

Vol. 5, N°17, pp. 391– 399, Mars 2026
Copy©right 2024 / licensed under CC BY 4.0
Author(s) retain the copyright of this article
ISSN : 1987-1465
DOI : <https://www.doi.org/10.62197/CVLO2620>
Indexation : Copernicus, CrossRef, Mir@bel, Sudoc, ASCI,
Zenodo
Email : RevueKurukanFuga2021@gmail.com
Site : <https://revue-kurukanfuga.net>

*La Revue Africaine des
Lettres, des Sciences
Humaines et Sociales
KURUKAN FUGA*

INVESTIGATING THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH CONVERSATIONS IN KINSHASA HIGH SCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY

BUSHAMINGA KWETE GEORGES

Teaching assistant-University of Kinshasa

Faculty of art/English department

georgeskot991@gmail.com

Abstract : This study investigates the teaching of English conversation in Kinshasa high schools mainly in Mont-Ngafula municipality schools, basing on the way pedagogical methods and techniques, procedures push learners' speaking skills. The main goal of this study is to examine efficiently the way and teaching methods, techniques and procedures used in teaching English conversation and finds out difficulties which hamper the growth of learners in English conversation. This study uses mixed methods that means quantitative which goes together with questionnaire and qualitative ones with interview combining teaching setting passive observations. Teacher interviews and questionnaires give an understanding outlook of the way of teaching English conversation lesson. The outcomes reveal that even facilitators know the conversation practices are vital for the learners but their lessons do not have any considerable attention on learner interaction, deriving from their ignorant and inadequate pedagogical and conversational approaches so that learners can or cannot develop oral communication. The study recommends to make learners the main actors in classroom activities: drills, field trip, role plays, solving-problems and discussions. It also requires to teachers to update or upgrade their teaching strategies, methods. These recommendations will effectively increase students' capacity to communicate fluently in concrete problems and provide to enhancing the use of English education norms in high schools of Kinshasa.

Key words: English, Conversation, High School, Investigating, Teaching.

Résumé : Cette étude examine l'enseignement de la conversation Anglaise dans les écoles secondaires de Kinshasa, principalement celle de la commune de Mont-Ngafula, en se basant sur la manière dont les méthodes pédagogiques, les techniques et les procédures influencent le développement des compétences orales des apprenants. L'objectif principal est d'analyser efficacement les méthodes et techniques utilisées dans l'enseignement de la conversation Anglaise et de mettre en évidence les difficultés qui freinent la progression des élèves. La recherche adopte une approche mixte : quantitative, à travers des questionnaires, et qualitative, par le biais d'entretiens et d'observations passives en classe. Les entretiens avec les enseignants et les questionnaires offrent une compréhension globale de la manière dont la conversation Anglais est dispensée. Les résultats révèlent que, bien que les enseignants reconnaissent l'importance des pratiques de conversation pour les apprenants, leurs cours accordent peu d'attention à l'interaction des élèves, en raison d'approches pédagogiques et conversationnelles inadéquates. L'étude recommande de placer les apprenants au centre des activités de classe, en intégrant des exercices, des

Georges

sorties pédagogiques, des jeux de rôle, des résolutions de problèmes et des discussions. Elle exige également que les enseignants actualisent et améliorent leurs stratégies et méthodes d'enseignement. Ces recommandations devraient accroître la capacité des élèves à communiquer couramment dans des situations concrètes et contribuer à renforcer l'application des normes éducatives en Anglais dans les écoles secondaires de Kinshasa.

Mots-clés : Anglais, Conversation, Ecole secondaire, Enseignement, Enquête.

Introduction

The teaching of English conversation in secondary schools in Kinshasa, the capital city of the Democratic Republic of Congo, has increasingly become a vital component of communication within the Congolese educational system. This is particularly evident in many high schools in Mont-Ngafula municipality, where the importance of English has grown due to the country's global position and recent agreements with the United States and other English-speaking nations. In this context, the necessity of speaking English no longer requires justification, as it is widely recognized as a common language in diplomacy, business, science, culture, and technology. Despite this recognition, Congolese learners often struggle to converse in English, which reflects a gap between the acknowledged importance of the language and the practical ability to use it effectively.

This difficulty is largely attributed to the traditional focus of language learning and teaching in the Democratic Republic of Congo, which has emphasized mastery of grammatical rules and written content while giving limited attention to oral communication. As a result, learners are insufficiently prepared to engage in authentic conversation, both within local contexts and in interactions with native speakers or second-language users abroad. The present study underscores the need to investigate how English conversation lessons are taught in Kinshasa secondary schools, with the aim of identifying pedagogical practices that can better equip learners with the conversational competence required in today's globalized environment.

Regardless of the recognized essentiality of verbal competence, plenty of pupils from Kinshasa high schools are unable to take part in English conversations. The target causes are the lack of communicative or interactive methods, techniques and teachers' lack of competence. Then the questions are to think on these limitations and the impact of teaching strategies, methods and the enlarge to which they use to teach to orient learners for concrete

issues. This is the way to overcome the problem of speaking incapacity of Congolese pupils from high schools.

The main objective of this research is to investigate the teaching of English conversation in Kinshasa high schools focusing on adequate strategies, methods, difficulties, and the manner to improve them.

Aligning to the main goal, the basic question of this study is:

- ✓ How English do you teach English conversation, and what strategies and methods do you use to teach it?

Hypothesizing this research, some English teachers in Kinshasa secondary schools use adequate techniques, methods and others use inadequate techniques, methods or do not know them or they ignore them.

This study is established in applied linguistic as well as language teaching is involved especially teaching conversation which implies the speaking skills or communicative approaches analyzing whether teaching interactivity in Kinshasa secondary schools which match internationally norms to foster competence in conversation.

Apart from the introduction and the conclusion, this study is organized into three sections. The first one describes the research methodology; the way the writer has collected data. The second describes the obtained and intended results of the research. And then, the third and the last is about discussion.

1.Methodology

This section presents a detailed account of the procedures followed by the researcher in conducting the study. It focuses on the population, the sample, the instruments, the data collection process, and the research design. To investigate the teaching of English conversation in Kinshasa high schools, specifically as a case study, the researcher employed a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative techniques. The instruments used included survey questionnaires, interviews, and passive observation. As noted by Rebollar B. E. (2017:33), mixed methods are generally more effective for larger populations than single-method approaches. In this study, qualitative methods were applied to categorical data, while quantitative methods were used to analyze numerical data and statistics.

Given the time constraints of the research, it was not possible to include all secondary schools and English teachers in Kinshasa. Therefore, the researcher selected a representative sample. Fifteen English teachers were randomly chosen from twelve schools located in Mont-Ngafula township. This sampling strategy ensured diversity while maintaining feasibility, allowing the study to generate meaningful insights into the teaching of English conversation in the selected context:

1-1-Setting of Investigation

N°	SCHOOLS	TYPES	NUMBER OF TEACHERS
1	C.S. Francisco Palau	Private	2
2	C.S. Gianelli	Private	1
3	C.S. Les Etoiles Brillantes de Kimbondo	Private	1
4	C.S. Mère Agnes	Private	1
5	C.S. Métiers et techniques	Private	1
6	C.S. Notre Dame Consolata	Private	1
7	C.S. Saint Vincent Depaul	Private	1
8	C.S. Vincenzina Cusmano	Private	1
9	College Materdei	Public	2
10	College Regina Pacis	Private	1
11	College saint claret	Public	2
12	College saint Rita	Public	1

It is observed that the table presents twelve schools, of which nine are private and three are public. These schools are staffed by a total of fifteen English teachers. In addition, three schools have two teachers each of them due to financial mean and teachers from these three schools can perform well because they are well paid; two of them are public in which the State takes care of the teachers and another private and it is best setting where there are some rich parents that pay well teachers. The remained twelve schools, the parents cannot pay well teachers that is why they cannot risk to hire many teachers.

It was not based on a kind of criteria for this selection as Nunan (1992:143) points out: “in the random sampling technique a researcher selects subjects, in this context”. The schools randomly selected from the research participants, that involves in this context, the whole municipality of Mont-Ngafula. In the fifteen surveyed and interviewed teachers, each of them

received one copy of the questionnaire. Thus, the sample size of this research is made of fifteen participants.

2. Results and Discussion

This section presents the analysis of data collected from fifteen English teachers of Mont-Ngafula municipalities on investigating the teaching English conversation in Kinshasa high schools: a case study. The researcher critically examined the data in order to clarify the focus of the study and to engage in both positive and negative discussion. The information collected was systematically codified, categorized, and organized into potential themes, thereby allowing for a more coherent interpretation and analysis of the findings.

2.1. On the Institution or University where the Informants Have Completed their Studies

The analysis of participants' academic backgrounds reveals that the majority of English teachers, specifically thirteen individuals, completed their studies in institutions or universities specializing in teacher education. This group represents 86.6% of the sample. In contrast, two teachers, accounting for 13.3%, graduated from universities that do not provide training in pedagogy or teaching methodologies. Consequently, these teachers may lack awareness of instructional techniques and methods, which could affect their effectiveness in classroom practice. This distinction highlights the importance of specialized training in shaping professional competence among educators. Although most participants received formal preparation in teaching, the outcomes of their professional performance should be examined in relation to the specific training they undertook at their respective universities. The quality of instruction and the pedagogical approaches employed are likely influenced by the curriculum and emphasis placed during their academic formation. Therefore, the results of this study must be interpreted not only in terms of the proportion of trained teachers but also in connection with the nature and depth of the training programs they experienced. This perspective ensures a more accurate understanding of how institutional background contributes to teaching proficiency.

2.2. Teach English Conversation

The findings indicate that all fifteen(100%) teachers surveyed and interviewed unanimously affirmed that they teach English conversation in their classrooms. Nevertheless, the critical issue lies in the specific type of conversational practice they provide to learners. Teaching conversation requires more than simply introducing dialogue; it must be structured in accordance with pedagogical principles that foster communicative competence. Such

competence is essential for learners in Kinshasa and beyond, enabling them to interact effectively with native speakers as well as with individuals who use English as a second language. Therefore, the effectiveness of conversation teaching depends not only on its inclusion in the curriculum but also on the methodological rigor applied to ensure that learners acquire authentic and functional conversational skills.

2.3. Frequency to Teach English Conversation

The analysis of the frequency of teaching English conversation in secondary schools within Mont-Ngafula municipality indicates notable variations among the participants. Five teachers reported that they always teach conversation, which represents 100% at the level of normal teaching frequency but corresponds to 33.3% in the research data. Seven teachers stated that they sometimes teach conversation, equating to 50% of normal frequency and 46.6% in the study. Two teachers indicated that they occasionally teach conversation, corresponding to 30% of normal frequency and 13.3% in the research findings. Finally, one teacher reported teaching conversation often, which represents 70% of normal frequency and 6.6% in the study results. These findings demonstrate that while all teachers engage in teaching conversation to some extent, the intensity and regularity of their practice differ considerably. The majority of teachers fall into the category of “sometimes,” suggesting that conversation is not consistently integrated into their teaching routines. The smaller proportions of teachers who teach conversation always, occasionally, or often highlight the uneven distribution of instructional emphasis on this skill. This variability underscores the need to examine how institutional policies, teacher training, and classroom practices influence the frequency with which English conversation is taught in secondary schools.

2.4. Procedures Used In Teaching Conversation

After observing different informants while teaching English conversation I saw that some teachers gave me answers which does not match with their teaching and are in deep confusion. Fourteen (93%) interviewed and questioned participants confuse techniques and procedures to teach conversation lesson and one teacher respects all procedures that gives 6,6%.

2.5. Strategies to Teach English Conversation

Answering to question related to strategies used to teach conversation, five (33,3%) guides use strategies that they do not know their nouns, one case (6,6%) does have preference or fixed strategies, for him his objective is not to know strategies but to see his learners to speak in the

target language. Another informant (6,6%) has revealed plenty of strategies that he uses to teach this lesson as role play, pair, drilling, dialogue practice, question-answer, games, picture. Among the surveyed teachers, the use of techniques for teaching English conversation varied considerably. One participant employed role-play, songs, and games, representing 6.6% of the sample. Two teachers relied on group work, accounting for 13.3%. Several teachers reported using only one specific technique: one used songs (6.6%), another also used songs (6.6%), one applied scenarios (6.6%), another focused on dialogue practice (6.6%), one relied on jokes (6.6%), another used pair work (6.6%), one applied role-play (6.6%), and the final participant employed gestures (6.6%). These findings reveal a wide range of strategies, though only a small proportion of teachers, suggesting that instructional practices in teaching conversation remain highly individualized and fragmented rather than standardized across the group, adopted each technique.

2.6. Methods to Teach English Conversation

All of the surveyed and interviewed English teachers reported employing various methods to teach conversation, though their approaches differ significantly. Four teachers acknowledged using certain methods without clearly identifying them, representing 26.6% of the sample. One teacher reported employing a wide range of techniques, including direct, aural-oral (audio-lingual), Silent Way, community language learning, total physical response, communicative language teaching, task-based language teaching, memorization, audio-visual, and drill methods, accounting for 6.6%. Another teacher indicated that he does not rely on a fixed method but instead encourages learners to communicate in English by any means, also representing 6.6%. One facilitator applied an oral method (6.6%), while three teachers (20%) explicitly used communicative language teaching. Finally, four teachers (26.6%) reported applying interactive methods in their conversation lessons. These findings highlight both the diversity and inconsistency of methodological practices among teachers, reflecting varied understandings of pedagogical approaches to teaching English conversation.

2.7. Different Steps To Follow In Teaching English Conversation

Regarding and considering the steps followed to teach English conversation, we see that one informant confuses the steps to follow in teaching English conversation that provides 6,6%, eight participants follow correctly the steps of conversation lesson that gives 53,3% and six

among informants do not respect or know the steps to follow in teaching English conversation that provides 40%.

This research step is very important because it explains the findings, guides actions and support conclusions of the study. As the result of this research:

All English teachers from Mont-Ngafula municipality teach English conversation but this teaching cannot allow immense learners to communicate in English because statistically little number of English teachers use adequate techniques, methods, steps applied in teaching English conversation. Bushaminga K. G and Kasonga K. M (2025) the success of any teaching and in any levels depends on the best use of strategies, methods and steps.

Conclusion

This study has investigated fifteen English teachers in Mont-Ngafula Township in teaching English conversation and has used mixed method in order to solve the problem of conversation lesson failure. After analysis of collected data related to the research, some facilitators do not use correctly the strategies, methods and do not follow seriously the steps in teaching conversation. Therefore, their learners may or not speak in the target language. Some of guides have confusion about the strategies, methods, steps in teaching conversation or they do not know them and they should update their way of teaching. At last another few number of teachers use relevant strategies, methods, steps in teaching conversation then their can communicate in the target language.

References

Bushaminga K, G. and Kasonga K, M. (2025). "Strategies used to teach English conversation in high schools: Case of Mont-Ngafula/ Democratic Republic of Congo." *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*, 10 (9): 25sep924, pp. 1497-1501.

Erikson Saragih et al. (2019). *English Teachers' Strategies in Teaching Conversation Materials at High School Level in Medan*, University of Prima Indonesia.

Isola Rajagopalan. (2019). "Concept of Teaching." *Shanlax International Journal of Education*, vol. 7, no. 2, pp. 5-8.

Kampinga M. F. (2017). *Didactique générale*, Edition Agon, Lubumbashi.

Kasamba M. (2017). *Strategies of teaching English conversation lesson in some schools of Kimbanseke*, University of Kinshasa, Unpublished.

Milton Wright. (1936). *The Art of Conversation and how to apply its techniques*, Whittlesey House, New York.

Nunan, D. (1992). *Research Methods in Language Learning*, Cambridge University, New York.

Oksana Ye. Milova. (2015). *Teaching Conversation in English Language Classroom: Conversational Techniques*, Boris Grinchenko Kyiv University, Kyiv.

Rebollar B. E. (2017). *Research methods in Applied Linguistics: Key issues in research methodology*, University of Cadiz, Cadiz

