



REPUBLIQUE DU BENIN



\*\*\*\*\*

MINISTRE DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPERIEUR ET DE LA RECHERCHE  
SCIENTIFIQUE

\*\*\*\*\*

UNIVERSITE D'ABOMEY-CALAVI

\*\*\*\*\*

ECOLE NORMALE SUPERIEURE DE PORTO-NOVO

\*\*\*\*\*

DOMAINE : SCIENCES DE L'EDUCATION ET DE LA FORMATION

MENTION : PROFESSORAT DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SECONDAIRE

GRADE : LICENCE/BAPES

FILIERE : ANGLAIS

# MEMOIRE DE FIN DE CYCLE

THEME :

EFL LEARNERS' POOR INVOLVEMENT IN  
CLASSROOM LEARNING ACTIVITES: A CASE  
STUDY OF LYCEE BEHANZIN

Présenté et soutenu par :

GONNI Oscar Tobias

Professeur-Assistant à l'ENS

Sous la direction du :

Dr. Juvénale AGBAYAHOUN

ANNÉE ACADÉMIQUE : 2013-2014

# DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my parents Kossi Noël GONNI and Hortense GUEZO for their everyday support to my brothers and me.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is a duty for me to address my sincere thanks to all those who, in whatever way, have contributed so far in my education and guidance. Therefore, my thanks go to:

- The almighty God, the giver of life and knowledge,
- Dr Juvénale AGBAYAHOUN whose constant advice and assistance have helped me in completing this work,
- All the teachers who taught me from the first to the third year of my training at the Teacher Training College of Porto-Novo,
- My parents.

God bless you all

# ACRONYMS

EFL : English as a Foreign Language

ENS: Ecole Normale Supérieure

CAEB : Conseil des Activités Educatives du Bénin

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>CONTENTS</u>	<u>PAGES</u>
DEDICATION.....	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	ii
ACRONYMS.....	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	v
GENERAL INTRODUCTION.....	1
<u>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY.....</u>	<u>3</u>
1-1 Problem statement.....	3
1-2 Purpose of the study.....	4
1-3 Research question.....	4
1-4 Significance of the study .....	4
<u>CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....</u>	<u>6</u>
2-1 Home factors.....	6
2-2 Hereditary factors.....	7
2-3- School factors.....	7
2-3-1- The teacher's attitude.....	7
2-3-2- Competency.....	7
2-3-3- Infrastructural Facilities.....	8
2-3-4- The selection of the suitable learning methods and teaching .....	8
2-4- Learners related factors.....	8
2-4-1- Students' health.....	9
2-4-2- Readiness and maturation of the learner.....	9
2-4-3- Self image perception.....	9

2-4-4- Peer group influence.....	10
2-4-5- Learners' attitude.....	10
2-5-The activity method.....	11
2-6- The project method.....	12
2-7- The Dalton or individual method.....	13
2-8- The group method.....	14
<u>CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY.....</u>	<u>15</u>
3-1- The sample population.....	15
3-2- The research instruments.....	15
3-3- Research in libraries and on the Internet.....	16
3-4- Data collection and analysis.....	16
<u>CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA.....</u>	<u>18</u>
4-1- Data presentation.....	18
4-2- Analysis of findings.....	24
<u>CHAPTER FIVE: RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS.....</u>	<u>30</u>
5-1- Recommendations.....	30
5-2- Suggestions.....	31
5-2-1- Suggestions to EFL teachers.....	31
5-2-2- Suggestion to EFL learners.....	32
5-2-3- Suggestion to learners' parents.....	33
CONCLUSION.....	34
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	35
APPENDIX.....	36

## INTRODUCTION

English is the most used language all over the world. It continues to be the world standard language and there is no major threat to the language or to its global popularity. The use of English in the domains of science, technology and commerce widely contributes to the spread of the language.

Some African countries were earlier aware of the English language importance and that is certainly the reason why it has been introduced in most schools of African countries. Benin belongs to the list of these countries. English has been taught in Benin for decades now in our secondary schools. For many students, schools and colleges are the places where they are exposed to this foreign language. Unfortunately, they don't make profit from these occasions because of their poor involvement in classroom learning activities. This fact has attracted my attention as I have myself come in contact with it.

According to my remarks, EFL students' level is more and more decreasing. Thus, the question that first comes to my mind is why do so many EFL learners in Benin show so poor involvement? That question leads me then to choose my topic which is entitled: "EFL learners' poor involvement in classroom learning activities".

My aim in choosing this topic, is to examine the problems that learners face during classroom activities and outside the school as far as learning EFL is concerned. It is also to make teachers of English aware of some realities that occur during classroom activities but that they may not be conscious of. This might lead them to pay more attention to how to work with the students mainly those who don't participate to activities.

The methodological approach used for this research leads me to organize the whole work into five main chapters. Apart from the introduction and the conclusion which respectively opens and closes the study, the first chapter

entitled "introduction to the study" deals with the problem statement, the purpose of the study, the research question and the significance of the study. Chapter two displays the literature review whereas chapter three is about the research methodology of the study. In chapter four, I make a full analysis of the different results related to questions contained in my questionnaires handed to learners. Finally, the last chapter, chapter five relates to the recommendations and the suggestions for the improvement of learners' involvement.

## CHAPTER ONE : INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

### 1-1- Problem statement

The principal aim in any teaching procedure is to bring learners to achieve some objectives that can be summarized in the acquisition of some given skills or knowledge. To achieve these objectives, both teachers and learners are concerned. The teacher's role then is to bring the information and to make up activities so that students can learn and acquire or develop the skill he wants them to. As far as the student's role is concerned, he has to get as fully as possible involved in the given activities so that to make the class session profitable to himself. Thus, students' involvement in classroom learning activities is very important for the good implementation of the courses. Unfortunately, this is not what happens in most of EFL classes because there are some students who sometimes don't even pay attention to what is going on during class sessions. Most of the students consider the English language as an inaccessible field that they have to fear all the time because it lowers their average mark. But where the shoe pinches is that the majority of those students are neglected or misunderstood by both their mates and their teachers. A proverb says that there is no smoke without fire. Very often those students are blamed without any further investigation into what actually is wrong with them. Some, then, are frustrated and start developing some negative attitudes to learning.

## 1-2- Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is, therefore, to examine the factors that account for learners' poor involvement in learning English as a foreign language. Indeed, the study focuses on identifying both internal and external factors. The former involve all observable aspects related to the classroom and the school environment that account for the learners' poor involvement in EFL classroom learning activities and the latter have to do with learners' lives outside the school.

## 1-3- Research question

To achieve this purpose, the study has answered the following question: why are EFL learners poor involved in classroom learning activities?

## 1-4- Significance of the study

I have chosen to work on this topic because I want the betterment of EFL teaching and learning. Indeed, problems become easy to solve when their real causes are known. My study will enable teachers to know what to do when their learners show poor involvement in classroom activities. They will consequently be aware that students are not the same and that they need to take this into account in each activity they design. Such a behavior will get teachers close to their students. Thus, the learning and teaching process will occur in a relax and good atmosphere.

If teachers put into practice the suggestions made in this study, it will help students very much. EFL learners will get rid of their negative attitude toward learning. They will constantly endeavor to involve themselves in

every classroom learning activity that they are given the opportunity to carry out. They will also make efforts to improve their proficiency in English.

This work is divided into five chapters. The first chapter deals with the introduction to the study. The second chapter presents the literature review. The third gives information about the methodology of the study. The data collected and their analysis are presented in chapter four. The fifth chapter includes the discussion of the results and the suggestions made to improve EFL teaching and learning so as to avoid students' poor involvement in classroom learning activities.

## CHAPTER TWO : LITERATURE REVIEW

Learners all over the world and especially those Beninese behave in dissimilar manners when they are faced to learning English as a foreign language, a language different from their mother tongue. Though students are taught the same way in the same class, many of them do not involve themselves in classroom activities because of certain problems related to the inside-class and/or outside-class. The present literature review deals in first position with the different factors that account for students' poor involvement in classroom learning activities. Then, in second position, it gives some methods to be used to attract students' full attention.

### 2-1- Home factors

The type of home a child is exposed to determines the nature and the way he/she learns. Home is not only the physical structure. For Adedayo (2010, p.103) "it's consisted of the parents, the learners' siblings, relatives, and physical fittings like furniture, electronics and also the prevailing atmospheric conditions in the place". All these make a home and Adedayo (2010, p.104) continues by saying that "his home invariably becomes the bedrock on which the future intellectual activities of the child rest." Thus there is no doubt that the nature of each home will be reflected on the child's learning. In addition to what have been said, the socio-economic background of the learner's parents can affect a child's learning in class. But, Adedayo didn't stop there. He (2010, p.204) also estimated that there are some school factors that can contribute to EFL learners' poor involvement in classroom learning activities.

## 2-2- Hereditary factors

According to Adedayo (2010, p.103) it is :

"The transfer of trait through genes from one generation to the other especially from parents to offspring. For instance, the genes determine whether the child will be dull or clever. In this case, the gene determines the nature of the child's intelligence."

That is to say that if the parents are bright, perhaps, with high intelligence quotient, it is possible for their children to be high intelligent and vice-versa.

## 2-3- School factors

After the child's home, the next most important type of environment is the school. Here are some of them:

### 2-3-1- The teacher's attitude

Today's teachers' attitudes in the schools are more and more depreciated in so far as these attitudes directly have impacts on learners. So many teachers do not want to teach; so that when they found themselves teaching, their attitude greatly affect their productivity. As Adedayo (2010, p.204) said, "many prefer selling materials to teaching in class for economic purpose" instead of teaching.

### 2-3-2- Competency

Many teachers do not adequately prepare for their classes. inadequate and bad preparation can dramatically affect a child's learning.

### 2-3-3- Infrastructural Facilities

In addition to the availability of Instructional materials and teaching aids which are very crucial to the child's learning according to Adedayo (2010, p.105) the nature of infrastructural facilities in schools also can affect learning. For instance, it has been established that when pupils learn under conducive school environment with good benches and desks, less crowded classroom along with modern learning gadgets etc, they learn better than where these things are not available.

### 2-3-4- The selection of the suitable learning methods and teaching

There are sufficient methods and a number of good techniques available for the teaching and learning of different subjects and areas of experiences. The results of learning are always influenced by the nature and quality of the methods and techniques employed for the teaching and learning of a particular content, subject matter or learning experiences.

### 2-4- Learners related factors

There are so many factors relating to learners that can affect learning, these are :

#### 2-4-1- Students' health

A healthy child is a wealthy child. Just as Adedayo (2010, p.106) holds, "the child's state of health is very crucial factor that can affect child's learning". A child who is always sick may probably miss many class lessons leading to poor involvement that will cause poor performance.

#### 2-4-2- Readiness and maturation of the learner

Maturation and readiness are twin concepts that can also affect learning. Maturation is the qualitative increase in physiology of a child. This also goes with the passage of time. It is also natural. With the passage of time, that individual increases in age. As said by Adedayo (2010, p.106) "every other organ in the body begins to mature. This maturation also in a way implies a child's readiness to learn." Indeed, it goes along with the chronological age of the child that's why the author (2010, p.106) affirms that "without doubt, the age of the child determines what he/she will learn and how he/she learns it ". Thus, readiness, maturation, mental and chronological age are interwoven and affect learning.

#### 2-4-3- Self image perception

This is the way an individual child sees himself/herself in relationship with his/her environment. As I will say it in "learners' attitudes", it was established that self image perception affects learning. Things are already clear when Adedayo (2010, p.107) said that "a child that perceives he is very low, automatically will develop low self-concept and vice versa." This in turn affects his/her self-esteem and self-actualization which, at last resort, impacts the learner.

#### 2-4-4- Peer group influence

The type of friends a learner keeps, can affect his/her learning. Adedayo (2010, p.107) holds that "Peer behavior and attitude could be acquired by a learner. Therefore the EFL learner begins to copy his/her mates' behavior" and this is capable of affecting the learner's involvement in classroom activities.

#### 2-4-5- Learners' attitude

It is believed that language learning has a pivotal role in helping human to express his opinions, hopes, and even his dreams. No matter what great efforts could be done, nobody can learn a language if he/she doesn't like it or doesn't find its importance to be learnt. So, there is an affective predisposition that leads each kind of learning. According to Hassan (2013, p.1), "among different factors contributing to foreign language learning, affective variable such as learners' attitudes is of paramount importance." Indeed, education is the powerful tool which helps to modify the behavior of the child according to the needs and expectancy of the society. Student's attitude is an integral part of learning and thus it should, therefore become an essential component of second language learning pedagogy and Hassan (2013, p2) holds that:

Attitudes toward learning are believed to influence behaviors such as selecting and reading books, speaking in a foreign language etc. Especially in Education, if the students have positive attitude towards any subject, they can achieve many things in that specific area."

There is an interaction between language learning and the environmental components in which the students were grown up. Both

negative and positive attitudes have a strong impact on the success of language learning. Hassan asserted (2013, p.2) that:

“Attitude is determined by the individual’s beliefs about outcomes or attributes of performing the behavior (behavioral beliefs), weighted by evaluations of those outcomes or attributes. Thus, a person who holds strong beliefs that positively valued outcomes will result from performing the behavior will have a positive attitude toward the behavior. Conversely, a person who holds strong beliefs that negatively valued outcomes will result from the behavior will have a negative attitude.”.

Thus, the EFL learners who have positive attitudes towards learning English will be inclined to like it and involve themselves as well as possible in classroom activities. Therefore it stands clear to our mind that attitude towards any language learning plays a crucial role in language learning as it conditions learners' success or failure.

To prevent all these different situations that put the learner at a disadvantage to happen, some very useful and effective methods can be used. In number of these methods, there are:

### 2-5- The activity method

This is the method of learning by doing; learning through participation. According to Anuforo A.M. “by doing things, children learn both to do and to know better. The activity method helps the learners to develop positive interest and the desire to work and learn.” Indeed it helps the learners to be gainfully active throughout the lesson period. The task is carried on by the entire class in a friendly atmosphere as the teacher plays his role as the facilitator of learning. This method, as developed by Anuforo (2010, p.20) has some advantages such as:

- It deals with practical experience and real life
- Lesson is real, practical and meaningful
- It helps to develop social living and create awareness
- It encourages self-education and healthy rivalry among learners
- It generates and leads to a sense of responsibility and encouragement
- It creates self discipline and respect among learners
- It encourages creativity and creates self confidence and purposeful learning
- It develops the creativity interest of the learners
- It also encourages group learning as it turns the classroom into a friendly environment.

But this method as it is said by Anuforo (2010, p.20) has its disadvantages which are the following :

- The method cannot work in a poorly equipped classroom
- It requires enough space
- The teacher may not be intellectually and physically able to deal with this method
- It is time consuming and expensive

## 2-6- The project method

This method deals with a special task for the production of something that is unique. It involves much thought and efforts. Sometimes, the class may have to visit a place of special interest outside the classroom or the school for observation and come back to embark on the task. As advantages emphasized by Anuforo (2012, p.21),

- It arouses spontaneous interest and curiosity
- It brings real activity to the work

- It helps the learners to see the progress they are making
- It brings life to school work
- It helps to develop the learner's initiative
- It encourages self reliance and responsibility on learners
- It encourages learners to persevere
- It leads to discovery and exploration

As disadvantages, it

- Takes a lot of time to complete
- Affects other school/class subjects and especially when it is conducted outside the school or community

## 2-7- The Dalton or individual method

This method originated from Dalton in the United States of America. In this method, the learners are handled individually. It consists of a series of assignments in which each learner is expected to work at his own rate with the help of the teacher as the need arises. Its advantages as cited by Anuforo (2012, p.19) are the following:

- It takes care of every learner in the class, the exceptionally brilliant, the average and the backward as provision is made for all according to their interests and abilities.
- The learners are treated as individual not as group.
- By moving from one learner to another, the teacher becomes simply a guide rather than an instructor.
- With the knowledge of the individual needs of the children, the teacher helps and gives advice to them and like a friend, he joins them in doing the work in which each child is engaged.

This method's main disadvantage is that it is time consuming.

## 2-8- The group method

This method gives the teacher more opportunity to discover the pupils and their abilities. It helps the pupils of equal abilities to learn at their own rate and remove the possibility of over feeding children at the detriment of the others.

The class may be grouped into three according to different abilities as pointed out by Anuforo (2012, p.24):

- a) small groups for the bright ones
- b) small groups for the weak
- c) other small groups for the average

After identifying the groups according to different abilities, the teacher provides each group with an appropriate assignment/activity which keeps the group fully occupied throughout the lesson period. He gives equal attention to each group but more to the weak group.

It presents many advantages as:

- It provides opportunity to develop leadership abilities and social responsibility as the groups work under group leaders
- It encourages inter-group competition
- It keeps the class together through having the same unit of instruction
- Sometimes, it facilitates the work of the teacher

The only one disadvantage of this method is that it may encourage a feeling of superiority in the ability group and inferiority in the weak group.

## **CHAPTER THREE : METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

I have used different methods in the logic of completing this research work, and these methods include selecting the sample population and the research instruments, carrying out some research in libraries and on the internet, collecting and analyzing data. The present section presents in more details this methodology.

### **3-1- The sample population**

In the topic of this research work it is clearly stated "the case study of Lycée Béhanzin". The investigations carried out in the logic of making my research work successful have, thus, covered the area of Lycée Béhanzin, a Beninese secondary school. The target population whom I addressed my questionnaire to is composed of ninety-six students of Lycée Béhanzin secondary school of Porto-Novo. Each of them has been given the opportunity to answer questions before giving me back the questionnaires.

### **3-2- The research instrument**

The main instrument used in the framework of the investigations for this research work is the questionnaire addressed to students. Copy of this questionnaire appears in the appendix.

The questionnaire addressed to students is composed of ten questions which globally bring beginner students to mention what they are really confronted with during their classroom activities and that prevent them from learning more effectively the English language.

### 3-3- Research in libraries and on the internet

My research in libraries have consisted in going to some libraries looking for documents related to my topic. These documents include books and prior dissertations from which I got some reliable data for the writing of my research work. The libraries I have actually gone to are the library of ENS, the National library situated at Ouando in Porto-Novo and the library of CAEB.

This research is completed with the help of the internet which serves an important source of information today thanks to the diverse existing websites. The articles I read and selected have contributed to the enrichment of this research work.

### 3-4- Data collection and analysis

The data collection, though it has not been easy, has enabled me to complete some data that have been submitted to analysis.

Once the questionnaire has been elaborated I went at Lycée Béhanzin handing them to English students of third form. The answers from the students were collected straightaway every time when I meet with a group of EFL learners of the targeted form, as I stayed with them explaining each question before they tick the answer of their choice. As I was also doing my teaching practice in a class of students in fourth form, I seized the occasion at the end of one class to submit them the questionnaire after explaining to them what they were expected to do.

The analysis of the data collected is quite the last step in the methodology of this research work and has consisted in a detailed study and examination of the data collected in order to understand more about the different causes related to EFL learners' poor involvement in classroom learning activities at

the secondary school concerned, that is to say, Lycée Béhanzin secondary school. The analysis has therefore helped me in making recommendations and suggestions in the logic of improving EFL teaching especially only at the said secondary school.

## CHAPTER FOUR : PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

### 4-1- Data presentation

Throughout this research work, I notice that students are not confronted to the same situations though they are in the same class. That's why their answers show a great diversity as you can see it in the following chart. Initially, of the one hundred questionnaires I gave to the students, I got back ninety-six which show that thirty-six students are in their fourth year of learning English contrary to forty-two who are in their fifth year and eighteen students, in their sixth year.

No	Questions	Answers	Number of students	Percentage
01	How long have you been learning English?	04	36	37.5%
		05	42	43.75%
		06	18	18.75%
		TOTAL	96	100%

Among these students twenty three said they like English at the opposite of seventy three who radically said they don't like English. Each of these two categories is lead by some reasons. To answer to this question, each learner is given the possibility to tick more than one box of his/her choice. Thus, fifteen students like English they understand all that the teacher says in that language. Twenty one like it because of the good marks they get in it whereas eighteen like it for the sake that they like listening to people who speak it. Nine learners because they have some English speaker

friend, like that foreign language too. As far as the learners who don't like English are concerned, thirty and fifty three don't like it respectively because they never understand when the teacher speaks English and because they don't always understand it as they want. Sixty nine of the fact that they don't have good marks in English and forty-five because they find learning English boring, don't like that international language.

02	Do you like it?	Yes, because:		
		*I understand when the teacher speaks it.	15	15.62%
		*I work get good marks in it.	21	21.87%
		*I like listening to people when they are speaking English.	18	18.75%
		*Some of my friends are English speakers.	9	9.37%
		TOTAL	96	100%
		No, because:		
		*I never understand when the teacher speaks it.	30	31.25%
		*I don't always understand it	53	55.20%
		*I don't have good marks in it.	69	71.87%
		*It is boring.	45	46.87%
		TOTAL	96	100%

Of the ninety-six learners, eighty four attend each of their English classes but twelve recognized the contrary. It happen to thirteen learners among the ninety six, not to attend an English class because they were tired; nine because they were late; twenty-five because they had a problem whereas for forty nine it is because they didn't want.

03	Do you attend each of your English classes?	a- yes	84	87.5%
		b- no	12	12.5%
		TOTAL	96	100%
04	It happened to you not to attend an English class because you:	a- were tired	13	13.54%
		b- were late	9	9.37%
		c- had a problem	25	26.04%
		d- didn't want	49	51.04%
		TOTAL	96	100%

To the question which consists in knowing if they have their students book, thirty-one learners answered "yes" at the opposite of sixty-five who didn't have it.

05	Do you have your student book?	a- yes	31	44.92%
		b- no	68	70.83%
		TOTAL	96	100%

Moreover, nineteen learners find the activities they are giving in class easy whereas thirty-six find them medium and the fifty-five others find them difficult.

06	How do you find the activities you are given in class?	a- easy	19	19.79%
		b- medium	36	37.5%
		c- difficult	55	57.29%
		TOTAL	96	100%

To continue with, eleven students said they try their best when they cannot do a given exercise/activity instead of asking for help as thirty-nine of some of their mates or giving up as the forty-six others.

07	When you cannot do a given exercise/activity, you:	a- try your best	11	11.45%
		b- ask for help	39	40.63%
		c- give up	46	47.92%
		TOTAL	96	100%

Fifty-seven out of ninety-six students recognized that they are disturbed by their mates during classroom activities; seventy-seven are perturb by the surrounding noises whereas thirty-two learners are disturbed by their thoughts and five by nothing.

08	During classroom activities, you are disturbed by:	a- your mates	57	59.37%
		b- the surrounding noises	81	84.37%
		c- your thoughts	46	47.91%
		d- nothing	1	1.04%
		TOTAL	96	100%

Indeed, to know more about what effectively happens in classrooms I asked students how often do these perturbations occurs. Twenty-one

students answered then "every time"; thirty said "sometimes"; some forty-two others replied that such things happens very often and three persons answered "rarely".

09	How often does this happen?	a- every time	21	21.87%
		b- sometimes	30	31.25%
		c- very often	42	43.75%
		d- rarely	3	3.12%
		TOTAL	96	100%

Concerning those who said that they are disturbed during classroom activities by their thoughts, fifteen confessed that familial problems are what they think a lot of. A number of six other learners dealt with what to eat but the eleven remaining are disturbed by something else. When such things occur in class situation, twenty-seven students avowed that their teacher always notice that they are troubled. Forty-six recognized that their teachers notice it very often but twenty-three made out that their teachers notice it sometimes.

10	In your thoughts you always think of:	a- familial problem	15	46.87%
		b- what to eat	6	18.75%
		c- something else	11	34.37%
		TOTAL	32	100%
11	Does your teacher notice that you are disturbed?	a- always	27	28.13%
		b- very often	46	47.92%
		c- sometimes	23	23.95%
		d- never	0	0%
		TOTAL	96	100%

Twenty-four students out of ninety-six said to be punish by their teachers when the latter notice any disturbance coming from them. Fifteen asserted that their teacher does nothing when he/she notices while nineteen said to be sent to the headmaster. In all this, thirty-eight students are given advises by their teachers.

12	What does your teacher do when she/he notices it? He/she	a- punishes you	24	25%
		b- does nothing	15	15.63%
		c- sends you to the headmaster	19	19.79%
		d- gives you advises	38	39.58%
		TOTAL	96	100%

Sixty-nine students are acquainted with the fact that their teacher explains each of the activity they (the teachers) give them (the learners) but twenty-seven students affirm the contrary. In the same way, thirty-one students attested that when their teacher has explained them what an activity he gave them consists in, they still don't understand contrary to sixty-five who said they understand everything.

13	Does your teacher explain you each activity he/she gives you?	a- yes	69	71.87%
		b- no	27	28.13%
		TOTAL	96	100%
14	When your teacher explained you what an activity, consists in, you:	a- still don't understand	65	47.29%
		b- understand	31	52.26%
		TOTAL	96	100%

When I ask the ninety-six EFL learners when they have class, forty of them answered " in the morning from 08 a.m to 10 a.m" and twenty-four tick the box of "in the morning from 10 a.m to 12 p.m" whereas thirty-two replied that they class in the afternoon from 03 p.m to 05 p.m. The last box, which consists in knowing if the learners have class in the afternoon from 05 p.m to 07 p.m remains empty filled.

15	When do you have class?	a- in the morning from 08 a.m to 10 a.m	40	41.67%
		b- in the morning from 10 a.m to 12 a.m	24	25%
		c- in the afternoon from 03 p.m to 05 p.m	32	33.33%
		d- in the afternoon from 05 p.m to 07 p.m	0	0%
		TOTAL	96	100%

Twenty-six students particularly of those who have class from 10 a.m to 12 p.m and from 03 p.m to 05 p.m, said they are disturbed by the moment at which the class take place in the opposite of seventy who are pleased with their class time table.

16	Does it disturb you anyhow?	a- yes	26	27.08%
		b- no	70	72.91%
		TOTAL	96	100%

#### 4-2- Analysis of the findings

To start with, the findings prove that the majority (43.75%) of learners in fourth form at Lycée Béhanzin are in their fifth year of learning English, which means that they have already taken one class again such as 18.75% of learners who are in their sixth year. Thus, the greater part of these learners has some gaps to fill up to perform their academic productivity otherwise they should normally be in their fourth year so as 37.5% of the remaining learners. This then, is a sign that something is not going well with the concerned learners.

Secondly, it is obvious that the English language is not welcome by every EFL learner. That's why 73% among them said they don't like it for diverse reasons. Therefore, they justify this by the fact that they don't understand what their teachers say in English during class activities or that they don't always understand it as they want. Some of them tackled the point according to which they get bad marks to defend the fact they do not like English. For the others, learning English is straightly boring. Throughout their answers, I notice that most of learners' first criteria guiding their desire to learn English is based on marks they get. Learners are more focused on their marks than anything else and this is clearly perceptible by looking at the answers of both those who like learning English and those who don't. Where the shoe pinches is that 61.64% of the latter qualify learning English as being boring. Indeed no language teaching class should be boring. But if it happens even once, I think and I do believe that it's up to the teacher's teaching methods because if the class activities are well designed by the teacher, there is no reason that boredom finds any place within the learners who, thus, will involve themselves in any kind of class activity at any time. So, teachers have their responsibility engaged in

their students' attitude toward learning English. And this is also highlight when some learners said that they don't like learning English because they don't understand what their teachers say in class especially when they speak English.

Thirdly, the majority of learners (87.5%) attend each of their English classes, which is a good thing because attending a class make you understand all the explanations the teachers could have given for a specific structure or lesson. And this may not be done effectively by a learner. As far as the remaining 12.5% students are concerned, they recognizing not to attend each of their English classes, I can say that even if they do not do it frequently, they may afford misunderstanding problems. Thus, they cannot involve themselves in any classroom activity or will do it very poorly because they will be in lack of some pre-requisites. Not attending a class can lead then to poor involvement of EFL learners in classroom activities which will have without a doubt, bad impacts on his/her academic results. Indeed there are different reasons why some learners don't attend English classes. Being tired, being late, having a problem are some of these reasons. But a greater one has been emphasized by the majority of learners. It is the matter of will. Frankly speaking, a very large number of students choose themselves not to attend English courses because they don't want. Here, I can say that the teacher may be the real cause or not of such situation because there are some students who don't their studies in a serious way no matter what the teacher does to change things.

Let's point out now the fact that 67.70% learners don't have their student books contrary to only 32.30% who regularly have theirs. That is to mean that when an activity is given, not every students can do it because they don't all have access to this elementary pedagogic document. So, it is

only those who are next to the owners of that document who will benefit from it and the others will be there just as passive participant instead of being really involved in the classroom activities. Having one's student book, in thus compulsory for every learner.

Most of the learners (57.29%) find that the activities they are given during classes are difficult and the majority of them used to give the exercises up instead of making efforts. This may be considered as a lack of motivation and also lack of will in so far as 11.45% of the learners always try first their best even when the exercises they are given seem to be difficult for them. Between this two parties, there are those who ask for help when they cannot do an exercise that they are given opposite. They constitute 40.63% of the learners who gave me their questionnaires back.

Furthermore, there are some relevant factors to be taken into account that prevent learners from involving themselves in classroom activities. In number of these factors there is the surrounding noises that 84.37% learners avowed to be disturbed by during classroom activities. Beside, 59.37% learners approved that they are disturbed by their mates contrary to 47.91% who perturbation is due to their own thought. Indeed these thoughts are related in 46.87% to familial problems; 18.85% to what to eat and finally in 34.37% to something else. Thus, I notice that the environment of the learner also constitutes an obstacle for him to concentrate and involve himself/herself in any classroom activity. A noisy surrounding is harmful for anyone who wants to study; so are those learners who are sources of trouble for their classmates. Teachers should thus, pay more attention to their pupils' attitudes in class. Let's tackle now the case of those learners who are disturbed by their thoughts. This stands for the fact that learners, though they are still children, also have their own priorities which

don't always occur at the good time and such things can have a bad impact on learners' academic productivity. Fortunately, 47.92% which constitutes the majority of the learners said that teachers always notice that their learners are disturbed.

Indeed, one thing is for teachers, to notice what is going wrong with their students but another one is to take good measure to prevent such things to happen again. That's why I questioned the ninety-six learners about the actions undertaken by their teachers in such situation. 25% affirmed to be punished by their teachers; 19.79% are sent to the headmaster whereas 39.58% are given advises. In all this, 15.63% said their teachers don't do anything. This shows that teachers don't react the same way every time, which means that each type of bad attitude deserves a certain kind of action from the action/punishment from the teacher. But above all, I'd rather prefer giving advises to anything else because more than punishments, advises are full of lessons and they are very touching when they are well-done. The one to whom it is addressed regrets his act so deeply that he is ashamed of it and most of time, avoid do it again.

When I asked them if their teachers explain them every activity they give to them, the great majority of the learners replied "yes". But 42.7% of them recognized not to understand something in spite of the teachers' explanations. I realized thus, that there is a problem of communication in our secondary classes and such thing can lead learners not to have any interest for learning English. Teachers have then, to be clear as largely as possible in their explanation so that students can really be involved in classroom activities.

Finally, most of the learners (66.67%) have their English classes in the morning especially 41.67% from 08 a.m to 10 a.m and 25% from 10 a.m to

12 p.m. The remaining (33.33%) have class in the afternoon from 03 p.m to 05 p.m. Many among the latter and some of the students who having class from 10 a.m to 12 p.m said that this hour section disturbs them. Indeed, I understood that when students come back from break after 10 a.m they are tired because their organs start digesting what they have eaten. As far as those of the afternoon are concerned, they are still tired and are sleepy for having eaten at home before coming and also for the heat that characterizes that period.

## CHAPTER FIVE : RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

In chapter two, that is to say, in the literature review are discussed the causes of EFL learners' poor involvement in classroom learning activities. Whereas chapter four presents and analyses the findings of the investigations on the different realities that students encounter in class at Lycée Béhanzin secondary school. If these two chapters are taken into account and brought closer to the main problem of this research work, I can make the following recommendations and suggestions.

### 5-1- Recommendations

My recommendations to the different school administrators and actors of education for the improvement of EFL learners' involvement in classroom learning activities in our country are that they try their best so that :

- The classroom and school premises are neat
- Adequate ventilation and lighting are provided to make the classrooms conducive for learning
- The classrooms are adequately furnished
- There is enough space in the classroom for free movement of the teacher and learners when the need arises
- Things that encourage noise and distraction are avoided
- Build a library inside the school, where learners can borrow student's book
- EFL teachers can be well-trained to actually accomplish their role in learners' education

## 5-2- Suggestions

### 5-2-1- Suggestions to EFL teachers

For EFL learners to be fully involved in classroom learning activities, an EFL teacher should take into account a certain number of things.

First, he/she has to well-plan his/her lesson so that he/she can be aware of whatever may prevent his/her learners from involving themselves into the activities that will be designed.

Secondly, he/she must make sure that the communication is free of any hindrance to the learners' comprehension. For the communication is the process of passing a verbal or non verbal message or information from one person to another who understands the message and makes response, the teacher should pay more attention to his/her learners' feedback. He/she may also use some very smart methods to attract and maintain his learners attention such as stimulus variation. It is the art of changing the environment in such a way that learners are excited to learn. This helps to remove boredom and promotes attention, curiosity and the desire to learn.

Moreover, EFL teachers should reinforce their learners. Indeed, reinforcement is any material or non-material stimulus which when presented in a learning situation, increases the probability that the behavior exhibited before it was presented will reoccur. Material reinforcement includes a certificate of merit for good conduct and academic excellence, book, or cash prize and other items presented to learners for excellent behavior. Non material reinforcement, on the other hand, includes praise, a clap, a nod of approval, the teacher's smile, a pat on the back. Reinforcements are of two types: positive and negative. A positive reinforcement is any activity, behavior or event such as praises, claps, material awards, which gives the learner

pleasure and facilitates his/her learning. But a negative reinforcement is any event, activity, behavior or situation that gives pain and discomfort and which the learner would not want to reoccur. Although negative reinforcement may cause pain and discomfort, it also facilitates learning when it is properly applied as well as positive reinforcement.

In addition to all this, teachers should do more use of examples and illustrations because it is a desirable practice in education to relate what the learners already known to what they are about to learn. That is, starting from the known to the unknown, from the concrete to the abstract and from the simple to the complex. Teachers could also have their learners role-play some important activities so that everybody can take an active part in the lesson.

#### 5-2-2- Suggestions to EFL learners

It is worthwhile to bring to the attention of EFL students that they should take the English language learning as seriously as possible. Moreover, they should work in the logic of taking again from time to time exercises they did in class at home alone or with friends. For instance two students or a group of students may decide to work together when they are in the same quarter. This can help be really familiar with the language.

On the other hand, learners must know that, to be completely trained for the job, they should not neglect English. Even to have access to a position nowadays, we hear more and more " the candidate must speak English and know reading and writing it".

### 5-2-3- Suggestions to EFL learner's parents

As an African saying already teaches us, "if you send your son to the farm, you should provide him with a hoe." Parents should give their children, the means they need to succeed in English learning. So, I invite parents to fulfill their roles in buying to their children the books they need to learn English.

In addition, the parents should early sensitize their children on the importance of this language in today's life. This could prevent the children from excluding some subject like English.

## CONCLUSION

EFL learners nowadays, are less and less involved in classroom learning activities due to many factors inside and outside the classroom environment. These factors are linked somewhat to the learner himself, to the teacher and the parents. One important factor that contributes to the learner's poor is his/her attitude as I noticed that most EFL students learn English not at will but just because it is a compulsory subject. Thus, it is recommended that the teachers in EFL classrooms motivate learners towards English Language learning by designing good and efficient activities to attract learners' attention. EFL teachers should involve learners in classroom learning activities because the contrary will severely affect the learners' results.

The teacher's role to enhance his/her learners involvement in activities is, first, to well-plan the lesson to be taught. Then, he/she should give students good activities which enable them to be very active and interested in what they do. Parents' responsibility here is then to take great care of their children in providing them with adequate documents and in being attentive to their children's needs daily.

To finish with, it is compulsory that school authorities provide learners with a good and safe environment. That is to say, the classrooms should be lighted with lamps, spacious allowing free movement of both students and teachers, well organized by the teacher. The authorities in charge of Education in Benin should also resort to qualified English teachers, particularly those formed in the Teacher Training Schools of Benin because our secondary schools are in lack of qualified teachers. It is a necessity for

the improvement of teaching English as a Foreign Language in Benines secondary schools.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### 1- Books

- Adedayo, D.M. (2010). Essentials of Educational Psychology. Ibadan: Joytal Printing Press.
- Adesina, S. et al (1989). Teaching Practice - A Guide for Students and Teachers. Ibadan: Board Publication Ltd.
- Akande, M.V. (2005). Hints On Teaching Practice and General Principles of Education. Lagos: DMMM Publishers.
- Anuforo, A.M. (2012). Principles and Practice of Teaching. Lagos: T-Excel Publishers.
- ANYANWU, ND. (2006). Essentials of Language Teaching. Badagry Lagos: Cyrus Publishers.
- Cook, V. (1991). Second Language Learning and Language Teaching. London: Hodder Headline Group.
- Willams, D. (1990). English Language Teaching. Ibadan: Spectrum Books Ltd.

## 2- Articles\_\_\_\_\_

Mahmut U.A and Azamat A. (2012). "EFL Learners Perceptions and Attitudes towards English for the Specific Purposes" in *Acta Didactica Napocensia*, 5 (4), pp.25-30

- Alkaff A.A (2013). "Students' Attitudes and Perceptions towards Learning English" in *Arab World English*, 4 (2), pp.106-121
- Gajalakshmi (2013). "High Students' Attitude towards Learning English Language" in *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, 3(9), pp.1-7
- Hassan S. (2013). "Iranian Medical Students' Attitudes towards English Language Learning" in *International Research Journal of Applied and Basic Sciences*, 4(12), pp.3816-3823
- Majid P-M. (2012). "EFL Students' Attitudes towards Learning English Language: The Case of Libyan Secondary School Students" in *Asian Social Science*, 8 (2), pp.119-134

## APPENDIX

### QUESTIONNAIRE TO EFL LEARNERS

Here are some questions that you are going to answer by choosing among the possibilities of answers. Tick the box of your choice. Thank you for your contribution.

1. How long have you been learning English? .....years

2. Do you like it? Yes  No

a- If yes, why?

\* I understand when the teacher speaks it

\* I get good marks in it

\* I like listening to people speak it

\* Some of my friends are English speakers

b- If not, why?

\* I never understand when the teacher speaks it

\* I don't always understand it

\* I don't have good marks in it

\* It is boring

3. Do you attend each of your English classes? a- Yes  b-

4. It happened to you not to attend an English class because you:

a- you were tired  b- you were late  c- you had a problem

d- didn't want

5. Do you have your student's book?

a- Yes  b- No

6. How do you find the activities you are given in class?

- a- Easy                       b- Medium                       c- Difficult

7. When you cannot do a given exercise/activity, you :

- a- Try your best                       b- Ask for help                       c- Abandon

8. During classroom activities, you are disturbed by:

- a- Mates                       b- Surrounding noises                       c- Thought   
d- Nothing

9. How often does this happen?

- a- Every time                       b- Sometimes                       c- Very often                       d- Rarely

10. In your thoughts, you always think of :

- a- Familial problem                       b- What to eat                       c- Something else

11. Does your teacher notice that you are disturbed?

- a- Always                       b- Very often                       c- Sometimes                       d- Never

12. What does your teacher do when she/he notices it? He/she:

- a- Punishes you                       b- Does nothing   
c- Send you to the headmaster                       d- gives you advises

13. Does your teacher explain you each activity he/she gives you?

- a- Yes                       b- No

14. When your teacher explained you what an activity consists in, you:

a- still don't understand       b- understand

15. When do you have class?

a- In the morning from 08 a.m to 10 a.m

b- In the morning from 10 a.m to 12 a.m

c- In the afternoon from 03 p.m to 05 p.m

d- In the afternoon from 05 p.m to 07 p.m

16. Does it disturb you anyhow?      a- yes       b- no

-THE END-