

Francophone University Students' Attitudes Towards English Accents in Cameroon

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Abstract : The norms and models for learning pronunciation in relation to the teaching and learning of English pronunciation are key issues nowadays in English Language Teaching in ESL contexts. This paper discusses these issues based on a study on the attitudes of some Francophone university students in Cameroon towards three English accents spoken in Cameroon: Cameroon Francophone English (CamFE), Cameroon English (CamE), and Hyperlectal Cameroon English (near standard British English). With the desire to know more about the treatment that these English accents receive among these students, an aspect that had hitherto received little attention in the literature, a language attitude questionnaire, and the matched-guise technique was used to investigate this phenomenon. Two methods of data analysis were employed: (1) the percentage count procedure, and (2) the semantic differential scale. The findings reveal that the participants' attitudes towards the selected accents vary in degree. Though Hyperlectal CamE emerged first, CamE second and CamFE third, no accent, on average, received a negative evaluation. It can be deduced from this findings that, first, CamE is gaining more and more recognition and can stand as an autonomous accent; second, that the participants all rated Hyperlectal CamE higher than CamE implies that they would be less motivated in a context where CamE is the learning model. By implication, in the teaching of English pronunciation to francophone learners learning English in Cameroon, Hyperlectal Cameroon English should be the model.

Keywords : teaching pronunciation, English accents, Francophone learners, attitudes

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