s limited attention span (Bourne, 1994). The argument may be further supported with knowledge of the challenging nature of English grammar in general, fostered in this case by lack of experiential learning for the pupils to rely on. Poor coverage of functions will combine with the observed neglect of meaning-oriented presentation and practice of the structural elements to hinder self expression in the learners.

4.3.4.3 Thematic content.

Provisions on thematic content given in the Introduction section indicates two considerations that inspired the choice of the topics in the various textbooks:

- the need to not remove the pupils from their cultural settings so that they can easily connect with what they are learning, and
- the interest and the impact of some topics on the communities the pupil lives in.
The identification procedure involved a thorough inventory of the topics appearing in each Book as per grade. The Tables of Contents within the textbooks served a very useful guide to this end. During the process, it became clear that certain topics were recurrent across the programme, as indeed it was the designers’ principle (TBs 5 & 6, p.7) to present some complex themes gradually along the course. The next step was then to narrow down the list of topics into a small number of broader clusters according to their level of conceptual closeness as shown in Table 4.9. For example, “My School”, “Home and Family” and “Domestic Animals” were regrouped under the new theme of *Immediate Environment*. Similarly, “My Country”, “At the Supermarket” and “Wild Animals” formed the new theme *Wider Environment*.

The new theme *Time* was created to incorporate “Time expressions”, “Days of the Week”, and “Months of the Year”. The non-specific theme *Other* was so labeled because of the subtopics in it not focusing on any identifiable subject, and for the difficulty to establish clear conceptual relationships between them beyond their grammatical nature. As a third and last step, these general themes were quantified, basing on the number of occurrences or appearances of the subtopics incorporated in them. The symbol – is used in the table to indicate the non inclusion of the particular topic across the curriculum.
Table 4.9 Thematic content across the primary English curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme/Topic</th>
<th>Bk.1 9 units</th>
<th>Bk.2 13 units</th>
<th>Bk.3 10 units</th>
<th>Bk.4 10 units</th>
<th>Bk.5 5 units</th>
<th>Bk.6 6 units</th>
<th>Total 53 (%)</th>
<th>Rank position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greetings and Introductions</td>
<td>1,5*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3,5* (6.6)</td>
<td>5th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immediate environment</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11 (20.7)</td>
<td>2nd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human body</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 (3.7)</td>
<td>6th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wider environment</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8 (15.0)</td>
<td>3rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and fruit</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 (3.7)</td>
<td>6th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6 (11.1)</td>
<td>4th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1,5*</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20,5* (38.6)</td>
<td>1st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>53 (100)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A clarification note may be necessary here about the asterisk (*): the decimal number in Bk1 column and thus in the Total Units column resulted from the existence of a unit appearing under the binominal topic ”Introductions and Commands” Bk1, Unit 2) which created a dilemma about its thematic affiliation. For the sake of objectivity, it was judged better to consider each of its two subtopics for where it fitted better (Themes 1 and 7), and to allocate it the quantifying number 0.5 when counting its occurrences.

Book 6 appears solely focused on environment, while Books 2, 3, 4 and 5 show a tendency toward being less focused. The thematic content suggests that emphasis was put on the sole the pupils’ cultural settings. Cultural integration is of course a justifiable aim considering the age levels of the pupils; the goal of regional integration, however, does not fit well in the selection of topics.. The inclusion of Other in the table does not mean that it is considered as a theme; and nor are the topics in it. As a guide this cluster includes Counting, Colours, and Grammatical items (Plural nouns with ‘s’; Possessive Adjectives; Demonstrative Adjectives; Tenses; Prepositions; and Wh questions with Do).
The counts in the above table are represented graphically in Figure 4.5 to facilitate comparison.

**Figure 4.5 Summarized distribution of thematic clusters**

The data in Figure 4.5 shows that the immediate environment and the wider environment themes enjoy a good position in the curriculum content (35.7% for both). One may point out the impact of the non-thematic category on thematic coverage: given that it was given a large portion of space in some books, it will restrict time that would otherwise be spent on relevant thematic topics. This notably is the case with SBs 3, 4 & 5 where thematic coverage is comparatively low.

The inventory exercise, however, failed to identify the topics in connection with the provision about ‘the interest and the impact that the topics have on the communities that the pupil lives in’. Since this information is essential in guiding the teacher in approaching and addressing this aspect of the syllabus the topics had better be formally presented. In the same vein the analysis found that thematic content was not sufficiently
rich to bring about the wide scope of information that pupils may need for their progressive cultural and intellectual opening up. In order to make up for this gap, the following topics (adapted from Wacira (2010) could be tried out in upper grades (5 & 6):

![Diagram](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

Some of the topics may look challenging for learners at the primary level, but using the gradual presentation approach, the difficulties would become manageable. The point of the matter is to not sacrifice needed ‘novelty’ at the expense of ‘cultural integration’. In this connection, Magoma’s (2011) statement in favour of integrating language and literature is insightful: “Anything that breaks down the traditional subject barrier and makes knowledge more meaningful, relevant, and stimulating for learners must be in the interest of effective education”. A few topics opening to the outside world could be included in the Wider Environment cluster. Hudelson (1994) explains that “a sense of novelty can act as a strong incentive for L2 young learners”. Pedagogically, this is in agreement with the acknowledged principle of getting the learners to move from the very familiar/easy to the less familiar/challenging. Since education is about developing the
human in his/her wholeness, and given that at the age from 12, children in Burundi may already be moving away from their home environments (for example, to study in boarding schools), it would serve their survival and intellectual curiosity needs if cultural self-centeredness is not overemphasized.

Last but not least, it is necessary to point out the need to ensure that the drawings in the textbooks are not only in harmony with the realities in the pupils’ wider world (as opposed to the world from the curriculum designer’s view), but are also used to illustrate some of the important ideas being promoted through thematic content. This is said because it was found that this element was not put into perspective in both the general design of the textbooks and the choice of pictures.

4.3.4.4 Teaching/learning activities.

For practical purposes of this study, the inclusive term ‘activity’ was used synonymously with the words ‘exercise’, and ‘task’ while assessing their quality, even though the latter does not appear in the ECFBSPS, and however knowing that there exist nuances in their pedagogical meanings as indicated in Crookes and Chaudron (2001). An analysis of this component documented that the ‘learning activities’ – as they are referred to across the series – are listed per period and described accordingly in the TBs under the subheadings Review, Reinforcement, and Memorization with relative regularity within every unit. This permits quick reference to the lesson topics within a given unit. There is, however, no indication as to what stage of the lesson the specific activities are serving. In other words, the TBs are not clear about where the focus of particular activities in the continuum are – on providing input, or fostering practice or output.
It was also established that the TBs do not offer clarifications of the pedagogical intents behind the above 3 activity specifications. This would guide the teacher’s understanding of their relative values to learning, and their importance in the implementation of the syllabus, as they internalize the ‘philosophy’ underlying the primary English course. A careful examination of the contents in the three lesson specifications as illustrated in 2 sample units in Table 4.10 suggests no differences both in the procedures used and in the contents dealt with. This results in practically all lessons evolving around the same kind of work and targeting the same purpose.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sampled unit</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Learning activities (TB2, pp.19-23)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SB2, Unit3. <em>In the House</em> (pp.11-13)</td>
<td>By the end of the lesson, the pupil should be able to:</td>
<td>-The teacher (T) asks pupils (P) to name some objects found in the house (10 given examples): radio, pot, window . . .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>•Name some objects found in the house</td>
<td><strong>Period 1. Review:</strong> table, fork, bed . . . The T shows a chair, a spoon . . . and repeats each word 3 times. Then the P repeat it all together . . . (End of period)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>•Name some parts of the House</td>
<td><strong>Period 2. Naming and pronunciation:</strong> radio, lamp, basket, bucket (SB, p.11). The T shows them one after another and repeats . . . As feedback, the T shows previously seen objects one after another and asks p to name them. (End of period)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>•Pronounce correctly the identified objects</td>
<td><strong>Period 3. Naming and Pronunciation:</strong> bottle, pot, mat, bowl (SB, p.11). Review: radio, lamp . . . The T does as she did in Period 2. As feedback, the T shows . . . [End of period]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Period 4. Naming and Pronunciation:</strong> door, window, wall, ceiling, floor (SB, p.12)- Review of Period 3. The T does as . . . in Periods 2 &amp; 3.[End of period]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Period 5. Naming and . . .:</strong> Sitting-room, kitchen, bedroom. The T does as . . . periods 2 to 4. [End of period]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Period 6. Memorization (I):</strong> radio, lamp . . . By pointing at the different pictures, the Tasks P to say the corresponding names (What is this? It is . . .). As the objects are numerous to be dealt with at once, the period should concern. . . (8 items). [End of period]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Period 7. Memorization (II):</strong> door, window . . . (9 items). [End of period]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Period 8. Reinforcement:</strong> To check if the P remember the objects and parts of the house, the T shows the objects at random and says: What is this/that? (It is . . .). The T makes as many as possible repeat, making sure that the pronunciation s correct. [End of Unit]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 6, Unit1, pp16-17 . <em>Wild animals</em></td>
<td>•Recognize and name some wild animals</td>
<td><strong>Period 1. Review:</strong> Domestic Animals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>•Pronounce correctly the new vocabulary</td>
<td><strong>Period 2. Wild Animals: Naming and pronunciation:</strong> tiger, lion . . . (SB, p. 16) (Same procedure as in Unit above). As feedback, the T shows different pictures at random. P name and pronounce them correctly.[End of period]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>•Read correctly the text</td>
<td><strong>Period 3. Naming and . . . :</strong> elephant, zebra (SB, p. 17) (Same procedure as above) [End of period]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Period 4. Introduction and explanation of new words.</strong> The T asks P to name some domestic animals . . . then some wild animals . . . The T presents (3) new words (in the usual fashion). [End of period]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Period 5. Reading for detailed comprehension:</strong> The T read the first sentence and asks P what kind of animals are found in Burundi (domestic and wild). The T reads the second sentence and asks: “Give some examples of domestic animals”. The T reads the third sentence and . . . [End of period]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Period 6. Reading practice:</strong> The T reads the text and asks P to read it after him/her one by one. [End of Unit]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It clearly appears in the different sampled activities that no room is given to pupil thinking, and creativity. The reading lesson is for the most part a review of the language items presented in the previous lesson, and therefore is designed to fulfill the same objective of word recognition with no attempt to loosen the teacher’s grip on the pupils. This situation corroborates the earlier findings which established that the methods for various content pay little credit to meaningful use of language. With different lessons being focused on the same material, the result is no real progress being achieved both quantitatively and qualitatively. The fact that the term ‘activity’ does not appear in the Pupil’s Books probably entails that all learning is viewed as taking place solely by way of teacher input. This evokes (and probably replicates) the principles and practices of the Transmission Models (Robinson, 1980).

4.3.4.5 Exercise inclusion.

The separation of exercises from activities came from the difficulty to interpret accurately the relationship underlying the two in the TBs. The analysis unveiled a rare reference to the term (exercise) both in the TBs and in the SBs. Interestingly, just as Learning Activities, an instrumental term, and its related subheadings mentioned above were ignored in the TBs, so too Exercises was taken for granted. Referring to the term, all six TBs have this single provision, which appears in the Main Objectives section: “at a given stage of learning, exercises are given to check progression”. As was pointed out in an earlier finding, this guideline is clearly confusing with its use of ‘a given stage of learning’. Table 4.11 shows the exercises identified in the TBs and the SBs, using for guidance the deliberate mention of ‘exercise’ in the books.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book</th>
<th>Total exercises</th>
<th>Exercise type (page)</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Exercise Instruction</th>
<th>Delivery / Assessment Mode</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SB1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-Colour identification -Item identification (22 &amp; 25)</td>
<td>4 &amp; 5</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-Animal identification -Garment identification (32 &amp;38)</td>
<td>10 &amp;12</td>
<td>“What is it?”</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Garment identification (12-13)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>“What is it?”</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB6*</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-Sentence completion -Sentence construction -Sentence completion -Sentence completion</td>
<td>5 &amp; 6</td>
<td>“Complete with one from the listed words” “Reorder to make a complete and meaningful sentence” “Read the text and complete the sentences”</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tot</td>
<td>8 exercises</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7 units</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key:** Tot un. = total units  *=* all exercises in this book are based on the reading passages.

Data in Table 4.11 show that the textbooks for grades 4 & 5 are totally lacking in exercises, and that even in the grades where they are available, they remain very low in number. A similar weakness was established by Bwire (2007) in relation to activities/tasks for testing listening comprehension skills of Form 3 learners in the Kenyan context. Also the discovery of materials with no accompanying guidance led to the conclusion that there was both inadequacy and lack of direction about the listening skill. Lack of direction in the ECFBSPS case is evidenced, in addition to lack of exercises, by the inclusion of 2 songs (TB4, p.36 & TB5, p. 34) and 2 games (TB2 & TB4, p.25) in the entire programme (6 years), which are neither clarified nor guided for their teaching and use. The suitability of songs in teaching EFL to children is widely
acknowledged in the literature (Harmer, 1983; Hudelson, 1994; Sevik, 2012; Derewianka, 2013). The song *We shall overcome*, for example, contains a lot of new vocabulary and unfamiliar structures, but it has no accompanying explanations in the TB. Its historical context may also complicate the meaning of the verses; and even assuming that the context was known to the teacher, it may not fit into the pupils’ knowledge level at their stage. Considering the importance of songs and games in the pedagogy of young learners, and of EFL in particular, it may be concluded that the TBs have not properly captured (for the teachers) the contribution of these two types of activities to language input and practice. Concerning the exercises themselves, it seems fair to note that the coverage of this component is generally inadequate.

Table 4.11 shows that grade 4 in particular was, however, found to have been generously served with grammatical content. Prevalence also emerges for the item-identification and sentence-completion types of exercise. Rarely are learners engaged in practice beyond the word level, probably to avoid challenge. Together, these findings not only corroborate the already claim made about the imbalanced nature of most of the contents, but also entail lack of genuine opportunities for learners to reinforce what they have been taught.

In line with the programme recommendation, all the exercises are to be done orally. There is good reason to think that the exercises in SB 6 are interesting and would add value to pupils’ learning if they could also be done in writing. A further finding about the exercises is that they all are closed-ended, thus do not allow any speculation on the part of the learners. This is not consistent with the curriculum goals in general, and the goal about “the youth’s need to speak English” in particular. Overall, the exercises undermine the *My Language is Me: Personal Language* component of the communicative approach
(Savignon, 2001). Taken beyond the classroom world, the point would be that self-expression as a basic human need, hence a right for the growing child, deserves to be taken care of in teaching as well.

Finally, no exercises or activities were found catering for homework and testing. In fact, the systematic provision for testing says, “The evaluation of pupils is a continuous teaching function. During the whole year, teaching/learning is exclusively oral. However, pronunciation, intonation and rhythm are continuously evaluated”. These are important features of speech that rightfully should be monitored. Nevertheless, not every teacher is able to interpret ‘continuous evaluation’. Those who do may still have aspects of its management that need clarifying, and it is only fair that the TBs takes care of the other components of the programme as they have done for the ‘learning activities’.

4.3.4.6 Language skills.

In assessing the language skills, the guiding questions were:

- Which language skills are taught?
- Are there activities and materials to promote them?
- How are they taught? (In isolation? Interactively?)
- How useful are the given activities in the pupils’ lives at their stage of learning?

Despite the guideline in the Introductory section of each TB about the four (and later three) language skills, it has been difficult to ascertain whether language skills in their traditional distinction into receptive and productive skills was really accounted for in the development of the materials in the books. Whereas the teaching steps for the reading skill are clearly articulated in the PBs, the same was not done for the remaining skills.
This leaves the teacher wondering to what extent these skills were deliberately accounted for. The Learning Activities sections in the TBs do not give any clues on the (leading) skills being employed in the accomplishment of these activities. Equally, meaning and purpose seem to have been pushed into the background as a learning objective in the design of activities and exercises. In this light, and considering the earlier finding that the instructional guidelines and the activities generally exhibited characteristics of audiolingualism, it can be concluded that the language skills are taught passively, except for reading, and that their use and integration remains artificial.

- **Reading content**

An overview of the reading materials is given in Table 4.12 below. It will be recalled that the recommendation was to introduce Reading in grade 4. The analysis of the nature and coverage of linguistic content earlier found that all of Book 6 is built around reading.
Table 4.12 Distribution and characteristics of the reading content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading text title</th>
<th>Language characteristics</th>
<th>Book level &amp; page</th>
<th>Order of unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Text 1. Days</td>
<td>•8 simple sentences (sent.) ; 2 paragraphs (par.)</td>
<td>Bk.4, p.50</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text 2. What are you doing?</td>
<td>•4 sent.(3 simple ; 1 compound)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text 3.(No title)</td>
<td>•9 sent. (3 complexe, 1 simple), 3 par.</td>
<td>Bk.4, p.50</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text 4.(No title)</td>
<td>•Dialogue, 7 lines, 9 sent.(one is a spelt name),</td>
<td>BK.4,p.57</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text 5 Animals</td>
<td>•6 sent.(all simple and long because of numeration), 2 par.</td>
<td>Bk. 6, p.17</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text 6. Lake Tanganika (I)</td>
<td>•6 sent. (fairly long, simple), 2 par.</td>
<td>Bk.6, p. 18</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text 7. Lake Tanganika (II)</td>
<td>•5 sent. (6 simple, 1 compound and long)</td>
<td>Bk.6, p. 19</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text 8. In a supermarket</td>
<td>•9 sent. (6 simple ; 3 compound), 3 par.</td>
<td>Bk.6, p. 21</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text 9. A visit at the museum</td>
<td>•9sent. ( 9 simple and short; 2 compound)</td>
<td>Bk.6, p.23</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text 10. A visit to a child’s friendly school(I)</td>
<td>•7 sent. (5 simple, fairly long; 2 compound)</td>
<td>Bk.6, p. 24</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text 11. A visit to a child’s friendly school(II)</td>
<td>•9 sent. (7simple; 2 compound); 2 par. Pictorial illustrations</td>
<td>Bk. 6, pp.24-25</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text 12. A visit to a child’s friendly school(III)</td>
<td>•8 sentences (8 simple; 2 compound); 2 par. Pictorial illustrations</td>
<td>Bk. 6, p. 24</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text 13. My home</td>
<td>•9 sent.(6 simple; 3 compound), 3 par. Pictorial illustrations</td>
<td>Bk. 6, p. 25</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text 14. My family</td>
<td>•13 sent. (10 simple and short; 3 compound); 2 par. Family tree</td>
<td>Bk. 6, p. 27</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text 15. My country</td>
<td>•8 sentences (8 simple; 2 compound); 2 par. Pictorial illustrations</td>
<td>Bk. 6, p. 28</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Text 15. My country</strong></td>
<td>7sent.(simple ; 3 long because of enumerations)</td>
<td>Bk.5, p. 13</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total number of texts:</strong> 15</td>
<td>13 texts in prose; 2 dialogues. In one dialogue, all but 6 sentences are affirmative; 5 are interrog.; 1 is exclamatory</td>
<td>Nb.of Books/Grades covered: 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.12 indicates that the textbook series contains a total of 15 texts. It is also observed the tendency to place Reading towards the end of the programme in the relevant grades. This may lead to speculation that this skill is not considered at the same level as
listening and speaking in these grades. This may compromise good development of reading skills in the learners.

Concerning text structure, there is a predominance of prose texts over dialogue texts and no observed negative sentence; the gradual introduction of paragraphing and a mix of simple, compound, and complex sentences is noticed. Although the number of sentences does not seem to vary much from the lower to the upper grades, text length, however does, due to inclusion of more compound and complex sentences. Both content wise and structure wise, the reading passages however look and sound a bit artificially constructed. The contents in some texts show too thin a message about their topic. This is not consistent with the principle of selecting/using interesting materials which stimulate learners and sustain their motivation.

Considering that pupils at this stage have not started writing, and given that the teaching of structures was found not to deal with exploring these structures, it can be speculated that the text content or message might not be easy to understand if pupils were given exercises that involve the guessing of meaning or the extraction of messages in texts with complex sentences. As was noticed earlier, reading exercises are limited to reading (aloud) practice, which is can be seen as a less challenging exercise.

Dialogue is an efficient technique in this context because it displays how language operates in communication. It also lends itself to role playing and dramatization which are both suitable activities for young children. Savignon (2001) explains the importance of these two techniques in what she refers to as the You Be, I’ll Be: Theatre Arts of the
communicative approach to language teaching. Nevertheless, 2 dialogue texts against 14 prose texts in 6 years and with learners within the age range of 7-12 is insufficient.

For a suggestion of how language skills can be integrated with the materials provided, the following example may suffice:

- **Base text**: A visit to a child’s friendly school I, II, and III (SB 6, pp.24-25)
- **Skills employed**: reading, listening and speaking
- **Activity**: reading and answering questions (may be teacher-led or done in small groups that fit sitting arrangements in particular classes):
  - What is the name of the school in the text?
  - Who visits the school?
  - What is he wearing in the picture?
  - Find/give 2 good characteristics of the school in the text
  - Find some differences between the school in the text and your/school
  - Do you prefer the school in the text, or your school? Give your reasons.

The last three questions can be done as a post-reading-practice exercise. It is worthwhile to note that these exercises may not be too demanding even if they were done in writing (bringing the number of skills to 4), assuming that the teacher were playing his/her facilitating role. Equally interesting could be the enhancement of the text and learning content operated through the opinion-based (last) question. That Kirundi could be used while the pupils are interacting ought to be expected. So long as they are focused on the work, the teacher would let them, but supply key language to report their answers. The format of the exercise need not be in the form of questions. It is possible to change it to Right/Wrong statements or Question-Answer matching.
4.3.4.7 Teaching methods.

The provision on methodology gives an orientation according to which teaching is learner-centered; the communicative approach is strongly recommended all along the primary level; and programme integrates all four main language skills (three in TB5-6). The importance of this information for teachers would require that explanations be provided in order to guide, not only the teachers’ understanding around these ‘innovative’ approaches, but also their application of in the different levels of the primary schools. The lack of any such explanations may lead to the interpretation that it was assumed that the teachers had the necessary awareness. This is however highly unlikely, given that issues of methodology are not part of the contents in the syllabuses for ELT as a subject. Two procedures describing how language components and skills are to be acquired from grade 1 to grade 6 can be retained, followed by detailed explanations of their execution:

- Modeling of the language items (words, phrases, sentences, text) by the teacher
- Intensive repetition by the learners of the items modeled

i) Presentation of new items: It is assumed here that the referent for the term “item” is a vocabulary word/phrase, or a grammatical structure (it has not been clarified in the context). A recurrent guideline in the six TBs is that When presenting a new item, the teacher repeats it several times until the pupil’s ears becomes familiar with the new pattern sound making sure that the stress and intonation are correct. A close reading of the specific lesson guidelines clearly recommends at least three instances of the teacher’s modeling after which pupils’ repetition can start in the prescribed fashion of all together first, then row (group) by row (group), closing with the individual pupils’ turns. Further
guidance mentions the reliance to the visuals in the SBs, teacher-initiated pictures and drawings, and gestures.

What shows through the above instructional procedures is the emphasis put on language modeling as a learning technique at the expense of language use and expression of meaning by the learners, and indeed the teachers as well. While this may be justified by the setting itself and the early stages of English of the pupils, there needs to be some room for learners’ creative output in the upper levels of grade 5 and grade 6, as for example, making sentences to demonstrate understanding of the word meanings and command of their correct pronunciation. Findings from child psychology support such interaction with language at their developmental stage (Nunan, 2013). Also, the communicative approach to language teaching is sensitive to learners being gradually encouraged, but also supported to use the forms already mastered in producing meaningful language. (Savignon, 2001; Celce-Murcia, 2001).

ii) **Teaching of reading**: The method for teaching reading lessons comprises 5 steps:

- Pre-teaching of new vocabulary (if there is any) or review of key words
- Books closed, the teacher reads the whole text/dialogue twice while pupils are listening
- Books open, the teacher reads the text/dialogue sentence by sentence. Each sentence is read twice, and the pupils listen and repeat following the turn fashion described above
- The teacher reads the whole text/dialogue once again while students follow
The teacher assigns individual students to read the text in turns (reading practice).

The teacher corrects pronunciation errors following the same turn pattern.

The data shows that most work in a reading lesson is done by the teacher, and that the pupils are kept at the receiving end. In the first four steps of the lesson, all that the pupils have done is listen and repeat. The work is much the same in the last step, except that here, individual errors of pronunciation are pinpointed and dealt with. As in the previous component, the purpose here is to develop language accuracy. None of the activities involves the learner in making sense of the passage at hand. This is contrary to the principle in modern pedagogy in general and TSL/TEFL in particular, according to which the more a programme is engaging for the learners, the more successful it will be.

iii) Teaching of Listening and Speaking: The methods for these are integrated with the statement of the main objectives, which somehow reduces their visibility (Appendix L). They stipulate that listening is based on the oral comprehension by listening to the teacher’s model, and that the acquisition of the speaking skill consists of reproducing the oral expression got from the teacher’s model. It is further indicated that the two competencies are acquired by means of short dialogues and simple words taken from the everyday life students are familiar with.

One cannot fail to notice here that the pupil’s work is centered around recognizing and reproducing language forms from strictly controlled models. The role played by the teacher’s model in an EFL setting cannot be denied if the model is good; but it has to be recognized too that in the case under study, the patterns modeled are hardly representations of realistic language use. Short dialogues are indeed an efficient
technique in the contextualization of meaning; a careful search of the TBs and the PBs, however, revealed negligible use of them. What is more, overemphasizing the teacher’s model in this case may not only have undermined the chance for the pupils to do some of the practice collaboratively (e.g.: per desk group of children), but it may also have overlooked the possibility of limited results due to large class size. Unfortunately too, the books make no provision for the learning of some unfamiliar sounds (e.g.: think, sing, book) from the English language.

The two sample lessons below may provide a more comprehensive description of a typical English class in the Burundi primary schools. These lessons are for grade 2 and for grade 5 respectively, and they are both based on linguistic content in order to facilitate comparison between the lesson steps and their general pedagogical foci.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson 1: Unit 6. Days of the week</th>
<th>(TB2, page 31, period duration: 30 minutes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lesson objectives:</strong> The pupil should be able to (1) say the days of the week (2) to pronounce them correctly.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Period 1. Learning activity:</strong> Days of the week: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The teacher asks the pupils to name the days of the week in Kirundi. Then the teacher says the first day in English (Monday) and repeats it 3 times. Then pupils repeat it after him/her all together, then row by row, and then individually. The teacher says the second day in English and follows the same process with Wednesday.

**Period 3. Reinforcement:** The teacher says the days of the week from Monday to Sunday and pupils repeat after him/her until they say the days by heart (all together ...).

**Game:** Raising his/her fingers, the teacher asks the pupils to say the corresponding day.[End of unit]
Concerning the second lesson, it may be necessary to clarify that although the TB indicates 45 minutes per each of the two weekly periods (page 7), the reality is that the length has been revised changing from the two periods (of 30 minutes), which were intended initially, to 4 hours (of 30 to 40 minutes) at all levels starting from the 2012/2013 school year.

**Lesson 2: Unit 3. Wh-questions with Do, Where, When and Why (TB5, page.26, period duration: 45 minutes).**

**Lesson objectives:** the pupils should be able to (1) ask for information using Where, When, and Why (2) answer correctly any question with Where, When, Why.

(Period 1: Review of What with Be or Do, Where with Be)

**Period 2. Learning activity: When with Do**

Teacher: We come to school in the morning/afternoon

Teacher: When do you come to school? (3 times).

S/He invites the pupils to repeat after him/her (all together, row by row, individually). To conclude, the teacher asks the question once again and the pupils answer “We come to school in the morning/afternoon”. (Same procedure with We go to church on Sunday). (Period 3 deals with Why with Do).

At face value, the formulation of the objectives for Lesson 2 is use-oriented. This may mislead the reader into believing that language use or language output is a true dimension of the methodology. To the contrary, Lesson 1 objectives clearly indicate that this dimension is simply neglected in the methodology at the expense of forms. This is not consistent with the provision in the Introduction: *La philosophie qui est derrière la*
conception de ces deux manuels est qu'apprendre l’anglais comme langue étrangère devient beaucoup plus compréhensible et effectif quand la langue est utilisée à des fins communicatives (TB 1, p. 5). [The philosophy underlying these two books (for grade 1 & grade 2) is that learning English as a foreign language is more comprehensible and effective if language is experienced communicatively – translation mine].

While the game appears an imaginative technique to reinforce the learned material, it could be enhanced by the same technique transferring into the hands of pupils in the form of pair work (at a different stage), and if it involves use of (answer) cueing language such as in the following pattern:

Pupil 1: What’s the day?
Pupil 2: It’s (day name)
Pupil 1: Now, tell me the day
Pupil 2: (day name), etc after which they could sweep roles.

A few appraisal words like Right! Wrong! Correct!, Not Correct/Incorrect! could be used by Pupil 1 to accept or refute the answer given in a view to give the exercise a blend of purposeful communication. The teacher would facilitate by pre-teaching these items, which after all are instrumental to general communication when eliciting answers.

The procedures in the 2 lessons illustrate the researcher’s earlier finding that meaning is de-emphasized – sometimes even ignored in the language work. For example, one sees no attempt to link days (of the week) in Lesson 1 to the pupils’ classroom or house chores, or some sort of regular activities. Likewise, the question patterns in Lesson 2 are not explored structurally; and nor are they extended beyond the examples in the TB. It is
worthwhile to point out that not everyone in the class may fall under the ‘catholic’ example, or be going to church (on Sundays) at all. With such “one-size-fits-all” models of examples and lengthy repetitions, there is still much to be done before awareness of the limitations of the audiolingual approach (Larsen-Freeman, 2012) finds its way into the primary ELT practice.

Morley (2001), referring to the English language teaching approaches of the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s, which include audiolingualism, supports the above claim: “They[its proponents] attributed little importance to listening beyond the sound discrimination associated with pronunciation learning…grammar drills…imitation of dialogues. Listening, along with Reading, was regarded as a ‘passive’ skill, and was simply taken for granted” (p. 76). If ELT in Burundi aims to meet the country’s education needs, among other things, then there can be no gains in sticking to already challenged practices which benefit very little to pupils in terms of language knowledge and skills. As citizens of a changing world, it is important to be guided by more innovative and acknowledged practices such as learner-centered teaching, which are better suited for the 21st century – and have even been recommended in the curriculum.

A suggestion to improve the technique in Lesson 2, hence learner input, could be incorporating questions such as When do you go to church/the mosque/the market? or Which day of the week do you like the most/least? Why do you go to church on Sundays and not on Mondays/during the week? Repetition could be done once the questions have been answered. The subsequent little dialogues would be drawing on the pupils’ real experiences, and therefore likely to engage both the teachers and the learners in more
meaningful and interesting interactions, yet which are focused on the new items as well as on integration of listening and speaking.

4.3.4.8 Pictorial content.

The analysis established that the SBs contain many visuals in the form of drawings (e.g.: Appendix J) which are spread over each unit of every SB. For example Unit1 of SB1 has 11 drawings illustrating 4 language items and distributed as follows: Good morning (8 incidents); Good afternoon (2 incidents); Good evening (4 incidents); and Good bye (6 incidents). This is almost equal to 3 drawings per one item. In a different Grade this time, Unit 3 of SB2 (In the house) for example, has 19 drawings illustrating one item of the kind It’s a . . . window (e.g.: Appendix J). Its counterpart in SB1 has 21 similar incidents. The counts made of the illustrations in the Books were found to be 152 drawings for SB1, 154 for SB2, 72 for SB3, 82 for SB4, 39 for SB5, and 40 for SB6, which entails the average of 89.8 drawings per book, that is, 10.1 illustrations per unit. The same drawings are reproduced for exercises or for input work in later units. This affects variety.

The relevance of visuals has ever been acknowledged by research in education psychology (Bennett et al, 1986; Vygotsky, 1962), on the understanding that their selection is appropriate for the particular learners and are used efficiently in teaching. Their use, which is not different from that stated in the TBs, is linked to purposes of meaning conveyance, enjoyment, and motivation (Ayot, 1984; Nzoma, 2011; Derewianka, 2013) The amount, however, not only outnumbers the language content in some of the SBs; but it also generally outweighs it. This imbalance may restrict the pupils’ (and the teachers’) needed exposure to printed language, with its possible effects on readiness for reading and writing for example. This deficit may be exacerbated by the
fact that the images themselves are not exploited to their full potential. This finding was also supported by a similar experience during the researcher’s classroom observation in some schools. In fact the teaching notes within the TBs seem to have assumed teacher control of the way to deal with pictures. It can be fairly concluded so because of the lack of visible connections between *learning activities* and the visuals in the teaching notes within the TBs. The consequence is that the pedagogic value of these materials is not fully exploited.

A further finding was that the drawings are not rich in action. This does not imply that some cannot be used successfully in teaching, for example to cue short discussions. Simple, realistic tasks designed to provide for reinforcement could involve speculation on the ages of the characters in the drawings; which animals they fear; which ones they like or not, and so on. ‘Speculation’ in this context would call for an examination of the drawings’ cultural potential.

The analysis performed in connection with cultural content revealed some characteristics of interest in terms of the values and attitudes underlying the images. Some examples are given in Table 4.13 to guide the reader on the researcher’s findings. The symbols plus (+) and minus (-) mean that the image inspires something culturally positive, or culturally negative respectively – in the researcher’s view.
Table 4.13 Illustration of some cultural content in the textbooks’ drawings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drawing/scene description</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Value/attitude</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Females in formal duties (</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Gender rights improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family watching TV together with children relaxed, wife</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Family cohesion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leaning on husband’s shoulder (Appendix P)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formally dressed husband with suitcase near wife without,</td>
<td>¬</td>
<td>Gender status (female bias)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and later with ironing wife (</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious teachers’ pointers straight out at shy, withdrawn</td>
<td>¬</td>
<td>Teacher domination/Child-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>children (</td>
<td></td>
<td>unfriendly school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data in the table illustrates something about what is often called ‘the hidden curriculum’ in teaching. With an alert teacher, visuals can therefore serve to promote as well as to scrutinize the values depicted, which at the best should also be expected to emerge from the thematic content selection. The ultimate aim would of course be to generate/create or practice language in meaningful contexts. Unfortunately, the teachers were not guided to this dimension.

4.3.4.9 Teaching guidelines.

The guidelines in the TBs cover all units in each PB and are written in both English and French – occasionally in Kirundi for difficult concepts. They are printed all in black and white, the French being highlighted through use of a tinted background. A heavy presence of numbers and a rather casual use of bold-faced items (words, sentences, headings) can also be observed, which does not make reading of the TBs very comfortable. The strong ‘instructional’ tone underlying the directions for teachers is an interesting feature of the TBs. This tone is conveyed through the uses of such verbs or phrases as “X is highly/strongly recommended . . .”; “the teacher must/should make sure that. . .”; “it is highly desirable to . . .”; “the teacher is reminded that . . .”, and so on. This tone sounds rather compelling, and with the qualification background (1.3.7, Table
4.10) in mind, it may hinder creativity and flexibility in using both the materials and language in the books. Ahmad (2013) argues that one of the dangers of a prescriptive textbook is the risk of it becoming a ‘master’ and developing slavish dependency of the teacher.

4.3.4.10 Scope and quality of language input.

The lack of audio resources and opportunities for creativity mentioned above raises issues of relevance in relation to the learner’s language input. Based on a tentative equation between ‘what is taught’ and ‘what is learned’ dictated by strict adherence to the TB instructions, the possibility of the language presented – thus learned – suffering in scope, quality, and practicality or usefulness cannot be ruled out.

- **Scope:** specifically, scope is undermined by the large amount and high rate of repetition and illustrations which may slow down progression in input delivery. Also since the excitement that may be created by some of the illustrations is not converted into additional language learning opportunities, this entails a pedagogical loss to the curriculum general objective of communication. Narrowness of scope may further result from the ‘artificial’ nature of the texts and dialogues, as well as from their superficial contents.

- **Quality:** quality is affected negatively by the practice which consists in presenting and practicing ‘isolated’ words, and never taking the pupils to a step beyond reproduction. This is not trying to ignore the value of repetition drills in helping pupils to familiarize with the target language, which is, after all, the purpose of most controlled activities like role-play and review. It must equally be recognized that their contribution is more to the input phase than to the output
stage. Not accounting for this latter stage –this was established in our findings – overshadows the whole idea of the English programme employing a communicative approach.

The few incidents where some form of interaction takes place show features of rather artificial exchanges all the way till grade 6. To begin with, the interaction is solely based on ‘hearing’ and ‘saying’. Next, it is always initiated and led by the teacher; so it never involves peer pupils. Another typical characteristic is the monopoly of display questions in cueing the pupils’ responses. A common argument against an overemphasis of overuse of display questions is that they emphasize language accuracy over meaningful communication (Crookes & Chaudron, 2001). These procedures can be scrutinized for not only giving prominence to language from the textbook, but also undermining the pupils’ attempts to think and speak for themselves.

But perhaps even more importantly, quality is affected by the language models available in the context itself, here the teachers and the prints in the textbooks, each with their own defects. That some teachers were former secondary school dropouts is a serious threat to quality. Indeed there is a possibility that non-standard and erroneous models of English may develop which will prove rather too fossilized to refine later. In this perspective, the analysis found that certain ways of using the language may not correspond to accurate representations of an acceptable standard model of English. The areas identified include:

- use and order of names
- negligence of features of spoken English
- inadequate or unnatural collocations
- fragmented language functions for learning purposes
- inappropriate contextualization
- incomplete delivery of meaning
- sentence run-ons
- erroneous use of structure, and
- poor paragraphing.

A few examples are given below in support of the findings:

- *Names*: the order of names in English (forename, surname) is not respected (for example, Ndizeye Charles instead of Charles Ndizeye). Using surnames alone in personal introductions should observe the rules of usage (titles, or both names), and it should be systematic: not forename in one instance, and surname in another.

- *Fragmented learning*: introducing someone (This is Jessica) in a vacuum, that is, without a third party and with no response being given after the introduction (Nice to meet you . . .); naming the colour without knowing the related question

- *Erroneous use of structure*: illustrating the use of *What* with these questions and answers
  
  What are you? I am a pupil/we are pupils; What is he? He is a teacher

- *Spoken English*: not using contracted forms in dialogues and interactional examples


- *Poor paragraphing*: a 2-line paragraph

- **Practicality**: practicality is affected by the nature and quality of the language learned on one hand, and the techniques used to teach it on the other hand. There is very little ‘active’ or ‘useful’ language in the elements that are presented. For example, it was noticed that the study of functions is neglected, and that meaning is not emphasized in the study of grammar. Neither is the meaning of vocabulary
items enhanced through the kind of practice and exercises given. In other words, most of the learning remains ‘inert’ in as long as its use is not experimented on for classroom communication purposes.

4.3.4.11 Assessment of specific features of the textbooks by teachers.

The information provided here was sought through a section in the Teachers’ Questionnaire which covered 5 major areas: the learning activities in the textbooks; the methodology suggested in the TBs; the timing for the reading and writing skills; the use of small groups in teaching; and the time allocated to the programmes. The teachers’ opinions helped to cross-check some of the findings from content analysis and BEPEB’s assessment on the same.

It was estimated that regrouping items dealing with the same topic (e.g.: activities: methodology) in a unique table would have the advantage of offering a clearer and more holistic picture of the respondents’ views on the topics concerned. The discussions, however, addressed each separately to facilitate reading of the findings on them. Table 4.14 displays the ratings obtained in relation to the activities. This section was open to both the in-serviced teachers and their non in-serviced counterparts.
Table 4.14 Teachers’ views on the learning activities in the textbooks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rating option</th>
<th>Buj. M ratings N=166</th>
<th>Mwaro ratings N=136</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I find activities sufficient in quantity</td>
<td>SA (5)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A (4)</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U (3)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D (2)</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD (1)</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CA 37.9%</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CD 50%</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>U 12.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find that activities cover all learning components</td>
<td>SA (5)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A (4)</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U (3)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D (2)</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD (1)</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CA 29.5%</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CD 52.4%</td>
<td>56.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>U 18.7%</td>
<td>24.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find that activities are varied</td>
<td>SA (5)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A (4)</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U (3)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D (2)</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD (1)</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CA 39.7%</td>
<td>33.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CD 53.0%</td>
<td>52.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>U 10.2%</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find that activities are suitable</td>
<td>SA (5)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A (4)</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U (3)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D (2)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD (1)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CA 45.7%</td>
<td>35.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CD 36.1%</td>
<td>44.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>U 18.0%</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data shows that half of the teachers in the 2 samples generally find the learning activities insufficient and unvaried (range of 50%-62%). This corroborates the finding from content analysis (4.2.4). It may however be pointed out that the ratings in favour of sufficiency and variety might have been influenced by the inclusion of the instrumental term ‘learning activities’ in every single lesson developed in the TBs. Worth noting too is
the high levels of ‘uncertainty’ (range of 10%-24%) on the teachers’ part for such a vital component of the materials. It is important that teachers are helped to grasp the nature of the activities in their books so that they better understand [how to assess] their efficiency in SL/FL learning.

The teachers’ opinions are roughly divided when it comes to the suitability of the activities (45.7% favourable opinions in Buj. M against 35.2% of the same in Mwaro). Such an evaluative exercise may not be easy for teachers for reasons linked to their poor preparation background, the lack of a critical knowledge of the curriculum goals/objectives, as well as the differences in the materials of reference (some teachers may be referring to the activities for the lower grades; others to the upper grades). Appraising the quality of materials is a useful tool in deciding how to do the most, or else, how to deal with the activities that are offered in one’s textbook. According to Byrd (2001), this may include replacing or supplementing some, or even leaving some away. There must, though, be a clear reason and goal for each of these decisions.

Table 4.15 gives the data obtained from teachers on the methodology used to teach English, specifically what they think about aspects such as repetition, creative language use, and level of challenge.
Table 4.15 Teachers’ views on aspects of the methodology in the textbooks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rating option</th>
<th>Buj. M ratings N=166</th>
<th>Mvaro ratings N=136</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I find that the methodology (M) uses too much repetition</td>
<td>SA (5)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A (4)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U (3)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D (2)</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD (1)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CA 40.9%</td>
<td>53.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CD 46.9%</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>U 12.0%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find that the M encourages creative use of English</td>
<td>SA (5)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A (4)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U (3)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D (2)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD (1)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CA 53.0%</td>
<td>32.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CD 34.3%</td>
<td>54.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>U 12.6%</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find that the M is easy</td>
<td>SA (5)</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A (4)</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U (3)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D (2)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD (1)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CA 74.0%</td>
<td>72.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CD 21.6%</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>U 4.2%</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data shows that the teachers have clarity about the methodology proposed in their books, which they highly rate as easy at 74% and 72% as shown through the graphic representation in Figure 4.6 below.
Whether such comfort with methodology results from the clarity and quality of the INSET input, or whether it results from the low challenge shown by the methods themselves, is an issue that deserves assessing if the designers are to be well informed on this component. What is clear, though, is that the availability of detailed teaching guidelines plays a great role in facilitating the teachers in this case.

The opinions appear rather divided about amount of repetition and encouragement to use English, with uncertainty rising to up to 12% and 13% in both Bujumbura and Mwaro. As previously mentioned, this kind of assessment requires sound awareness of TEFL, and relevant critical knowledge and experience that the respondents do not have yet. This indicates that a number of practicing teachers lack confidence in the procedures that they, however, are implementing. They can then hardly take well informed decisions.
Regardless of the direction of the opinions expressed, however, it remains important that teachers be helped to develop appropriate understanding of the contributions, but also the limitations of repetitions; the benefits of learner attempts to use the English language; and how to foster them. The teachers’ view that the methodology does not present much challenge is shared by the researcher’s earlier (4.2.3) suggestion that the methodology was not cognitively demanding, being essentially built on repetitions and vocabulary teaching through visuals. Such routine however, while it is felt less challenging, it may at the same time embody disadvantages for the long term learning goals (Larsen-Freeman, 2012) in that it impedes learner thinking, creativity, and self-expression. It is also counterproductive to teacher fluency in English.

When asked what they thought about time allocation, whether and when to introduce the skills of reading and writing, and the possibility of using small groups as a teaching technique in their classes, the teachers responded as summarized in Table 4.16 below.

Table 4.16 Teachers’ views on the teaching of reading and writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rating option</th>
<th>Buj. M. ratings N=166</th>
<th>Mwaro ratings N=136</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching of reading and writing should start before grades 5 &amp; 6</td>
<td>SA (5)</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A (4)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U (3)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D (2)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD (1)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>69.87%</td>
<td>64.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CD</td>
<td>22.89%</td>
<td>25.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U</td>
<td>7.22%</td>
<td>9.55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results show that teachers are in their majority (69% & 64%) favourable to an earlier introduction of reading and writing, that is, before the pupils reach grade 5. In 7 cases, the respondents included a wish (Last section in their questionnaire requesting suggestions)
to begin reading and writing at grade 3, arguing that even the TBs recommend use of the blackboard as a teaching aid for some; and that the ‘lessons are boring without any reading or writing’ for others; or still that they could not prevent children from writing anyway – since even the teachers had to sometimes recourse to writing, for example, the texts on the blackboard to make up for non-availability of SBs.

But perhaps an even stronger argument here would be the familiarity of the children with reading and writing as learning techniques in the other school subjects, and their roles in providing and strengthening orally presented input (Harmer, 1983; Ediger, 2001). Beside the fact that literacy is normally universally taught at primary level (Nunan, 2013), ignoring these two skills or teaching them superficially would be in contradiction with some of the ideals of Basic Education (1.1.1) in Burundi.

Table 4.17 Teacher’s views on the use of small groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rating option</th>
<th>Buj. M ratings</th>
<th>Mwaro ratings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N=166</td>
<td>N=136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is possible to use pairs and small groups in my class</td>
<td>SA (5)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A (4)</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U (3)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D (2)</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD (1)</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.17 shows that the respondents also showed support – even though comparatively lower – for use of small groups (45% & 44%). The strongest argument in favour of such a working technique in classes of young learners is the social and stress-free environment that it provides them, creating conditions that are thought to be conducive to [language] learning (Savignon, 2001; Derewianka, 2013), and even child social integration in his/her classroom (Bennett, 1994). What teachers (and pupils) need for engaging in using them is
clear instructions, appropriate activities, and guidance on how to use small groups efficiently to the benefits of language learning in their classes.

**Table 4.18 Teachers’ views on time allocation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rating option</th>
<th>Buj. M ratings</th>
<th>Mwaro ratings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item</td>
<td>N=166</td>
<td>N=136</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic calendar permits full coverage of programme</td>
<td>SA (5)</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item</td>
<td>A (4)</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item</td>
<td>U (3)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item</td>
<td>D (2)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item</td>
<td>SD (1)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item</td>
<td>CA 74.0%</td>
<td>74.0%</td>
<td>72.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item</td>
<td>CD 21.6%</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item</td>
<td>U 4.2%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.18 shows teacher satisfaction. Nevertheless, it should be pointed out that some teachers – although in negligible number (3) – raised concerns about the time having been doubled since 2012/2013 without consulting them; more importantly without accommodating this change into the existing contents. A teacher in Mwaro had this to say: *Depuis l’augmentation de 2012/2013, chacun se débrouille pour répartir la matière. Il est possible que chacun fai ce qu’il veut* [Since the 2012/2013 time increase, we each have to cope individually with time distribution. Discrepancies then cannot be ruled out].

What such [change] conditions suggest, therefore, is the lack of preparedness of the MoE and BEPEB to ensure harmonious implementation of the English curriculum. It further suggests the “mechanistic” (Kennedy, 2013) nature of the 2005 reform in general.

Objective two of the study sought to assess the extent to which the teachers of English, the school principals, and the curriculum designers as primary implementers of the curriculum were ready for their respective tasks. These involved delivering instruction
through the suggested methods to attend to the stated goals, monitoring their application, and providing other necessary support, such as through teacher appraisal and provision of resources, as for example, textbook supply.

4.4 Preparedness of primary English language curriculum implementers

Teachers of English in state primary education, school principals, and designers at the bureau for curriculum development for primary school were considered in this study as the most directly concerned by implementation of the English language curriculum. This was the rationale for their involvement in our field investigation.

Data on this component of the research came from the Teacher’s Questionnaire, the Principal’s Questionnaire, and the BEPEB’s Questionnaire. Notably, teachers and school principals are vital to the implementation of the ECFBSPS, because they are the ones to experience and manage the pupils’ learning encounters with the instructional materials. Resulting information was partly expected to cover four main areas of the study, namely (1) the in-service training (INSET) opportunities received by these stakeholders (2) the INSET achievements with regard to their abilities to interpret the curriculum (3) their readiness to teach the materials efficiently, and (4) the effect of school-management supervision, as a support service, on their teaching of English.

4.4.1 Teachers’ and principals’ views on the INSET opportunities.

Prior to developing this section, it is necessary to precise that INSET attendance was communal rather than separate. Because principals in Burundi continue to see themselves as teachers even after being promoted into this ‘temporary’ position, they sometimes
offer substitution when it is needed in their school. It was therefore in their interest that they get trained together with the teachers in this case. The information sought then concerned the respondents’ opportunities for INSET, its duration, its providers, and whether it helped them professionally. It is to be understood here that data from the two questionnaires was used complementarily for practical purposes of the study. Table 4.19 gives a summary of the teachers’ opportunities.

**Table 4.19 Teachers’ in-service training opportunities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunity</th>
<th>Buj. M frequency (%)</th>
<th>Mwaro frequency (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N=166</td>
<td>N=136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trained teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-1 session</td>
<td>135 (81.3%)</td>
<td>86 (63.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-2 sessions</td>
<td>119 (88.1%)</td>
<td>74 (86.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-3 sessions</td>
<td>13 (9.6%)</td>
<td>11 (12.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untrained teachers</td>
<td>31 (18.6%)</td>
<td>50 (36.7%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data shows that although most teachers in the two locations have been in serviced (81.3% in Bujumbura and 63.2% in Mwaro), this was only once, and added to the fact that the training might have lasted a day or 2 (Table 4.15), this is inadequate. Comparatively, Mwaro shows a lower level of INSET with 36.7% (against 18.6% in Buj.M), but almost similar trends in the rates. It can then be purported that there are many teachers in Mwaro who do not have the skills to teach English. Their numbers in both places are not negligible considering how teachers are vital to programme implementation, and the magnitude of possible repercussions in 9 years of implementation. Such likelihood is supported by findings from Matere (2011).and Magoma (2001) in their respective researches on the Integrated English Curriculum in Kenya. Matere established both a ‘mishandling’ and a low level of integration in actual teaching resulting from poor or lack of pre-service and in-service teacher preparation.
Magoma identified confusion over the concept of ‘integration’, owing to inadequate preparation of the teachers.

It is worth noting from the data that some teachers could attend 2 or even 3 INSET sessions, with their colleagues still waiting for a first such opportunity. This certainly raises issues with planning and administration, and may lead to, if not frustration due to some feeling of unfairness, then to some wastage of financial resources (Wolf, 1976).

Table 4.20 summarizes the data on principals.

**Table 4.20 Principals’ in-service training opportunities in English**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunity</th>
<th>Buj.M frequency (%)</th>
<th>Mwaro frequency (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trained principals</td>
<td>N=47</td>
<td>N=32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-1 day</td>
<td>30 (65.2%)</td>
<td>17 (53.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-2 days</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-3 days</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-4 days</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-1 week</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-2 weeks</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-3 weeks</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-4 weeks</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untrained teachers</td>
<td>17 (36.1%)</td>
<td>15 (46.8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.20 shows irregular patterns in both the provision and distribution of INSET in the two provinces: 36% in Buj. M., a significant number, were not trained; about half the principals in Mwaro (53%) had INSET. It further shows that even those trained did not receive equal exposure. Indeed a range of 1 day to 4 weeks in the length of INSET shows through, with the tendency for longer sessions being observed in Buj.M and having benefited more principals than they did in Mwaro. Such differences suggest that INSET was not equitably distributed; hence was inadequate, favouring Buj. M., probably because its urban location may have constituted an advantage in terms of access and
expenditure. However, with (unconfirmed) details from some of the respondents on the last section (Suggestions to improve the programme implementation) that the time for INSET was too short to cover three new subjects (English, Kiswahili, and Civic Education), this could suggest that even those who reported more than a 1-day INSET might not necessarily have been adequately trained. Notwithstanding this possibility, the results generally call into question the capacity of many school principals (Table 4.16) within these two locations to support their non in-serviced teachers (Table 4.15), to appraise English teachers in general, and to monitor the quality of the implementation.

When asked to explain the lack of training opportunities, the untrained Principals – who had the question to answer – gave various explanations, as shown in Table 4.21. Their responses were categorized into thematic explanations.

**Table 4.21 Principals’ explanations for lack of training**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Buj.M frequencies</th>
<th>Mwaro frequencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know why</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not lucky</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No INSET since my promotion</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perhaps lack of funding</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad planning</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No mention</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The attempted explanations roughly indicate that while some of them are resigned to their fate, probably due to what they know about the limited financial resources for INSET, a number of them are still hopeful to receive the training. Satisfying their expectations would not only sustain the morale in both groups, systematic opportunities could transform the INSET into a catalyst for school-based initiatives to boost success of the
programme. It matters that as colleagues, teachers (and principals) feel that they can count on one another when their job requires it.

A principal without the appropriate training in English is challenged on the two levels of understanding the programme – thus the teaching – and of offering supervision. In this regard, the confession made by a principal from Mwaro is revealing: *En tant que Directeur non formé, je n’organise pas de visites de classe pour un enseignant formé* [Being an untrained Principal, I do not organize classroom visits for trained teachers]. The message here is ‘loud’ about principals’ challenges about their roles in monitoring and pushing the implementation. Matere (2011), in the comparable case of the IEC in Kenya, found that Department Heads who had been trained were actively involved in providing assistance to the teachers by, for example, clarifying the concept (integration) or encouraging students and teachers to read. This is a finding that both exemplifies the possible adverse effects of lack of training and emphasizes its capacity as a catalyst for self-investment.

**4.4.2 INSET providers.**

A broader picture of the INSET may be guided by the data on the training providers. Or ‘deliverers’. The information was supplied by the principals whose questionnaire included a question on who their trainers were. From the data, it was learned that the trainers essentially included BEPEB and BEPES, as well as secondary school teachers. This was found to be consistent with BEPEB’s information on a similar question. An interesting recurrent detail from the responses was that these teachers were “from the neighbouring schools”, which may suggest that selection of training assistants might have
been biased in favour of practical considerations, rather than EFL teaching experience and training capacity.

Teaming up, as a mechanism that fosters the putting together of knowledge and skills to achieve a particular goal, should be encouraged, including among teachers and principals for the search of teaching solutions. It can, however, be a double-edged strategy if selection of the training providers is casual. In this connection, Matere (2011) for example recommended it as an efficient mechanism with teachers collaborating to resolve their teaching difficulties in the context of the IEC in Kenya. At the same time, however, she deplored the lack of professional preparation reported about some among the training personnel on the very concept of integration. Magoma (2011) echoed the same gap in a finding reporting lack of adequate sponsors during INSET on the IEC. Mivuba (2009a), recognizing the practical advantages of the mechanism in the Burundi context, nevertheless scrutinized its undermining of the quality of input offered to primary schools teachers in general. His main argument rested on trainer selection not taking into consideration the preparation needed by the ‘training assistants’ themselves, whereas some of them may not have the requisite skills for providing INSET.

With the enlightenment derived from the various data from teachers and principals, it is now possible to draw out the characteristics of the overall picture of the INSET:

- There have been differences in training coverage and distribution
- The INSET lengths were not the same (1 day to 4 weeks)
- Most teachers and principals have attended for 1 week
The training providers included officers from BEPEB and BEPES, or secondary school teachers.

- The teachers were from schools near the training centers.

4.4.3 Evaluation of the INSET.

For a thorough understanding of the teachers’ and principals’ views on the achievements of INSET, the *trained* teachers and the *trained* principals were requested to rate or describe how they benefited from their training from INSET. A Likert scale question was used with the teachers, and an open-ended question with the principals. Pronunciation, like methodology in the textbooks, was an area under the focus of INSET, as reported by BEPEB. The researcher’s intention in reporting on them first is to conform to their priority in the in-service training sessions. For practical purposes related to focusing the analysis, the data was broken down into specific item areas – even though there was one questionnaire for all the items.

4.4.3.1 Achievements on pronunciation.

Out of a total of 166 and 135 in the respective provinces of Bujumbura Municipality and Mwaro, it came out that 135 and 86 had respectively received INSET, and were thus eligible for answering the questions in Section 2 of the questionnaire, focused on the evaluation of INSET. Table 4.22 presents the data from teachers.
Table 4.22 Teachers’ views on achievements on pronunciation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rating Options</th>
<th>Buj. M ratings N=135</th>
<th>Mwaro ratings N=86</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understand how to teach pronunciation</td>
<td>SA (5)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A (4)</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U (3)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D (2)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD (1)</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cum. A (38.5%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(45.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cum. D (48.1%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(38.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U (13.3%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(16.2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: Cum. A= cumulative agreement; Cum. D= cumulative disagreement; U= undecided

Graphically, the results offer Figure 4.7

Figure 4.7 Teachers’ INSET achievements on pronunciation

The calculated means for pronunciation ($\bar{X}_{pron}$), that is, 2.7 and 2.8 for Bujumbura and Mwaro respectively suggest the rating ‘Disagree’ (2), but leaning toward ‘Undecided’ (3) for the average teacher, which shows lack of confidence in what was acquired. This is significant in terms of INSET achievements, and means that this component of INSET did not achieve the desired level of preparedness for teaching pronunciation. This was
also corroborated by BEPEB in their suggestions of ‘needy’ areas of the curriculum.

Table 4.23 presents the views on the teaching methodology in the textbook series.

Table 4.23 Teachers’ views on achievements on methodology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rating options</th>
<th>Buj. M. ratings N=135</th>
<th>Mwaro ratings N=86</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understand the programme methodology</td>
<td>SA (5)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A (4)</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U (3)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D (2)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD (1)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cum. A (44.4%)</td>
<td>Cum. D (48.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>111</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cum. U (6.6%)</td>
<td>Cum. SD (12.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: Cum. A = cumulative agreement; Cum. D = cumulative disagreement; U = undecided

The graphic presentation of these results appears in Figure 4.8

Figure 4.7 Teachers’ INSET achievements on methodology

The calculated means for the 2 samples for methodology ($\overline{X}_{\text{meth}}$) were 2.6 and 2.9 for Bujumbura and Mwaro respectively, almost the same trend closing from Disagreement
(2) level to Undecided (3) level. This is yet an indicator of low achievement from INSET. Overall the general trends appear to indicate comparable scores of trained teachers in both Buj.M and Mwaro who still hold low levels of confidence in their abilities in pronunciation and methodology (up to 48%). This reflects the views of BEPEB on the same topics, which implies low achievements of INSET in preparing teachers (and principals) especially for pronunciation.

It is important to note that more respondents from Buj. M appear not to have gained from the input on these areas. This is significant considering that they were more to be in-service trained than those in Mwaro, and probably more to attend a longer session (1 week) as shown in Table 4.16 on principals from the same location. High uncertainty in Mwaro might be linked to features of the INSET presented above. But this is speculation that can only be established through proper research. Such findings could then suggest the teachers’ rampant inability to attend satisfactorily to the curriculum goals over many years.

These two areas are critical to effectiveness in the implementation of the English curriculum as an L2 programme. It is important that teachers are given sufficient knowledge and awareness in the areas so that they can provide for the foundations that will help the pupils to engage in communication situations with abilities to both understand what they hear and be understood in their transactions (for example in the all-English secondary school lessons). This entails not seeing pronunciation as an end in itself, but shifting the emphasis from discovery and practice of language in isolation to presentation and practice in meaningful contexts (Bobda, 1994).
4.4.3.2 Achievements on goals and objectives.

The teachers were asked to rate the extent to which they thought that INSET had helped to *understand* the curriculum goals and to *formulate* lesson objectives. It is worthwhile to recall that the question for BEPEB on this very topic asked them whether they thought that INSET *had helped to achieve* the curriculum goals and objectives to which they answered in the affirmative. Table 4.24 presents the results from the teachers’ responses.

**Table 4.24 Teachers’ INSET achievements on goals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rating option</th>
<th>Buj. M ratings N=135</th>
<th>Mwaro ratings N=86</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understand the curriculum goals</td>
<td>SA (5)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A (4)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U (3)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D (2)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD (1)</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cum. A (41.4%)</td>
<td>(41.8%)</td>
<td>(41.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cum. D (48.8%)</td>
<td>(56.9%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U (9.6%)</td>
<td>(12.7%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graphically, the above gives representations as shown in Figure 4.8

**Figure 4.8 Teachers’ understanding of curriculum goals after INSET**
Figure 4.8 shows that more than half the trained teachers feel that they do not understand, or are uncertain about the English language curriculum goals despite having attended INSET (48.8% and 56.95% respectively in Buj.M and Mwaro; respective means of 2.6 and 2.8). This is concerning, given the importance of goals in informing teachers (and learners) the purposes for learning the target language. Without this understanding, it is possible that the teaching and learning lack a sense of direction (Larsen-Freeman, 2012) which on its turn renders learner progress assessment rather hazardous. The teachers’ views in relation to the curriculum objectives are given in Table 4.25

**Table 4.25 Teachers’ INSET achievements on objectives**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rating option</th>
<th>Buj. M ratings N=135</th>
<th>Mwaro ratings N=86</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understand how to formulate lesson objectives</td>
<td>SA (5)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A (4)</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U (3)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D (2)</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD (1)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cum. A (41.4%)</td>
<td>(41.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cum. D (48.8%)</td>
<td>(32.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>U (9.6%)</td>
<td>(26.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The graphic presentation of the data in Table 4.25 would give the following as in the pie chart in Figure 4.9
Figure 4.9 Teachers’ ability to formulate lesson objectives after INSET

Similarly to goals, the input on formulation of objectives was negatively assessed by the teachers, with means of 2.5 & 3.0 for Buj. M and Mwaro respectively. This finding contrasts with the strong view held by BEPEB of the opposite. Such high ‘disagreement’ (48.8%) in Buj. M and ‘indecisiveness’ (25%) in Mwaro in particular should have an implication for INSET in the sense that ability to formulate lesson objectives and goal awareness constitute strong assets in a teacher’s pedagogy of any subject. What is more, if gaps in knowledge can be recorded among the trained teachers, the situation could be worse for the untrained ones.

4.4.3.3 Achievements on approaches.

The items in the investigation concerned the teachers’ comprehension of the communicative approach and the integration of language skills. Table 4.26 shows the results.
Table 4.26 Comprehension of the communicative approach after INSET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Ratings options</th>
<th>Buj.M ratings N=135</th>
<th>Mwaro rating N=86</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comprehend communicative approach</td>
<td>SA (5)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A (4)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U (3)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D (2)</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD (1)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cum. A (30.3%)</td>
<td>(23.2%)</td>
<td>(61.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cum. D (57.7%)</td>
<td>(61.6%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U (11.8%)</td>
<td>(15.1%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A graphic representations of the above results offers the following view:

**Figure 4.10 Teachers’ comprehension of the communicative approach after INSET**

The data in Figure 4.10 shows a high negative rating in relation to the communicative approach in both provinces (57.7% in Buj. M. and 61.6% in Mwaro). The levels of uncertainty are also high, which in real fact further emphasizes the disagreement opinions. This speaks loud about the limited results achieved by INSET on an aspect of
importance to the curriculum due to its innovative nature in Burundi ELT pedagogically.

The opinions on language skills integration as another recommended approach are given in Table 4.27

**Table 4.27 Comprehension of language skills integration after INSET**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rating options</th>
<th>Buj. M. ratings N=135</th>
<th>Mwaro ratings N=86</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comprehend language skills integration</td>
<td>SA (5)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A (4)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U (3)</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D (2)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD (1)</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cum. A (17.7%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(8.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cum. D (62.2%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(65.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U (20%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(26.7%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graphically, the above data offers the picture as in Figure 4.11

**Figure 4.11 Teachers’ comprehension of language skills integration after INSET**
Reading the results in Figure 4.11 one notes even higher ratings in disagreement with the statement. This may be explained by the fact that this concept, like the communicative approach, might have been disregarded, thus taken for granted during INSET.

Overall the data consistently shows negative ratings for the two areas, with more of them being observed in Mwaro (61.6% against 57.7% in Buj. M on the communicative approach, and 65.1% against 62.2% in Buj. M on skills integration). This finding, together with the high levels of ‘uncertainty’ corroborate the finding from content analysis that these two concepts were not clarified in the TBs. They also disagree with the opinions held by BEPEB. That a number of teachers still declared to comprehend them may raise some questions. Unless they were addressed in the INSET – which would be contrary to BEPEB’s own authoritative report – this then throws some shadow over the validity of the view expressed.

4.4.3.4 Achievements on language creativity and teaching of writing.

Table 4.28 shows the trained teachers’ opinions on their achievements in relation to language creativity and teaching of writing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rating option</th>
<th>Buj. M ratings N=135</th>
<th>Mwaro ratings N=86</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understand how to encourage creative language use</td>
<td>SA (5)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A (4)</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U (3)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D (2)</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD (1)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cum. A (37.0%)</td>
<td>(39.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cum. D (54.0%)</td>
<td>(43.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>U (8.8%)</td>
<td>(17.4%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graphically the above data gives the following view:
The results in both Table 4.28 and Figure 4.12 show that more than half of the in-service trained teachers do not have mastery of how to stimulate creative use of language (English) in the pupils. This is a serious gap in their training, given the intended goal to have the learners ‘speak’ English. BEPEB, too, through a note in the TBs, recognize that language is better learned when it is utilized for communication inside the classroom (preface pages).

On a general level, it may be interesting to note that the views expressed to ‘agree’ are somewhat high, knowing that this aspect was neither identified as a feature of the methods and activities (in content analysis), nor reported by BEPEB as one of the target areas for their INSET. There may, therefore, be possible confusion over the meaning of the concept (creative use of language) and its realization in actual teaching. Table 4.29 presents the results on the teaching of the writing skill.
Table 29 Comprehension of how to teach writing after INSET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rating options</th>
<th>Buj. M ratings</th>
<th>Mwaro ratings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understand how to teach the writing skill</td>
<td>SA (5) A (4) U (3) D (2) SD (1)</td>
<td>5 26 12 38 54 Cum. A (22.9%) Cum. D (68.1%) U (8.8%)</td>
<td>3 6 14 24 39 Cum. A (10.4%) Cum. D (73.2%) U (16.2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graphically, the results are as appearing in Figure 4.13

**Figure 4.13 Comprehension of how to teach writing after INSET**

The high percentages for ‘Disagree’ (68.1% in Buj. M. and 73.2% in Mwaro) clearly indicate that most teachers do not understand how to teach writing. Such high ratings may partly be attributed to the directive in the TBs to *not* introduce writing in the programme (Appendix K). For children who already have an experience of 5 years with
writing when they reach grade 6, this may be frustrating. It is recognized that literacy is usually the province of primary education worldwide (Derewianka, 2013).

4.4.3.5 Achievements on testing and proficiency in English.

The teachers’ ability to design tests for their classes and their improvements in English language proficiency were also assessed. They constitute a key asset in teacher preparedness for a new subject, a new method, or even a new textbook. The results are presented in Table 4.30 in connection to teacher preparation for testing.

Table 4.30 Achievements on testing after INSET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rating options</th>
<th>Buj. M ratings N=135</th>
<th>Mwaro ratings N=86</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understand how to construct my pupils’ tests</td>
<td>SA (5) A (4) U (3) D (2) SD (1)</td>
<td>7 42 9 41 36 Cum. A (36.2%) Cum. D (57.0%) U (6.6%)</td>
<td>5 25 15 22 19 Cum. A (34.8%) Cum. D (47.6%) U (17.4%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data indicates low ratings for favourable opinions (around 35%) in both locations about gains in test construction. The negative views (around 56%) can be attributed to unclear guidance on ‘evaluation’ in the TBs; but this topic was not covered during INSET either. The scarcity of exercises and test samples, also established through content analysis, was further acknowledged by BEPEB. In these conditions, the likelihood of inappropriate assessment of learning cannot be ruled out, compromising the monitoring of the extent to which the curriculum goals are being achieved. The ability of a teacher to sustainably monitor his/her learners’ progress and offer them useful feedback is acknowledged as a factor in teaching effectiveness (Crookes & Chaudron, 2001).
The data in relation to the teachers’ improvement of the English language after receiving training is given in Table 4.31

Table 4.31 Achievements on English language improvement after INSET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rating options</th>
<th>Buj. M ratings N=135</th>
<th>Mwaro ratings N=86</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improved my knowledge of English</td>
<td>SA (5) A (4) U (3) D (2) SD (1)</td>
<td>6 41 12 42 34</td>
<td>4 25 10 20 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cum. A (34.8%) U (8.8%)</td>
<td>Cum. A (33.7%) U (11.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement of knowledge of English</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cum. D (56.2%)</td>
<td>Cum. D (54.6%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Improvement of knowledge of English was not the goal of INSET, as its sole foci were pronunciation and methodology. Unfortunately, problems with language proficiency were recorded during classroom observation, especially in pronunciation and language structure. These results (around 55.5% refuting improvement in the two locations) are quite significant in terms of their pedagogical implications. At the same time, realism requires that recognition be made that development of language skills is gradually constructed over time, and that even with a longer INSET, the teachers’ expectations to improve their English might have been too high.

For an even thorough understanding of the state of preparedness for implementation, the evaluation section was extended to school principals. The in-service trained principals were, her, asked to report on their own gains made from INSET. First, Table 4.32 gives the results in relation to their overall attitudes to INSET.
Table 4.32 Principals’ overall attitudes to INSET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rating option</th>
<th>Buj. M ratings N=30</th>
<th>Mwaro ratings N=17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benefited from INSET, as principal</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>9 (30%)</td>
<td>5 (29.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>21 (70%)</td>
<td>12 (70.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In both Bujumbura Municipality (Buj. M.) and Mwaro, most of the principals (70%) reported that they did not benefit from the INSET in English. This means that the gains fell short of their personal expectations. The implication becomes feared inability on their part to support their teachers. That said, it may be kept in mind that the INSET was organized to address teaching rather than administration needs. This is, however, not meaning that they should be ignored, for they are real, as shown in the specific gains below from a subsequent question to principals asking to identify their specific gains from INSET. The descriptions are given in Table 4.33

Table 4.33 Principals’ specific gains from INSET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Buj. M mentions N=30</th>
<th>Mwaro mentions N=17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Familiarity with methodology</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronunciation improvement</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proficiency in English</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can train my teachers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can control implementation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not gain much</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 33 shows more principals putting first methodology then phonology as gains. Unsurprisingly, these are the same topics that were the core of INSET, and the data has been clear that the opinions on pronunciation have remained low key throughout, compared to those on methodology. Echoing of difficulties with pronunciation by
teachers and principals alike was found to be revealing, as in these few instances: *Pour moi, la prononciation c’est comme si on me donnait de la grêle à avaler* [Pronunciation for me is like being given sleet to chew – Mwaro teacher]. *Je fais des visites de classe ... on n’échange pas sur la prononciation car il y en a plusieurs. Je ne sais pas laquelle est correcte* [I do classroom visits …we don’t discuss pronunciation because of the differences in the teachers’ models. I can’t tell which one is correct – Mwaro Principal].

The numbers of principals who declared to not have ‘gained much’ are not surprising either, on the grounds that they corroborate the findings from the teachers, and knowing that INSET was the same for both categories. An interesting element in the data worth mentioning is the reference made to the “ability to train my teachers” voiced by two principals in Mwaro. Its interest lies with the important message sent about the ‘added value’ resulting from (adequate) INSET. It is a finding that would benefit BEPEB and upgrade the whole perception of INSET.

Another aspect of the INSET investigation involved the Principals’ perceptions of how INSET improved programme implementation in their schools.

**Table 4.34 Principals’ views on classroom improvements made by teachers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improvements observed by principals</th>
<th>Buj.M mentions N=47</th>
<th>Mwaro mentions N=32</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mastery of methodology</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer-tutoring</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linguistic improvements</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More structured lessons</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negligible improvements</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In line with the subject areas that were covered during INSET, most improvements are connected with methodology and language knowledge. The latter area was generally
clarified to mean vocabulary and pronunciation. In one instance, a principal from Bujumbura commented that: *Connaître le vocabulaire sans la prononciation, ça n’est pas enseigner …* [Knowledge of words without their pronunciation leads to no good teaching …] alluding to the holistic nature of language teaching. This indeed should prevail over the discrete item approach of the syllabus. It can be clearly seen that the greatest benefit from INSET was on improvement of the methodology.

The frequency of 5 for ‘peer-tutoring’ by Principals in Bujumbura Municipality may look low, but pedagogically, it suggests that this practice is slowly making its way into the schools. As an acknowledged training approach (Goddard & Emerson, 1994) it should be encouraged and promoted through adequate INSET. After all, one of the findings of the present research has been that BEPEB has had to rely on outside support to train as many teachers as possible, but with limited results, as observed in Buj. M. and Mwaro (Table 4.33). If promoted, peer-tutoring is likely to motivate the teachers and create a sense of self-reliance in the schools (Barnard, 1995). For example, to a question asking the principals what roles they would like to play in INSET, the preferred role was found to be as trainees. This implies that they are conscious of their limitations with regard to teaching English, which then means they need further INSET. Table 4.35 shows their proposed roles.

**Table 4.35 Principals’ proposed roles during INSET**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed role</th>
<th>Buj.M mentions N=47</th>
<th>Mwaro mentions N=32</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trainee</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer-tutoring</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The fact that the role as ‘trainee’ has been suggested by more principals means that they are conscious of their own training needs, especially knowing that some of them have not received any INSET. It also means that even the trained ones understand that peer-training would require a solid command over the textbooks, which not only demands adequate INSET, but also integration of this aspect of participant needs in the INSET input. The role as ‘mentor’ is also significant: the proposition was clarified in 2 out of the 3 cases as meaning “the guidance provided to the trainers by participants with regard to the areas to target, and how to involve teachers”. This principal from Bujumbura, for example wrote: *Les formateurs ne maîtrisent pas bien la situation. On peut leur montrer les difficultés des enseignants* [The trainers are not fully aware of the teachers’ difficulties. We can guide them]. This sounds an interesting proposition for BEPEB both in the sense that it would be based on gaps observed by these respondents in their training experiences and that it informs them on the need to be consultative in their organization. Failure to collaborate with teachers and principals on the ‘needy’ areas to target may, therefore, have impacted the INSET effectiveness in teacher and principal preparedness.

**4.4.3.6 Overall assessment of INSET**

In order to round up their evaluation of INSET, the *trained* teachers and principals were asked for their thoughts on the relevance of the INSET course. The teachers did their assessment through a closed-ended question in Likert-scale style; the principals’ question was open-ended. Table 4.36 presents the results from the teachers.
Table 4.36 Teachers’ assessment of the relevance of INSET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rating option</th>
<th>Buj. M ratings N=135</th>
<th>Mwaro ratings N=86</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INSET course was exactly what I needed</td>
<td>SA (5)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A (4)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U (3)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D (2)</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD (1)</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cum. A (38.5%)</td>
<td>Cum. A (30.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cum. D (55.5%)</td>
<td>Cum. A (53.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>U (5.9%)</td>
<td>U (16.2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data shows roughly comparable trends in both the positive and the negative feedback from both the teachers in Bujumbura and in Mwaro (respective low means: 2.69 & 2.65). The negative opinions, however show a clear margin, with more than half the trained teachers (55.5% and 53.4% respectively in Bujumbura and Mwaro) indicating their disapproval of the training programme. This suggests that for teachers, INSET is not what they need. Its failure to build their confidence in pronunciation and the lack of training opportunities for yet many teachers of them may be the source of such resentment.

Structured training which enhances knowledge of subject content and proficiency in English, and equips them with relevant competencies to the level of the other subjects may change their attitude. Mwaro has remained generally consistent in its patterns of ‘uncertainty’ (high ratings for ‘Undecided’ with 16.2% against 5.9% in Buj. M). This may be attributed to the possibly higher rate of untrained teachers in the province, and it can be purported that it is not without consequences on their confidence levels in teaching. The principals were further asked to give their overall feelings about the INSET contents. The results are shown in Table 4.37.
Table 4.37 Principals’ overall assessment of INSET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluative opinion</th>
<th>Buj. M mentions N=30</th>
<th>Mwaro mentions N=17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superficial</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No mention</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.37 shows the same pattern of negative attitudes among the teachers and the principals. This means that neither category (teachers or principals) was satisfied, not even the teachers who were the designated primary beneficiaries, something which contradicts the views held by BEPEB on the same (Table 4.34).

The principals who found the INSET programme ‘superficial’ argued that the training essentially involved reading of the general guidelines in the TBs and the introduction of some vocabulary words. This shows through this example of a view that was expressed by a principal from Bujumbura on teacher appraisal: *J’ essaie de les accompagner, mais le problème est que nous n’avons pas été formés dans les contenus-matières* [I try my best to give them support, but the problem is that we were not trained in the contents]. A further factor to the argument was trainer attitude, as can be seen in this comment from another principal in Bujumbura on trainer quality: *Le formateur, lui aussi disait qu’il avait été désigné au hazard* [The trainer himself complained that he had not been prepared]. This finding supports Mivuba’s (2009a) earlier criticism of some gaps in the INSET courses for primary teachers, especially in relation to trainer selection.

An exploration of the principals’ views on trainer quality may throw some light on the principals’ impressions on this aspect. The question in this regard asked them if they thought that the trainers were able. In Bujumbura, 17 out of 30 answered in the
affirmative. In Mwaro, 9 out of 17 did the same. While differences in the opinions are observed, it is probably more the meaning of such perceptions than their impact that calls for thought. In other words, if care is not taken to ensure INSET quality through the selection of able trainers, the INSET results will not be sustainable. Even peer-training will be compromised.

The main argument for the Principals who found INSET ‘inadequate’ was based on time and amount. They argued that the time was too short to cover what they needed, and that the Grade levels were not taken into consideration in the invitations for participation. Of course it has to be understood here that Principals are also echoing the teachers’ claims. Truly speaking, a 1-day or 2-day session is hardly sufficient to achieve reasonable results in the sight of what is known about the teachers’ pre-service backgrounds.

Overall, considering that Bujumbura appeared to have higher in-serviced teachers and Principals, it can be estimated that the evaluation of INSET has revealed negative views from significant numbers in both groups in the two locations. The implication for INSET (or better, for pre-service courses) is that there are still many gaps to be filled, especially in the areas of teaching skills and linguistic competence in general.

Objective 3 was intended to establish the effectiveness of the support offered to implementing teachers by school administrations through principals, and by the MoE through curriculum designers.
4.5 The Effectiveness of Support Services to Implementing Teachers

4.5.1 BEPEB’s views on teacher preparedness.

The response turnout from BEPEB was satisfactory. Seven of the nine questionnaires sent out, that is 77.7% were returned, having been completed. Information from designers is considered first-hand, and therefore critically important to the understanding of findings from content analysis in particular. Their demographic and professional details follow below in Table 4.31.

The magnitude of teachers’ needs for INSET and field follow-up might not have been expected at the time of the programme elaboration. The teachers’ and principals’ mixed feelings on the achievements of INSET (some of which were confirmed by BEPEB), and the shortage of books observed in the schools would support this claim. Also, the recourse made to secondary school teachers as co-trainers, and the persistence in the system of many untrained teachers after 10 years are both indicators of both BEPEB’s unpreparedness and limited resources, two important gaps in the provision of adequate support for implementation of the curriculum.

The normal trend would be that the longer experience one has in a position, the more efficiency one will have developed. While this thinking may be true of teaching, it may however not apply in the case of curriculum development in Burundi. Two major reasons can support this view: one is that it is an area that requires academic specialization and professional nurturing; but there are no official catering structures for either to date. The other reason is the non-dynamic nature of curriculum development as a government service in general (Mivuba, 2009a). The institutions in charge are not
sufficiently resourced to keep up with the needs for continued staff-competence enhancement in an area where research (ESL/EFL learning) keeps evolving. In other words, the respondents’ experiences in either position are sufficient enough to learn about the job, but efficiency in utilizing learned experiences is hampered by lack of opportunities for further training and professional enhancement.

4.5.1.1 BEPEB’s views on the ECFBSPS.

The views sought were with regard to the characteristics of various resources in the English textbooks. Such data was necessary to cross-check the teachers’ expressed perceptions of key areas of the English curriculum. This then would guide the researcher’s understanding of how the support to teachers stands with regard to INSET, both past and future. Their perspectives have a role in influencing decisions on what forms of support to prioritize in favour of the teachers. Opinions in this regard were sought by means of two sets of questions, one of which was closed-ended, the other being open-ended. A ‘yes’ or a ‘no’ was required for the former, and an opinion for the latter. Data from the closed-ended section is given in Table 4.38 (the questions have been adapted for practical purposes).

Table 4.38 Views on key features of the English curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question/Item</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Methods and activities are aligned to curriculum goals</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching guidelines are easy to apply</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicative approach is comprehensible to the teachers</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills integration is comprehensible to the teachers</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice activities are sufficiently varied</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods &amp; activities encourage creative language use</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronunciation backup is necessary for teachers</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contents are well-paced out to create a sense of progress</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers need testing guidelines and test samples</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The data shows a prevalence of the Yes answer to all questions from all 7 respondents. This suggests an overwhelmingly positive rating for the textbooks’ potentials, with a recognition for the need for pronunciation back up for teachers (100%). Comparable recognition (100%) is made of the need for guidance on testing. Although only one respondent thinks that *language skills integration* is not clear in the books, this opinion agrees with the finding from content analysis that skills integration in the textbooks remained a theoretical statement. This finding was also in agreement with the view of the majority of in-serviced teachers who reported not comprehending language skills integration (62% in Buj. M. & 65% in Mwaro). In this sense then, it is a significant finding.

Likewise, one respondent does not agree with the purported encouragement of *creative use* of language in the textbooks methods and activities. This opinion, too, corroborates a similar finding from content analysis, which was also emphasized by teachers. These opinions are quite significant considering the respondents’ (BEPEB) familiarity with the course books, and most probably their (shared) authorship for them.

That BEPEB respondents think the communicative approach is clear to the teachers is also contrary to the earlier finding from content analysis (4.2.3) and from many teachers for the same reasons as for skills integration (Figure 4.10). On the whole, the differences in BEPEB’s and the researcher’s views may be interpreted in terms of faulty assumptions, on the part of the designers, that *they* and the teachers are on the same page with regard to critical components of the textbooks. Table 4.29 further shows total recognition of pronunciation and testing as areas for which the teachers deserve due guidance. This is an additional indicator of BEPEB’s state of unpreparedness to provide
adequate and timely support to implementing teachers, something which gathered general consensus from all 3 sampled populations, and was further evidenced through classroom observation. Assuming that the investigation might have been felt as a test of ‘the self’, such recognition is very significant for BEPEB, and meaningful to the study.

4.5.1.2 BEPEB’s views on the clarity of curriculum goals in the textbooks.

All seven respondents were of the view that the curriculum goals are clearly stated in the TBs. One of them stated “the goal is very apparent”, thus pointing out the visibility aspect. This should suggest that the curriculum designers know that the goals exist or are traceable in the books. However, use of the singular form with reference to goals in this very case despite the question using the plural might throw some shadow over the assumed visibility, hence their clarity. Visibility happens to be an issue that was raised in content analysis. Uncertainly and skepticism were felt among many teachers about goal comprehensibility.

If the goals have a physical existence and are clear to BEPEB, this is important in at least four ways: it puts the designers in control over this aspect; it guides materials selection (as was suggested by one of the respondents); it is a platform upon which new perspectives for the curriculum can be worked out; and it guides the processes of appraisal and review or evaluation that are generally associated with curriculum implementation.

One designer suggested to review the goals in order to align them to the goals of the Basic School System. This is an innovation with an impact beyond the only English
subject. Nevertheless, content analysis has established a link of ELT at primary level to “the country’s education needs”. There is room, therefore, for such adjustment, especially given that curriculum development integrates (or should) an evaluation component in its process.

4.5.1.3 BEPEB’s views on the effect of lack of a curriculum statement and a syllabus on their work

Two positions were seen to emerge from the responses: one, which was held by 4 out of the 7 respondents (57.1%), is that lack of a curriculum statement and a syllabus incorporated in the textbooks did not affect their work. The other position, held by 2 respondents (28.1%), was that it did. One abstention was noted. This suggests discrepancies over the matter, and it may affect the nature of the support that could be provided to the teachers if the views were not harmonized. It could also be a barrier to integrating the true goals in the designing process.

Using the details supplied by the supporters of the ‘no-effect’ option, it is possible to argue for the possibility of BEPEB equating the textbook with the syllabus – which is right in this case – or meaning that the textbook is all that is needed to guide the teaching. In the event of the latter position, one may read behind it the likely influence from teaching traditions and beliefs in the country which emphasize the researcher’s earlier reference made to the power of the textbook (or rather, the TB) over the teacher. The other position (It does not affect our work), if it were the dominant opinion among the entire team, could constitute to the elaboration of a curriculum statement and a syllabus that indeed are separate from the textbook, mainly because the importance of this
separation is not clearly perceived. The details provided by some of the respondents themselves are informative on lack of preparedness of this structure for implementation: “we need a curriculum for setting a vision for teaching ELT in primary school”. “Not having a curriculum makes our work difficult”.

It is of necessity here to recall that the role and support from a well-articulated curriculum document and a syllabus are to be viewed beyond the life times of specific textbooks (Byrd, 2001), for indeed a textbook which is not coherent with the curriculum generally falls out of favour, leaving the curriculum validity unaffected and allowing entry for new, more suitable textbooks. But far from the voiced opinions, it matters that the concepts, the tools they represent and their roles in materials design be clear in everyone’s mind. The opinion that “We have a textbook separate from the curriculum and this helps to achieve our goals”, just like the non-response from one respondent, may allude to the possibility of the contrary. This is based on the premises that it is formal knowledge that there is no separate curriculum document for ELT in primary schools known to this date. Equally important is the liability caused by lack of such documents in pre-service teacher preparation. The design of appropriate programmes for prospective teachers becomes hampered in terms of content/input delimitation and quality determination, for example, which methods to introduce into the preparation programme.

4.5.1.4 In-service teacher-training.

Other information sought from BEPEB was about INSET. Respondents were asked to tell their roles in INSETs, its other trainers, the areas that are covered, as well as the ‘needy’
areas in the primary English curriculum. Table 4.39 displays the patterns of information in the data.

**Table 4.39 INSET providers, roles and training areas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INSET features</th>
<th>Options recorded</th>
<th>Mentions (N= 7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondent’s own participation</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent’s role</td>
<td>Trainer</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other role</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No mention</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside trainers</td>
<td>BEPES</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Administration officer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Secondary school teachers</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Areas covered</td>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pronunciation</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contents</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No mention</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Needy’ areas</td>
<td>Pronunciation</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.39 shows respondent unanimity over *BEPES* as BEPEB’s co-trainer during INSET. The involvement of secondary school teachers and an administration officer (from the curriculum bureau) was also reported. Methodology and pronunciation were both given as the 2 areas covered by INSET, yet which remain ‘needy’. This would suggest BEPEB’s unpreparedness, especially bearing in mind the creation of a task force (1.2) to deal with issues of implementation even as the programme had been launched. It must also be recognized that inadequate staffing (9 in total) may have affected their capacity to cope with the urgency and large scale of training needs; hence the lags recorded in the in-service training of teachers.
There can be gains in BEPEB seeking the support from the Secondary School Department and BEPES if the ‘outsiders’ have been adequately inducted about the trainees’ backgrounds, the goals of INSET and the nature of the input, as well as the methodologies to be employed. This possibility is, however, not supported by Mivuba’s (2009) scrutiny of their subjective selection and some of the teachers’ and principals’ dissatisfaction with the INSET. Cooperation between the curriculum institutions is the more beneficial if the individual strengths and competences are identified and capitalized for INSET purposes. The procedure is likely to help avoid the randomization of roles and the related risk of participation being based more on a mechanical, or otherwise, an authoritarian decision than on individual members’ commitment and competencies. But there ought to be even bigger gains if training was opened to university lecturers so that they can contribute their ‘expertise’ in EFL. Their broader outlook could enhance quality of the input, especially during plenary discussions when most issues of relevance to the teachers’ awareness of EFL are likely to be raised.

The leading positions shown for methodology and pronunciation in the areas covered by INSET (and where additional training is desired – needy areas) implies two things: for one, this confirms that the introduction of English in primary schools did not take into account the teacher-competence factor; for two, recognition is made of the centrality of the 2 components to programme implementation. At a lesser level, this is an indication that teachers were not provided with dictionaries to assist them (one respondent suggested dictionaries in the ‘needy’ areas). But BEPEB may also be implicitly suggesting that they need extra support to deal with these components of the course. The
overall interpretation may be BEPEB’s self-consciousness that their support to teachers has fallen short of meeting the teachers’ needs for implementation, both qualitative and quantitative. The implication for BEPEB would be to ensure that the effect of INSET on classroom delivery be regularly assessed, which would be smaller in scope, for example, the formulation of lesson objectives; teaching of pronunciation; and so on.

4.5.1.5 Appraisal of teachers on the field.

The study also investigated BEPEB’s views on their own practices of teacher appraisal on the field. The data was obtained through the use of both closed-ended and open-ended questions. Table 4.40 shows the results from the closed-ended questions.

Table 4.40 BEPEB’s approach to teacher-appraisal and views on INSET achievements (closed-ended items)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have you personally participated in field visits to teachers?</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it your feeling that INSET has enabled teachers to teach towards achieving the curriculum goals?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you find that INSET has improved teachers’ knowledge of English?</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you personally discuss aspects of the lesson observed with the teachers?</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you believe that BEPEB should observe teachers in action?</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All the 7 respondents (100%) report their familiarity with field visits (through personal presence in the classes). The same number (100%) report observing and discussing lessons with the teachers. This leads to the conclusion that classroom visits is a current practice, which is likely to benefit to implementation and teacher appraisal. Indeed, classroom visits puts BEPEB in a good position to get firsthand information on ‘the state of the art’ both with teachers who have received INSET and those who have not. More importantly, such learning is crucial to the planning of future INSETs, and the development of a base for advocacy to the authority.
The opinion expressed by 2 respondents (28.2%) who think that INSET did not help improve teachers’ language proficiency and achievement of the curriculum goals is not to be interpreted in terms of majority and minority choice, but in terms of their opinion’s significance. Conversely, they corroborate the teachers’ and principals’ own declarations on the two components. It is also possible to argue that unless proper assessment of those components has been performed, it may be difficult to ascertain the extent of their achievement. What is certain, however, is that in teaching matters, the poor performance of one individual teacher can have far-reaching implications, if one considers the pupils that he/she is likely to teach in one school, and may reach in his/her lifetime across the country.

4.5.1.6 Views on specific practice of classroom visits and perspectives for untrained teachers.

In order to enhance the information on teacher appraisal, 2 open-ended questions were used. The teachers were consulted for their opinions about classroom visits and what should be done for teachers who are not trained. All 7 respondents reported that presence in the classroom is the more efficient approach than if the visits take the form of ‘school visits’ designed for pedagogic exchanges. This reinforces the researcher’s view that practices have changed in a better direction with the conceptualization of appraisal as a primarily classroom-based activity. It also corroborates findings about teacher appraisal by school principals. This practice was recommended by Omollo (1990) to Department Heads charged with the supervision of the IEC in Kenya stressing the importance of keeping close to the teachers as an efficient strategy to confront their problems.
The 4 respondents who explained their preference for classroom visits to school visits related the benefits of classroom visits to the opportunity that is created to “see how teachers perform and give them advice”, or “see their different mistakes”. One respondent had this catchy explanation: “Difficulties are seen on the spot”. The focus on teacher performance should, however, not undermine finding out about other aspects such as the effect of lack of materials (TB & SB) and the effect of class size.

The lack of an explanation (for what they consider the better approach to TA) in 3 cases could be interpreted as not having a justification off hand, with lack of clarity as a possible underpinning. While the process of appraisal itself will be beneficial to the appraisers if they have a clear reason for ‘seeing’ the teachers, it is equally critical that their purpose be tied to the teacher’s professional growth and not just with judging them (Goddard & Emerson, 1992). The likelihood of a judgment in this case shows through linguistic clues in the respondents’ explanations, notably the term ‘mistakes’, and the use of phrases like ‘see how. . .’ and ‘give advice’ which suggest a unidirectional process in which the teacher’s practices may be challenged through the appraisers’ feedback. “Exchanges”, which is put forward by 1 respondent, is also desirable.

The issue at the centre of attention here is appraiser attitude - which associates feedback. It is interesting that an understanding of the factors behind successful practice of appraisal be explored for the professional development of those called to perform it themselves. Goddard and Emerson (1992) suggest that “the success of appraisal depends
heavily on the calibre of the appraiser” (p. 25) and that appraisers should have credibility with the persons for whom they are appraising. They argue that credibility is built on the two important elements of quality and legitimacy. Expanding on these two elements, they explain that quality depends on the appraiser’s personal skills which include observing, interviewing, listening, questioning, analyzing, counseling, and facilitating. Legitimacy, on the other hand, depends on the appraiser having an additional set of qualities, namely competence, knowledge, experience, authority, and time.

Reference was earlier made to TA in Burundi not integrating the need to consult with the teacher prior to observing his/her lesson. The intention was to make a case of positive assessment being inherent in the teacher’s knowledge of the planned visit and the appraiser’s intent. This is notably reported in the principals’ practice of appraisal. Goddard and Emerson’s (1992) proposal for The Staff Development Model as a more efficient approach of appraisal – than The Accountability Model – emphasizes this procedure, making a case for a cooperative process in which the teacher feels fully integrated and actively participates in his/her lesson critique. They indicate that this is possible and favourable if the teacher is both psychologically prepared and made aware of the professional benefits that are embodied in it.

Concerning the question of how to deal with teachers who have not received INSET in the 9 years of the English curriculum life, all BEPEB’s respondents agreed on the necessity to organize one for them, with 3 of them adding the details ‘special’ and ‘long’, and another the “importance of monitoring the problems”. The results spell out a number
of things: recognition of the co-existence of trained and untrained teachers in the system; awareness of the need to train the entire population of teachers; and the challenge that lack of INSET is to the implementation efforts. Research indicates that teachers have a better chance of helping their learners develop flexible understandings of subject matter if they themselves understand it well (Bennett, 1994).

Objective 4 sought to investigate the challenges faced during actual teaching. It was therefore necessary to see the teachers of English in action.

**4.6 Implementation of the English Curriculum and Attending Challenges**

The data on this component of the study was obtained using the classroom observation guide which required the researcher’s own presence in the classrooms. It is during the actual lessons that most of the problems which are reported on this component came to light. Some of the challenges were found to relate to textbook provision; others were in relation to class size; other problems, even more serious, were seen in connection to the teachers’ own proficiencies in English. The details and their discussion in this section are in reference to both the background information in Table 4.6 (characteristics of the classes observed) and to Table 4.41.

**4.6.1 Availability of course books.**

Concerning textbooks availability, the book-pupil ratio trend was found to lean toward 1 book for 3 in the classes visited, a situation which limits full access of the users (pupils) to the contents, hence to the written language and pictures in the books. It is also possible that during repetition (e.g.: practice of loud reading), a pupil may say the word without
associating its written support. This likely to cause errors in pronunciation and delays in the mastery of spelling (Bobda, 1994).

Some teachers explained using photocopies of the TBs because the school did not have the original copies, or they only had one for 2 or 3 parallel classes, or they could not go home with the book, so they made their own copy to take home. It was learned that book insufficiency due to limited provisions to the schools had resulted in the books being kept in the principals’ office for purposes of management and safety. In one school, the teacher had to give up using books after 10 minutes into the lesson, because the Principal required that the teacher herself go to get them. Yet she had planned to use them, having sent a pupil for them. In another school, the researcher was informed that lessons were often delayed by the books not being available because they were (still) being used by another teacher in grade 6. Indeed, as this was reported, the Books changed hands between grade 5 and grade 6 according to where they were needed (Content analysis established the confinement of the 2 syllabuses in a single book). This ‘borrowing’ entailed accountability for their safe return, since the teacher had to sign a form prepared to this end. This situation can be a bit stressful.

4.6.2 Class size.

The numbers of pupils in Table 4.6 earlier resulted from the researcher’s own counting, which was done as she was quietly sitting in the back of the classroom. The calculated average size for a class in the sample observed is 41.8 pupils, with a maximum of 80 and a minimum of 30 being observed respectively in one urban school and 2 rural ones. The majority of classes (7 out of 10) have more than 50 pupils. This suggests that the repetition practice must take a long time for most or all the pupils (4.2.3) to have a turn,
with a risk of boredom resulting. Introducing small group techniques could help alleviate the problem.

Some classes in the Kibumbu canton were however comparatively smaller (30 pupils). When consulted about their smaller-sized classes, the teachers in the Kibumbu canton (Mwaro province) linked the trend to the Government’s policy to involve the grassroots in competitive construction of schools for their Communes’ development.

In most lessons, class size was found to be a source of challenge to the teachers’ efforts to ensure good pronunciation and necessary motivation both at the choral and at the individual pupil levels. The table further shows that the lessons observed were varied, and that they were therefore representative of the range of activities appearing in the TB for grade 5. It is important to recall that “My country” is the only text in the book for grade 5. It may also be worth recalling that classroom observation involved 10 grade 5 classes from 2 different provinces.

4.6.3 Observed teacher behavior.

Teacher bahaviour was recorded as the researcher followed the lessons and are outlined in Table 4.41. The numbers in the Table represent a summary of the teachers who showed the specified behaviour in the 2 lessons. For organizational purposes, it was decided that a description and discussion of the behavior would better lead to a more logical and easier perception of the related challenge.
Table 4.41 Teachers’ communication skills and methodological processes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher behavior</th>
<th>Consistently</th>
<th>Mildly</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher sticks to guidelines in TB</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher sticks to own prepared notes</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher uses Kirundi to direct pupils</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher (T) uses French to direct pupils</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T uses English to direct pupils</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T helps pupils with needed English words</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T puts variety in his/her vocabulary/structures</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T’s pronunciation is misleading</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T uses accurate/correct structures</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T uses sentences of variable length</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T encourages pupils to speak English</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T uses closed-ended &amp; open-ended questions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T uses just one type of questions</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T tries to make pupils interact in pairs/groups</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T tries to get pupils use different language skills</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T corrects every error</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher tries to involve everybody in the class</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities are created to use English in writing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In using the coding system, the *consistently* option was marked if the behavior being assessed was somewhat automatic and steady over the 2 lessons; the *mildly* option meant that the behavior did not seem stable; the *not at all* option was marked if the behavior was not noticed in any of the 2 lessons, or if they occurred in rather incidental manner. There may be problems that are not observable, but can be reported through interview or questionnaire completion.

A clarification is needed on how the guide helped the investigation. In summary the items were intended to assess the following: assess the degree of teacher freedom in using the TB; flexibility with English as the main instructional language; ability to provide English language facilitation; teacher language model; knowledge of teaching strategies; methodological processes; and linguistic competence. Some overlap should be expected in the use of certain items. For example, dependency on the TB may be dictated by the
teacher’s language deficit; but it can also come from the wish to apply the recommended approaches. These two are not necessarily exclusive of one another in L2 language setting. Likewise, the use or non-use of (any type of) questions may be viewed as an issue of methodology or of language ability.

4.6.3.1 Attitude to the TB.
All teachers were seen to closely follow the official guidelines in the TB. The same was observed about the one teacher who used her own prepared notes. The guidelines that she was ‘reading’ were the same as those by teachers who were using the TB.
Teacher dependency on the TB may be interpreted in two ways: for one, under Goddard & Emerson’s (1992) Accountability Model, strict observance of formal instructions gives them a sense of security both in relation to the administration in the event of them undergoing a visit to appraise their teaching. Alternatively, they may feel more confident linguistically by keeping themselves to the language of the TB. Subsequent to the latter explanation is that the TB provides teachers with direct language or the expected responses from their pupils. Therefore, it could be the case that they are left with no better options of their own. This attitude to the TB may also be attributed to the teachers’ low competence in subject knowledge (evidenced by the use of parallel versions of French and English in the TBs and teacher sensitivity about their qualifications – see 3.7 & 4.1.1 ), and its consequence on their self-confidence. The signature of the Minister of Education in some of the books (SB1, SB2, and TB 5 & 6) to endorse the programme could be interpreted as another even more compelling factor for the teachers. Educationally, such a prescriptive nature for a textbook is believed to undermine the
teachers’ creativity, as their behaviour will be mainly to ‘conform’. This is generally counterproductive to learning quality (Nias, 1989).

4.6.3.2 Teaching language

None of the teachers were seen directing the pupils in English. The majority used Kirundi and French, with Kirundi prevailing over French in the mix. This in itself is an indicator of the previously-mentioned lack of competence in English.

The teachers’ avoidance of English can be partly traced to their incompetence in English and the need to facilitate their pupils’ understanding of their instructions. In one of the classes in Bujumbura Municipality, the teacher was relaxed using the Kirundi and French to communicate to her pupils in the presence of the school principal, which implied their common understanding over the matter: probably to make learning easier for the pupils.

The presence of notes in Kirundi and French in the TBs without any guidance on how these 2 languages should be managed in teaching, might itself have influenced teachers into not only avoiding English, but also using languages randomly during class. Although the early stage and certain circumstances of EFL may fairly necessitate use of L1 (Nunan, 2013; Savignon, 2001; Crookes & Chaudron, 2001) it may be suggested that helping teachers to understand the benefits of teaching in English could trigger some change in their attitudes to the management of English as an instructional medium. It is partly in the interest of developing some level of fluency in a language that they are called to teach.

Use of English both reinforces the pupil’s learning in that it is by itself input; it implicitly reviews some of the elements presented in meaningful contexts of use, and it enhances learners’ listening skills by offering itself as an opportunity for purposeful
listening (Sevik, 2012). Recognizing that the transition is not easy, Savignon (2001) stresses the importance of the teacher bringing the learners to realize that they are not expected to understand every one of his/her words, or to produce correct language on the spot in their efforts to express themselves.

It has to be stressed, though, that the place of L1 during classes is something which has not gathered general consensus among practitioners. What seems to have been established, in addition to the possible uses of L1, is that teachers who share their L1 with their learners can rely on it to introduce a different language, to anticipate and explain some of the possible challenges in learning the new language (Larsen-Freeman, 2012). This consideration may be very inspiring for teachers in the context being studied. An acknowledged strategy in helping learners build some kind of operational language is for the teacher to restrain from correcting errors that do not affect the meaning, thus focusing on the message, and reassuring learners about mistakes, errors, and mispronunciations by giving them appropriate and ‘friendly’ feedback (Savignon, 2001). This author considers that telling students that native-like pronunciation is not the goal will generally stimulate self-expression.

4.6.3.4 Language facilitation.

Although half of the teachers (5 out of 10) showed the tendency to not supply needed English words to pupils, some move in the opposite direction was noted with 2 teachers steadily doing it when this was necessary, and 3 of them occasionally doing it. Is not This shows that 50% of the teachers observed did not fully exploit (or were not aware of) cueing as a strategy for acquiring vocabulary beyond the presentation/input stage. Not supporting pupils to use strategies for acquiring vocabulary is not in line with the role
that teachers of EFL must play as language resources for their learners (2.4.1) and as learning facilitators (Crookes & Chaudron, 2001; Champeau de Lopéz, 1994). If it were a habitual procedure in the teachers’ practices, however, it would present itself as a problem of language proficiency, a situation that was also observed. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that this trend not to prompt pupils or to do it ‘mildly’ might have been influenced by the children not showing much need for assistance, as the lessons’ input was not that challenging, being focused on repetition drills.

4.6.3.5 Variety in teacher language

Variety in the teachers’ structures can be hardly talked about, given the said predominance of Kirundi and French. Recurrence of the same utterances, that is, 1 or 2 questions or statements, and which were often unstructured, was noted.

This could be the result of their said dependence on the TB. The comprehensive nature of its guidelines – which include provisions of direct language for the questions and the expected pupils’ answers – may create a feeling of satisfaction with its ‘completeness’. In this case, the lesson emerging may be the strict alignment of teacher behaviour to the TB requirements. Lack of variety, hence initiative, can be seen as partly a likely consequence of the absence of flexibility noted in the findings of content analysis. A more plausible interpretation is that the teachers were incapable of thinking of their own utterances due to their limited language store.

4.6.3.6 Pronunciation, language accuracy, and sentence flexibility.

About 50% of the teachers displayed faulty pronunciation, one capable of misleading, while 3 of them (30%) had serious difficulties with a number of specific terms. One teacher (10%) had a fairly good pronunciation model. Some examples of the errors that
were recorded are: *last year*, with ‘year’ pronounced like ‘ear’; *lake* nearing ’like’; *province* and *commune* pronounced in French; *month* pronounced like ‘mouth’; not lengthening some vowel sounds (as in sheep, teach), and so on.

Keeping in mind some of the examples provided above, it can be said that Pronunciation is another component that poses serious problems. 6 out of the 10 teachers observed, one of whom showed a near misleading model ‘consistently’. It is of course a positive thing to systematically ask teachers to “continuously evaluate pronunciation, stress, and intonation”, but it is also the case that they are not linguistically equipped to do so.

Lack of audio support materials suggests that the teachers’ remote experiences with English are a barrier that cannot be ignored. In this light, it is worth remarking that pronunciation is not formally taught in the secondary school programme, which makes it a vulnerable area in teacher and learner language model. Although a pronunciation guide is appended to the TBs, vulnerability of the teacher in reading the phonetic symbols cannot be ruled out. The worst scenario, of course, would be for the teachers to take pronunciation for granted, and ignore the guide. Basing on the experiences of the negative effects of deviant pronunciation of English in Nigeria and Cameroon, Bobda (1994) points out the risk that if pronunciation is allowed to deviate in a significant manner from the native norms, the possibility of its negative effects on other components (intelligibility, spelling) in the long term cannot be excluded.

The teachers’ language accuracy and sentence flexibility were assessed as ‘mild’ or ‘low’ for as many as 9 of the 10 assessed, with one controlling these aspects ‘consistently’. The following are only a few illustrations of errors that were identified and which were systematic in the (particular) teacher’s English: *speak after me* (instead of say); *where
Anniella does she live? (instead of Where does Anniella live?; *last year, you was in Grade 4 (instead of You were …; *Now I go to read the text (instead of I am going to read …), and so on.

The system through which teachers were pre-serviced may be a plausible source for the teachers’ defects – as an additional factor to general lack of exposure in the country. Notably, the didactic nature of the teaching methods has been scrutinized (Mivuba, 2008; Rwantabagu, 2009a; Mazunya & Habonimana, 2010) for promoting ‘passivity’ in the learner. The teaching-for-examinations perspective may also have played a role in secondary school learning with its emphasis on input memorization. One of the goals of the Bachelor’s-Master’s-Doctorate degree reform is to modernize the education system in Burundi through a promotion of participatory approaches.

4.6.3.7 Encouraging pupils to speak in English.

Very few (2 out of 10 or 20%) of the teachers observed seemed to care when an individual did not respond in English. Most (7 or 70%) instead switched to a different pupil. This indicates teacher ignorance of useful strategies to encourage/support the learners into trying out language use.

If repetition/imitation meant ‘speaking’, then we would have been right in marking all 10 teachers observed as ‘consistently’ encouraging their pupils to speak in English. Imitation, repetition, and memorization, as controlled activities, undeniably play an important role in early learning of L2. Specifically, their role has been acknowledged in helping the learning of spoken language through element assimilation (Harmer, 1983). It must, however, be kept in mind that it is the boring and poorly motivating nature of these activities which partly led to the refutation of the audio-lingual approach in the 1960s
(Larsen-Freeman, 2012; Celce-Murcia, 2001). Their effectiveness is more appreciated if they are short and limited at the practice stage.

An argument is often heard about children not being ‘ready’ for engaging in speech and indeed in work on other skills like reading and writing (which is the case with the ECFBSPS). The children in one class had, had however, no problem doing the written exercise when this was given. This supports the argument that children are capable of more than teachers tend to give them credit for, if they have a clear purpose to achieve (Bourne, 1992), and if they are given appropriate feedback (Green, 1994). But the more important point here is that while the debate goes on about the timing and order of the language skills, there seem to be no clear premises for a 6 or a 7-year-old from grade 1 to be put in the same language ‘ability bag’ as a 12 or a 13-year-old from grade 5 or grade 6. If communicative language teaching emphasizes the need for variety of communicative, meaning-based activities, it is mainly because of the recognition that not everyone in the class is comfortable in the same role (Savignon, 2001; Harmer, 1984), and that with variety, the chances for learner involvement are greater. Green (1994) maintains that output and consequent feedback are efficient in informing the learner on his/her progress, something likely to engender keenness to improve one’s learning attitude.

4.6.3.8 Question variety/flexibility.

About 90% of the teachers used one type of question or statement which generally was instrumental to the type of lesson or activity that was running. Most generally, the question was What is this/it? or the informal question form This/It is ...? (The TB is not responsible for the latter form).
In commenting on the combination of closed-ended and open-ended questions, it is of necessity to underline that very few incidents of questions in the interrogative form were noted in the lessons. The TBs themselves were found to be ‘mean’ on them. When English was attempted as the directional language, the question would generally take the form of a statement. Even for those who used the interrogative form, it must be made clear that the structure was often inaccurate. This corroborates the finding from content analysis that the scope and quality of teacher language was likely affected by his/her textbook. But continued use of French and Kirundi in teaching must also have a share in undermining the chances for these teachers to improve their abilities in various components of English. This may be purported because the teacher who was seen trying to use English as much as possible came out with a positive mark in her use of questions.

4.3.6.9 Pair work/group work and the integration of language skills.

Pair work and group work techniques were absent in the teachers’ methodologies. This is not in synchrony with the teachers’ opinions which were found to be generally favourable to their feasibility.

Two main factors may explain non-use of interactive techniques. One is lack of reference to such techniques in the teachers’ materials, whereas the teachers were found too dependent on the TB. It can be argued that in the light of the TBs having “strongly recommended” some teaching procedures, and not encouraging teacher creativity, it is only logical for teachers not to ‘bother’ about techniques that they cannot be ‘accountable’ for (Goddard & Emerson, 1992). The other factor may be insufficient knowledge of how to approach these techniques to ensure (good) learning. They themselves might not have experienced their use as students themselves – or they may
not trust them. Not to be overlooked is the association generally made by administrators between interactive techniques and indiscipline, which may influence the teachers’ attitudes negatively. But perhaps the most likely reason is the general conservative belief in the teacher’s authority as “possession” of knowledge in English, and its resulting in pupils and teachers not seeing the possibility of pupils learning from each other. Reassuring teachers through formal guidelines would encourage them to integrate these techniques into their practices.

4.3.6.10 Language skills integration.

Only one teacher (out of the 10 observed) was seen trying to get the pupils to apply what they were reading to themselves orally. In one of the lessons, he asked them to write what they were practicing in the form of a fill-in-the-blanks exercise. The finding from content analysis on language skills integration was that they remained a theoretical principle. Its practice does not appear to have been accounted for. The example of this teacher shows that it is possible to organize simple activities within the language proficiency level of the pupils and come up with an integration of language skills in the English programmes. The teacher might not have been aware of this aspect of his lessons, thus not realizing its pedagogical benefits.

4.3.6.11 Error correction and pupils participation.

Teacher correction of every error was the dominating trend (70%). Engaging pupils in peer-correction was observed with 2 teachers; one of them ignored the errors. In all the classes observed, there were noticeable efforts to involve as many pupils as possible. Providing appropriate feedback is an acknowledged aspect of effective teaching of EFL (Derewianka, 2013; Savignon, 2001) especially in the case of school children. It is
believed that they need to feel constantly supported and encouraged by older people in their environments to feel self-confident in trying out certain challenging situations (Nunan, 2013).

The emphasis placed on accuracy of the forms, which has been established through content analysis of the TBs and SBs, should explain the teachers’ attitude to learner error. Considering the amount of repetition required in the TBs, there are great chances for a high correlation being seen between error correction and learning. Practical classroom experience shows an interconnected relationship between learner participation and error correction in EFL settings. The more the student involvement in language work, the more likely the occurrence of errors.

Interestingly, the observed teachers’ involvement of as many pupils as possible looked more like a mechanical way of responding to the pupils show of hands. Hardly was there a genuine search for good answers or good repetition/pronunciation models. Unsurprisingly, pupils were rarely praised for their performance, which in itself could be criticized. Increased chances for participation is an efficient motivational incentive for the sense of ‘business’ it creates in pupils and teachers alike. At the same time, one may caution against the learner dependency that may result. The argument is that, if pushed too far, error correction may develop such a strong dependency upon the teacher that some children will only participate with the purpose of ‘conforming’ out of fear (Gipps, 1992).

4.3.6.12 Writing.

Writing, either as input or learning support was non-existent in the lessons. An attempt was observed with one teacher, though, but it was incidental.
The strict observance of the TB instructions as explained above is hardly favourable to teachers engaging in something that the TB ‘forbids’ (in this case the introduction of writing). The sight of some pupils manifesting their interest to write/take notes and teachers doing the same to provide explanations (use of the blackboard is recommended in the TBs after all) sends a clear message that this skill has a place in their perceptions of English language learning. Such viewing on their part may be supported through Savignon’s (2001) reference to a Korean writer for whom writing in English “Was like wearing a new dress … made her feel fresh … see herself in a new way …” (p. 22).

The observed lessons have brought to light quite a number of challenges of which lack of competence and poor preparation stand out as important threats to successful implementation of the English curriculum. Lack of competence was demonstrated through almost total avoidance of English in both addressing the pupils and receiving their answers, in dependency on the TB for the instructional language, in lack of language variety, in shaky pronunciation, in errors when formulating questions was attempted, as well as in the absence of prompts to the pupils. Such is the situation whereas there are no school libraries or even dictionaries for the teachers to use as resources for improving their English. In one case, the teacher did not seem to have a focus for his lesson. This is evidence that untrained teachers are not likely to use official methods in their structured lessons, despite them being recommended. The implication for teaching is that poor preparation of teachers remains a serious challenge to the programme. Lack of sufficient books was noted as yet another challenge, in this case exacerbated by logistical and administrative problems. It may be necessary to note information from one of the teachers who were using a photocopied TB, and which indicated that because of lack of
photocopiers in the schools, the teachers had to find the materials needed (SB/TB) by themselves. Such lack of photocopying equipment becomes an aggravating factor of textbook insufficiency.

**4.7 Chapter Summary of Major Findings and Emerging Issues**

This chapter has presented the collected data and discussed the findings. The organization of data was done within the spirit of the 4 objectives of the study. Objective 1 of the study was to analyze the course books used to teach English at primary level in Burundi in order to get a good grasp of the learning resources offered, as well as the teaching methods recommended. The subsequent analysis found that the SBs and TBs were generally comprehensive in their support to the teachers and pupils, but also prescriptive in their guidelines. Also documented was the existence of goals and objectives in the TBs, but which needed to be adjusted for clarity and coherence with the proposed approaches. The learning contents were found to be both imbalanced and lacking in activities and exercises, which together with the audio-lingual orientation of the methods would constitute a barrier to achieving the goal of communicative competence. Objective 2 was to establish the level of preparedness to teach and supervise/support the teaching. The data revealed that INSET was not systematic and adequate enough to reduce teacher dependency to the prescribed textbook and induce their communication abilities. The non-inserviced principals reported inhibition in their performance of teacher supervision and appraisal. BEPEB, however, thought that INSET had successfully achieved its goal of preparing the teachers; but they recognized that pronunciation remained a ‘wanting’ aspect of teacher preparation. Objective 3 was to establish the effectiveness of teacher support services for implementation. The fact that there are still many teachers awaiting
their first INSET opportunity means that BEPEB and the government were not ‘ready’ and have lagged in addressing the challenge of training teachers for an adequate implementation of the curriculum. Teacher-appraisal, as the most available form of support, takes place through classroom visits followed by counseling and/or exchanges. The last objective was to identify the challenges faced in the teaching of English at the primary level. Lack of requisite competencies resulting in ‘slavish’ use of the TBs, minimal use of English in teaching, lack of strategies to expand learner vocabulary, and shortage of books (SBs and TBs) were established during classroom observation.
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This study originated from the dearth of properly researched information on the effectiveness of the curriculum used to teach the English language in Burundi state primary schools since it was launched in 2005-2006. It was felt that if this curriculum were to stand the test of time, then it would be necessary for the MoE authorities and the Quality Assurance Board to be properly enlightened about the potentialities of the different learning materials offered for English language learning at this level of schooling. It would also help them get a thorough picture of ELT in primary schools if adequate information on the quality of implementation is made available for them.

The use of triangulation as a research approach was useful in getting a near complete picture of the parameters of interest about the concerned curriculum, and which underpinned objectives of the present study. Briefly, these include (1) the goals of the curriculum (2) the resources available to attend to their attainment (3) the preparedness of the curriculum implementers (4) the support available for implementation and its efficacy in actual teaching, and (5) the challenges encountered at implementation level. This chapter summarizes the findings on these parameters and makes relevant recommendations for addressing the challenges and issues having emerged from the research. It concludes the study with propositions for areas of the curriculum worth of interest for further researchers.
5.1 Summary of the Findings

5.1.1 The textbooks used to teach English in primary schools.

A careful examination of the general design of these books showed a number of features: there are a Student’s Book (SB) and an accompanying Teacher’s Book (TB) for each of the 6 grades, with the TB presenting two parallel versions of French and English for its explanatory guidelines. Added to the fact that these explanations cover every unit of the SB and to the inclusion of a lot of pictorial content, it was thought that their design had used a comprehensive approach. The combination of programmes for different grades in 1 book, as for example, for grade 3&4, or grade 5 & 6, and colour restriction were considered a negative characteristic of their design. This was partly interpreted as an indicator of the quantitative imbalance observed in the contents for various grades, with range of 5 units (grade 5) to 13 units (grade 2) despite little difference in teaching time allocation.

5.1.2 The curriculum goals and objectives.

Content analysis has revealed that although the TBs include a short section on goals, these were not sufficiently highlighted and clearly articulated in comprehensible terms for the teachers. This was further evidenced through curriculum designers’ reference to goals in ways which invited some questioning about their clarity. Notably the details from some respondents used the singular form in their reference as in this example: *The goal is very apparent.* Sometimes, ‘goals’ was used in association with aspects of the curriculum in a manner that overshadowed its referent, as for example in this case: *The goals should be revised because the periods for English have been increased.* Information on the rationale for English language teaching was, however, not included in
the SBs. Also, whereas the general objectives are clear in terms of their formulation, they were found to not integrate any perceivable learning purposes for their orientation. Such a gap in conception impedes the evaluation of the extent to which the goals are attended to in actual teaching.

5.1.3 Learning resources and methods used in the teaching of English.

It was found that learning resources in the books comprise in descending proportions: lexical topics and their illustrative drawings, structural points, reading texts, and functions. These evolve around topics and themes drawn from the pupils’ immediate and local environment. The contents and learning activities tend to lean towards vocabulary acquisition. The activities appear in a continuum of “learning activities” comprising 3 stages which all amount to practicing pronunciation of the words /structures in prescribed fashion of in chorus, then in groups, followed by individual repetition. They were found not to be cognitively demanding.

A close analysis unveiled an unclear distinction between input material and practice material, which led to the difficulty to accurately establish their distribution. A tentative explanation was made in the sense of a possible equation having been made between learning and practice activities, which would translate to a case of awkward design. This would also entail practice activities assuming the poor characteristics displayed by the learning activities such as low interest due to overemphasis of pronunciation drills, absence of opportunities for language use, and little focus on meaning.

Whether there is an assumed distribution into input activities and practice activities, their coverage would remain both insufficient and unsuitable for the ages of the older learners
in particular. This aspect of learner variable was considered to have been ignored in the design of materials and exercises for the upper grades where some cognitive challenge and an attempt to use the target language may be required. The linguistic content is structurally sketchy and fragmented, leaving the pupils totally unable to express basic notions even at more advanced stages of the curriculum.

5.1.3.1 Exercises.

Like the activities, the provision of exercises was found, if not totally lacking in some books, then negligible in amount in the books where they were given. Their orientation was also focused on the accuracy of language forms, with word recognition being favoured. Songs and games, generally reputed to constitute appropriate materials for young learners, were included only minimally (2 for each), and without proper guidance for their efficient use. On the whole, the exercise component of the ECFBSPS was found to suffer poor coverage, imbalanced distribution, and lack of due teaching guidance to upgrade the inputs from the lessons.

5.1.3.2 Language skills and thematic content.

The skills introduced in the curriculum include speaking and listening from grade 1, and reading from grade 4. Writing, which was expected to start at grade 5 level, was postponed till secondary school with no explanations to the teacher for this change. Concerning the skills of listening and speaking, they are solely used as instructional modes for receiving and responding to input. With the schemes of work having been pre-established in the Table of Contents, teaching takes on a mechanical nature as the teachers are simply concerned with executing the procedures in the TBs. This was noted during classroom observation. Concerning reading, the reading texts were found to
display artificial characteristics both in their structural organization and in their content. Also the ratio *prose vs dialogue* text was found to be imbalanced but in favour of prose texts (13 in prose against 2 in dialogue format). The thematic content is solely narrowed down to local concepts and events, that is, things and notions generally familiar to the Burundi child. The outside world has not been given any space despite one of the goals of the English curriculum being to ‘facilitate the goal of regional integration’.

5.1.3.3 **Pictorial content.**

Pictorial material inside the SBs was found to have benefited considerable attention in the materials design. Their use, though was found to be basic till grade 6, although they constitute the major part of the resources available in the SBs, that is, in comparison with the printed materials alongside them. An additional finding was that their content has a narrow character, given that they mostly illustrate concepts and rarely involve, for example, interactional scenes. This in itself does not favour the creation of interest that could arise from ‘action’ scenes. This was further found to be a possible factor in undermining the quantity and quality of learner language input. Other major weaknesses identified in this component included the design not taking into account learner age differences, lack of guidance for both general use for efficiency and optimization of content exploitation to generate imagination, language creativity and variety, all being areas at stake in the teaching plans offered in the TBs.

The lack of audio support materials was established and deplored mainly because of the missed opportunities that result from their non-availability (pronunciation/intonation improvement, listening comprehension, language expansion, and variety in activity).
5.1.3.4 The teaching methods.

It was established that the communicative approach was ‘strongly’ recommended in the teaching of each and every programme for the 6 grades. The integration of language skills and learner-centered teaching were further stipulated as principles underlying the methodology. However, an analysis of the techniques and procedures – which were seen to be closely followed in actual teaching – led to the conclusion that there was a conflicting relationship between what was ‘theorized’ and its practical translation. More precisely, besides the teacher being the full learning provider (given the compelling tone of the TBs), the teaching techniques are essentially based on oral drills aimed at mastery of word pronunciation and recognition through discrete-item activities and memorization. Little or no room is given to the integration of form and meaning, or of the functional role of language skills.

It is recognized that contextualization is an efficient aid to the perception of meaning. In the present case, there is systematic emphasis on acquisition of words or structures in isolation at the expense of meaningful interaction or expression. Almost no instances were established either in the books, or during classroom observation, of teaching where pupils are given an opportunity to even formulate a sentence of their own. This reverberates the old practices of the audio-lingual method, which are generally criticized for inducing ‘passivity’ in the learners. This finding was contrary to a number of views held by the designers on this component: one is their belief that the methods and activities in the books ‘encourage creative use’ of English; another is that the methods and activities/exercises are ‘aligned to the curriculum goals’. The last is their opinion that
the curriculum approach and language skills integration are ‘comprehensible’ to the teachers, despite the designers’ own information from research that these two elements were neither clarified in the TBs nor included as topics for consideration during INSET.

5.1.4 Preparedness of the teachers, school principals, and BEPEB.

The data from all three categories of populations in the study contained an expression of concerns over INSET not having reached all teachers and principals. In this regard, it was learned that INSET has been irregularly distributed both in terms of geographical coverage and duration, and that it was delivered by different providers including curriculum designers and secondary school teachers “from the neighbouring schools”. Reference in data from some principals was made to some of the teachers not being well prepared for the task. Lack of or inadequate training which were self-reported by the 3 groups of implementers, could mean in the case of teachers and principals a very remote experience with the English language. On the part of BEPEB, proof of their unpreparedness was partly evidenced by BEPEB joining the teachers’ and principal’ voices in presenting methodology and pronunciation as two areas where training needs continue to be felt, in spite of these 2 areas having been dealt with in previous INSETs. It is also explained by the persistence of numbers of untrained teachers and principals in the system, by their seeking outside assistant trainers, and the disparities in the INSETs allocation and length.

Another aspect of teacher preparedness that was established was in relation to language proficiency. Many teachers avoid communicating in English to their pupils, and the only English that happens to be used in the lessons is that which is provided in the TBs. Their
ultimate dependency to the TB for the work to be carried out, the procedures to follow, and the language to use (while teaching) was then established. Whereas English and French were found to have been used as the printing languages for the TBs, their proportional management in actual teaching was not formally explained, thus leaving the ground free for teachers to decide for themselves. Such avoidance, combined with official implicit recognition of teachers’ and principals’ limitations, point to a lack of confidence and low preparedness for both teaching and supervision/appraisal duties. But the untrained principals have also echoed similar feelings with regard to offering assistance to teachers or conducting appraisal.

5.1.5 Support for implementation.

Primary support for implementation in the case of a new subject should focus on training the teachers and regularly updating their skills and knowledge through professional development and refresher course programmes. The present study established the existence of numbers of teachers and principals still untrained 10 years after the curriculum was launched. The numbers were established at 18.6% and 36.7% for teachers and at 34.0% and 47.6% for principals in Bujumbura Municipality and Mwaro respectively, not forgetting that INSET for the majority of teachers (88% and 86%) had 1 short session. This is clear evidence that this form of support has not been adequately provided, with a risk of unequal opportunities in schools or classes in terms of the quality of their teachers and/or principals.

Non-availability of textbooks in sufficient quantity has constituted another gap in the interventions for support to implementation. Co-existence of two course contents in 1
book, which was established by content analysis is an aspect of inconvenience that can be attributed to insufficient support in book provision. The sharing of books between parallel classes and different grades was seen causing unwanted delays and changes in teachers’ planned lessons, something which affects lesson pace as this was witnessed during classroom observation.

Dictionaries and audio aids are other resources that the support services have failed to provide despite their importance to the implementation of the curriculum. Nothing emerged from the data about perspectives on these materials beyond the claims made by teachers for their provision.

Teacher appraisal was said to be based on classroom visits followed with some form of counseling or of pedagogical exchanges. The practice of peer-tutoring to help teachers who have not had opportunities for INSET was reported in Bujumbura, but hampered by both the quality of the training received and the existence of untrained teachers which restricts collaboration on one hand, and by its orientation which tends to foster more the teachers’ accountability than their professional development on the other hand – this at least was reportedly observed in the data from BEPEB.

5.1.6 Challenges faced in the implementation.

The very circumstances of the launch of the ECFBSPS curriculum and the gaps observed in the organization of INSET have led to various challenges. The major ones documented are:

(i) Usually, the challenges would lie with the pre-service preparation of the teachers, but it has come to be known that even post-launch training has not been to the level of the implementation needs. This challenge is not limited to the
interpretation of the curriculum and its optimal exploitation, but it also extends to the language proficiency of the teachers, with its impact on the model that is transmitted through teaching. It was established that the print in the books also contains some errors. When asked what should be done for the teachers who have not yet received training, BEPEB suggested organizing “special” INSET for them, but they did not give a time line. This indicates that the in-service training of teachers is in itself a major challenge facing ELT at this level of schooling.

(ii) Teacher-dependency on the TB as a result of both lack of TEFL competence and poor proficiency in English is also a challenge. It affects teacher creativity and imagination, two reputed sources of variety and flexibility in activity selection and organization. Strong dependency in this case leads to reduced language input, and of artificial nature. For example, avoidance of English as an instructional language, and little use of learner vocabulary-expansion strategies by the teachers were noted. These strategies basically involve teacher facilitation of learning, for instance by prompting the learners.

(iii) An even more important challenge comes from the curriculum designers (BEPEB) not recognizing certain aspects of the English curriculum as constituting ‘dark’ areas for the teachers. Examples of this include their admitting that the communicative approach, language skills integration, and creative use of language are all features that are comprehensible to the teachers. Not recognizing their difficulty means that they will probably not be subject of INSET. Consequently, the ECFBSPS, rather than being an innovative instrument, will be
only perpetuating the same passed approaches that make the weaknesses of current ELT in Burundi.

(iv) The situation whereby the books are immediately returned to the Principal’s office for keeping after the lesson entails pupils being prevented from accessing the books, for example for self-study, away from the English lessons. Teachers complained of delays being caused in beginning their lessons because they have to go to the Principal’s office to get the books, which as was reported by some teachers, maybe needed in 2 different levels for the books combining programmes for different grades (e.g.: SB/TB 3 & 4).

(v) Teacher appraisal is hampered by lack of competence and sufficient TEFL methodology awareness of those tasked to do it.

5.2 Conclusions of the Study

The analysis of the textbooks has identified a number of positive and negative characteristics about their general design and the resources in them. On the positive side, the existence of a SB and an accompanying TB for each grade has been noted, with an effort to make them ‘user-friendly’ through the use of French and English for the TBs and many pictures in the SBs. On the negative side, the combination of two different syllabuses in a single book was found to cause practical problems with book accessibility. Lack of audio material to support teaching/learning, especially of pronunciation, was noted.
Concerning the resources inside the textbooks, a number of conclusions were arrived at. First, although the goals and objectives for ELT in primary schools were included, they were not clearly explicated to inspire effectiveness in teaching. Secondly, there is a lack of clear direction as to the functionality of the language elements/features and skills taught. Subsequently, it is difficult to distinguish between the purposes, or better, the pedagogical values of various activities in the units and across the books, despite their appearing under different denominations.

Also, the coverage of activities and exercises was generally found inadequate, considering the need in the context for opportunities to practice English. It was considered that more opportunities, and which associate the expression of meanings, were overlooked in the upper grades materials and methods. But even for the earlier grades, the use of relevant activities such as songs and games, was found to be negligible and unguided for their teaching. Lack of guidance was also recorded about the visuals in the SBs.

The analysis further concluded that there were discrepancies in the methods stated and the teaching procedures developed for the different activities, something which led to a questioning of the designers’ interpretation of the communicative approach to language teaching. More importantly, the emphasis placed on the mastery of discrete items (especially vocabulary) at the expense of meaningful discovery and practice implies that ELT at primary level is not innovating the old practices in the system, whereas they are known to be inappropriate. From a language achievement perspective, the gaps identified were considered a hindrance to learner achievement of good levels of proficiency in
English, which is the core of the goals stated for the introduction of English in primary schools.

Successful implementation of the primary English curriculum is hindered by the lack of competence and skills to teach EFL. Upon launch of the ECFBSPS, the teachers and the principals did not have the requisite pre-service backgrounds to teach English. Therefore, the possibility of them having achieved required levels of knowledge and skills to teach efficiently cannot be supported by what has come to be known with regard to the circumstances of INSET.

Weaknesses in the training model have also negatively impacted on the participants’ levels of acquisition and preparedness. This, together with the persistence of still untrained teachers in scores of schools, has jeopardized the chances for additional support, for example through school-sponsored appraisal. But successful implementation of the programmes also depends on the government’s capacity and readiness to support the training of all teachers and principals, and to avail textbooks in sufficient numbers to equip the schools. The reality shows that these aspects are still problematic and that BEPEB does not have the solution. The conclusion is that the implementation of the English curriculum has not been adequately supported; hence a number of challenges that are faced on the field.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings, a number of recommendations can be formulated for the study, and which involve the responsibilities of BEPEB, the government, the teachers, and the principals.
5.3.1 BEPEB

(i) BEPEB should produce separate SBs and TBs for each grade in order to facilitate practical use and accessibility of those books. They should also improve the clarity of goals and objectives of the programme, by spelling them out, and by relating the objectives to perceivable and achievable learning purposes. The same is necessary for their proposed methods to clarify for the teachers the key concepts of communicative language teaching; learner-centered approaches; and the integration of language skills. A separate section, instead of one in which they are combined, could improve visibility of the components concerned.

(ii) BEPEB should also reappraise the contents of the various textbooks with a view to improving their balance and coverage in favour of the components most ill-served in the programmes. Mainly, these are language functions and reading texts, as well as practice activities and exercises. Sample tests to guide the teachers on assessment should also be included. Care should be taken to increase the texts in dialogue format, to improve the activities based on the ages of the pupils, to provide comprehensible guidance as to the relative value of various activities/exercises (including the songs and games), and how to do better pedagogical exploitation of the pictorial materials in the books. There should be a place for the writing skill in the programme to foster and enhance the language input orally presented, for example, beginning with grade 4.

(iii) In the perspective of improving the quality of input from INSET, it would be necessary for BEPEB to reappraise their training model in order to adapt it to the
needs of the beneficiaries. Probably that consulting with them would be a useful strategy. They further should ensure that the training assistants (here secondary school teachers and pedagogical advisers from BEPES) have been adequately inducted about the INSET programmes and objectives, so that their interventions are harmonized in different training centres.

5.3.2 The government

(i) The government through the Ministry of Education and BEPEB, should work out a viable plan for INSET provision to all teachers of English in state primary schools and principals. The plan would also integrate the adequate provision of SBs and TBs, reference materials, and at least an English-French dictionary for each school.

(ii) There is an urgent need to put up academic facilities that can cater for the preparation and professional enhancement of curriculum designers, for example through regular refresher courses, workshops, and seminars.

(iii) Through the Quality Assurance Board, and as the sponsor of curriculum design in Burundi, the government should adopt a new working approach integrating the 4 stages of needs assessment, piloting, implementation, and evaluation as this was done about the Integrated English Curriculum for secondary school in Kenya (Magoma, 2011). It should then commit itself to providing the resources necessary to meet their time line.

5.3.3 Teachers and school principals

(i) Teachers and school principals should work collaboratively for a more successful implementation of the curriculum, for example through peer-
tutoring where this is not happening. They should self-involve in experimenting of peer-appraisal to find out about its potentialities as an alternative form of learning. Principals should also facilitate accessibility of books to teachers.

(ii) Teachers and principals should initiate activities that bring them together (both vertically and horizontally) with a view to practicing speaking English, such as taking turns in storytelling, organizing weekly discussions or talks around agreed issues, all to improve their general language proficiency in English.

(iii) Teachers should try to read the textbook the methods critically in order to come up with a rational interpretation of their possible weaknesses or side effects in terms of language learning achievements. Some teachers, for example, have questioned repetition drills as the only teaching method for the programme. In thinking critically about the contents, they should also work out what resources may be necessary to support their teaching – and in what way they can be fruitfully exploited – and engage in finding them through the help of their pupils, school administrators, or their teaching counterparts.

5.4 Areas for Further Research

(i) One interesting way to complete the present study would be to investigate the language proficiencies of the learners at Grade 6 level. This would be useful in giving information to BEPEB about the efficiency of the methods and to the MoE about the effectiveness of the programme.
(ii) Another area worth researching is the effect of the textbook contents and teaching techniques on the teachers’ language proficiency and awareness of and skills in TEFL.

3. A replicate of this study to different locations would help to expand knowledge about the effect of INSET on the implementation of the ECFBSPS. It could also bring to light other issues not having emerged or observed in the present research.
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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Map showing Bujumbura M. and Mwaro locations
Appendix B: Questionnaire for BEPEB

Dear Sir/Madam,

This questionnaire is given to you to request your personal feelings and opinions about the adequacy and implementation of the Primary English Curriculum (Grade 1 to Grade 6). I believe that your evaluation and experience with this programme, especially with regard to the in-service training course organized for those charged with its implementation, are valuable to the understanding of the teachers’ needs – and probably your own – for a successful implementation of this curriculum. My research topic is *The English Curriculum for State Primary Schools in Burundi: an Appraisal of its Adequacy and Implementation*. I guarantee total confidentiality of your responses and assure you that they will be used to serve the only purposes of the present research study. I thank you in advance for your kind participation. (*Please use clarity and concision in giving your answers*). I would also appreciate your not sharing the responses you provide with anyone as what counts is what *you* think. There is no right or wrong answer. Please close the envelope before returning the data.

Marie-Immaculée Ndayimirije, Ph D Student, Kenyatta University, Kenya

1 Background information: Please fill in the appropriate personal details

1.1 Sex

1.2 Number of years of experience in present position

1.3 Your highest qualification (Please add subject area)

1.4 Length of experience as a teacher – if applicable

1.5 Any other professional qualification

1.6 Are you familiar with the English curriculum for Grade 1 to Grade 6?

2 Programme of English globally (In bold type: are the key aspects to consider)

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<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tr>
<td>2.1 Do you find the <em>methods and activities</em> aligned to the programme goals?</td>
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2.2 Do you find the **guidelines** in the Teacher’s Manuals easy to apply?

2.3 Do you find the **communicative approach** comprehensible to the teachers?

2.4 Do the teachers comprehend how to approach **skills integration**?

2.5 Do you find the **practice activities** in the book sufficiently varied?

2.6 Do you find that the methods and activities encourage **creative use of English**?

2.7 Do you think that back up for is needed for **pronunciation** teaching/learning?

2.8 Do you find the contents **well paced out** to create a sense of **progress**?

2.9 Do you find **testing** guidelines and sample **tests** necessary for the teachers?

2.10 What do you think about the **clarity/articulation of curriculum goals** in the course books?

2.11 How does **not having a curriculum statement and a syllabus** (i.e. one separate from the textbook) affect your work?

3. **In-service teacher training (INSET)**

3.1 Have you personally participated in curriculum INSET for Grade 1 to Grade 6?

3.2 What was your role? Please explain briefly

3.3 Who – in addition to BEPEP – acts as trainer at the English INSET?

3.4 Which areas of the English programme are covered by INSET?

3.5 What areas do you think teachers need further training in?
4. Appraisal of teachers at the field

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<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<td>4.1 Have you personally participated in field visits to teachers?</td>
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<td>4.2 Is it your feeling that INSET has enabled teachers to teach towards achieving the curriculum goals?</td>
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<td>4.3 Do you find that INSET has improved teachers’ knowledge of English?</td>
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<td>4.4 Do you personally discuss aspects of the lesson observed with the teacher?</td>
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<td>4.5 Do you believe that BEPEP should observe the teachers in action?</td>
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<td>4.6 Which do you think is more beneficial, in-class or out-of-class visit? Please briefly explain your response:</td>
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<td>4.8 What do you think should be done for teachers who have not received INSET after 9 years?</td>
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5. Your final comments and suggestions. Please comment on any area of the English programme including those appearing in the previous sections; for example, the availability of resources, teaching time, your collaboration with school principals or the inspectorate, the curriculum contents, etc. Please feel free to write overleaf should you need more writing space.

Thank you very much for your time.
Appendix C: Questionnaire for school principals

Dear Sir/Madam,

This questionnaire is given to you to request your personal feelings about the Primary English Curriculum (Grade 1 to Grade 6) and the forms of support that you provide to the teachers. I believe that your evaluation and experience are valuable to the understanding of your needs for a successful implementation of this curriculum. My research topic is *The English Curriculum for State Primary Schools in Burundi: an Appraisal of its Adequacy and Implementation*. I would also appreciate your not sharing the responses you provide with anyone as what counts is what you think. There is no right or wrong answer. Please close the envelope before returning the data (Feel free to use stapling). I guarantee total confidentiality of your responses and assure you that they will be used to serve the only purposes of the present research study. I thank you in advance for your kind participation.

Marie-Immaculée Ndayimirije

Ph D Student, Kenyatta University, Kenya

1 Background information (Please fill in your personal details as appropriate)

1.1 Sex

1.2 Number of years in your position as principal

1.3 Number of years as teacher

1.4 Your qualification (Please precise Diploma)

1.5 Have received in-service training

1.6 Number of training sessions attended

2 In-Service Training Course for English Teachers (INSET) (Please tick under Yes or No to mark your answer, and make a comment where required).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Have you ever attended English INSET?</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
2.2 Does INSET help teachers achieve the curriculum goals?

2.3 Did you think that the trainers were competent?

2.4 Did INSET help you personally as a Principal?

2.5 How long was your INSET? ................................................

2.6 Please explain your professional gains from INSET. .......................... .................................................................

2.7 How do you explain that you have not received INSET so far (if this is your case)? .................................................................

2.8 What role would you like to play at INSET? ............................

2.9 How many training sessions have you attended? ........................

2.10 How would you assess the contents covered by the INSET? ............

2.11 What improvements have you observed from the trained teachers in your school? .................................................................

3 Appraisal for teachers of English (Classroom visits)

3.1 How do you personally carry out classroom visits for English teachers? Please explain whether you carry out exchanges, and their nature ..................

3.2 How would you feel about teachers observing each other’s lessons for appraisal? Please clarify your response ............................

3.3 What form of appraisal do you personally recommend to support the teachers? Please clarify your choice ........................................

4. Your final comments and suggestions: please number them as 5.1, 5.2, etc. You can comment on the improvements that you would like to see in your INSET; in the allocation of course books; in the support from the MoE, BEPEB, etc. Please feel free to write overleaf should you need more writing space.

Thank you very much for your time.
Appendix D: Questionnaire for school teachers

Dear Sir/Madam,

This questionnaire is given to you to request your personal feelings about the Primary English Curriculum (Grade 1 to Grade 6). We believe that your evaluation is valuable to the understanding of your needs for a successful implementation of this curriculum. My research topic is The English Curriculum for State primary Schools in Burundi: an Appraisal of its Adequacy and Implementation. I guarantee total confidentiality of your responses and assure you that they will be used to serve the only purposes of the present research study. I would also appreciate your not sharing the responses you provide with anyone as what counts is what you think. There is no right or wrong answer. Please close the envelope before returning the data. Feel free to use stapling. I thank you in advance for your kind participation.

Marie-Immaculée Ndayimirije
Ph D Student, Kenyatta University, Kenya

1. Background Information

Please fill in your appropriate personal details

1.1 Sex ........................

1.2 Number of years of teaching English ............

1.3 Grades already taught ............

1.4 Number of training sessions received

1.5 Focus of in-service training (INSET)

1.6 INSET providers (trainers)

1.7 Materials used during INSET

2. INSET Evaluation: Please choose one among the options SA (strongly agree); A (agree); U (undecided); SD (strongly disagree) to give your view. Tick in the box representing your view.

Statement: In my view, …

SA  A  U  D

2.1 The content of INSET was relevant to my needs
2.2 INSET equipped me with the skills to organize my lessons
2.3 INSET has improved my knowledge of English
2.4 INSET clarified how to formulate specific lessons objectives
2.5 INSET has clarified the curriculum goals for teachers
2.6 INSET was helpful in understanding how to teach pronunciation
2.7 INSET clarified for me how to deal with skills integration
2.8 INSET has helped me understand the communicative approach
2.9 INSET was helpful in my understanding of creative language use and how to foster it in the learners
2.10 INSET has helped me understand how to teach Writing
2.11 INSET was helpful in my understanding of language skills integration

3. Learning activities (Please use the same answering process as previously)

   Statement: In my view, ...

   3.1 Learning activities in the textbooks are sufficient in quantity
   3.2 Practice activities/exercises cover all components of the curriculum
   3.3 Practice activities/exercises are generally varied
   3.4 The activities and exercises are generally interesting
   3.5 Activities and exercises are at the cognitive levels of the pupils
   3.6 The methodology proposed encourages creative use of English
   3.7 The methodology in the Teacher’s Guidebook is easy to apply
   3.8 The methodology heavily relies on repetitions
   3.9 The content is in line with the curriculum goals
   3.10 It is better to introduce Reading and Writing before Grades 5 & 6
3.11 It would be possible for my classes to work in pairs or in small groups

3.12 The TBs have answer keys where these are required

4. **Teaching time** (Same answering process as above)

    **Statement: In my view, …**

4.1 The official academic calendar permits full coverage of the programme

5. **Your final comments and suggestions:** please number them as 5.1, 5.2, etc. You can comment on the improvements that you would like to see in your INSET; in the allocation of course books; in the support from the MoE, BEPEB, etc. Please feel free to write overleaf should you need more writing space.

Thank you very much for your time.
Appendix E: Content analysis guide

A. Material identification: SB for Grade -----; Total units -----; Total pages -----;
   Published in -----

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Units</th>
<th>Lang. cont. type + pgs</th>
<th>Skill type + pgs</th>
<th>Them. cont. type + pgs</th>
<th>Activity type + pgs</th>
<th>Illustr + pgs</th>
<th>Ancillary material pgs</th>
<th>Physical Features + pgs</th>
<th>Comments + pgs</th>
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**Key:**  SB: Student’s Book;  Illustr: Illustrations;  Gram: grammar;  Voc: vocabulary;  Functn: function;  Pron: pronunciation;  Cont: content;  Lang: language;  Them: thematic;  Pgs: pages

B. Material identification: TB for Grade -----; Total units -----; Total pages -----;
   Published in -----

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<tr>
<th>Units</th>
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Appendix F: Classroom observation grid

**General details:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Textbook</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lesson focus/topic</th>
<th>Teacher (M/F)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| 1.1 | Teacher sticks to official guidelines | consistently | mildly | Not at all |
| 1.2 | Teacher sticks to own preparation notes |
| 1.3 | Teacher uses Kirundi to direct pupils |
| 1.4 | Teacher uses French to direct pupils |
| 1.5 | Teacher uses English to direct pupils |
| 1.6 | Teacher helps pupils with needed English words |
| 1.7 | Teacher puts variety in his/her vocabulary/structures |
| 2.1 | Teacher’s pronunciation is misleading |
| 2.2 | Teacher uses accurate/correct structures |
| 2.3 | Teacher uses sentences of variable length |
| 3.1 | Teacher encourages pupils to speak English |
| 3.2 | Teacher uses closed-ended & open-ended questions |
| 3.3 | Teacher uses just one type of questions |
| 3.4 | Teacher tries to make pupils interact in pairs/groups |
| 3.5 | Teacher tries to integrate skills in the lesson |
| 4.1 | Teacher corrects every error |
| 4.2 | Teacher tries to involve as many pupils as possible |
| 4.3 | Opportunities are created to use English in writing |

Key: 1 (Flexibility in using English): 2 (Language model): 3 (Practice opportunities): 4 (Other aspects)
APPENDIX G: Research Permit for Bujumbura Municipality

REPUBLIQUE DU BURUNDI

MINISTERE DE L’ENSEIGNEMENT DE BASE ET SECONDAIRE, DE L’ENSEIGNEMENT DES METIERS, DE LA FORMATION PROFESSIONNELLE, ET DE L’ALPHABETISATION

DIRECTION PROVINCIALE DE L’ENSEIGNEMENT EN MAIRIE DE BUJUMBURA

N° Réf. 620.04/DPE.BJA-M/01/JUIN/2014

OBJET : Autorisation pour enquête

A Madame NDAYIMIRJE Marie-Immaculée, étudiante à Kenyatta University

Madame,

Faisant suite à votre correspondance dans laquelle vous sollicitez l’autorisation de mener une enquête dans le cadre de votre formation doctorale, j’ai l’honneur de vous informer que je marque mon accord à votre demande. Les Directeurs Communaux de l’Enseignement concernés, qui me lisent en copie, sont priés, chacun en ce qui le concerne, de vous prêter main forte pour que cette activité académique soit couronnée de succès.

Vous en souhaitant bonne réception, je vous prie d’agrémenter, Madame, l’assurance de ma considération très distinguée.

C.P.I à :

Madame, Monsieur le D.C.E (tous)

Le Directeur Provincial de l’Enseignement en Mairie de Bujumbura

Rénovat NZEYIMANA
APPENDIX H: Research Permit for Mwaro Province

Annexe A Demande d’Autorisation pour Enquête

Ndayimirije Marie-Immaculée
Etudiante, Kenyatta University
B.P. 43844
Nairobi, Kenya

Monsieur le Directeur Provincial de l’Education
Province Mwaro
A
Mwaro

Objet: Demande d’autorisation pour enquête

Monsieur,

J’ai l’honneur de m’adresser à votre autorité pour solliciter l’autorisation de mener des enquêtes dans le cadre de la formation doctorale que j’effectue à Kenyatta University au Kenya depuis janvier 2013. Ma thèse s’intitule “Appraisal of the Adequacy and Implementation of the English Curriculum for State Primary Schools in Burundi”. L’objectif dudit travail est d’examiner les perceptions des principaux partenaires du programme d’anglais du primaire, en l’occurrence les enseignants, les directeurs d’écoles et les conseillers pédagogiques au BEPEP (Atelier d’anglais) sur les aspects d’importance clé dans l’implémentation de ce programme.

Pour des raisons d’éthique professionnelle, les données ainsi collectées seront utilisées pour les seules fins des recherches relatives à ma thèse. A toutes fins utiles, j’annexe à la présente un exemplaire des questionnaires prévus pour les enseignants d’anglais et les directeurs d’écoles (primaires). Mon espoir est que les résultats de ces recherches pourront éclairer, non seulement les partenaires, mais aussi et surtout les autorités hiérarchiques sur les décisions futures en rapport avec l’implémentation du programme dont il est question.

Vous remerciant de l’assistance que vous voudrez apporter à la réalisation du présent travail, je vous prie d’agréer, Monsieur le Directeur, l’expression de ma considération.

Ndayimirije Marie-Immaculée

Etudiante en doctorat, Kenyatta University, Kenya
Appendix I: Research permit for the BEPEB

Ndayimirje Marie-Immaculée
Etudiante Doctorante, Kenyatta University 
Kenya
Tél 77 809 929

Bujumbura le 14/7/2014

A Monsieur le Directeur du BEPEP

A
BUJUMBURA

Objet : Autorisation pour enquête

Monsieur le Directeur,
Dans le cadre de la formation doctorale que j’effectue à Kenyatta University depuis Janvier 2013, j’avais visité vos services en Octobre dernier pour solliciter votre concours en rapport avec l’effectif des enseignants en cours d’emploi ayant déjà reçu la formation sur le programme d’anglais pour le cycle primaire (Réforme de 2005). Je voudrais par la présente, solliciter votre autorisation pour mener une enquête auprès de l’atelier d’anglais qui suit de près l’implémentation dudit programme. A toutes fins utiles, vous trouverez en annexe un exemplaire du questionnaire élaboré à cet effet.

Vous remerciant de votre collaboration habituelle, je vous prie d’agréer, Monsieur le Directeur,

l’expression de ma haute considération.

Ndayimirje Marie-Immaculée

Pour accord

[Signature]

[Date: 18/7/2014]
Appendix J: Illustration of two combined syllabi in one textbook (grades 5 & 6)
Appendix K: Goals and objectives and methodological guidelines for the English curriculum

(From Book 2)

PREFACE

In order to meet the Burundi Education needs, the Government of Burundi initiates the English course in primary schools.

In fact, considering the sociolinguistic and geographical environment of our country and the development of technology, there is a strong need for the Burundian youth to speak English.

Furthermore, our country is member of regional and international organizations such as EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY, COMESA, UNESCO, UNICEF to name but a few. Since English is one of the languages of communication in those organizations and in neighbouring countries, learning that language should help to achieve the goal of regional integration.

The Primary English Course programme integrates the four Skills: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. However, Listening and Speaking skills are focused on from first year, whereas Reading and Writing will be introduced later in the fifth and sixth years.

Therefore, the communicative approach is strongly recommended all along the primary level.

Special thanks are directed to the designing team for the efforts in producing a programme that is adapted to the Burundian needs.

The Minister of National Education and Culture

Dr. Ir. Saïdi KIBEYA
Preface

In order to meet the Burundi Education needs, the Government of Burundi initiated the English course in primary schools.

In fact, considering the sociolinguistic and geographical environment of our country and the development of technology, there is a strong need for the Burundian youth to speak English.

Furthermore, our country is member of regional and international organizations such as East African Community, Comesa, Unesco, Unicef to name but a few. Since English is one of the languages of communication in those organizations and neighbouring countries, learning that language should help reach the goal of regional integration.

The Primary English course programme integrates the three skills: Listening, Speaking and Reading. However, Listening and Speaking skills are focused on from first year, whereas reading is introduced in fourth year. Writing will be introduced later in the secondary level. Therefore, the communicative approach is strongly recommended all along the primary level.

Special thanks are directed to the designing team for the efforts in producing a programme that is appropriate as it helps meet the Burundian education needs.
However, learning English as a foreign language is still at the oral step and in this context, the teaching of English focuses on the following main objectives:

1. The acquisition of **listening skill** based on the oral comprehension by listening to the teacher.

2. The acquisition of **speaking skill** which consists of reproducing the oral expression got from the teacher’s model.

3. The acquisition of **reading skill** by repeating short texts or dialogues according to the instructions given by the teacher.

All of these three competences are mainly oral. They are going to be acquired by means of simple words, short dialogues or texts that reflect the everyday life of pupils.

The teacher and the pupils can repeat isolated words, look at the pictures, role play the dialogue or read short reading passage text at a given stage of learning. Exercises are given to check the progression.

2.2. **Specific objectives**

As it is in all great undertakings, it is very important to define clearly what one is hoping to achieve. Thus, when dealing with a foreign language, there are four specific objectives to achieve: to hear and understand the spoken language, to understand what they read, to speak and to write.

Therefore, four skills must be developed: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Cependant, l’enseignement de l’Anglais comme langue étrangère reste au stade oral et dans ce contexte l’enseignement de l’Anglais se focalisera sur les objectifs principaux qui sont les suivants:

1. L’acquisition du **savoir-écouter** qui consiste à reproduire l’expression orale en suivant le modèle donné par l’enseignant.

2. L’acquisition du **savoir-parler** qui consiste à reproduire l’expression orale en suivant le modèle donné par l’enseignant.

3. L’acquisition du **savoir-lire** en répétant de petits textes ou dialogues selon les instructions données par l’enseignant.

Toutes ces trois compétences sont principalement orales. Elles seront acquises par moyens de mots simples, de courts dialogues ou textes qui reflètent le vécu quotidien des élèves.

Le maître et les élèves peuvent répéter des mots isolés, regarder les images, jouer le dialogue ou lire de courts textes. A un certain degré d’apprentissage, des exercices sont proposés pour évaluer la progression.

2.2 **Objectifs spécifiques**

Comme il est dans toute grande entreprise, il est très important de définir clairement ce que l’on veut atteindre. Ainsi, en enseignant une langue étrangère, il y a quatre objectifs spécifiques à atteindre : entendre et écouter la langue parlée, comprendre ce qui est lu, parler et écrire.

Bref, il y a quatre compétences à développer : écouter, parler, lire et écrire.
At the fifth and sixth year level, learning English as a foreign language is exclusively oral.

Reading is introduced in the fourth year and the related teaching methodology is given at the end of the introduction and before each reading passage.

3. Methodology and teaching techniques

1. It seems better to remind the users of this book that pupils are not taught long sentences or expressions in order to allow easy memorization.

However, if it happens so, the teacher should pronounce each word separately before moving to the whole sentence or expression.

For instance, when dealing with the expression How do you do?, first she/he pronounces How? three times.

Next, she/he deals with the pronunciation do you do? three times.

Finally she/he pronounces the whole expression “How do you do?”

When presenting a new item, the teacher repeats it several times until the pupil’s ears become familiar with the new pattern sound making sure that the stress and the intonation are correct.

The repetition must be done:
- all together
- row by row
- individually

2. The use of visual aids is highly recommended as far as children can bring them at school.

3. The use of gestures is very encouraged.

Pour la cinquième et la sixième année, l'enseignement de l'Anglais comme langue étrangère demeure au stade exclusivement oral.

L'enseignement de la lecture sera introduit en quatrième année et la méthodologie y relative sera donnée à la fin de l'introduction et au début de chaque texte à lire.

3. Méthodologie et technique d'enseignement

1. Pour faciliter la mémorisation, il s'avère nécessaire de rappeler aux utilisateurs de ce livret que l'on n'enseigne pas de longues phrases ou expressions.

Cependant si cela arrive, le maître commence par la prononciation de chaque mot séparément avant la phrase ou l'expression toute entière.

Par exemple, en enseignant, l'expression How do you do?, d'abord, elle/il prononce d'abord How? trois fois.

Ensuite, elle/il prononce : do you do? trois fois.

Enfin, elle/il prononce toute l'expression How do you do?

En présentant un nouveau mot, le maître le fait répéter plusieurs fois jusqu'à ce que les élèves se familiarisent avec la façon dont il est prononcé tout en insistant sur l'accent et l'intonation.

La répétition doit être faite:
- tous ensemble
- rangée par rangée
- individuellement

2. L'utilisation des supports visuels est recommandée surtout que les enfants peuvent les apporter à l'école.

3. L'utilisation des gestes est très encouragée.
Appendix L: Illustration of drawings’ colours in the textbooks

(from Book 2)
(From Book 3)
Appendix M: The unit on “colours” in the textbooks

(From Student’s Book 1)
Appendix N: Illustration of drawing with interesting cultural content (from Book 6)

UNIT 6: MY HOME AND MY FAMILY

2. Reading text: My home
At home there are four rooms. There is a living room, a dining room, a kitchen and two bedrooms. One bedroom is for my mother and my father, another bedroom is for my brother and me.

We eat in the dining room. There is a table and chairs. We have a cupboard in the living room. We put dishes, plates, cups and glasses in the cupboard.

I eat with a fork, my brother eats with a spoon. My mother cuts meat with a knife when she prepares food in the kitchen.
Appendix O: State primary schools that have participated in the research

Bujumbura Municipality location:

1. EP Ntahangwa
2. EP Bassin II
3. EP Musaga II
4. EP Musaga I
5. EP Busoro
6. EP Notre Dame d’ Afrique
7. EP Ruziba II
8. EP Kanyosha II
9. EP Kibenga
10. EP Cibitoke I
11. EP Q4 Ngagara
12. EP Cibitoke III
13. EP Kinanira III
14. EP Kinanira I
15. EPA Nyakabiga
16. EP Kinama II
17. EP Kinama III
18. EP Jabe I
19. EP Combu
20. EP Kinanaira III
21. EP Stella Matutins
22. EP Kanyosha II
23. EP Kanyosha III
24. EP S L de Gonzague
25. EP Kinanira III
26. EP Kinama II
27. EP Kinama III
28. EP Kanyosha II
29. Ep Bassin II
30. EP Comibu
31. EP Musaga III
32. EP Mutanga
33. EP Stella Matutins
34. EP Musaga I
35. EP Stella Matutins
36. EP Jabe II
37. EP Musaga III
38. EP Mutanga
39. EP S L de Gonzague
40. EP Bihara
41. EP Kanyosha I
42. Ruziba I
43. EP Mutakura
44. EP Cibitoke I
45. EP Nyakabiga JP
46. EP Foréami
47. EP Nyakabiga I
48. Gasenyi III
49. EP Kamesa
50. Nyakabiga I
51. Kinama IV

Mwaro location:

1. EP Kibimba I
2. EP Musivya
3. EP Gisoi
4. EP Gitara
5. EP Nyakararo
6. EP Gatare
7. EP Rorero
8. EP Fota
9. EP Muyange
10. EP Munago
11. EP Kinyovu
12. EP Muyebe II
13. EP Baziro
14. EP Twe
15. EP Rurero
16. EP Butora
17. EP Rutongati
18. EP Kiyange
19. EP Kibumbu I
20. EP Muramba
21. EP Buziracanda
22. EP Bugera
23. EP Kibumbu II
24. EP Nyarucamo
25. EP Raro
26. EP Mwaro I
27. EP Bukwavu
28. EP Rujambere
29. EP Buhogo
30. EP Vyma
31. Murama
32. EP Muyange
33. EP Nyamatovu
34. EP Nyabihanga II
35. EP Nyabihanga I
36. EP Ndava
37. EP Nyabihanga III
38. EP Kivumu
39. EP Mpanuka
40. EP Matongo
41. EP Mbovara III
42. EP Rwintare
43. EP Nyabihanga II
44. EP Nyarucamo
45. EP Taba
46. Nyangunzu