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**UNIVERSITE DE YAOUNDE I**

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**ECOLE NORMALE  
SUPERIEURE  
DE YAOUNDE**

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**DEPARTEMENT D'ANGLAIS**

**A PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT OF THE  
IMPLEMENTATION OF ENGLISH IN HIGH SCHOOLS  
IN CAMEROON WITH REFERENCE TO YAOUNDE**

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of a  
Postgraduate Teacher's Diploma (DIPES II) in English

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study, entitled “A Preliminary Assessment of the Implementation of English in High Schools in Cameroon: With Reference to Yaounde”, set out to do a preliminary investigation of the implementation of English Language in High School in the Anglophone subsystem of education in Cameroon. In order to attain this, we sampled the views of some high school students and teachers in three high schools in Yaounde. These schools included Government Bilingual Practicing High School, Yaounde, Government Bilingual High School, Etoug-Ebe and Government Bilingual High School Mendong. The data for the study was collected through the administration of questionnaire given out to students, and an interview administered to teachers. Given that this study was out to assess the views of teachers and students in order to see how students could be more competent in the English language upon graduation from the High School. We used the linguistic and pragmatic competence theory. The analysis of the data got from the questionnaire and interview revealed some findings. For example, with regard to the attitudes towards the implementation of English, we found out that 58.33% of the students are satisfied with the implementation of English in the High School and 80% of teachers had positive attitudes towards the implementation of English. It was also discovered from the responses of both students and teachers that grammar and vocabulary are the most problematic areas in English Language teaching in the High School. These findings led to the conclusion that with conscious effort on the part of both teachers and students, ELT in the High School can be very successful given that the predispose positive attitudes towards the subject.

## RESUME

Cette étude, intitulée « évaluation préliminaire de l'implémentation de la langue Anglaise dans les lycées au Cameroun : cas d'étude Yaoundé », s'investit dans la recherche préliminaire sur l'exécution de langue Anglaise en tant que matière dans les lycées de la sous-section Anglophone de l'éducation au Cameroun. Pour y parvenir, nous avons fait la collecte des données auprès des élèves et enseignants de trois lycées de la ville de Yaoundé : le lycée bilingue d'Application, lycée bilingue d'Etoug-Ebe et le lycée bilingue de Mendong. La collecte des données s'est faite par un questionnaire auprès des élèves, et d'une interview aux enseignants. Vu que l'étude avait pour but d'évaluer les enseignants et les élèves afin de voir comment le niveau de ces élèves pourrait être amélioré dans cette langue pendant leur cursus scolaire. Pour ce fait nous avons utilisé la méthode de recherche linguistique et pragmatique. L'analyse des données obtenues du questionnaire et de l'interview a indiqués des résultats satisfaisant. Par exemple, nous avons découvert que 58.33% des élèves sont satisfaits de l'insertion de la langue Anglaise dans les lycées et 80% des enseignants ont une attitude positive envers l'implémentation de cette matière. A travers les éléments de réponses obtenu l'or de la collecte de données, nous avons également découvert que la grammaire et le vocabulaire sont les secteurs où ses derniers rencontres des nombreux problèmes dans l'enseignement de l'anglais dans le lycée. Ces résultats ont mené à la conclusion suivante : avec une participation consciente d'une part des élèves et de d'autre part des enseignants, l'enseignement de la langue Anglaise dans le sous-système anglophone serait un succès si des pense positives sont développés par rapport à cette matière.

## **CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that this work entitled, "A Preliminary Assessment of the Implementation of English in High Schools in Cameroon with Reference to Yaounde", was carried out by Paula Nfor Biyeh in the Department of English, Higher Teacher Training College.(E.N.S.) Yaounde, University Of Yaounde I.

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**Supervisor**

Professor Daniel Nkemleke

## **DEDICATION**

To my aunt, Catherine Nfor and my daughter, Abright Melo.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

**ELT:** English Language Teaching

**SIL:** Summer Institute of Linguistics

**CPE:** Cameroon Pidgin English

**SBE:** Standard British English

**SBA:** Skill-Based Approach

**CA:** Communicative Approach

**CCA:** Child-Centred Approach

**CBA-RLS:** Competence-Based Approach through Real Life Situations

**GCE:** General Certificate of Education

**BEPC:** Brevet d'étude du premier cycle

**A/L:** Advanced Level

**O/L:** Ordinary level

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to the Study

The English language has spread across the world today. Generally, it is the most widely used language across continental boundaries. Scholars such as Platt et al. (1984) and Wolf (2001) have attributed this unprecedented spread of the English language to colonisation and imperialism. The language has traversed its traditional frontiers and is used in the world today to serve various purposes and functions. In many countries today, the English language is used in the media, the judiciary and in education. For the language to be effectively used, there is the need for those who practice the language to appropriate it correctly in the course of passing across their thoughts and feelings. This therefore underlines the importance of teaching and learning the English language within and without borders.

Though English Language Teaching (ELT) is highly implemented, it is, however, not a very straightforward process. This is because there are usually a number of factors which exert some considerable influence on English. In this light, the ELT industry in Cameroon has its own obstacles. Considering the fact that for a learner to confidently boast he or she has a good mastery of the language, there is the need for that learner to be both linguistically and pragmatically competent. It is however unfortunate that learners find it quite difficult to master both rubrics of the English language and apply them to their day to day activities. This explains why Ebot (1999:30) says “the written and spoken English of secondary and undergraduate students in Cameroon reveal a surprising and disquieting inadequacy at both levels”. Apart from this, there are a number of reasons why it is a daunting task for learners in our context to easily learn the language.

To begin with, the linguistic complexity of Cameroon makes it one complicates a proper acquisition of the language. This is because according to statistics from the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) in its 2003 publication, there are more than 200 ethnic groups with about 279 indigenous languages in Cameroon. There are also two foreign languages, English and French,

used as co-official languages in domains such as education, commerce, communication, administration and politics, Cameroon Pidgin English (CPE), and Camfranglais.

Furthermore, according to the Secondary Education Curriculum for the Observation, Sub-cycle, English “is taught within the multicultural and multilingual context of Cameroon, Africa and the world”. This means that the effects of interference of other languages on the learning of English in Cameroon are inescapable. The English language is a legacy of British colonisation in Cameroon. Consequently, Standard British English (SBE) is the variety recommended in schools in the country, though this is not overtly stated in any official text, not even in the 1998 Law to lay down guidelines for education in Cameroon.

The ELT industry in Cameroon has specific goals. In line with Order No 264/14/MINESEC/IGE OF 13/09/2014, the aims of the teaching of English in Cameroon are:

- To enable learners to act competently in real life situations that require them to communicate in English;
- To enable learners to use English as a medium of instruction and learning for all other subjects;
- To encourage learners to set their own learning goals and evaluate their own progress;
- To help learners to use language to acquire knowledge and thinking skills and to make rational judgments;
- To prepare learners to communicate in English in an international context;
- To develop the learner’s ability to apply knowledge of language systems and develop behavioural strategies and skills necessary for social adaptation.

The syllabus also includes life skills like critical thinking, problem solving, demonstrating interpersonal skills and demonstrating life-management skills.

Over the years, in order to meet up with these aims, the English language has been taught following a number of approaches. Some of these tactics include: the traditional Skill-Based Approach (SBA), the Communicative Approach (CA), the Child-Centred Approach (CCA) and, today, the Competence-Based Approach through Real Life Situations (CBA-RLS). Each of these methods is often accompanied by skills such as Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. In like manner, essential knowledge like Grammar and Vocabulary equally come into play to enable the learners to use the language clearly so that the objectives can be met.

English Language is one of the subjects evaluated in end of course examinations organized by the Ministry of Secondary Education. As a main subject on the curriculum, the educational department encourages a proper teaching and learning of this subject. This is one of the strategies through which the learning of the language can be enhanced. As a result, there is the designation of the General Certificate of Education (GCE) Ordinary Level for the Anglophone Sub-System and the *Brevet d'Etude du Premier Cycle* (BEPC) for the Francophone Sub-System.

In the Anglophone sub-system of education especially, students who often leave the English language in the Secondary School never do it again until they reach the university. Even in the university, English is studied by only the few who specialize in it. This therefore means that a vast majority of Cameroonians do not study English again, at least formally, when they leave Secondary School. This therefore had far reaching consequences on the quality of English spoken in Cameroon. This probably accounts for the introduction of English Language Paper at the GCE Advanced Level from the 2015 session.

The philosophy of English in Anglophone High Schools so far has been a jumbled and difficult endeavour. The students have over the years counterattacked 'Subsidiary English' as it is called in some schools, even though teachers of other subjects at this level find the students inadequate in English expression. This is a justification to the fact that students resist the teaching of English at this level. One of the main reasons is the idea that teachers of the first

cycle fail to create an awareness of the fact that English is not taught for the purpose of getting the learners to G.C.E. (O'Levels English), but rather to enable them succeed in life at large. They need to be conscious that English is not only a medium of instructions in our schools, but also an official national language and a gateway to the rest of the world. Again, the students on their part believe that they have acquired all the English necessary to survive in the English speaking world, (after the G.C.E. O'Level Examination) although reality shows that they still have a lot to learn.

It is important to mention that the zeal to expose students to the English language has greatly affected the syllabus. With the negative attitude of students in the first cycle, there has been an effort to motivate the students by moving away from a traditional English Language course (that concentrates on the teaching of syntax and semantics) to a course that is skills-based; emphasizing the use of English as a tool in solving real life responsibilities. In this light, the students are expected to be cognizant of the fact that there is no pure language content in the English syllabus and also, that not only sub-skills are listed. The students should be aware that they are learning to use language rather than learning language for language sake.

The horrific performance of students over the past years has raised a lot of eye brows. This has demanded the grammatical aspect of the language to be taken into consideration. According to Mumene (2005),

Grammar should be treated as remedial work and only those errors that are manifested in the students' language performance should be attended to. Where students are generally weak, almost all aspects of language may be taught, but this should be treated as obstacles that must be cleared so as to use language more effectively.

This implies that amendments ought to be made on such areas that act as setbacks to students; especially the grammatical aspect. With this, there has been a change of the method used in handling grammar with the employment of English to the High School learners. According to the setting of English Language in the G.C.E Advanced Level 2014/2015 for instance, focus

was mostly on grammar; an indication that efforts have been made to improve on the lapses recorded over the previous years.

So far as vocabulary is concerned, there is no language that can be assimilated without integrating its vocabulary. In this light, vocabulary is regarded as a component of reading. It is recommended that reading and listening materials should be as much as possible be reliable and chosen from the students' specialization areas. This should not only generate, but also make the students aware that they are using English to talk about their subjects. Hence, English Language to Anglophone High School students will greatly influence their vocabulary considering that most of their subjects are taught in English.

## **1.2 Aims of the Study**

This study is out to assess the implementation of English Language in some High Schools in the city of Yaounde. In this light, we looked

- At the syllabus of English in High School in an attempt to grasp whether it is inclusive enough to meet students' need to be competent in the language.
- This study also looked at the attitudes teachers incline towards the subject.
- This work enabled us to give an appraisal of how the people who are involved with the subject on the field actually feel about the subject they teach.
- Finally, this work highlighted the hindrance of the institution of English Language in Cameroonian High Schools. This way, we were able to highlight the pedagogic relevance of this study and also put forth recommendations which will help to improve on the teaching of English Language in High Schools in Cameroon.

## **1.3 Motivations of the Study**

The motivations for this study are twofold. Firstly, this study was inspired by the urge to find out whether English language teaching in the High School is yielding the expected results. Over the years, stakeholders in the educational sector in Cameroon have constantly decried the falling standards of both spoken and written forms of the English language, even though the language

has been taught through a number of approaches including the traditional Skill-Based Approach (SBA), the Communicative Approach (CA), the Child-Centred Approach (CCA) and, today, the Competence-Based Approach through Real Life Situations (CBA-RLS). Worth noting is the fact that even though these approaches to the teaching of the English language in Cameroon has been changing over the years, very little has been recorded in terms of increase in students' performance in and out of the classroom. This probably explains why English language, which before now was taught only in the First Cycle, was introduced in the High School. Consequently, this stimulated this work to find out whether the goals of ELT in the High School have actually been met. Secondly, the need to find out how studying English Language in the High School can be advantageous to students who go in for it, given that it is not mandatory for all students. This is because every subject has a particular contribution to the development to the students offering the subject. This therefore motivated the researcher to find out from the students how useful studying English Language will be to them and their future careers. By this, we intend to raise students' awareness of the importance of studying English Language in High School. This was intended to show the student the chain the English language has, both as a subject and as the main working language in other subjects.

## 1.4 Research Questions

This study will be guided by the following research questions.

1. What are teachers' and students' attitudes towards the implementation of the English language in Anglophone High Schools in Cameroon?
2. How beneficial is the teaching of English in the High School to both teachers and students?
3. What are the difficulties faced by students in the implementation of English in the High School so far?
4. How does the implementation of English Language affect the teaching and learning process in our context?



## **1.5 Scope of Study**

This study is carried out within a scope which is both linguistically and geographically defined. Geographically, this study is limited to the city of Yaounde, precisely in three schools; Government Bilingual High School Mendong, Government Bilingual Practicing High School Yaounde and Government Bilingual High School Etoug-Ebe. Linguistically, this study is limited to English language teaching in the High School.

## **1.6 Significance of the Study**

This study is likely to be relevant in a number of ways. It is a landmark in the advancement of studies on English language teaching and learning in Cameroon. This is because ELT in the High School is relatively new and such studies are needed to boost the morales of stakeholders involved in it and to equally improve on its quality. Furthermore, we cannot leave out the pedagogic significance of this study. Pedagogically, creating awareness of the advantages of learning English in the High School is an important step towards helping students improve their language skills. That is, listening, speaking, reading and writing.

## **1.7 Structure of Work**

This work has a definite structure. It is divided into a general introduction, three chapters and a general conclusion. The General Introduction gives some preliminary information on the research topic. That is, it focuses on the background of the study, purpose, motivation, some research questions, the scope, significance and the structure of the work. Chapter One focuses on theoretical issues and reviews of some related literature. Chapter Two describes the methodology used in carrying out the research. Chapter Three is an analysis of the findings and the last part of the work which is the General Conclusion is an overview of the findings, the pedagogic and sociolinguistic implications and recommendations for further research.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

# **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

### **Introduction**

This chapter discusses the perspective from which this study will be carried out and the review of literature related to the study. In this light, we have divided the chapter into two main sections. The first part of the chapter looks at the theoretical framework of the study while the second section handles the reviews of related literature to this study.

### **2.1 Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework adopted for this study is Communicative competence. The goal of teaching a language is to enable learners to be competent in it. The Communicative competence, developed by Chomsky (1965) and elaborated in Hymes (1972), is a theory which aims at developing learners' aptitude in a language. In this light, Chomsky (1965) makes a distinction between "grammatical competence" and "performance." According to him, the former is the linguistic knowledge of the idealized native speaker, an innate biological function of the mind that allows individuals to generate the infinite set of grammatical sentences that constitutes their language, and the latter is the actual use of language in concrete situations. However, Hymes (1972) points out that Chomsky's linguistic competence lacks consideration of the most important linguistic ability of being able to produce and comprehend utterances which are appropriate to the context in which they are made.

Hymes (1972) considered Chomsky's view of communicative competence monolithic, idealized notion of linguistic competence inadequacy. He equally introduced the broader, more expounded and extensive concept of communicative competence, which includes linguistic competence or implicit and explicit knowledge of the rules of grammar. Again, he looked at the contextual or sociolinguistic knowledge of the rules of language use in context. Consequently, Hymes (ibid) posits that communicative competence has four ideas which must be taken into

consideration if we must give a clear picture of what communicative competence is all about. These four ideas includes: what is formally possible, what is feasible, what is the social meaning or value of a given utterance, and what actually occurs. Thus, the competence that the speaker of a language possesses must include their ability to handle linguistic variation and the various uses of language in context. Communicative competence, according to Hymes, should therefore encompass a much wider range of abilities than the idealized approach proposed by the Chomsky (1965).

Communicative competence, from the beginning, actually had nothing to do with learning. It was Canale and Swain (1980: 20) who defined communicative competence in the context of second language teaching as:

a synthesis of knowledge of basic grammatical principles, knowledge of how language is used in social settings to perform communicative functions, and knowledge of how utterances and communicative functions can be combined according to the principles of discourse.

Accordingly, they elaborated on the four types of communicative competence proposed by Hymes as follows:

- The first type, “what is formally possible” is the interaction of grammatical system of competence. Hence, the sentence: “**the was cheese green**” is not grammatical.
- The second “what is feasible” is the psycholinguistic system of competence. For example, the utterance “**the cheese the rat the cat the dog saw chased ate was green**” is grammatical but not acceptable in that its multiple center-embedded clause is difficult to understand in terms of information processing. Thus, to make it feasible, the sentence must be changed to the right branching structure common in English as in: “**the dog saw the cat that chased the rat that ate the cheese that was green**”.
- The third type, “what is the social meaning or value of a given utterance” is the socio-cultural system of competence. For example, if one says good-bye in greeting someone, it is inappropriate in a particular social context.
- The last type, “what actually occurs” is the probabilistic rules of occurrence that something is in fact done, actually performed (Yano 2003: 77).

The relevance of such knowledge to the teaching and learning of English language cannot be overemphasized. Teaching should be done in such a way that learners would be imbued with the grammatical system of the language. Teaching should equally be done in a way that the awareness of learners to the correct use of the language should be raised. Furthermore, teaching should be done in such a way that learners would use the language in different social context. That is, they should be able to vary their use with regard to time and situation. In fact, this is what we call communicative competence. Finally, learners should be taught the rules which govern the construction of correct structures in the language.

Communicative competence, elaborated by Canale & Swain (1980) and Canale (1983), was intended to serve both instructional and assessment purposes. This is made up of four components namely:

- Grammatical competence - the knowledge of the language code (grammatical rules, vocabulary, pronunciation, spelling, etc.). In other words, this means the acquisition of phonological rules, morphological rules, syntactic rules, semantic rules and lexical items. Today it is usually called linguistic competence.
- Sociolinguistic competence – This is the mastery of the socio-cultural code of language use. It refers to the learning of pragmatic aspect of various speech acts such as the cultural values, norms, and other socio-cultural conventions in social contexts. They are the context and topic of discourse, the participants’ social status, sex, and age, and other factors which influence styles and registers of speech. Since different situations call for different type of expressions as well as different beliefs, views, values, and attitudes, the development of sociolinguistic competence is essential for communication in social contexts.
- Discourse competence – This is the ability to combine language structures into different types of cohesive texts (e.g., political speech, poetry). It is the knowledge of rules regarding the cohesion (grammatical links) and coherence (appropriate combination of communicative functions) of various types of discourse. Canale and Swain (1980) emphasize that sociolinguistic rules of use and rules of discourse are crucial in interpreting utterances for social meaning, particularly when the literal meaning of an utterance does not lead to the speaker’s intention easily.

- Strategic competence - knowledge of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies which enhance the efficiency of communication and, where necessary, enable the learner to overcome difficulties when communication breakdowns occur. In other words, it has to do with the knowledge of verbal and nonverbal strategies to compensate for breakdowns such as self-correction and at the same time to enhance the effectiveness of communication such as recognizing discourse structure, activating background knowledge, contextual guessing, and tolerating ambiguity.

The theory of communicative competence is relevant to our study in a number of ways. It should be noted that English language was introduced as a subject in the high school because of the persistent poor results obtained at the GCE O/L. This means that learners were not imbued with the necessary competence to use the language both in the classroom and in social settings. Consequently, ELT in the high school should be conducted in such a way that it will build the competences of learners in the subject. Drawing from Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983), we have outlined the various competences which teachers should concentrate on in the course of teaching. These competences include grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence. These are the main points of the communicative competence approach and if teachers consider these in the course of teaching, the goals of the implantation of the English language in the high school will be met.

## 2.2 Review of Related Literature

This section of the work focuses on a review of literature which is related to the work. Given that this study sets out to investigate the implementation the English language in High Schools in Cameroon, we have looked at the importance of English. This importance will help raise the awareness of both teachers and students involved in ELT in the High School. Equally, we have reviewed the various ways through which the various skills can be tested. This is because the four language skills are at the heart of English language teaching and learning. Furthermore, this section looks and some language teaching methods. Previous studies on program/ course assessment are considered here as well, with a section dedicated to what has been done in Cameroon so far on the assessment of ELT. Finally, this chapter ends with the envisaged contributions of this study to existing knowledge.

## 2.2.1 The Importance of English

English Language is not only significant when one look at the population that speaks the language but at the variety of uses that the language has. Crystal (1997) confirms this by saying that English is the most widely spoken language in the world. There are more than 350 million native speakers and more than 400 million non-native speakers who use it as a second language or foreign language. English is the main language used to broadcast news and information in the world. Apart from the fact that English is the language of the government and business, it is equally used for international air traffic control and maritime communication. According to the internet TESL journal, there are a number of ways in which English is relevant.

To begin with, English is commonly used as a medium for communication of information and news. Three quarters of all messages and telegrams are sent in English. Of all information in world's electronic retrieval systems, 80% is stored in English. Two thirds of world scientists write in English. Five thousand newspapers, more than half the newspapers published in the world, are published in English. Television news is broadcast in English. Crystal (1997) espouses this by saying that over 150 million in 120 countries receive English programmes.

Again, English used for international business, diplomacy, science and the professions. Important commodities such as silver, tin, and hard currency are traded in English. English is the official language of many international organizations including the United Nations and many professional organisations. Furthermore, it is the language of international conferences and international athletics. Many professional papers are published in English.

English Language serves as a means of entertainment. American and British movies which are watched in almost all countries in the world today are acted in English in like manner, American and British popular songs too are heard all over the world too since most of them are sung in English. Books in English are available even in countries where few people actually use English. Hence, for students need to understand these songs, movies and books, they need to intensively study the language in order to evade the worries brought about by the ignorance.

English is very important for international travel. Considering the fact that the language is spoken in large hotels, shops, tourist attractions and at airports, as mentioned above, there is the need for people to master the language. Such knowledge will ease anybody who intends to

travel. English is used as a medium of communication among people who do not have another language in common. 16 countries in Africa use English as the language of Government. In these countries, Standard English is taught in schools because it is necessary for their careers. Crystal (1997) adds that English is a necessity, if a country has to exercise a role in world affairs. To him, it is strength to be able to meet other people from other countries on equal linguistic terms. He goes further to say that it prepares children to cope with the new perspectives brought about by a rapidly changing world, not only abroad, but also within their own community. It can help overcome their insecurity and develop their confidence as they face the demands of social and personal relationships. Crystal (ibid) thus sees language as a prerequisite for full understanding, tolerance and respect for the cultural identity, rights and values of others whether abroad or at home in a minority group.

As already mentioned above, English is a wide spread and important language in the world today. Its usage cover from international academic conferences to news reports to popular music lyrics. It is used for communication between native and non-native speakers of English and between non-native speakers. Based on these issues, the teaching and learning of English in Cameroon schools should be a continuous process, from primary schools right up to the university level. In this light, the students will be well exposed to the language. However, if at any level there is an alternation along the educational ladder, the learners' will be lacking at some points in time.

### 2.2.2 Formats for Testing Basic Language Skills

A true mastery of the English language lies in the mastery of the various skills that are associated to it. In ELT, a series of methods have been designed to test the acquisition of these skills since they are at the centre of language learning. In the assessment literature, there is a long tradition of discussing and labelling language tests based on their application to the four basic language skills, that is, writing, speaking, reading and listening. There follows a brief review of some of the test formats for each language skill in order to understand the different methods of assessment that teachers of English language in High schools in Cameroon can apply in the course of teaching. When testing writing, several aspects of the test situation should be considered. Lynch (2003) identifies four primary procedures:

- The task: Length of time, medium of response (computer or pencil and paper) and prompt attribute (topic, content for the prompt, purposes, audience and linguistic difficulty).
- The writer: the characteristics of the student who answers the tasks, such as cultural background, gender, ethnicity and personality.
- The reader: the reader, whose interpretations and understanding of the written text are crucial in judging it.
- The scoring: several types of procedures are available, such as ‘analytic scoring’, which gives separate ratings for a variety of aspects of the performance (Lynch, 2003).

One of the main problems with testing writing is that tests are actually assessing grammatical competence, instead of assessing the true objective of the writing course. Bernhardt and Deville (1991) observed that the ability to write should not comprise only mechanical aspects of writing such as spelling, punctuation and grammar, but also the ability to organise content, to revise what has been written and to adapt the writing style to suit the audience.

- The testing of speaking skills has also received wide scholarly attention. According to Bernhardt and Deville (1991), there are three types of speaking test methods.
- Static tasks: where a student is asked to explain a diagram or describe a picture.
- Dynamic tasks: where a student is asked to relate a story that involves the description of relationships.
- Abstract tasks: where a student is asked to express his/her opinion.

Lynch (2003) suggests other formats for testing speaking, such as personal conversation, reading aloud, giving directions, detailed description, picture sequences and presentations. Among all these speaking assessment methods, role-play and oral interviews are the most widespread methods for testing speaking. With regard to the testing of reading skills, ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’ models of reading are extensively reported in the literature. The top-down model of reading focuses on skills such as identifying the main purpose, skimming for main ideas, scanning for specific information and making propositional inferences. On the other hand, the bottom-up model of reading focuses on skills such as recognising the meaning of grammatical structures, recovering the referent from a pronoun and recognising the meaning of any given lexical item. According to Lynch (2003), reading tests always involve tasks where



students read a text and then indicate their understanding of the different information mentioned in the text.

Finally, listening is an internal process of comprehension, just like reading. Lynch (2003: 50) pinpoints that “it is difficult if not impossible to test solely listening; other language modalities will inevitably form a part of the testing process”. He further proposes a range of formats to test listening. These include listening to passages using television, radio or recorded dialogues, where students have to answer task formats such as multiple-choice, matching, re-ordering, short answer and gap-filling. The recent literature on listening tests is proving to be a valuable resource for teachers when deciding on the tasks to be applied to test their students’ listening comprehension skills. As concerns reading, two main activities have been distinguished. This includes skimming and scanning. Each of these is explained below.

*Wikipedia*, an online dictionary, defines skimming as a process of speed reading that involves visually searching the sentences of a page for clues to meaning. Kailani and Muqattash (1995:93) describe it as passing eyes overhead lines, titles, topic sentences and summaries in order to recognize the main idea of a text. Idiagbon and Sani (2006) and Urguhart and Weir (1998:213) state that skimming is a reading skill that involves reading rapidly through a material in order to identify the main points in a passage. It aimed at understanding the gist or a particular piece of information. However, it is not essential to understand every word of the passage. Skimming is done at a speed three to four times faster than normal reading. People often skim when they have lots of material to read in a limited amount of time. In reading comprehension, it is often done the first reading carried out by students to have a general idea of the passage. According to Urguhart and Weir (1998:213-214), people skim in order to establish a general sense of the text, to quickly establish a macro propositional structure as an outline summary and to decide the relevance of texts to established needs. The following can be examples of skimming.

### **Examples of Skimming**

- Reading a newspaper quickly to get the general news of the day

- Reading magazines quickly to discover which articles you would like to read in more detail
- Reading a business and travel brochure quickly to get informed

Skimming from the above definitions involves reading rapidly through specific reading material in order to identify the main points of discussion. It is aimed at understanding the gist or a particular piece of information. It is, however, not essential to the understanding of every word of the passage. It is an important reading skill as it gives the student a sense of the general idea of the text and so how to make a good summary later.

Many researchers and specialists give similar definitions for scanning as follows: Grellet (1981:19) defines scanning as “quickly searching for some particular piece of information in the text”. Kailani and Muqattash (1995: 93) state scanning means looking through a text for specific item of information such as a date, a number or a place. They add that when scanning, we only try to locate specific information and often we do not even follow the linearity of the passage to do so. We simply let our eyes wander over the text until we find what we are looking for, whether it is a name, a date, or a less specific piece of information. This view is supported by Idiagbon and Sani (2006) who ascertain that scanning entails reading rapidly to find specific or particular piece of information. This is done by running one’s eyes through the passage, scouting for the required specific details.

Al-Drees (2008:21) explains that when scanning, one should look for the author’s use of organizers such as numbers, letters, steps, or the words, first, second, or next or look for words that are bold faced, italics, or in a different font size, style, or color. Thus, we may scan a text to find all the words that relate to a particular topic, locate geographical names, find names of historical leaders, etc.

Booth (2001:46) makes a comparison between skimming and scanning when he states that skimming and scanning are reading strategies students can use when reading for information, when reading a text or when deciding whether to read a text. When we skim, we form a general picture of the text, and have a sense of the main ideas. When we scan a text, we have a specific goal in mind. We skim through a text looking for key words, focusing on headings and opening and end paragraphs. Such knowledge is therefore very vital when it comes

to reading comprehension because students are often expected to bring out specific details about the passage they have read and this can be achieved through skimming, scanning or both.

Skimming is therefore a more thorough activity which requires an overall view of the text and implies a definite reading competence. Scanning, on the contrary, is a far more limited since it only means retrieving what information is relevant to our purpose. Yet it is usual to make use of these two activities together when reading a given text. For instance, one may well skim through an article first just to know whether it is worth reading, and then read it through more carefully because he has decided that it is of interest. It is also possible afterwards to scan the same article in order to note down a figure or a name which one particularly wants to remember.

In conclusion, skimming and scanning are actually two different ways of going through a given text. Scanning or speed reading is the process of looking for a specific piece of information, like looking up a word in the dictionary for example. Skimming, on the other hand, involves going through the book page by page just looking at text titles and sub titles, categories, pictures and diagrams to get a general feel for the text and its layout to familiarize oneself with its structure. This is done in order to help get an overview of the subject matter the book is on and to get a general impression of what the text contains.

## 2.2.3 Language Teaching Methods

Over the years, a series of methods have been used in the teaching of the English language. This section reviews four major teaching methods that have been used in teaching over the years. These methods are the grammar translation method, the direct method, the audio-lingual method based on the theory of behaviorist psychology and structural linguistics; and the communicative method based on the notions of sociolinguistics. Knowledge of these methods by teachers would enable them to teach English language well in the high school.

### 2.2.3.1 Grammar-Translation Method

According to Richards and Rodgers (1986), the grammar-translation method came to prominence as the Renaissance era approached its end, and when Latin and ancient Greek were no longer learned or taught for communicative purposes in any linguistic community. After World War I, especially in the United States, there was a need for a language teaching method through which a

foreign language could be taught effectively. Results of a longitudinal study conducted on the success of modern foreign language teaching in the United States in the year 1924 showed that the short time spent in foreign language classes in both high schools and universities did not give enough opportunities for learners to acquire a minimal proficiency in the target language. This was noticeable in the students' linguistic capabilities in the four language domains: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Consequently, taking into account the paucity of classroom time, it was suggested that educational institutions devoted to language teaching and learning focus on reading skills as the most reasonably learnable skill.

Based on this theoretical interpretation of foreign language teaching and the recommendations made, the grammar-translation method was adopted and dominated the field of language teaching, especially in the United States, for the first half of the last century. The focus of this language teaching method is on reading skills, and little attention is paid to the communicative aspect of the language. Teachers use translation as the main instructional strategy. They translate the target content and match it with its equivalent in the first language of the learners. Grammatical structures and rules are taught to aid reading comprehension, and pronunciation is only crucial for classroom intelligibility. Students are taught to memorize the rules, errors are not tolerated, and teachers are expected to correct errors every time they occur. Thus, the role of the first language in the process of foreign language acquisition is evident. Stern (1983: 455) states, “[T]he first language is maintained as the reference system in the acquisition of the second language” . This explains why teachers adopting this method depend heavily on their first language in their classroom practices.

The main features of grammar-translation, according to Mackey (1965), are as follows:

- grammar is an outline for the formal grammar and the vocabulary depends on the selected text;
- the teaching starts with rules, decontextualized vocabulary items, and translation;
- new vocabulary items and grammatical rules are listed to be memorized out of context;
- there is little emphasis on pronunciation and it is taught only occasionally.

Therefore, the major emphasis is on the memorization of new vocabulary items and new grammatical rules. As Mackey (1965: 151) claimed:

In the grammar translation method the rules for grammar to be used are strongly emphasized in order to keep the student aware of why and when he should develop a specific sentence. The problem with this notion is that most of the students are confused with these rules that they have to learn and their interest and desire for language learning are generally decreased. The primary purpose of this method was to teach rules, and the secondary, the application of rules. This method neither stressed accurate pronunciation nor the competence to express oneself in a free conversational exchange.

In addition to the features mentioned above, Richard and Rodgers (1986: 6) identified major characteristics of the grammar-translation method:

- It is a method that approached the target language via a detailed analysis of its grammatical structure; then, teachers are expected to apply knowledge by translating sentences and texts from and to the target language using the learners' first language in order to understand the morphology and syntax of the foreign language. Reading and writing were out of the focus in this method and little systemic attention was paid to the social and communicative aspect of the language.
- Bilingual vocabulary lists, dictionaries, and memorization are the only strategies used to teach new selected vocabulary items. Students are expected to memorize the new words by translating them to their equivalents in the first language.
- Unlike earlier approaches to language teaching, this method used and depended on grammar extensively, with the idea that it would make language learning easier.
- Accuracy was preferred, and errors are intolerable; grammar was taught deductively, and most syllabi based on grammar-translation had a sequence of grammatical rules and structure in each lesson.
- Teachers depended heavily on the students' first language as a medium of instruction.

However, this method of language teaching received extensive criticism. Mackey (1965) claims the emphasis on forms and the memorization of decontextualized vocabulary in this approach may help build up some knowledge, yet it does not help build the speaking and listening skills required for communicative purposes in the target language context. Moreover, it was noticed that focusing on grammar and ignoring other language skills "led to learning about the language rather than learning to use the language". Contrary to this viewpoint, Hammerly (1982) believes that the grammar-translation method is practically advantageous. This method does not require

deep knowledge of the language or of the teaching techniques needed and, therefore, is a less demanding method both physically and emotionally. It was a common method until the middle of the last century, when a new method was introduced in an attempt to fill the gap that the grammar-translation method failed to do.

### 2.2.3.2 The Direct Method

As a reaction against the grammar-translation method, several alternatives were developed; one of these methods is the direct method. It was described as "... one of the most widely used known and the one has caused the most controversy" (Mackey, 1965, p. 161). The direct method came also as a result of the growing interest in teaching language for speaking purposes. This method focused on communicative practice; however, grammar and vocabulary were taught by the gradation and sequencing of the materials. Adopting this method, teachers experienced their classroom practices in a foreign language without using translation and postponing reading and writing skills to later stages. Teachers using this method were expected to build a communicative classroom environment without a focus on rules and deductive thinking. However, grammar was taught sequentially through artificial contexts, and no authentic natural communicative settings were provided for the learners.

The merit of this method is based on the notion that in order for a person to learn a foreign language easily and effectively, the mechanisms and processes of first language acquisition should be adopted and followed instead of memorizing the rules and new vocabulary items. Although this method emerged in the last century, some claim that its theoretical basis goes back to the year 1880 when Francois Gouin, a French educator and author known for his work in the field of language education, questioned the unsuccessful academic routine of the classical method. Gouin's ideas, however, were lost in an array of skepticism about the effectiveness of some language teaching methods. Those thoughts of Gouin came back to life and established a foothold in the principles of the direct method (Brown, 1980).

Like other methods, the direct method has its unique features. Some researchers identified these characteristics and listed them as:

- Grammar taught by situation
- The use of many new items in the same lesson to make the language sound natural and to encourage normal conversation

- The oral teaching of grammar and vocabulary
- Concrete meanings taught through object lessons, abstract meanings through the association of ideas
- Visual presentation used to illustrate grammar
- The use of extensive listening and imitation until forms become automatic
- Most work done in the classroom, with much time needed

The strength of this method is in its potential to provide learners with the opportunity for intensive immersion into a foreign language, particularly if they have no chance to practice or experience the language in its natural environment. Rivers (1968: 10) states that “the method provides an exciting and interesting way of learning the foreign language through activity” . The direct method still has its presence in various forms in today’s language teaching context, a good example being Berlitz language schools (Brown, 1980).

Despite its persistence in the field of language teaching, the good results the method produced, and the popularity this method gained, the direct method received huge criticism. It was criticized for being heavily dependent on skillful teachers and requiring longer classroom time. Further, learning a foreign language is not similar to learning a first language. Hammerly (1982) believes that the constructed environment and statements created by teachers in the classroom do not often represent the everyday use of the target language; in other words, there are no authenticities in the classroom practices that reflect the real context of the target language. These critique and observations led researchers to develop a new method that better met the needs of the learners and serve as an effective method of language teaching.

### 2.2.3.3 The Audio-Lingual Method

Brown (1980) notes that with the critiques the previous methods received and with the advancements and developments in the fields of psychology and linguistics, there was a need for an approach that best filled the gap. The two theories were developed in the United States during World War II because of the ongoing development of foreign language teaching and learning programs. Both behavioral psychology and structural linguistics provided the theoretical baseline for the audio-lingual method. The former provided a model of teaching based on creating behavioral habits by operant conditions, while the latter provided tools for breaking down language into small pieces and contrasting language using a contrastive analysis approach.

Other terms are used to refer to this method, including the oral-aural method and the mimicry-memorization method. In this method, there are no rules to memorize, and language is considered a collection of habits. Therefore, learning a foreign language is viewed as a mechanical process of habit formation. Students are led through a series of stimulus and response situations followed by reinforcement. This is the prominent classroom strategy used by teachers adopting this method. Imitation and memorization are also required to build up the new habits of the target language. The method focuses on speaking and listening by repeating dialogues, through which grammar and vocabulary are also learned. Translation was not a technique used in this method; pattern drills, dialogue memorization, and repetition with an emphasis on pronunciation were evident strategies in this method.

The basic assumption of this method is that learners should learn how to speak before they know how to read and write. Thus, teachers are expected to expose their learners to repeated drills in the target language until it becomes a habit in the learners' minds. There is also a great emphasis on accurate pronunciation and intonation; language is viewed from the speech aspect rather than from the writing aspect. According to this method, four language skills are presented in this order: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Rivers (1967: 103-104) adds, "[B]ecause foreign language is a set of arbitrary symbols adopted by certain community, with an arbitrary standard of acceptable pronunciation, it is obvious that the student should hear it correctly before endeavouring to speak it".

The influence of behaviourism and structural linguistics on this method is reflected in the approaches and instructional techniques adopted by its proponents. Richards and Rodgers (1986) list the major characteristics of the approaches and instructional techniques of this method:

- Foreign language learning is a process of habit formation. This can be best achieved through dialogue repetition and memorization and giving the correct response;
- Learning should be based on analogy rather than analysis. Thus, an explanation of the rules are not given until students have experienced and been exposed to the patterns in different contextual settings. Drills are also thought to help learners form new correct analogies;
- Speaking should be taught before writing;
- Language should be learned in cultural context. This implies that teaching a foreign language is teaching the culture of that language. The meanings of the words are better



understood through a cultural context rather than as isolated items matched with their equivalents in the learners' first language (p. 52).

However, teachers and proponents of this method started to realize that it did not actually give the desired results and provided little knowledge of the target language as seen in learners' language use. Furthermore, the development of cognitive psychology and its influence on the field of foreign language teaching called for a new method that better met the learners' needs for the use of foreign language for communicative and functional purposes. There was a need for a method that considered learning a target language as a means of acquiring a conscious control of the phonological, grammatical, and lexical patterns of that language. This led to the thinking that language learning happens in interactive situations, where people wish to communicate with one another or each other rather than in situations far removed for everyday life. Problems and drawbacks associated with the audio-lingual method are believed to be due to several factors. Hammerly (1982) describes these problems as: poor professional development programs; lack of detailed explanation of the method's goals and procedures; and the absence of technology use in classroom practices.

#### 2.2.3.4 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

After the failure of the previous methods of language teaching to enable learners to use the language effectively and appropriately in real communicative contexts, linguists called for an alternative approach that would emphasize "communicative competence." The rationale for this approach stems from the social study of language known as sociolinguistics (Savignon, 1983). Research conducted in the social sciences has had a major role in forming the communicative approach; therefore, the communicative movement in applied linguistics and language teaching is considered to be a multidisciplinary field that involves linguistics, psychology, anthropology, and sociology.

In this approach, the focus shifted away from grammar and structure towards the social aspects of language. The emphasis is on the way language is used by speakers in various communicative contexts. Thus, in communication-based curricula and instruction, the purpose of language learning and the goal of language teaching are communication. Since "one of the characteristic features of communicative language teaching is that it pays systematic attention to functional as well as structural aspects of language" (Mackey 1965 ), such a method may be seen

as a realistic response to a practical problem in language teaching that both teachers and researchers in the field of foreign language teaching have been raising for some time. Johnsons (1982) defined this problem as "... the problem of the student who may be structurally competent, but who cannot communicate appropriately" (p. 121). Johnson (1992) referred to this problem as "communicative incompetence" which is considered a feature of the structural approach in language teaching.

A number of major features were identified in this approach to language teaching. For example, Nunnan (1999) lists the following as major features of this approach:

- Language is a system of the expression of meaning. Its primary function is communication;
- Activities to promote learning involved real communication, carrying out meaningful tasks, and using language that is meaningful to the learner;
- Objectives reflect the needs of the learner and include functional skills as well as linguistic objectives;
- The syllabus includes some or all of the following: structure, functions, notions, and tasks. Ordering will be guided by learner's needs;
- The primary role of instructional materials is to promote communicative language use that is task-based and authentic. (p. 246)

It seems, thus, that the emphasis in this method is on building the learner's communicative competence; Savignon (1983) defined the term "communicative competence" as "the expression, the interpretation, and negotiation of meaning involving interaction between two or more persons or between one person and a written text" (p. 303). This knowledge or competence is also referred to as the ability to use the learned language for actual communication purposes. It implies functional language proficiency in both written and spoken form. Communicative-based language curricula often reflect and contain real-world tasks and authentic materials in the target language.

#### 2.2.4 Previous Studies on ELT program/ material evaluation

This section reviews some evaluation studies conducted both in other countries on the implementation of English. Even in the field of evaluation of language programs in general,

there are very few studies devoted to pre-service Language programs. The extant program evaluation studies differ in terms of their purposes, emphasis and methodologies. Some aim to show whether the institutions met their goals and objectives at the end of the program, while others evaluate their programs formatively, to find out whether the programs are effective or not, or to find out what the teachers', students' and authorities' views are about the program.

As earlier mentioned some of the studies carried out on the field of evaluation was to find out students' attitudes about the implementation of English. A typical example is Al Yousef's (2009) study which sought to find out the various informants' opinion about learning English in the College of Education at Kuwait University. Though this study was carried out in the University, unlike the present study which targets High School students, the findings revealed the respondents were weak in their English reading, writing and listening, their speaking skills were poorer still. To account for this, the researcher identified two main reasons. These reasons included the ineffective instruction in English received by students during their schooling years and the disjointed methods of teaching English in the College of Education at Kuwait University. Thus, he concluded that teachers and curriculum designers should come up with teaching methods and curricular that is innovative in order to meet the learning challenges in that country. With the falling standards of ELT in Cameroon over the years, this study is out to analyse the reception of the implementation of English in High Schools in Cameroon and to see whether the program proposed for the teaching of English is robust enough to meet learners learning needs. If this is the case, then the situation of ELT in Cameroon will be greatly improved.

Al-Mutawa (1996), on his part, evaluated an English course for teachers of English as Foreign Language in the Primary Education Sector (EFLPS). The study was undertaken to evaluate a short-term programme organised for first grade teachers in primary schools in Kuwait. Its main aim was to assess workshops, theoretical aspects, training and organization in order to improve the program. A questionnaire was used to collect data from a sample of EFLPS teachers. The study found that trainees' overall evaluation of the course was favourable. However, this study can be criticised for using only one method; it can be argued that observation is critical and can be very useful in any evaluation study. Such a study is of immense importance to ours because it adds on the methodological aspects of our work. This due to the criticism levied on Al-Mutawa's (1996) study. Thus, in a bid to get data for this study, we would use a questionnaire, designed for students and equally interview the teachers on their take on the

implementation of English language as a subject in the High School. That way, we would be able to diversify our sources of data and make the present study more credible in terms of the quality of data used.

In addition, Al-Shalabi (1988) evaluated the English teacher education program at the College of Education at Kuwait University. The main aim of the study was to evaluate the English teaching performance of student teachers and to elicit their opinions on their program. Two methods were used to collect the data: observation and questionnaire. The results show that 80% of the student teachers obtained high ratings in most of the teaching skills required of English teachers. The main weakness found was in the students' command of English. However, this study was missing one important method, namely interviews, as it is argued that interviews are among the most important methods for collecting rich, deep and detailed data. Like this study, we want to find out how teachers and students rate the implementation of the English language in Cameroon. Consequently, if they are receptive, they are likely to teach and learn well respectively so as to improve the ELT situation in Cameroon. Consequently, we have equally sought to find out the weaknesses they observe in the course of teaching and learning the subject. The overall goal is to bring out concrete proposals which will improve the face of ELT in Cameroon.

In the same Arabian Gulf context Al-Mansoori (2001) conducted an evaluation of pre-service EFL teacher education in the United Arab Emirates University (UAEU). A responsive-Constructivist approach was selected for the evaluation. A conceptual and procedural framework, grounded in some basic tenets of Fourth Generation Evaluation, was developed. Eighty-one student teachers in their final year in the UAEU and 56 newly qualified teachers from the UAEU completed a questionnaire 85 about their preparation. Following this, ten percent of them were asked to participate in follow-up interviews. Fourteen decision makers from the UAEU and the Ministry of Education and Youth were also interviewed, employing in-depth/open-ended conversational interviews. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the quantitative data. The qualitative data were categorized through comparative analysis. On the basis of the problems and needs identified, recommendations and suggestions for program planning and improvement were made. It is hoped that at the end of this study, we would also make worthwhile recommendations for the improvement of the teaching of English language in the High School.

Ustunluoglu *et al.* (2012) conducted an evaluation aiming to describe the process of developing a new teaching program at the Preparatory Program at the School of Foreign Languages, Izmir University in Turkey, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. Two hundred and thirty-six first year students and 48 faculty members from five different faculties participated in the study. The results indicated a significant relationship between students' proficiency scores and their perception of their own competencies, and a significant difference in perceptions of their own competence in terms of levels at the preparatory program. Although faculty members stated that the Preparatory Program, in general, meets the needs of the students, students still had difficulty in practising some tasks requiring higher order thinking skills. The study suggests several courses of action: a series of learner training sessions to raise the awareness of the students, extending the duration of the modules, reviewing the order of objectives at the Intermediate and Upper-Intermediate levels, and working in cooperation with Faculties in order to increase awareness of mutual expectations. Though different in the study was focused on university students, unlike ours which is focused on the high school, the two studies are similar in that they are aimed at assessing an English language program and making recommendations which can improve it.

Coskun and Daloglu (2010) conducted an evaluative study with the two main aims of drawing attention to the importance of program evaluation for teacher Education programs and revealing the pre-service English teacher education program components that are in need of improvement or maintenance. The study was based on data collected from teachers and fourth-year student teachers who had had experience with the new teacher education program initiated by Higher Education Council (HEC) in the 2006-2007 academic year. The data collected by means of questionnaires and interviews revealed that although participating teachers and student teachers had similar views about some of the program components, they held different ideas about the balance between linguistic and pedagogic competences in the program. While teachers believed that the program did not suffice to improve student teachers' linguistic competence, student teachers thought that the pedagogic side of the program needed to be improved. This is similar to our present study we equally set to find out the possible weaknesses in the implementation of English in the high school in order to improve on the ELT component in the high school.

Another study was conducted by Tarnopolsky (2000) to formatively evaluate the language program in Ukraine. In the study, Tarnopolsky evaluated the writing course and considered the past and present situations in teaching writing. The results of the needs analysis indicated the necessity of introducing writing into EFL courses and using the process-genre approach in the course. The first version of the course based on this approach was evaluated and it was found that there were some problems. The course was communicative, but activities that were more fun needed to be added. When this was done, the second version of the course was found to be more successful.

Finally, Henry and Roseberry (1999) evaluated the writing course at the University of Brunei Darussalam. The aim of their study was to evaluate the teaching method and materials prepared according to the process-genre approach by testing whether the participants would improve their ability to texture their writing after genre-based language instruction, and whether the participants would produce texts that conformed more closely to the allowable move structure after genre-based instruction. The participants in their study were 13 first-year students. The results indicated that practical analysis of the genre, both in the target language and in the mother tongue, can be beneficial for learners' output in terms of organizing information and how this information is combined. It can be seen from this discussion that the evaluation of second language programs has concentrated on specific issues, such as the comparison of different teaching methods or comparison of the teaching styles of different teachers.

A review of the studies carried out on programme evaluation has revealed that there are a number of studies which have been carried out to evaluate programs or courses aimed at teaching and learning the English language. These studies seem to be unanimous on the fact that constant evaluations need to be carried out on programs in order to improve on them. This goes without saying that there is a need to carry out an assessment of the implementation of the English language in high schools in Cameroon. In order to achieve to assess a program the informants are always those involved in the program, that is, teachers, students or both. Furthermore, a series of methods are used in collecting data. Prominent among which are questionnaires, interviews and observation. This study uses some of these methods in these previous studies, especially interviews and questionnaire to collect its own data.

## 2.2.5 The Case of Cameroon

The use of language by humans has precipitated its Implementation in schools. With this, some scholars have carried out some inquiry to explore the role of language in high schools. Nonetheless, much research has not yet been carried out as far as investigating the role of Language in high school is concerned. However, the few that were found will be reviewed alongside other works that have focused on the teaching of specific skills of English as a whole, in our schools around today. Tambi (1994) looked at the problems of Anglophone secondary school learners of English in the use of phrasal verbs. The aim was to find out if phrasal verbs were taught in Anglophone schools. This study revealed that most teachers do not teach phrasal verbs because they had not learnt phrasal verbs in their schools. To the researcher, students' errors were due to insufficient exposure to the language, intra-lingual and developmental errors as well as difficulties of language teaching. So the researcher proposed that to eliminate such problem, there should be the teaching of phrasal verbs as a vocabulary items in schools.

Fru (1995) carried out an analysis on spelling errors in the 1991 G.C.E. A/L Literature scripts. He focused on fifty marked scripts with deviant spellings. These spellings were identified, analysed and classified under error connected with the joining of words, splitting of words, omission of letters, and insertion of letters. It is realised that this is one of the numerous problems students encounter which leads to their poor expression in the English Language. In like manner, Egbe (2004) probed into some of the problems of English. On his part, he scrutinized the effect of the writing skills on students' performance in English as a second Language in the high schools. In the course of the research, it was realised that the teaching of writing skills was not given due attention. This was as result of the fact that English Language was not taught in the high schools to enable them acquire the necessary skills. The researcher therefore recommended the reinstatement of the teaching of the Language in high schools and a syllabus of English Language to reinforce the teaching and learning of writing skills.

Mumene (2005) investigated the need for a harmonized programme beyond General English and the assessment of the Language at the G.C.E. A/L examination. She summed up her study by saying that there is no syllabus for English Language in the high schools, leading to students' low proficiency in the language. She recommended that there be a syllabus for the English Language in the high schools at all levels, and that it be evaluated in the G.C.E. A/L examination.

Mbongeh (2006) set out to study the importance of the teaching and learning of English Language in the Lower and Upper Sixth arts classes. The work was based on the neglect of English Language in Government high schools in Yaoundé with regards to the performance of English results in the G.C.E.O/L. This study centred on the fact that Anglophone high schools students have problems in expressing themselves in both spoken and written English. The work was limited to the importance of the teaching and learning of English Language in the high schools (arts) and the significance of the study was to create awareness in high school students of the invaluable use of English in their academic career. It was also aimed at laying a better foundation for their University study as English speakers. This study exposed the fact that the students acknowledged their weakness in the English Language and would welcome it happily. Thus, the recommendation here were that English Language should be a compulsory subject in the high schools, be part of high school programme and educational authorities should draw a good syllabus for English Language in high schools.

Jipughu's work can be likened to Mbongeh's. Jipughu (2008) worked on English Language teaching across the curriculum as a strategy for improving Language performance. Jipughu was aimed at finding out if English Language is taught across the curriculum. His focus was also to find out if language irregularities can retard progress in the acquisition of other subjects. The significance of the work is meant to make students to know that their competence in English Language will improve a good performance in other subjects. This work came up with the conclusion that teachers of other subjects have a vital role to do in the Language learning process because their subjects would act as forum to test language proficiency. She further recommended that teachers mark scripts for content knowledge and ideas and equally for language. According to him, teachers in other subjects sit together to discuss their challenges in language. Also to learners, that language is at the core of every academic development and they should make extra efforts to be proficient in the English Language, and the educational administrator's role is to provide leadership and draw up good programmes for the educational family.

Asoh (2012) on her part examined a comparative study of methods used in Language Centres and secondary schools in enhancing the acquisition and learning of the English Language. The focus of this work was to find out why most people attend extra language lessons in big towns, the qualification of teachers and whether those teaching the English Language are



more qualify than secondary school Language teachers. This study came out with the supposition that the slow acquisition of English in secondary schools is of the fact that much emphasis has been put on writing and reading skills to the disadvantage of listening and speaking skills which are areas that attract Language learners very much. Finally, Asoh recommended that the overcrowded classrooms in Cameroon remain a major problem which ought to be taken into consideration to ensure an improvement in the learning and teaching process. This work further recommends that evaluation be done in two phases. That is oral and written evaluation. Teachers should also use teaching aid.

### 2.2.6 Gaps and Contribution

The review of related works above suggests that a lot has been written on the teaching of English in secondary schools but very little study has been carried out so far as the teaching of English in the high schools is concerned. Even those which attempted looking at the teaching of General English in the high school are unanimous on the fact that there is so much which needs to be done in order to better the situation of English in high school. Furthermore, studies which have been carried out on the situation of ELT in the secondary school hold that the English language learnt in the secondary school is grossly insufficient to make its learners have a proper command of the language upon leaving secondary school. All these studies, thus, point to the fact that there is the need for English language teaching in the High School. However, with the implementation of the English language, there is a dire need to find out whether the program which has been elaborated for the teaching of the English language in the High School is robust enough to meet the learning needs of students in the High School. If this is not the case, how can we remedy the weaknesses of the program? It is in this light that the present study the present study seeks to investigate the implementation of the English Language in high schools in Cameroon. It is thus hoped that the results of this study would contribute its own quota to the fostering of the teaching of English language in High Schools in Cameroon.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter throws lights on the methodology used in carrying out this study. This is because we cannot over emphasize the importance of the methodology to scientific validation of this piece of work. In this wise, the chapter focuses on the research design, the administration of the instruments, difficulties encountered in the course of administering the instruments and the technique for the analysis of data gotten from the various informants, that is, the students and the teachers.

#### **3.1 The Research Design**

This study was designed to enable us to do a preliminary assessment of the teaching of English language in High Schools in Cameroon, with specific focus on some selected schools in Yaounde. Our research design considers the area of the study, the population of the study, the research instrument used in the investigation and their administration.

##### **3.1.1 Area of study**

This work was carried out in Yaounde. The city of Yaounde was chosen because of its convenience and nearness to the researcher. Equally, there are many private Anglophone high schools that Government Bilingual High Schools. Thus, the teachers and students in these schools could readily serve as informants.

##### **3.1.2 Population of the study**

The population of this study was made up students and teachers drawn from Government Bilingual High school Mendong, Government Bilingual practicing High School Yaounde and Government Bilingual High School Etoug-Ebe. The students who constituted the population of this study were Upper Sixth students who study English language as a subject and have registered to do the subject at the GCE. This study was limited to Upper Sixth students because they have done the subject at the Advanced Level for at least one year and, consequently, can give significant information which can enable us to assess their attitudes towards the implementation of English in High school.

With regard to the teachers, the informants were those who have been teaching English at the High school. Consequently, they were chosen on grounds that they are versed with the syllabus proposed for the teaching of the subject.

## 3.2 Research Instruments

The instrument of used in collecting data for this study was an interview and a questionnaire. The interview was meant for teachers, while the questionnaire was designed for students. Each of this is described below.

### 3.2.1 Interview for teachers

The main aim of the interview was to find out teachers' reactions towards the implementation of English language at the Advanced Level. The interview guide enlisted for teachers contained eight items. Consequently, the interview was meant to elicit the attitudes of teachers towards English language since its implementation at the Advanced level. Teachers were expected to react to the performance of students at the GCE so far. Equally, some areas of language study such as vocabulary, pronunciation, writing, speaking and reading were identified and the teachers were expected to either say whether the students they teach face problems in them or not. They were also expected to give reasons for their answers. It is important to consider the fact that the answers given by these teachers will enable us to come up with proposals to better teach these aspects of language learning. Furthermore, the interview required these teachers to speak generally on the implementation of English at the A/L. in this light the researcher wanted to know from them whether there are some specific issues they would want to fixed, their perception of the A/L English paper and finally, to say whether English language paper has been overdue in its implementation or whether it has been.

### 3.2.2 Questionnaire

As earlier mentioned, the respondents for the questionnaire were students. The questionnaire, like the interview, sought to elicit the overall assertiveness of students offering English at the Advanced Level towards the subject. In this light, students were obliged to say whether they were positive, negative or neutral about the implementation of English at the A/L. Through the questionnaire, the researcher also tried to find out why they actually chose to take English as a subject in the High School and why they think some of their friends are taking it.

They were equally asked to identify their major problem area in English and the relevance of taking English as a course at the A/L to them.

The questionnaire had 9 items, which was comprised of both open and closed questions. For the open questions, students were expected to select one or more answers (depending on the question) from the options given. With regard to the closed questions, the informants were supposed to fill in spaces with brief and concise answers. The above instruments enabled us to collect credible data which will help us to do a preliminary assessment of the implementation of English language as a subject in High Schools in Cameroon.

### 3.3 Administration of Questionnaire

The questionnaire was presented to students to fill in immediately after the researcher had presented herself to them and found them eligible for the study. Each of the informants was given a questionnaire and in cases where they did not really understand a particular question, the researcher clarified them. After the questionnaire was filled in, the researcher took them home for subsequent analysis.

With regard to the interview, in each of the schools earmarked to the schools, the researcher met the English teachers concerned with the teaching of the subject in the High School. After this was done, the researcher explained the aim of her research to them and expressed her wish to talk with them concerning the teaching of English language in the High School. Once this link was created and the informant accepted to take part in the research, the researcher took out her interview guide and asked them some questions. While they spoke, the researcher jotted their views in her notebook for subsequent analysis. The information got from the questionnaire and the interview enabled the researcher to elicit information to carry out a preliminary assessment of the implementation of English in high schools in Cameroon.

### 3.4 Difficulties Encountered

Some difficulties were met in the course of collecting data for this study. These hitches occurred at the levels of meeting the informants and administration of the various tests. Having the informants was a major difficulty the researcher faced in the whole process. First, meeting the target population was not an easy task. There were a series of administrative procedures which the researcher had to be submitted to. This trouble was faced in some of the schools where

the authorities wanted the researcher to offer them something before they can actually grant her the opportunity to get information from the students. However, these snags were surmounted by persistence on the part of the researcher which made her to come in touch with some good-hearted teachers who actually got her to the students. Thus, despite the number of difficulties faced, the researcher managed her way out. This is seen in the fact that she got credible material which was analyzed to throw more light on the study.

### 3.5 Method of Data Analysis

In order to calculate the frequency of each item got from the informants, we used the percentage count procedure, that is, the frequency of responses to the particular question (X%), was got from the division of the number of responses to the question (P) per the total number of scores (T) and the quotient was multiplied by one hundred.

$$\implies \frac{P}{T} \times 100 = X\%$$

Practically, after having scored the responses from the various informants, we proceeded to calculate the results for each question. Following the above-mentioned method of data analysis, the data collected were quantitatively analysed for subsequent interpretation. The next chapter will focus on the presentation, analysis and discussion of the findings.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS**

This chapter focuses on the presentation and analysis of the data collected from the field in a bit to carry out a preliminary investigation on the implementation of English Language in High School. This is done by discussing the various findings got from the questionnaire that was designed to elicit students' views on the implementation of English Language, the areas where they face difficulties in English Language so far, why they chose English language in High School and whether they will encourage their siblings to study the subject in the high school. It is hoped that these views help to give a clear image of how students perceive the implementation of English language in the High School. Correspondingly, the analysis carried out in this section also includes results from the interview carried out on teachers. In this light, the analysis is divided into two broad sections. The first section is focused on the students' questionnaire, while the second is focused in the interview conducted on teachers of English Language in High School. For want of clarity a proper orientation, the data are presented in tables in the different sub-sections.

#### **4.1 Presentation of Students' Views**

This section focuses on the responses got from the questionnaire administered to students. Worth noting is the fact that the students whose views are presented here are those who actually do English language in High School.

##### **4.1.1 Students' Attitudes toward the Implementation of English as a Subject in the High School**

The teaching of English Language in the High School has come to stay. However, its reception and perception by learners can significantly shape how the teaching of this subject in the High School can be done. Consequently, we sought to find out how the learners feel about the implementation of English Language in the high school. In this light, the informants were expected to say whether they were positive about the implementation of English language, whether it is timely or not well conducted, whether a lot still needs to be done, whether it was not necessary or whether they do not know what to say. The various responses provided by the informants are presented in the following table.

Table One: Students' attitudes towards the implementation of English language

<b>Attitude</b>	<b>Frequency of occurrence</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Very positive	20	33.33
Positive	15	25
Timely but Not well conducted	8	13.33
A lot needs to be done to improve it	14	23.33
Not necessary	0	0
I don't know	3	5
Total	60	100

The table above provides a lot of information as to their attitudes towards the implementation of English Language in High School. This is seen as 33.33% of the informants portray a very positive attitude towards the implementation of English Language in the High School. Such an attitude is quite understandable for so many reasons. Firstly, over the years, learners of the English language in Cameroon have been calling for the subject to be taught in the High School so as to bridge the gap between Form Five and university studies. This is because English Language teaching and learning is important in the High School as

- ESL is a medium of instruction for Anglophone learners.

- It sharpens previous acquired notions on the language.
- None is master when it comes to English.
- It improves students' language proficiency but some English Language teachers also need to work extra hard to polish their English.
- The different language component cannot be given enough emphasis during the teaching of Literature in English.
- Most problems faced by Anglophone under graduate stem from their poor mastery of the English Language.
- It would somehow reduce the excessive use of 'pidgin' in schools, homes and the society at large.
- It will equally help student to cope with university study in general.
- It will help them function more efficiently in their jobs.
- It will help them better interact in various social and other domain.
- It will help them speak and write properly and even take part in international exams.
- It will help them to be competitive in international job market.
- It will help them carry out study in other English speaking countries.

Secondly, the level of English Language proficiency in the country has constantly been on the decrease. This is seen, most especially, in the fact that people leave Form Five without really being able to express themselves squarely in English. Given such deplorable state of affairs, this group of learners sees the implementation of English language in the high school as a welcome relief. Equally, from the table above, we discover that 25% of the informants are simply positive about the implementation of English in the high school. Though we can claim that such informants are less enthusiastic, compared to those who are very positive, we can say that their responses add to those who appreciate the implementation of English language as a



subject in high school. Thus, on a whole, we can say that 58.33% of the informants have positive attitudes towards the implementation of English language in the high school.

Some of the informants actually graded the implantation of English language in the high school as timely, but actually decried the way in which it is conducted. This view is held by 13.33% of the informants used in this study. Such an attitude may be instigated by the way some teachers teach the subject. It may also be instigated by the syllabus proposed for the teaching of the subject. Whatever the cause may be, these informants are of the opinion that, though the teaching of English in the high school may be quite timely, a lot still needs to be done to shape it to meet the reasons for which it has been implemented.

Though the subject has come to stay in the high school, some of the informants are of the opinion that its implantation is far from over. In fact, 23.33% of the informants support this idea as they said that a lot still needs to be done to improve on the situation of English language teaching in the high school. Such an attitude is quite evident in the fact that the subject is currently in its third of its implementation in the high school. Consequently, it becomes obvious that there are still some areas which still need to be completely fine-tuned to meet learners' expected outcomes with regard to the learning of English as a subject in the high school.

Furthermore, we note that all the informants find, at least, something good in the implementation of English in the high school. This is seen as none of the informants said that the implementation of English language in the high school was unnecessary. Such results are quite understandable because nobody will actually offer a subject they do not think is necessary. Consequently, we discover that all the informants find English necessary in some way. Finally, we discover that 5% of the informants are just passive as they said that they do not have a particular attitude towards the teaching of English in the high school. On a whole, we note the informants' attitudes towards the implementation of English in the high school range from very positive through positive to ignorance.

#### 4.1.2 Students' motivations to study English in the High School

English language is not compulsory in the high school, unlike in the first cycle. This means that a student must have a particular motivation before choosing English language as a course. These

motivations can range from the simple fact that it is easy to pass, it was forced on them to the fact that it is a very important to pass. The various motivations for students to offer English language in the high school are presented on the table below.

Table Two: Reasons for choosing English as a course at the A/L

<b>Reason</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
They think it is easy to pass	16	26.7
They see it as a very important subject	30	50
It is forced on them	6	10
I don't know	8	13.3
total	60	100

The table above reveals that some of the informants chose to do English in the high school because they think it is easy to pass. The purported ease of succeeding in English language at the final exams motivated 26.7% of the informants to choose English as a subject in the high school. Most students tend to confuse spoken proficiency with written proficiency in the language. Consequently, as long as they can communicate orally, they simply conclude that English language is simple. So, they offer the subject in a bid to add to their papers. However, most of these students may not have it in the final exams because their motivation to study it was not authentic.

Furthermore, most of the learners, that is, 50% were motivated to take English language as a course because they see it as a very important subject. The relevance of English as a subject to a student cannot be overemphasized here. First, English is the language of instruction in the Anglophone subsystem of education in Cameroon. So, a learner who has a thorough mastery of the language is very likely to succeed, compared to a learner who does not have a mastery of the language. Second, the English language is a global language. This means that those who identify with it equally identify with global trends in modern communication.

Though up to half of the informants were motivated to take English as a subject in the high school because of its advantages, a tiny percentage that is 10%, was of the opinion that it was not out of their free will that they chose the subject. Consequently, they held that it was forced on them. Thus, given such a situation, we cannot undermine the role of parents and guardians on the education. Finally, some of the informants were simply carried by the waves to the English language class. This is seen as 13.33% declared that they did not have any particular motivation to take English language as a course in the high school.

A survey of the informants' motivation to study English language in the high school has reveals that 50% of the informants chose to study English as a subject because they perceive it to be very important, 26.7% of the informants were motivated to take English language because they think that it is easy to pass, 10% held that it was forced on them either by their parents or their guardians, while 13.33% of the informants did not have a particular motivation to take English language.

#### 4.1.3 Reasons for positive motivation to study English language in the high school

From the survey of students' motivations to study English language in the high school presented above, we saw that 50% of the informants said they took English language as a course because it is very important. We therefore sought to find out the different ways in which English is important to them. The results got are presented on the following table.

Table Three: Informants' reasons for offering English at the High School

<b>Reason</b>	<b>frequency</b>	<b>percentage</b>
It is a global language	20	33.33
It is a gateway to employment	15	25
It is necessary for studies abroad	9	15
It is good to have a certificate with English	2	3.33
It facilitates the assimilation of other subjects	14	23.3
Total	60	100

The elicitation of the various reasons the informants had before choosing to offer English as a course in the high school has revealed very interesting results. To begin, 33.33% of the informants chose to study English because it is a global language. This is quite true because the English language is now the language of global communication, international trade, etc. In fact it

has become the world's lingua franca. Consequently, with the world increasingly becoming a global village, there is the need for people to identify themselves with the dominant language. It is from this standpoint that this group of informants chose to study English at the high school.

The role of knowledge of a language in the acquisition of a stable employment cannot be underestimated. In this light, some of the informants chose to study English language in the high school because it is a gateway to employment. This view is held by 25% of the informants as the table above portrays. Worth noting is the fact that after studying English language in the high school, learners can employ themselves directly or indirectly. For example, they can readily become English language teachers or indulge themselves into creative writing. With all these in mind, students can be encouraged to study English language because it can serve as a gateway to employment.

Some of the informants also said that they were studying English language because it would enable them to further their studies abroad. This is quite thoughtful on the part of such students because most scholarships to study abroad often require a language proficiency test. In this light, 15% of the informants held that they were instigated by the need to study abroad to take English language as a subject in the Advanced Level.

Still in line with the relevance of English language in studies, 23.33% of the informants held that they were motivated to study English language because it would help them to better understand other subject. This view cannot be undermined because, in the Anglophone subsystem of education, the English language is the main language of instruction. Thus, a student who masters the English language is very likely to succeed very well in other subjects. This therefore made some learners to develop positive attitudes towards the studying of English language in the high school. Finally, 3.33% of the informants held that it is good to have a certificate in English language. Such a certificate is likely to put these students in a better position to enjoy the advantages which come with the mastery of the language outlined above.

On a whole, the survey of the various reasons the informants had for choosing English language in the high school have revealed that they did so because it is a global language, it is a gateway to employment and, finally, because of its relevance in their education.

#### 4.1.4 Aspects which Pose Difficulties to Learners

Still in line with assessing the institution of English in high schools in Cameroon, we equally wanted to find out the various linguistic areas or skills in which the informants face problems. In fact, the goal was to look at the possible areas which are likely to hinder their proper acquisition of the language in the high school. Such findings are very important in a maiden study like this one which seeks to assess the situation of the English language in the high school. With such findings, we intend to highlight these difficulties for teachers to concentrate more on them in the course of teaching. This will go a long way to limit the high rate of failure in which is often noticed in the secondary school in the high school. Consequently, some of the areas which are likely to pose difficulties to learners earmarked for this study included grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, limited time to practice language skills among other. In a bid to have a true picture of the various problems learners face, the informants had the possibility of choosing more than one area of difficulty. The results obtained in the light of the difficulties faced by English language students in the high school are presented on the table below.

Table Four: Difficulties Faced by Students of English Language in High School

<b>Difficulty</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Vocabulary	24	30.8
Pronunciation	10	12.8
Limited time to practice language skills	3	03.8
Lack of textbooks	15	19.2
Grammar	17	21.8

All the four language skills	9	11.5
Total	78	100

The table above shows that vocabulary poses a major problem to learners. This premise is confirmed by 30.8% of the responses. Such a difficulty may not augur well for English language learning given that language use lies on the greater part on words. Consequently, if learners have a problem with vocabulary, they may as well have a major problem in the use of the language. This goes without saying that in the course of teaching, teachers should stress aspects of vocabulary such as parts of speech, deriving meanings from words and word formation and creating links between words through synonymy, antonymy and homonymy. All these will go a long way to edify learners not only on the various aspects of vocabulary, but also on the relevance of the mastery of vocabulary to language learning.

The second difficulty highlighted by the learners is at the level of grammar. This is seen as 21.8% of the responses from the informants attest to this. Worth noting is the fact that English grammar is a major problem to its learners. Consequently, in the course of teaching, teachers should emphasize grammar points such as the structure and elements of a sentence, punctuation, the notion of voice and reported speech. All these will go a long way to improve learners' knowledge of English grammar. Equally, in the light of language skills, 11.5% of the informants held that they face a major difficulty as far as listening, speaking, reading and writing are concerned. This may be a great handicap given that language learning lies on these skills. Consequently, teachers of English in the high school should make learners master the various English language skills.

Some of the responses also point to the fact that the lack of textbooks and insufficient reading time pose a problem to their proper acquisition of the language. This is seen as the responses for the lack of textbooks stand at 19.2%, while those for insufficient time to practice language skills stand at 3.8%. In this light, teachers should raise learners' awareness on the

relevance of textbooks in second language learning and the need to create time and revise what has been done in the classroom.

#### 4.1.5 Setbacks to the Learning of English as a Subject in the High School

The informants were equally required to identify some setbacks to their proper acquisition of the language. By extension, these findings can be generalized to cover the setbacks to the implementation of English language in the high school. Such findings can go a long way to improve the quality of English taught in the high school. The results from the informants are presented on the table below.

Table five: Setbacks to the learning of English

<b>Response</b>	<b>frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Teaching hours are not enough	5	13.51
The program is not well-defined	12	32.43
Insufficiency of teachers	5	13.51
No improvement compared to O/L standard	4	10.81
Lack of didactic material	7	18.92
Total	37	100



The above table reveals that the highest setback brought out by the informants is that the program is not well-defined. This is seen in 32.43% of the responses. Though one can claim that the students are not well-placed to say whether the program is defined or not, we can claim as well that teachers' way of teaching can make the students understand whether this program is defined or not. We cannot overemphasize this point of view because this is a new program and teachers are still likely to be struggling to grasp its contents.

Equally, 13.51% of the informants are of the view that the teaching hours allocated for English language are not enough. This same percentage goes for those who hold that they do not have enough teachers. While 18.92% of the informants attribute the setback to lack of didactic material, 10.81% hold that the major problem they discover with the high school program for the teaching of English is that there is no improvement compared to that which is taught in the first cycle

# **CHAPTER FIVE**

## **GENERAL CONCLUSION**

This section of the work discusses the findings revealed in the analysis of the data got from the field. In this final part of the work, we also look at the pedagogic and sociolinguistic implications of this study. This section ends with the suggestions for further research with regard to the topic of this dissertation.

### **5.1 Overview of Study and Discussion of Findings**

This study set out to do a preliminary investigation of the implementation of English language as a subject in the high school in the Anglophone subsystem of education in Cameroon. In order to attain this, we sampled the views of some high school students and teachers in three high schools in Yaounde. These schools included GBPHS Yaounde, GBHS Etoug-Ebe and GBHS Mendong. The data for the study was collected through the use of a questionnaire given out to students and an interview administered to teachers. Given that this study was out to assess the views of teachers and students in a bid to see how students could be more competent in the English language upon graduation from the high school, we used the linguistic and pragmatic competence theory. The analysis of the data got from the questionnaire and interview revealed a series of findings.

In terms of students attitudes or perception of the implementation of English language in high schools in Cameroon, we discovered that 58.33% of the students who served as informants were actually satisfied with the implementation of English in the high school. This notwithstanding, 13.33% of the informants added that the implementation of the subject in the high school is quite timely, given that it will resolve, in a greater major, the problem of performance in English; however, it is not well conducted. This view is thus confirmed by 23.33% of the informants who note that a lot of work still needs to be done. Such views, especially on the teaching of the subject in the high school, are very important. Consequently, teachers need to be more engaged in the teaching process, especially by getting closer to the new syllabus. Much as we can say that the syllabus is new, teachers should be more engaged in their teaching so as to build learners' confidence in the subject. The positive reception of the subject by students means that ELT in the high school is promising. In fact, this view is supported by

60% of teachers' responses who pointed out that the performance of students in the subject will improve with time.

The positive view of the relevance of the English language, especially as 0% of them said English was not necessary, resulted from the expected benefits the students stand to accrue while after having studied English as a subject in the high school. Consequently, 50% of them noted that they study English because they see it as a very important subject. Worth noting is the fact that the importance of English as a subject is first of all seen in the fact that it is the primary language of instruction for these students. This means that the more they get intimate with English, the more they are likely to understand what is done in the other subjects and hence, get good results. Furthermore, the importance of the language lies, as confirmed by 33.33% of the students, on the fact that it is a global language. The English language occupies a comfortable position as the first language used across international boundaries. With such observed usefulness of English in global communication, it becomes necessary for students not only to develop positive attitudes towards it, but also incumbent on them to communicatively and pragmatically competent in the subject. So, this calls for teachers and stakeholders concerned with the teaching of English in the high school to help students to sustain these positive attitudes by fine-tuning the programme making students become competent in the language.

This call on stakeholders to fine-tune the programmed is not a matter of chance. From our findings, 32.43% of the students are of the opinion that the syllabus for English is not well-defined. This view cannot be neglected given that it accounts for up to 30.8% of the difficulties the informants face in studying English in the high school. Much as we can hold that the students are not in a better position to assess the programme, it is also worth noting that the way a teacher presents the programme or teaches in a classroom can make a smart student see whether the teacher is talking out of conviction or not. Nevertheless, teachers should also pay attention to grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation because most of the responses got under this section pointed to the fact that students face difficulties in these areas of linguistic analysis.

On a whole, the views of students on the implementation of English language as a subject in the high school as revealed that students who study English in the high school have positive attitudes towards it, especially because it is a global language and because it is useful to them. However, there are some difficulties they face in grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation which must be solved by teachers, if ELT in the high school must meet its objectives.

Concerning the interview administered to the teachers, we realised that the teachers like the students had positive attitudes towards the implementation of English language as a subject in the high school. This is seen as 80% of them were very positive with regard to the implementation of the subject in the high school. This positive reception on the part of the teachers could result from the falling performance of students at GCE O/L. Thus, the implementation of the subject is likely to give teachers the opportunity to follow their students up in the high school and, consequently, help them to become better users of the language. Although there was no teacher who decried the implementation of English in the high school, we noted that 20% of teachers were neutral. This positive reception therefore points to the fact that teachers are willing to work as none of them actually mentioned that the implementation entailed that they would work for more hours. Since teachers are the main actors involved, we can therefore say that ELT in the high school has a bright future. By extension, the employment of the subject was well thought of by the educational authorities in the Anglophone subsystem of education.

In line with the objectives of this study, we asked the informants to carry out an assessment of the programme provided for the teaching of English language in the high school. Curiously enough, in spite of the fact that up to 80% of the informants were positive about the implementation of English language in the high school, the responses 90% of teachers gave pointed to the fact that it is too early for them to say whether there are some issues which require to be fixed. Such a response points to the fact that teachers find the programme proposed to them inclusive enough to meet students learning needs. However, given that the success of any given programme can be assessed based on students' performance, and given that English has only been written in the June 2015 session of the GCE, teachers would want to see the performance of students before saying whether the programme is good enough to produce the expected results or not.

In relation to the areas of difficulties to students identified by the teachers, all the teachers agreed that students had a problem as far as grammar is concerned, while 68% of the informants responded that students had a problem with vocabulary and 100% of the informants held that students had no problem with reading, but may face some problems with comprehension. These findings therefore suggest that teachers should concentrate more on aspects of grammar and vocabulary in the course of teaching so as to build informants knowledge about the language.

## 5.2 Pedagogic Implications of the study

This work was out to investigate ELT in high schools in Cameroon in a bid to propose how it can be better done. The findings got from this study discussed above have a series of implications to the teaching and learning of English in the high school. First, we discovered that teachers and students have readily received the subject with very little hesitation. This means that if both teachers and students do their work the way they are supposed to do it, then the situation of ELT in Cameroon can greatly improve. Furthermore, given that the students' motivation to offer English was based on the usefulness of the subject to them, teachers need to help them to attain these objectives by teaching them well. It is in line with this that, in a bid to help teachers on the area of language to concentrate in, we discovered that students face difficulties in grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. These answers from students are equally supported by the teachers who constituted the informants for this study. All the informants noted that students have a problem with grammar, while some said they noticed that students have difficulties in vocabulary. This information is very vital in the ELT classroom in the high schools because it brings to the limelight areas which teachers should concentrate on in the course of teaching.

Finally, we cannot downplay the role of parents to the success of ELT in the high school. This is because some of the students noted that the difficulties they face come from the lack of textbooks and the shortage of enough time to study. Thus, students will do more if parents empower them by buying their textbooks and equally giving them enough time to study at home. This will greatly contribute in their studies and consequently, enable them to achieve their aims of choosing to offer English in the high school.

## 5.3 Suggestions for Further Research

This study has contributed its own quota to the implementation of English language in the high school by assessing the attitudes of teachers and students involved in the teaching and learning of the subject respectively. However, it will be preposterous to claim that everything concerning the teaching and learning of English language in the high school has been exhausted in this study. It

is in this light that we propose some areas/ topics research on this subject can be further carried out.

Research can be carried out on a comparative analysis of the syllabuses used for the teaching of English language in the secondary and high schools respectively and the effect on students' performance. Such a study is very important in a bid to see whether there is continuity or redundancy in both the syllabus for the secondary and that for the high school.

Furthermore, research can be directed towards assessing the syllabus from the teaching of English in the high school and its effectiveness in developing communicative competence on learners.

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# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: STUDENTS QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Students,

I am a student in the Higher Teacher Training College, Yaounde. I am carrying out a study on the teaching of English in Anglophone High Schools. Please kindly tick in the appropriate box (es) that correspond to your opinion and response where necessary. This questionnaire is purely for research purpose. Please answer the questions as sincerely as possible.

Thank you for your cooperation:

1. How would you characterize your attitude towards the implementation of English as a subject in High school and in the G.C.E. A/L? You may tick up to two.

a  I am very positive about it.

b  I am positive about it.

c  It was timely but I feel it is not well conducted.

d  It was timely but a lot need to be done to improve teaching and results.

e  I think it was not necessary.

f  I don't know.

2. If one of your answer is (C) or (d), tick the following below as a possible cause (you may tick more than one).

a  Teaching hours not enough.

b  The program is not well-defined.

c  We don't have enough teachers.

d  There is no big difference in students' proficiency level compared to O/L standard.

e  Didactic materials are not yet readily available.

f  The examination paper is far above students' level.

g  The examination paper is far below students' level.

3. Do you think most of your friends take English as a course because?

a  They think it is easy to pass.

b  They see it as a very important subject.

c  It is forced on them.

d  I don't know.

4. Do you have any other reason for taking the English course that the list in (3) above does not provide?

Yes

No

5. If yes, please provide it here: .....  
.....  
.....

6. Would you encourage your siblings to take English as a course when they get to High school?

Yes

No

7. Please kindly give reasons for your answer in (6):.....  
.....  
.....

8. For the past one year that you have studied English in High school, tick in the box if the following applies to you. (You may tick more than one).

a.  My greatest challenge has been Grammar, I wish the teachers could do more to help me.

b.  My greatest problem has been vocabulary, I wish the teachers could do more to help me.

c.  My greatest problem has been pronunciation, I wish the teachers could do more to help me.

d.  My greatest problem has been in the four skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening). I wish more could be done to help me.

e.  We do not have enough time to practice our language skills.

f.  We do not have textbooks.

9. When I consider that English is now a High school subject and it is written at the G.C.E. A/L I feel happy because. (You may tick more than one)

a.  It is an important tool for global communication.

b.  It will prepare me for a career in future.

c.  One needs English to survive in most universities abroad, since I intend to study there in future.

d.  I just want to get a certificate in English.

e.  It helps me to study other subjects.

## APPENDIX B: SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

1. Could you assess your students' attitude in English since the subject was implemented at the A/L.?
2. What can you say about their performance generally and in the G.C.E. so far?
3. Would you say they have some specific problems in the subject in the following?

	Yes	No	Reason
Grammar			
Vocabulary			
Pronunciation			
Writing			
Speaking			
Reading			
Any other aspects			

4. Generally, has it been a very good experience for you in terms of your expectations of students' performance and/or attitude?
5. Are there issues /things/matters of procedures you would like to be fixed? And by whom?
6. What can you say or advice on the natures of the English paper at the G.C.E. A/L.
7. I believe most English language teachers welcome the implementation of English at the G.C.E.A/L with relief since it was long overdue. Was that your case? Why?

8. Is there any other thing you might want me to know about English at the A/L and/or High school?



## **APPENDIX C: Classification of series according to subjects**

A1 English Literature, French Literature, History

A2 Geography, History, Economics

A3 English Literature, History, Economics

A4 Geography, Mathematics, Economics

A5 English Literature, History, Philosophy

S1 Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, Biology, Further Mathematics

S2 Physics, Biology, Chemistry

S3 Mathematics, Chemistry, Biology

S4 Biology, Chemistry, Geology