

***LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES AND ATTITUDES OF FRANCOPHONE  
LEARNERS TOWARDS ENGLISH IN YAOUNDE, CAMEROON***

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE  
DEGREE OF MASTER (LINGUISTICS FULL THESIS) IN THE FACULTY OF ARTS  
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**20<sup>th</sup> August, 2009**

## **Declaration**

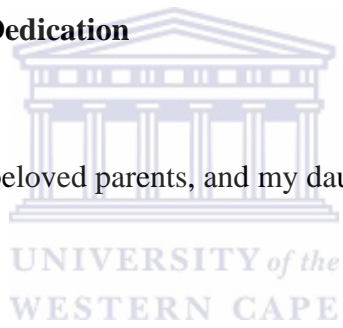
I declare that *Language Ideologies and Attitudes of Francophone Learners towards English in the Central Province of Cameroon* is my own work and that all sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete reference.

Jane-Francis Afungmeyu Abongdia

August, 2009

## **Dedication**

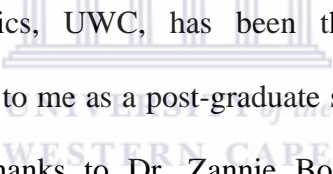
This thesis is dedicated to my beloved parents, and my daughters, Trysta-Ann and Pearl.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Praise and thanks to God for the mental and physical strength used to complete this work.

Sincere thanks go to my supervisor Professor Charlyn Dyers whose supervision was an eye-opener to me. Prof, you made this work seem much easier than it could have been. Thanks a lot for all your time, critical suggestions and reading list. You have in fact taken me through a significant intellectual journey for which I am so grateful.



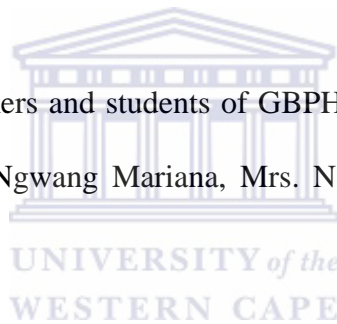
The Department of Linguistics, UWC, has been the most accommodating and intellectually stimulating space to me as a post-graduate student. I am thankful to all my lecturers and staff. Sincere thanks to Dr. Zannie Bock for all her comments and suggestions. Special thanks to all my friends especially, Chu Fidelis, Gwendoline Tatah, Awemo Tanjong, Tasneem Solomons, Lyne Cupido, and Waseem Matthews for their moral support.

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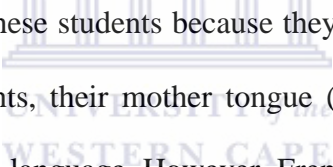
A special thanks to Mrs. Ngayong Victorine for her assistance in collecting the data for this thesis. She gave me all the moral support needed from the very conception of this work to the end. She was more of a sister than a friend to me.

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## **Abstract**

English is the most widely spoken language in the world and for this reason it would be of advantage for everyone to learn it. This thesis reports on the language ideologies and attitudes of Francophone learners towards English in the Central Province of Cameroon, a central African country. It offers a critical examination of the different attitudes and motivations of Francophone learners towards English as a third language at secondary schools in the city of Yaoundé. It also presents the most important factors that appear to play a role in shaping their attitudes towards English, a language that many of the respondents appear to find hard to learn. Central to these factors are the prevailing language ideologies in Cameroon.



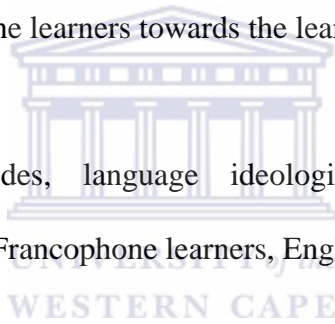
English is a third language to these students because they are Francophones by birth and culture. To some of the students, their mother tongue (L1) is their first language and French is taught as their second language. However, French is the first language of some of these students, and is also used in schools as a medium of instruction.

The thesis begins with a historical background to the language problem in Cameroon, followed by a detailed literature review. Qualitative research methods were used and the data was collected through interviews, participant observation and an essay written by the students. The findings of this study reveal a great deal about the largely negative language attitudes that Francophone learners have towards English as well as the principle influences that help to shape these attitudes. The findings also reveal that most of the students have instrumental, rather than integrative motivations (Gardner and

Lambert, 1972) for learning English. The study further revealed much deeper ideological positions towards English and the Anglophone community in Cameroon than what could be meaningfully captured by existing theories of attitudes and motivation, and for this reason I had to examine my data in the light of theories on language ideologies, which are often politically significant and deeply shape how speakers understand social life.

A number of recommendations are made at the end of the thesis to help improve and/or change the negative attitudes many of these learners hold towards English. It is further hoped that these recommendations, if implemented with due sensitivity, can lead to more positive attitudes in Francophone learners towards the learning of English.

**Keywords:** Language attitudes, language ideologies, motivation, instrumental, integrative, negative, positive, Francophone learners, English, Cameroon.



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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

#### 1.1 Introduction

In a late-modern age typified by the free flow of people and ideas around the world (Appadurai 1996) English enjoys an almost unassailable position as the dominant language of global trade and commerce. Because of its predominant role in these arenas, it is being introduced into the language policies of many countries, creating the type of *negotiated multilingualism* described by Dor (2004). In negotiated multilingualism, there is a constant tension between English and the local languages, as nations try to balance their demand for English with the continued use and survival of their local languages. In addition to its dominant role in the global sphere, English is one of the major colonial languages used in Africa and in the central African country of Cameroon in particular. The other two major colonial languages in Africa are French and Portuguese, resulting in three different post-colonial linguistic entities; countries which are officially Anglophone (English), Francophone (French) and Lusophone (Portuguese).

Cameroon, because of its colonial past, is in the unique position of officially being both Anglophone and Francophone despite the presence of other majority languages like Fang, Bamileke and Fulani. Cameroonians speak a total of 249 languages, (Kouega 2003:409 and Echu 2004:1) grouped into three families: Bantu (e.g. Fulani in the southern and western parts of the country); Nilo-Saharan (Kanuri) and Afro-Asiatic (Arabic). There are also Chadic languages such as Hausa and Bura (Webb and Kembo-Sure, 1999:47). People use these languages in their daily interactions, and one may say that only about

5% of the population of Cameroon speak English daily, while 25% speak French. In addition, we find Cameroonian Pidgin English (CPE), which is used as a *lingua franca* by at least 70% of the total population in their daily communication in addition to their indigenous languages.

All high school learners in Cameroon have to learn both official languages, French and English. This study is an examination of the different motivations with which Francophone high school learners at a high school in Yaoundé approach the study of English. The thesis further offers an examination of the reasons underlying these motivations – the factors which influence the learners' individual language attitudes, as well as the prevailing language ideologies in Cameroon.

According to Gardner and Lambert (1972), there are two kinds of motivations involved in language learning: an *integrative* motivation, and an *instrumental* motivation. Integrative motivation involves deep immersion in, and emotional attachment to, the target language. “An individual successfully acquiring a second language gradually adopts various features of behavior which characterize another linguistic and, as is often the case, another cultural group” (ibid: 229). On the other hand, instrumental motivation is often brought about by utilitarian or material aims. It may occur when the language is for example being used to fulfil an educational requirement, to get a better job or to read material in the language.

Language attitudes, which are closely linked to motivation for learning languages, are defined by Baker (1992: 12-13) as comprising the three major components of cognition,

affect and readiness for action. In his model, a distinction is made between cognitive and affective components of attitudes, and this distinction parallels what the individual may say about the language. Baker (2006:132) further contends that a learner of a particular language cannot be successful if he or she has a negative attitude towards the target language.

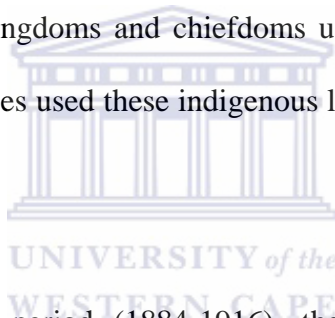
It was deemed essential to include an analysis of language ideologies in Cameroon in this thesis, because of the limitations of language attitude studies, which are mainly concerned with language learning and people's affective reactions to various languages in the classroom context (e.g. Lukmani 1972, Saville-Troike 1989 and Norris-Holt 2001). Language attitude studies therefore do not fully capture, as Swigart (2000:91) puts it, "...how languages provide their speakers access to different sorts of resources, and how views on particular languages and resources may themselves evolve". People's language ideologies therefore reflect issues of socio-political and group identity, particularly in a country like Cameroon where one particular speech community dominates the socio-political and economic landscape, i.e. the Francophone community.

Irvine and Gal (2000:35, cited in Haviland 2003:764) define language ideologies as "...the ideas with which participants and observers frame their understanding of linguistic varieties and map those understandings onto people, events, and activities that are significant to them". Language ideologies are therefore reflected in actual language practice – how people talk, what they say about language and their actual language choices, and their socio-political positioning with regards to particular languages. In my

theoretical framework, I discuss the intersection of language attitude and language ideology studies in order to clarify the relationship between these two areas of study.

## **1.2 Background and History**

Cameroon was founded around 1472 by a Portuguese navigator, Fernando Po. He arrived at the Bight of Biafra and sailed up the Wouri River in the coastal region. He called the river *Rio dos Cameroes* (river of shrimp). When Germany colonised Cameroon in 1884, the country was named Kamerun which later changed to “Cameroon” and “Cameroun” during the British and French rule respectively (Echu 1999). In the pre-colonial era, Cameroon was divided into kingdoms and chiefdoms using many different indigenous languages. Christian missionaries used these indigenous languages in the educational and religious domains.



During the German colonial period (1884-1916), the colonial government led by Governor Puttkammer encouraged the use of the German language. However, both the American and the German missionaries continued with the use of the local languages in education and evangelisation. Languages like Basaa, Duala, Bulu, Ewondo and Mungaka were used in these domains (Mbuagbaw 2000:135 cited in Echu 2004). The German language was used in the German public schools. Despite the fact that the mission schools were underdeveloped, the government continued exerting pressure on the missionaries to use German. In 1989 this government forced the indigenous language schools to close down by imposing German as medium of instruction in schools (Echu (2003).

When Germany lost the First World War in 1916, its colonial possessions were handed over to the victors, France and Britain. The Cameroonians were then expected to speak French and English, but this was impossible as they did not know the languages and had to learn them for the first time. When the territories were mandated to the two countries, there was no co-operation between the two new colonial powers. Levine, cited in Fonlon (1969:42), wrote this of Cameroon:

The mandate ushered in a new phase of the Cameroon's development. Arbitrarily sundered into two parts, the territory lost whatever unity it had achieved during the Protectorate. The two Cameroons under separate administration moved off in different directions, propelled by the force of colonial policies often diametrically opposed to one another. The artificial bisection of the territory created the reality of two distinctly different Cameroons, with the different social, economic, and political traditions.

During the Franco-British period which effectively separated the country, no thought was given to reunification. However, by the 1950s, there was agitation for reunification by both sides. In 1961, through a plebiscite, the Federal Republic of Cameroon was born. In the Federal Republic of Cameroon there was now the language problem given that two languages were inherited: French and English. French was used by four-fifths of the country and English by the remaining fifth (Fonlon, 1969). The 1961 constitution stated that French and English were the official languages: French for the federal state of East Cameroon and English for that of West Cameroon. Knowing that the language issue might one day lead to a problem, this Government decided not to take any risks. The only

language that was likely to be wholeheartedly accepted by all citizens at the time was the language of the ex-colonial master. Since the country had two such masters, both their languages were chosen. French and English thus became the official languages of Cameroon. To further confirm this choice, bilingualism was recommended in these two languages.

With the declaration of French and English as official languages, most French-speaking Cameroonians were interested in learning the English language. Fonlon (1969:43) has this to say:

It is also very striking to note the enthusiasm among East Cameroonians, to master English and the pride they take in using it, when they do. In fact, in terms of concrete achievement, they have more to show than their English-speaking brethren.

What Fonlon says of Cameroon in the 1960s, when Francophones were eager to learn English, appears to be the direct opposite of what is happening today. The English speaking Cameroonians are more interested in French than the French Cameroonians are in English. This is however influenced by the political position of the two languages in the country.

Given the reunification of the country and the declaration of the two official languages, both languages were now being used as media of instruction. French, which used to be the medium of instruction in Francophone schools before reunification, was introduced into Anglophone schools. Similarly, English, which was the language of instruction in Anglophone schools, was introduced into the Francophone schools. By so doing it was



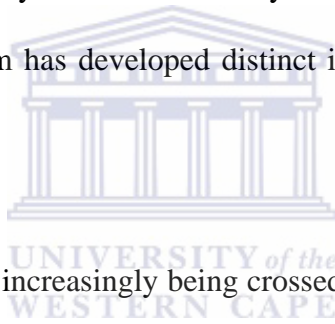
envisaged that Cameroonians would become proficient in the two official languages in the long run.

However, the policy of effective bilingualism is not a success in Cameroon. Out of the ten provinces, only two make up the Anglophone population and eight the Francophone population. Because the Anglophone population is in the minority, they are dominated by the French population and French is the dominant language in virtually all government departments, businesses and public offices. This creates different attitudes towards the two languages in Cameroon. English is the third language to most Francophone students. Their first language is their home language, and French is their second language and main medium of instruction at school. For some, French is even the first language.

The adoption of French and English as the official languages in Cameroon gave rise to the distinguishing linguistic markers: Francophone and Anglophones Cameroonians. French became the *lingua franca* in the French speaking part of Cameroon and Cameroonian Pidgin English (CPE) in the English speaking part. The development of these two linguistic communities has rather attenuated than solve the linguistic problem in Cameroon (Mforteh 2006). This conflict has been shaped by the western powers through the use of their own languages: French and English. However, these countries continue to perpetuate the use of these languages in Cameroon. This has been through neo-colonialism and the indirect rule. This continues through the use of political and economic dependency on the colonial master, (France) Alidou (2007). Alidou further sees this to be the result of the role of international textbooks corporation with interest in promoting their own languages. Finally is the role of the elite (France) in the country who is keen to maintain power and dominate the country politically and economically

(Alidou 2007). Politicians have used the linguistic and cultural differences to divide and rule Cameroon. Cameroon is a country where two systems of education operate simultaneously, namely: an English Medium subsystem intended for the country's Anglophone population and a French medium subsystem intended for the Francophone population.

The admissions of students into professional schools and appointments to the civil service on basis of ethnic and linguistic representation and regionalism rather than competence have reinforced this feeling of difference between the Anglophones and Francophone (Mforteh 2006). While there may not have been any real sociolinguistic conflict among these two groups, each of them has developed distinct identity boundaries that exclude the other.



However, these boundaries are increasingly being crossed over and becoming diffused as a result of the increased use of CPE as a *lingua franca* and a new urban youth variety called *Fran-anglais*. For some people, CPE is actually their first language (Ayafor 2006). Ayafor (2006:195) defines Pidgin as “a simple makeshift contact language that develops when people of different linguistic backgrounds meet and must interact with one another”. CPE originated in the 18<sup>th</sup> century when traders and missionaries came to West Africa. After the abolition of slave trade, the language continued to expand all over the coastal region and was widely used by workers in the Cameroon Development Corporation (CDC), as it was the only language that could facilitate communication.

With the birth of the Federal Republic of Cameroon in 1961, CPE grew in terms of its vocabulary, idiom and structure because of the influence of French and the other local languages spoken by the Francophones (Echu 2003). In the mid-sixties, 85% of CPE terms came from English, 13% from the indigenous languages and 2% from other languages including Portuguese and German (Schreider 1966:5 cited in Echu 2003:4). Ten years later, 80% of CPE words were English-based, 14% came from indigenous languages, 5% from French and 1% from other languages (Mbassi Manda 1973 cited in Echu 2003).

Currently there are two varieties of CPE: the Anglophone variety and the Francophone one. CPE is now being used in all functional domains in the country such as in churches, in the markets, on the streets, by teachers in class to make explanations easier for their learners, and also used by writers. It is even used as the L1 in cross-linguistic, cross-cultural families. Despite its popularity, its use is frowned upon by many who believe that its use will prevent people from acquiring the desired standard in the two official languages. For example, at the University of Buea, the following criticisms of CPE appear on certain notice-boards:

*English is the password not Pidgin*

*English is the language of Commonwealth, not Pidgin*

*If you speak pidgin, you'll write pidgin*

*Pidgin is taking a negative toll on your English; shun it* (Ayafor 2006: 197)

*Fran-anglais* is a mixture of English, French, CPE and some other European languages like Spanish and German. It is very popular among the youth as it is a *hip-hop* language

(Pennycook, 2008) used especially by young musicians. It is a language of fun and leisure that originated in the late 70s in Douala as “langue des bandits” (language of gangsters). It was later taken up by secondary students / pupils as a marker of their urban identity and has today a remarkable number of speakers (Niba 2007).

This variety is common in big cities like Yaoundé, Douala, and Bafoussam. Many parents are negative towards this language because they see it as an ‘impure’ variety which poses a threat to both the moral standards of the younger generation and the quality of the French language. Some children are even beaten if they use this language at home. Some Cameroonians claim that Fran-anglais impoverishes the French vocabulary making the young people lose their ability to speak and write good standard French/English. This, they say, is responsible for the general drop in academic achievement among students. However a few parents admit that they enjoy the jokes and playful nature of the variety (Niba 2007). However, the fact that these youngsters are crossing linguistics boundaries could be a hopeful sign that the rigid Francophone/Anglophone distinctions are starting to be reduced in the cities, thereby lessening ethnolinguistic tensions and conflict.

### **1.3 The place of indigenous languages**

Cameroon has no official policy regarding its indigenous languages (Chumbow 1996). During the pre-colonial period, some of the indigenous languages had gained prestige such as the Bamun language that was standardized by Sultan Njoya (Echu 1999). It was

used for teaching before the arrival of the German missionaries. In the three northern parts of the country, the Fulfulde language was used for the dissemination of Islam.

During the German colonisation, the German language was encouraged but at the same time the indigenous languages were preferred by the German and American missionaries. Languages like Basaa, Ewondo, Mungaka, Bulu and Duala were used for teaching and evangelisation (Echu 2003). Thus, during the German colonial period, the indigenous languages enjoyed a much higher status than in the current post-colonial dispensation. When the British and French took over, things changed. The territories mandated to the French were transformed and French became the dominant language.

On the other hand, territories mandated to the British still used the indigenous languages alongside English. Languages such as Bafut, Mungaka, Kenyang, and Duala still have power at the level of education and religion. However, in the French section, there were perpetual conflicts between the missionaries and the French colonial administration as the missionaries persisted in the use of the indigenous languages (Strumpf 1979, cited in Echu 2003). Later, decisions were taken to promote French and the indigenous languages were relegated to the background. In 1917, a special law was instituted by the French government for schools to use only French as a medium of instruction, and the schools that used the indigenous languages had to close down. However, these indigenous languages continued to serve in evangelisation and popular communication.

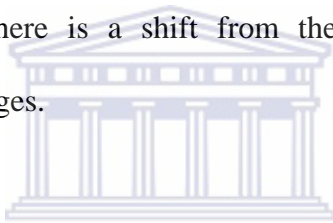
After Cameroon gained her independence in 1960 and 1961 and voted through a plebiscite for reunification in 1972, the two colonial languages, French and English, were declared the official languages of the country. The bilingual policy was reiterated in the three consecutive revised versions of the constitution (1961, 1972, and 1982) as reported in Kouega (2003). There is no official document that indicates any official or semi-official functions for the 249 indigenous languages. Some proposals have been made to promote and/or teach national languages. Some attempts were made to teach these languages at the University of Yaoundé but they all failed, owing to a lack of an official policy recognising the national languages in Cameroon. Chumbow (1996:5) suggests some reasons for the lack of this language policy. These are:

1. The multiplicity of languages;
2. The legacy of French colonial ideology that encouraged assimilation and devalued local languages;
3. The inheritance of a legal, administration and educational system that only functioned in metropolitan languages;
4. The lack of impact of the local languages at the international or national level; and
5. The fact that none of the languages are demographically large enough to function as *lingua franca*.

If we consider the presence of 249 languages in a population of about 16 million people, then we can imagine how small individual speech communities can be.

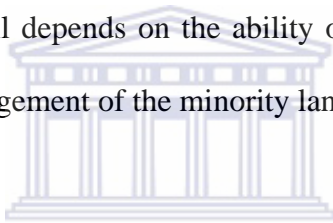
There are also signs of language shift in some of these speech communities as some of the people shift from their home languages to English, French and or pidgin, often as a

result of inter-tribal and inter-racial marriages. Despite this, a day has been set aside for the sensitization of the people on the importance of the indigenous languages in the transmission of cultural values (Trudell 2007). There is a small initiative to teach mother-tongues, but many people are questioning how such projects can be possible given the many languages they have. The main question here is which language will be used and what conditions are used in selecting the language. Some people want to know how far their children will go with the language since education to many means having a good job in future or travelling abroad. With this in mind, most people are of the opinion that children should be taught in an international language which might be useful to them some day in future. Thus, there is a shift from the indigenous languages to the international or colonial languages.



However, the use of local languages in formal education is highly debatable in sub-Saharan Africa. Mother-tongue instruction is permitted in primary grades, but the implementation of this policy is not yet common in many African countries. One of the main reasons Trudell (2007:561) puts forward for this is “...the perspectives and desires of the stakeholders in the education process who reside in the local community: teachers, parents, community leaders, school authorities, and children themselves. Responding to their particular historical, social, and economic context, these stakeholders have developed their own perspectives on the nature and outcome of formal education as well as beliefs about the utility and proper place of the local language”.

Most national policy makers and community level educators often hesitate to replace education in official languages with education in local languages. Moulton (2003:8 cited in Trudell 2007:553) says that the national level of adaptation of mother-tongue education is not only impeded by pedagogical aspects but also by political and social factors that have a powerful role when language and educational issues are under consideration. However, the implementation of mother-tongue education in African community contexts is more of a local endeavour and is greatly influenced by the values and beliefs of those community members. For local languages to be put effectively into place, Stroud (2003:18) holds that to counterbalance the negative effects of globalisation on minority language use, it all depends on the ability of the local community itself to support and influence the management of the minority language development.



In Cameroon however, among the Kom, Bafut, Nso (to name a few) language communities, mother-tongue medium of instruction has been available in selected local schools for the past two decades as part of a program run jointly by local language committees, the university of Yaoundé and the Summerset Institute of Language International (SIL) (Trudell 2006, cited in Trudell 2007: 560). These languages are supported and administered in each community by the local language committee made up of a group of teachers and other members of the community elites who are concerned with the maintenance and development of the local languages as well as the learning outcomes of the community's children.



According to Bitja'a Kody (2001) earlier studies on language use in Yaoundé has shown that 32% of the young people between the ages of 10 and 17 years old do not speak any Cameroonian local language. French is their only language of communication. Bitja'a Kody (ibid.) thinks that this trend will only increase in future given that these young Cameroonians will not in any way be able to transmit the local languages to their children. Unlike some other Sub Saharan African countries where the indigenous languages are used as a medium of instruction in the first three years of primary education, Cameroon unfortunately still uses the two official languages at all levels of education (Echu 2004).

However, the government is doing much to encourage people to use their mother-tongue as the 1998 and 2002 constitutions promoted and encouraged the use of mother-tongues in schools. Most important is the introduction of inspectorates for mother-tongue programs especially in schools (Alidou 2006). Simo Bobda (2004) indicates that although the indigenous languages are officially included in the school syllabus, the 2001-2002 report of the National Association of Cameroon languages shows that the indigenous languages are taught either formally or informally in more than 300 schools.

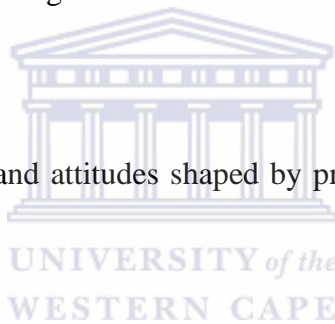
#### **1.4 Rationale and Research Questions**

The rationale for this study is to investigate the motivations and individual language attitudes held by Francophone learners of English towards the language, against the background of dominant language ideologies in the country. As a teacher of English in Cameroon, I am particularly concerned that my Francophone students may have

difficulty in acquiring the necessary competence in English required for university studies owing to negative attitudes they may have towards the language in a country dominated by a Francophone elite. Some universities in Cameroon, like the University of Buea, only use English as its main medium of instruction.

With this in mind, I developed the following three research questions:

1. What are the different motivations with which Francophone high school learners at a high school in Yaoundé approach the study of English?
2. What are the key factors that give rise to the learners' individual motivations and language attitudes?
3. How are these motivations and attitudes shaped by prevailing language ideologies in Cameroon?



### **1.5 Research Assumptions**

A number of assumptions which also affect language learning underpin this thesis:

1. The languages used at home and their frequencies of usage influence attitudes (Morgan 1993);
2. The number of lessons taught per week and the coefficient attached to the target language affect the motivation and attitudes of learners (Cummins 2000);
3. The learner's environment, in terms of parents, government policy, friends, i.e. the socio-cultural context can either help to develop a negative or a positive attitude in the learner and to a certain extent would determine his motivation in the learning (Spolsky 1989); and

4. The opinions of the learners about Anglophone Cameroonians and native speakers of English would affect the kind of attitude they bring to the learning (Gardner 1985, Gardner and Lambert 1972).

## **1.6. Conclusion**

This chapter focused on the history of Cameroon and the situation that led to the use of two colonial languages, French and English, as official languages. The chapter also includes the rationale for the study, the research questions and some key assumptions. The other chapters will deal with different issues. Chapter Two looks at the related literature on language attitudes and ideologies in Africa and the world at large. It also looks at literature in terms of the language situation in Cameroon and language identity in general. Chapter Three describes the research methodology. Chapter four focuses on the research findings and analysis, and Chapter Five will present the conclusions and recommendations of the study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Introduction

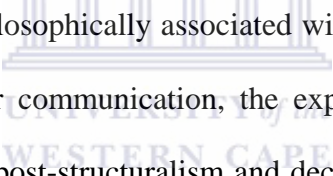
The theoretical framework for this study is situated in the study of language ideologies and their effect on individual language attitudes and motivation for learning particular languages. This chapter will therefore present a review of studies in these three related areas while taking the historical, social and political context of Cameroon into account. The literature review will be done against the wider backgrounds of post and late modernity and the effects of these philosophies on language, followed by the effects of colonialism and post-colonialism on languages in Africa.

##### 2.1.1 Modernity and late/post modernism: different responses to multilingualism

The era known philosophically and historically as ‘Modernity’ was characterized particularly in Europe by the growth of the manufacturing industry, the nation-state (a sovereign country with defined borders having people of common race or culture and everyone would speak the same language) and the development of the working class. This period characterized by modernity can be said to have lasted from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the early 1970s (1860-1970s) and this word was coined by Giorgio Vasari who referred to the arts of his period as modern (Witcombe 2000). This era is philosophically associated with discovering absolute truths and determining universal standards.

Language was seen as a primary symbol for nationalist movements of all kinds since the 18th century (Derbel and Richards 2007). Linguists during this period started describing

individual languages more closely or “inventing languages” (Makoni and Pennycook 2007). Modernity is closely related to colonialism. In the pre-colonial era large parts of the world ran their own affairs without the influence of European colonial powers, but Colonialism refers to the period when countries were colonised by European countries like Britain, France and Portugal, Italy, Germany, Belgium and Spain. Colonisation came with technological and industrial development, and the idea of the nation-state (one nation, one language). During this period, the fuzziness of the pre-colonial communication was seen as problematic. Linguist, missionaries, anthropologists, and other agencies began to codify, classify and categorize various dialects, leading to the emergence of languages and their standardized forms (Makoni and Pennycook 2007).



The post/late modern era is philosophically associated with technological innovation, the spread of mass technology for communication, the expansion of services and leisure industry. It is associated with post-structuralism and deconstructionism which has to do with meaning and reality emanating from social actions and discourse, not from the formal properties of language. Linguistically, this period is concerned with how language is constructed locally within particular socio-cultural and linguistic contexts. During this period, there has been a shift in the way people choose the language in which to study and communicate, and some would argue that people have more freedom to exercise their own preferences (Derbel and Richards 2007). This is due to the present technological development and the influence of globalisation. Many people therefore opt to invest in languages that will be profitable to them, and these are not necessarily the languages of their particular speech community (ibid 2007). Because of this factor, I contend that

language ideologies and attitudes in the late-modern era cannot be studied without looking at the effects of globalization.

Globalisation is the process of integrating and interacting among people and nations politically, economically and culturally (Cameron 2001). With globalization, language is implicated in one or more significant ways in every major development. If the nation-state is in decline, one might ask what symbolic role language is destined to play in future. One may want to ask if globalization "...offers new possibilities for the maintenance and/or reevaluation of diversity. In the sphere of language the key question here is whether globalization means "Englishization", or whether it is more likely to lead to an increase in individual and societal multilingualism, and the preservation/revival of currently "endangered" languages" (Cameron 2001). Given that English is the language or the *lingua franca* in the global village for jobs, education, business and even politics, there has been a huge demand for the study of English. This will be reflected in the language attitudes and ideologies held towards English in this study.

### **2.1.2 Colonialism and post-colonialism**

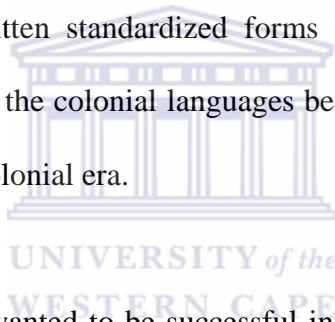
The social context for this study is post-colonial Africa in a late-modern world. Post-colonialism is an abstract representation of the global situation after the colonial period (Murray 2003). Colonialism was the period when most countries in the world were colonized by European countries like Britain, Portugal, France, Italy, Spain, and Germany and did not have the rights to take decisions on their own (15<sup>th</sup> -19<sup>th</sup> centuries). Post-colonialism on the other hand is the era after these colonized countries gained their

independence. Before colonisation the different countries used their own languages in the different domains (economic, political and social). During the colonial period (which is related to Modernity), the colonial languages were imposed on the people and when these countries gained their independence, these languages became the official languages of these countries. The countries colonised by Portugal (Angola and Mozambique, e.g.) therefore became officially Lusophone, those colonised by France became Francophone (e.g. Niger, Cameroon) and those colonised by Britain became Anglophone (e.g. Malawi, Nigeria).

In the post-colonial era, many African countries may have desired to use indigenous African languages in education, particularly higher education, but they encountered various challenges. Some of these challenges identified by Alidou (2007) are: political and economic dependence on international donor agencies, often from the ex-colonial countries; the role of the elite in the country who are interested in maintaining power and dominating the country economically; the different ideologies of researchers and consultants and lastly the role of parents and their attitudes towards the colonial languages (Alidou 2007). Countries which may have wanted to incorporate African languages into their educational systems, found this an extremely difficult process because of political, ideological and economic reasons. For this reason, education in many African countries is possible through the colonial languages only.

The colonial languages, especially French, English and Portuguese, became official languages for both political and economic reasons. Politically they were used for nation

building and for easy administration. The political leaders thought that unity could be established if a common language was used given that African countries had many languages associated with many different ethnic groups. Choosing the official languages for the newly independent states was a problem as the leaders were afraid of revolts from speakers of those languages that were not favoured (Fonlon 1969 and Chumbow 1980). Economically it was a problem to develop the African languages for official use due to a lack of finance (Chumbow 1980). Ideologically, Colonization had made Africans feel that the colonial languages, with their long tradition of standardization and highly developed orthographies and literature, were superior to their own languages that had only been developed into written standardized forms by the colonists (Wa Thiong'o 1982). For these three reasons, the colonial languages became official languages in most African countries in the post-colonial era.



Consequently, everyone who wanted to be successful in education had to learn and use the colonial language(s) especially as assistance was given to them by the colonial countries and international organisations (Alidou 2007). Cameroon, the site of our case study, uses both French and English as official languages and media of instruction because the country was shared between the French and the British during colonisation (see Chapter One). It was first colonized by Germany, and after the First World War, which Germany lost; it was ceded to France and Britain as part of the Versailles agreement.



However, the use of the colonial languages and English in particular finally became popular in Africa due to globalisation. Globalization has a very big influence in the post-colonial and late-modern age as people are always on the move. Appadurai (1996) describes this phenomenon as “flows”, that is the flow of people, ideas, money and technology around the world leading to urbanisation as people continuously leave the rural areas and go to cities as well as other countries. In most of the post-colonial countries, language policies tend to favour the use of the colonial languages. Such policies influence societal language ideologies as well as individual attitudes towards the different languages in these countries. As ideologies are constructed ‘in the interests of dominant groups’ (Dyers and Abongdia, 2008), the languages preferred by such groups (in the case of Africa, the colonial languages) would also come to occupy dominant positions in such countries, most of the time resulting in perceptions of the indigenous languages as ‘underdeveloped’ and ‘unsuitable for higher functions like tertiary education’.

At the same time, the colonial languages have also undergone many changes in these countries, developing into different dialects as they were used by speakers of the various indigenous languages. In regions of Africa where English was imposed historically (Phillipson 1992), local varieties of English have evolved into important additional languages in the everyday lives of the general population (Brutt-Griffiere 2002). This is supported by Lowenberg (2000) when in reference to the use of English in the Ex-British colonies he remarks that:

[i]n these countries, English is used by non-native speakers in the absence of native speakers, in non-Western sociocultural contexts

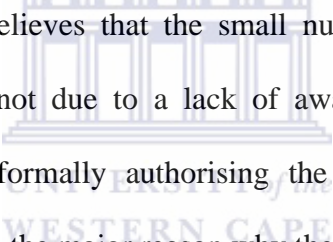
and in constant contact with other languages in multilingual speech communities. As a result, it often undergoes systematic changes at all linguistic levels, from phonology and morphology, to syntax and semantics, to discourse and style (69).

In the Cameroonian context, there are also varieties of Anglophone and Francophone English and both varieties are used by the different groups in any situation.

Chumbow (1980:281-310) argues that the official bilingual language policy of Cameroon exists only on paper, but is not implemented correctly owing to a lack of trained language teachers at all levels, as well as suitable language teaching resources. This has resulted in very few people who are actually bilingual in French and English. For example the current president of Cameroon and almost all his ministers neither present nor read speeches in English and most state decisions have to be received in translated versions by the Anglophone community. The fact that members of the government operate exclusively in French has resulted in a sense of marginalization by the Anglophone community (Bilola and Echu 2008), and strengthens the ideological dominance of the Francophone community. Greater national unity could be achieved if English could occupy the same status as French, but attention should also be given to strengthening the role of certain important indigenous languages like Fulfulde.

Alidou (2006) writes that most Cameroonians have a negative attitude towards their indigenous languages in terms of education but things are gradually changing especially with the promotion of national languages in the national constitution, according to Law No. 98/004 of 14 April 1998. This law provides for the training of citizens, giving full acknowledgement to their cultures and the promotion of national languages. Decree N°

2002/004 of 4 January 2002 reorganised the Ministry of National Education to create pedagogic inspectorates for mother-tongues. It is realized that although the official languages for instruction in this country are French and English, indigenous language are gradually gaining ground. The use of these national languages is common in the mission schools (schools owned by churches mostly the Catholic and Presbyterian churches) though some public schools are now introducing it (Alidou 2006). The government of Cameroon however is trying to encourage the use of the national languages in literacy both in the legal and constitutional reforms but has however made very little input into the process of fostering the effective use of these languages in literacy.

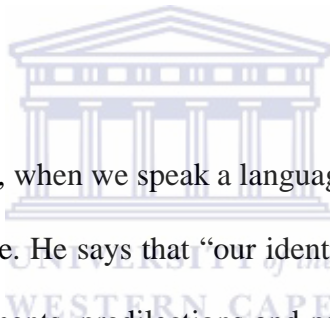


However, Anchimbe (2006) believes that the small number of public schools in the programme (193 in 2006) is not due to a lack of awareness but rather to the slow administrative procedures in formally authorising the programme. The role of the government cannot however, be the major reason why these languages are not completely accepted as educational languages. I believe that issues of identity together with different language ideologies and attitudes in Cameroon are playing a role as well. Let me first unpack the issue of language and identity.

Language is one of the fundamental means by which we can establish our identity and shape ourselves. Social groups and communities use language to identify their members and establish their boundaries (Myers-Scotton 2006 and Thomas *et al.* 2004) Thus language is an important instrument for the construction of individual and social identities. Like dress codes that display people's membership of a social group, there are

also certain kinds of linguistic behaviours that signal people's identity in relation to a group as well as their positions within it (Thomas *et al.* 2004).

West (1992:46) says that "identity relates to desire, the desire for recognition, the desire for affiliation and for security and safety". He goes further to say that people's access to material resources determines how they will articulate their desires. Thus a person's identity may shift depending on changes in his/her social and economic status, and this may also imply a shift to a different, perhaps more socially prestigious language. This will explain in part why some Anglophone Cameroonians have shifted from English to French.



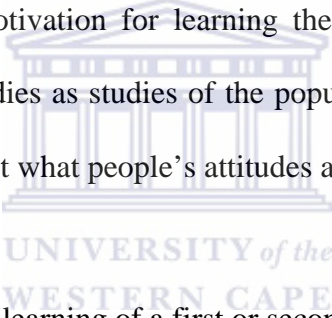
According to Baker (2006:136), when we speak a language, it often identifies our origins, history, membership and culture. He says that "our identity is conveyed in our language, in our expressions and engagements, predilections and preference. Language is a symbol of unity, conveying our preferred distinctiveness and allegiance". He holds that our identities are reframed, developed and sometimes challenged as situations change. This is because we do not establish our identities by ourselves but as we communicate with others. Baker cites Pavlenko (2003) who thinks that "identity is more or less imposed, assumed and negotiated". Baker says that some people hate to be called members of a minority language because, like the concepts 'minority ethnic group' and 'cultural minorities', it carries a negative stigma, implying somehow that the language and its speakers have less status than those of the majority group, who will also be less inclined

to learn the minority language. Thus the issue of identity may also explain why some Francophones in Cameroon are so reluctant to learn English.

In the next two issues I explore the effects of language ideologies and attitudes on the population of Cameroon.

## **2.2 Language Ideologies**

This study started within the conventional framework of language attitudes. I wanted to investigate the attitudes of Francophone high school students in Cameroon toward the English language and their motivation for learning the language. Schiffman (1997:1) describes language attitude studies as studies of the population at large, or a segment of that population, to try to find out what people's attitudes are about:

- 
- Language in general;
  - Motivation towards the learning of a first or second language;
  - The status of a language, or the status of its speakers, or the status of the variety (standard/non-standard) of the language, or its use in certain domains;
  - Language shift within a particular community or in general; and
  - Loyalty towards their own language or own non-standard dialect.

Schiffman's categories are a simplification of the work of Agheyisi and Fishman (1970:137-157), who provide three categories of language attitude studies:

- Those evaluating languages as classical/standard/official against modern/non-standard/vernacular;

- Those pre-occupied with the social significance of language or language varieties and attitudes towards speakers of different languages in multilingual settings; and
- Those dealing with language behaviour, i.e. language choice and usage, language reinforcement and planning, language learning and views about inter-dialectal intelligibility.

However, I found that these categories and definitions did not account adequately for the findings of the study in the context of Cameroon, and my supervisor and I decided to look at the relatively newer field of language ideologies for some answers (Dyers and Abongdia, 2008). We encountered various definitions of this concept, all of which corresponded with Kroskrity's (2000:8-21) four intersecting dimensions of language ideologies. According to him (his italics):

- “...*language ideologies represent the perception of language and discourse that is constructed in the interest of a specific social or cultural group*”;
- “...*language ideologies are profitably conceived as multiple because of the multiplicity of meaningful social divisions (class, gender, clan, elites, generations, and so on) within sociocultural groups that have the potential to produce divergent perspectives expressed as indices of group membership*”;
- “...*members may display varying degrees of awareness of local language ideologies*”; and lastly
- “...*members’ language ideologies mediate between social structures and forms of talk*”.

The first dimension, according to Kroskrity, reveals how people's notions about languages are rooted in their social experiences and often tied to their political and economic interests. This dimension comes out strongly in studies (cited in Milroy 2000) conducted by Lippi-Green (1997), Cameron (1995) and Milroy and Milroy (1998) on the type of language-based discrimination that takes place in the United States and Britain against marginalized social groups who do not speak the 'standard' language. In the setting of Cameroon, we have the dominant Francophone group and the subordinate Anglophone group, which leads to similar patterns of discrimination. Blommaert (2006) argues that language ideologies are not attributed to one person or located in a particular site (political party/government) but it penetrates the whole fabric of societies or communities and results in normalised, naturalised patterns of thought and behaviour. Thus ideology is seen as common sense, the naturalised activities that sustain social relation and power structures and the patterns of power that reinforce such common sense (Bourdieu 1991).

Kroskrity's second dimension reveals that social experiences are not uniformly distributed but differ in terms of the divisions in particular societies. Men and women, older and younger people, for example, may have very different perceptions, beliefs and attitudes about language. In this way, different ideologies can become contentious within the same group and lead to tensions between what are often state-endorsed dominant ideologies and their opponents. In South Africa, for example, we find contrasting views on the perceived shift towards English from Afrikaans and Xhosa depending on the area

in which respondents live and the particular social class they belong to (Dyers 2008a and 2008b; Anthonissen and George 2003).

At the core of the third dimension is how *conscious* members of a society are about their attitudes towards languages. Kroskrity contends that those who are most conscious of their ideologies are the ones likely to be most vocal about the value of different languages. But ordinary people's ideologies are more likely to be reflected in their actual language usage – the languages they prefer to use as opposed to the languages they avoid using (Kroskrity 1999: 19; Dyers 2008b).

Kroskrity's fourth dimension (2000: 24) shows how people use their ideologies about language as a bridge between their 'sociocultural experience and their linguistic and discursive forms as indexically tied to features of their sociocultural experience.' In other words, people are quite *selective* about the features of language and the role of particular languages in society when expressing their language ideologies. Certain features stand out, for example "I don't like the sound of that language/language variety – it sounds too coarse/common/disrespectful" or "My language cannot be used at university level". In the first example quoted here, the language or language variety has somehow become associated with unpleasant social experiences and in the second example there is recognition of the absence of 'my language' in a tertiary setting. A good example of this dimension is Swigart's analysis of the harsh criticism by the Senegalese Francophone elite of former President Abdou Diouf's speech to the nation in Urban Wolof, one of the local Senegalese languages, instead of French (Swigart 2000).



These four dimensions led me to conclude that studies in language attitudes and language ideologies intersect in the following two areas:

1. Both deal with the issue of status and how this affects patterns of language shift and maintenance in societies – In Schiffman’s terms, the status of a language, the status of its speakers or the status of the variety (standard/non-standard) of the language, or its use in certain domains. In Agheyisi and Fishman’s terms, the social significance of language or language varieties and attitudes towards speakers of different languages in multilingual settings.
2. Just as there are, according to Kroskrity, a multiplicity of language ideologies which effectively capture social divisions within sociocultural groups, so language attitudes also tend to differ depending on factors like age, gender, social class and level of education, as has been shown in the studies conducted by Siachitema (1985), Morgan (1993) and Gardner and MacIntyre (1993).

This therefore means that language attitudes and language ideologies differ fundamentally in only one main area:

Ideologies are constructed in the interest of a specific social or cultural group: i.e. they are rooted in the socio-economic power and vested interests of dominant groups. As Fairclough (2003:9) argues, ideologies are ‘...representations of aspects of the world which can be shown to contribute to establishing, maintaining and changing social

relations of power, domination and exploitation'. All the literature I have consulted provide evidence that this is where language ideologies and attitudes diverge, whether they are studies on the infringement of the language rights of minorities (e.g. Haviland 2003 ) popular beliefs about language in countries like Britain and the USA (e.g. Milroy, 2000), or the construction of ethnic identities (e.g. Kroskrity 1999). In a bilingual country like Cameroon, with a dominant Francophone population, such ideologies were also therefore likely to be present, as my discussion of the main findings of my study will show.

According to Pavlenko (2002), language attitudes are gradually being replaced as a field of research by language ideologies which are considered to be more socially and culturally derived. To her, attitudes towards a language can be criticised and changed if the language can affect the people positively (jobs, education, travels). She thinks that people with integrative motivation (learning a language to identify oneself with speakers of a particular language) to language learning could be seen as having a particular ideology about that language, instead of an attitude. This is because one can easily depict the person's language ideology to be related to say politics, culture, social and economic rather than the mere idea of identifying with the speakers of that language. Ideologies are therefore social constructions, but attitudes relate more to the construction of people's individual and even group identities. Thus people may hold a particular attitude towards a language because they want to be identified with that language.

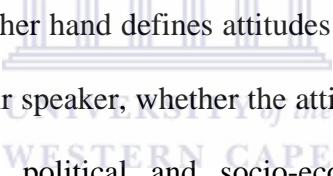
For Myers-Scotton (2006), the language situation in Cameroon, despite its policy of official bilingualism in French and English mirrors the prevailing language ideologies of

the dominant Francophone group. The lack of proper implementation plans creates major difficulties. For example, policies on medium of instruction is absent at most universities except for the University of Buea where English is the only medium. She gives a pat Simo Bobda (2004) who states that “Cameroonian Universities are probably the only ones in the world where a student never knows in what language a course is going to be taught before the instructor begins to lecture” (Myers-Scotton 2006:385). Myers-Scotton (2006:385) concludes that “[of] the two official languages, English has been the loser”. This is because it has been marginalised while speakers of French hold the majority of public offices. This in turn would definitely affect the way Francophone high school students regard English as having less value than French in Cameroon, although Simo Bobda (2004) believes that Francophones are motivated to learn English nowadays because of its spread as a world *lingua franca*. The prevailing language ideologies in Cameroon would definitely have an impact on individual language attitudes, which is the focus of the next section.

### **2.3 Language Attitudes**

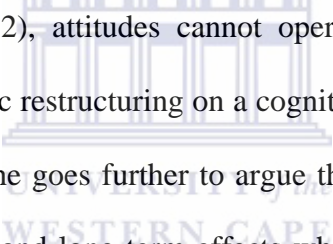
Baker (1992:12-13) distinguishes between “...the cognitive, affective and readiness for action parts of attitudes”. To him, the cognitive component relates to the thoughts and beliefs people have about the languages they know, while the affective components relates to how people feel about such languages. The “readiness for action parts” is a plan for action with regards to a language – what people intend to do about such languages, whether they would be happy to learn them.

Allport (1954:45 cited in Dyers 2000) defines attitude as a ‘mental and neural state of readiness’ while Fasold (1984:147) defines it as ‘an intervening variable between a stimulus affecting a person and that person’s response’. Gardner (1982) supports Allport’s definition of attitudes, particularly in the context of language, because it means that attitudes may influence people’s responses to attitude objects or situations, but may not necessarily determine them. Therefore, attitudes can be different from, and not always related to, actual behaviour (Dyers 2000). Some researchers (Carranza and Ryan 1975; Ryan 1979; Edwards 1982) are however of the opinion that professed attitudes may be different from an actual subconscious attitude that governs a language user’s judgments of and conduct towards speakers and writers of a particular language.



Myers-Scotton (2006) on the other hand defines attitudes as “...subjective evaluations of both language varieties and their speaker, whether the attitudes are held by individuals or by groups.” She thinks that political and socio-economic forces can change a community’s attitude toward a particular language or a variety of a language. This also illustrates the influence of prevailing ideologies on language attitudes. People will want to learn a language of prestige, as is the current situation in Cameroon. Given that French is the language of prestige here in terms of politics and socio-economic activities, the minority English-speaking people are eager to use it despite the rising demand for English as a global language. This also of course has an impact on the development and use of indigenous African languages in all domains, which may be ideologically desirable, but is in conflict with the reality of the dominance of French in Cameroon and English globally.

Brown (2000) contends that attitudes develop in childhood as a result of existing attitudes in parents and peers. These attitudes form a part of one's perception of self and others and of the culture in which one is living. He also says that in a language learning situation, each learner has both negative and positive attitudes to a target language, and that these are often fostered by often subjective perspectives on different cultures fostered by sources such as TV and newspapers. Negative attitudes can often change by exposure to reality such as meeting more speakers of the target language, and teachers have important roles to play in changing such attitudes.



According to Morgan (1993:72), attitudes cannot operate in isolation. "In order for change to take place, some basic restructuring on a cognitive level with probable shifts in affectivity must also occur". She goes further to argue that attitude change may vary in durability such that short-term and long-term effects which are influenced by cognitive and effective factors should be taken in to consideration. Therefore in the absence of positive re-enforcement for change in classroom, school setting and even at in-service workshops, there will only be a short term change in language attitudes. A long term change will be effected if societal change is at the level of work. It is because of the difficulties in changing attitudes that Dyers (2000:29) contends that:

Language activist who believe that people's attitude towards languages can be changed through e.g. public awareness campaigns or state policies, must realize that changing language attitude is no simple task. An individual might change his/her attitudes, but unless such changes are supported either by societal changes in attitudes or by state intervention through enforced language policies which carry

the approval of the majority of the population, the individual would find it extremely difficult to sustain such changes.

Several studies have been done on language attitudes in Africa. Muthwii and Kioko (2004) give us an overview of the general attitudes of Africans towards colonial languages and their indigenous languages. They hold the view that Africans prefer the former colonial languages (English, French and Portuguese) to their indigenous languages. They consider their languages inferior to the colonial languages as they do not have social and economic status in their societies. In Kenya and Uganda for example, there is the present pressure for youngsters to learn in English as opposed to their indigenous languages. Children in primary schools are even beaten if they are speaking their home languages. Even parents do not favour instruction of their children in the indigenous African languages. This shows the negative attitudes Africans hold towards their indigenous languages in favour of the colonial languages.

This is similar to what is happening in Cameroon, where parents do not want their children to be instructed in their indigenous languages. Most of them even go as far as avoiding communicating with their children in these languages and the children finally grow up without knowing their home languages. According to Muthkwii and Kioko (2004), in Nigeria, Uganda and Kenya education in English has become education for the minority that have the resources to access it. Cameroon suffers the same fate as only about 5% of Anglophone Cameroonians are actually English speaking. All of this is caused by the language policy put in place by the state in favour of colonial languages in the name of national unity. That is why in Cameroon today, indigenous languages do not

have any status in the society. The language policy is only in favour of French and English and all the 249 indigenous languages are left out.

As far as South Africa is concerned, Dyers (2000) holds that people maintain pride in their rural roots and cultural traditional values but this is somehow diluted by urbanization since it has to do with people coming in close contact with speakers of other languages, culture and tradition. In South Africa, the attitude held towards English is a very positive one. However it is for instrumental reasons as it is said to have a strong market value. Some parents think that English is the key to success. The idea of assimilation here is not different from what is happening in Cameroon. English speaking students would rather abandon their home languages and English to learn and speak French. This is firstly because it is the dominant language and secondly because they want to identify themselves with the speakers of this language. It is rather surprising and unfortunate too that most countries in Africa are now fighting for their national languages to go into their constitutions and become official languages even used in education but Cameroonians neglect their national languages and are rather fighting to identify themselves with foreign languages and will even conflict over this.

## **2.4 Motivation**

Closely related to the study of attitudes is the *motivation* that learners bring to the language learning situation. Gardner and Lambert (1972:22) carried out a study on language attitudes and revealed the following:

An individual successfully acquiring a second language gradually adopts various features of behavior which characterize another linguistic and, as is often the case, another cultural group. The learner's ethnocentric disposition and his attitude toward the other group are believed to influence his success in learning the new language. His motivation to acquire the language is considered to be determined both by his attitudes toward the other group and by his orientation toward learning a second language (Gardner and Lambert 1972: 22-229).

According to Gardner (1985), one might think that those with favourable attitudes would be more attentive and serious than those with negative attitudes, but even so, such attitudes might not be related to the achievement. An individual could hold positive attitudes, but prefer not to study the language in school because of a dislike for the teacher, for example. This makes it difficult to be able to relate attitudes to achievement. Saville-Troike (1989) found in one study that students who had active and competitive coping styles, and a more positive attitude toward learning English, achieved better in school.

Norris-Hott has also written on language attitudes and motivations. He defines motivation as “the learner’s orientation with regards to the goal of learning a second language” (2001:1). He cites Mowrer (1950) who proposed that when learning a first language, a child’s success could be attributed to the desire to gain identity with the family and then the wide language community. Norris-Hott thinks that motivation is one of the factors that combine with others to influence a learner’s success. He alludes to one of Gardner’s theories which identify the linguistic and non-linguistic outcomes of the learning



experience. The linguistic outcome refers to the actual language knowledge and language skill while non-linguistic outcomes reflect an individual's attitudes concerning cultural values and beliefs towards the target language community. He also cites Ellis (1997) who thinks that the learner with a higher degree of proficiency and more desirable attitudes are those who combine both the linguistic and non-linguistic outcomes of the learning experiences.

This thesis tests the theories that emerged from the research Gardner and Lambert (1972:202) carried out in Canada, USA and the Philippines, in the context of multilingual Cameroon. Of central interest to me was their conclusion that people's orientation towards learning a second language could take an

“instrumental” form if the purposes of language study reflect the more utilitarian value of linguistic achievement such as getting ahead in one's work, and an “integrative” form if the student is oriented towards learning more about the other cultural community, as if he were eager to be a potential member of the other group.

Their research concluded that an integrative motivation could lead to stronger second language learning than an instrumental motivation, as learners who identify themselves closely with the target language group would learn the second language much faster. As Gardner (1985:63) emphasizes:

In general, most but not all of the analytic studies support the notion of an integrative motive as being important in second language acquisition, while the multiple regression studies appear to cast doubt on this conclusion... Obviously, I am biased, but it is my

opinion that the weight of evidence supports the generalization that an integrative motive does facilitate second language acquisition....

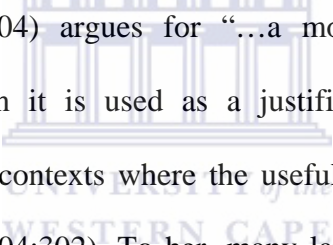
I am however of the opinion that, while this may be true, an instrumental motivation can also facilitate second language acquisition. I agree with Liu (2007) that both the integrative and instrumental motivations to language are important for language learning, but which is more important will depend on the context; the students and the environment. Gardner, Smythe, and Lalonde (1984) contend that both contribute in the same way in the success of language learning because one who is integratively motivated may as well recognize the instrumental value of learning the language and vice versa.

Norris-Hott (2001:4-5) like Lambert and Gardner believes that integrative motivation is more powerful in second language learning. He goes as far as noting that:

...instrumental motivation has only been acknowledged as a significant fact in some research, whereas integrative motivation is continually linked to successful second language acquisition. It has been found that generally students select instrumental reasons more frequently than integrative reasons for the study of language. Those who do support an integrative approach to language study are usually more highly motivated and overall more successful in language learning

This could be true in some contexts, but I disagree with Norris-Hott when he makes a categorical statement that integratively motivated learners are “usually highly motivated and overall more successful in language learning”. This is not the case in Cameroon and in many other situations. Gao *et al.* (2000), writing about the situation in China, hold that instrumental motivation is more successful among the Chinese students as most learners

maintain their instrumental motivation with clearly defined objectives at different stages of English in education and promotions at jobs. Lukmani (1972 cited in Norris-Hott 2001) investigated non westernized female learners of L2 English in Bombay and came out with the findings that instrumental motivation was more important than integrative motivation. In addition, Benson (1991:36), in a study done with university students in Japan, concluded that there are some students who are neither integratively nor instrumentally motivated to learn English. Thus, he posits a third aspect called “personal” reasons. This has to do with motivations such as the “pleasure at being able to read English”.



However, Van der Walt (2004) argues for “...a more nuanced understanding of instrumental motivation” when it is used as a justification for particular language planning and practices and in contexts where the usefulness of English is regarded as self-evident (Van Der Walt 2004:302). To her, many language surveys have looked at instrumental motivation as a one-sided issue (i.e. the desire to use the language for future prospects). She holds that students believe their academic success has been prevented by the language they want to be exposed to. In the context of her university, the University of Stellenbosch in South Africa, this would be English for Afrikaans speaking students and Afrikaans for English speaking students. The students struggle with the target language leading to frustration and therefore less achievement. Van der Walt thus believes that language policies which ignore Baker’s (1992) input-output distinction with regards to motivational attitudes are therefore likely to fail. The input means that a favourable attitude can predispose the outcome of a learning experience while the output

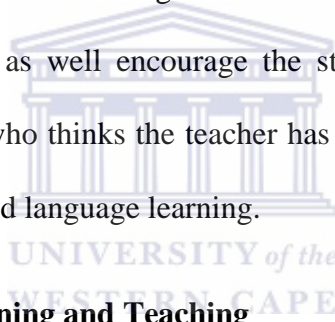
means that a learning experience can produce a positive attitude. Therefore a learner with less skill in a particular learning area becomes more positive and productive at the end. All too often, particularly in the context of South Africa, “a one-sided view of students’ instrumental motivation is used as justification for using a language as a medium of instruction” (*ibid*: 308). Therefore the general conception that students’ instrumental motivation to learn a language (English / Afrikaans) is, in her opinion, a “powerful force” but this does not mean that the learners do not need support in their home languages especially when they are dealing with complex concepts.

Macaro (2003:93) thinks that from the 1990s, there has been a shift in the perception of motivation. He says that motivation is now being perceived in the way that it incorporates cognition. This could be supported by the following question that he proposed: “Does an instrumental or integrative desire to learn an L2 lead to greater cognitive effort and therefore success? Or, does greater cognitive performance (for example greater powers of vocabulary memorization and instant recall) lead to finding the subject relatively easy ...?” What Macaro says ties in with what Cummins (2000) says that teachers should use students’ cognitive knowledge in the teaching of the second language. Macaro (2003) also cites Stable and Wikeley (1993) who think that some learners have a dislike for the foreign language because of their “perception of their ability in the subject”. The students do not have confidence in their ability and sometimes even the top achievers do not feel secure enough in their ability and thus do not continue learning the language.

Macaro cites (Dörnyei 2001) who says that teachers' motivation and enthusiasm is an important element in motivating learners but however suggest that this assertion should be treated with caution. He thinks that:

The most powerful motivational force comes from the learner focusing on himself or herself, then shifting the spotlight on the teacher would seem to be a course of action contradicting the evidence. Thus, for teachers to draw the spotlight upon themselves could be a way of shifting the attributions for success to them rather than the learner (p.112-113)

I however differ from Macaro because I think that motivation or enthusiasm on the part of the teacher goes a long way to encourage the students to like the subject. A teacher who is highly motivated will as well encourage the students and vice versa. This is supported by Spolsky (1989) who thinks the teacher has an important role to play in the success of the students in second language learning.

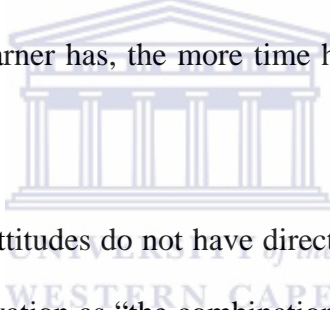


## **2.5 Attitudes, Language Learning and Teaching**

Gardner (1982) holds that there are four features of second language (L2) learning. These are the social and cultural milieu, individual learner differences, the setting or context to which learning takes place and linguistic outcomes. The social and cultural milieu refers to the environment in which the individual is situated. This helps to determine and shape their beliefs and ideologies about other cultures and languages, as was shown earlier in the sections on language ideologies. Thus there is a prevailing ideology in Cameroon, shaped by socio-historical and political forces over many years, that French is a more powerful language with a majority of speakers and geographical distribution. The dominance of this language may hinder the desire of French-speaking Cameroonians to

learn English, while English-speaking Cameroonians believe that they should master French as the dominant language in order to improve their prospects of employment, particularly in government ministries and major industries.

Spolsky (1989:148) has also written extensively on L2 teaching and learning. In his study of attitudes he cites Carroll (1962) who says that the acquisition of the second language may be strongly influenced by factors such as aptitude, opportunity, or methods and motivations. For aptitude, Carroll says that "...the greater the learner's aptitude, the faster he or she will learn all parts of the second language". Secondly, the "...more time spent learning any aspect of the second language, the more will be learned" and finally, "...the more motivation the learner has, the more time he or she will spend learning an aspect of the second language."



Spolsky (1989) contends that attitudes do not have direct influence on learning but leads to motivation. He defines motivation as "the combination of efforts and desire to achieve the goals of learning plus favourable attitudes towards learning the language" (1989:149). He refers to Gardner who says that "...motivation involves four aspects, a goal, effortful behaviour, a desire to attain the goal and favourable attitudes towards the activity in question...." Spolsky (1989) further makes reference to one of Gardner's (1982) studies which had shown some changes in the attitudes of students on summer intensive French course. It revealed that as the students' proficiency in French increased, they became less certain about their identity and thus did not speak French all the times.

According to Spolsky (1989), motivation has three main components: attitudes towards learning a language, desire to learn the language and effort made to learn the language. He says that all these three are involved when the student is truly “motivated” to learn the language. He cites Clément and Kruidenier (1983:286) who conducted research in Quebec and found that the students in their study learned English mainly for instrumental reasons.

Spolsky goes further to say that language attitude and motivation depend greatly on social context. This is because a learner will learn a language faster depending on how he will use the language and the cost to pay for it. According to Spolsky (1989:160)

...the social dimension becomes obviously important when the language choice is related to a wide context or when the social relation it self is valued as much as the practical business.

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Thus in situations where the language is dominant in the society, people will want to learn this language and vice versa, as is the case in Cameroon with the dominant position of French.

According to Cook (1991), some second language learners do better than others because they are better motivated. However, he thinks that it is risky for a student to learn a language with a particular motivational reason in mind. This is because they may sometimes find it difficult to take in ideas different from what they already have in mind. He says that teachers face problems as the different motivations for L2 learning are deeply rooted in the minds of the students. This therefore makes the teaching of L2 difficult as

all efforts made by the teachers are powerless against the many different influences on the learners.

As far as the teaching of English is concerned, Dörnyei (2001:116) says that the teachers' skills in motivating the learners should be seen as central to teaching effectiveness. He thinks that what ever is done by the teacher has an influence or effect on the learners. Therefore, the teacher's behaviour is a powerful "motivational tool" (ibid: 120). Where there is a mutual trust between the two, it leads to enthusiasm in the students and teachers. This is very important in language teaching as an enthusiastic teacher instils in the students a sense of commitment and interest in the lesson.

Macaro (2003:88) gives a powerful support to Dörnyei (1998:117) who says that "...motivation provides the primary impetus to initiate learning the L2 and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process." He also makes reference to Gardner (1985) who says that L2 learners need orientation as students were classified into integratively and instrumentally-oriented groups. Dörnyei (2002:8) identifies motivation as "...why people decide to do something, how long they are willing to sustain the activity [and] how hard they are going to pursue it." A learner's motivation may vary from day to day and even from task to task (Dörnyei 2002).

## **2.6 Conclusion**

This chapter reviewed literature on language ideologies, language attitudes, motivations for language learning and the methods of second language learning. It also looked at the



possibility of a change in language attitude. It provided evidence of the relevance and values of research on language attitudes and the relationship between language attitudes and motivation, which reveals a lot about second language learning and acts as a marker of individual and social identity. In second language learning, positive attitudes can play a great role in motivating second language learners and can also affect language maintenance, growth and shift.

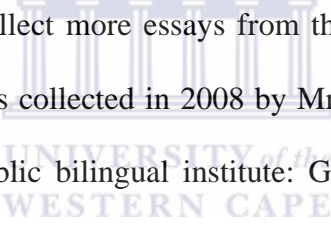


## Chapter Three

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

This thesis reports on a study of the language ideologies and attitudes of Francophone learners in Cameroon to English in 2006 and 2008. Specifically, it looks at how these ideologies and attitudes influence not only their motivations for learning English, but also their success in learning the language at school. The bulk of the data was collected by me while working as a teacher in Cameroon in 2006, and part of it was actually used for my BA Honours Research Essay in Linguistics.



For this thesis, I decided to collect more essays from the students to supplement those collected in 2006. The data was collected in 2008 by Mrs. V (who assisted me with the collection in 2006) from a public bilingual institute: Government Bilingual Practising High School (GBPHS) generally known by its French translation: Lycee Bilingue D'application (LBA) Yaoundé. Bilingual schools in Cameroon are schools that have both the English and French systems of education on the same campus. There is actually no mixture of mediums of instruction (MOI), and each system uses its language as MOI while the other language is taught as a subject on the curriculum. Thus in GBPHS Yaoundé, there are the English and French sections, using English and French as their MOI respectively. French is taught in the English section as a subject and English in the French section.

This chapter focuses on the research methodology used in this study, which was qualitative in nature. This chapter therefore describes and discusses the qualitative research methods used in this thesis. It outlines the various stages involved in the design and implementation of the methodological plan devised for this study. Qualitative methods were used in order to understand the teachers, the students and the socio-cultural contexts within which they live. It was considered to be the most appropriate means of realising the aims of this research, because it gives a greater degree of insights into the motivations and attitudes of the respondents.

### **3.2 Research design and methodology**

Qualitative research is defined as being “concerned with human beings: interpersonal relationships, personal values, meanings, beliefs, thoughts and feelings. The qualitative researcher attempts to attain rich, real, deep, and valid data and from a rational standpoint, the approach is inductive” (Leedy 1993:143). This research deals with collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data by observing what people do and say. It refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things (Berg 2001). It is much more subjective and uses very different methods of collecting information, mainly individual in-depth interviews and focus groups. The nature of this kind of research is exploratory and open-minded. The quality of the finding from the research is directly dependent upon the skills, experience and sensitivity of the interviewer or group moderators.

According to Jacob (1987 cited in Seliger and Shohamy 1989) the qualitative research method tries to present the data from the perspective of the subjects or observed groups

so that the cultural and intellectual biases of the researcher does not distort the collection, interpretation or analysis of the data. This research method uses a variety of means to collect data. These methods are used in the same study in order to compile a more complete picture of the activity or event being described. Some of the methods are participant observation, interviews, questionnaires, case histories, taking field notes to name a few (Seliger and Shohamy 1989).

This research method has both positive and negative aspects. Seliger and Shohamy (1989) say that conducting qualitative research in second language learning presents problems to the researcher. This is because the language itself becomes a variable. Although it has also been criticised as being subjective, it is the most appropriate in the research of language teaching and learning as it deals with comprehensive human behaviour. One cannot understand human behaviour without understanding the framework within which subjects interpret their thoughts, feelings and actions. I considered this understanding critical to my research on attitudes in Cameroon.

Thus the qualitative research method was viewed as the most appropriate to gain understanding of these issues. The use of more than one method as part of a research design is referred to as 'triangulation'. It is defined by Oslen (2004) as a method of cross-checking data from multiple sources to search for regularities in the research data. This is to enable diverse view points cast light on a topic. It entails the use of multiple, independent method of obtaining data in a single investigation in order to arrive at the same research findings (Oslen 2004). It is not aimed merely at validation but at deepening and widening one's understanding of the issue in question. This helps to

reduce observer's or interviewer's bias and enhance the validity and reliability of the information.

According to Denzin:

Triangulation, or the use of multiple methods, is a plan of action that will raise sociologists (and other social science researchers) above the personal biases that stem from single methodologies. By combining methods and investigators in the same study, observers can partially overcome the deficiencies that flow from one investigator or methods (Denzin1989:236).

When one analyses data collected through different techniques, one comes out with more valid and reliable findings than data collected using a single technique. A researcher may understand and describe a concept if he can look at it from two or more different perspectives. If he comes out with the same results, the researcher becomes more comfortable with his/her conclusion. This Denzin (1978) sees as the application and combination of several research methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon.

### **3.2.1 Ethics**

Ethical considerations are increasingly becoming essential concerns in the process of knowledge production. Doing research today without consent being sought from all participants may result in the questioning of the validity of the results and knowledge claims that might emanate from the research.

Ethics is thus very important in this thesis in order to avoid infringing on the rights and freedom of the informants. I did all I could to ensure confidentiality of reporting for my

respondents. According to TerreBlanche & Durrheim (1999:65) the essential purpose of ethical research planning is to protect the welfare and the rights of research participants. In order to satisfy these ethical requirements, I met with the teachers and students I used in this study in person and explained the purpose of the study. I provided details about myself and a consent form which was signed by each interviewee. The participants were given the option of being tape-recorded or not, and they had the right to withdraw from the interview at any time and to request for their recorded interview to be erased. By giving respondents control over their interview experiences, it was hoped that some of their concerns regarding privacy and anonymity would be ameliorated. The students writing the essay did not write their names or any thing that could identify them on the papers. Their social and personal positions were respected to the full.

### **3.2.2 The research population**

English is taught as a compulsory subject to the Francophone students who formed my research population and it carries a very high coefficient: 3 for the secondary (Form 4) and 3 and 5 for the high school (Upper Sixth) Science and Arts respectively. The survey was done with students from Form 4 and Upper Sixth. Although this study focuses on the data gathered in 2006, my teaching experience from 2001-2006 also counts. In 2006 I went to the school where I actually observed the students and asked them to write an essay.

Age and sex are very important issues in the research of attitudes in language learning. In this research, age was used to place the respondents in the 21 first century society where there is globalisation and English is used as the main international language. Given the

ways in which young people are part of a global culture these days, I took their ages into consideration to see if the students found the language an important component of their future lives as members of a global society.

Sex was also taken into consideration. This was however solely to equate the number of respondents of both sexes in both classes. It was not used to see if the female or males were more positive or negative, or more instrumentally or integratively motivated. Gender would have been a very interesting issue in this study but given that the students were not to identify themselves in their essays, this was left out as it was difficult to distinguish between boys and girls. However, some teachers in the interview made mention of this aspect.

The research population for this thesis consisted of male and female students between 15 to 21 years of age, and teachers aged between 30 to 50 years. They were drawn from forms four and upper sixth classes in GBPHS, Yaoundé. The students were Francophone by birth, culture and training. French is used as a medium of instruction and English is studied as a subject on the school curriculum. The research was carried out over a period of nine months in Cameroon in 2006.

This study made use of a total of 70 respondents. 40 students wrote the essay, 20 from each level. 20 students and 10 teachers were interviewed. However the two classes observed had 60 and 50 students for form four and upper sixth respectively.

### **3.3 Instruments used**

Effective research instruments are very important for any project to be successfully accomplished. The instruments involved in this research project are interviews, classroom observation and an analysis of essays written by the students.

#### **Interviews**

Interviews are very useful research tools as they give the researcher a degree of flexibility and privileged access to other people's lives. There are often associated with survey-based research used by many qualitative researchers (Creswell 2003:186). An interview could be defined as one or more face to face interactions between an interviewer and interviewee, where the purpose is to understand the interviewee's life experiences or situations as expressed in his/her own words (Seliger and Shohamy 1989). It (the interview) gives an opportunity to get to know people quite intimately so that we can really understand how they think and feel (Seliger and Shohamy 1989). Interviews "involve unstructured and generally open-ended questions that are few in number and intended to elicit views and opinions from the participants" (Creswell 2003:188).

Given that the purpose of interviews are to collect data by actually talking to the participants, the interviews are therefore personalised and give the researcher a level of in-depth information, free response and flexibility that cannot be gathered by other techniques (Seliger and Shohamy 1989). Secondly, the interviewer can come in at certain levels of the interview with particular cues that allows for more information to emerge that was not foreseen at the beginning. He can also elicit additional data if initial answers



are vague, incomplete, off-topic, or not specific enough. The interviewees on their part also have the opportunity to ask questions on what they have not understood.

Interviews can however have limitations as they are sometimes biased in answers and accuracy. This can happen when the interviewer and the interviewee are familiar with each other or when the issue under research is very sensitive such as HIV/AIDS. In such cases the interviewee will fail to give the right information for fear of the unknown. In the case of the students used in this study, some were afraid that their interviews could be used against them and thus held back the truth and rather preferred to give the interviewer positive responses just to please her. On the other hand, the interviewer can be biased in analysing the responses given by the interviewee. The interviewer with a particular impression about an interviewee can carry this impression in to the analysis of the data collected. The interviewee on the other hand can also give biased responses based on the researcher's attitude or the issue under research. Many researchers believe that interviews may involve a selective recall, distortions and memory loss from the respondents, and subjectivity in the researcher's recording and interpreting of the data.

Also, inaccurate responses can sometimes occur when the interview questions are not written down and do not follow the same order. By this I mean that the researcher asks the questions randomly and it some times confuses the respondents. The questions should be chronological such that one question leads to the next. To prevent this, my questions were written down and were administered in the same order to all those interviewed. Changes only occurred in cases where the responses of some of the respondents gave me the opportunity to get more information that was not envisaged at the beginning of the

research. Thus further questions were posed immediately. These interviews were used to determine the experiences and perception of these participants.

This study was carried out in form four and upper sixth classes in GBPHS Yaoundé, Cameroon in 2006 and 2008. The 2008 data was solely collected by Mrs. V. as I could not go back to Cameroon due to the financial cost involved. However the data collected in 2008 consisted mainly of essays written by the students of form four and upper sixth classes of the same school (GBPHS Yaoundé). Thus I simply phoned the head of department of English and told her of the need for more data and that Mrs V. would be collecting the data for me. The interviews used were part of the 2006 data collection. I negotiated with the head of department of English in the school and was allowed to do my research. This was very easy to arrange as especially as I was a colleague from another school and member of the English Teachers' Association. I decided to interview ten teachers and twenty students. Six of the ten teachers were teaching the two classes used in the study while the other four were also teaching Francophone children but in different levels. Of the ten teachers interviewed, seven were Anglophones and three were Francophones. Two of the twenty students interviewed were Anglophones by birth but they grew up in the northern part of the country (a French speaking area), where there were no English or bilingual schools. The children were thus forced to follow the French system of education. However, they spoke English at home with their parents and used French with neighbours, friends and in school. French became their language of instruction. Though Anglophones by birth, they are now Francophones by culture and upbringing although not entirely because they speak English at home.

In the interviews conducted, I wanted to find out the following from the teachers:

- *How many students do you have in your class and how do you manage this class?* Here, I wanted to know the class sizes and the how the teachers coped up with the students given that one of the biggest problems we face in Cameroon is that of large classes.

- *How do the students react in their English classes? Do they participate actively or are they reserved in class?* This question was to get from the teachers the participation rate of the students because it is believed that in very large classes, students hardly participate as they spend most of the time talking and or doing things unrelated to the subject in question. This mostly happens as most of the teachers in the public schools do not bother controlling these large classes. Thus the students do what they want in the classes.

-*Do you sometimes use or allow your students to use French in your classes?* This question was to help the researcher know what language the students used in class (If they sometimes shift from English to French when answering or asking questions). This particular question helped her to know one of the methods the teachers used. This is a crucial problem as some of the teachers do translation in class in the name of clarification which rather discourages most of the students in their attempt to learn the target language. My experience and that of other educators have shown that as long as a second or third language teacher starts translating from the target language to the first or second language of the learners, the learners learning ability drops. The learners will continuously be asking for these translations and if not given their attitudes are bound to change.

-*Which teaching methods do you use and when do you incorporate the different activities in the specific lessons?* This was to help the researcher understand the different methods

used by the teachers in their lessons and also to know the activities used at the different levels of the lesson. Also I wanted to find out if the methods and activities they used influenced the learners' success in achieving their goals.

- *Do you have enough teaching materials?* This was to know if there were enough teaching materials to facilitate the teaching-learning process. Second language teaching and learning can be more effective if there are sufficient teaching and learning materials (Cummins 2000). Thus I wanted to know from the teachers if they had enough of such materials and if the materials encouraged and promoted the different kinds of learning, that is instrumental and integrative motives. However this is not the case in Cameroon as the teaching and learning process is purely based on Darwin's theory of the survival of the fittest. Teachers have to look for their own teaching materials and because no one is willing to do so at his or her own cost, second and third language learning is mostly done in a lecture manner to the detriment of the students.

-*What do you do when a student gives a wrong answer to a question in class?* This was a very crucial question and was asked to find out the different techniques used by the teachers in such cases. Most of the students interviewed were of the opinion that they do not want to be laughed or mocked at in class by classmates or teachers so they rather kept quiet. Thus the researcher wanted to know from the teachers how they reacted to wrong answers and how they motivated the students to make further attempts to answer questions in class.

-*Do you think your students like English? Why? What do you think could be done to change or improve the attitudes of the students towards this language?* This helped the

researcher to get the opinions of the teachers on the students' attitude or reaction towards the language and what they thought could be done to change or improve the situation.

The findings from these interviews gave the researcher information on the teachers' teaching methods and their opinions on whether the needs, materials, and methodologies used in language teaching matched the needs and expectations of the learners. It also gave the researcher information on the attitudes of the students and some reasons for the different attitudes. Some suggestions were also made by the teachers on how to improve the language situation in Cameroon and the attitudes of the French speaking learners of English towards English.

With the students' interviews, I wanted to find out:

- *Do you like English? Why?* This was to know if the students liked English and if they do, is it for integrative or instrumental reasons or both.

- *What language do you commonly use with your family, friends and at school?* This question was to know the student's choices of language as it greatly determines their attitudes towards the target language. Also from the languages they used, one can easily determine how often they used English and if they like it.

- *Do you participate in class? Why or why not?* This was also to determine their participation rate and to confirm the data collected from the teachers. It is believed that some students are generally shy while others are scared of the teachers or their classmates so I want to get from the individual students what their problems were. What encouraged them to participate or what discouraged them from participating in class.

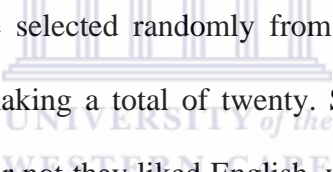
*-What do you think could be done to help you improve in English?* This was to get the students' opinions on the weaknesses around the teaching and learning of English.

The interview with the students gave me their different views on English, including their attitudes towards the language, their needs and expectations and also their motivation for learning English as a third language. Some of the students also suggested what they thought could help them improve in the language or change their attitudes toward the language. The interviews were conducted in both English and French and I was assisted by a friend whom I would like to call Mrs. V in the data collection. She is very bilingual and presented the questions in French when the students could not understand English and they were allowed to answer the questions in a language of their choice.

However, as the principal interlocutor in the interviews, I gradually noticed that the respondents might not be revealing their true attitudes towards the language because most of them knew me. This could have been influenced by the fact that I was a teacher and some of the students and teachers knew me. There was also the danger that my assessment of the respondents' attitudes could be influenced by my own attitudes and assumptions. In response to this, I immediately withdrew and Mrs V had to do the rest of the interviews as the students did not know her. To ensure further anonymity of responses, the students were asked not to write their names on the essay papers and it was only collected by the class coordinator and handed in to Mrs V.

The face-to-face interviews were very important as it helped me and Mrs V to probe the interviewees for more information. At the end of the interview, students were engaged in general discussions around the languages used in Cameroon and the language policy put

in place by the government. This helped me to get more data as far as the attitudes of the learners are concerned. Given that the discussion took place in an informal environment (during lunch hour) the students relaxed, and expressed themselves better to their friends, speaking mostly in French. This actually helped us (Mrs V and I as we both participated in the informal discussions) to gather more on their attitudes and different ideologies towards English. Some of these interviews were recorded and later transcribed (12) while some were simply written down (8) as some respondents refused being recorded. Some of the students could not express themselves well in English and thus spoke in French. These interviews were later translated and also transcribed.



The students interviewed were selected randomly from the class. Ten students were interviewed from each class making a total of twenty. Some of them could not freely express their feelings whether or not they liked English, while others were very bold and told us exactly how they felt about the language. Some even went as far as naming teachers and listing their experiences with English as a subject and as an official language in the country.

### **Observation**

This thesis includes a narrative description of classroom observations. Observation is very important in research as the researcher takes notes of the behaviour and activities of the researched. It refers to methods of data generation which involves the researcher immersing him/herself in a research setting, and observing the different dimensions of that setting (Creswell 2003:186). The researcher may record the speech act or language of

the learning activities. The observation is done by a participant observer who later becomes a participant and observes what is happening in the field herself (Seliger and Shohamy 1989). The researcher thus gets first hand information and can judge what he or she sees based on the theories studied. This system of data collection is very important as it allows the researcher to study the phenomenon at a close range with many of the contextual variables present. This is very important in the study of language behaviours. This is because through observation, the researcher's aim is to provide careful description of the learners' activities without unduly influencing the events in which the learners are engaged. This is usually done through the combination of field notes and audio/ visual recordings. This helps the researcher to analyse the language use in greater depth later and to involve outside researchers in the consideration of the data (Creswell 2003).

According to Creswell (2003:188) the researcher "records in an unstructured or semi structured way, activities at the research site. The qualitative researcher may also engage in roles varying from a non-participant to a complete participant." Although observation has the above important advantages which makes it suitable for this research, it is also limited in that sometimes the results do not reflect the actual behaviour of the students. This describes the classroom environment and builds on the children's experiences. Also the closeness of the researcher may result in biases which may later affect the researcher's objectivity in the analysis of the data. Lastly the presence of the researcher in the research situation may alter the behaviour of the researched (Seliger and Shohamy 1989:162).

The classroom observation was chosen to supplement the interviews and the essays written by the students. Two classes were observed - sixty students from Form Four and



fifty from Form Upper Sixth. This was done to observe the interpersonal behaviour and to gain an understanding of the context of the classroom. I also felt that simply drawing conclusions from my experience as a teacher teaching Francophone children for six years was not enough. I thought it necessary to carry out this research and in fact use a different school to confirm or invalidate my own experiences, which I did with Mrs. V. The main purpose of the observation was to observe what was happening in the classes, what language the students used in class, the teachers' teaching methods and how they managed the students in order to get them involved in the lesson. It was also intended to find out the number of students in each class and their participation level in the classes.

These classes used for this study were observed four times (four hours) each per term in 2006. Thus a total of twelve visits were done in each class given that Cameroon has three school terms in a year. In all we observed the two classes twenty four times. These observations were done with Mrs V. as she assisted me all through the collection of this data. In the classes, our attention was on the students, the lesson and the methods used by the teachers. We were also interested in the different activities used at the different stages of the lesson. We also focused on the distribution of questions in class and the ways the teachers reacted to the students' responses especially to wrong answers. The result of the observation was very important as it helped to confirm some of the data collected through interviews and the essays from the students.

### **The written essays**

Written responses can also be collected as data in qualitative research. According to Creswell (2003), documents for research may be public documents, (for example news

papers, minutes of meetings, official reports) or private documents (example personal journals and dairies, letter, emails). Documents were good for data collection in this study as they provide the researcher the language and the words of the participants. This was more effective as the students wrote in my absence and thus information was unobtrusive and thoughtful.

Students wrote essays in response to the questions: **“Do you like English?”** In these essays, students either agreed or disagreed and gave reasons for their answers. The essays were used in this study because it was observed that students could not actually reveal their true attitudes in the interviews and even in class because they were scared and some could not speak English fluently but could write it reasonably well. The findings in these essays were used to support or to contradict the responses from the interviews and the observations in the classrooms. The essay was written in both classes: form four and upper sixth. This was done immediately after the interviews were conducted. These two classes, one from the secondary and the other from the high school were used because it was felt that at the high school level, students would have been conscious enough to realise the need for a bilingual education or at least the importance of English in their lives.

### **3.4 Data Analysis**

I analysed the data collected through a narrative description of the essays written, the interviews and the classroom observation. Descriptive narrative analysis as an approach to data analysis provides information on “...*how often* certain language phenomena occur, the *typical* use of language elements by the different language learners, how *different* and *varied* certain groups of language learners are with regards to certain

linguistic phenomena, and the *relationship* among various variables” (Seliger and Shohamy 1989:211). This type of analysis can provide the researcher with detailed insights into the data.

According to Creswell (2003:191) descriptive narrative analysis describes phenomena based on data collected by a variety of means (but does not address causes of those phenomena). This method is used in studying individuals by asking them to provide stories about their lives. The narrative is then given a structure by the researcher so that the final research provides a blended narrative combining the input of both the participant and the researcher. “Description involves a detailed rendering of information about people, places, or events in a setting. Researchers can generate codes for this description .... This analysis is useful in designing detailed descriptions of case studies, ethnographies, and narrative research projects” Creswell 2003:193).

A narrative text is therefore used to convey the findings of the analysis. This could be a discussion with a chronology of events and detailed discussion of the different themes derived from the data collected. In such studies, the researcher interconnects themes into a storyline. The narrative outcome is compared with theories and the general literature on the topic. Once the initial classification of the data is done, pattern description is developed. The researcher begins the analysis with a description of evidence gathered from the data supporting or differing from claims of other scholars. The warrant for the claims can be established through a variety of procedures including triangulation. The descriptions follow the course of decisions about the pattern of descriptions, claims and

interpretation from the beginning to the end of the analysis process. Sufficient details are given for transparency and validity of results (American Education Research Association: 11).

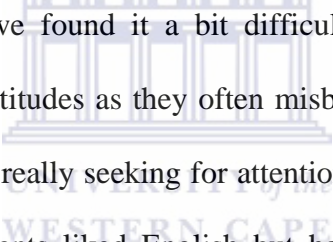
### **3.5 Limitations of the Research**

To say that this study was carried out without any problem will not be true. A good number of problems were encountered in the realisation of this work although I tried to overcome them. Conducting my research in a public school was a very big challenge as students in public schools especially very big schools like bilingual schools, are ill disciplined. It was very difficult for us to get the students in the research classes to grant us interviews. This was because we could only do this during their lunch break and they were not willing to sacrifice that time. They gave excuses such as: “We are hungry and cannot talk” and “We want to rest and chat a bit”. Some even went as far as asking us questions like “Who are you? Are you going to pay us? You are going to be rich because of us so nothing goes for nothing”. This problem was solved by taking the students to the lunch sheds, where we bought them food and explained the purpose of the research to them. After that, they granted us the interviews.

Some of the students were happy to talk to us while others were scared that we were going to take the information to their teachers. However when they saw the consent form being signed by their friends, they agreed to be interviewed as well. The main problem here was that of time as the lunch break was just for thirty minutes and sometimes the teachers took fifteen minutes of this time. Thus before the students could decide to grant

us an interview the bell would summon them back to class. Thus we had to make countless visits there to get the number of interviews needed for the study.

Another problem with interviews was that sometimes when we managed to record the interview to the end, some students would not allow us to use the recorded data but preferred that we wrote down what they said. Thus we had to do that but the unfortunate thing was that we could not sometimes successfully go through the second interviews due to time constraints. It was also observed that, unlike the boys, the girls did not want to be interviewed as they were very shy.



At the level of observation, we found it a bit difficult at the beginning to actually understand the students' real attitudes as they often misbehaved in class. Some students were serious while others were really seeking for attention. At one point in time one was tempted to think that the students liked English but had problems with the teachers' method but when the teachers changed the method of teaching there was still no change in student behaviour. We therefore needed to observe more classes.

Finally, when we asked the students to write the essay, it was a big problem. Most of the students refused to write the essay, saying that they did not have papers to waste. This was solved by us giving them paper to write on. The most difficult students to deal with were those in Upper Sixth whom we considered more mature than the Form Four students. Although some form four students were also very difficult, this class cooperated with us to a large extent.

### 3.6 Conclusion

This chapter focused on the methodology used in this thesis. It discussed the qualitative research design and methods used in the project. The qualitative data, viz. the interviews, classroom observation and essays written by the students were analysed through the use of a descriptive narrative. In a descriptive narrative approach, the question of how and why a particular language is effective in certain contexts is implied or informally woven into the presentation, but not explicitly formulated or developed. The focus in this research was to investigate the attitudes and ideologies of the students towards English and whether their motivation for learning English was integrative or instrumental. I also examined the extent to which the respondents' survey responses were supported by their interviews and the written essays and whether there were any contradictions in the findings of the different instruments used in the data collection. Classroom observation also formed part of the methodology, as it added to my understanding of what was actually happening in the classes and whether the teaching materials and methodology were appropriate for the needs of the students. The research population and how it was used in the study was also discussed. Triangulation was used in the method of data collection to ensure the reliability of the information gathered.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### FINDINGS

#### 4.1. Introduction

The data collected for this thesis revealed that prevailing attitudes towards English among the majority of my research population is a major issue affecting their motivation for learning the language and ultimately their ability to attain the required proficiency in English. In turn, these attitudes, particularly the negative ones, are affected by the prevailing language ideologies in Cameroon – ideologies created and sustained by the dominant Francophone group, but also apparently supported by many Anglophones.

This chapter first discusses the data which revealed positive attitudes towards English, by examining data from the essays, interviews, comments from teachers and personal observation. It includes a discussion of the different types of motivation held by the minority of students with positive attitudes towards English.

After this, an analysis of the data which revealed negative attitudes towards English is presented and discussed, together with the motivations of these students, who formed the majority of my research population. This data is categorized according to the different themes that emerged from the essays, interviews and participant observation. Data from those with a more positive orientation will also be discussed under these categories in order to contrast the responses of the two groups.

## 4.2 Positive Attitudes towards English

The data on which these findings are based comes from essays and individual interviews. Of the total body of data collected, only a small minority (20) of the students surveyed revealed positive attitudes towards English. Of these, only 5 revealed deep-seated integrative motivations (Gardner and Lambert 1972) for learning English, and most often, I found a blend of integrative and instrumental motivations present in their responses.

Norris-Hott (2001) like Brown (2000) thinks that both integrative and instrumental motivations are needed for second language learning. They believe that both are inseparable and are needed by the students. One of the respondents wrote: *“English is my passion since I am fourteen, I like it very much. I have been attracted to it by the American and British people who speak it. I have decided to speak like them. It will help me have an easier contact with the English people and besides have a good job and a rich culture because the best books are written in English”*. When we look at what this student said, one is bound to agree with Brown (2000) that integrative and instrumental motivations to language learning are inseparable given that one influences the other.

Another respondent wrote: *“I like English; I want to speak and write it. I want to go to the United States because I want to write and speak English. I like much music in English because I sing well.”* This response ties in with what Benson (1991) says that people also have personal reasons, like learning for pleasure, for studying English. At the end of her essay, the student quoted above wrote that she liked English and that everybody in her house spoke English. *“Every body in my house speaks English, my mother, my father, my sisters, and my brothers. When I am doing my home work, if I don’t know the word in*



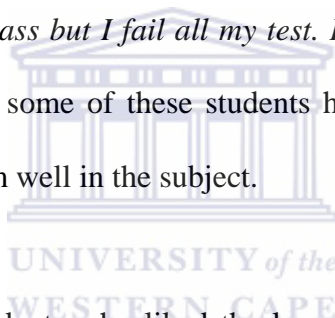
*English, I ask my mother and then she tells me. English is very important to me and to us because my country Cameroon is bilingual.*” It can be seen that this student liked English and was motivated and supported by her family in general and mother in particular. Having people at home with whom she could use this language was also a very important motivating factor for this student.

One of those interviewed said, *“I like English because it is the language of the world, it is a prestigious language. I want to speak it with the English people and I can also travel and have a good job in any part of the world.”* This student also revealed both an integrative and instrumental reasons for learning the language. She needed the language both to integrate with English-speaking people and for travel and employment.

Another student wrote: *“I like English because it is a beautiful language and is the most spoken in the world. This language helps us develop our language and can be able to discuss with many people who don’t understand your language. Even if you want to be a doctor, a teacher, a businessman, and so on, you should learn English.”* While this student saw the need to learn English in order to integrate with people from different parts of the world, he thought that English would also act as a *lingua franca*. He also thought that it was an important language in any occupation, especially as Cameroon is a bilingual country.

I observed during my years of teaching and data collection period that some students were actually interested in English and enjoyed using the language with the speakers

(Baker 2006, Gardner 1985, Spolsky 1989 and Macaro 2003). Some of my students and two from my research school (GBPHS) constantly came to me for conversation and like the student above, would say *“English is a beautiful language”, “I love English”, “I love the way the English people speak”, “I want to speak English like them”*. I however realised that although most of the students with a positive attitude towards English performed well and better than those with a negative attitude towards the language (subject), a few of the students with this positive attitude still did not perform well in the language. This was due to lack of books (learning materials) and late exposure to the language. One student in the essays wrote: *“I like English but every time I fail de test. I try to speak English. I go to class but I fail all my test. I am trying to pass dis time”*. It was realised that even though some of these students have a positive attitude towards English, not all of them perform well in the subject.



There were however some students who liked the language but their English speaking friends were not willing to speak the language with them. One student in the essays wrote: *“I like English but my English friends don’t like to speak English to me. All the time they speak French. I don’t have anyone to speak this language”*. I also observed this during the period of data collection and during my years of teaching English in Cameroon. Most of the students (even English speaking students) spoke French even during English lessons and once they are out of class, the language of interaction is almost exclusively French.

A further 11 students displayed positive instrumental motivations for learning English, that is, they were learning the language because of a particular goal in life. For example, one student wrote the following in an essay:

*“I love English because it will help me in my future plans to continue my studies abroad in an English speaking country. Most computer materials or equipments in the world are in English which make it important to master the language. Also most scientific and artistic discoveries are published in English, therefore making it necessary to know English”.*

*“I like English. I want to speak and to write. It is the best language I like. I want to go to the United States to study and be a big person tomorrow. In my class, I listen the lesson in English. If I don't understand I ask the teachers. When I am doing my home work if I don't know the word in English, I ask my mother and then she says me. I like English more than the subjects in class. English is very important to me and to us because my country; the Cameroon is bilingual.”*

*“I like English because it is a very good language. If you don't speak English you cannot going some countries in the world. You cannot have a good job in America, England because the countries speak English”.*

*“I like English. English is my life. It helps you to communicate, it help you to get a job, to go out of the country, it help you to be bilingual, it help you to pass your exams and finally to have international prize. English is beautiful”.*

These students were motivated to learn English for purely instrumental reasons. They saw English to have been very vital in their future lives: jobs, travel, study as well as to be bilingual.

Some of the teachers interviewed said that the students with strong motivations were always interested in the subject and participated actively in class while those with poor motivations were very inactive in class and performed poorly in the test and exams as well. During the observation period, it was noticed that most of the students with positive attitudes towards the language did better than those with negative attitudes. This was because the students with the positive attitudes were keen to participate in class and would sometimes code-switch to French just to get their points across no matter how much they were mocked and laughed at. On the contrary, those with negative attitudes did not make any attempt to participate in class. In an interview with the teachers some said:

*“Students with positive attitudes do better than those with negative attitude. Of the eighteen (18 out of 82) students who passed in my last test, the top five (5) are those with a positive attitude and who really participate in class. The other students do not care and as you could see their marks did not bother them at all”.*

*“Some of the students are positive while others are negative towards English. The different attitudes have a role to play on their performance as well. Negative goes with failure and positive with success, and I think this is not new to you. The students with a positive attitude struggle and are given assistance which helps them to improve in the*

*language and of course performance in test and exams. This does not mean that those with negative attitudes do not pass but the performance can never be the same”.*

The above interview extracts support what Saville-Troike (1989), Cook (1991), Spolsky (1989) Liu (2007) and Macaro (2003) say about the attitudes held by students having an important role to play in the teaching and learning of a second language. This was also confirmed by my observations. However, I also observed a complete contradiction of this theory, as some students obtained good marks in English even though they had a negative attitude towards the language. This was because they were learning the language mainly as a coefficient 3 and 5 subject for Science and Arts students respectively. In high school, English has the same coefficient as the core subjects of the Francophone students. It is coefficient 5 for Arts students because they do languages, thus failing in English brings down their averages. The students had to fight for good marks also because there is a mark level that they must not go below (depending on the performance) in each subject in their final exams or else they fail the entire exams.

Some students also expressed positive attitudes towards English for economic reasons in both the written data and the interviews. Cameroon is an underdeveloped country with very few job and employment opportunities. Most if not all young people are thinking of making a better future for themselves and this they think should be outside the country. Thus there is the need to learn English as it is the global *lingua franca*. One student gave this as her reason for learning English. She thought it essential to be bilingual to have a job, and wrote: *“To have a job it is important and capital for me to be bilingual. Also English is important in business and international co-operations”*. Most of the students

who liked English did so mainly because they needed to work or to travel to other countries for studies. Their interest in learning English was therefore strictly for instrumental reasons.

Responses from the interviews also reflected positive attitudes towards English in relation to the economic situation:

*“I like English because I can work in any part of the world. I can work with international organisations where I will make much money to help my family and friends.”*

*“China has many companies and needs English speaking people to work in these companies and teach English in their schools so I will have a good job there as soon as I finish school and pass in English.”*

The high demand for a job, especially a good one, was the central issue in most of the essays and in the interviews, and this could potentially become one of the major influences in changing attitudes towards English among young Francophones. It was observed that business oriented Francophone learned English in order to be able to interact with their business partners from other countries in the world. Only one student was influenced by the fact that most companies and industries in Cameroon are found in the French speaking areas, and said: *“I think I will work in a big direction and I will work in French. I don't see how English is good”*. This student was contented with French and did not want to take on another language. He might have been interested in English if he found companies that interested him in the English area or if English were one of the conditions for work in the *“big direction”*.

A further 4 students displayed neither integrative nor instrumental motivations for learning English, but had what Benson (1991:36) terms “personal” reasons for learning the language. In their essays, three of the respondents wrote that they liked English because they enjoyed singing English songs and were fans of English musicians. Another respondent was a fan of Nigerian movies, which are mainly produced in English. Here are some of the responses in the pleasure/personal category:

*“When I hear English, I am very happy to hear and speak that language. This is because I sing English, I love the music in English and when I sing Chris Brown, Holiday, P-Square, Keysha Cole, I am so glad.”*

*“I like English because I like to sing and my favourite musicians are Americans.”*

*“Since childhood I always liked watching English films and now the channel African magic shows a lot of Nigerian films and they are very good but I don’t understand some words and I like to learn English so that I can understand the films very well.”*

*“English is the language of the world. All big musicians sing English. If you want to be big, you should speak English”.*

I however noticed that student with a positive attitude towards English for personal reasons did not perform as well in the language as those with instrumental reasons. This was because these students needed just the basics to help them understand movies and or sing and enjoy English music. Their immediate needs for English were therefore met, and they did not appear to have a stronger motivation for learning English. One of my

students testified that she could reproduce a good number of English songs, but could not understand nor write “good English”.

### **4.3 Negative attitudes towards English**

The vast majority (40) of the 60 students surveyed revealed negative attitudes towards English. Their responses in their essays and interviews fell into the following three categories:

- a) Socio-political: Prevailing government policies and the way in which Cameroonian society is structured appeared to be a major factor in shaping the language ideologies of the population which in turn impacted on these students’ language attitudes;
- b) Ethno-linguistic identity: Both group and individual identity impacted on the learning of English;
- c) How English is taught in schools had a major effect on creating negative attitudes towards the language or strengthening already negative ones.

I will now discuss each of these categories, contrasting the responses from those with negative attitudes with those who had more positive responses.

#### **4.3.1 Socio-political reasons**

##### **4.3.1.1 Responses from the written data**

As the literature review has shown (Spolsky 1989, Myers-Scotton 2006, Dörnyei (1998, and Cook 1991), language attitudes and motivation are strongly influenced by the social



context in which individuals find themselves. The social position of a language has a role to play in people's motivation for learning that language. In a case where a language has a high status in a particular country or community, most people will be interested in learning the language, especially if it is a majority language. One of the students wrote:

*“English is the most spoken language in the world but I do not like it because we do not speak English in our house. I do not have any one to speak it with and English is very complicated.”*

This student could have been motivated to speak the English language if he had some one to use the language with even in the family domain.

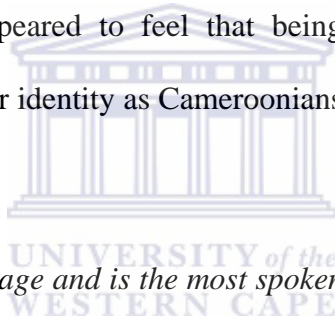
In Cameroon, French is the dominant language in virtually all government departments, businesses and public offices, and this strengthens the ideological position among Francophones that the English language (and by extension, its speakers) is subordinate to French. In addition, currently there are very few television and radio programs in English in Cameroon. According to Biloa (2004), “90% of the print media is Francophone, while Cameroon Radio and Television programmes are broadcast in the ratio of 65% in French and 35% in English”. Of course, the situation is much worse for the indigenous languages, which only can be heard on a few local radio stations. This situation clearly offers support for Kroskrity's first dimension of language ideologies, viz.: “...*language ideologies represent the perception of language and discourse that is constructed in the interest of a specific social or cultural group*” (1999:8). The lack of media coverage further encourages a negative attitude towards English in the students as the language is continuously being marginalized. As two of the students wrote:

*“I don’t like English because it is difficult and is spoken by very few people. Very little appreciation is given to the language and most television programs are in French.”*

*“I don’t like English because this language is very difficult. Most of the television programs are in French”.*

These students might have like the English language if it were the dominant language and or used in a good number of radio and television programmes.

According to Cameroon’s official language policy, every Cameroonian is expected to be bilingual in the two official languages, French and English. Some of the students with more positive orientations appeared to feel that being bilingual in the two official languages was a symbol of their identity as Cameroonians. Here are four examples drawn from the essays:



*“English is a prestigious language and is the most spoken language in the world, for that reason, I love the language, more so coming from a bilingual country (80% French) it is of vital importance to know English because it will enable someone to interact at all level in the society without a problem”.*

*“I like English because I will like to marry an Anglophone”.*

*“English is important to me because I will end my life in Britain or America. I must speak this language”.*

*“I love English because my country is bilingual. We speak French and English. English is very beautiful in the world.”*

These students are interested in the language because of the bilingual nature of Cameroon and the importance of English in the world.

#### **4.3.1.2 Responses from the interviews**

Some of the socio-political aspects were also evident in the interviews conducted with the students and the teachers. When a community has a broadly negative view of a target language and its speakers, or a negative view of its relationship with them, learning or acquiring the target language is typically much more difficult. More often than not a negative attitude develops towards the language. Here are some of the responses from the interviews:

*“What do we do with English, how many people speak English? French is the language of the people.”*

*“English is in class, I speak French with friends and family. All Anglos speak French”.*

*“Why should we learn English when only one-fifth of Cameroonians speak it? Everybody should use French. English should not be coefficient 5”.*

*“I don’t like this language because it is complicated. Many people like me don’t speak it in my country. It has many rules. It is difficult to understand what the teacher say. And it is a little people who speak English in Cameroon”.*

One of the teachers I interviewed had this to say:

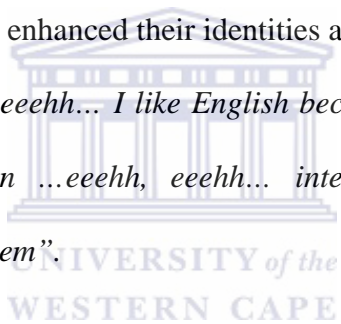
*“For the students’ attitudes, emmm eeh, you know eehh, I think the government has a very big role to play. How can students like English when eeh everything thing around them is French? How? You see, this country is not at all bilingual, they are only*

*pretending to be, so ehh, so I don't even blame the students when they don't come to class or see English as unimportant to them. Go to the ministries, everything is French, television, radio, name them. The students are of course negative towards the language for reasons you and I know."*

The above students were negative towards English because they did not see its importance. This was further confirmed by the teacher who thought that the situation of the country gives reasons for the students' attitude towards the language.

As with the written data, a few students also observed and one interviewed felt that being bilingual in English and French enhanced their identities as Cameroonians.

*"I am a Cameroonian. Eeehh, eeehh... I like English because Cameroon... eeehh... is a bilingual country. I can, can ...eehh, eeehh... interact with Francophones and Anglophones without any problem".*



*"I like English because it makes me proud. There are only two countries in the world that speak French and English; Cameroon and Canada. I can visit many countries without any problem because I am bilingual".*

These students were interested in English to identify themselves with the language and to be able to use it with speakers of English.

Another common social factor is the attitude of parents towards the target language. This also has to do with the different language ideologies that shaped this society with its minority and majority official languages. This is in line with Blommaert's (2006) assertion that language ideologies are not attributed to one person or located in a

particular site (political party/government), but penetrates the whole fabric of societies or communities. Some parents try to implant these ideologies in their children and it affects second language learning. When parents have a positive attitude towards the language, they encourage their children to learn the language though some of the children will still not learn it for individual reasons. Parents with negative attitudes will obviously discourage their children from learning the language.

Some of the students interviewed said:

*“I like English but my parents do not like it. My father says it is not my language and I should only speak French and my home language. He punishes me whenever he hears me speaking it so I only speak English when I am in school”.*

*“I like English. I have English neighbours. They are my friends. I like to play with them. Their parents and my parents all the time quarrel and my parents don’t want me to go there but my friends like me. If I go there I learn English with my friends. My mother says I should not go there again”.*

The negative attitude of these students’ parents discouraged them from speaking English and this would automatically have affected their performance in school.

In direct contrast to these students is another who wrote that her parents encouraged her and even got a home teacher for her. Despite her parents’ efforts, she still did not like the language because the home teacher shouted too much. Another student say: *“My parents like English and speak it. My mother teaches me English at home but I always fail the test*

*because English is very difficult. My mother says if I don't pass English I will not go for holiday. I want to try and pass this time."*

Thus, while some parents tried to encourage the development of a positive attitude towards English in their children, others discouraged this development. It could be seen that the last student above is now determined to study and pass in English not really because he likes the language but because of the reward of a holiday and the influence of his mother. If this student finally succeeds, he may develop a more positive attitude towards English.

I believe that attitudes can change depending on the situations in which the students find themselves. Baker (1988:142) contends that "Attitude change is essentially a cognitive activity, yet is formulated through social activities." In an interview with some of the students and teachers, I realised that attitudes can change. One of the students said that "*I did not like English but because most of my friends liked it and were passing in it I started learning it and I am now having very good marks and I like English.*" Thus the influences of friends affected this student positively. Her attitude towards English changed from a negative to a positive one. On the other hand another student said that he liked English but because his friends were always giving him negative reports such as how difficult the language was, how poor the teaching of it was and the high failure rate in the tests, he started hating the language and would avoid attending the English classes. This student had been influenced negatively by his friends and his initially positive attitude changed to negative.

The teachers I interviewed were of the opinion that students' attitudes can change both positively and negatively. One said, "*The attitudes of the students can change depending on the students themselves, their parents, peers, teachers and the environment in which they live.*" He said that the attitudes of some students were influenced by a range of factors such as their relationship with their English teachers, the attitudes of their friend, parental encouragement and most importantly (echoing Gardner and Lambert 1972) whether they lived among Anglophones and practiced the language with them daily. For example, one student wrote: "*I like English because it is a good language. I use it with my friends. My neighbours are Anglophones. They speak English to me*".

I observed that the environment and peer relationships had a very big role to play on the attitudes of the students. Some students who were positive towards the language later on changed to negative and would not even come to class due to peer pressure. If they associated with friends who did not come to class and or did not like the language (subject) they suddenly changed and would not come to class as well. Some however changed from a negative to positive attitude due to the influence of their friends and the new environment in which they lived and studied.

### **4.3.2 Ethnolinguistic Identity**

#### **4.3.2.1 Responses from the written data**

Identity is a very vital aspect in second language learning. Some people desire to learn a language because they want to identify themselves with the language and be recognised by the speakers of that language so as to be affiliated in to that speech community. As

West (1992:46) puts it "...identity relates to desire, the desire for recognition, the desire for affiliation and for security and safety". This desire to affiliate with the Anglophone speech community was evident from some of the data produced by those with more positive integrative motivations for learning English, as could be seen in section 4.2.

However, the majority of the essays showed how proud the students were of their identities as Francophones and revealed a deep antipathy, even hatred, towards English and the Anglophone community. They did not see the need for English in their lives, and they learned the language mainly because it is a compulsory school subject. One student wrote: *"I am a Francophone and I do not see the use of English. I hate English; I do it just because it is a must to do it in school"*.

According to Ellis (1994: 207), "[t]here is a general consensus that ethnic identity can exert a profound influence on L2 learning...A key concept here is that of the "distance" between the cultures of the native and target languages ...". Despite 'surface' level similarities between the cultures of the Anglophones and the Francophones, there are major 'deep' -level differences between the cultures involved. One main reason for this is the strict Anglo-Saxon system of education that the Anglophone children receive especially during the primary and secondary school. Such an education emphasises ways of thinking, believing, being, doing and behaving that are totally different from those nurtured and sustained in the French culture (Echu 2004). The Anglophone's academic system is very structured and rules are put in place for the teachers and students to follow. This is unlike the French system of education which allows students a much greater degree of freedom. Stressing this difference, one of the students wrote: *"I don't*



*like English because the people are very formal and strict, I don't like to be like them or to dress like them so I don't like to speak their language. This language has many rules”.*

More evidence about the negative attitudes and ethnolinguistic intolerance towards the Anglophone community in Cameroon came from another student who wrote: *“I hate English because I hate the English people. I don't want to speak this language and I don't stand where they speak it. I am forced to learn it in school but I hate it. I pay people to do my assignments for me so that the teacher should not punish me in school.”* This student did not only hate the language and its speakers but did not even want to be where it was spoken. The word ‘hate’ was used thrice by this student which emphasized his strong prejudice against both the Anglophones and their language. It is difficult to determine whether it is the language or its source community that most inspires his negativity. I am therefore of the opinion that these attitudes are clearly deeply entrenched and are unlikely to change given the prevailing language ideologies and entrenched ethno-linguistic identities in Cameroonian society.

#### **4.3.2.2 Responses from the interviews**

The interviews provided further evidence that ethno-linguistic identity contributed towards the negative attitudes towards English held by the majority of the research population. One student said: *“I don't like English because my neighbours are Anglophones and are very wicked. They spend most of their time speaking pidgin and talking about people. They call us ‘frogs’ and do not want us to play with their children because we speak only French”.*

This example shows that ethno-linguistic intolerance in Cameroon is not one-directional, but is present in both speech communities. “Frog” is a deeply-resented derogatory term commonly used by Anglophones to refer to their Francophone compatriots in informal discussion among friends and peers. The animosity between the two groups consequently hinders the possibilities of greater informal contact with the target language.

Norton (1997) emphasises the fact that we have multiple identities that are dynamic and being constructed in each new social situation. While some people like to identify themselves with more than one language others do not. For example, one of the students said: *“I don’t like English. I like French. I like to speak it every time. It is my culture”*. However, another student said: *“I like English. It is a beautiful language. I like to speak it but I don’t know it. My friends say eel eighth I know it but eehh (laughs) I am not sure. I don’t know it. I like to be like the English people”*. This student has a positive attitude towards speakers of English, and appears to want to identify with them.

One of the teachers of English I interviewed told me that the students mockingly called her *Anglais* (English) behind her back. She believed that ethno-linguistic identity was a major reason for the students’ negative attitude towards English, and this negativity extended to include teachers of English. She said: *“The students have both positive and negative attitudes towards English. Eeeeh, eeehhh, you know, one can hardly say because these students (laughs) always pretend when you are there but will call you funny names in your absence. You need to stand somewhere and hear what they say. They call me Anglais, (laughs) I am sure some of them do not even know my name. Find out you will discover the name they call you”*.

It is obvious that “Anglais” used to refer to the teacher is used in a derogatory manner and this already showed the attitude held by the students towards English. I also observed that students generally gave teachers names depending on what they did and what subjects they taught. This was very common with languages given that these are compulsory subjects on the curriculum. Those who used nick-names for teachers were mostly those students who did not like the language and would signal their friends to leave the class before the teacher entered.

### **4.3.3 How English is taught in schools**

Another very important category impacting on the language attitudes and motivation of these students is how English is taught in schools. Second language teaching and learning is a very sensitive issue as it needs a lot of techniques and diversity in the teaching methods of teachers. This can either encourage or discourage learning. Many of the students I surveyed actively hated English because it was strange to them and their interaction with it at school was therefore a key element in their attitudes towards the language. They only encountered English in school and had no one to practice it with outside their English language classes.

#### **4.3.3.1 Responses from the written data**

Cummins (2000) says that the teacher’s education and beliefs are of great importance within the education of a multilingual population. Morgan (1993) supports this when she says that a teacher’s knowledge is influenced by his or her experience. Some students in this study claimed not to like English because of their teachers and the ways in which they taught the language. Here are some extracts from the essay in this regard:

*“I don’t like my teacher, he shouts me too much”.*

*“My teacher is too strict; he does not play with us in class and does not explain anything to us”.*

*“I don’t like English because the teacher is always unhappy, the lesson is boring because the teacher does not play with us and send us out of class.”*

*“I don’t like English because the teachers are strong and they do not speak French in the class.”*

*“My teacher is always absent from class and comes only when we are writing tests or examination”.*

*“I don’t like English because my teacher does not explain well in class. He only writes out notes on the board for us to copy and we copy without knowing what he is saying”.*

*“The teacher is speaking `big` English to us so we do not understand him”.*

*“I don’t like English because my teacher is not happy”.*

These students confirm that teachers have a great role to play in how their students learn a particular language. Baker (2006) says that the attitude of the teacher and the enthusiasm s/he takes to class influences and affects the teaching and learning of the second language. For the students to develop interest in the language, the teacher should also show a high degree of professionalism such as punctuality, regularity, and effective teaching methods instead of just coming to class to evaluate the students on what has not

been taught. An example of this lack of professional ethos among some teachers came from the student who said that he hated English because his secondary school English teacher was seldom present in school. He used to come to class just once or twice a term or he did not come at all and at times the principal had to ask any other teacher to teach them English. This student only had a regular teacher at the level of high school and he was unable to make progress because of his secondary school experiences with English. Because of this, he wrote: *“I am always the last in the class when ever a test is given and this brings down my average because English is coefficient three to us”*. Another student wrote: *“I don’t like English because my teacher don’t explain well. He teach fastly and goes home. We don’t asked questions”*.

This problem of incompetent teachers is very common in cases where unqualified teachers or unmotivated teachers are allowed to teach. In my years of teaching, I observed that most teachers usually went to class unprepared. Some do so because of low salaries, others because they do not like or enjoy teaching and others because they were busy with their other businesses that took up all of their time. In such situations, the students can ask questions in class that challenge the teacher and s/he will give them wrong answers that may affect their learning in the long term.

The association of English with academic failure was another reason given for the students’ negative attitudes towards the language. Students wrote:

*“I do not like English because it gives me too much difficulty in my education. It makes me fail my exams, but this language is spoken the most in the world.”*

*“I do not like English because I have very bad marks in it.”*

*“Many students don’t like English. English make me fail exams. I don’t like it”*

*I don’t like English because I don’t comprehension grammar, vocabulary essay. Everytime I fail English. I don’t like English. Many people don’t like English because it is very very strong to learn”.*

Most of the students with negative attitude in the study held the view that *“English is very difficult and has many rules and tenses”*. This negative attitude decreased their motivation as the students already believed that no matter what they did, they would not succeed in the subject.

It is clear from the above that much, but not all, of the blame for the poor performance of the students is due to the teaching methods and attitudes of the teachers. A poor foundation is laid at primary school level and influences their learning negatively right through high school. Most teachers use methods of translation rather than employing more contemporary methods.

Some students had problems with all the aspects involved in learning English – the grammar, vocabulary, comprehension and essay writing. Many wrote: *“English is very difficult and I can never pass in it”*. One student revealed in his essay that he struggled with these aspects because he did not have *‘...the will to learn the language’*, thereby clearly revealing that his problems began at the level of attitudes and motivation. Some felt that the English conjunctions are also many and have different functions that they could not always remember all. One of the students interviewed said that he hated

English because it is very confusing. He said that he could not understand the different uses of *in* and *at*, and every time he failed the test. He even felt that English should not be taught at all because it was so confusing that even teachers could not explain its rules adequately. The student argued that the teachers were not competent enough and had not mastered the grammar rules enough to teach them without any confusion.

#### **4.3.3.2 Responses from the interviews**

The size of the class and the availability of text books for the students also affected their attitudes and language learning. Some students in this study complained about the inadequate supply of text books, which further slowed down the teaching and learning process. I also observed that many students did not have the required text books and thus could not do extra work nor participate actively in class. As one student put it:

*“I am trying but cannot pass because I don’t have books and my friends do not want to give me their books. All time the teacher, the teachers ask me out because...because I no do home work. I fail because each, because I am no attend the class”.*

Text books are very important especially in second language learning and teaching and learning will be difficult without these books particularly in large classes as it is the case in Cameroon.

Francophone children in Cameroon could become more motivated to learn English if they had good and interesting learning materials at their disposal and well trained and motivated teachers in class. This is however not the case as one of the teachers interviewed said that, *“I don’t see why I have to bother myself too much, little pay, little*

*work done. I go to school when I feel like going because I have my private businesses that give me more money than this headache*". How can such a demotivated teacher be expected to stimulate his students? In another class, I witnessed a teacher sending a student out of the class simply because this student had used his mother tongue. The teacher shouted: "*Get out of my class. You can never pass in English because you spend all of you time speaking that your nonsense language that will take you no where*". This teacher had a negative attitude towards the student's home language and this together with the way she sent the student out of the class can make this student develop a negative attitude towards English.

The effects of good, caring teachers was however evident among those students who had positive attitudes towards English. One of the interviewees said:

*"I like English because my teacher was very good. She used to explain very well in class and ask us to come to her if we have any problem. She was more of a mother to me. I will like to be an English teacher too"*. It can be seen here that the teacher motivated the student to learn the language and to develop an interest in it. The student did not only want to learn and know the language but also wanted to be an English teacher thanks to the methodology and supportive nature ('love', in Baker's words) of her teacher.

Another student interviewed liked English because of the way it was taught and the activities they did in class. He said: "*I like English because we do debates every week and I enjoy them. I love debate and it makes the class interesting because we argue and everybody wants to win. I read many books at home to improve my English so that I can argue and win for my group.*"



This is a very important aspect in second language teaching and learning as the students are exposed to the use of the language. This was observed during the collection of the data for this study. It was quite interesting and most students enjoyed it especially those with positive attitudes towards English. However the large class sizes made it a bit noisy and sometimes out of control.

#### 4.4 Conclusions

The data revealed a great deal about the prevailing language ideologies in Cameroon and how these impact on students' individual language attitudes. I showed in section 4.3.1 that the data supported Kroskrity's first dimension of language ideologies, viz.: *"...language ideologies represent the perception of language and discourse that is constructed in the interest of a specific social or cultural group"* (1999:8). Kroskrity's fourth dimension *"...members' language ideologies mediate between social structures and forms of talk"* (1999: 21) was also supported by the data. I observed a definite pattern of selectivity about features of English and its role in Cameroon in both the students' written and oral responses, for example:

- They contrasted the global situation with the local one by revealing their knowledge that, while English may be important in the world, French is more important in Cameroon;

- They revealed a definite animosity towards the Anglophone community who were variously defined as ‘wicked’, ‘too strict’ and ‘spend all their time speaking pidgin’; and
- They described the English language as ‘too complicated’ and ‘having many rules’.

Macaro (2003:93) wonders: “Does an instrumental or integrative desire to learn an L2 lead to greater cognitive effort and therefore success?” In the case of this study, one may be tempted to say ‘yes’ to the instrumental desire given the responses from some of the respondents, especially the teachers who felt that the students’ success depended on the motivations they took to class. All of these teachers thought that the students who did better in English were those who were thinking of their futures in terms of study, travels and employment. Some of them however felt that the students who did better were those who were in one way or the other motivated positively by their parents, who also used the language with other children back at home. Thus, the instrumental desire to learn a second language appeared to lead, in the case of the respondents studied here, to a greater cognitive effort and therefore success.

This chapter dealt with the analysis and presentation of data from interviews, classroom observations and written essay by the students. In the analysis, the main aim was to investigate what attitudes the students of Government Bilingual Practising High School in Yaoundé held towards English, and how these were influenced by prevailing language ideologies in Cameroon. I also investigated their motivations for learning English, i.e.

instrumental or integrative, whether their attitudes could be changed from negative to positive and whether already positive attitudes could be improved further. A summary of the main findings is presented in the next chapter.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

This thesis focuses on the attitudes and motivations of a particular group of Francophone students of English in Cameroon towards English, and how these are influenced by the prevailing language ideologies in the country. The purpose of the research was to investigate the different attitudes the students held towards the language, the reasons for these attitudes, and the different motivation students had for learning English. From the findings, it was realised that the different attitudes and ideologies held towards English in Cameroon are influenced and shaped by socio-political factors, economic, identity and personal reasons. In addition, the way in which English is taught in schools also influenced individual attitudes. After presenting the main findings, a number of recommendations are given below to ameliorate the language situation in Cameroon.

#### 5.2 Conclusions – A summary of the main findings

After studying the data collected from the students surveyed for this study, it was clear that the predominant language ideology in Cameroon, i.e. that French was the more desirable and powerful language, as well as the language of the dominant socio-political group in Cameroon, had a powerful impact on the language attitudes of the Francophone students I surveyed. The majority of them held negative attitudes towards English, despite being instrumentally motivated to learn the language. Even those with positive attitudes towards English had instrumental reasons for learning the language, and felt no

need to integrate with English-speaking people, or to build good relationships with them, in order to achieve their goals with regards to higher education and jobs.

The data also led me to the conclusion that the relationship between the language used at home and their frequencies of usage and attitudes, played an important role in fostering particular attitudes in the students. Most of the students only encountered English in school, when the English teacher was present. They did not have the least opportunity to practice the learned language out of class because everybody spoke French or their home language (L1). As the saying goes, “practice makes perfect”. But these students were unable to perfect what they had learnt as they had no one with whom they could practice speaking the language. Their subsequent failure to improve their test and examination scores in English increased their already-existing negative attitudes.

There was also a significant relationship between the coefficient attached to the target language (English) and the attitudes and motivation of the students. This is in line with the central idea since the coefficient is concerned with an instrumental motive – that of passing an examination. English carries one of the highest coefficients as the main subjects for the Francophone: coefficient 5 for Arts students and coefficients 3 for Science students. The students are therefore forced to study English, not because they like it but because they want to pass their examination.

Furthermore, there was a significant relationship between Francophone students’ opinions about Anglophone Cameroonians and their attitudes towards English. Given that the Anglophones are in a minority, the Francophone students in this study appear to consider English as inferior to French and see no need to learn the language. The students

in this study believed that they could survive economically without English, as they could work successfully in eight out of the ten provinces in Cameroon. The students had a negative stereotype about the Anglophone community and this contributed to them being discouraged from learning the language. Some felt that English had no place and that Anglophones who are in a minority should rather learn the majority language. This is the common ideology held in Cameroon and recurred in many of the essays.

The teaching methods and overall conduct of the teachers also contributed to a poor performance with attendant negative attitudes. Most of the students blamed their teachers, and my classroom observation confirmed the use of methods that were definitely not effective and which were unlikely to foster a love for the target language, English. The poor foundation from the very beginning of their school careers affected the students all through their studies. The teachers used the translation method rather than employing more contemporary methods like the communicative method. Thus students at the secondary and high school levels found it difficult to understand the language. Teachers sometimes had to spend time teaching some English terms explicitly to the students. Given that the teacher has a great role to play in the students' learning of a language, the students are therefore motivated positively or negatively by the teacher and his/her teaching method.

Some students performed well or had a positive attitude mainly because of their language learning skills and the desire to use this language with the speakers of the language. This supports what Gardner (1985) says about motivation being composed of efforts, desire

and affects. Efforts refer to the time spent in studying the language and the drive of the learner. Desire is how much the learner wants to become proficient in the language and affect shows the learner's emotions with regard to language study. Thus, students who put all of these together become more proficient in the language as their attitude towards the language is very positive

Most of the poorly-motivated students did not devote enough time to the study of English. This is because they were not motivated to learn the language due to the position of English in the country and the common ideology held towards the language. This therefore resulted in failure which further increased the negative attitude the students had towards the language and strengthened their belief that English is difficult. This is however in contrast to the students who said that they performed well in English because they studied it at home and used it with friends and neighbours.

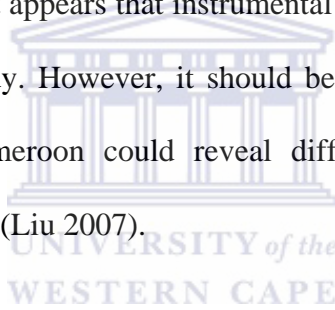
It was also realised that some of the students wanted to be bilingual so as to use both French and English in their daily communication whereas others, echoing Spolsky (1989), felt that their identity as Francophones could suffer as people would call them 'Anglophones'. One is therefore not surprised when a student starts his essay with a strong identity statement like: "I am a Francophone".

Furthermore, I noticed that the students were not motivated socially to learn English as even those who lived with English-speaking neighbours confessed that the neighbours preferred speaking French to them rather than English. This is highlighted by Pavlenko (2002) who says that L2 learning occurs through social context and through individual's interaction with the world and the internationalisation of the voices available to him/her.

Therefore in a situation like this that the students do not have people to speak the language to, the learning of English will only be for instrumental reasons rather than integrative one (Spolsky 1989).

I found that most of the students in this study had different motivations and influences that they carried to the language class. This reminds us of Cook's (1991) warning that teachers should be aware of the reservations and preconceptions of their students as what they think of their teachers and the course itself strongly affects their success.

While Gardner's (1985) research ranked integrative motivations as more important for successful language learning, it appears that instrumental motivations are more important to the respondents in this study. However, it should be borne in mind that a different group of respondents in Cameroon could reveal different results because of their operating in a different context (Liu 2007).



I also noted the strong relationship (for a small group of respondents) between language learning and the pleasure gained in using the language, e.g. to watch Nigerian movies and listen to English pop music. The research further showed that as in many other countries, most students learn English solely for examination purposes – a major instrumental motivation, which was also revealed by their feelings of insecurity about English. During the observation period and teaching experience, I noticed that most of the students did not participate in class not because they do not want to, but because they felt insecure about their command of English. This confirms the results of Macaro's questionnaires (2003) where the students thought that foreign languages are more difficult than the other



subjects. Graham (2002) found that students attributed failure to low ability and to task difficulty rather than a lack of strategies for achieving tasks.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

Based on the above findings, I would like to make the following recommendations:

1. The study has shown that most Francophone students of English in Cameroon have a negative attitude towards English. I believe that there is a need to develop positive motivations in Francophone students of English in Cameroon. They should not only learn English just because it is a school subject but should be interested in English as one of the languages use in the world in general and Cameroon in particular by their English speaking compatriots in order to foster nation building and peaceful co-existence. This could be achieved by the use of diverse teaching methods and student centred approaches, e.g. games, dramatization, and the use of pair and group work. This will go a long way to foster learning and understanding and the students will become interested and positively motivated to learn the language not just as a subject but will want to use it more frequently in their daily lives.

2. The learning of English is often introduced at a later stage than French. Students learn the language but do not have the opportunity to practice what they have learned out of class. They speak only French as their first language and the only opportunity they have to speak English is when they are in class with the teacher. It is my recommendation that English should be taught from nursery school level. The Government should pass a

decree involving all schools, government or private, and provide good and competent teachers. Also, more English clubs should be formed with interesting activities in schools and prizes allocated for the best students. It has been observed that there are very few radio and TV programs in English. Lambert and Gardner (1972) and Spolsky (1989) contend that the regular use of a target language in one's normal social interaction can enhance language learning.

I would therefore like to propose that more English programs should be introduced for children and these programs should be interesting and educative as well. Exchange programs such as pen pals, and trips should be encouraged among schools. Parents who can speak English should be encouraged by the schools to make an effort to communicate with their children in English. This will encourage the children to learn the language better and faster. Teachers should also act as role models, sharing their personal interests and perspectives, transmitting personal positive values about the second language as well as personal commitments to the second language (Baker 2006:135).

3. Given that language classrooms are most likely to have face-threatening contexts, it is important for the teachers to find out how to maintain and increase the students' self-confidence. This could be done through the use of the five approaches proposed by Dornyei (2001: 130):

- Teachers can foster the belief that competence is a changeable aspect of development
- Favourable self-conceptions of L2 competence can be promoted by providing regular experiences of success;

- Everyone is more interested in a task if they feel that they make a contribution;
- A small personal word of encouragement is sufficient;
- Teachers can reduce classroom anxiety by making the learning context less stressful.

I think that if these points could be applied in the teaching and learning of English in Cameroon it would go a long way to motivate the students and even to change their attitudes completely from negative or neutral to positive.

Also if the teachers use more student-centred method of teaching, where the students are encouraged to discover the rules of the language on their own, do many practice exercises and use games, students will enjoy learning the language much more. Drama, visual and concrete demonstrations should be used to make abstract concepts comprehensible (Leung 1996 cited in Macro 2003). The use of such methods may lead the students not only to be interested in English for instrumental reasons only, but may lead to a desire to know the language and its speakers much better.

4. Students need to be made aware of the benefits of being bilingual. Parents, teachers as well as the state should be instrumental in this role. Parents should encourage their children to create enough time to learn the language at home and should assist the children when they have some difficulties. The state should implement the policy of bilingualism so that both languages enjoy equity of use.

5. The language policy in Cameroon should be accompanied by a clear implementation policy. At present, there is more individual bilingualism than state bilingualism in this

country. This is because people are expected to be bilingual while Government offices and services are not bilingual. Though many Cameroonians have become bilingual officially, the majority are officially monolingual. These officially monolingual Cameroonians are however bilingual if not multilingual as they speak one of the two official languages, their home language and in some cases other indigenous and or foreign languages.

Many Francophones in various state departments tend to expect all people to be proficient in French when they seek services or jobs. This attitude has created many conflicts in Cameroonian society and many people have missed opportunities, especially in the domain of education. One could therefore say that many Cameroonians have been deprived of their liberties of expression in offices, schools, courts, meetings, etc. because of the poor implementation of the countries language policy: individual bilingualism rather than state bilingualism.

This imbroglio can be attributed to inadequate language planning which did not take account of prevailing attitudes and ideologies. It took no account of how powerful French is in Cameroon as opposed to English in terms of socio-political, demographic and economic aspects. But the growing demand for English globally is motive enough for Cameroonians to improve their skills in this language. I therefore suggest that the government of Cameroon should put an effective implementation plan in place to reflect the ideals of the official language policy. This should be made much more visible in the language practices of state departments and other national services, and people should be

appointed on the basis of a high level of bilingualism in French and English. Once bilingualism is viewed as a definite asset, people's attitudes towards English are likely to change.

However, I would like to propose that the government should be very careful when taking any measure to encourage the use of English by Francophone Cameroonians. The methods need to be introduced with a great degree of sensitivity, or the Francophones might become even more negative towards English if certain measures are enforced by the government. People should not feel threatened by the implementation of state language policies, but should gradually be made aware of the advantages of such policies.

7. Finally, I think that instead of using only French and English in the name of nation building and national unity, it would be better to develop some national languages as nation building does not imply cultural or linguistic uniformity. Some languages of wider communication like Bamun and Bamelike in the Western province, Lamso and Nkom, Mungaka and Pidgin in the North West province, Duala and Basa in the Littoral province, Ffulde in the Northern provinces and Fang-Beti in the Central, South and Eastern provinces that have been codified could be developed further and used more extensively. Nation states can be more representative and achieve stronger and more sustainable unity if they guarantee the right of minority communities and their individual members to distinct language and cultural practices, and do not withhold resources or power from such communities (Maja 2007). If Cameroon could develop her home languages, identify with them and use them, I think this problem of minority and majority languages would be half solved. It is unfortunate that while immigrant languages are considered minority languages in Europe and America, the reverse is true here in Africa. Post-colonial

African states have always relegated their national languages to the background as minority languages and fought over the position of foreign languages as is the case in Cameroon. It is time for people to start appreciating their own languages, developing them and using them in all aspects of life.

#### **5.4 Conclusion**

The study has revealed how the prevailing language ideologies in Cameroon influence the language attitudes towards English of a group of Francophone secondary and high school students in GBPHS Yaoundé. It has highlighted the issues of identity through language, the socio-economic status of French and English, the prevailing political situation in the country with regards to language, as well as the state of English teaching in schools. All these factors influence both the attitudes towards English and the largely instrumental motivation for learning the language. Against a background of increasing globalisation, as young Cameroonians move around the world in search of employment, the demand for English is likely to increase, but the successful acquisition of the language is likely to be strongly influenced by prevailing negative attitudes. The study has shown the major causes of these negative attitudes – the socio-political and historical nature of Cameroonian society, economic factors, identity factors and the manner in which English is taught at school.

It is my belief that changing the position of English in Cameroon is a matter for the state, rather than the individual. The majority of employees in Public and Private Companies should be fully bilingual, in response to the country's policy of official bilingualism in

French and English. Unless there are enough material incentives at stake, Francophone Cameroonians will never realize the need for learning English.

No matter what the underlying motivation is to study a second language, what cannot be disputed is the fact that motivation is an important variable in second language learning. Cameroon is unique in Africa as it is the only bilingual country with French and English as its official languages. This alone should be a strong incentive for the students to learn English given the rising demand for English in many countries in the world and Africa in particular.



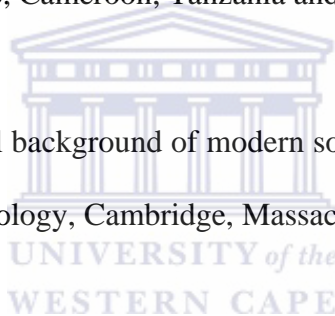
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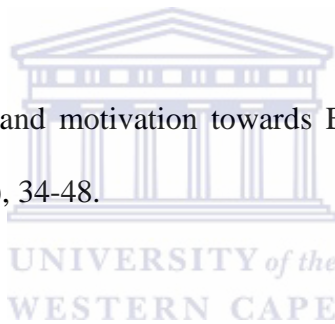
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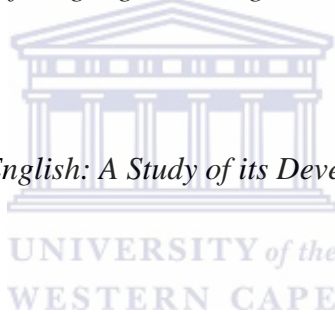
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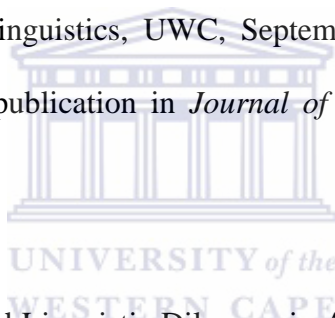
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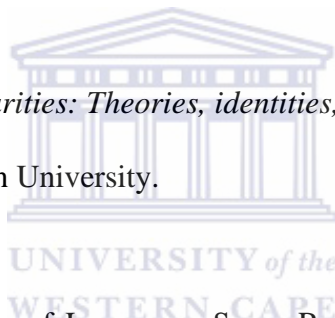
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## APPENDICES

### 1. Interview with teacher A

**Inter:** What is your first official language?

**Teac:** English.

**Inter:** Which classes do you teach?

**Teac:** Form four and five.

**Inter:** Do you enjoy teaching English? Why or why not?

**Teac:** Somehow I do

**Inter:** Why do you say somehow, are there some problems?

**Teac:** Yes of course, there are many problems. Teaching is a very good profession but the government does not make things easy for us. There are no teaching materials and this make the job too demanding especially with the francophones. It would have been

better if we had some visual material to use in class so that the students can understand us better.

**Inter:** So, what do you do in the absence of this?

**Teac:** Sometimes we need to dramatise and it become too tiring. The worst thing is that some of the students will spend their time talking and laughing while you are killing yourself to help them understand.

**Inter:** Do your students like English? Why? or Why not?

**Teac:** Some do and others do not. They do not seem to see the need for English in their lives but they fail to understand that English is a very important language. They say that it is very difficult. However a few of them like the language.

**Inter:** What are their attitudes towards this language and why?

**Teac:** You see those who like the language have a positive attitude towards it while those who hate it have a negative attitude.

**Inter:** Do you think the students like you as their teacher?

**Teac:** eeee-----eeh that I can't say because students will always hide their feelings in the presence of the teacher.

**Inter:** Can these attitudes change?

**Teac:** Yes of course, these attitudes can change depending on the students and the teachers. eee-----eeh if the students can be attentive in class they will do better in class and their attitudes will change to positive.

**Inter:** What can the teacher do to change the attitudes of the students?

**Teac:** If the teacher is good and interacts well with the students, they students will be interested in the subject and will definitely change from negative to positive.

**Inter:** What teaching methods do you use?

**Teac:** I use the student centred method where I ask leading questions and the students come out with the rules themselves.

**Inter:** What if the students are unable to come out with the rules?

**Teac:** In most cases they do but when they are unable, I come in and explain it to them.

**Inter:** Do you have enough teaching materials?

**Teac:** No, we don't. All we have as teaching material is the chalk which sometimes you do not even have it. You go to the office for chalk just to hear that it is finished and you have a class.

**Inter:** So what do you do?

**Teac:** eeee—eeh you go to class and ask the students if they have chalk. If they do----, fine. If not then you talk and talk and leave.



**Inter:** When you talk without writing, do you think the students do understand what you are saying?

**Teac:** What should I do? I have prepared a lesson and must deliver it because I have to cover my program.

**Inter:** Is it covering the program that matters or the students understanding the lesson?

**Teac:** Both, but---- what should I do. I should not buy chalk from my pocket because there is money kept aside for that and again how much do they pay us. You understand what I am saying because you are a teacher and you are living the same experience. Jane, be honest, would you buy chalk from your pocket if you were in my position?

**Inter:** hahahaaaa (Laughs) however do you use games in class with the students?

**Teac:** Yes, I do. I use language games and the students like them because I always put them in groups and they have to compete.

**Inter:** Do you find this an effective teaching method?

**Teac:** eeehh eeehh Yes, I do. It is very very effective and many students like it as it makes the class interesting.

**Inter:** How many periods do you have a week and how do you use them?

**Teac:** English has four periods a week because it is a compulsory subject and I use all my periods but for when I am not around.

**Inter:** Do you make up for these periods when you come back?

**Teac:** Yes I do especially when I notice that the students are behind the program.

**Inter:** What do you think could be done to improve on the teaching and learning of English and or change the negative attitudes of the students to a positive one?

**Teac:** The main problem we face here is that of large classes and no teaching materials. If the class sizes could be reduced and enough teaching materials are provided, teachers will teach better and students will also learn well and will like the language.

## **2. Interview with Teacher B**

**Inter:** What is your first official language?

**Teac:** French.

**Inter:** Which classes do you teach?

**Teac:** Upper sixth and form two.

**Inter:** Do you enjoy teaching English? Why or why not?

**Teac:** Yes, but it is challenging because as a francophone the students want me explain everything to them in French.

**Inter:** But do you do that.

**Teac:** emmmmh, yes, eh, mere, sometimes because I want to help the students.

**Inter:** Do you think it is correct to teach English in French?



**Teac:** emmmmh, it is not the case because it is wrong but if the students do not understand what should I do?

**Inter:** Do your students like English? Why? or Why not?

**Teac:** No, they don't like English. They say it is very difficult and that it has many rules more than French.

**Inter:** What are their attitudes towards this language and why?

**Teac:** Most of them have a negative attitude but some few are positive about English.

**Inter:** Can these attitudes change?

**Teac:** I think so only if the students can learn the language and like it.

**Inter:** What teaching methods do you use?

**Teach:** I ask students questions and they answer then I explain the rules to them. You know upper sixth students are already feeling too big and it is difficult to deal with them because they even threaten to beat you out of class.

**Inter:** Do you have enough teaching materials?

**Teac:** No, there are no teaching materials, government keeps promising.

**Inter:** Do you use games in class with the students?

**Teac:** Yes I use games when necessary but it is not very effective because the students when put in groups spend their time discussing other things.

**Inter:** How many periods do you have a week and how do you use them?

**Teac:** I have four periods and I use them for the work programmed for the week.

**Inter:** What do you think could be done to improve on the teaching and learning of English and or change the negative attitudes of the students to a positive one?

**Teac:** The students should first be informed by their parents that English is important. The government should also give English some power so that the students can feel its importance in their lives. Teaching materials should be used to encourage the student learn better and to like the language as well.

### **3. Interview with Student A**



**Inter:** What is your first Language?

**Stud:** French.

**Inter:** Do you understand English?

**Stud:** Little

**Inter:** Do you speak it? Why, or why not?

**Stud:** No, because it is difficult

**Inter:** How often do you speak English and learn it in school.

**Stud:** When I am in Class.

**Inter:** Do your parents speak English?

**Stud:** No

**Inter:** When did you start learning it?

**Stud:** In form one

**Inter:** Do you have any problems with it as a subject and as a national language?

**Stud:** It is very difficult and only little people speak it.

**Inter:** Do you like it? Why or why not?

**Stud:** I don't like English because my teacher does not explain well in class. He only writes out notes on the board for us to copy and we copy without knowing what he is saying. The teacher is speaking big English to us so we do not understand him.

**Inter:** Do you like the Anglophones and other speakers of English?

**Stud:** Some

**Inter:** Why some?

**Stud:** Because some are my friends.

**Inter:** What do you think could be done to better the teaching and learning of English in your school and Cameroon in general?

**Student:** Teachers should teach well and many people should speak in English in Cameroon.

#### **4. Interview with student B**

**Inter:** What is your first Language?

**Stud:** Bassa

**Inter:** And your second language?

**Stud:** French.

**Inter:** Do you understand English?

**Stud:** Yes

**Inter:** Do you speak it? Why, or why not?

**Stud:** Yes, because it is a good language.

**Inter:** How often do you speak English and learn it in school?

**Stud:** When I am with my English friends and in class

**Inter:** How often do you learn it in school?

**Stud:** we have English four hours a week.

**Inter:** Do your parents speak English?

**Stud:** Yes.

**Inter:** When did you start learning it?

**Stud:** In the primary school.

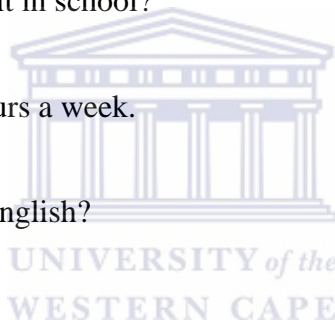
**Inter:** Do you have any problems with it as a subject and as a national language?

**Stud:** No I pass well in it but some times I am confused with the tenses.

**Inter:** Do you like it? Why or why not?

**Stud:** Yes.

**Inter:** Why?



**Stud:** I like English because I can work in any part of the world. I can work with international organisations where I will make much money to help my family and friends.

China has many companies and needs English speaking people to work in these companies and teach English in their schools so I will have a good job there as soon as I finish school and pass in English.

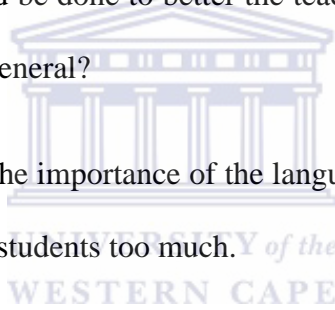
**Inter:** Do you like the Anglophones and other speakers of English?

**Stud:** Yes, they are very good people.

**Inter:** What do you think could be done to better the teaching and learning of English in your school and Cameroon in general?

**Stud:** Students should be told the importance of the language. Also teachers should teach well and should not punish the students too much.

**Inter:** Thanks for your time.



I am a francophone and I don't like English. I don't pass in English test donc I don't like it. My father is look for teacher in the house to teach English. I don't like the teacher he shout me too much. Par fois I don't go to class I stay outside and talk with my friends. I know that it good to know english but I don't like it.

Yes, I like English because first it's a first language in the world and second, English is a best language in the world. I think that English is very important and it's also important for me. In the way that if I have get a job, it's must important and capital for me to be bilingual. So English is important in business, in international co-operation and so on.



1) Do you like English?

Many person in Cameroun  
speak english because the  
Cameroun was belingua  
but we can see in school  
many student who don't like  
it like me.

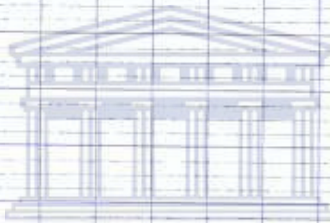
I don't like english because  
I don't stand want do people  
speak.

2) To like English I want  
to understand, I want  
to stay with a people who  
speak english.

No, I don't like English, because English is a language which give very much difficulty in my education. English is a matter which occasionally the losing in my examen. but, this language is a language the most speak into the world, He is necessary for me to like English. for arrive to like this language, I must doing a very effort because I don't have a base. yet I know that if I fortify my vocabulary and my verb I could obtain the very good result. I saig that for win this matter I must like my teacher which one English and like to do this language

## Writing Essay.

I don't like English because my teacher don explain well in class. He only write notes the board for us. pass copy and we don't understand anything. He is always absent and come and give the examint.




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## ESSAY

Do you like english? what can you do to improve or better your english?

English is one ~~my best~~ sub of the subject in school that many students do not year, very well or do not want to study.



In my class, we do many subject but english is my best subject. I like english because, I live with the ~~anglophone~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ When the teachers came in class many students started to make noise because the doesn't like english. For me to better my english, I want to learn, to be very attentive when the teachers came in class, ~~not to~~ ~~be~~ ~~noise~~. Because, when I will

essay

English is Very important, I like english because

When I can speak english the society is respect me  
When my pals listen me speak he tell me in french of course  
you learnt english.

When you can speak english you have Very good occupa-  
tion in my society english is Very important When you do the  
business

When I have a big Shop <sup>do</sup> my customer can  
speak english, but when you, no speak be look you and go  
come in others big market.



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Tle A (upper sixth)

## Essay

Topic: Do you like English!

English is a prestige language and is the most spoken language in the world, for that reason I love the language, more so coming from a bilingual country (80% French), it is of vital importance to know English because it will enable someone to interact at all levels in the society without a problem.

I also like English because I will like to marry an Anglophone

Essay

Upper sixth.

I don't like English because the teacher is always unhappy, the lesson is boring because the teacher does not play with us and sends us out of class.

~~to~~ I don't like it because the teachers ~~are~~ are strong and they do not speak French in the class. It is the language of the English people. I don't like it.



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## DO YOU LIKE ENGLISH

~~Nnamdi~~  
~~Maddox~~  
~~✍~~

English is a language, the most speaking in the world, ~~YES~~ I like English? ~~is~~ what can I do to improve or better my English? ~~that~~ questions will be answering in space below.

Since my childhood, I always like watch some Englishes films, at primary school, my teacher told me that English is a beautiful language and the right way for us to be welcome in some countries is to speak English. <sup>UNIVERSITY of the WESTERN CAPE</sup> ~~until now~~, I work well in English; I read very much many things in English and try to understand some difficult words.

I like English, I know that Cameroon is bilingual and I have few English friends, ~~two~~



Do You like English?

What can you do to better your English?

English language is one of the national languages of our country. Every citizen must know to speak it. But many person don't ~~not~~ speak English because they not learn this in primary school <sup>UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPES</sup> or they never go to school. I don't like English because I don't speak it. I have don't do English in primary school and I don't have a teacher who teach me the base of English: conjugation, grammar, vocabulary.

~~THE~~  
~~GEORGE~~

Tuesday ~~April~~ 2008

ESSAY: DO YOU LIKE ENGLISH?

Many persons think that English is not important and they not like English. But in my person I like English and this essay I give you my reasons and tell you what can we do to like English.

Personally I like English for three major reasons.

Firstly I like English because is a beautiful language and very easy to study speak and write than a other language like French, Spanish and Dutch. For example accent do not exist in English like French.

Secondly I like this language because is the language of Business in the

World, English is the language of economy and science. In the world many scientists books are written in English. It is the favorite language that people speak in the world, every world speak and used English.

Finally I like English because I like England because is the country of my dream, the people are very gentle and simple.

The think that we can do to like English are learn English and study is when we are a small child, we read the book in English like books, dictionary and magazine.

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