

## Use of written English by students and staff educated in French: a case of institutions of higher learning in Kigali

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### Abstract

English became the third official language in Rwanda in 1994 besides French and Kinyarwanda to accommodate the returning Rwandan refugees. In 2008, French was dropped, and English became the major medium of instruction (MOI). This study sought to highlight the use of English by Rwandans who were educated in the medium of French so as to gain an understanding of how they are coping with the new situation and recommend necessary actions. The study was carried out in former Kigali Institute of Science and Technology (KIST), former Kigali Health Institute (KHI), and Kigali Independent University (ULK). This study mainly focused on written competence. Both qualitative and quantitative methods of research were employed to collect required data. Findings revealed a significant increase of English use in formal settings, low usage in informal settings, encouraging perceived confidence, and significant difficulties in writing. However, a high interest revealed in English use will lead to a bright future of English in Rwanda.

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**Key words:** Confidence, language use, Medium of Instruction (MOI), second language

### Background to the study

Until 1994, French and Kinyarwanda were the only official languages in Rwanda. With the return of Rwandan refugees after more than 30 years in exile, English was introduced as the third official language besides Kinyarwanda and French and a Medium of Instruction (MOI). However, with more involvement with English speaking countries, the government of Rwanda realised the importance of English and resolved to promote its use. Rwanda's cabinet decision of 12<sup>th</sup> December 2008 established English as the only MOI in Rwanda's education system besides Kinyarwanda at Nursery and lower primary level. [The Cabinet's decision was to use English at all levels. In 2011, the decision was slightly modified making Kinyarwanda a MOI from nursery to p. 3]

Though French was widely used as an official language and MOI, originally being inherited from the Belgian colonial masters as was the case with other African countries, the use of English realised a sudden and tremendous growth in Rwanda after 1994. The introduction of a trilingualism policy and the new job opportunities required the knowledge of both English and French.

Despite the efforts of many Rwandans educated in French to learn English, their proficiency in the use of the English language is still low due to late and limited exposure. This can be observed in the fact that many graduates and undergraduates still face difficulties in expressing themselves in different settings (Tabaro, 2012)

### Aim of the study

This study aims at analysing the use of written English in Institutions of Higher Learning (ILH) by Rwandan students and staff who were educated through the medium of French, and determining the impact of the errors in their use of English.

### Specific objectives

1. Examine the exposure of English to Rwanda IHLs' students and staff who were educated in the medium of French.
2. Establish the different settings in which the English language is used in Rwanda's IHL
3. To determine the confidence in the use of English by Rwandan IHL students and staff educated in French.
4. To identify the difficulties and challenges faced by students and staff in the use of English
5. To recommend possible strategies for overcoming the difficulties in English.

### English language use in Rwanda

Rwanda, unlike other African English speaking countries, does not have a long history of using English. In 1994, after the Genocide committed against the Tutsis, Rwanda experienced major changes. Roosendaal (2009) observed that In addition to establishing political and economic stability, peace and reconciliation, the government was faced with the return of the refugees from the neighbouring English speaking countries. The new social-demographic conditions resulted in a change in the official language policy, from Kinyarwanda – French bilingualism to Kinyarwanda-French-English trilingualism. This marked the beginning of the official use of English in Rwanda, which has contributed to a new linguistic situation in the post genocide Rwanda.

In 2008, a new phenomenon occurred in Rwanda. The government decided to drop French as a Medium of Instruction in favour of English. However, a serious challenge is observed. More than 95 percent of Rwanda's secondary schools were still teaching mainly in French, yet the knowledge of both English and French was required at university and for most jobs in a country with only 3 percent of the population was fluent in English (Gweenne 2008). Nevertheless the new decision ended French as a MOI Rwanda's schools.

Rwanda's government wish to promote English language is explained by the Government as an economic one though some critics attribute it to the souring relations with France, which Rwandan government officials have denied. Washington Post newspaper journalist Stephanie McCrummen (2008) in her article "*Rwanda Says Adieu to Français,- leaders promote English as a language of learning, governance and trade*", quoted a senior government official, 'This is not about France, it is about us. Introducing English is about being realistic. English is a language of business'. Americans and other English speaking countries are pouring into Rwanda, and its East African trading partners speak English and Swahili. Rwanda has also joined the Commonwealth. McCrummen observes that most Rwandans speak Kinyarwanda, the local language and/or French, although that is supposed to change.

Lynd (2010) observed that English is seen by Rwandans not only as the language that can link Rwanda to its English speaking neighbors and to an increasingly Anglophone world, but also as the language of the future, the key to a knowledge-based economy where Rwanda will be, in the President's vision, a hub for the sub-region. English has therefore become a very important language in Rwanda as the main language of instruction, trade, and official communication. Despite the short history of its use in Rwanda, and the small number of schools that were originally

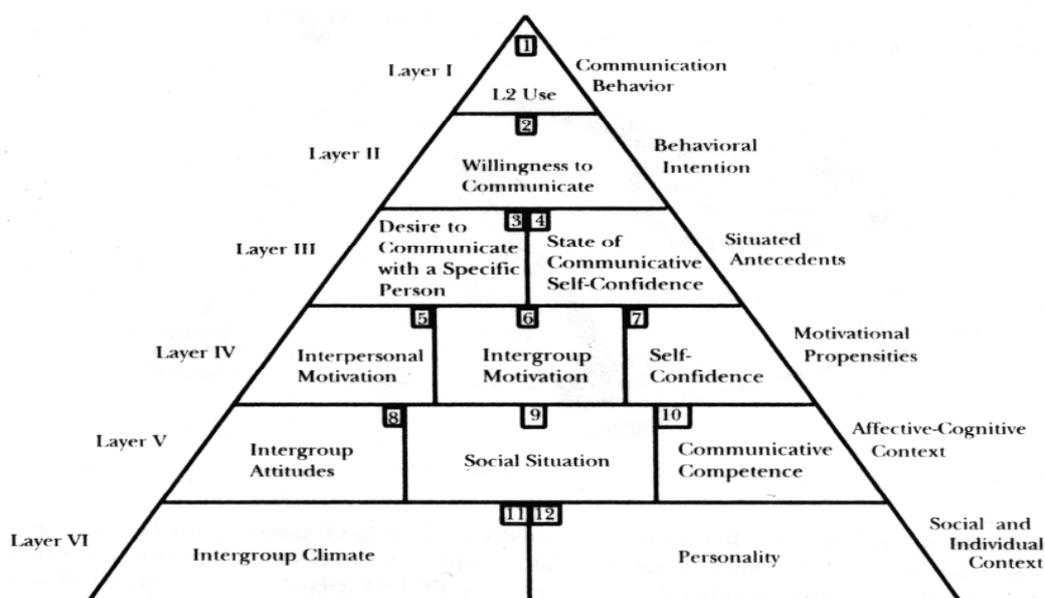
teaching in English, its use has been embraced by all Rwandans and is expected to grow.

Despite the political will and people’s interests, huge constraints have been observed. Firstly, since almost all Rwandans can speak Kinyarwanda, there is no need for a lingua franca for communication (Gwynne, 2008), and Kinyarwanda is so much wide spread even among university students in their daily life activities. Despite the advantages of having a common language (Kinyarwanda), this may hinder the learning of other languages because of lack of practice. (Katerega 2010). Secondly, exposure to English particularly in rural schools is limited and many primary and secondary teachers’ proficiency is low. This could affect not only the learning of English but the quality of education (Lynd, 2010).

### Theoretical Framework

The model below explains variables that influence willingness to communicate in L2 and the use of a second language that could lead to improved performance.

**Figure 1: Heuristic model of variables influencing Willingness To Communicate (WTC) of MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels (1998).**



MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei & Noels(1998) developed the Willingness to Communicate (WTC) model which refers to the idea that language students who are willing to communicate in the second language (L2) actually look for chances to communicate; and furthermore, these learners actually do communicate in the L2.

The above pyramidal WTC model has been established to describe the variables that influence the learners' use of the L2. As the learner moves up the pyramid, the learner has more control over the act of communicating in the target language.

The model consists of six layers, as seen from top to bottom: Communication behavior (I), Behavioral intention (II), Situated antecedents (III), Motivational propensities (IV), Affective-cognitive context (V), Social and individual context (VI). Layers VI, V, and IV are considered to be lasting and enduring influences on second language communication (MacIntyre et al., 1998) while at layers III, II and I, the influences on actual L2 use are at a given time and are situation specific. The following section explains these layers.

#### **Layer VI: Social and individual Context**

At the base of the model are the societal and individual contexts of communication. This layer involves an interaction between society and the individual. The societal context provides the opportunities for both learning and using a second language (Clément, 1980, 1988), entailing such things as the attitudes and values of society members, prejudice, and discrimination. Good intergroup relations encourage learning and subsequent use of L2. Individual personality traits such as extroversion, agreeableness, etc. influence L2 learning, and willingness to communicate in L2 (Gardner & Clément, 1990).

#### **Layer V: Affective and cognitive context**

This layer also plays an important role in the second language use. These affective and cognitive variables are individual-based and not typically specific to any situation (MacIntyre et al., 1998). These entail intergroup attitudes, communicative experience, and communicative competence.

Intergroup attitudes involve the concept of integrativeness. The desire to affiliate and identify with the members of a second language community may be a powerful motive for an individual to learn that second language (Gardner, 1985), whereas fear of assimilation and losing one's identity may be a motive to avoid learning or using a second language (Clément & Kruidenier, 1985).

#### **Layer IV: Motivational propensity**

The next layer in the model is referred to as motivational propensities which are seen to be stable individual difference traits that apply in many situations (MacIntyre et al., 1998). It involves interpersonal motivation, intergroup motivation, and second language self-confidence. Interpersonal motivation refers to an individual's relationship with the second language and the people who speak that language. Motivation, according to (Gholami et al. 2012) is believed to be a key factor that determines the achievement of learning in any second language learning context.

Two types of motivation have been identified which are integrative and instrumental.

Instrumental motivation is generally indicated by the aspiration to get practical benefits from the study of a second language (Hudson, 2000). It is thought to be the purpose of learning a second language when the learner is not interested in interacting socially with new target language community members. "Instrumental motivation refers to the perceived pragmatic benefits of L2 proficiency and reflects the recognition that for many language learners it is the

usefulness of L2 proficiency that provides the greatest driving force to learn a language. It subsumes such utilitarian goals as receiving a better job or a higher salary as a consequence of mastering L2” (Dornyei, et al., 2006, p.12)

A student has integrative motivation if he or she is inspired to learn, willing to join the other language group, and holds positive attitudes towards the learning process (Masgoret and Gardner, 2003). Integrative motivation is a usual behavior of someone who appreciates the target language community, and studies the language for the reason of joining that community. Those integratively motivated students should hold an internal motivation for learning the language (Gardner, 1985). Integrativeness indicates an affirmative view of L2 and its culture to the extent that learners perhaps would like to join the L2 culture and become related to L2 speakers (Dornyei, 2006).

### **Layer III: Situated antecedent**

Though people show consistency in their communication behavior across situations (MacIntyre et al., 1998), there are variables that apply in specific situations and vary across situations. This layer is referred to as situated antecedents of communication and entails variables of a desire to communicate with a specific person and the state of communicative self-confidence. The state of communicative self-confidence is influenced by two constructs: perceived competence and lack of anxiety (Clément, 1980, 1986).

### **Layer II & I: Willingness to communicate and Actual communication**

The above two layers represent the cumulative effect of the variables listed previously and can be seen as readiness to speak in the second language at a particular time (McCroskey & Baer, 1985). A person can be willing to speak even without the opportunity to do so. The WTC is conceptualized as having a direct impact on second language use. People with high willingness to communicate would be expected to use that second language more often (MacIntyre et al., 1998).

The use of an L2 is of paramount importance in its learning. The importance of frequent use the L2 by learners has been emphasized by many language researchers. Seliger (1977), observed that language learners who use the L2 more frequently gain more proficiency compared to those who do not. Swain (1995, 1998) also argues that L2 use provides a wider learning opportunity of the L2. Hashimoto (2002) concludes that the use of a target language is clearly an important condition for successful target second language learning. Hence the variables that influence the use of the L2 lead to a higher competence in the use of the L2 among learners.

The above model explains factors that should be available in Rwanda for the use of English. If these factors are available, then there would be more use of English, and improved proficiency. This study will thus examine the availability of these factors in this model.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Several methods, procedures, and techniques were used to gather the required information that helped in achieving the

research objectives. The researcher used a cross sectional study design whereby Institutions of Higher Learning were selected in Kigali City and the findings were generalized for all the Institutions of Higher Learning in Rwanda. The study was conducted in Kigali city where three (3) Institutions of Higher Learning (IHLs) were chosen namely Kigali Health Institute (KHI), Kigali Institute of Science and Technology (KIST) and Kigali Independent University (ULK). The target population consisted of students and staff from the above mentioned institutions of higher of learning. The total population was estimated to be 12,000 for both students and staff. The total student population was estimated to be 11,000, and 1000 members of staff for all the three institutions. These formed the parent population from which a sample was drawn to form respondents that would provide information that answered the research questions.

The target sample consisted of two hundred and eighty (280) respondents broken down as follows: Two hundred and twenty (220) students were chosen from all the three institutions identified in the study population using simple random sampling. A list of available students was provided by the administrators from which the researcher made a selection. Also 40 non-teaching staff and 20 teaching staff were selected using purposive sampling based on the suitability and availability of the respondents to participate in the study. Ahuja (2003, p. 188) asserts that in a population of between 10,000-25,000, the sample should be composed of 394 respondents at 95% confidence level (i.e. whether the estimate is correct at 95% of cases). However, this study did not adhere to this recommendation because of limited time and other logistics. The researcher was satisfied that the reduction in number of expected respondents would not alter the information in data after observing a consistency and convergence of ideas during the process of data collection.

**Table 2: Sample of respondents**

Institutions	Students	Staff		Total number of respondents
		Administration	Academic	
KHI	65	14	8	75
KIST	77	12	6	97
ULK	78	14	6	98
TOTAL	220	40	20	280

Source: own construction

### **Data collection instruments**

Self administered questionnaires were used to collect data from students and administrative staff regarding their use of English. The questionnaires were used because they could cover a big number in short time. A key informant guide was also used to collect in depth views of lecturers who handle students and therefore were deemed knowledgeable about their use of English.

Sentences written by respondents in the questionnaire open ended questions and 10 randomly selected essays that students from level three Biomedical Laboratory in Science classes were asked to write were also analysed to assess the errors.

### **Presentation and discussion of research findings**

#### **Exposure to the English language by Rwandan IHL students and administrative staff**

Factors that lead to L2 learners' incompetence in the second language have been given in various literatures, and one of them is lack of or limited exposure of the second language to the learners. Tucker (2003) argues that for an adult learner, exposure to L2 may be as little as 3 hours in a classroom in a week.

The findings of the study revealed that prior to joining IHLs, both students and staff had had exposure to English and had acquired some knowledge of it. The majority of respondents (about 70%) estimate that they had between 40% and 60% of their English knowledge upon their joining of IHL from mainly their secondary schools. This study further established that only very few (5%) of non academic staff never had an English course at IHL level, and the rest had between 50 – 200 hours and more, spread between a few weeks to several month and years. The ability of some to express themselves, with difficulties notwithstanding, implies an effort and motivation by respondents to learn english language on their own.

The study established that the duration of the English language course at IHL level for students was different from that of the administrative staff. All students had more than 200 hours of English course. 30% of student respondents had English course for more than the 200 hours in less than 3 months, 35% had English course spread in 4-6 months and for 35%, it was more than 10 months. Staff had shorter English course duration at IHL level.

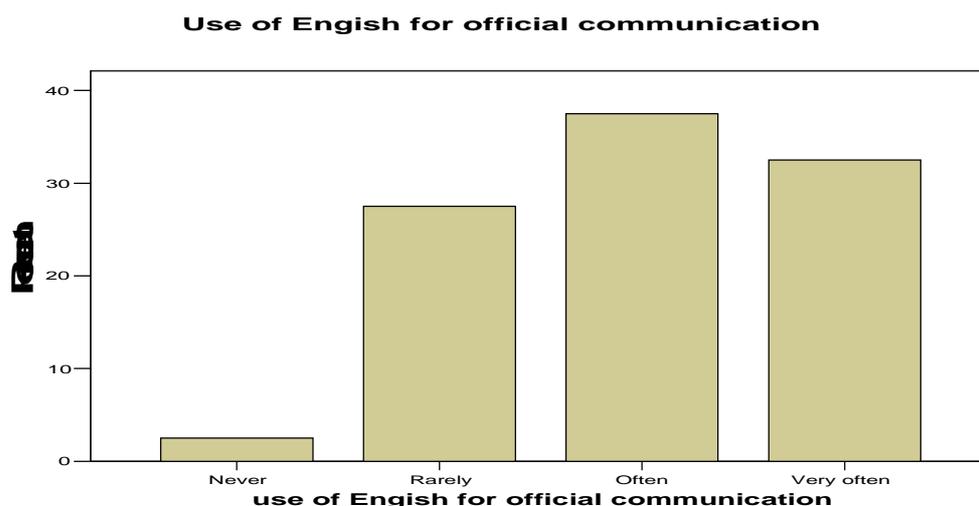
The study further revealed the majority of respondents (73% and 84% for students and staff respectively) believed that IHLs provided an opportunity for improvement of competence in English and, therefore, they gained more confidence after their IHLs experience.

#### **Settings in which the English language is used in Rwanda's IHL**

The study also wanted to establish settings in which Rwandan administrative staff and students in IHLs who were educated in the medium of French used written English so as to gain an understanding of their confidence and competence in their use of English, as well as the usefulness of this language to them. Clement (1980), and Clement & Kruidenier (1985) argue that frequent use of L2 leads to variation in L2 confidence which they describe as a

composition of perceptions of communicative competence and low level of L2 anxiety is associated with increased communication competence in the L2, increased identification with the L2 group, and increased psychological adaptation. Therefore the more the English language is used, the more the L2 competence and confidence could be achieved.

**Figure 3: English language use by IHL staff for official communication**



Source: primary data

According to the chart above, the majority of the staff respondents (about 70%) frequently communicate officially in English. This is interesting that people who had all their secondary and most of the university education in French is able to communicate officially in English. It was also revealed that Students were required to officially communicate in English in some institutions, both orally and in writing. However, one key interviewee reported that the official letters which were written by the students were poorly written with the same format, suggesting that they were written by the same people. In other institutions, there was flexibility, and Kinyarwanda or French could be used by students for official communication.

As for the use of English outside work or outside the classroom, only 28% of respondents frequently used it. The majority (78%) did not use it much. This finding was also echoed by one key informant, who remarked that, “for students, English just stays in class. They always use their mother tongue outside classes”. It can therefore be concluded that the incompetence in the use of English by some Rwandans who were educated in the medium of French can be explained by the low frequency of its use, most especially outside work and classes as this leads to missed learning opportunities through trial and error.

Many reasons were given for the limited use of English in writing by non academic staff and students. It was claimed that almost all Rwandans speak Kinyarwanda and that many Rwandans do not like using foreign languages

with their fellow Rwandans, unless they are on official duty. Some respondents reported that they would like to use it, but their friends and relatives do not know it. So they do not have people to use it with, and add that there are few opportunities to use English language in Rwanda outside work.

The lack of access to English reading materials and to English teaching programs as well as the time to access them were also blamed by respondents as the reasons for low use of English. Some respondents reported that they did not have the time to read and write emails and sms as they were busy at work.

For those who reported a high use of English language, they stated that they were motivated by the feeling of being comfortable in English and the desire to improve their proficiency in it so that they could be able to go for further studies in English speaking countries. They also argued that English was the most widely used and the most important language in the world and therefore they made effort even outside work to learn it, and improve it by using it frequently.

Interestingly, only two respondents reported lack of interest in English. In the words of one of the two respondent, *‘there are people who do not like English because it is not a language for Rwandans yet French language which they had been using was for Rwandans.’* In this study, however, apart from the two, no other respondent reported lack of interest in English. It should be noted that despite the above respondent’s claim, though both English and French are used in Rwanda, they are not Rwandan languages.

### Confidence in the use of English language

Clement (1980), and Clement & Kruidenier, (1985) explain L2 confidence as a composition of perceptions of communicative competence and low level of L2 anxiety, which are in turn, associated with increased communication competence in the L2, increased identification with the L2 group, and increased psychological adaptation. L2 confidence was related to the willingness to communicate in L2 and identity with L2 group, contributing to a higher frequency of L2 use. This explanation implies a greater importance of the need for confidence in L2 use. This was explored in this study so as to explain the use of English by Rwandans in IHLs who educated in the medium of French which could lead them to more frequent use of English and hence an improved use of this language.

### Confidence in written English

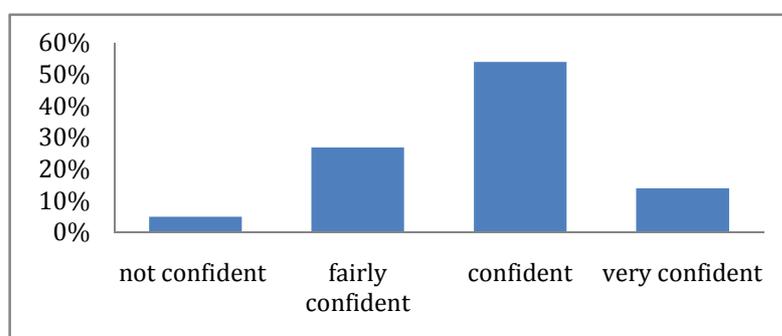


Figure 2: Confidence in written English by students

Source: Primary data

The above figure reveals that most respondents (70%) feel at least confident with their written English. This confidence can be associated with their perceptions of their communicative competence and the level of anxiety in their English language use. This implies that about 70% of the respondents feel confident about their use of written English and are therefore willing to communicate in English, which is encouraging.

However, as many as 85% of respondents reported that they needed assistance from someone more knowledgeable in English to edit their written work such as letters, reports, assignments, etc. This implies awareness on the part of respondents about the errors in their writing, which could affect their confidence.

As for the actual competence, which was captured through assessment of their written sentences in their answers to open ended questions on the questionnaire and the essays written by the 10 selected students, the findings reveal that most of those who indicated that they were confident could not actually write correct basic English. Their performance remained wanting.

Examples of some sentences with errors made by one of IHL class covered:

1. Most of Rwandan doesn't know it  
As you see, in our days most of books are written in English. and even most of information via to internet. In addition, our country is in EAC so the best usable language in this community is the English
2. Because KIST is an English –speaking medium  
English has many variabilities depending upon the origine of the English users
3. Listening news on radio or TV  
Self confidence with enagh knology
4. Because of different teachers from different country  
I'm capable to travel in others country and I'm able to speak good English with other person from out our country.
5. Because, English a media of communication which is appreciated in Rwanda  
Communicating with foreign people  
listening the news
6. It depends on whom I address to  
Most of people use English in our region
7. Because KIST we can use it  
The benefits have had by learning English are to study English for all the course then Many countries, they use English for all word
8. It is the updated language  
Only pronunciation of Americans and word connection

- Allows me to interest and communicate with people who speak English and most of countries are using English since English people are often of most developed countries
9. Because I studing in KIST  
You studing english in primary school  
Because the English is Rwanda is now like obligation  
Is not possible to speak a language Immediately and less another  
People are not interested to English
10. I'm not feeling so comfortable in English, Especially in spoken English

The above difficulties to express themselves correctly therefore indicate that their actual confidence in the use of written English is low. The perceived confidence of the majority of respondents does not translate directly into their competence in the language. This however explains why they are willing to communicate and express themselves in English despite their difficulties. Some respondents may also not be aware of their errors.

It was also reported that 40% of staff respondents had prepared and presented a paper in a conference, workshop and seminar, leading us to conclude that there was a growing degree of confidence in English for these respondents. However assistance in the preparations of the presentations may not be ruled out.

### **Difficulties faced by students**

The study also wanted to establish difficulties students encountered in writing the English language. This was achieved by examining the linguistic errors committed by Rwandans who had French as the medium of instruction, and relating them to the context in which English is used in Rwanda.

Respondents' written sentences and written essays revealed that there were difficulties in all areas of English. Many errors were observed in most of the IHLs students and administrative staff sentences. In addition to errors committed by respondents in essay writing, most of them appeared to write poorly organized essays, with little evidence of critical thinking. Serious errors were seen in grammar (articles, adjectives, tenses, pronouns etc.), syntax (coordination, and sentence structure), lexical (word choice), substance errors (punctuation, capitalization, abbreviation, spellings, contracted forms, etc.) as seen two of the essays written by third year students of Kigali Health Institute, in Biomedical Laboratory Sciences department.

### **Essay 1**

#### ***Why I chose to do Biomedical Laboratory Sciences at KHI (Kigali Health Institute)?***

*I have just chose KHI because it is a high education which is very marketable and is the one in Rda which is a health institution offering a bachelor's degree in Biomedical labo. Sciences and is one which is in the town and it has a Campus at Nyamishaba where we pass our first year and I am sure Nyamishaba is a touristic site because it is near the lake.*

Another reason of choosing laboratory in KHI, the option of laboratory is only in KHI among the Rda high institutions. So KHI trained a qualified medical laboratory students who are competent in eastern African even in the whole world (wordwide competence)

### Essay 2.

*I have chosen Biomedical Laboratory Sciences at KHI because, it is a very good department from others ( i think i consider it as the best department in KHI) car it has a bachelor degree and it is good in studying (in enjoying its lessons) and also in working (Practicals in hospital or reference or other laboratories) and it has a fashion job that does not make stress compared to others. Also job around the word is available for our department. In fact studying biomedical laboratory sciences is grateful, to enjoy its lessons (such as parasitology, microbiology, molecular biology...) that gives us knowledge not only in school line but also in community or all daily social life (either at school or at home) to us and others, It gives us knowledge on about how to prevent different (many) communicable diseases and to know their side effects on human or community in general. Also in plasticizing at hospital or in job at hospital, you are able to see how the community is affected by diseases car you are in the diagnosis of the causative agent. So it is a grateful and joyfull department in all. (money creation due to job availability around, skills, knowledge and social knowledge)*

Several reasons were given for the difficulties faced by many Rwandans who were educated in the medium of French. These include the following:

The Rwandan education system did not give the teaching/learning of English the place which it deserved in learning institutions. As one respondent from KIST observed,

*Until 2006, languages in KIST were elective and students were free to learn them or not. So, little effort was put in languages before then. And even after 2006, when languages became compulsory up to the final year, they were still not credited and thus did not appear on their academic transcripts. This made students concentrate more on their core courses and made little effort to learn and improve their English*

The poor quality of education received prior to joining IHL impacts on the performance in all academic areas including both English and French. The poor background in languages caused by limited efforts to learn English at primary and secondary level of education was also blamed by key respondents as being responsible for the poor English of many students. One respondent argued:

*Most primary and secondary schools ignored languages especially English. In fact in many schools instruction was in Kinyarwanda up to grade 9 and people who studied in Rwanda are disadvantaged in English. There was little interest in foreign languages in Rwanda at both primary and secondary level of education.*

The key informants also mentioned the change of the MOI policy as a source of difficulty to the learning and use of English. They argued that the sudden change in the MOI policy also aggravated the already inadequate use of English by students.

Another difficulty that hinders students from acquiring adequate competence as expressed by academic staff is lack of practice in the use of English language. A respond observed that,

*Rwandans are proud of their culture and therefore make little effort to practice and learn other languages by speaking Kinyarwanda even in their group discussions and hence they remain poor in other languages. The reading culture is low and this is one of the sources of poor vocabularies and there is little effort made in doing assignments*

The findings in this study can be explained by the WTC model in many ways. The model explains various variables that interact and contribute to the learning and use of English in Rwanda's institutions of higher learning. The WTC model's level VI of society and individual context explains the limited use of English outside classrooms and outside work and an increased use in official settings for administrative staff. Outside class and work, people tend to use Kinyarwanda as most Rwandans can use it. The level V of the WTC model further explains the limited increase of the use of English in Rwanda IHLs. Rwandans have positive attitude towards the learning of English, and happy for Rwanda's integration in the East Africa Community and the Commonwealth where English is widely used. The low competence in English whether perceived or real, leads to limited use of English, especially outside class and work. The WTC layer IV of motivational propensity also explains the increased learning and use of English observed in this study, which is driven by the instrumental motivation. Many Rwandans recognize the benefits and opportunities for successful learning and use of English. The respondents' frequent use of English depends on how confident and competent they felt or were in the use of English. The situated antecedent layer of this model also explains the use of English by some Rwandans in higher education. Those who felt more comfortable using English to obtain some goals used it especially in formal settings. The above factors interact to produce different levels of willingness to communicate, and the actual use of the language. The findings reveal the existence of favorable factors for the learning and use of English will lead to more successfully learning and use of English in Rwanda.

### **Conclusion**

The findings of this study have clearly indicated that Rwandans who were educated through the medium of French had been exposed to English in all education levels. Though to date, English is major medium of instruction in Rwanda, and courses of English were offered to all our respondents at secondary level of education, they are still offered at IHL level because students still have difficulties in English, as revealed in this study. However, limited efforts were made in learning English at both secondary and at IHL level. These limited efforts can partly explain the existence of difficulties in the students' use of English and low confidence as well as the low frequency of English use outside classes. More efforts still need to be made; these may include devoting more time to the English language learning, and giving it more weight as is the case with other core subjects which are credited and appear on their final transcript.

The study also indicated that English is used in both formal and informal settings. There has been a surprising significant increase in the use of English in Rwanda for a country that had been originally French speaking for many years. At work, English is used for official communication by many IHL staff and students who were educated in French. Furthermore, it is used for communication in business, travel, and even in churches. The use of English outside

work and classroom however remains limited, which implies less practice of the language and less opportunity for improvement, which is much yearned for by the majority of Rwandans and stakeholders.

As regards confidence in the use of English, the findings indicate that the majority of both staff and students felt confident, though most of them sometimes need assistance from someone more knowledgeable than them in English, to edit and correct their work before submission. The written expressions for many revealed many difficulties in English and a poor performance despite the confidence felt by the majority of students and staff. Many of their sentences contained errors and some even failed to convey meaning. However, the use of English was found to have increased significantly, given the importance, of positive attitude, and the high motivation for learning and using English. It can therefore be hoped that more progress, confidence, and better performance in English will be achieved, leading to a better future of English in Rwanda.

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