



## **Pedagogical Strategies in Teaching and Learning through English as Medium of Instruction at Lower Primary Level in Rwanda**

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**Abstract:** This study investigated about pedagogical strategies in teaching and learning through English as medium of instruction at lower primary level in Musanze District, Rwanda, through the phenomenological design. Out of 117 schools, the study sampled six schools, based on their location and status. Out of the population of 3738 subjects, the respondents were 12 teachers and 317 learners. Instruments for data collection included non-participant classroom observations, semi-structured interviews with teachers and focus group discussions with learners. Data analysis took place thematically by grouping information into categories and sub-categories based on the types of information they held. The study concluded that after the re-introduction of English as Medium of Instructions, teachers and learners opted specific strategies to enhance the teaching-learning interaction. While teachers code switched from Kinyarwanda and English and vice versa, poor translation or interpretation led to misconception and misunderstanding of intended meaning. On the other hand, the learners' strategies included memorization, constant repetition, learning through songs and games, group work discussions and debates. Based on the conclusions, the study recommends that teachers should strive to improve their level of proficiency in English as Medium of Instruction by attending English training sessions organized by the Rwanda Basic Education Board (REB). Learners need to minimize the use of memorization, which does not provide room for critical thinking. Finally, REB has to prepare strategic manuals with recommended teaching and learning strategies for effective interaction during the teaching-learning process.

**Keywords:** Teachers-Learners' strategies; classroom interactions; endoglossic country.

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## Introduction

Classroom interactional strategies involve a combination of various methods used for delivering and apprehending information among teachers and learners, or among peers (Saputra & Aziz, 2014). The tool for passing information is the language, which may be verbal and/or non-verbal (Febriantini, et al., 2021). Non-verbal language communication is a very helpful means that positively influence learners' understanding and comprehension of learnt content (Ghorzang, et al., 2021). Wahyuni (2018) characterized a good teacher as someone capable to play role model in speaking and writing and thus understand learners' verbal communication for helping them to improve their verbal communications skills.

Depending on the situation, the application of both verbal and non-verbal communication languages can improve the quality and effectiveness in learning within the classroom. Furthermore, high achievement of learning objectives does not only depend on good communication skills of teachers and learners. Teacher-learners' communication skills have to be coupled with well and careful planned techniques to be used, known as teaching and learning strategies (Hasanova, et al., 2021).

The building of a smooth interconnectivity between teachers and learners in the classroom requires the adoption of some strategies (Amadi & Paul, 2017). According to Kistner et al. (2015), the adoption of suitable strategies leads to self-regulated learning. However, this approach demands teachers and learners to consider their background and recognize their weaknesses and strength, referring to their working conditions. Therefore, several factors, in and outside the classroom, observables or non-observables either for teachers or for learners, influence pedagogical strategies adopted to favor teacher-learners' classroom interactions (Noviyenty, 2018). For this reason, the use of multimodal strategies may be necessary to improve teachers' expertise in teaching and more specifically to enhance dynamic classroom interactions.

Teaching strategies play a vital role in the achievement of learning intentions (Sibomana, et al., 2021). For this reason, Niyibizi, et al. (2021) recommended teachers to be effective pedagogues. Teachers must seek strategies that help and motivate learners to achieve their learning intentions (Barasa, 2021). Moreover, learners on their side, have to be self-motivated and engaged by

using different learning strategies that enable them to reach an efficient, improved and fruitful learning outcome (Wegner et al., 2013).

In Rwanda, the required strategies of good communication skills to enhance fruitful teacher-learners' classroom interactions through English Medium of Instruction (Moi) are not met (Sibomana, 2021). The causes or barriers highlighted to hamper good teachers-learners' classroom interactions are mainly related to the unfamiliarity with the Moi, which is English, for both teachers and learners and insufficient teaching-learning aids (Liyanage & Walker, 2019). These challenges lead to inadequate teacher-learners' classroom interactions. In fact, the Moi is considered as a tool that connects teachers and learners during classroom interactions, and a passport leading to learning performance. Then, the low proficiency in Moi considered as a vehicle that hinders effective learning outcomes (Hanum, 2017). Whatever the case, some strategies have been adopted by Rwandan teachers and learners to be able to interact. Researchers can study the adopted teacher-learners' interactional strategies within classrooms in terms of forms, approaches used, role played by teachers and/or learners during classroom interactions.

Scholars mentioned specific strategies adopted to mitigate challenges related to barriers in Moi following the shift from Kinyarwanda to English Moi. In fact, the transition from Kinyarwanda to English Moi was challenging for teachers and learners due to their limited competencies in using English (Sibomana, 2022). Ndabaga, et al. (2023) highlighted code-switching and translation as well as constant repetitions strategies to be adopted by teachers and learners for maximized interaction. Additionally, Sibomana et al. (2021) highlighted learner-centered approaches whereby teachers employ various strategies in helping learners to reach good academic achievements. On the other side, Nzabalirwa et al. (2016) identified concentration as a learning strategy adopted by learners during National Examinations' preparation periods. Moreover, teacher-learners classroom interactions are complex and required various teaching and learning strategies to enhance effective learning outcomes. Therefore, referred to the gaps detected in the existing literature, the motive to carry out this study was the need to explore strategies employed by teachers and learners when interacting after the shift from

Kinyarwanda to English as MoL. The intention was to investigate strategies employed when teachers' low proficiency in MoL combines with learners growing in endoglossic ideologies at early and critical stages of learning.

## **Literature Review**

Apart from the learner- peers' interaction and learner- learning materials interaction, the interaction between teachers and learners are very important in formal education (Sun & Wu, 2016); Achor et al. (2019) testified that the manner interactions between teacher and learners are organised and conducted plays the key role toward a successful end.

In Rwanda, various teacher and learner strategies have been adopted to comply with the policy of re-adoption of English as the sole MoL at lower primary levels, starting from the 2020/2021 school year (Williams, 2020). Hence, as Rwandan teachers and learners are primarily Kinyarwanda speakers (Hamlaoui et al., 2021), specific strategies were found essential to facilitates smooth classroom interactions through English. The key pedagogical strategies adopted can categorized into teachers' strategies and learners strategies.

## **Strategies for Teachers**

Teachers use a number of strategies, including audiovisual aids, code switching, language paring, transitions, and storytelling.

### ***Audio-visual aids***

Teachers use drawings, photographs and other visual illustrations to concretize learned content and mitigate the language barriers (Ingabire et al., 2024). This approach make abstract concepts more tangible and accessible to learners.

### ***Code switching***

Alternating between Kinyarwanda and English ensures comprehension and eases communication. In addition, translating or signifying content make it more understandable (Ndabaga et al., 2023). These methods help to bridge the gap between the familiarity and the unfamiliarity within the MoL. Furthermore, they support learners' understanding.

### ***Storytelling***

Utilizing the storytelling technique makes learning more relatable and interesting. This motivate learners to engage actively and enhance their understanding of learners' content (Ntabajyana et al., 2021).

## **Strategies for Learners**

Learners use various strategies in learning. These include rote learning, memorization and repetition, note taking, handouts, group work, role-playing and debates. They also use regular activities and extracurricular activities.

### ***Rote Learning, Memorization and Repetitions***

Learners often rely on memorization, constantly repeating the learned content. The use of these techniques reinforce language patterns and vocabulary because, as Fazal et al. (2023) argued, constant repetitions enhance memorization of facts.

### ***Note Taking and Handouts***

Copy notes and handouts are one of key techniques employed from primary to tertiary levels of learning to reinforce effective comprehension and future learning outside the classroom. Özçakmak (2019) qualified these techniques as an external memory that helps learners to consolidate their knowledge independently.

### ***Group work, Role-play and Debates***

The role playing, group work and debates are strategies that motivate and engage learners to participate actively, articulate their thoughts, apply the language skills and develop critical thinking (Stevens, 2015).

### ***Regular Exercises and Extra-curricular Learning***

Regular practices help learners to solidify their understanding. According to Ingabire et al. (2024), completing class and homework exercises reinforce learning. Furthermore, homework enhance extra-curricular learning, strengthen and improve level of understanding and learning outcomes (Pyari, 2019).

## **Theoretical Review**

Jean Piaget's Constructivist Learning Theory (Fosnot, 2013) and George Herbert Mead's Symbolic Interactionism Theory (Carter & Fuller, 2016) guided this study. These theories provide a fundamental framework to understand the dynamic teacher-learners' classroom interactions. The Constructivism Theory emphasizes the active role of learners in the construction of their knowledge through experiences (Bada & Olusegun, 2015). In addition, Symbolic Interactionism Theory focuses on social interactions that shape individuals' perceptions and behaviors.

In the context of Rwandan education, the combination of these two theories provide a comprehensive understanding of multifaceted

teaching and learning strategies. In fact, within the constructivist classroom, learners become no longer passive recipients of information and knowledge provided by teachers, but active participants. Through various strategies employed, they engage in various practices fostering effective acquisition of knowledge and skills (Darsih, 2018). On the other hand, the Symbolic Interactionism Theory underscores the importance of social actions in the classroom that contribute to the acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences (Husin, et al., 2021). Within this study, this theory applied when analysing how strategies employed in classroom interactions serve as social processes that help learners to be integrated in the classroom groups. However, these theories put more importance to learners only while the effective classroom interactions requires a holistic approach that embrace suitable teaching and learning strategies.

## Methodology

### Design

This study was a qualitative research that adopted an interpretivism research paradigm and a phenomenological research design. The researchers adopted the design to describe, explain and interpret strategies employed when teachers and learners interact through English.

### Population and Sampling

The study took place in Musanze District, Northern Province of Rwanda, which has 117 schools. The sampled school were six, chosen purposively, based on their location and status. Two groups of schools (rural and urban) and public, government aided and private supported the sampling construction. As it appears in table 1.

**Table 1: Table of sample schools based on their location and status**

School location	School status			Total Number of schools
	Public	Government -Aided	Private	
Rural	1	1	1	3
Urban	1	1	1	3
<b>Total number of schools</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>

**Table 2: Demographics for 48 Learner Participants in the FGDs**

Variables	Categories	Frequencies	Percentages
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Male</b>	24	50%
	<b>Female</b>	24	50%
<b>Ages</b>	<b>1 to 10</b>	37	77.08%
	<b>11 to 20</b>	11	22.91%

The study population was 3,738 persons, comprising 3,682 learners and 56 teachers. The research respondents were 329 individuals, including twelve (12) SET teachers and 317 learners in lower Primary. Only information from twelve SET teachers was used in this study because no new information was gained after them (Saturation). From 317 learners, forty-eight (48) learners in P3 A class of each sample school, in the proportion of eight learners per school, four girls and four boys have drowned randomly for focus group discussions. The demographic features of participants appear in Table 2 and 3.

Table two shows the demographic features of learners who participated in the study. It indicate that learners who took part in this study were 50% male and 50% female. Majority (77.08%) of respondents were aged ten years or younger.

demographic insights highlight that the study primarily focused on younger learners, emphasizing their early educational experiences on classroom interactions.

Table 3 presents the demographic features of teachers who participated in the semi-structured interviews.

The information provided in Table 3 highlights important demographic and professional characteristics of interviewed teachers: Firstly the table indicates that majority (83.33%) of interviewed teachers were female. This observation aligns with broader trends identified by Carroll and Alexander's (2020), indication that in Rwanda and many other countries, primary and pre-primary teaching profession are predominantly occupied by females. Secondly, data show that vast majority of

informant teachers (91.6%) were qualified in education. This qualification is crucial as it signifies that the teachers possessed formal training, prepared for the field of Education. In addition, the

table reveals that a considerable proportion (41.6%) of interviewed teachers had the extensive teaching experience ranging between 21 to 30 years.

**Table 3: Demographic Features of 12 Informant Teachers in the Interview**

Variables	Categories	Frequencies	Percentages
Gender	Male	2	16.66 %
	Female	10	83.33 %
Ages	20-29	3	25 %
	30-39	2	16.66 %
	40-49	5	41.66 %
	50-59	2	16.66 %
Working Experience	0-10	3	25 %
	11 to 20	2	16.66 %
	21-30	5	41.66 %
	31-40	1	8.33 %
Qualification	41-50	1	8.33 %
	NP/TTC/A <sub>0</sub> in education	11	91.66 %
	Other Options	1	8.33 %

NP= 'Normal Primaire, TTC= Teacher Training Center, A<sub>0</sub>= Bachelor's degree.

This breadth of experience is valuable as it indicates that the teachers bring a wealth of practical knowledge and pedagogical expertise to their roles, potentially influencing the methodology employed during teacher-learners' classroom interactions.

### Instruments

Techniques for gathering data were non-participant classroom observations, semi-structured interview (with SET teachers) and focus group discussions (with learners in P3). The researchers watched SET lessons in P1, P2 and P3. They then conducted semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions in Kinyarwanda to get data that are more detailed. The researchers watched SET lessons for 40 minutes and they conducted the focus group discussions with learners about strategies employed when learning through English. Thereafter, the interview followed with teachers.

### Trustworthiness of Data

To ensure truthfulness and dependability of data, sessions of the classroom observation, semi-structured interview and focus group discussions were carried out twice: during the first and second terms of academic year 2023-2024, specifically in December 2023 and early January 2024. The second sessions completed and confirmed data acquired from the first sessions.

### Data Analysis

Data analysis took place thematically by grouping collected information into categories and sub-categories based on the types of information they held. The information was translated from Kinyarwanda to English and classified based on school location, school status and class levels. Then, data were coded and integrated.

### Ethical Consideration

Participation in this study was voluntary and inclusive. The researcher ensured confidentiality. Research participants signed the consent forms. For the focus group discussion with learners, the parents of selected learners signed the consent forms.

### Findings and Discussion

Pedagogical strategies in teaching and learning through English in lower levels of primary schools differed according to school status.

**Research Question 1:** What pedagogical strategies do teachers in lower primary employ when interacting with learners through English?

Findings reveal that teachers used various strategies like code switching, semi-abstraction, teaching through games and songs as pedagogical strategies. The strategies were common in all visited classes even though utilized differently, depending on

school status or class grades. It was also detected that within teacher-learners' classroom interactions, some strategies like language pairing and language translation, storytelling were combined to enhance learners' understanding of subject content.

The 12 interviewed teachers evoked some conditions that pushed them to combine various strategies within the lesson. The most highlighted conditions were learners' background, the nature of the lesson; step reached within the lesson, class grades, class size, teaching conditions (types and available teaching aids), day time and weather conditions.

One of interviewed SET teachers in P1 and P2 rural government aided school reported:

It is not easy to tell which strategies that I use when interacting with my learners during SET lesson because the use of one or another strategy may depend on various factors. For example, the strategy to employ for P1 pupils must be different from that you can use for learners in P3. The daytime or weather conditions can also influence the type of strategy to use, because the learners' 'mood in the morning may differ from that in the afternoon when there is harsh sunlight....

The key element is to analyse the nature of the lesson to teach, learners' background, environmental conditions, including available teaching aids, and then decide the teaching strategy to employ. However, we can use various strategies simultaneously or interchangeably in one lesson depending on lesson steps. Therefore, you may use phenomena observations and group discussions, repetitions and memorisation of key words.

Some of those conditions mentioned by this teacher closely related to Abulhul's (2021) assertion that what is effective in teaching for one lesson might not be effective in another lesson, and what is effective for one student might not be effective for another. Therefore, helped by Hamre et al. (2013) comments on teaching through interactions, some of enumerated teaching strategies in lower primary appeared into two main categories: Knowledge transfer strategies that combine elaboration, motivational and evolutional strategies as well as organisational and attitudinal strategies to enhance discipline within the classroom. Categories, sub-categories and some examples of teaching strategies provided by interviewed teachers appear in table 4:

**Table 4: Teaching Strategies**

Main categories of strategies	Sub-categories	Examples of teachers' strategies
Knowledge transfer strategies	Elaboration strategies	-From simple to complex words, facts or phenomena
		-Concretization by using example of real life
		-Semi-abstraction by using audio-visual illustrations and drawings
		-Sign language and code- switching
Organisational And attitudinal strategies	Motivational strategies	-Organize learners group works
		-Request learners to copy notes
		-Teaching through games
		-Use gestures (eye contact, changing voice tenure etc.)
Organisational And attitudinal strategies	Monitoring and evaluation strategies	-Teach through songs
		-Provision of various class exercises and home works
		-Conducting morning and evening catchup sessions
		-Avoid common speech and responses, unless it is allowed
Organisational And attitudinal strategies	attitudinal strategies	-Avoid unauthorized movement within and outside the classroom

Table 4 reported some strategies employed by teachers in lower primary. Strategies like code switching, repetitions, content concretization, semi-abstraction, starting from simple to complex

phenomena, group discussions among others, helped teachers to transfer knowledge to learners. On the other hand, the avoidance of common speech and unauthorized movements within the classroom served in maintaining harmony within the classroom.

Based on the observation made and explanations provided through interview, the code switching strategy by translating from English to Kinyarwanda was the most used strategy in public and government aided schools.

The reason behind was revealed by one interviewed teacher in a public school. She said, "We adopted code switching strategies because of limitations vis-a-vis the use of English language." She further asserted that when they tried to teach in English only, specifically in P1 classes, learners did not get any information. When they are required to react on the asked questions, they reply by moving their heads to mean that they accept or refuse, since they cannot speak through English. Thus, they opted code switching or language pairing strategy by translating lesson content from English to Kinyarwanda to enhance learners' comprehension.

Four interviewed teachers in private schools revealed that the strategy of code switching from English to Kinyarwanda language was not necessary because learners were able to communicate in English. Then, the mentioned most used strategies were concretization, semi-abstraction, organization of group work, discussions or debates as well as lesson summary. They asserted that the copied lesson summary served learners in personal review

because of insufficient teaching and learning materials, specifically books.

During classroom observation, learners raised their hands before answering, asking questions, requesting for clarification or sharing ideas. In addition, no learners could stand up or go out during class without permission from the teacher. Ten among 12 teachers notified that those attitudinal strategies were adopted for maintaining order within the classroom but also for inculcating in learners at early ages, some values that are needed and helpful within the classroom environment as well as in the whole society. One among them said, "Better to strengthen good behavior of a child at early ages. In other words, learners have to acquire disciplinary values earlier, to help and prepare them to live in harmony with themselves, with the society and with their environment."

**Research Question 2:** What strategies do learners in lower primary levels use while interacting with their teachers through English?

Learners' strategies during the classroom interactions with teachers related to knowledge acquisition. The enumerated strategies by learners during focus group discussions included cramming and memorising concepts, constant repetitions, learning through songs, learning through games, working into small groups, copying lesson summary, trying out various exercise for better retention, being attentive and listening to teachers' instructions and environmental explorations organised by teachers.

**Table 4: Ranking of Learners' Strategies in Urban Government Aided Schools**

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	R
A		A	A	A	A	A	A	A	7
B	A		B	B	B	B	B	B	6
C	A	B		C	C	C	C	C	5
D	A	B	C		D	D	D	D	4
E	A	B	E	D		F	E	E	3
F	A	B	C	D	F		F	F	3
G	A	B	G	D	G	F		G	3
H	A	B	H	D	E	F	H		1
R	7	6	2	4	1	3	0	0	
TR	14	12	7	8	4	6	3	1	
RK	1	2	4	3	6	5	7	8	

Results from focus group discussions with learners revealed that the preferences in use of one or another strategy defer depending on school status. Tables 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 highlight ranks of

preferred strategies in different schools based on their status. In the tables, A represents memorisation, B represents constant repetition, C stands for learn through songs, D stands for learn

through games, E represents group works, F stands for copy and read notes, G represents try out various exercises. H stands for attentiveness in the classroom, R represents results, TR stands for Total Results and RK represent Rank.

The pairwise comparison matrix of strategies employed by learners in urban government schools appears in table 5. The table indicates that among

the more preferable strategies, memorisation is at the first level and constant repetition at second level. The least employed strategies are keeping attention in the classroom and trying out various exercises. The choice of combining memorization and constant repetitions bears Fazal, et al.'s (2023) note that spaced repetition enhance efficient memorisation.

**Table 5: Learners' Strategies Ranking in Rural Government Aided Schools**

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	R
A		B	A	D	A	A	A	H	4
B	B		B	B	B	B	B	H	6
C	A	C		C	D	C	C	C	5
D	A	B	C		D	D	D	D	4
E	A	B	E	D		F	E	E	3
F	A	B	C	D	F		F	F	3
G	A	B	G	D	E	F		G	2
H	A	H	H	D	E	F	H		3
R	6	5	2	5	2	3	0	2	
TR	10	11	7	9	5	6	2	5	
RK	2	1	4	3	6	5	8	7	

**Table 6: Ranking of Strategies Employed by Learners in Urban Public Schools**

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	R
A		B	A	D	A	A	A	A	5
B	B		B	B	B	B	B	B	7
C	A	C		C	D	C	C	C	5
D	A	B	C		E	D	D	D	3
E	A	B	E	D		F	G	E	2
F	A	B	F	D	F		F	F	4
G	A	B	G	D	G	F		G	3
H	A	B	H	D	E	F	G		1
R	6	6	1	5	2	3	2	0	
TR	11	13	6	8	4	7	5	1	
RK	2	1	5	3	7	4	6	8	

Information in table 6 indicates that the most employed strategies were constant repetitions and memorisation. The rarely utilised were trying out various exercises and hold attention in the classroom. Preferred strategies by learners in rural government aided schools do not much differ from that in urban. Then, this information relates to Porter's (2016) argument that the memorized vocabularies, formula, phenomena and concepts need to be refreshed through repetitions and trying out various exercises and practices to improve their proficiency in English and learning performance.

Learners' strategies in urban public schools appear in table 7. Finding in the table specifies that learners in urban public schools mostly employ constant repetitions and memorisation. The seldom-

employed strategies were being attentive in the classroom and working in groups. The distraction observed and indicated by the lack of attention on lessons mentioned by learners was taken as one of signs that block the perception of desired information. This was highlighted by interviewed teacher as one among factors influencing low performance in public and government aided schools. This notification underpins Billinger's (2012) argument that learners' attention and participation in the classroom is crucial to enhance effective teaching and learning.

Learners' strategies in rural public schools appear in table 8. Finding in the table specifies that learners in rural public schools mostly employ constant repetitions and memorisation while trying out various exercise, copying notes and being attentive



in the classroom were infrequently used. The common observation for rural and urban public and government-aided schools was that constant repetition and memorization are the most preferred learners' strategies. In addition, learners did not hold attention on lesson content and disliked trying out many exercises. All these information relate to that provided by interviewed teachers, who revealed that low proficiency in English language (Mol) prevents learners to understand and capture all desired information. Consequently, some learners loose interest in learning and distract while

others opt for rote memorisation. Moreover, as Badr and Abu-Ayyash (2019) asserted, rote memorisation may help in remembering of details for a brief period, specifically for passing an examination, but may undermine cognitive capacity of understanding and operating deep analysis or solving puzzle problems. Therefore, learners are advised to employ strategies like trying various exercises, group working and discussions that lead to deep understanding rather that rote memorizing of uncomprehensive subject content.

**Table 7: Ranking of strategies employed by learners in rural public schools**

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	R
A		A	C	D	A	A	A	A	5
B	B		C	B	B	B	B	B	6
C	C	C		C	D	C	C	C	6
D	A	B	C		D	D	D	D	4
E	A	B	E	D		F	E	E	3
F	A	B	C	D	E		F	H	1
G	A	B	G	D	E	F		G	2
H	A	B	H	D	H	F	H		3
R	5	5	4	5	2	3	0	1	
TR	10	11	10	9	5	4	2	4	
RK	2	1	2	4	5	6	8	6	

**Table 8: Table of learners' strategies in urban private schools**

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	R
A		A	C	D	E	A	G	A	3
B	B		C	D	E	B	G	B	3
C	C	C		D	E	F	G	C	3
D	A	B	C		D	D	G	D	4
E	E	E	E	E		F	G	E	5
F	F	F	F	D	E		G	H	3
G	G	G	G	G	E	F		G	5
H	H	B	H	D	E	F	G		2
R	1	2	3	5	6	4	6	1	
TR	4	5	6	9	11	7	11	3	
RK	7	6	5	3	1	4	1	8	

**Table 9: Strategies Utilized by Learners in Rural Private Schools**

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	R
A		A	C	A	E	A	G	A	4
B	B		C	D	E	B	G	B	3
C	C	C		D	E	F	G	C	3
D	A	B	C		E	D	D	D	3
E	E	E	E	E		E	G	E	6
F	F	F	C	D	E		G	H	2
G	A	B	G	G	Q	G		G	5
H	A	B	H	D	E	F	G		1
R	3	3	4	4	6	2	6	1	
TR	7	6	7	7	12	4	11	2	
RK	3	6	3	3	1	7	2	8	

Learners' strategies in urban private schools appear in table 9. The table shows that the most opted strategies are working in-group and try out various exercise. The hardly opted strategy are being

attentive in the classroom and memorization. These strategies help learners to retain sustainably learned subjects. This decision strongly relate to Zabriskie and Heath's (2019) idea that underlined the

importance of exercises on the recall's ability for individual's long-term memory. It helps in fully understanding, sustain skills and enhance good performance.

The Table 10 holds information on strategies utilised by learners in rural private schools. Data in the table reveals that students mostly employed working in groups and try out various exercises strategies. Results further indicate that being attentive in the classroom and rarely copying notes hold last places. The lack of attention detected in all categories of schools was found as a big issue that can hamper learning performance. One among interviewed teacher mentioned that this distraction could be caused by different factors including the high pupil/teacher ratio, averaged at 62/1 and other factors related to teachers' teaching strategies as well as psychological factors from learners.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concludes that after the re-introduction of English as Medium of Instructions in lower primary grades, teachers and learners opted some specific strategies to enhance the teaching-learning interaction. While teachers code switched from Kinyarwanda and English and vice versa, poor translation or interpretation led to misconception and misunderstanding of intended meaning. On the other hand, the learners' strategies included memorization, constant repetition, learning through songs and games, group work discussions and debates.

Based on the conclusions, the study recommends that teachers should strive to improve their level of proficiency in English as Medium of Instruction by attending English training sessions organized by the Rwanda Basic Education Board (REB). Furthermore, teachers need to select teaching strategies that help learners to improve their learning performance. The study further recommend that learners need to minimize the use of such strategies like memorization, which do not provide room for critical thinking. REB has to prepare strategic manuals with recommended teaching and learning strategies that can help teachers and learners to effectively interact through English and enhance learning performance.

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