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COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Investigating the Correlation between English Language Proficiency and Academic Performance for Engineering students at Rwanda Polytechnic.

The case of IPRC-Kigali

by

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Dissertation Submitted to the College of Education in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Masters of English Education

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STUDENT DECLARATION

I thus affirm that I have conducted this research alone and welcome contributions from other writers, quotations, and citations. The research was not published in Rwanda in any capacity. This study's copyright was submitted to the College of Education at the University of Rwanda.

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ABSTRACT

The government of Rwanda adopted the English Language on top of French and Kinyarwanda as the official language to integrate the country into the East African Community, the English-speaking countries community, and trade in 2009. English became the Language of instruction in the education system, from primary school to higher learning institutions. MINEDUC took different initiatives to upgrade the student's and teachers' proficiency in English; however, the gaps were still noticeable. A lack of English proficiency impacted academic performance, especially among engineering students. Therefore, this study investigated the relationship between English proficiency and academic achievement at RP, specifically at IPRC-Kigali, to determine the significance of the correlation. The study consists of a dependent variable (academic performance/achievement), an independent variable (English proficiency), and an intervening variable (Cummins' theory of self-efficacy) to clarify the correlation between English proficiency and academic success.

The research used systematic and random sampling techniques to select students from Civil Engineering, Electrical Engineering, and Mechanical Engineering and Information and Communication Technology. Data collected from mark sheets and questionnaires revealed that English proficiency significantly impacts academic performance ($b = 0.572$, $p > 0.0001$), which proves a strong correlation between English proficiency and academic performance. At 32.8% of academic performance or achievement, self-efficacy (culture of reading, participation in English clubs, self-coaching) of the students can intervene to improve English proficiency, which ultimately leads to academic performance. Consequently, we recommended that RP revise the curriculum based on needs analysis (present situation and target analysis) to ensure that students can improve their English proficiency in their studies, reinforce the use of English in the academic environment, and, more importantly, develop policies to accommodate English as an official language, educational Language, and general Language. Periodically, RP (Rwanda Polytechnic) should develop instructors' English language teaching and learning capacity and create a conducive learning environment that permits self-teaching and peer learning. Additionally, ICT is essential in the classroom to encourage students to improve their English proficiency.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATION

- **TVET:** Technical Vocational and Educational Training
- **RP:** Rwanda Polytechnic
- **IPRC-KIGALI:** Integrated Polytechnic Regional College/Kigali
- **EFL:** English as Foreign Language
- **ESL:** English as Second Language
- **BICS:** Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills
- **CALP:** Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency
- **ICT:** Information and Communication Technology
- **C.E:** Civil Engineering
- **E.E.E:** Electrical and Electronics Engineering
- **M.E:** Mechanical Engineering

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CHAPTER I. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The number of native English speakers is increasing all over the world. English has been the dominant language in many places to the extent that even non-English speaking countries consider English the most important means of communication. Even though one-third of the world's population speaks English today, Crystal (2006) reports that people who speak English as a first language count for only 9% of the world's population. Several native speakers have made it a global language of communication, along with other fields (science, technology, medicine, and business). According to Geraltin and Ramganesh (2013), English has become a global communication medium and a language used in various academic fields. Consequently, many African nations have adopted English as an official second language.

In this regard, the Rwandan government also authorized all public and private institutions to use the English language for integration into East Africa as a member of the EAC (East African Community) and in international affairs to encourage and promote the use of English among Rwandans. In this respect, the cabinet adopted English as a medium of instruction at the education system's upper primary, secondary, and university levels. The cabinet instructed the Minister of Education to implement a policy mandating English as the medium of instruction in primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions affiliated with the goal and those it subsidizes (GoR, 2008). Therefore, the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) implemented the government's decision following the resolution. As a result, elementary, secondary, and higher education institutions quickly adopted English as the language of instruction and emphasized teaching and learning English to ensure that students had acquired it.

Due to dissatisfaction with all policy options, Rwanda's language policy and planning field has undergone frequent and unanticipated revisions over the past two decades. While revising the language policy and planning, numerous policy changes have discouraged beneficiaries, students, and teachers and impacted the teaching and learning of English (Niyibizi et al., 2015). Teachers anticipate assisting students in successful English-taught courses and ensuring that graduates can communicate effectively in their future employment. They envisioned integrating it with contemporary methods for teaching and studying the English language and assisting students in mastering it. In addition to general education, the Rwandan government implemented TVET (Technical Vocational Education Training) to train and renovate the

workforce for national development. People believed that TVET had strengthened the nation's economy and mobilized the labour force, enabling the government to achieve the NST1 goal 'To prepare its technical workforce for national development, Rwanda has utilized TVET as one of its most influential human resource development strategies' (TVET Policy, 2018).

TVET covers various vocational education, training, and skills development. TVET includes education, training, and skills development in various specialties, Miller & Diop, 2020). TVET includes technical and entrepreneurship courses, allowing students to understand their coursework and prepare them for future careers. Strategies of teaching and learning trends, grammar in context, language exchange, and interaction have presented new challenges to teaching and learning English. Nevertheless, teachers of Engineering subjects and their students have negatively perceived the role of English in TVET. People noticed that students do not want to study and improve their English because they need to see its relevance for their academic careers which engenders difficulties in teaching and learning English. Teaching English in a TVET environment is difficult because English is considered a pass criterion rather than a core subject (Abdullah & Majid, 2013). Students need to put more effort into improving their English proficiency since they believe they focus on practical skills and Engineering courses. In Dieudonee's research (2022), English lecturers told him that I face several challenges in my everyday teaching of EFL. Some of them are students with " low level of communication in English, learners who concentrate on the technical core subject rather than general courses including English, lack of enough teaching materials/resources, the mindset of being trained as technicians, and they do not need to be more fluent in the English language. (P32). However, students with excellent English skills perform well in their studies and get jobs quickly after graduation. Itsuokor (1987) confirms that English proficiency strongly predicts academic achievement.

Educationalists believe that proficiency in English can enhance students' performance in academic or practical courses. Students' proficiency in English allows them to excel in their technological field of study. In today's globalized society, English proficiency as a global language is also one of the essential qualifications for a skilled worker or technician. To be globally competitive in the twenty-first century, one must master English, a necessary skill in global education and competence (Telaunmbanua, 2017).

Even though TVET emphasizes developing technical skills, the government will only meet its goal if students comprehend the instructional language. Students will always have to understand lecture material. On the other hand, guidance and explanations from professors are essential to academic success. Ismail et al. (2018) point out that learners need to understand the English language curriculum to increase their level of competence. Therefore, it is worried that the situation could worsen if educators do not take further corrective action in advance. A lack of English knowledge prevents TVET graduates from performing specific tasks competently.

TVET students should be aware of the opportunities provided by the English language. Poon (2016) demonstrated that graduates of TVET programmes must be aware that English language proficiency is one of the most significant determinants of their employability and marketability. There is an urgent need to refocus students' and teachers' attention on English proficiency as a language of instruction and raise awareness of the importance of English in their studies and future careers. There should be research on the effect of English language proficiency on academic performance in Rwandan universities or technical colleges. From this perspective, this study aims to determine the relationship that bridges English language proficiency and academic performance or achievement at Rwanda Polytechnic (RP), specifically at IPRC-Kigali.

1.2 Statement of the problem

TVET students in Rwanda are good at practice (hands-on skills), but on another side, they are facing a deep gap in the English language, especially in communicative skills (Minani & Sikubwabo, 2022; Khambayat, 2017). The gap makes them fail to achieve their performance. They need help to follow in class and understand reading materials written in English, which undermines their knowledge and skills in Engineering courses.

Komba (2012) *illustrates* that academic achievement is the outcome of a student's educational performance, especially in colleges or other academic institutions. Class grades measure student achievement since they indicate if students have performed high or low. Hence the ability to demonstrate knowledge verbally or in writing in the classroom and put acquired skills into practice can increase productivity and job satisfaction. Scholars have theorized about the determinants of academic achievement and pointed out that language proficiency should be a determinant element of academic achievement. They also believe that mastery of the language

of instruction enables students to assimilate, consume, and interpret instructional materials. Additionally, English proficiency is related to academic achievement, as Kiyun (2010) and Webb (2004) argued that proficiency in the language of instruction is essential for academic achievement. Otherwise, students will perform poorly in school subjects.

In other words, lack of awareness of the importance of English proficiency, especially among TVET students who feel that practical skills necessary to their careers will affect their academics. However, teachers of technical courses continue to undervalue English proficiency as a predictor of academic performance. Alphonse, N&Cyprien, T (2023) declared that RP lecturers revealed that using English only in class cannot make it enjoyable since they fail to motivate students and sustain their attention while teaching due to a lack of English proficiency in both teachers and students. They also highlighted that students and lecturers believe using English in class can hamper content comprehension.

Aina, Ogundele, and Olanipekun (2013) discovered that many TVET students believe that language should not have a soft focus in TVET due to its emphasis on acquiring practical scientific knowledge that requires creative minds, manipulative skills, and attitudes. The students acquire the skills through extensive laboratory and workshop practice rather than language. Students and teachers of technical education in Rwanda share a similar outlook; they see no reason to develop their English language skills because they feel their objective is to gain technical skills. They recommended focusing on job-related skills instead of English language proficiency. Ogundele (2010) emphasizes that language proficiency should not be emphasized in TVET because the focus is on employable skills acquired through workshops and laboratories, involving the unique application of manipulative skills, creative minds, and attitudes.

Various scholars have refuted the idea of undermining the importance of English for success. They argued that language skills improve the implementation of technology and economic development. TVET students need self-actualization skills, not compulsory language grammar, which hinders technological progress (Aina et al., 2013). They emphasized the significance of language proficiency as the language of instruction to achieve successful academic outcomes. "However, what many of these students fail to realize is that language proficiency is necessary for them to understand and digest course materials and communicate effectively in class

discussions, presentations, assignments, and examinations, among others (Win and Miller, 2005; Jalili-Grenier and Chase, 1997)."

Students with weak language abilities could need more support to participate in class activities effectively. They will need support understanding or following course instructions or performing practical assignments. According to Feast (2002), students only have a chance of success if they comprehend instructors and respond to questions, complete assignments, and respond to examinations in the language of instruction. In addition, language became a tool to enhance students' learning of technical skills and eliminate potential hurdles to academic advancement. Adogpa (2015) argues that language is essential to schooling. If learners need help understanding the language used to instruct them on conducting practical tasks, the desired skills cannot be developed. Lack of English language proficiency impedes achievement. Thus, disregarding the importance of English language competency in TVET schools and colleges could harm the academic performance and competence of TVET students. If English proficiency declines, the nation might be unable to rely on a qualified technological workforce. Several academics predicted this worry, arguing that pupils who lack the requisite language-of-instruction skills will not progress intellectually (Brockton & Alidou, 2011; Heugh, 2000; Wolff, 2011; Webb, 2004).

According to Alexander (2013), it is easier for college students to understand the subject if they know English. Therefore, students with poor English proficiency need help to successfully understand lessons conducted in English, which negatively affects their grades. Jadie et al. (2012) also pointed out that studying in class and achieving success in school can be difficult if you need to learn the language of instruction. They must have a high level of proficiency in the language of instruction to understand course material such as lessons, course content, and textbooks, to ask or answer questions during class, to take oral, practice, and written tests, and to understand academic work in general. A student attending a TVET school needs to speak and write English sufficiently to perform academically. They often need help in their academic activities. They must avoid competing in domestic or global labour markets to obtain the necessary information and skills. Nonetheless, knowledge of English remains essential for employment. English proficiency is a significant advantage in the global economy, and most companies prefer graduates with strong English proficiency (Saleh & Murtaza, 2018).

English proficiency is necessary for academic achievement. Yunus and Sukri (2017) emphasized that the value of mastering English originates from creating global academic

competition and preparing students for future difficulties. Dooley (1999), as mentioned in Maame Akua Nkrumah (2020), recommended that each institution research relationship between language proficiency and academic success and make its own decisions regarding appropriate levels of language proficiency. Because of the above opinions about English proficiency and its impact on academic performance, MINEDUC and RP should address, dissuade, or mitigate this unfavorable attitude before it impacts graduates' competency and workforce growth. They should strengthen the teaching and learning of English in colleges of technical and vocational education (TVET) and provide the necessary facilities and learning materials to improve students' English competence. However, this study attempted to find out if there is a real strong relationship between English proficiency and academic achievement, especially at IPRC-Kigali, to understand the correlation better and support students' educational needs to upgrade their English proficiency.

1.3 Significance of the study

Engineering or TVET program students have been greatly affected by neglecting the importance of English proficiency in academia, especially among engineers. Scheckle, E Stander, L (2022) said that only ten (10) lecturers (notably in Mechatronics, the most practical and quantitative of the Engineering subjects) said that poor English Language Proficiency did not limit the performance of students in his subject. Some of them need to be made aware of the English language perceptions of TVET college staff about the relationship between English language proficiency and academic performance among engineering students (Plooy,2022).

Although soft skills are crucial in the workplace and are a focus in the TVET system, students suggest that they should not be a barrier to employment, especially if a candidate has the necessary formal training Anthony Tolika Sibiya and Nceba Nyembezi and David Bogopa,2021. This mindset undermined students' motivation to improve their English skills by affecting their academic performance or inability to communicate in English and outside the classroom. This perspective also affects communication at work, reducing productivity.

However, researchers realized that students attending TVET school perform well in practical courses, though they need better communication skills in English. Sikubwabo,2022, Khambayat,2017). The students continue to have a significant gap in communication skills. Their English language proficiency could be higher while the language of the medium of instruction is in English, and they have to compete in the national and international labour

market where effective communication is required. According to Jean de Dieu & Maniraho 3 (2022), there is a poor linkage between learned skills from technical training institutions with market needs; on the other hand, the public and private sectors need a workforce good at marketing to make people love the products—p 71. Students could note that more than knowledge and skills in engineering courses is needed to compete in the labour market. They have to ensure that proficiency in English is an utmost advantage to access the job market. Indeed, English help them to upgrade their knowledge and skills while still at school and at the end of their studies.

From this perspective, this present study sheds light on the relationship between English proficiency and academic achievement and recommends sustainable strategies to close the gap and increase the employability of TVET graduates.

1.4 Delimitation of the study

This study focused on the relationship between English language proficiency and the overall average academic performance of IPRC-Kigali students. The institution is one of the first higher education TVET institutions established in Rwanda in 2008; compared to other IPRCs in different provinces, the College introduced numerous engineering programmes and enrolled many students. It is also in Kigali, the capital of Rwanda, where poor English proficiency in the workplace could highly harm students' employment opportunities and deprive them of employment opportunities. Notably, the College is a representative pool to select a sizable sample of students with superior and inferior English language proficiency. Hence, an appropriate sample was selected to determine the effect of English proficiency on academic achievement.

1.5 Research Question

This study investigates the degree of correlation between English language proficiency (ELP) and overall average academic performance (AP), the current level of English proficiency among students, and the types of interventions that are effective at improving English proficiency and academic performance in RP, particularly at IPRC-KIGALI. This study generally answered the research question. What is the degree of correlation between English Language Proficiency (ELP) and Academic Performance (AP) in IPRC-Kigali?

1.6 Objectives

The study aims to meet general and specific objectives to ensure the degree of correlation between the English proficiency of students studying in year II or level six (6) and their academic performance. It helps to identify the impact it should have on their studies as far as academic performance is concerned.

1.6.1 General objective

To investigate the degree of correlation between English language proficiency and academic performance among students enrolled in IPRC-KIGALI year II, the second year of the undergraduate programme, commonly referred to as level six (6) in the TVET framework.

1.6.1.1 Specific objectives

- a. Identify English language proficiency gaps at IPRC-Kigali second year students or level six students
- b. Determine the impact of inadequate English proficiency on academic performance.
- c. Describe the influence of advanced English language proficiency on overall average academic performance

1.7 Organisation of the study

The first chapter covers the introduction and context of the study, the research question, general and specific objectives, the significance of the study, and the scope and limitations.

The second chapter covers the literature review, that is, TVET background in Rwanda, a discussion on the research conducted by various authors regarding English language proficiency and academic performance, and a comment on theories developed by other scholars to explain the relationship between language acquisition and learner performance. It also includes a conceptual framework to indicate the independent and dependent variables and intervening variables.

The third chapter is all about the methodology. It indicates the research design, which justifies the qualitative and quantitative methods and data collection methods. It also explains the sample size and population size.

The fourth chapter presents the results and interpretation of the data. It highlighted the gaps in English language proficiency, the consequences of poor language proficiency, and, most

importantly, the correlation between English proficiency and overall average academic performance.

The fifth chapter concludes the study. It summarises the fundamental research and recommends the best practices to improve English language proficiency at IPRC-Kigali, which should be implemented at other IPRCs.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

2. 1. Introduction

This chapter examined a variety of works, books, papers, and journals on the significance and dominance of the English language around the globe. In addition, we analysed the link or relationship between English language proficiency and academic performance. Strong, negative or positive correlations elicited differing viewpoints in response to the authors' works. They went on to identify additional factors contributing to academic performance.

2.2 Overview about TVET Education History TVET The history of TVET in Rwanda.

Technical and Vocational Training (TVET) aims to equip the students with the required hands-on skills in the labour market, specific to industries, trades and occupations. Minani & Sikubwabo (2022) defined TVET as a hands-on product-based form of training that seeks to expose people to the real world of work. Okwelle & Ayonmike (2014) emphasized that TVET is the economic and technological growth engine. Academicians drafted TVET policies to solve the problem of poverty, improve economic growth and train the youth to compete in the labour market. TVET is crucial in empowering people and making them well-skilled in a specific work area. Rwandan vision aims at transforming its citizens into skilled human capital for socio-economic development through quality education and vocational training (Procknow, 2017). TVET in Rwanda went through improvement over the years from the pre-independence period, post-period, post 94 genocides against Tutsi up to TVET policy strategy in 2008, vision 2020 and reforms to meet the government agenda to promote economic growth, innovation, and reduce the employment rate among the youth. Hence TVET policy envisaged training qualified workers and citizens capable of playing a significant role in sustainable growth and poverty alleviation.

In 1979, Rwanda offered vocational training to males and females based on Rwandan work categorization as stipulated in Rwandan culture. However, the government must still establish a law governing its implementation and National Qualification Framework. In that period, girls

were enrolled in Ecoles Familiales (schools for family provisions) to train them to conduct house chores. It took two years after 6years of primary school. Boys were enrolled in centres for arts training known as CERARs (Centre d'Enseignement Rural et Artisanal) for 2 years as well (Mporananayo&Ng'umbi, 2019). From 1979 to 2008, Rwanda introduced centres for Integrated Arts training in rural areas called CERAI (Centre d'Enseignement Rural Artisanal Intégré) and Public Technical Schools called ETO (École Officielle Technique). At the top of these centres, short training centres for youth CFJ (Centre de Formation des Jeunes) were established upon the advent Workforce Development Authority (WDA) in 2008 (Rukundo&Sikubwabo, 2021; Cernea, 2004; Gakuba, 1991).

WDA was mandated to provide strategic training to respond to development challenges across the country through VTC and TSS: Vocational Training Centers (VTC) and Technical Secondary Schools (TSS). WDA was established by law no 03/March/2009. It is since 2009 that this field of TVET training in RWANDA has taken a clear direction. It has been conducted based on the Rwanda TVET Qualification Framework (RTQF) since June 2012 (Mporananayo &Ng'umbi, 2019).

Nevertheless, the graduates from VTCs and TS had continuous training to upgrade their skills to the Integrated Polytechnic Regional Colleges (IPRCs). In 2020, VTCs and TSSs became TVET schools, and they work under Rwanda TVET Board (RTB), whereas IPRCs: Integrated Polytechnic Regional Colleges are working under Rwanda Polytechnic (RP) that was established in 2017 by the law, N° 22/2017 OF 30/05/2017 but become operational since March 2018 (MINEDUC, 2020)

2.3 English language policy in Rwanda

A component of Rwanda's language policy, which regulates the use of the language in the nation's educational system and official communications, governs the use of English. The policy recognises English as the official language of instruction and communication for all secondary schools, colleges, and higher education institutions. The media, business, and

international communication widely use English, in addition to the tourism industry. The policy encourages the use of English in the judiciary, civil service, and public administration. The policy was announced in October 2008 and had to be implemented within the following five (5) years (Rwanda English Action Program, 2009). According to Mawaura (2008), this policy aimed to improve Rwanda's competitiveness within the EAC and globally. Rwanda sought to forge ties with English-speaking countries to further its political and socio-economic interests.

MINEDUC has mandated that all public and private schools and universities teach all subjects in English, regardless of students' linguistic background. Since 2009, educationalists have implemented the policy immediately. Samuels and Liberty (2010) concluded that the language of instruction is significant for students' knowledge acquisition and skill development because students who do not acquire it cannot progress academically. The students had no choice but to improve their English skills. Kagwesage (2013) emphasised that English is a dominant language as much as an international one. Therefore, they should pay attention to English.

2.4 English as the language of medium of instruction in Rwanda Education system

Due to political, economic and social factors that the country went through, Rwanda adopted English in all education levels, primary, secondary and tertiary levels in 2009 (Kayigema et al., 2017; MINICAAF, 2011). Rwanda had a vision of regional and global integration and foreseeing the principle of a human capital-based economy (Pearson, 2013; Samuelson & Freedman, 2010). This factor motivated the country to reborn TVET in Rwanda in 2008 (MINEDUC, 2018).

The use of the English language dominates in different sectors, news reports, social media, sports, entertainment, trades, education, international relations, aid administration, competitions, agri-business, food chain, information technology, and manufacturing, to name a few (McGreal, 2008). Valentin (2021) ascertained that English as a foreign language is a compulsory subject to teach at all education levels in Rwanda and TVET education. This assertion confirmed that mastering English seemed necessary for students attending TVET schools to learn in class and communicate effectively. Therefore, teaching and learning English in TVET will help students integrate and compete in business and technology. In today's globalization, English plays a deep-seated role and is widely spread as the foreign language taught at many higher learning institutions in the intellectual world (Nigora, 2021).

2.5 Teaching and learning English challenge in TVET

Students enrolled in TVET faced the problem of communication during their studies and in the workplace. Amiruddinet al. (2015) pointed out that the areas for improvement of current TVET graduates are communication skills and proficiency in the English language. This undermines their employment opportunities, and acquiring the necessary language skills to cope with the job requirement while mastering English is one determinant in the global market. Telaunmbanua (2017) justified that English is the most required proficiencies in 21st-century global education. The TVET graduate must inevitably ensure they have the necessary skills to communicate effectively at the workplace and throughout their studies.

However, it was reported that students and teachers face challenges in teaching and learning English effectively. Among the challenges that EFL teachers face include a lack of motivation to learn general courses on the side of students, which leads to communication barriers at the workplace, and the lack of language competency among TVET students makes them less competitive (Suhaili & Mohama, 2021). Abdullah & Majid (2013) revealed that teaching the English language in a TVET environment is challenging as English is not classified as the main subject content but rather a requirement for the students to only pass.

2.6 Theories of language acquisition and second language theories

It is essential to understand the theories of language acquisition and second language theories to overcome the challenges students have faced throughout their studies since their background continues to affect them while learning and mastering English languages. The theories highlighted conducted experiments to learn the language which the English language includes. Many scientists, linguists, and psychologists have developed various theories about language acquisition. Well-known examples include cognitivism, behaviourism, and mentalism. Behaviourists believe people learn a language through repeated, guided, controlled practice. Contrary to the notion that children are born from scratch, their environment (Tabula Rasa) influences their language acquisition. Mentalists believe that children acquire their mother tongue through the Language Acquisition Device (LAD), a different ability responsible for other cognitive abilities.

Chomsky (1957,1965) demonstrated the validity of his Transformational Generative Grammar theory, which contributed to the overthrow of Structural Linguistics and the transformation of ideas regarding language acquisition and, as a result, foreign language (FL) learning. Cognitive

theories incorporate both behaviourism and mentalism. According to cognitivism, children are born with the biological, psychological, sociological, and environmental capacity to learn a language, but they acquire the skills through interaction and the environment. Piaget (1986) asserted that children's mental development stages intertwined with language acquisition which we must consider alongside other social reflections.

However, Newby (2011) indicated that Chomsky differentiated linguistic competence and performance. Competence is knowledge of the language, while linguistic performance is the actual use of language in real time. Schank (1969) asserted that linguistic competence enables individuals to construct all possible grammatical sentences, while performance is how this competence is translated into everyday speech. At the same time, the linguistic theory focuses on competence. This study will combine competence and performance to ensure students can communicate effectively in or outside the classroom since students learn engineering subjects need competence and performance.

Students who perform well in the subjects could also perform well in another subject without necessarily considering one subject that might be a determinant of other performance. The two-factor intelligence theory proposed by Charles Edward Spearman in 1904 focuses on the general intelligence concept known as the "g" factor. Raquel (2022) indicated that Spearman noticed that the two scores of the same participants were almost similar in every test. Those who had a good score on one aptitude test also scored well on other aptitude tests, and those who performed poorly on one test also performed similarly on other tests, representing a factor common to all the intellectual and cognitive abilities of the person. The theory implies that a person should be able to perform well in all subjects. It is related to academic performance since a student with higher general intelligence can understand and apply complex academic concepts in different courses/subjects.

A student can acquire all the knowledge and skills at the same pace. No subject might be more catalyser than others to achieve a specific competence. However, the theory does not limit itself to two factors; other factors and subfactors depend on specific abilities. In academic performance, several factors out of the intelligence influence intelligence likely, teaching and learning strategies, learning environment, resources and personal commitment and motivation. Thus, the theory does not limit two-factor general and specific intelligence.

Nevertheless, Cummins (1979, cited in Teemant & Pinnegar, 2019) developed a second theory of second language acquisition that incorporates the essential aspects of language proficiency and identifies the relationship between a learner's language proficiency and academic performance. He categorised two levels of learning language: Basic Interpersonal Communication skills (BICS), which focus on learners' oral fluency, and Cognitive Academic language proficiency (CALP), which drives the learner's ability to cope with the academic demands of various subjects taught in school. In BICS, academic achievement weakly correlates with language proficiency since it regards oral communication skills, while in CALP, language proficiency strongly correlates with academic achievement in manipulating advanced-level language in an academic setting and social interaction. Thus, CALP skills are essential for academic excellence and improved academic performance since it refers to language skills needed in an academic context. It is undeniable that TVET needs to integrate the theory of CALP, which has proved to be a springboard for academic performance.

2.7 English proficiency and academic performance

In academics, the student's performance is expressed in marks or grades. The grade draws from various in-class and out-of-class assessments, such as formative or summative assessments. A grade indicates whether a student has passed a particular test, course, or module. According to Caballero et al. (2007), academic achievement is the achievement of a program or course's goals, outcomes and objectives. Rodriguez (2006), cited by Willcox (2011), defined *academic achievement* as the relative level of demonstrated knowledge in a specific domain or subject. Therefore, academic grades/marks indicate or allow teachers or lecturers to judge whether students could be promoted to an advanced level or redo the assessment to upgrade their knowledge or skills to the accepted level. In other words, academic performance is demonstrated or expressed in school grades or test scores. It is an academic system which considers performance based on the standard set by instructors, teachers, or colleges to determine the students' achieved competence. Paliwal & Rathi (2016) emphasised that academic achievement is the General Percentage average (GPA), a typical indicator of an average score as a criterion a student must meet.

A student must also perform well to determine English Language Proficiency (ELP). However, they must perform to the accepted level in four skills (Reading, writing, listening and speaking), commonly included in the definition of English proficiency. Students who perform well in the

above skills can communicate effectively in English. Throughout tertiary education programmes, academicians measure students' English proficiency by their ability to use English in reading, listening, speaking, and writing contexts, The University of Southern Queensland Portal (2026). This description indicates that a student who has mastered the four skills can pursue higher education studies successfully.

Deewr (2009) also defined English proficiency as the capacity to use English in spoken and written contexts while completing university studies. Students must be proficient in writing, reading, listening, and speaking English in various contexts. He ensures that students have a certain level of English proficiency by attending higher education institutions or acquiring additional knowledge from documents written in English.

Universities in the US and UK conduct the Test of English as a Foreign Language and the International English Language Testing System to determine the level of English proficiency. The International Test Administration, commonly known as "TOEFL" and "IELTS", measures English proficiency. Rintaningrum (2018) urged students to listen or learn to listen better. Otherwise, the final stage of the complex model of language acquisition will be difficult in a productive environment (e.g., speaking and writing) in a communicative classroom. Hence it is essential to note that the mastery of the four (4) skills is necessary to approve the English proficiency,

Students must use the four skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) to communicate effectively in the classroom. Otherwise, certain instructional and learning materials may be difficult to understand. Reading promotes knowledge acquisition while writing enhances communication and cognitive skills. It is also a necessary skill for the job. Students can improve their knowledge of vocabulary and understanding of grammar through speaking. This effort makes it easier to communicate with native English speakers and teachers. According to Rudd and Honkiss (2020), Spearman's data led to the scientific finding that people who scored high in one domain performed better on unrelated tasks. These data show that students who perform well in English also excel in other areas.

Researchers have found that English proficiency predicts academic achievement, while other factors do not. According to Burgess and Greis (1970 cited Goldstein,1987), they administered the TOEFL test in 17 colleges, and test results correlated significantly with GPA. Goldstein (1987), Heil and Aleamoni (1974) found a significant correlation between TOEFL and GPA

($r=0.270$ for Term 1 GPA and 0.336 for Term 2 GPA) and concluded that TOEFL is useful in predicting test success for non-native English speakers. They concluded that reading and writing skills are critical to college success.

Hill, Storch, and Lynch (1999) found that TOEFL scores were weakly correlated with academic performance but did not predict their statement. Similarly, Wilson and Komba (2012) found a weak but positive correlation between English proficiency and academic achievement among urban students in Morogoro, Tanzania. However, many researchers have found that English proficiency significantly predicts academic achievement (Arsad et al., 2014; Abdirahman, 2013). In Nigeria, Fakeye (2014) and Jekayinka (1991) found a significant correlation between English proficiency and academic performance in the subject.

Besides, Arsad et al. (2014) found a significant correlation between students' English proficiency and overall performance in undergraduate engineering programs at Malaysian universities. Roche and Harrington (2013) found a strong positive correlation between English proficiency and GPA in two higher education institutions in Oman. Therefore, studies showing a weak correlation between English proficiency and academic achievement are less critical than studies showing a strong correlation. This background shows that English proficiency is a predictor of academic success. Higher education institutions, including TVET schools, will not deny the impact of English proficiency on student achievement. Therefore, they should strive to improve students' English proficiency to ensure students effectively acquire another technical knowledge.

2.8 Importance of English language proficiency in academics

In the twenty-first century, English became a significant target language. The number of English speakers has increased due to its dominance in business and technology. Five per cent (5%) of the global population speaks English as their native language. Similarly, between one and two billion (1,000,000,000-5,000,000,000) use it as a second language or lingua franca, a language of communication, or are learning it (Graddol, 2006, cited in Mitchel, 2013). Charise (2007) ascertained that English is a communication requirement attended to and utilised in Higher Learning Institutions/ Universities. It is observed that English proficiency is the key to a better education, more employment opportunities, and a higher social standing.

Since most of the world's universities have adopted English as their medium of instruction, English proficiency has been deemed essential for higher education. According to Kweon and Kim (2017), an increasing number of national governments view English as a medium of instruction as a crucial strategy for gaining access to cutting-edge scientific knowledge and technological expertise and boosting their national competitiveness, particularly in knowledge production and technological innovation. Airey, Lauridsen, Rasanen, Salo, and Schwach (2017) also discovered that many education ministries efficiently enhance the quality of higher education and prepare their students with 21st-century skills.

Different countries adopted the English language as a medium of instruction in the education system from primary school to tertiary level to train students to compete in the global market and enhance the opportunities for job employment. Students were obliged to must the English language to acquire knowledge and skills in subjects other than English since it significantly impacts student performance. Wilson and Komba (2012) discovered in their research conducted at a secondary school in Tanzania that students' English proficiency correlates positively with their academic performance, and Avary and Carola (2008) also revealed that low levels of academic English language proficiency can inhibit academic achievement and full engagement with academic content. This assertion was confirmed by Banga (2016; Oribabor, 2014; and Wilkinson and Silliman; 2008), who said that student's success in school depends heavily on their command of the instructional language. Wilkinson and Silliman (2008) concurred that student achievement depends on their command of the instructional language. They advised students to adapt to learning the language because of the high consideration attributed to English as a language of medium instruction. If a student is proficient in English, they can pursue their studies effectively because they will benefit from the opportunity to learn the language, whether it be in the classroom or in their future workplace.

To conclude, it is strongly believed that their English proficiency greatly benefits their academic environment and future career since English is a global language which will allow them to enjoy many other areas, such as Business, Technology, entertainment, job opportunities and learning skills.

2.9 Effect of poor English proficiency in academics

Since English as a language of instruction (LOI) in higher education institutions was spread to many countries, students must be proficient in English to continue their education. A student

with poor English language proficiency will need help to pass the class assessment. The low level of English proficiency will affect students' performance. According to Ayodele (1988) and Falayajo (1997), language ignorance always leads to poor academic performance. Poor academic performance or failing college can lead to low self-esteem, lack of motivation, and reluctance to attend lectures and practical classes.

In a study of university students in Oman, Sivaraman et al. (2014) found that knowing English helped their performance in engineering courses. Moreover, Evary and Carola (2008) emphasized that low English proficiency can hinder academic success and full participation in learning. Students needed help studying engineering courses and passing the assessments since teachers/lecturers delivered all the content in English. Students will regard as having poor academic performance because of low-level English performance. Orgunsiji (2009) hypothesized that students with low language proficiency are more likely to perform less well in other school subjects.

Different authors of different research found that students with limited English proficiency need to improve in other subjects. Ho and Spinks (1985, cited by Goldstein, 1987) demonstrated that English-deficient university students will be hindered in their academic pursuits and may avoid enrolling in courses requiring English proficiency. Lastly, inadequate English proficiency harms students' academic performance in higher education institutions since students need help communicating with their instructors or lecturers during the learning process. Therefore, it would be challenging for students to master the course material, innovate in their field of study, and compete in a global market where English is the language of communication and a requirement for employment.

2.9.1 Factors affecting academic performance

Several factors, such as students' background studies, educational resources, teacher-student connections, family environment, motivation, self-discipline, and motivation, are likely to impact student performance. According to Sparkles (2008, cited in Considine and Zapala 2002), the school environment and instructor influence student achievement, and Kesiga (2002) added that school learning and teaching facilities influence student success. Students are likely to achieve their performance academically if they attend schools with practical learning and teaching facilities and qualified teachers who push pupils to perform well academically. Various types of research demonstrated that self-efficacy significantly affects engineering students' performance (Lent et al., 1984; Pajeres, 1996; Panton, 2001).

Bandura (1977) describes self-efficacy as a person's beliefs determining how well one can execute a plan of action in a prospective situation. He believed that self-efficacy is a person's belief in their ability to succeed in a particular situation. Self-efficacy is a predominant factor that can lead to academic performance. Louis and Mistel (2011), self-efficacy are also a key predictor of academic success. This approach could be practical if the school or academic institution offering engineering courses adopts it to help students simultaneously enhance their English language abilities and academic performance

2.9.2 Self-efficacy and academic performance

Advanced English language proficiency is one of the most important determinants of academic performance, and self-efficacy is also a factor that may affect academic performance. Torkzadeh, Chang, and Demirhan (2006, cited in Henderson, 2009), self-efficacy argued that self-efficacy is a construct that changes as new information and experiences people acquire. The student's performance improves if addressed during English language acquisition. Students can accomplish self-efficacy beliefs as a person's estimation to complete their capacity to plan and execute the actions necessary to achieve specific types of performances. This concept indicates that persons who believe they can accomplish a particular task can achieve it. Henderson (2009) urged that self-efficacy strongly predicts future achievement, and numerous studies (Bandura's, 1984; 1997; 2006; De Groot, 1990; Pintrich & Schunk, 1996, 2002) supported this claim.

Additionally, Bandura (2006) concluded that students' self-efficacy predicted academic achievement and found that self-efficacy had a more substantial effect on academic performance than other motivational beliefs. However, Bandura (1987, cited in Hunderson, 2009) explained that success and failure do not strengthen or weaken self-efficacy beliefs. Instead, how students interpret these experiences influences their self-efficacy beliefs. Students should have high self-efficacy to predict high performance. The student's effort during their learning plays a significant role in determining their achievement.

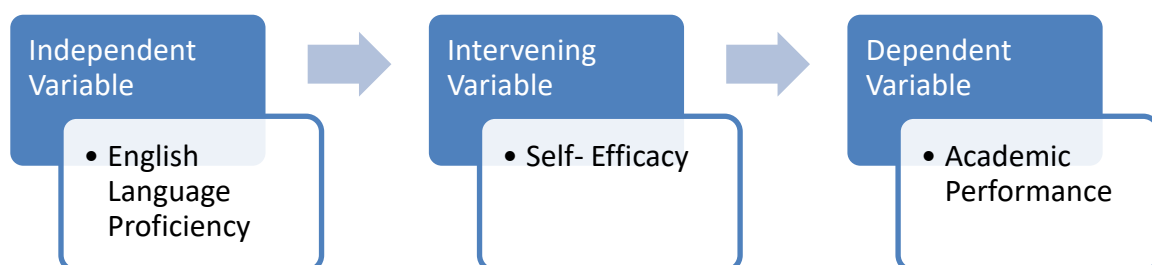
Self-efficacy enables students to persevere and overcome difficulties associated with acquiring knowledge. It implies that students should try to achieve their goals, as self-efficacy is only adequate with action. Students with high self-efficacy tend to exhibit lower anxiety levels, more remarkable persistence when confronted with obstacles, and great effort. Exhibit greater flexibility in using learning strategies, greater intrinsic interest in academic tasks, minimal effort and strategy use, and more significant anxiety in the face of an obstacle (Sarah et al.,

Williams'2014). The students achieve their objectives despite the academic environment's complexities.

Students' self-efficacy can lead to academic success. The fact of believing that students can perform or enhance their English proficiency can also contribute to the improvement of their English proficiency. Students who believe in and commit to their tasks will be able to overcome the challenges of learning a second language and achieve their goals. Ching (2002) found that students with high self-esteem felt confident in their abilities and set goals for themselves. They worked to achieve their goals, worked harder to avoid failure, displayed remarkable resilience, and attributed the failure to a lack of effort or the knowledge and skills they thought they could acquire. Since English is the language of education, any effort on self-efficacy to achieve goals will only be helpful if the student has sufficient English language skills to continue their studies. Therefore, all efforts will lead to mastering the English language, which is the basis for acquiring other knowledge.

2.10 Conceptual framework

Camp (2001) describes a conceptual framework as a structure that the researcher believes best explains the accepted study progression of the phenomenon, while Grant & Osambo (2014) defined it as the relationship between the main concepts of a study arranged logically to provide a picture or visual display of how ideas in the study relate to one another. The conceptual framework of this study consists of three variables: an independent variable (English proficiency), a dependent variable (academic performance), and an intervening variable (self-efficacy), which represent factors that influence English language acquisition and academic performance. Consequently, these variables contributed to the demonstration that English proficiency affects academic performance.



CHAPTER III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.2 Research design

Researchers have used various research methods to answer the research question. A quantitative approach helped establish the relationship between English proficiency and academic performance. In addition, the qualitative methodology contributed to a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon linking English proficiency and academic achievement. Johnson (2014) that there is a positive correlation when the values of two variables tend to move in the same direction. Hence the study attempted to find a positive correlation between English proficiency and academic performance. Indeed, the study predicted positive academic achievement using a quantitative method based on a correlational design as Creswell (2012) demonstrated that a correlational design is a procedure used in quantitative research to measure the correlation or the degree of association (or relationship) between two or more variables using correlation analysis. Therefore, qualitative methods allow researchers to better understand the relationship between participants and variables.

Fraenkel (2012) concluded that mixed-method studies could facilitate cross-validation of the relationship between two variables when comparing quantitative and qualitative methods to obtain a single interpretation. These mixed methods determined the difference between the two variables. It combined the elements of qualitative and quantitative methods to answer the research question.

Navarro (2003) ascertained that academic performance could be understood as a construct that includes quantitative and qualitative values (quantitative if we talk about numerical measurement and test results and qualitative if we talk about the development of skills, values and competencies) related to knowledge, attitudes and values developed by the students in the teaching-learning process.

Therefore, the study used the mixed-methods to examine the relationship between English proficiency and academic achievement. Quantitatively and qualitatively to comprehensively understand the correlation.

3. 2.1 Data Collection Tools

To gather information regarding English Language proficiency and Academic performance, a researcher examined the students' mark sheets to determine the score obtained in the English module and the overall performance. This method illustrated the relationship between the two

scores. In addition, he utilised a questionnaire to collect information on students' comprehension and perception of English language proficiency and academic achievement, obstacles encountered in acquiring the English language, and suggestions for overcoming these obstacles.

3.2.2 Data Collection process

The data were extracted from score or marks of students obtained in English modules (Pre-Advanced English) and the overall average score or marks of all year I Module for a year I or level 6. The two scores were compared to determine the significance between English proficiency and academic performance. In addition, questionnaire was distributed to students that were selected randomly to collect data on English language proficiency perception and challenges towards their academic performance.

3.3 Population

The study was conducted on students studying at Integrated Polytechnic Regional College (IPRC-Kigali). IPRC-Kigali, Kicukiro was initially established by the government of Rwanda in 2008 as “Kicukiro College of Technology (KCT)” <https://www.iprckigali.rp.ac.rw/1/about-us#>. It was one of the first established colleges and has enrolled many students and programs since it has many infrastructures compared to other sister colleges in rural areas. IPRC-Kigali is a sufficient pool that allows us to find students with poor or advanced English Proficiency easily. The college is located in Kigali city, which gives it a competitive edge and exposes its students to the labour market. Knowing that Kigali city is considered a hub of various industries and companies that can offer jobs and require performance and practical communication skills <https://statistics.gov.rw/publication/trends-labour-market-performance-indicator-rwanda-august-2021>

Four (4) engineering departments (Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, ICT, and Electrical and Electronics Engineering) were collected in this regard. However, the collected data were from the year (Is) since students still need to cover all the modules of year II. Thus, their results could not be found.

3.4 Sample size

The study utilised mixed-method designs and mixed methods to understand the topic in this study. Teddlies and Tashakkori (2003) found that we use qualitative methods to explore and obtain a depth of understanding, while quantitative methods test and confirm hypotheses based

on existing conceptual models and obtain a breadth acknowledging of predictors of successful implementation. Creswell (2012) explained that in quantitative research, random sampling identifies participants and locations systematically. In contrast, in qualitative research, participants and venues are picked based on purposeful sampling that best helps to explain the fundamental phenomenon. Therefore, the above factors guided the sampling of research participants and determined the sample size required to collect and analyse the data effectively; consequently, while employing the quantitative method, student's class scores/marks from each of the four engineering departments were selected since all students in year II (level 6) took the same pre-advanced English module.

Students from the programs/classes were selected using a simple random sample. Punch (2011) describes that random sampling gives each participant an equal chance of being placed in one of the two groups. It avoids bias because the sample is likely to reflect all population characteristics. Therefore, www.randomizer.org, an online software to select the participants randomly, was used to generate r samples from each department. In the ICT department, an IT class was selected. An electrical and Telecommunication class in the Electrical and Electronics department was selected. In the Department of Mechanical Engineering, an automobile class was selected. That all students sat for all assessments/exams of Pre-Advanced English modules and took all the engineering module exams were selected to compare their performance in English and the overall performance for the entire academic year (average cumulative score). A qualitative method was used to determine students who obtained English language scores above 75% and below 50% in each program. This selection supported to verify that students who performed well in English performed well in other Engineering subjects and also verified if students who poorly performed in English did so in other Engineering subjects. Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) noted that objective methods involve identifying and selecting individuals or groups with expertise or experience in a topic of interest. The used software yielded the following results:

Table N^o 1: Purposive sampling from the qualitative data

S/N	Department	Program	Students score above 75%	Students scored below 50%
1	ICT	IT	4	2
2	Civil Engineering	Construction	3	3
3	Electrical and Electronics Engineering	Electronics and Telecommunication	19	1
4	Mechanical Engineering	Automobile	16	0
TOTAL			42	6
GRAND TOTAL			48	

Table N^o 1 indicates that forty-two (42) students passed the English exam with a score of 75% or higher than 75%, while six (6) students passed with a score of less than 50% in the English exam. It makes a total of forty-eight (48) students selected randomly. These students filled out the questionnaire papers that were distributed to them. The paper intended to collect information on the significance of English as a medium of instruction, the impact of English on students' academic performance, and the proposed strategies to improve student's English proficiency.

3.4 Validity and Reliability of Instruments

3.4.1 Validity

Validity refers to what the researcher intends to measure. It indicates the level of evaluation or expectation based on tests or studies. Kothari (2014) defined *validity* as the extent to which variations found with a measuring instrument reveal substantial variations among tested individuals. This study determined the instrument's validity as a pilot study conducted in an ICT class. The results indicated a positive and statistically significant correlation between the students' English results and their overall average points. The data collected from a distributed questionnaire distributed to the students that were picked up randomly from the same class to crosscheck if the result obtained from the analysis of the results are similarly associated with the results from ones obtained from the mark sheet also indicated a significant relation. Consequently, the obtained results demonstrated the precision and suitability of the research instruments.

3.4.2 Reliability

According to Kothari (2004), reliability exists when measuring instruments provide consistent results. During the ICT class pilot, we utilized the split-half method to determine the instrument's internal consistency and dependability of the instruments. Thus, we divided the class into two groups, one for students who scored more than 70 per cent in English and the other for those who scored less than 50 per cent compared to their overall average performance/achievement. We compared the results from the questionnaire and class performance. Nonetheless, the Spearman rank correlation coefficient formula

$$r_s = 1 - 6 \frac{\sum d^2}{n(n^2 - 1)}$$

assists to calculate the coefficient between the halves was used to determine the consistency in producing comparable results after administering the questionnaire. Therefore, the coefficient was determined to be 0.80, indicating high reliability. It demonstrates once more the precision and suitability of the utilized instruments.

CHAPTER IV: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter contains the data gathered for this study regarding the second-year students or level six (6) in TVET frameworks, English proficiency results and overall performance in four Engineering programmes, construction, automobile, electronics and Telecommunication, and IT.

4.1 Data Collection and Analysis

Hatch (2008) defines *data analysis* as a systematic search for meaning through the organisation and interrogation of data in a manner that enables researchers to identify patterns, discuss their relationships, develop explanations, mount critiques, or generate theories. Quantitative and qualitative data were analysed to answer the research questions and achieve the objectives.

4.2.1 Data analysis from mark sheets

Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) Version 29 was used to analyse quantitative data from students' marks in English Proficiency (Pre-advanced English) and Academic Performance (Overall Accumulative Points) for a year I/Level 6. The correlation between first-year/sixth-grade students' English proficiency and academic performance was significantly predicted using simple linear progression on the data. A significant correlation occurs when

two variables (dependent and independent) are significantly correlated; changes in one variable tend to be associated with consistent changes in other variables.

The collected information was organised as follows. R²(coefficient correlation), which measures the strength and direction of linear regression, indicates how much variation in the dependent variable (Academic performance) can be explained by the independent variable (English proficiency). According to the ANOVA table, the regression equation fits the data well. It predicts the dependent variable significantly based on the independent variable. The coefficients table provides the information necessary to predict Academic English Proficiency performance. Examining the "Sig" column determines whether Academic performance is statistically significant to the model. The collected information was organised as follows.

4.2.1.1 Information and Communication Technology Department

A year I/level 6 IT class with 58 students in the ICT department was sampled. Every student completed all formative and summative assessments in the Pre-advanced English module. However, two students needed more summative grades for two engineering modules, resulting in low overall grades.

Table 2: English proficiency's impact on year I/level 6 IT class academic performance

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.486 ^a	.236	.220	12.95583

a. Predictors: (Constant), EP

As shown in Table N^o 2, the R-value as a correlation measure is (0.486), and R-square is (0.236), indicating that our independent variable causes a 23.6% change in the dependent variable. That English proficiency influences academic performance by 23.6%.

Table 3: The significant relationship between English proficiency and academic performance of the year I/level 6 IT class

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2434.464	1	2434.464	14.504	<.001 ^b
	Residual	7889.118	47	167.854		
	Total	10323.582	48			

a. Dependent Variable: AP

b. Predictors: (Constant), EP

Table N⁰ 3 NOVA outcomes with p-values which is less than 0.05. The dependent variable is predicted by the regression equation (academic performance). Consequently, it asserts that there is a significant link between English proficiency and academic performance.

Table 4: Positive relationship between English proficiency and academic performance of year I/level 6 IT class

Coefficients ^a						
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	22.011	11.127		1.978	.054
	EP	.632	.166	.486	3.808	<.001

a. Dependent Variable: AP

The results of the coefficients are shown in Table N⁰ 4; the beta value is 0.486, which indicates that a one-unit change in the independent variable (English proficiency) will result in a 0.486-unit change in the dependent variable. In addition, the beta coefficient is positive, indicating a positive correlation between English proficiency and academic performance.

Regressive Weight	Beta coefficient	R ²	F	P-value
EP → AP	632	236	14.504	<0.001

Note that $p < 0.05$ **EP**: English Proficiency **AP**: Academic Performance.

Academic performance was significantly predicted by English proficiency. It is demonstrated that English proficiency has a substantial effect on academic performance. The dependent variable was regressed on the predictor variable to determine whether English proficiency

influences the academic performance of first-year/sixth-year IT students enrolled in the ICT programme. $F(22.011) = 14.504$, $p < 0.001$, indicating that English proficiency has a substantial effect on academic performance ($b = 0.486$, $p < 0.0001$). These findings point to the positive effects of English proficiency. In addition, $R^2 = 0.236$ indicates that the model accounts for 23.6% of the variance in Academic performance.

4.2.1.2 Civil Engineering Department (C.E)

Among the other programmes, the Civil Engineering department sampled a class of year II/level (6) students comprised of thirty-eight (38) students studying construction. All students obtained total marks (formative and summative marks) for the English module and have not missed any other Engineering module assessments.

Table 5: English proficiency's impact on the year I/level 6 construction class academic performance

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.500 ^a	.250	.229	3.99862

a. Predictors: (Constant), EP

Table N^o 5 reveals that R-value is 0.500, representing the degree of correlation, and R-square is 0.250, meaning a 25% change in the independent variable with concerning dependent variable. In other words, English proficiency influences academic performance by 25%.

Table 6: Significant relationship between English proficiency and academic performance of the year I/level 6 construction class

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	192.194	1	192.194	12.020	.001 ^b
	Residual	575.602	36	15.989		
	Total	767.795	37			

a. Dependent Variable: AP

b. Predictors: (Constant), EP

The p-value is less than 0.05 ($p < 0.005$), as shown in Table N^o 6 of the ANOVA. The regression model statistically significantly predicts the independent variables. The relationship between independent and dependent variables is thus significant. English proficiency is predictive of academic achievement.

Table 7: Positive relationship between English proficiency and academic performance of year I/level 6 construction class

Coefficients^a					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	56.132	2.969	18.907	<.001
	EP	.175	.051	.500	.001

a. Dependent Variable: AP

Table N^o 7 displays the results of the coefficients. It indicates that the beta value is 0.500, which suggests that a change of one unit in the independent variable causes a change of 0.50 unit in the dependent variable and that the beta value is positive. The relationship between English proficiency and academic performance is, therefore, positive.

Regressive Weight	Beta coefficient	R²	F	P-value
EP→AP	175	250	12.020	0.001

Note that $p < 0.05$ EP: English Proficiency AP: Academic Performance.

Since the dependent variable was regressed on the predicting variable to verify its significance on the independent variable, the analysed data demonstrated that English proficiency significantly impacts the academic performance of construction class students in the Civil Engineering programme. In other words, English proficiency predicted Academic performance significantly. $F(0.175) = 12.020$, $p < 0.001$, indicating that English proficiency significantly affects academic performance ($b = 0.500$, $p < 0.0001$). These outcomes unequivocally demonstrate a positive impact on Academic performance. In addition, $R^2 = 0.250$ indicates that the model accounts for 25% of the variance in Academic performance.

4.2.1.3 Electrical and Electronics Engineering (E.E.E)

Sixty-seven (67) students in year II/level 6 were selected from the department of Electrical and Electronics Department (EEE). It was observed that the class was overpopulated however all students sat for all assessment. there was no student that missed total exams marks in other engineering modules.

Table 8: English proficiency's impact on year I/level 6 Electrical technology class academic performance

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.510 ^a	.260	.248	5.86958

a. Predictors: (Constant), EP

Table N^o 8 displays an R-value (0.510) as the degree of correlation and an R-square value of 0.260, indicating that our independent variable sparks change in the dependent variable. Thus, English proficiency influences academic performance by 26%.

Table 9: The significant relationship between English proficiency and academic performance in the year I/level 6 electrical class

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	774.857	1	774.857	22.491	<.001 ^b
	Residual	2204.926	64	34.452		
	Total	2979.783	65			

a. Dependent Variable: AP

b. Predictors: (Constant), EP

As indicated by a p-value less than 0.05 in Table N^o 9. therefore, the relationship between independent and dependent variables is significant. English proficiency is strongly associated with academic performance.

Table 10: positive relationship between English proficiency and academic performance of year I/level 6 Electrical class

Coefficients^a					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	43.907		8.353	<.001
	EP	.359	.510	4.742	<.001

a. Dependent Variable: AP

According to Table N^o 10 coefficients, the beta value is 0.510, which indicates that a one-unit change in independent variables will produce a 0.51-unit change in dependent variables. Additionally, the beta coefficient is positive, showing a positive correlation between English proficiency and academic performance.

Regressive Weight	Beta coefficient	R²	F	P-value
EP→AP	359	260	22.491	<0.001

Note that $p < 0.05$ EP: English Proficiency AP: Academic Performance.

To confirm the significance of the effect, the independent variable was regressed against the dependent variable. $F(0.359) = 22.491$, $p < .001$ demonstrates that English proficiency has a significant impact on academic performance ($b = 0.510$, $p < 0.0001$). There is a positive correlation between these results and English proficiency. In addition to the R^2 value of 0.260, the model explains 26% of the variance in Academic performance. Thus, it is concluded that English proficiency has a significant effect on the Academic Performance of students in the electrical programme in the year I/level 6 who are proficient in English

4.2.1.4 Mechanical Engineering

A sample of forty-seven (47) students studying a year II/level (6) automobile was taken in the Mechanical Engineering department (M.E). All students completed all English module assessments and did not miss any other engineering module assessments.

Table 11: English proficiency's impact on the year I/level 6 automobile class academic performance

Model Summary ^b					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.572 ^a	.328	.313	4.66998	2.626

a. Predictors: (Constant), EP

b. Dependent Variable: AP

R-value is (0.572) as a degree of correlation, and R-square is (0.328) as the amount of change from an independent variable to a dependent variable, as shown in table N^o 11. This indicates that English proficiency influences the dependent variable by 32.8%. Academic performance

Table 12: The significant relationship between English proficiency and academic performance of the year I/level 6 Automobile class

ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	478.371	1	478.371	21.935	<.001 ^b
	Residual	981.391	45	21.809		
	Total	1459.761	46			

Table N^o12 contains ANOVA outcomes with p-values less than 0.05. Consequently, the p-value confirms a significant relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Therefore, there is a strong correlation between English proficiency and academic performance.

Table 13: Positive relationship between English proficiency and academic performance of year I/level 6 Automobile class

Coefficients ^a								
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	44.207	4.918		8.989	<.001	34.301	54.112
	EP	.344	.073	.572	4.683	<.001	.196	.491

a. Dependent Variable: AP

Table N⁰ 13 displays the results of the coefficients. The beta value is 0.572, indicating that a one-unit change in an independent variable result in a 0.5-unit change in the dependent variable. In addition, the beta coefficient is positive, indicating a positive correlation between English proficiency and academic performance. English proficiency has a 0.5-unit effect on academic performance, down from one unit.

Regressive Weight	Beta coefficient	R²	F	P-value
EP→AP	344	328	21.935	<0.001

F (0.344) =21.935, $p < 0.001$ is the result of analysing the dependent variable's regression on a predictable variable to determine the significance of the impact correlation. Since ($b=0.572$, $p<0.0001$), the results indicate that English proficiency significantly influences academic performance. They also clearly demonstrate the benefits of English proficiency. It has been demonstrated that English proficiency has a significant impact on the academic performance of students in the Mechanical Engineering department's Automobile level 6. This further significantly impacts ($R^2 = 0.32$), which indicates that the model accounts for 32.8% of the change in Academic performance.

Generally, the total number of students whose English results were correlated with the marks in Engineering subjects was Two hundred and Nine students (209) students. That is 67 students in EEE. 47 students) in ME, 37 students in C.E. and 58 students in ICT. The data analysis has shown that English assessment/exam results correlated with the annual average. The result with a p-value of less than 0.05 means a relationship between the independent and dependent variables. It explains a significant correlation between English proficiency and academic achievement in the first year of engineering. It represents the relationship between English proficiency and academic performance for IPRC-KIGALI Year II, Advanced Diploma Year or Level 6 students in the TVET framework.

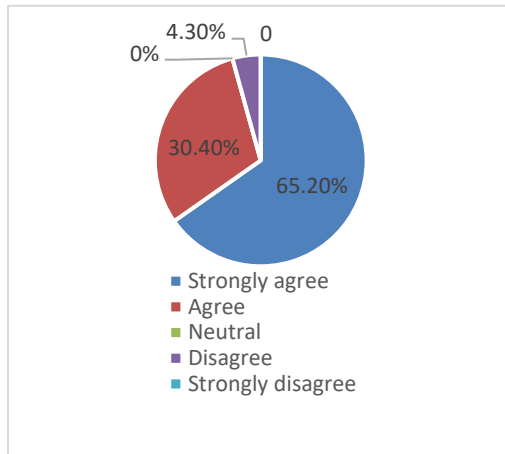
4.2.2 Data analysis from Questionnaire

Students had to rate the statements they agreed on a 5-point Likert scale, such as strongly agree, agree, disagree, neutral, and strongly disagree. Hence Data collected from the questionnaire revealed what participants think about the importance of English language proficiency, the effects of poor English proficiency and the effects of English language proficiency towards

academic performance. The data were also associated with the scholars' thoughts and the theory of self-efficacy to analyse the compatibility and prove the theory.

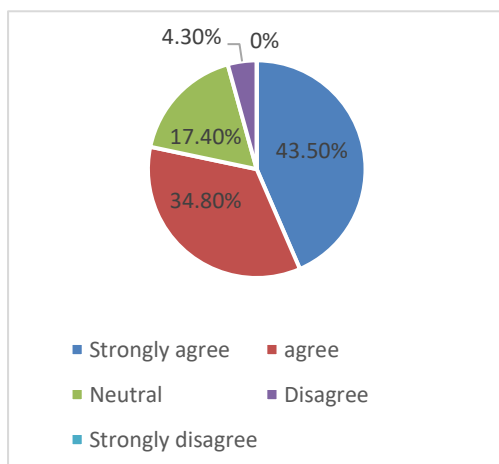
4.2.2.1 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Figure 1: Promotion of University Internationalization



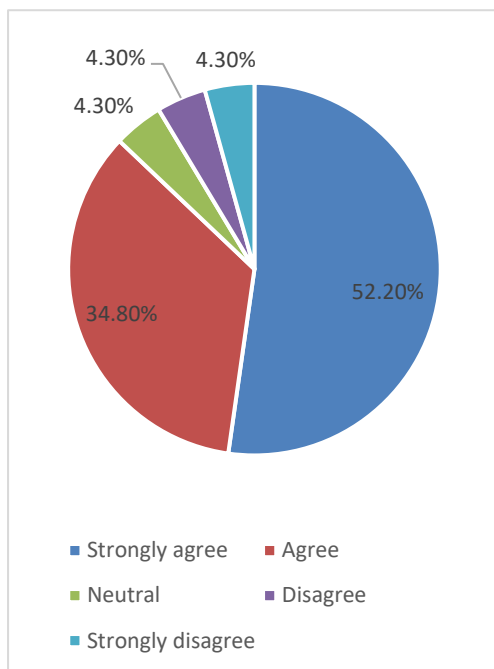
65.20 % of respondents strongly agree and 30.40% agree that English proficiency promotes universities on a global scale. That is, 95.6% of respondents agree that English language proficiency promotes the internationalisation of higher education.

Figure 2: Enhancement of Employment Opportunities



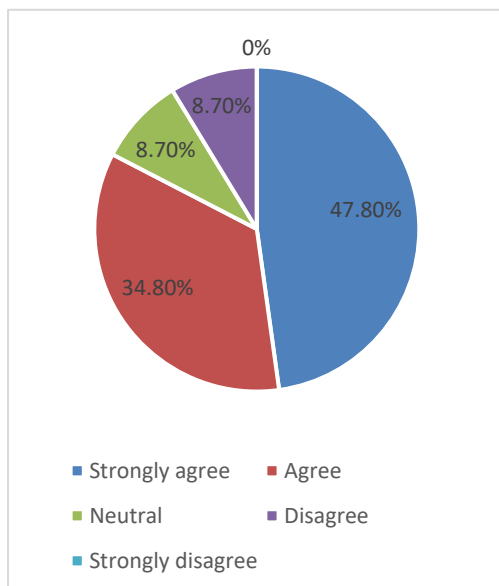
43.5 % of respondents strongly agree, and 34.8 % agree that English proficiency increases the employability of local students. Thus, 88.3 % of participants agree that a mastery of English attract employment opportunities.

Figure 3: Utilization of English in Science, Technology, and business



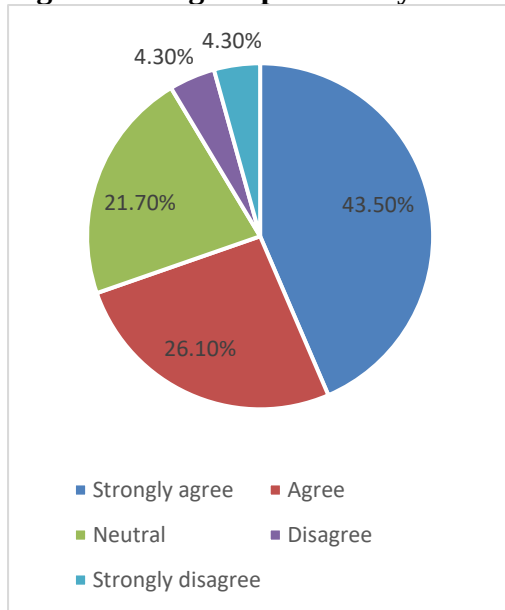
According to 52.2% of participants who strongly agree and 34.8% who agree, English is widely used in science, technology, and business. 87% of participants agreed that English is used in science, technology, and business and that students with English proficiency can quickly grasp or improve their knowledge in these fields.

Figure 4: English Proficiency and Academic Curriculum



48% of respondents are firmly in agreement, and 34% are in agreement that students with excellent English proficiency have a tremendous advantage in continuing their studies or performing in an educational programme. Since English is the medium of instruction, 82.6% of participants agreed that students with English proficiency could pursue their studies effectively in any educational programme.

Figure 5: English proficiency and rapid knowledge acquisition

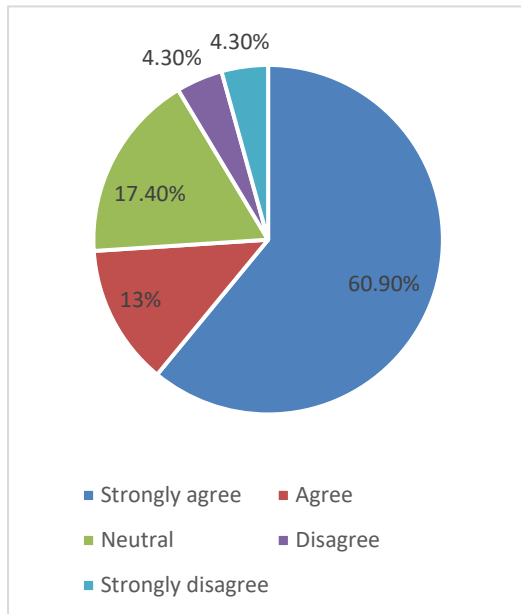


43.5% of participants are very in agreement, and 26.1% are in agreement that mastery of the English language has resulted in enhanced and faster knowledge acquisition. 69.6% of the participants believed that English-proficient students help students acquire knowledge rapidly, which lead to their success.

As evidenced by the results, students observed that English competence is of utmost importance in school because English is the language of instruction. Wilkinson and Silliman (2008) asserted that students' achievement in school mainly depends on their proficiency in the language of instruction. Wilkinson and Silliman (2008) concurred that students' achievement depends on their proficiency in the language of education. This statement suggests that students with a strong command of English acquire science, technology, and business knowledge rapidly. There is also evidence that English proficiency elevates colleges to the worldwide level. According to Kweon and Kim (2017), an increasing number of national governments view English medium of instruction as an essential strategy for gaining access to cutting-edge scientific knowledge and technological know-how and enhancing their national competitiveness, particularly in knowledge production and technological innovation. In addition, Telaunmbanua (2017) stated that to be internationally competitive in the twenty-first century; one must master at least one foreign language, preferably English. English is one of the essential proficiencies for global education and competency in the twenty-first century. In this regard, students must increase their English proficiency and prepare for a technological world.

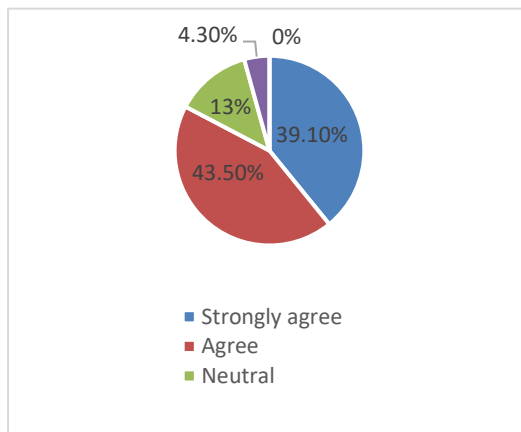
4.2.2.2 EFFECTS OF POOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Figure 6: Failing to comprehend Course Material



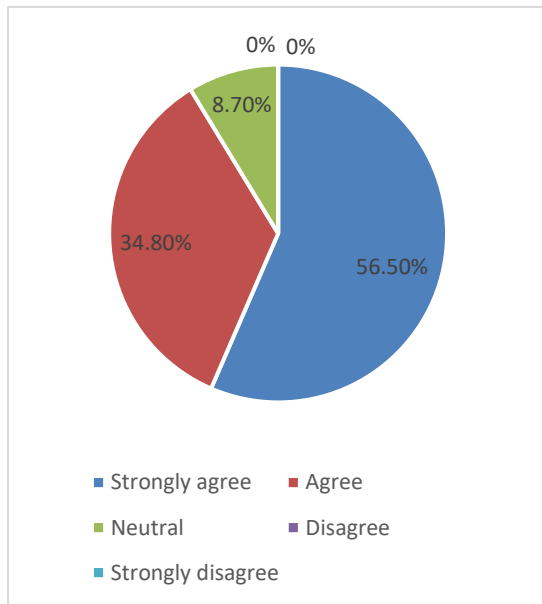
0.9% of participants strongly agree, and 17% agree that weak English language competency diminishes the ability to comprehend course material. That is, 67.9% of the participants believed that a lack of English proficiency prevents students from comprehending course materials; they may also need help understanding the course/subjects, resulting in low performance.

Figure 7: Failing to Understand Questions on Several assessments



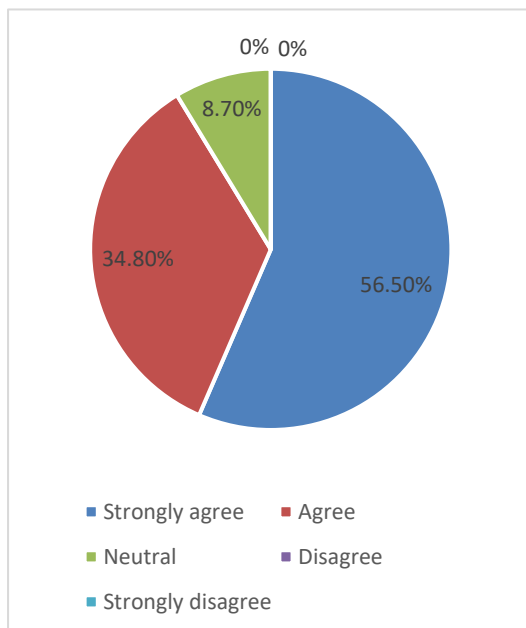
39.1% of participants strongly agree, and 43.5% agree that they seek assistance to understand the questions on various tests. Thus, 82.6% of participants concurred that students with limited English proficiency do not understand questions on multiples tests, which could result in poor performance.

Figure 8: Failing to participate in class actively



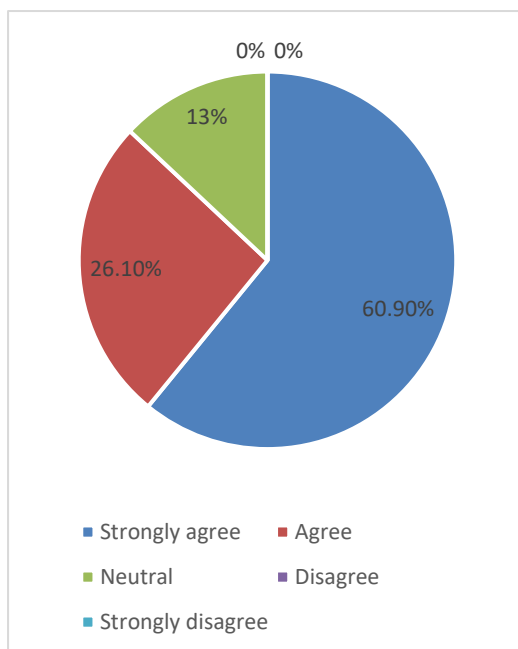
Due to a lack of English language skills, 56.5% of participants strongly agreed, and 34.8% agreed that they do not participate actively in class. Students with inadequate English proficiency do not participate actively in class because they cannot readily express themselves and have no interaction with the lecturers, as agreed by 91.3% of the participants agreed

Failure to understand subjects' content



56.5 % of participants strongly agree, and 34.4 % agree that getting assistance in comprehending English classes or textbooks published in English is beneficial. 90.9% of participants believed that a lack of English proficiency prevented them from learning course topics.

Figure 9: Poor Engagement in Learning and Tendency to Memorize Content



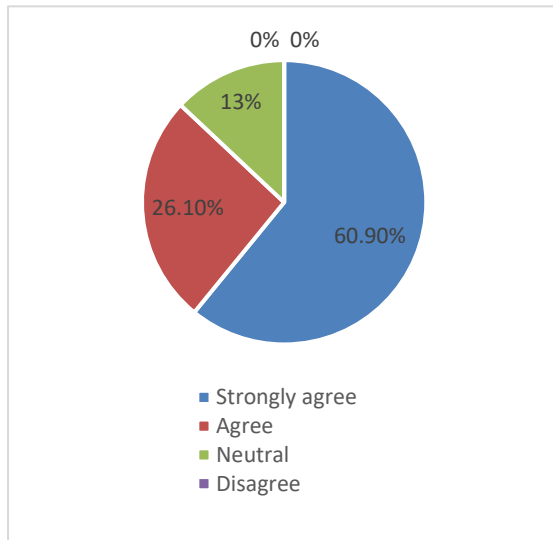
60.9% of participants strongly agree, and 26.1 % agree that students with poor English language proficiency tend to be less engaged with their learning material and to memorise it. 87% of participants agreed that a lack of English proficiency leads to a lack of motivation to learn and a tendency to memorise course material because they must to express themselves clearly. They are displeased.

Poor English language proficiency hindered students' academic success, as indicated by the preceding graph. Since they cannot interact with the lecturer, they cannot actively participate in the lesson. Avary and Carolla (2008) found that low English language proficiency levels can impede academic achievement and full engagement with academic content. Students with low English proficiency will not successfully achieve their academic performance. They will need support to understand exams and tests questionnaire because they are formulated in English. Feast (2002) emphasised that students are only likely to succeed if they comprehend instructors and respond to questions, complete assignments, and take exams in the language of instruction.

Consequently, students with inadequate English proficiency were compelled to memorise course material to pass their courses. One should imagine what will happen if such a student sits for the exams and faces them with different instructions from what they saw. Indeed, they will fail the exams, and it will affect their performance. Sivaraman et al. (2014) confirmed that students' performance in engineering courses was affected by their lack of or poor English proficiency. It is undoubtedly understood that students must make an effort to overcome their English proficiency gaps to enhance their academic performance.

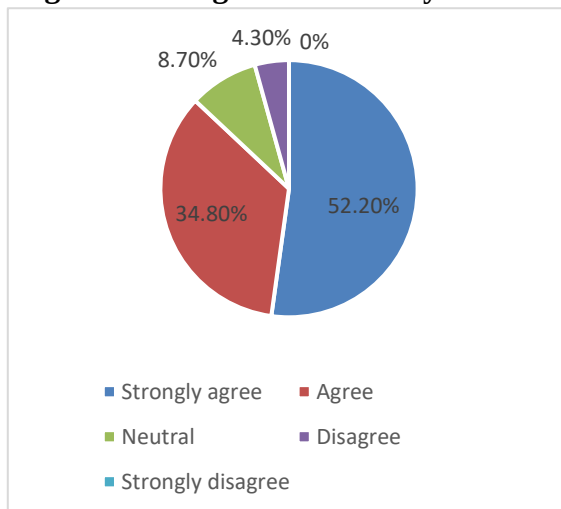
4.2.2.3 EFFECTS OF ENGLISH PROFICIENCY VIS A VIS THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Figure 10: Positive outlook on English Proficiency and Academic Success



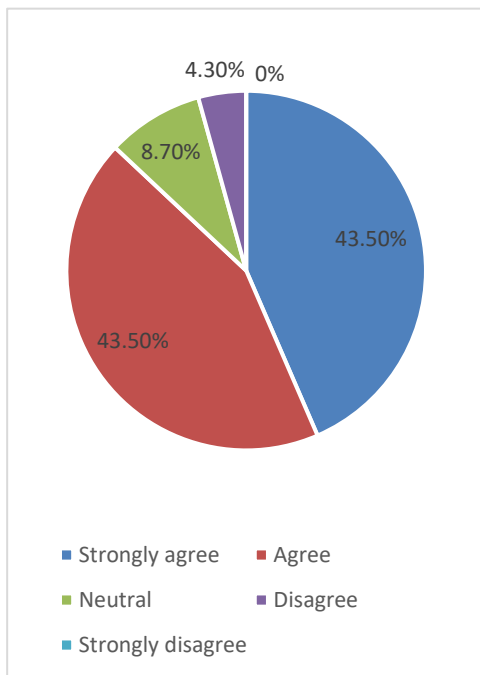
60.9% of respondents strongly agree and 26.1% agree that they have developed a positive attitude towards English proficiency and academic performance. In other words, 87% of participants agreed that a positive attitude could lead to English mastery and academic success.

Figure 11: English Proficiency and Creativity



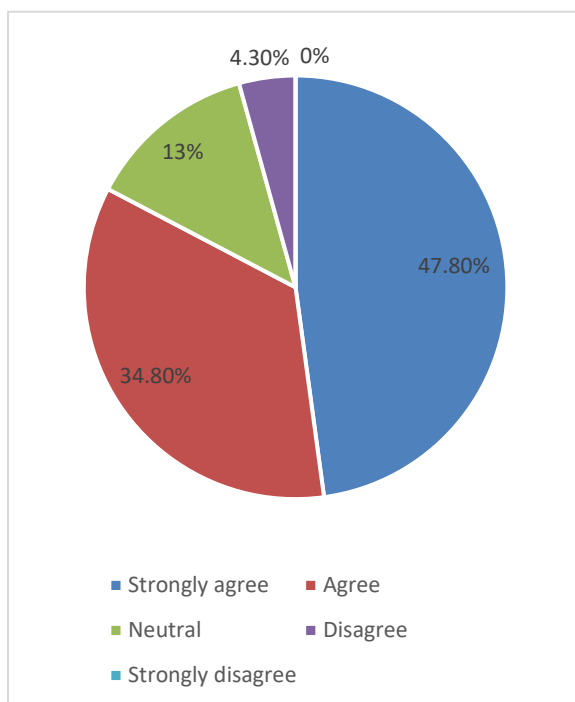
52.2% of the participants strongly agree and 34.8% agree that students with English proficiency can be innovative when examining various English-written documents. 87% of participants agreed that English proficiency enhances creativity.

Figure 12: English Language Proficiency and Profession Opportunities



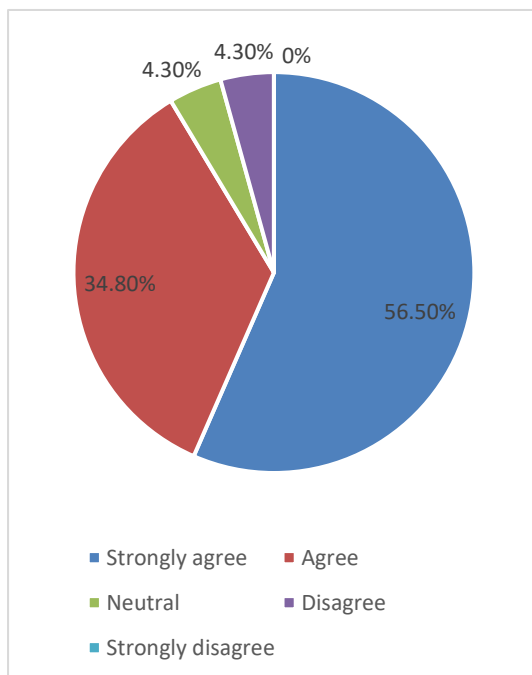
43.5 % of respondents and 43.5 % of respondents agree that English proficiency increases student career opportunities. 87% of participants agreed that English proficiency increases career opportunities for students and graduates. Due to their proficiency in English, they are can easily express their knowledge and abilities which could impress the managers or employers

Figure 13: English Proficiency and Engineering Course Performance



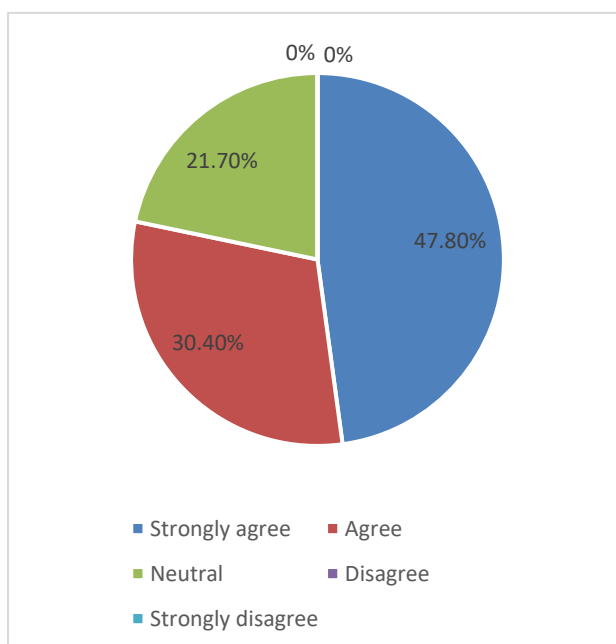
47.8 % of participants strongly agree, and 34.8 % agree that their English performance helped them improve their proficiency in various engineering courses. That 82.6% of respondents concluded that English proficiency helped them succeed in other engineering courses.

Figure 14: English Proficiency and the Capability to Work Abroad



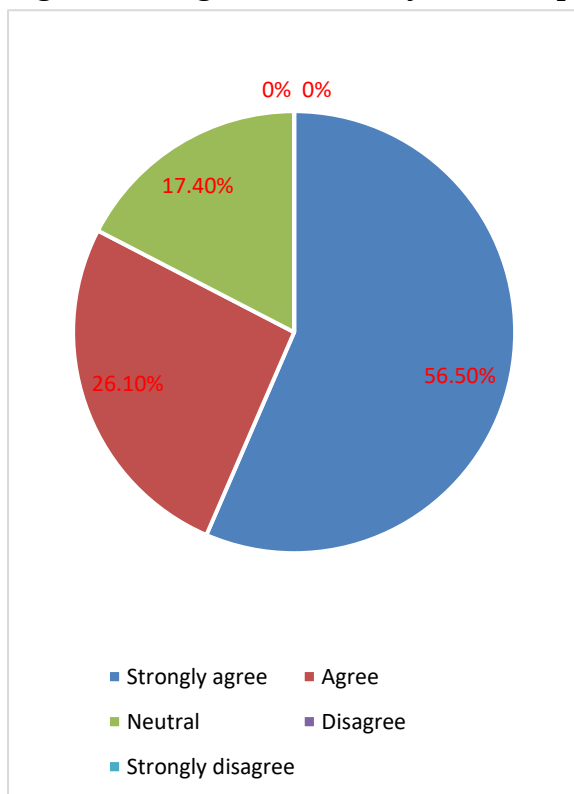
56.5% of respondents are strongly in agreement, and 34.8% are in agreement that English proficiency makes students more globally acceptable or enables them to work in English-speaking countries. In other words, 91.3% of participants agreed that English proficiency enables students to work in other English-speaking countries because they can communicate with English speakers. This results in their international acceptance and recognition.

Figure 15: English Proficiency and Interaction with Professors and Employers



47.8% of respondents strongly agree, and 30.4% agree that they can easily communicate with professors, authorities, and employers. That 78.2% of the participants concurred that students with English proficiency can easily communicate with lecturers, authorities, and employers or College leaders

Figure 16: English Proficiency and Comprehension of Course Material and Readings



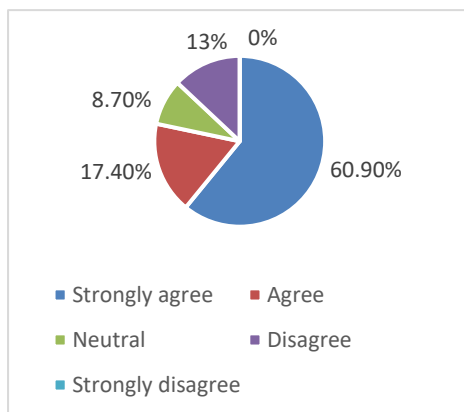
56.5 % of respondents strongly agree, and 26.1 % believe that English ability is necessary to comprehend the substance of what they have learned and read. Results suggested that 82.6% of participants thought English-proficient students can understand course content and reading materials.

The above figures and graphs illustrate the impact of English competence on student achievement. Students comprehend course information and read diverse English-language learning resources. They connect efficiently with professors and other academic authorities, which enhances their knowledge. Consequently, knowledge is quickly and readily. Possessing a command of the English language opens the door to various employment prospects, as it facilitates communication with national and international employers. In addition, students emphasised that a good attitude towards English Proficiency leads to academic performance, i.e., mastering English enhances their confidence and communication. Bandura's studies (1984,1997,2006) found that students' self-efficacy strongly predicts performance. Ching (2002) observed that students with firm self-efficacy beliefs were confident in their abilities and set ambitious goals for themselves. Students were quick to enhance their performance. Nevertheless, English empowers students to invent and explore various materials.

4.2.2.4 STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY IN TEACHING AND LEARNING FOR ENGINEERING STUDENTS

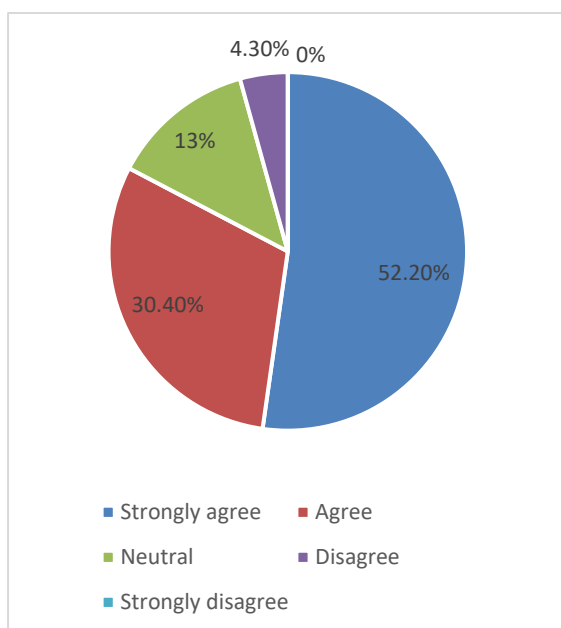
English has predominated as a language of communication in business and technology. It has also been approved in higher learning institutions and colleges as a medium of instruction. Hence academics and employers expect students to be proficient in English to acquire knowledge and skills and compete in the labour market. However, it was found that they must be adequate strategies to teach and learn the language to ensure students have the required four (4) skills. The strategies must also cope with the student's needs, learning styles and environment. The below-collected data reflects what strategy students need to improve English proficiency.

Figure 17: English Instruction for All Levels (6-7)



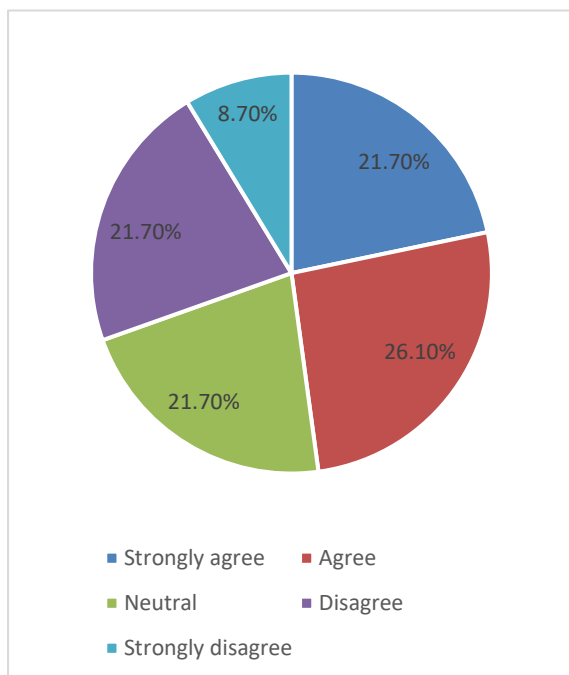
to enhance their English proficiency. 60.9% of respondents are strongly in agreement and 17.4, % are in agreement that teaching in English at all levels, from levels 6 to 7, would assist students in enhancing their English skills. 88.3% of participants require English instruction at all levels from level 6 to level 7. This will assist them.

Figure 18: Emphasis on teaching speaking and writing



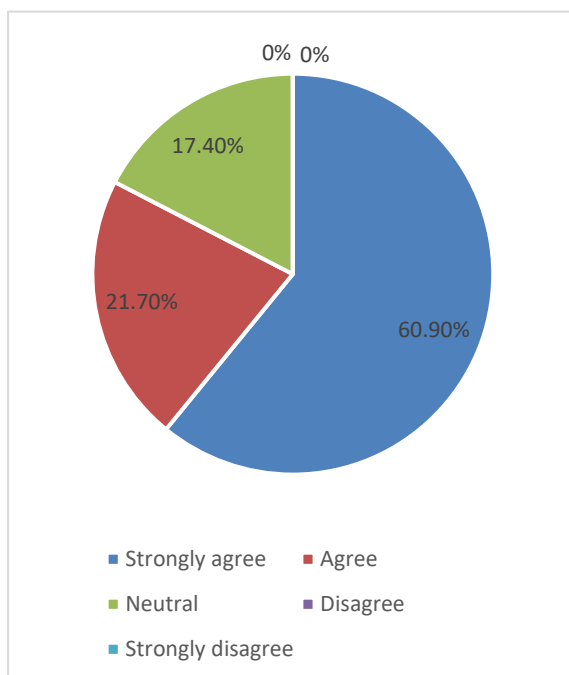
52% of respondents strongly agree, and 30.4% agree that instruction focuses on sharpening speaking and writing skills. In other words, 82.4% of respondents felt that training in speaking and writing abilities will help students enhance their English ability.

Figure 19: Increasing Instructional Time



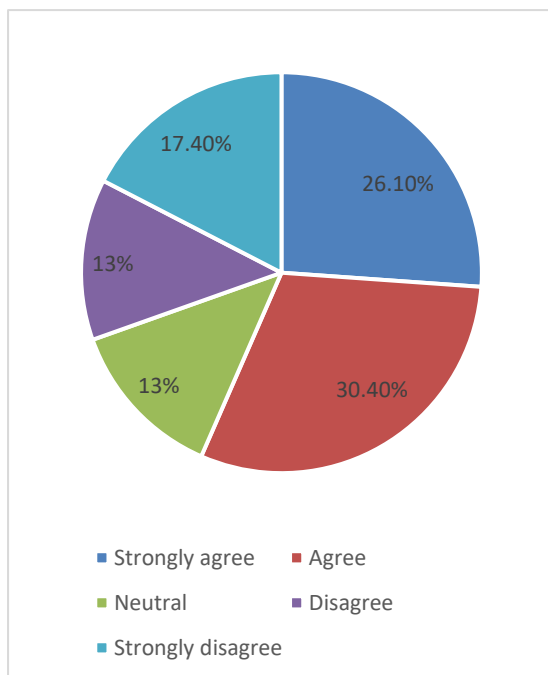
21.7% of the participants strongly agree, and 26.10% agree that English teaching hours should be increased; however, 21.7% are neutral and 21.7% disagree that increasing teaching hours would help them improve their English proficiency. In other words, 47.8 % of respondents agree that increasing English teaching will help students improve their English ability. 52% of the participants, however, or were opposed to the point that expanding teaching hours would help students learn and improve their English ability.

Figure 20: Participating in English club Competitions and Other Organized Events



60.9% of respondents strongly agree and 21.7% agree that requiring students to participate in English clubs and organised English language competitions will aid students in upgrading their English language competence. In other words, 82.6% of respondents felt that requiring or urging students to engage in English clubs and other relevant competitions would aid in their English proficiency development.

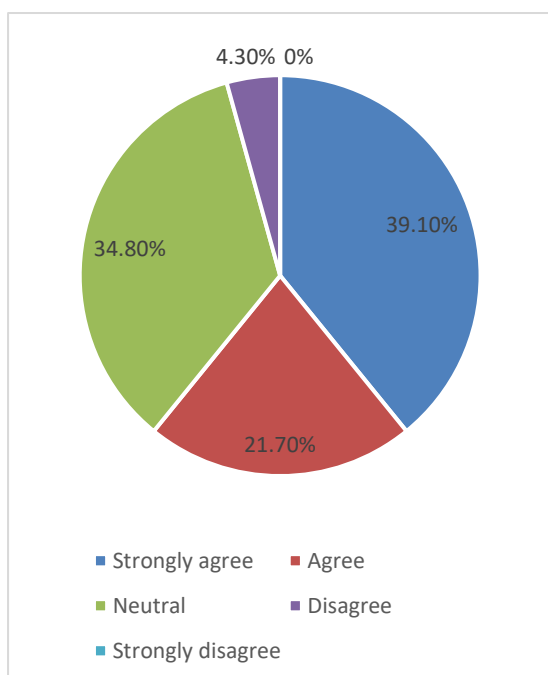
Figure 21: Placement of students at Various Proficiency Levels



26.10% of respondents strongly agree, and 30.4% are also in agreement that placing students at different levels of English competence will help them enhance their English proficiency. Nonetheless, 13% of participants are neutral, 13% are opposed, and 17.4% are extremely opposed to the notion that placement based on English skills will help them enhance their English proficiency. 56.5 % of respondents agreed that placing students in different levels of English proficiency will help them learn. In comparison, 43.4% disagreed or had doubts that doing so will

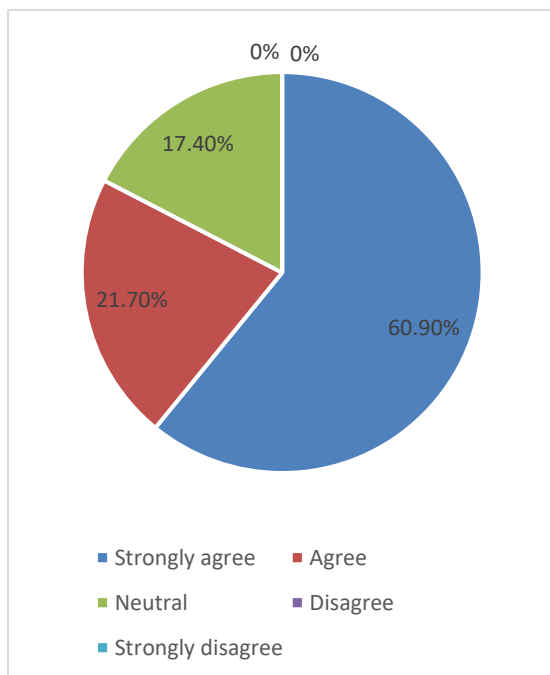
help them learn and enhance their English proficiency.

Figure 22: Use of ICT in English Teaching and Learning



39.1% of respondents strongly agreed, and 21.7% agreed that using ICT in teaching and learning English will help students enhance their English proficiency, while 34.8% were indifferent and 4.3% disagreed,. 60% of the participants agree that integrating ICT into teaching and learning English will help them improve their English proficiency, whereas 39.2% of the participants think that ICT integration into teaching and learning English will help them improve their English proficiency.

Figure 23: English Proficiency and Reading Culture



60.9% of respondents strongly agreed, and 21.70 % agreed that encouraging a culture of reading among students will help them improve their English proficiency. In other words, 82.6% of participants agreed that a reading culture will help students improve their English proficiency.

Students proposed strategies that can help them to improve their English proficiency. They think that English should be taught at all levels (level 6 up to level 7 in the TVET framework, from year I to year III). They said that teachers could focus on speaking and writing skills. However, they disagreed that increasing the teaching hours of English could help them improve their English proficiency. They are also convinced that having a culture of reading, joining English clubs and participating in debate competitions could upgrade their English proficiency. They will have other opportunities to learn English in other environments, namely in clubs where they will learn from their colleagues outside of the classrooms, and self-coaching while reading books, acquiring other knowledge and skills teachers might not have delivered in classrooms. Lastly, students have also proposed hiring teachers who are strong in English.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

This study investigated the degree of correlation between English language proficiency and overall average academic performance in RP, particularly at IPRC-KIGALI, among engineering students in year II (Civil Engineering, Electrical and Electronics Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, and Information and Communication Technology) or level six (6) of the TVET framework. It had to achieve the following objectives:

- a) Identify English language proficiency gaps for students at IPRC-Kigali levels six (6)
- b) Determine the impact of limited English proficiency on academic performance.
- c) Illustrate how advanced English language proficiency affects average academic performance overall.

The SPSS data analysis revealed a p-value of less than 0.05, demonstrating a significant relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Thus, there is a significant correlation between English proficiency and academic achievement in engineering level 6 students. Overall, there is a correlation between English proficiency and academic achievement of students enrolled in the first continuing education course of IPRC-KIGALI.

The results indicated that students need more English proficiency since 82.6% of participants did not understand the course material. 91.3% of participants need to participate actively. 87% of participants tend to memorise course material because they need to engage in learning and communicate clearly. 82.6% of the participants need help understanding questions of the various assessments, resulting in poor academic performance. Despite the students' low level of English proficiency, the data obtained confirmed a significant correlation between English proficiency and academic achievement.

5.2 Recommendations

The findings determined that students with limited English proficiency face difficulties in academic performance, whereas students with advanced English proficiency excel in their studies. Moreover, the results confirmed a significant positive correlation between English proficiency and academic performance.

To improve the student's English proficiency, we suggest the following:

1. MINEDUC could assist RP in partnering with various universities, academic institutions, and non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) to provide teaching and learning materials and build the English instructors' teaching capacity.
2. RP shall develop a language policy indicating the use of English as a medium of instruction. The primary objective of the policy is to ensure that all students can develop their English language skills to succeed in their academic studies, obtain employment in the global economy, and communicate effectively with individuals from diverse backgrounds.
3. RP shall review the curriculum to meet the needs of Engineering students' English language proficiency to ensure their excellent academic performance and success. Hence RP shall conduct a need assessment (current situation, desired situation) to tailor the course content following Engineering students' needs and future careers. It has to prioritize English for Specific Purpose (ESP) to ensure students are ready for effective workplace communication.
4. RP also shall enforce the use of English in administration and raise awareness of the importance of English proficiency in academic settings.
5. RP and IPRCs shall regularly build the English trainers' capacity to ensure effective teaching and learning and provide the necessary teaching and learning materials. They shall also d establish a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) l in colleges for English teachers to discuss the best practice and find solutions to problems encountered in teaching and learning English.

APPENDIX

RECOMMENDATION LETTER

MUKESHIMANA Claude

Kigali, 01/02/2022

Masters in Education English –Education

UR-College of Education

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Tel: 0788550121

E-mail: claudemuke@gmail.com

To: The Dean of School of Education

UR-CE



Through: My supervisor Dr. MFURANKUNDA Pravda

Dear Sir,

Re: Application for a research recommendation letter

This letter serves to apply for a research recommendation letter that will enable me to collect data as part of my field work in Rwanda Polytechnic/ IPRC-Kigali.

I am a Masters student in English Education at the University of Rwanda, College of Education, Department of Humanities and Language Education. I am currently conducting research on “**Investigating the Correlation of English Language Proficiency and Academic Performance in RP (Rwanda Polytechnic). The case of IPRC-Kigali**” in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Master of Education in English-Education.

I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



MUKESHIMANA Claude

Directorate of Research and Innovation (UR-DRI)
SECTION A: Project Information

Project title:			
Investigators:	MUKESHIMANA Claude		
Student No.	219016125		
Co-Investigators (if applicable): None			
Supervisor/s: Dr. MFURANKUNDA Pravda			
Contact details of Investigators:	Phone 0788511297	Fax	E-mail: pmfurankunda@gmail.com
Degree enrolled in (if applicable):	Master's Degree of Education in English-Education		
Project location:	This research will be conducted in RP (Rwanda Polytechnic), specifically at IPRC-KIGALI.		
Project duration:	9 months		

SECTION B: Ethical Review Application (To be filled by Applicant (s))
Please answer all of the following questions

1. Who are the research participants and how will they be recruited? The research participants will be IPRC-Kigali students studying in year I and year II engineering programs
1.1. In this study the sample is selected judgmentally/purposively
b) Population The research will be conducted in IPRC-Kigali. That is, participants will be students studying in IPRC-Kigali, especially year I and II in all departments (Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, ICT and Electrical and Electronics Engineering) since English modules, Apply preadvanced English at workplace module is delivered in year I while Communication skills module is in year II are delivered in two consecutive academic years.
c) Sample size All year I and II students will not be part of the research. I will sample students with high English proficiency, who have at least or above 70 % score in English modules and I will compare their scores with their overall performance to find out the correlation.

2. Provide a brief summary of the project:

The study will look into the correlation of English language proficiency and positive academic

performance for IPRC-KIGALI students. It will particularly indicate students' English language proficiency gaps at IPRC-Kigali level 6 and 7, identify the effect of poor English language proficiency on academic performance and predict positive academic performance from good English language proficiency.

3. Outline the research plan:

- Chapter one: General introduction and problem statement and objectives - Chapter two: Literature review.
- Chapter three: Research methodology.
- Chapter five: Data presentation, Analysis, interpretation and Discussion, Conclusions, Recommendations.

4. How will informed consent be obtained from participants?

The participation in the study will be voluntary and there will not be any form of compulsion or undue pressures.

5. Provide details of procedures for establishing confidentiality and protecting privacy of participants.

Information collected will be used for the purpose of this academic research only and the participants will be assured of their confidentiality before participating in the study.

The address and identification of the study participants will be kept anonymous and will not be disclosed to anyone.

6. Provide details of data collection, security and storage:

All data collected will be referable back to its source as much as possible. This paper makes use of quotations in various instances but included the appropriate source as well.

7. Give details of whether and/or how feedback will be available to participants:

Participants will be given feedback after the presentation of the paper. The summary of the findings together with the recommendations will be shared through e-mails.

8. Does the project involve any of the following procedures?

a) 41

b) Participant involvement by any "vulnerable groups." (If YES, give details): **No**

c) **Does the project involve any other disciplines and/or Ethics Committees?** (If YES, please state which and what approval has already been obtained - attach documentation.)
: **NO**

d) **Will payments to participants be made?** (If YES, state amount and whether payment is for out-of-pocket expenses, or a fee.): **NO**

e) Will the project receive financial support? (i) If YES, specify the nature and source of the support: If YES, have any restrictions been imposed upon the conduct of the research? (If YES, specify the nature of the restrictions): None	
f) Will any restrictions be placed on the publication of results? (If YES, please state the nature of the restrictions): NO	
g) Are there any other points you wish to make in justification of the proposed study? : None	
h) Please complete the items on the checklist shown below. (Write either YES or NO in the box following each item)	YES/NO
(i) Have you completed all the questions on this form that are applicable to your project?	YES
(ii) Have you attached an informed consent form (see below)?	YES
(iii) Have you attached a sample questionnaire or interview schedule (if applicable)?	YES

Signature of Proposer: Claude M. (provisional signature) Date: January 12th, 2021

SECTION C: Ethical Scrutiny by supervisor

To be completed by supervisor:

[Delete A or B]

- A. This research is considered ethically acceptable. It does not involve any of the following: ☐ research on live animals other than non-intrusive observational studies in the wild
- research involving children under the age of 16, people diagnosed as suffering from a serious physical or mental disease or handicap, people who have undergone what would generally be regarded as traumatic experiences related to the area of research now or in the past, or people who would be judged by any reasonable person to be especially vulnerable
 - experiments or clinical trials carried out on human subjects
 - a power relationship such as teacher/pupil, doctor/patient, employer/employee etc.
 - covert methods or where informed consent cannot or will not be sought, except for research on 'public situations' such as the behaviour of crowds or groups of people in circumstances where the researcher has a right to be present.
 - research where the identity of the subjects/informants/participants cannot be concealed, unless they are specifically to be made aware of this and provide their signed consent
 - research, which might reasonably be judged at risk of causing harm, distress or discomfort to people or groups (including social stigmatization/penalty, commercial disadvantage or environmental damage or degradation)
- B. This proposal should be referred to the Research and Ethics Screening Committee (RESC) for review.

Signature: _____



Name: _Dr Pravda MFURANKUNDA

Date: __01____/ __02____/
__2022____ dd mm yyyy

QUESTIONNAIRE

To the participant:

Thank you for agreeing to take part in the study examining the relationship between academic achievement in RP and English language proficiency (Rwanda Polytechnic). The IPRC-KIGALI case. The study will look at the relationship between academic success and English language competency.

You are cordially invited to take part in this study by responding to the questionnaire's questions. Your answers will be kept confidential, you won't need to give your identities, and the questionnaire will be anonymous.

We make sure that you maintain your confidentiality, that we protect your rights and welfare while making sure that you don't suffer any negative consequences as a result of your participation in this study, that there is no information manipulation or withholding, that we present the information and transcripts used in this study in a way that preserves the participant's dignity, and that, if we are unsure, we first consult with you.

Your contribution to the academic ecosystem will benefit education as a whole.

Yours sincerely

Participant's signature of agreement: _____

Date: _____

This questionnaire intends to gather data on the relationship between academic success at IPRC-Kigali and English language proficiency. It is divided into five (5) categories, including background information on the respondents, the importance of the English language, the consequences of misusing it, the consequences of using it correctly, and students' performance. Hence, there are closed and open questions. For the closed question, you must check the box next to the proper response with a tick (✓), and for the open question, you must type your answer in the space provided.

SECTION A: Respondents' Background Information

Please tick [✓] in the appropriate box provided to indicate your answers.

1. Please indicate your department:

- a. Civil Engineering ☐
- b. Electrical and Electronics Engineering ☐
- c. Mechanical Engineering ☐
- d. ICT ☐

SECTION B: SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

1. Please indicate the importance of using the English Language as a medium of instruction(Language used for teaching) by ticking (✓) in the appropriate box.

1= strongly disagree; 2= disagree, 3= uncertain; 4= agree; 5= strongly agree

The importance of using English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI)	strongly disagree	disagree	uncertain	agree	strongly agree	agree
It promotes the internationalisation of universities.						
It improves the employability prospects of local students.						
It is used widely in science, technology and business.						
It has gained student importance in our educational program.						
It results in improved and faster acquisition of knowledge.						
It enhances the student's academic progress in other subjects.						

- What are other benefits of using English as a Medium of Instruction(Language used for teaching) at College or in your future career as an Engineer?

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SECTION C: EFFECTS OF POOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

2. Please indicate the effect of poor English Language proficiency on Academic performance/academic achievement by ticking (✓) in the appropriate box

1= strongly disagree; 2= disagree, 3= Neutral ; 4= agree; 5= strongly agree

The effects of poor English Language proficiency	strongly disagree	disagree	Neutral	agree	strongly agree
reduces the ability to understand concepts					
Reduces the capacity to understand the course content					
Need help understanding questions of different assessments.					
Do not participate actively in class.					
Need help understanding lessons delivered in English or textbooks written in English.					
Students who do not understand English tend to engage less with their learning material and learn by memorisation.					

- What are other negative effects of poor English Language proficiency on academic performance/academic achievement?

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SECTION D: EFFECT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY ON STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE

3. Please indicate the effects of English Language proficiency on students' performance by ticking (✓) in the appropriate box.

1= strongly disagree; 2= disagree, 3= neutral; 4= agree; 5= strongly agree

the effects of English Language proficiency on students' Performance	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Students develop a positive attitude to English and academic performance/academic achievement.					
It enhances carrier opportunities for students.					
It helps to improve the proficiency level of students in different engineering courses.					
It makes students globally accepted/or enables students to work in other English-speaking countries.					
Students can easily communicate with lecturers, authorities and job providers.					
Students can quickly grasp the content of what they were taught and read.					
Students can innovate as they explore different documents written in English.					

- What are the other positive effects of English Language proficiency towards students' performance?

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**SECTION E: STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE
PROFICIENCY IN TEACHING AND LEARNING FOR
ENGINEERING
STUDENTS IN IPRC-KIGALI.**

4. Please indicate strategies for improving the English language proficiency of engineering students in IPRC-Kigali by ticking (✓) in the appropriate box.

1= strongly disagree; 2= disagree, 3= neutral; 4= agree; 5= strongly agree

strategies for improving the English language proficiency of engineering students in IPRC-Kigali	strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree
Teach English across all levels from level 6 to level 7.					
Focus on teaching speaking and writing skills.					
Increase teaching hours					
Request all students to participate in the English club and other organised English language competitions in IPRC-Kigali.					
Place students into different levels so of proficiency(beginners, intermediate, advanced) so that students of the same English proficiency have their class rather than mixing poor and advanced students.					
Use ICT while teaching and learning English.					
Encourage the students to have a culture of reading.					

- What other strategies or practices would help engineer student improve their English language proficiency?

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We thank you for contributing to the research; your information will be helpful to the improvement of English language teaching and learning in IPRC-Kigali

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