

## Challenges faced by Bunia English teachers in English teaching in 3rd and 4th forms building section

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**ABSTRACT:** Teaching as well as learning English as foreign language has become problematic in Bunia town, which makes it a neglected and less appreciated lesson by pupils in third and fourth forms throughout their course in building section. Therefore, a survey was carried out among these pupils as well as their respective teachers in order to be able to point out the difficulties they face but also the factors leading them there.

During this research, it turned out to be some difficulties which hinder the teaching and learning of English; five of which relate to teaching and five others to learning.

We then allowed ourselves to come to the conclusion according to which all the difficulties are mainly due to the lack of a professional education relating to the section and qualified personnel having followed the course of technical English teaching in building section.

**KEYWORDS:** difficulties, teaching, learning, building section.

### 1 INTRODUCTION

The world has become small thanks to international communication system and English has been one of the major languages of interconnection. For this purpose, English is used in many ways. In some countries it is used as mother tongue; in some others as second language, and even as a foreign language. English is the language of science, new technology and international transactions. Any intellectual around the world would like to speak English and apply it in his or her communicative tasks. When you know how to speak English, the opportunities of getting good jobs are large. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, it is used as a foreign language, especially in educational system and is inserted in the programme of secondary schools as well as in all universities, at all levels and orientations. Pupils and students are requested to learn English in order to profit from the different opportunities it offers its users around the world. But they encounter a lot of problems due to a great variety of factors. Teaching and learning English as a foreign language is so complex that pupils do not learn it successfully.

Teaching English as a foreign language is a challenging task, yet a rewarding career choice. As an English teacher, you must learn to adapt constantly to your pupils' needs. A good ESL teacher must be able to recognize these common problems, and work to find solutions. Even a slight adjustment in his/her teaching methods can help to create a more productive and casual environment for him and his pupils.

There are some most common classroom problems faced when teaching English as a foreign language, though they vary according to orientation domains. The important thing is to know how to tackle and solve them altogether. It becomes difficult to develop the language skills that are listening, speaking, reading and writing for many causes in the Democratic Republic of Congo in general, and in Bunia Town in particular. It is noticed that most of pupils finish their secondary school studies without being good at any of the four skills. So, finding no way out, most of those who need especially to refine their spoken skills join private institutions, centres and academies.

The causes of pupils' difficulties are numerous. In some cases, the teachers of English are not sufficiently trained to exploit the expected pupils' capacities and their needs that is why pupils encounter difficulties that they do not overcome.

Astana's, (2014) states that students' performance is affected by shortage of English teachers and absence of teaching and learning materials. Sometimes building classes are considered ESP learners being mostly adults who already have some acquaintance with English and are learning the language in order to communicate a set of professional skills and to perform particular job related functions. An ESP programme is therefore built on an assessment of purposes and needs and the functions for which English is required. The ESP local point is that English is not taught as a subject separated from the pupils' real world. Instead, it is interacted into a subject matter area important to the learners. Most of the time, teachers are qualified, but they lack essential needed materials.

It has been seen that Pupils like to become English speakers but it is not easy because there are a lot of problems related to teaching English as a foreign language in general and in Bunia Town in particular. Vuzo (2010) reported that it is through interactions with each other that teachers and students work together to create intellectual and practical activities. For the case of teaching English in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> form building sections in Bunia Town especially, pupils face a lot of difficulties which come from one main source. Teachers do not have appropriate materials which meet the interests and motivations of their pupils and the available materials are not taught altogether because of a limited number of hours. That is why pupils show very poor performance in English skills and a large number of them seem to have given up learning English lessons.

The present research aims at pointing out the striking difficulties encountered in teaching and learning English lessons in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> forms building section. And analysing the main factors that do not allow English teachers to reach the aims in different lessons are likely not to satisfy the needs of their pupils.

## 2 METHODOLOGY

In order to carry out and conclude the present article, both field work and desk work were applied. We attended several types of lessons in different Bunia secondary schools organising building sections, we observe some teaching methodology used in teaching English in building section. Moreover, we read some books and articles to put light on our research.

## 3 RESULTS

The following Chart shows the number of the pupils found in the four schools under study:

Number	School	Year 3	Year 4	Total
01.	ITP BUTSO	50	38	88
02.	COMPLEXE SCOLAIRE LA RACINE	27	23	50
03.	COMPLEXE SCOLAIRE MAENDELEO	39	34	73
04.	COMPLEXE SCOLAIRE UDJA	27	22	49
05.	INSTITUT SALEMA 1	18	15	33
	Total	123	132	293

### TEACHERS' STUDY LEVELS AND EXPERIENCES

One of the most important factors in teaching is undoubtedly the teacher's study level. At Teachers' Training Colleges, undergraduate students are usually trained to teach in Years 1 and 2 secondary schools, leaving Years 3 and 4 to graduate teachers. This is important in as much as it helps judging by this factor. The present chart gives information about the study levels of the English teachers working in those schools.

Nber	School	Form(s)	Teacher	Sex	Level	Teaching Experience
01.	ITP BUTSO	3rd & 4th	1	F	graduate	7 Years
02.	C.S. LA RACINE	3rd & 4th	1	M	Graduate	5 months & 7 years elsewhere
03.	C.S MAENDELEO	3rd & 4th	1	M	Under-graduate	20 years elsewhere
04.	C.S. UDJA	3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup>	1	M	Under-graduate	5 months
05.	C.S SALEMA1	3rd & 4th	1	M	Graduate	4 Years

A simple analysis of the chart reveals us that three fourths of building section 3rd and 4th forms teachers are not qualified. Furthermore, almost all of them do not have enough experience in teaching technical English in building section

**Question 1:** What is the percentage of your mechanic section pupils who are:

- motivated in learning English? 3<sup>rd</sup> form...; 4<sup>th</sup> form...
- able to express themselves in English? 3<sup>rd</sup> form...; 4<sup>th</sup> form...

Nber	School	Motivation		Expression	
		3rd form	4th form	3rd form	4th form
01.	ITP BUTSO	50 %	50 %	50 %	50 %
02.	C.S. LA RACINE	50 %	55%	40 %	40%
03.	C.S MAENDELEO	40 %	40%	40 %	40%
04.	C.S UDJA	45%	45%	40%	40%
05.	INST SALEMA1	55%	55%	50%	50%

When we wanted to know the percentage of the pupils who are motivated to learn technical English in building section both in 3rd and 4th forms, the I.T.P Butso teacher answered by the average, that is, 50 percent for both forms. For 'La Racine' as well, the teacher answered by the average (40% 3<sup>rd</sup> form and 40% 4<sup>th</sup> form) for motivation, but for expression, it is 50% 3<sup>rd</sup> form and 55% 4<sup>th</sup> form. The C.S Maendeleo teacher also reckoned the percentage to forty percent (40 %) for both motivation and expression, the C.S UDJA teacher answered by the average, that is, 45% 3<sup>rd</sup> form and 40% 4<sup>th</sup> form. At last, the Institut Salema1 teacher answered by the average, that is 55% 3<sup>rd</sup> form and 50% in 4<sup>th</sup> form.

**Question 2:** How many hours of English lesson do you have par week?

3<sup>rd</sup> form...; 4<sup>th</sup> form... Are they sufficient?

Nber	School	Hour(s) per week		Sufficient?
		3rd form	4th form	
01.	ITP BUTSO	1	1	Not
02.	C.S. LA RACINE	2	2	No, they are not.
03.	C.S MAENDELEO	2	2	No, they are not.
04.	C.S UDJA	1	2	Not
05.	INST SALEMA1	1	1	Not

According to this chart, the 'I.T.P BUTSO' and Institut SALEMA1 provide only one hour for English per week, both in 3rd and 4th forms. 'C.S. LA RACINE' and 'MAENDELEO' have two, in accordance with the National Program. 'C.S. UDJA' has of course two hours of English per week for 4th form, but only one for 3rd form. To the question whether the hours those schools have are sufficient, all of them replied in the negative.

**Question 3:** Do you follow a national program related to 3rd and 4th forms Building section?... If not, why?...

Nber	School	National Program Following		Reason
		3rd form	4th form	
01.	ITP BUTSO	Not	Not	I don't have it.
02.	C.S. LA RACINE	Not	Not	It is not available.
03.	C.S MAENDELEO	Not	Not	It does not exist.
04.	C.S UDJA	Not	Not	There is no program up to now.
05.	INST SALEMA1	not	not	I have my own books

it was established that all of them do not follow the National Program because they do not have it according to the 'ITP Butso', 'La Racine' and the 'Maendeleo' teachers; while for the 'C.S Udja teacher, that National Program does not exist. At

least, all of them do their best to teach their pupils what they can. We think that is too much saying that the National Program for Building section does not exist at all in our country.

**Question 4:** *Do you teach your pupils technical English? If yes, what materials do you use (subjects) and how?...*

Nber	School	Technical English teaching	Materials used
01.	ITP BUTSO	Yes, I do.	a syllabus containing some tools
02.	C.S. LA RACINE	Yes!	Building site and drawings
03.	C.S MAENDELEO	Yes!	visual aids and drawings
04.	C.S UDJA	Yes!	words related to the domain in 'English for Africa 3e & 4e
05.	INST SALEMA1	Yes!	Pictures related to their option

The schools under study are technical schools, the ones that are supposed to provide their pupils with technical English as well. Thus, when we wanted to know whether those teachers teach effectively technical English, the answers diverged. The ITP Butso teacher said yes, but through his syllabus. The 'La Racine' teacher went a bit beyond saying that he does not only teach technical English, but they also use drawings and go to building site. Even the 'C.S Maendeleo' teacher talked about drawings, but he especially uses visual aids. For the 'C.S. Udja' teacher, he just uses English for Africa book, selecting some words related to construction domain and at Institut Salema1 teacher use Pictures related to building. If we go through those different answers, we are likely to believe that in Bunia Building section, nothing serious is being done as far as technical English is concerned.

**Question 5:** *Do you have enough documents for teaching English in 3rd and 4th forms mechanic section?... What are your documents related to building section?... If not, which materials would you like to have?...*

Nber	School	Enough documents?	What he/she uses	What he/she would like to have
01.	ITP BUTSO	Not	some research	English text and book for building program
02.	C.S. LA RACINE	one book	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>collections for the domain</li> <li>Internet research</li> </ul>	National program and books
03.	C.S MAENDELEO	No!	a syllabus composed by the teacher	an appropriate book related to those classes
04.	C.S UDJA	No!	some selected materials	A standard program
05.	INST SALEMA1	No!	Internet	Books related to this section

The findings from the above table show that teachers do not have appropriate documentation to teach in building section. Each one is doing what could to teach at least something. Our analysis of the data lets us think that once again, the Bunia secondary schools of building section are not helped enough.

**Question 6:** *What difficulties do you face when teaching in 3rd and 4th forms Building sections? Enumerate at least five of them.*

Nber	School	Difficulties
01.	ITP BUTSO	English hours insufficiency, pupils' negligence towards English, the language lack of understanding, the dislike of English making them escape the course, and the pupils' irregularity.
02.	C.S. LA RACINE	the insufficient number of English hours per week and the lack of interest in learning English
03.	C.S MAENDELEO	The pupils' lateness in the first period, their disturbance inside the classroom and outside, the stones throwing on the classroom roof, their dealing with other courses during the English class, and their permission asking for toilet any old how.
04.	C.S UDJA	The pupils are not able to pronounce some English words.
05.	INST SALEMA1	

After analyzing our respondents' answers, we find that most of English teachers complain about English hours insufficiency secondary schools organizing building. Most of pupils of the building section are not interest in learning English.

**Question 7:** According to you, what are the remedial approaches for improving English teaching and learning in 3rd and 4th forms building sections in Bunia Town secondary schools?

Nber	School	Remedial approaches
01.	I.T.P BUTSO	- to increase the number of English hours per week - to have documents and the National Programme
02.	C.S. La Racine	- to motivate pupils about English - to favor English with four periods a week
03.	C.S MAENDELEO	- to provide the school with visual aids such as tools - to use those tools in sentences and dialogues
04.	C.S. UDJAE	- to provide the building section with appropriate documents
05	C.S SALEMA1	- they have to take in to consideration this section, for this we need relevant document

The results we got reveal that most teachers argued that if they were added some more English hours per week and if they were provided with the National Program as well as appropriate books related to building section, technical English would not suffer in Bunia secondary schools.

#### 4 DISCUSSION

Teaching is a noble profession which comes with many responsibilities and duties toward pupils. Teachers do not only teach and impart knowledge but inspire and motivate them to learn their new language. According to Atanas (2014) motivation is the most used concept for explaining the success and the failure of a learner. Also, it has been regarded as one of the main factors that influence the speed and amount of success of the foreign language learning.

However, most of the teachers of English teaching in Bunia building secondary schools confront serious difficulties in their teaching activities. First, the study findings reveal that most of teachers do not make sufficient effort to motivate their pupils to learn English. Second, teachers are not staffed with appropriate documentations, and equipment related to the building section in Bunia town. UNESCO (2000) reported that the prevision of teaching and learning materials especially books is an effective way of improving results.

Third, we also find that pupils' lack of interest in learning English. That was the major fact which was observed during our research in different schools organizing building section in Bunia town. Gardener (2006) reported students with higher motivation will do better than student with lower level. The study reveals that most of pupils studying in the building sections dislike English that is because they have problem to speak, listen, and to write English in the classroom.

Through this research, we have discovered that, the Majority of pupils studying in Bunia building section secondary schools do not attend regularly the English lesson or most of them come late to school. A teacher from I.T.P BUTSO institute interviewed on February 21<sup>st</sup> testifies that he likes pupils being absent during the English class because his problem is not to follow pupils but to get money only. The I.T.P BUTSO teacher's attitude towards his teaching duty shows clearly that he is mercenary, without any conscientiousness. In the same way, the 'Elite' teacher's shows he is first a lazy teacher, not equal to his task. Therefore, it can be said he is an incompetent teacher. This tells us clearly that those pupils are taught English which is not specific for building section.

Moreover, the research result prove that the discipline poses problem in different secondary schools organizing the buiding section in Bunia town and most of English teachers complain about English hours insufficiency. The result shows that teachers do not follow the National Program simple because they do not have it.

Schools organizing building teach English First, the teachers' level is low that they are unable to develop the pupils' abilities in vocabulary related to building. They should know that technical English is a four-level course for pupils in technical or vocational education, and for company employees in training at work. It covers the core language and skills that pupils need to communicate successfully in all technical and industrial specializations ([en.m.youtube.com>watch](https://en.m.youtube.com/watch), retrieved on February 3, 2023). Teachers must know that people learn a language best when using it to do things rather than through studying how language works and practicing rules (Richards, J.C., 2006).

How many of us know what we are looking at when we pop the hood off a vehicle? Most of us see a mare of wires, belts and parts that make little. A building sees something very different: a puzzle of pieces that fit together just as they should. Understanding that puzzle can help them narrow down the options, diagnose the problem, and have you back on the road as soon as possible. But figuring out how to understand what goes on under the hood doesn't always come naturally – it require

serious education and training. That is where building school should come in because talent and affinity for house are musts for aspiring buildings ([www.learnhowtobecome.org](http://www.learnhowtobecome.org), retrieved on September 3, 2020).

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Teaching English as foreign language has a lot of requirements to be fulfilled. In Building Section particularly, more needs are still felt in order to accomplish the expected result in English teaching and learning processes. Thus, the efforts are to be made at all levels for the welfare of this technical section in Bunia secondary schools. That is why the following recommendations are to be given:

### **TO THE NATIONAL MINISTRY OF PRIMARY, SECONDARY, AND TECHNICAL**

#### **EDUCATION AND THE GOVERNMENT**

Since the policy of education comes from the National Ministry of Education or government, the leaders of the Ministry are the ones to define the aim of a given subject while providing the necessary materials to be used in schools. Therefore, they have the responsibility of providing the technical sections in general, and in particular the building section with the National Programme and the appropriate English documents related to this section. Moreover, since the number of English hours per week in technical sections does not favor a good learning of the language, they should increase that number up to four per week.

#### **TO SCHOOL AUTHORITIES**

Being the responsible of the good running of their respective schools, the school authorities must first make sure the one they are taking on to teach at any level is really qualified for that level. Second, be careful whether teachers are truly following the programme and check how teachers use methodology to teach pupils with building objectives while focusing on practice. Furthermore, they should add more time in order to help teachers of technical sections, to plan more lessons for a better improvement.

#### **TO TEACHERS**

They should avoid a mercenary attitude in their tasks. Rather, they should make a special effort to motivate their pupils to learn English because the names of most materials they use in building section are in English all over the world. They must know that they are responsible for discipline during their class activities. At last, they should also make for their teaching a plan that meets the need of mechanic section in order to arouse their pupils' interest.

#### **TO PUPILS**

Pupils must know that to study is to work, to work hard and not to joke because the key of success lies in a hard work. Furthermore, they must be aware that building or repairing house is good, but knowing English can allow them get a good job in international companies not only as a builder, but also as a manager.

## **5 CONCLUSION**

The present work, the topic of which is entitled *English Teaching and Learning in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Forms Building Section: Case of Bunia Town* was formulated from the fact that the researcher has noticed that teachers do not have appropriate materials which meet their pupils' interest and motivations and the lack of available materials and the limited number of English hours per week.

In dealing with this topic, the main objectives were to point out the striking difficulties encountered by both teachers and pupils in teaching and learning English lessons in building section and, as well as to analyze the factors that do not allow the English teachers to reach their aims and their consequences in order to make some recommendations likely to help improve the teaching and learning of English in technical sections in general, and in particular in building section in Bunia Town.

For the sake, my target populations were the pupils of 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> forms building section in Bunia Town, including their English teachers. Methodologically speaking, the instruments of this research paper comprise the questionnaires, interview,

observation, and tests which were conducted so as to judge of the respondents' understanding. Apart from this, I used deskwork which allowed me to read books and works related to teaching English in different libraries. I also visited different schools where building sections are organized, this stage being my fieldwork. At last, I navigated on the Internet where I collected a great variety of data.

The difficulties encountered during the collection of data were also numerous, such as the financial problems and the reluctance of some teachers to provide me with the necessary information I needed. Anyway, I did my best to overcome them.

As for the answers to the investigation questions by the teachers, they showed that the majority of these latter are unqualified for teaching English in 3rd and 4th forms; that their pupils know almost nothing in English. They do not have appropriate materials for their teaching and the National Programme either. Even the number of English hours per week is not sufficient.

On their part, the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> form pupils who had to answer four questions based on the texts they had to read, the majority of them did not work well and this confirmed the hypotheses formulated at the beginning of the present work.

Considering the situation, some recommendations have been made to the government represented by the Ministry of Primary, Secondary, and Technical Education at the high level, and locally to the schools' authorities, to the English teachers themselves and to the pupils so that they may work together for the improvement of the teaching of English in technical sections in general, and in building section in particular. In addition, some texts, tools, and... have been proposed in the appendices as my contribution to help advance the teaching of technical English in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> forms building section.

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