

# **EFFECTIVENESS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TRAINING ON JOB PERFORMANCE AS PERCEIVED BY PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN KICUKIRO DISTRICT, RWANDA**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This paper investigates the Effectiveness of English Language Training on Job Performance as perceived by Primary school teachers in Kicukiro District. The study used a descriptive comparative research design. Four research questions and one null hypothesis were formulated. To collect data, the researcher made questionnaires which were administered to 222 respondents chosen as a sample from a population of 498 primary school teachers in Kicukiro District who attended English Language Training in 2009-2010. Descriptive statistics and Analysis of Variance were used to analyze the data.

The major findings from this study showed that the English training effectively developed vocabulary skills to primary teachers in Kicukiro District. The findings also showed that the training was moderately effective to develop other skills namely reading, writing, listening, speaking, grammar and methodology. Respondents agreed that the English language training was effective to their job performance.

Considering the effectiveness of English Language Training on job performance as perceived by primary school teachers in Kicukiro District, the government of Rwanda was recommended to keep organizing the training in English language so as to strengthen knowledge teachers got from the previous training.

**Keywords:** *English language skills, Training Program, Job performance.*

## **Introduction**

Medium of instruction plays a key role in achievement level of students. It has a crucial role in teaching learning process as it is the language through which teachers and students communicate with each other during the teaching and learning process (Saeed, 2012). English is the most popular language of instruction and it is expanding fast worldwide. In the period 1995-2005 educational systems have shown interest in the adoption of English as a medium of instruction (Marsh, 2006). The choice of English has been viewed from different perspectives.

For some, it is part of a steadily developing socio-economic conspiracy. For others, it relates to the need to have a single common utilitarian language.

Using modeling techniques, researchers such as Graddol (2005) predict that English will become a second language for many, if not most, of the world's citizens by 2050. In terms of number of speakers, English is forecast to be in fourth place by 2050, following the Chinese, Hindi/Urdu and Arabic languages. English has taken root in

science, business, and new key professional domains where it has recently been driven by various forms of e-commerce and outsourcing. Since 2006, English is being rapidly embedded into the curriculum in a wide variety of countries, from pre-school to higher education to the extent that the words globalization and Anglicization are inseparable (Marsh, 2006). This connotes its value across the world.

It is in this framework that since 2008, the Government of Rwanda has mandated English as the official language for schools beginning with the earliest grades. The Government seems to feel that command of English is one of the requirements for Rwanda to become a major economic force not only for Africa but for the world as a whole. One problem with this decision is that the majority of teachers do not speak English. A baseline survey carried out in 2009 by British Council to find out about the teachers' proficiency level of English found that most teachers did not even have intermediate levels of English. The survey pointed out that, 85% of primary teachers and 66% of secondary teachers only had beginner,

elementary or pre-intermediate levels of English. (Lynd, 2010).

In 2009, English was declared the Medium of Instruction for all levels of education in Rwanda.

The sudden linguistic shift from French to English has led to a serious hurdle in the Rwandan education system since a big number of teachers in Rwanda were trained in French. McGreal (2009) stated that in 2009, out of Rwanda's 31,000 primary teachers, only 4,700 representing 15.16% were trained in English while the remaining part representing 84.84% were French speakers. From the above figures, it was seen that primary teachers training in English Language was compulsory to enable them cope with the new system.

It is with this regard that the Ministry of Education organized a massive English Language Training in two phases 2009 and 2010 (Burd & Buchanan, 2004). This study aims at assessing if the underwent training filled the gap caused by the shift from English to French as a language of instruction in Rwandan Primary schools.

## Methods

In this study, a descriptive comparative research design was used. As descriptive, this research described respondents' profile in terms of gender, age, working experience and educational level, respondents' perceptions in respect to developed skills and job performance. It was also comparative as it compared teachers' perceptions in respect to their profile by using T-test.

The population of this study consisted of 498 primary school teachers from 31 primary schools in Kicukiro District who have been trained in English Language in the period of 2009-2010. The sample size of 222 was determined by Slovin's formula. This study used a systematic sampling technique. The research instruments of this study were the questionnaires administered to teachers in Kicukiro District in order to assess the effectiveness of English Language training on job performance as perceived by primary school teachers in Kicukiro District, Rwanda.

According to Kothari (2004), validity is the extent to which the questionnaire actually

and accurately measures the concept to which it has been assigned. In this study the questionnaires were set by the researcher and crosschecked by experts in English Language and Statistics. In order to confirm the reliability of the questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted in Gasabo District. Reliability was determined by Cronbach's Alpha coefficient which yielded .940 and a value of 0.6 was considered as the cut off point for the Cronbach's alpha values. In the process of data collection, the researcher got a written permission from the Mayor of Kicukiro District to administer questionnaires to the respondents. Cover letters explaining the purpose of the study and requesting the respondents to willingly and voluntarily participate in the study were attached to the questionnaires. The data of this study were coded, recorded, and edited. Data collected were analyzed by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences

(SPSS). Precisely, the following statistical tests were used.

1. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, means, standard deviations and percentages were used.
2. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used and the level of significance of .05 was considered.

## **Results and discussions**

This research was carried out in order to assess the effectiveness of English language training as perceived by primary teachers who underwent an English Language training in 2009-2010. Tables are used to provide the statistical patterns of the findings from the data.

### **Teachers' Perceptions on English Training Effectiveness to Skills Development**

Table 1 *Mean Rating Perceptions of Teachers on the Effectiveness of English Training on Development of Reading Skills*

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Developing a culture of reading in English Language	3.1396	.58127
Reading books written in English language about the course I teach.	3.3468	.56397
Reading about other works out of school such as magazine, newspaper etc.	3.2252	.50669
Encouraging my students' habit of reading English	3.0946	.75810
Visiting the school library for reading different books	2.9775	.71470
<b>Effectiveness in reading</b>	<b>3.1568</b>	<b>.42108</b>

Table 1 shows that for all the five items of reading variable, respondents were rated in tend to agree category with overall mean of 3.1568 which means that the training was moderately effective to help teachers to develop their reading skills. Even though all the items were classified in the same category, two of them which are reading books written in English language about the course they teach and reading about other works out of school such as magazine, newspaper were highly rated with overall means of 3.3468 and 3.2252 respectively.

Teachers in Kicukiro District reacted positively with a mean of 3.2252 when they were asked if they consult other resources such as magazine and newspapers. The fact that teachers can get information from various sources of information other than textbooks contribute to quality education because teachers can browse through newspapers and magazines and pick up some worthy news to teach in their classes instead of using textbooks all the time.

The item rated with the lowest mean on the reading variable was to know if the English training that primary teachers

underwent made them more effective in visiting the school library for reading different books. The mean of the respondents' responses is 2.9775 which also falls in tend to agree category. If the respondents in the previous items tended to agree that the training helped them to be more effective in reading the books they use

while teaching as well as other source of information such as magazines and newspapers but with a low mean tend to disagreed to visit their school library is due to the fact that Kicukiro District is located in Kigali city which has many libraries richer than school libraries from which teachers can get books to prepare their courses.

**Table 2 Mean Rating Perceptions of Teachers on the Effectiveness of English Training on Development of Writing Skills.**

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Encouraging my students to write about the course in English.	3.1171	.79863
Writing different passages in the school magazine in English language.	2.6396	.60604
Encouraging learners' creativities that develop writing skills.	3.0856	.85980
Preparing notes about the course I teach in English language.	3.3018	.78094
Filling pedagogical documents such as class dairy, school register, lesson plan, scheme of work, etc.	3.4099	.71727
<b>Effectiveness in writing</b>	<b>3.1108</b>	<b>.49447</b>

During this research, the researcher wanted to know to which extent the training in English language developed writing skills of Primary school teachers. As it is indicated by table 2, all the five items of this variable, fall in tend to agree category. The item with the highest mean is filling pedagogical

documents such as class diary, school register, lesson plan, scheme of work etc. which is recorded with a mean of **3.4099**. The reason of the highest mean of this item is that the way these pedagogical documents are filled are not different from the way teachers used to fill them in French

language. Whereas the item with the lowest mean is writing different passages in the school magazine in English language which had a mean of **2.6396**. The low mean on this item is due to the fact many schools do not have school magazine which is a weak area to be developed by school managers. In

general, writing variable was rated with a mean of **3.1108** which falls in tend to agree category and this means that teachers tended to agree that the English training they underwent helped them to be moderately effective in writing.

**Table 3 Mean Rating Perceptions of Teachers on the Effectiveness of English Training on Development of Listening Skills**

	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Following television or radio program about the courses I teach.	3.0721	.79832
Interacting with other teachers, head teachers and students in English language.	3.0225	.87418
Being able to attend seminars, conference and other professional development in English.	2.9730	.83433
Developing my students' listening through dictation exercise.	3.0631	.94920
Interacting with educational stakeholders speaking English language.	3.0676	.81276
<b>Effectiveness in listening</b>	<b>3.0396</b>	<b>.66988</b>

The table 3 shows that the overall mean score for all items of listening skills variable fell in tend to agree category. This means that English language training that primary

school teachers attended helped them to develop their listening skills. The item with a slightly lower mean compared to others is being able to attend seminars, conference

and other professional development in English which has a mean score of **2.9730**. Though the impact of the training on teachers' skills on listening was perceived moderately effective, teachers are not yet confident that is why they are not

comfortable with attending seminars and workshop which resulted in the lowest mean about this item.

Table 4 *Mean Rating Perceptions of Teachers on the Effectiveness of English Training on Development of Speaking Skills*

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Developing art of public speaking to my students through presentation	3.0360	.83398
Fostering learners' presentations in front of the class about what they had read	3.0270	.81789
Promoting student's discussion of the course I teach in English.	2.9324	.85614
Organizing students' debates.	2.9009	.77815
Encouraging English language speaking among students during their break time and outside the school	3.0225	.79275
<b>Effectiveness in speaking</b>	<b>2.9838</b>	<b>.64162</b>

Table 4 shows that on the item which asked respondents if the training in English language made them more effective in speaking, the overall mean is **2.9838** which falls in tend to agree category. Among 5

items of this variable, three of them which are developing art of public speaking to the students through presentation, fostering learners' presentations in front of the class about what they had read and encouraging students to speak English language during

their break time and outside the school, promoting students discussion of the course they teach in English and organizing students' debates in English language fell in the category of tend to agree. Though all the items fell in tend to agree category the last two items recorded the lowest mean of

**2.9324** and **2.9009** respectively. The findings in this table show that effort needs to be made to develop speaking skills in Rwandan education.

**Table 5: Mean Rating Perceptions of Teachers on the Effectiveness of English Training on Development of Grammar skills**

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Being able to make meaningful sentences in English language	3.5586	.66842
Writing a good paragraph in English.	3.5045	.67768
Marking my students' work and correct their mistakes.	3.4955	.65735
Marking national examination set in English language.	3.4009	.75902
Being able to make a written report of students' performance to the head teacher.	3.3964	.78191
<b>Effectiveness in grammar</b>	<b>3.3892</b>	<b>.50649</b>

As shown by the table 5, two out of five items of grammar skills which are making meaningful sentences in English language and writing a good paragraph in English language fell in agree category. The other three items remaining which are marking students' work and correcting their mistakes,

marking national examination set in English language and making a written report of students' performance to the head teacher are all rated in tend to agree category which makes the overall mean on effectiveness of English training to develop teachers' skills in grammar to fall in tend to agree category.

Table 6 *Mean Rating Perceptions of Teachers on the Effectiveness of English Training on Development of Vocabulary*

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Knowing technical terms to use in my course in English.	3.4865	.63623
Encouraging my students to learn new vocabulary using dictionary.	3.5991	.61401
Using English dictionary when I meet difficult words in my class.	3.6036	.64210
Making posts of new words on different topics and hang them in my classroom.	3.5270	.72866
Encouraging my students to use new vocabulary in their learning.	3.5856	.58594
<b>Effectiveness in vocabulary</b>	<b>3.5604</b>	<b>.46200</b>

The overall mean on the vocabulary skills is **3.5604** which fell in agree category. Among the five items of this sub variable four of them fell in agree category. The only item which fell in tend to agree category has also a mean closer to agree category (3.4865).The high mean ratings on this

variable is due to the fact that learning English vocabulary is easier to French speakers especially using bilingual dictionaries, which fully fits with the item with the highest mean in this variable **3.6036** which confirms that teachers use English vocabulary when they meet difficult words.

**Table 7 Mean Rating Perceptions of Teachers on the Effectiveness of English Training on Development of Methodology skills**

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Organizing learners in groups so that they may help each other.	3.3288	.72135
Taking into consideration learners with different learning styles while teaching.	3.3063	.74046
Encouraging learners to discover the lesson on their own.	3.4099	.67166
Teaching my course topics through songs and plays in English Language.	3.3784	.69327
Using teaching aids such as realia, posters, drawings when teaching my course	3.5225	.67061
<b>Effectiveness in methodology</b>	<b>3.3892</b>	<b>.50649</b>

Considering the data in table 7, the mean of **3.3892** falling in the tend to agree category shows that the training in English language sharpened the skills of teachers in

methodology .Among the five items of the methodology variable, four of them fell in tend to agree category and one is in agree category. The favorable mean on this item is due to the fact that the teachers were trained in methodology during their secondary school so the language change did not show a strong impact on the methodology

variable. Recorded mean show that the methodology of teaching in English language was moderately effectively taught to teachers during the training.

**Teachers’ Perceptions on English Training Effectiveness to Job performance**

Research question three addressed how primary teachers in Kicukiro District perceived the effectiveness of English language training on their job performance in terms of communication, course preparation, knowledge transmission and

completing pedagogical documents. This question intended to know the perceptions of teachers on outcome of the training

regarding their job performance. Findings are analyzed in table 8.

**Table 8 *Perceptions of Teachers on Outcome of the Training Regarding their Job Performance.***

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Being confident when transmitting knowledge.	3.6757	.52386
Giving instructions to my students in English language.	3.6171	.62546
Sharing experience with other teachers speaking English	3.5315	.69673
Using local teaching aids brought by students themselves.	3.5135	.64331
Using sources of information written in English while preparing course notes.	3.5991	.64982
Setting students' assessments such as examinations, assignments, course works, etc. in English language.	3.7207	.52401
Dealing with individual differences of learners while teaching.	3.7117	.50135
Caring for students with special educational needs	3.6667	.59914
Appropriately fill pedagogical documents	3.7883	.45149
Making my lesson plans in English language	3.8153	.43296
<b>Effectiveness in job performance</b>	<b>3.6577</b>	<b>.38363</b>

All of ten items which made the job performance recorded the mean score which fell in agree category. Teachers perceived the item about the effectiveness of the

training to enable them making lesson plans in English language to be the highly rated item recording a mean of **3.8153**. Teachers generally reported positive perceptions of

the effectiveness of the training on their job performance, recording an overall mean score of **3.6577** which fell in the agree category.

**Comparison of Perception on Effectiveness of English Language Training on Job Performance**

This section addressed question number four which is the following: Is there any significant difference between primary school teachers' perceptions of the

effectiveness of English Language Training on job performance in respect to their age, working experience, education level and gender. From the findings on this section the following null hypothesis were tested: There is no significant difference between teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of English Language Training on job performance in respect to their age, working experience, education level and gender

**Comparison by Gender**

Tables 9 *Comparison by Gender*

Group statistics					
	Gender	N	Mean	T	P-value
Effectiveness in job performance	Male	72	3.6806	.615	.539
	Female	150	3.6467		

Group statistics of both (male with  $\mu=3.6806$  and female  $\mu=3.6467$ ) yielded agree view on effectiveness of English

language training from all respondents. The t-test yielded a p-value of **.539** which is greater than the significance level of **.05**. This means that there is no significant difference between teachers' perception on

effectiveness of English Language Training on Job Performance as grouped by gender. Therefore, we confirm the null hypothesis stating that "There is no significant difference between mean scores of respondents' perceptions of training effectiveness on job performance as grouped by gender"

Table 10 *Comparison by Age*

	N	Mean	F	P-value
24 years or less	17	3.6209	.961	.453
25-30 years	48	3.7500		
31-36 years	65	3.6855		
37-42 years	35	3.5873		
43-48 years	23	3.6087		
49-54 years	24	3.5833		
55 years and above	10	3.6333		
<b>Total</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>3.6577</b>		

The comparison of perceptions on training effectiveness on job performance as studied through age group yielded an overall mean of **3.6577** fitting in agree view. The one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) produced the value of F equal to **.961** and p-value of **.453** which is greater than the significant level of **.05**.

It indicates that there is no significant difference between the respondents' perceptions on training effectiveness on job performance. Thus, we retain the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference between mean scores of respondents' perceptions of training effectiveness on job performance as grouped by age.

Table 11 *Comparison by Years of Teaching Experience*

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>P-value</b>
5 years or less	61	3.7341	.912	.458
6-10 years	51	3.6340		
11-15 years	51	3.6471		
16-20 years	19	3.6199		
Above 20 years	40	3.6028		
<b>Total</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>3.6577</b>		

The researcher used a one way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to discover whether there is a significant difference between teachers' perceptions on the effectiveness of English training on job performance as grouped according to the years of teaching experience. Descriptive statistics revealed that when considering the mean, respondents

agreed with all items regarding the effectiveness of job performance. The ANOVA computed F value of **.912** with p-value of **.458** which is greater than the significance level of .05. This means that there is no significant difference between the respondents' perceptions on the training effectiveness on job performance as grouped according to the years of experience.

Table 12 *Comparison by Educational Qualification***Effectiveness in job performance**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>P-value.</b>
Certificate of secondary	121	3.6180	3.014	.051
Diploma	58	3.6475		
Bachelor's degree	43	3.7829		
<b>Total</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>3.6577</b>		

The respondents' qualification in this study ranged from certificate of secondary, diploma and bachelor's degree. According to these educational qualifications, all respondents recorded an overall mean of **3.6577** which means that they agreed on the effectiveness of an English language training to teachers' job performance. Using one way analysis of variance, the researcher found an F value of 3.014 with a p-value of .051 which is greater than the significant level of 0.05. Thus, there is no significant difference between the respondents'

perceptions considering all the groups as observed in table 12. Consequently, there is no significant difference between mean scores of respondents' perceptions of training effectiveness on job performance as grouped by level of education.

Since the p-value is very close to 0.05, the researcher compared the groups pairwise to check whether there is a pair of respondents with perceptions that are significantly different from each other. The results of multiple comparisons are presented in table 13.

Table 13 *Effectiveness in job performance*

**Post Hoc Tests**

**Multiple Comparisons**

**Effectiveness in job performance**

(I) academic qualification	(J) academic qualification	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Certificate of secondary	Diploma	-.02951	.06072	.627
	Bachelor's degree	-.16495*	.06750	.015
Diploma	Certificate of secondary	.02951	.06072	.627
	Bachelor's degree	-.13544	.07651	.078
Bachelor's degree	Certificate of secondary	.16495*	.06750	.015
	Diploma	.13544	.07651	.078

\*. The mean difference between the perceptions of Certificate of Secondary and Bachelor’s Degree holders is significant at the 0.05 level.

The post hoc test, which is used to determine whether there is a significant difference between pairs of groups of respondents, revealed that respondents with bachelors’ degree have significantly higher mean rating than the respondents with certificate of secondary or diploma because the multiple comparison yielded a p-value of 0.015 which is less than the significance level of 0.05. The apparent reason for the high mean of the training effectiveness rated

by Bachelor’s degree holders is that they feel more comfortable with English language since they did their higher learning program in English language (Kagwesage, 2013). So, they had prerequisite in English.

**Conclusions**

The main objective of this study was to find out the effectiveness of the English language training on job performance as perceived by primary teachers in Kicukiro district.

1. The findings showed that teachers tend to agree the effectiveness of the training in English to develop their skills on reading, writing, speaking, grammar and methodology. While vocabulary was rated with the highest mean which is found in agree category.

2. About how teachers perceived the effectiveness of the English language training on their job performance the respondents rated the training effective.

3. There is a significant difference between the perceptions of training effectiveness of teachers with secondary school certificate/diploma and those with bachelor's degree.

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