

**THE ROLE OF EMOTION AND CULTURAL IDENTITY IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE
LEARNING: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF MENTAL REPRESENTATION AND
CULTURAL TRANSPOSITION**

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Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL INTRODUCTION	1
<i>Main Paradigms in Second Language Acquisition and Learning</i>	1
<i>Shifting Emphasis and Current Trends</i>	4
Background and Purpose of the Study	5
Objectives and Research Questions	7
Data Collection and Methodology	8
Organization and Overview of the Chapters	11

CHAPTER 2

Didactics of Foreign and Second Languages Teaching and Learning	13
Introduction	13
Foreign and Second Languages	14
<i>Foreign Language and Second Language Revisited</i>	15
<i>Foreign Language or Second Language Contexts</i>	16
Language Acquisition, Learning and Participation	18
Approach, Method, and Strategies	26
Howard Gardner and the Theory of Multiple Intelligences	31
Multiple Intelligences in Foreign Language Classes	36
Howard Gardner and his Critics	39
Summary	43

CHAPTER 3

An Intercultural Approach in Language Teaching	45
Introduction	45
Teaching Foreign Languages with Multiple Intelligences in Benin	46
<i>The Context</i>	46
<i>Course Structure and Content</i>	46
<i>The Challenges</i>	47
<i>Teaching Approaches in Historical Context</i>	48
<i>Funding Issues</i>	49
<i>Teaching Experience</i>	49
<i>Comments</i>	51
<i>Multiple Intelligences in the Context of the Study</i>	52
<i>Suggestion</i>	54
<i>Analysis of Textbooks: Profiles, Activities and Components</i>	59
<i>Comments</i>	68
<i>Is There a Universal Didactics in Language Teaching?</i>	70
Summary	74

CHAPTER 4

The Psychology of Foreign Languages	76
Introduction	76
Definition of Concepts and Limitation	78
Attitudes, Beliefs, Emotion, Motivation and Foreign Language Learning	79
Impact of the Teacher's Personality on Foreign Language Learners	93
<i>Comments and Implications</i>	101
<i>In Benin:</i>	103
<i>Germany and Benin: FL versus SL Contexts</i>	104
Language Use and Identity Construction	107
<i>Explanations of the Concept of Identity Construction</i>	108
<i>African Attitude towards Native and International Languages</i>	109
<i>Language Distribution and Interrelation in the Public Sphere</i>	114
<i>Comments and Implications</i>	123
Summary	126

CHAPTER 5

Multilingualism in Foreign and Second Language Context	128
Introduction	128
<i>Limitation and Definition of Concepts</i>	129
Mother Tongue, Native Language, First Language: What Else?	130
Bilingual or Multilingual Speakers and Language Use	134
<i>Spoken or Written Bilingualism and Multilingualism</i>	136
Competence, Performance	139
<i>Definition of the Concept: from Chomsky to Gardner</i>	139
<i>Competence and Performance vs Competence-in-Performance</i>	150
Balanced or Perfect Bilingualism Versus Semilingualism	148
Foreign Language Acquisition and Intelligence	163
Standard Form in Foreign and Second Language Classrooms	169
How Representative and Objective are Traditional Test Instruments	162
Summary	166

General Conclusion	169
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Recommendation	173
-----------------------	-----

Addenda	175
<i>Appendix A</i>	175
<i>Appendix B</i>	198
<i>Appendix C</i>	209
References	213

List of Tables and Figures

Table 1	23
Table 2	24
Table 3	29
Table 4	30
Table 5	62
Table 6	64
Table 7	65
Table 8	67
Table 9	83
Table 10	85
Table 11	87
Table 12	89
Table 13	90
Table 14	91
Table 15	94
Table 16	95
Table 17	97
Table 18	98
Table 19	99
Table 20	100
Table 21	143
Table 22	144
Table 23	153
Table 24	160

Chapter 1

General Introduction

Our modern society is characterized by global migration and cross-border mobility. Populations keep mixing and people are becoming aware of the importance of international languages. In the past decades, schools have been emphasizing the internationalization of education and, thus, the encouragement of language training. As a result, many regional and international exchange programs have emerged. Through academic partnerships such as Erasmus, Leonardo, or government-sponsored programs and various other college agreement schemes, a lot of students have the opportunity either to learn new languages in their home countries, or to choose the option to go into the target environment. Worldwide, there is a momentous increase in the number of students¹ learning an additional language (L2). This can be a foreign language (FL) or a second language (SL)². Some of these learners have multi-linguistic backgrounds and bring a wealth of prior language learning experience into the classroom. As a result, language training has been changing significantly.

Main Paradigms in Second Language Acquisition and Learning

The multi-ethnic demographic in student populations has resulted in more attention being paid to the imperative of training the concerned young people efficiently. This new reality necessitates a revision of

¹ Europe in figures: Eurostat yearbook 2012; Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2012 (206-208)

² In the English-speaking environment, the terms second language and foreign language are commonly used synonymously to refer to the use or study of a language by speakers with a different native language. In German speaking context, there is still a demarcation between „Deutsch als Fremdsprache“: DaF (German as a foreign language) referring to the use or study of German by speakers with a different native language and „Deutsch als Zweitsprache“: DaZ (German as a second language), referring to the learning of a language that is not the native language of the speaker, but is the linguistic medium of the environment of that person or the language of one of the speaker's parents.

traditional curricula and methodologies in the field of language learning. During the past century, a noticeable paradigm shift has occurred in the L2 classroom (Cohen, 2005; Richards and Rogers, 2001). The most meaningful changes are:

- Reproductive learning versus productive learning

The assessment of learners was previously concerned with learners' ability to memorize and replicate subject content; thus leaving little room for the production of knowledge.

- Behaviorism versus constructivism

Behaviorists believe that learning has occurred only when it leads to a change in the behavior of an individual, whereas constructivists emphasize the achievement of learning and construction of meanings by learners and through learners.

- Teacher-centered versus learner-centered

This school advocates a shift from the view that the language instructor should remain the main source of knowledge and information for learners, whose needs and learning style(s) are mostly neglected.

- Teaching versus learning facilitation

According to this view, the teacher or instructor should facilitate the transfer or delivery of contents and knowledge or assist students in that process.

Recent developments and trends in education have indicated that social constructivism, has emerged as the most significant paradigm in the social sciences (cf. Richards and Rogers 2001). It is also widely advocated by specialists in contemporary language education. Constructivism actually focuses on experiential learning, which integrates real life experience through innovative procedures and combines new knowledge with existing knowledge. This paradigm motivates different types of learners and self-directed learning. It

valorizes an educational concept inspired by emotional and social life experiences. Constructivism obviously influenced the Theory of Multiple Intelligences (MI), which will remain one of the central foci of this work. H. Gardner, in his model, promotes a creative and innovative technique which draws upon the visual/spatial, musical/rhythmic, bodily/kinesthetic, verbal/linguistic, logical/mathematical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic intelligences of learners.

Currently, the new challenge for language teachers is to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse population of learners, to stimulate the potential in students, since every human being is unique. Curricula, thus, need to place emphasis on interpersonal and affective values, attitudes, emotions of, and interaction with learners. Beyond linguistics and grammar, new approaches have to consider sociological and anthropological aspects of learners' needs and learners' personalities as well. Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf³ were among the first to argue that language is not an isolated phenomenon and that speech acts mostly occur in situations. In their theory of linguistic relativity, they articulate the idea that different cultural concepts influence our subjective perception and, therefore, our interpretation of related experiences that we reflect on through speech. According to Sapir:

“Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society. It is quite an illusion to imagine that one adjusts to reality essentially without the use of language and that language is merely an incidental means of solving specific problems of communication or reflection. The fact of the matter is that the 'real world' is to a large extent unconsciously built upon the language habits of the group. No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached... We see and hear and otherwise experience very largely as we do because the language habits of our community predispose certain choices of interpretation.” (Sapir, 1958: 69)

³ Edward Sapir, Benjamin Lee Whorf and Wilhelm von Humboldt have also been credited as originators of the linguistic relativity hypothesis.

Thus, speakers who grow up with different linguistic backgrounds are supposed to think in divergent ways. As a matter of fact, people involved in speech interactions do not hold similar perceptions of the world, and are likely to approach the learning of a new language with different sensibilities.

Shifting Emphasis and Current Trends

New orientations in social psychology have compelled scholars to propose a redefinition of objectives and research methods used in foreign and second language (L2) teaching. Gardner and Lambert (1972) and Gardner (1985) have formulated an educational model of L2 learning that rests upon socio-psychological variables. The paradigm draws on socio-ethnological fields like discourse analysis, ethnology and sociology, among others, and links motivation to language learning. In the same vein, cognitivists, for instance, suggest that special consideration should be given to socio-psychological phenomena such as the attitudes and beliefs of learners in the learning process (Kaplan, 2002; Nunan, 1999; Krashen, 1990). The cognitivists stress the imperative for language trainers to develop not only grammatical, linguistic and phonological, but also intercultural and communicative competence in target languages (Cohen, 2005; Norton, 2000). Likewise, the assumption that affective and behavioral factors such as beliefs and expectations can generate motivation and, therefore, play a seminal role in foreign or second language learning processes has been corroborated by new approaches to cultural psychology (Block, 2007; Richards and Schmidt, 2002).

In addition, since language does exist in society and is transmitted in a context, it also plays a role in identity development. According to Brown (2000), our "self-identity is inextricably bound up with our language, for it is in the communicative process, the process of sending out messages and having them 'bounced' back that such

identities are confirmed, shaped, and reshaped" (Brown, 2000: 64). He argues that the process of learning a foreign or second language involves a shift in learners' self-identity. Brown believes that L2 learning success rests partly upon a learner's predisposition to go through the subsequent emotional stages he or she will come across during the language training process. This implies that the acquisition of a new language also means acquiring the culture of the learned language. All these considerations require teachers to recognize the needs of adult learners, identify effective instructional methods, develop suitable approaches, and train the students to become active in the learning process. In other words, the aim of language training is not only to help learners succeed in school, but also and above all to prepare them to communicate in the target environment.

Background and Purpose of the Study

In the field of education, experts in the past have in the past adopted a purely linguistic perspective on the analysis of either foreign or second language acquisition (Gass and Schachter, 1989; Chomsky, 1975). In their review, Krashen, Scarcella, and Long (1982) indicate that young language learners take a little longer than adults to acquire new morphosyntactic rules. However, the former eventually outperform the latter. In the 1960s, language educators stressed the importance of context in language training. This period, therefore, witnessed culture simulations in the classroom and the birth of the first language exchange programs. The 1970s were marked by a renewed focus on cognitive language instruction. In the decades thereafter, there has been more awareness on language and context. This led to the development of immersion programs and an increase in opportunities to study abroad, the aim of which was to put the learner into the actual cultural context (Moos and Trickett, 1987; Richards and Rodgers 2001). Moreover, evidence from methods, courses and theoretical writings recommended a shift from teaching that was dominated by grammar

instruction. Yet, a scrutiny of these methods indicates that the practice of teaching in L2 has only changed little over the past decades and changes in methodology have occurred with a certain frequency (Howatt and Widdowson, 2004). As Latin has still been the model used to study other languages since the 19th century (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 3), language training has basically focused on translation and grammar acquisition (Larsen-Freeman 2000:17); oral communication and reading are mainly presented through guided exercises and repetition of sentences. Hence, it is my belief that by doing so, L2 instruction models have limited themselves to only describing grammar, phonetics and neglected the individual in context.

This study locates itself within the psycholinguistic and ethnographic perspectives to language acquisition. It adopts an approach which draws on constructivist⁴ perspectives and entails using students' feedback as its starting point. The cognitivist learning epistemology is mainly derived from the ideas of Piaget⁵ and Vygotsky⁶. In this view, knowledge and reality do not have an objective absolute value. The learner interprets and constructs reality based on his own experiences and interactions with the environment (Bourdieu, 1991). Learners as individuals or within a social group try to understand and give meaning to their experiences. So, for cognitivists, learning is not a fixed construct; it is rather an active process and could engender various outcomes. It originates within students, is monitored by students and underlies some mental mechanisms. Furthermore, for the realization of learning to take place, other psychological factors such as beliefs, emotion and motivation also play an important role in the complex ways in which learners negotiate constructions of knowledge (Block, 2007).

Traditionally, emotion and subsequently motivation have been considered as cognitive entities, and are commonly analyzed through

⁴ Constructivism analyses the internal process of learning and its developmental stages.

⁵ McLeod, S. A. (2009). *Jean Piaget Cognitive Theory*. Retrieved from <http://www.simplypsychology.org/piaget.html> (March 24, 2009)

⁶ McLeod, S. A. (2007). Vygotsky. Retrieved from <http://www.simplypsychology.org/vygotsky.html> (March 24, 2009)

quantitative tests designed for the measurement of psychological variables (Ellis, 2008). Bearing in mind the conviction that these variables are above all a learner-internal entity. The survey uses inputs and background information from respondents to understand some patterns of behavior in language acquisition mechanisms. The investigation has sought to get some clues on learners' perception about methodology. It attempts to determine if there is a relationship between L2 learners, their beliefs, emotion and identity constructions. The hypothesis of this study, with only isolated exceptions, strongly indicated that socio-psychological variables may exert either a direct, indirect, positive or negative influence on L2 learning and training.

Objectives and Research Questions

This study sets out to investigate the role of emotion and cultural identity in the learning and acquisition of foreign languages. By conducting an ethnographic, empirical and comparative study, the objectives are to:

- explore learners' perceptions of how psychological variables, especially beliefs and emotions, could affect students' attitudes to foreign and second language learning in the classroom
- look into the influence of mental representations, motivation and emotions on the process of acquiring a foreign and a second language
- investigate the correlations between L2 acquisition, the choice and use of language in context and identity development.

In order to arrive at some conclusions, I will elaborate on what students regard as important to them and what they report as their opinions and beliefs. Hereafter, effort will be made to expose the relationship between their beliefs, emotions and types of motivation. I will hypothesize how these constructs can facilitate the development of language learning or how they can hinder this process. Then, I will

question the common views on bilingualism and try to find out which aspects of the language acquisition phenomenon are considered to be most important, especially by populations living in societies marked by orality.

Data Collection and Methodology

The study will be settled within the social constructivist framework⁷. Given the complexity of these phenomena, I have adopted a mixed-method study which employs both qualitative and quantitative approaches. I have adopted an approach that moves away from inflexible psychometric studies, upon which the main research framework has rested since the 1950s (H. Gardner 1999). I believe that obtaining the opinions of learners about their preferences and expectations could inform more objectively and be fundamental in improving curricula that will be better adapted to students' needs. This research, therefore, looks into some affective constructs mainly from the perspectives of language students. Besides, I have given greater priority to an ethnographic case study which embraces the survey method. Likewise, I have also attempted to expose some evidences encountered in my short history of language teaching and to generate a reflection based on opinions provided by students. The research was carried out among 350 young and adult language course attendants in Germany and in Benin Republic. Two surveys were conducted between the years 2004 and 2006 (see: Appendix A) and thereafter from 2007 to 2011 (see: Appendix B). The study is partly of a descriptive-explanatory nature. The main criteria for the choice of participants was that they were mostly my students during the periods mentioned and learned German, French or English as study requirement or as additional language or languages. Since the focus of this undertaking is to concentrate on perceptions, beliefs and emotions, the age, gender, field of study of participants were not calculated as influencing variables or of

⁷ Constructivists generally follow a qualitative research model rather than a quantitative approach.

concern in the investigation. Data for this study were gathered through questionnaires (see Appendixes A & B).

My method is based on various means such as indirect measurement, use of closed and open questions. This choice allows participants to give multiple interpretations of the phenomena. The assessment instruments used in this evaluation were partially drawn from works by Onwuegbuzie et al. (2001), Gao, Cheng and Zhao (2007), Cohen et al. (2007) and based on principles outlined by Gass and Schachter (1989) and King (2008). The survey employed a five-point Likert scale⁸ as its main assessment tool. The first wave of questionnaires devised in English, French and German was sent to a cross-population of 200 persons. A total of 126 answers were received from respondents. The social backgrounds of these persons range from school and university students to teachers and scholars on the one hand, and from graduates to professionals on the other hand.

The second set of investigations was conducted among 150 students in Germany. 122 answers came back. The majority of the respondents consisted of ERASMUS⁹ program and international students enrolled in different faculties at the University of Mainz and at the EBS Universität für Wirtschaft und Recht¹⁰ in Greater Frankfurt. The collected answers to the questionnaires are partially summarized in the section "Addenda". Selected abstracts will appear, if necessary, as an illustration or explanation of some paradigms in subsequent chapters. A section of the questionnaire covers aspects such as place and duration of language acquisition and context of use. It evaluates an array of factors such as reasons for the choice of the L2 and learners' opinions about language learning or acquisition experience.

The study thereafter treats beliefs, self-perception, emotions and motivation on the one hand and the different strategies, the emotional

⁸ A subjective scoring system that allows a person being surveyed to quantify likes and preferences on a 5-point scale, with 1 being the least important, relevant, interesting, and 5 being most excellent, important, etc , or 1 equal to "strongly disagree" and 5 equal to "strongly agree."

⁹ The ERASMUS program was established in 1987 and forms a major part of the European Union Lifelong Learning Program 2007–2013. It is the operational framework for the European Commission's initiatives in higher education. A high percentage of students spend one or two semesters abroad.

¹⁰ Former European Business School.

variables at stake and their impacts on language acquisition on the other hand. The survey discusses the complexity or possible correlation between emotion, performance and achievement in L2. It attempts to determine if there is a link between L2, motivation and self-identity construction .

The questionnaires (see appendixes A and B) were usually distributed at the end of the semester and partly sent via e-mail. Participants were assured that their identities would at no point be disclosed. During the survey and the evaluation, some questions were slightly modified. In order to comprehend students' experiences and elucidate the research questions throughout this work, the collected responses will be provided analytically. Due to the fact that most affective variables are not available for direct observation, I will locate some verbatim statements within the framework of psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, neurolinguistics, and psychology. In addition, respondents' vivid testimonies will be interpreted in the light of relevant literatures and sometimes compared with my personal experiences.

My aim is not to provide an expert account on the topic of L2 or conduct an in-depth linguistic and pedagogic research. Yet, the findings are especially interesting, since they do not only unveil some of the perceptions held by language learners as regards the role of teachers, but also shed light on the impact of these perceptions on the process of language learning. I have realized that a deeper consideration should be given to learners' opinions and outside-classroom factors in formal language training. Some of my results might be criticized given the relatively small number of participants and the short duration of the research. I am also aware that some themes could have a more emotional weight, and this might not conform to formal requirements of scientific research. Nonetheless, it is my hope that the results will open up new paths for discussion and thus enable us to rethink how language teachers should best link theory to practical application.

Organization and Overview of the Chapters

The work consists of five chapters. In the first, I present the background of the study, the data collection and the method used in the survey.

Chapter two discusses participants' language acquisition and learning experiences. Students elaborate on the reasons that did underlie their choice of a foreign or second language. I look critically into concepts such as foreign language, second language, language acquisition and language learning. Then I discuss the Theory of Multiple Intelligences and its application. I try to analyze the way Howard Gardner's idea promotes an extension of traditional language teaching models.

Chapter three presents, among other things, the result of a fieldwork conducted in Benin Republic. It describes an attempt to implement the Theory of Multiple Intelligences in the classroom. I analyze some course books in L2 and try to investigate their contents, distribution of tasks and cultural relevance. This chapter includes a discussion on the question whether there is a universal didactic theory for in L2.

Chapter four elaborates on the roles of affective and cultural factors in foreign and second language training contexts. One of the major intentions was to understand, from learners' perspectives, how the learners' beliefs and perceptions could influence individual emotions and motivations. The work also analyzes the link between beliefs and certain types of emotion. It demonstrates how psychological variables impact on identity construction and personality development in the language learning process.

In chapter five, I discuss language acquisition in correlation with intelligence. In that respect, I also elaborate on the issue of competence, performance and standard and look at traditional testing models in connection with Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences.

Before moving into the core of the topic, I would like to underline that discussing the phenomenon of language acquisition and language contact is not an easy task. Given the fact that psychological variables are fluid, some effects are or appear to be indirect rather than direct. The work sometimes reveals overlapping sections as a result of contending views in the field. One of the crucial difficulties is the problem of language differentiation and its geographical repartition in the African multilingual context. As a solution, I primarily try to concentrate on sub-Saharan Africa and illustrate my work with examples from that part of the continent. For any other overview of international languages, I essentially restrict my investigation to the international languages I have been teaching. These are English, German and French. The term additional language (L2) will be used to denote a foreign language (FL), a second language (SL) or both, as well as any other language which has been acquired or learned by an individual.

Chapter 2

Didactics of Foreign and Second Language Teaching and Learning

Introduction

Globally, the educational system is undergoing rapid changes in order to meet current requirements and challenges in adult education. The field of both foreign and second language (L2) teaching and learning has been gaining considerable attention and there is an increasing belief among language specialists that traditional methods and approaches can no longer effectively facilitate language acquisition and learning. In the last few decades, many scholars have been calling for a revision of didactic models of learning. Professionals plead for innovative approaches in language institutions. Results of recent researches (Ellis, 1997; Norton, 2000; Block, 2007) reveal that adequate language learning is an active process that engages both linguistic and non-linguistic behaviour of subjects and requires a lot of individual effort. This view has been echoed by cognitivists who also expressed the need for the inclusion of "culture" in language teaching courseware, methods and curricula. Prominent advocates here (Gass, 1988; Lantolf, 2002) suggest, that learners should be exposed directly or indirectly to the target environment and language in order to generate positive results. They propound that acquisition and learning could generate emotion and a form of identity development that support the process of foreign and second language in adult training (Moje and Luke, 2009).

In this chapter, I will start by defining the concepts of foreign language (FL) and second language (SL) acquisition and learning with regard to English, German and French, which are the main languages considered in this work. This choice is motivated by the fact that the

above-mentioned mediums represent the modern languages I have been teaching for a few years at secondary and tertiary institutions in Benin and in Germany. As a matter of fact, I was able to conduct most of my surveys in the aforementioned two countries and believe that the data gathered will offer a good basis for the comparisons to be used throughout this paper. I will examine language acquisition strategies used by adults in their learning processes and focus on common teaching methods. Then I will observe the way these instructional approaches fit into the theory of Multiple Intelligences (MI), an idea put forward by the renowned Harvard American psychologist Howard Gardner¹. The aim here is to consider how MI influences learning and teaching of FL. I will mainly investigate the connection between MI and its practical application in the field of L2 in order to understand the reasons why this theory, favored by many teachers, still generates passionate discussions in the light of its application.

Foreign and Second Languages

In an attempt to set some parameters, I will begin by exploring the terms “Foreign Language” and “Second Language” with regard to English, German and French, which are the main languages considered in this work. Quoting from Robinson and Ellis, Second language (SL) learning refers to the

“learning of a language other than one’s first language that takes place in a geographical/sociological context where the target language is spoken.” As far as foreign language (FL) is concerned, it is used to refer to the learning of a language other than one’s first language that takes place in a geographical/sociological context where the target language is not spoken.” (Robinson and Ellis, 2008)

¹ American developmental psychologist and director of Project Zero at Harvard Graduate School of Education; in 2011, Howard Gardner won the Prince of Asturias Award in the Social Sciences.

As Gass explains,

“Foreign Language is generally differentiated from second language in that the former refers to the learning of a nonnative language in the environment of one’s native language (e.g. French speakers learning English in France [EFL] or Spanish speakers learning French in Spain, Argentina, or Mexico [FFL]. This is commonly done within the context of the classroom. Second language, on the other hand, generally refers to the learning of a nonnative language in the environment in which that language is spoken (e.g., German speakers learning Japanese in Japan [JSL] or Punjabi speakers learning English in the United Kingdom [ESL.]. This may or may not take place in a classroom setting. The important point is that learning in a second language environment takes place with considerable access to speakers of the language being learned, whereas learning in a foreign language environment usually does not.” (Gass, 2013: 4-5)

Foreign Language and Second Language Revisited

The definitions of FL and SL provide also some nuances depending on regions, countries and contexts of usage. For instance, one will notice that English as a second language (ESL) is widely used in North America, with the term English for Speakers of Other Language (ESOL) used preferably in the UK and Ireland. However, when we critically look at these characterizations, they denote an oversimplification of the two concepts. Richards and Schmidt (2002: 206) provide a wider definition which better reflects the reality of language in society. They describe a foreign language as a native language to another country. It denotes a language not widely spoken in the country of origin of the person using it. As such, it is not the native language of a vast majority of people in that region, neither the official language of education, nor the medium used extensively for communication in administration, business and media etc. That means, a French lady living in Germany can consider German as a foreign language to her. The German language on the other hand represents a second language for a majority of Turkish people born living in Germany. Likewise, French is a second language in Benin, Ivory Coast

and part of Cameroon. English has the same position in Nigeria and part of Cameroon² as well. They are not the native tongues of the local populations. In such multilingual environments, children acquire more than one language from early childhood on and have commonly more than one mother tongue. According to Richards and Schmidt (2002: 472), a second language is

“in a broad sense, any language learned after one has learned one's native language but when contrasted with foreign language, the term refers more narrowly to a language that plays a major role in a particular country or region though it may not be the first language of many people who use it.”

This view is also emphasized by David Crystal (2011, 2003), for whom a second language is a medium other than one's mother-tongue, but used widely in formal contexts such as in education and government matters. In opposition, foreign languages are generally learned in formal institutions such as school for the purpose of communicating with speakers of the concerned language or in order to study in the target country or read literature in the original language.

Foreign Language and Second Language Context

As we have discussed, the nature of the distinction between the two terms is fluid. Recently, the differentiation between “second language” and “foreign language” has moved from linguistic aspects to a more geographical connotation. Yet, the distinction between the two terms is not universally recognised, especially not in the USA (Crystal: 2011, 266). Very often, emphasis has been put on whether people learn a non-native language with the intention to use it in an environment where it is a second language or whether they learn a non-native language used within a speech community to which the denomination

² Cameroon is one of the very few countries in Africa with more than one official language. They are English and French. More than 80% of the population speaks French. (See : *Organisation internationale de la Francophonie : La langue française dans le monde en 2010*, Nathan.)

“foreign language” thus applies. Therefore, “second language situation” and “foreign language situation” denote two contexts of learning or use rather than two distinct languages. Both forms differ from first language, which we have discussed previously. In most cases, a “second language” has an official status or is one of two or more official mediums within a country, whereas a foreign language has no such a status for the speaker. Most people learn foreign languages for the purpose of going abroad, communicating with natives of that language, studying or conducting scientific works. (Crystal: 2011, 266).

Today in our worldwide multi-ethnic language learning and teaching contexts, this opposition has been vehemently challenged (cf. Hackert, 2012). For instance, let us consider French in Côte d’Ivoire. It has become a living language spoken by 75 % of the population³ and in the largest city Abidjan, the figure rises up to 99%. Though it should be “the second language” of most people, French has advanced to a lingua franca and some kids learn this form from early childhood. Given this fact, do we now have to contrast French as official language with French as lingua franca? Many people acquire the latter first and often better than their ethnic languages or “standard French.” So, does “standard French” still remain the second language for these speakers, which suggests de facto that the lingua franca has become their first language? My intention is not to create any confusion, but help shed light on nuances and finesse which often arise in language contact situations.

In order to avoid repetition, I will in the subsequent chapters, frequently use alternative terms such as Source Language (SL), Target Language (TL), Recipient Language (RL) and L2. Commonly, the abbreviation “L2” denotes any languages learned after one’s first language or L1. It is thus any additional language, either second or foreign language, or it refers to both as well. Although L2 is often termed second language, the concept has a purely denominative

³ *Organisation internationale de la Francophonie : La langue française dans le monde en 2010*, Nathan.

function and can indicate the learning of second, or even per extension, of a third, fifth, twelfth or subsequent languages.

Language Acquisition, Learning and Participation

In continuation of what preceded, we need to further elaborate on the terms acquisition and learning and put them into the framework within which they will be used throughout this work. Although there is no agreed definition, the usage of both terms goes back to such works as Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991) and Ellis (1994).

In the contemporary discourse about second language and foreign language, learning and acquisition characterize two ways of developing language. In adult education - as my focus is not on that of children - the term "acquisition" is commonly used. It appears to be widely accepted as a description of both learning and acquisition. However, there are some notable distinctions.

Commonly, acquisition is considered a natural, unconscious process that is "identified" as such by learners. This indicates that there is no previous but, very little information and knowledge in the person's mind and he or she develops the language in a given environment by interacting with the native speakers of that language. The implication here is that knowledge of the target language is not taught and is to be acquired implicitly and intuitively. Thus, acquisition is considered to be a subconscious and natural process of assimilation, just as a child does.

In contrast, learning is regarded as a conscious effort by language learners, to assimilate the structures and rules of the new language logically and proceed by error self-correction, all this with the conscious involvement of their minds. It is a teachable process, somewhat artificial and possibly based on instruction and study. Learning is supposed to take place mostly in formal institutions, mainly classroom contexts, and developed by means of intellectual and conscious mechanisms. In this process learners mostly use their cognitive skills and intellectual abilities to absorb grammatical or linguistic rules, to generate logical

analogy, to arrive at derivations and deductions, among other things. Following these distinctions, some questions arise and the answers should be left to the reader: Can we assume that learning mostly happens in foreign language contexts and that acquisition is likely to solely occur in second language settings? Do we believe that the conscious cognitive processes and the subconscious acquisition procedures are mutually exclusive and do not relate to each other; nor are they compatible? Let us say, for instance, can we really infer which of the two comes first in adult training? Does the process of learning precede acquisition or vice versa? Are they somehow influenced by the nature of our emotions? Where do we set the boundaries between both of them? Do they have any effect on learners' identities?

Anyone who has ever been exposed to a foreign or a second language would probably admit that there is some connection between the two concepts; that these are two dynamic processes that develop through time and, as a matter of fact, are actually interrelated in one way or the other. What these two concepts have in common becomes more apparent when I illustrate the situation with my own experience. I grew up in Benin, studied briefly at a Nigerian university before graduating in Germany. In preparation for my studies, I attended English and German classes respectively and, in terms of language acquisition, benefited from the target environments. On hindsight, I cannot recall differentiating the moments of conscious language learning and, when I was involved in the unconscious process again. In the latter, in fact, what could be seen initially as an unconscious process would often alert my attention on the rules or structures some time later and I would review and reflect again on what was first considered as unconscious assimilation.

All that said, acquisition can take place in the case of FL and learning can take place in the case of SL learning. For example, a student learning a foreign language directly in a monolingual target language environment is exposed to both processes. When foreign language learners who do not live in the natural surroundings of a language acquire some aspects by listening to foreign programs or

through computer-assisted language learning programs, then acquisition also occurs. This clearly indicates that the line of separation between both concepts is still fuzzy and may vary a lot. Nevertheless, some people go abroad for a short stay, learn a relevant target language for their professional needs, show no interest in building contacts with the natives of those places or restrict themselves mostly to their source languages or communities. I can illustrate by referring to a certain category of international students who go on exchange programs, prefer using their native languages rather than the target one, and mostly remain among themselves. In this case, how can we account for the acquisition process? Are these students just learning the said languages because they attend language classes at university or rather going through language acquisition processes because they spend months or years in the target environment? How can language flow take place when learners seldom use the target language?

Trying to find out whether any form of acquisition is conceivable without any teaching and intellectual reflection taking place, psychologists hold the view that no learning occurs without attention. This means that we have to be conscious of this process. However, this awareness at a given point of time does not necessarily guarantee that we assimilate the object of our attention, or rather not. We can even admit that this distinction may apply to grammar and linguistic rules. But yet, how is conscious and unconscious learning applicable to socio-communicative knowledge in a new language? What do we have to say about context and other extra- and non-linguistic elements that are part of language and influence meaning? People also use non-verbal communication such as the movements of hands, arms, and fingers. Human beings sometimes resort to a multitude of gestures to explain, emphasize or supplement spoken words. Some people use those signs or symbols far more than others. Language training is much more than using the correct grammatical form, terminology or just mastering the syntactic rules (Kramsch, 2008; Jarvis and Pavlenko, 2008). L2 process is a socialization model which suggests that meanings are handled in and modified through an interpretative process used by the person

when deciphering the “things” he or she encounters (Mead, 1934; Skinner et al., 2007). For instance, nodding or tilting, particularly leaning or moving the head up and down, denotes a positive answer in Western Europe, especially a consent, whereas it has the opposite meaning in some parts of Eastern Europe, like in Bulgaria. So, do we learn or acquire these features? We can also use facial expressions to show emotional states or reactions to messages (Verderber and Verderber, 2008: 81-83). Emotions are considered to be universal to all cultures. People commonly use a system of typed symbols and a pictorial representation known as emoticons to express their different emotional states, attitudes, moods and intended humor (Walter and Parks, 2002). Occasionally, I also wonder why learners show command of some rules during the first lessons, or when we first introduce new topics, but fail to display the same abilities at the next level. Should we assume that students get confused or that these rules are not correct just because the contexts are not the same anymore? Some explanations to these issues have been put forward by Krashen, who contrasted “acquired knowledge” and “learnt knowledge” to describe things students sometimes know without being aware of that, and things they recognize but are unable to explain. Krashen uses “Monitoring” to refer to the way the learner uses “learnt” knowledge to improve naturally “acquired” knowledge. According to his theory, “acquired” and “learnt” knowledge are preserved as separate entities in the brain, and therefore learning cannot be turned into acquisition.

Since the 1950s, there has been an expanding conception on how subjects acquire new languages. Multidisciplinary works that rest upon a broad premise of socio-cultural disciplines including education, linguistics, psychology, and sociology have emerged and advocated innovative instructional approaches. Early investigations by Vygotsky (1962, 1978) strongly indicated that language acquisition and learning are not solely acts of absorbing grammar or new concepts in order to store them in the long-term memory. Recent findings (Norton, 2000; Block, 2007) suggested that L2 didactics should be geared toward developing ability and social competence between adult learners and

target cultures. Teaching models need to take into account the broad social, cultural, and historical trends in society. While Ramirez (1995) insisted on the dynamic nature of language, Kramsch (2000, 2004) put more emphasis on the relationship between mind, language, communication and culture. Generally, cognitivists have been calling for new approaches to L2 learning. The major foundation for these perspectives has been laid by Krashen (1981, 1982, 1985). In his set of interrelated hypotheses about L2 acquisition, he contended that success in foreign and second language is linked to many interrelated factors of an affective, psychological and environmental nature, among others. The increasing importance of such theoretical perspectives was also examined by Kaplan (2002), who emphasized that learning and acquisition in L2 are not solely about the mastery of linguistic systems, but also the sum of students' personal and cultural beliefs about language learning, their efforts, the status of the target language, the process and context of language learning. This view was corroborated by Norton (2000), Pavlenko and Blackledge (2003), and Block (2007), who have advocated the importance of intercultural competence in early stages of L2. According to Atkinson (2002: 526), foreign language learning and acquisition should be seen as active processes or as "situated, integrated, socio-cognitive processes." Such models also highlight the correlation between previous education and personal experiences, as the latter are located in our long-term memory and should be recalled through the means of some specific class activities. In addition, effort in language learning depends on the degree of students' motivation, which in turn affects their performance and plays a crucial role in learners' identity development too. In the meantime, cognitive theories of learning try to understand the mechanisms that control acquisition and competence in a learner's mind. However, this specific aspect of language teaching is not going to be our main concern in this paper.

All these researches stress the conditional effects between learners' exposure, their active participation in target communities and effective language training. The metaphor "Participation" thus,

emphasizes communicative competence in opposition to the traditional learning of correct utterances. Our survey attempted to obtain the opinions of students about acquisition, learning and participation (see Appendix B), confirmed that the three processes are not mutually exclusive and should be viewed not in a simple linear dimension, but rather in a broader context.

To sum up, I will use acquisition and learning not in an isolated way. Whichever I choose, these concepts seem always connected to each other. I will, therefore, employ them interchangeably with a focus on languages and society. I will endeavour to adopt a framework in the line of most cognitivists, who emphasize the contextual occurrence and logical connection of the two notions with participation. The reason is that both of them go together and, in my opinion, they just occur without being influenced most of the time neither by any of our actions nor by our consciousness. Where there is conscious language learning, there is theoretically also an unconscious process. Therefore, any person learning a foreign or second language in its natural or formal context undergoes a “hidden” acquisition process.

Considering the table below, a vast majority of respondents wish not only a good “working atmosphere” in the classroom but also the “opportunity to practice their skills” (see table 1 below).

Rate the statements below: 25- The following aspects are important in a language class:	Very	Neither /nor	Not at all
The working atmosphere	102	12	0
Having discussions on actual topics	91	21	4
Having the opportunity to practice my skills	94	12	0
Interaction between a small group and the whole group	89	24	2
The teacher's attitude to the target language	105	8	4

Table 1: (Adapted from Gao Y., Cheng Y. and Zhao Y., 2007; Onwuegbuzie and DaRos-Voseles, 2001)

The constructivist and cognitivist approaches to foreign and second language learning suggest new models and curricula that should be based on innovative courseware and involved students' participation. The theorists argue that a substantial amount of knowledge, common cultural heritage or background pre-exists in most learners and should be reactivated through adequate pedagogical tools. For Krashen, acquisition can also occur in a formal context if a whole variety of activities is offered in the classroom. Most respondents acknowledge that this connection between language learning and in-context use is vital. This opinion is corroborated further by their desire to acquire Linguistic explanations and relevance of new terms on the one hand, and develop contextual examples of new concepts through interactions, on the other (see table 2 below).

Rate the statements below: <i>31 - I like receiving from the teacher:</i>	<i>strongly agree</i>	<i>strongly disagree</i>
Knowledge about non-standard language and idioms	87	23
Linguistic explanations and relevance of new terms	102	11
Contextual examples of new concepts	101	11
Encouragement and recognition for my performance	99	12
Tips and advice to help me reach my goals and high standards	103	6

Table 2: (Adapted from Gao Y., Cheng Y. and Zhao Y., 2007; Onwuegbuzie and DaRos-Voseles, 2001)

Krashen believes that students have to receive "enough comprehensible input," which should allow speech patterns to flow easily and "emerge" intuitively (1985: 65). He proposes the Affective Filter Hypothesis and reaffirms that psychological variables affect acquisition in various ways. He contends that the best acquisition occurs in environments with little resentment towards the target language (TL) and when defensiveness is absent. This is echoed by

Pavlenko and Lantolf (2000), who advocate that foreign and second languages should be learned not only for sets or rules. Rather, they should also provide students with adequate tools and the ability to develop social competence to mediate between self and target culture and allow them to switch between their functional heritage and foreign language. Nowadays, "Participation" has become a common metaphor which denotes a new didactics that emphasizes personal efforts and stresses the role of intercultural communication as effective method in language class. Participation is concerned with engagement in social and cultural activities with the target community and native speakers. Alternatively, it is to encourage the use of the modern tools such as internet platforms in order to stimulate the interest of learner, and offer a new view-point in the theory of language learning. However, participation should not be considered as a replacement for learning and acquisition, but rather perceived as their logical extension. Nor should it be viewed as more relevant than acquisition and learning in language training (Pavlenko and Lantolf, 2000). Since the distinction is unclear, the three situations acquisition-learning-participation should be considered as a continuum.

Generally, a second language learner is exposed to the target language both inside and outside the classroom. He or she is able to put to practice what is learned. This contact to the target environment of foreign language learners can, nowadays, also be performed through the new information technology, for instance the internet, multimedia tools as well as through any other interactive features for audio recordings or spoken and written exercises. As a global network, these technological instruments are changing the perception and the way we learn foreign and second languages. Some websites establish new language learning platforms where people can interact and exchange messages on the internet, mostly in a casual way and correct one another. These unprecedented mediums open for users the possibility of avoiding the tedious task of memorizing vocabulary lists and learning grammar rules by heart. Some offer free lessons in the form of quizzes, flashcards, social games, etc. The interactional exchange with native

speakers or experimented language teachers enable learners to become aware of how the language is really used and discover the contextually appropriate use of words, or even the usage of slang expressions. They can become familiar with various language registers, especially those aspects they either very often miss in the classroom context or rarely find in textbooks⁴. With this opportunity, learners can increase their self-confidence and develop new attitudes to the target language.

Approach, Method and Strategies

Other important factors used to sustain language acquisition, learning and participation correlatively are "approach", "method" and "strategies" (Richards, 2001). Since all play a crucial role in the acquisition and learning process, they should be identified at the onset in order to make FL and SL teaching and learning more interesting.

Referring to Larsen-Freeman (2000) and Richards and Rodgers (2001), the terms approach, method and technique stand in hierarchical relation, though they are sometimes used erroneously in literature. An approach denotes a set of assumptions about the nature of language and language learning, but does not give any information as to how we implement them into the classroom setting. Approaches can be a particular grammar or a linguistic theory in the field.

There are three principal "approaches": according to Richards and Rodgers (2001: 259):

⁴ The most popular websites are among others: Livemocha, UsingEnglish.com, Englishcafe.com, babbel.com, Englishbaby.com (<http://www.websiteslike.org/site/englishcafe.com>; <http://livemocha.com/pages/press/from-the-new-york-times-learning-a-language-from-an-expert-on-the-web/>: Accessed on 13 November 2010)

- The structural view represents language as a system of grammar and linguistic structures which have various codes that we translate into meaning.
- The functional view considers language as a channel through which we express or achieve a certain meaning or specific tasks, such as a request.
- The interactive view treats language as a tool with the purpose to foster social interactions. It entails the ability to move and interact properly with language.

A method represents steps required for presenting a selected approach. It involves both language learners and instructors. As such, it is an instructional synergy of the objectives, carefully chosen contents and the selected tasks to be completed in the teaching or learning process.

Methods are generally subcategorized into structural, functional and interactive methods. The common methods ranged from the oldest: Grammar Translation Method (GTM) through the Audio-lingual Method (ALM) to the contemporary Cooperative Learning (CL), Communicative Approach (CA) and the Task-based language learning (TBLL), also known as task-based language teaching (TBLT).

The choice of methodology and self-imposed activities (Richards and Rogers 2001) can create authenticity for the foreign language classroom. Learning through media (movies, music, etc.) offers one of the most efficient tools to improve listening comprehension, helps to reinforce grammar and other skills. Likewise, movies and music usually contain parts of speech, idioms and many references to contemporary culture, topical aspects of everyday life that do not commonly occur in daily classroom teaching. Various experiments have shown that students learn more effectively through active participation, especially when they invest more effort in the process. The choice of methodology should foster personal interests of the language learners, stimulate their own strategies, motivate them to explore the target culture, and

therefore enable them to acquire both the foreign or second language and the respective culture in their real context.

At this point, I would also like to look at the strategies used by course attendants and which are also denoted as learning techniques. Quoting O'Malley and Chamot (1990: 1), Learning Strategies are "the special thoughts or behaviors that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information." Oxford (1990) views language learning strategies as the specific actions, behaviors, steps, or techniques that students, often intentionally, use to improve their progress in developing language skills. These very specific stratagems can facilitate the internalization, storage, retrieval, or use of the new language. They are mostly conscious efforts by learners themselves, steps and actions they take to ease the process of language learning. In addition, these tricks help learners accomplish an immediate objective and enhance the development of language competence.

Whereas a smaller body of literature has documented the topic, one of the most comprehensive researches done to evaluate the impact of strategies used by students and the extent to which these factors affect performance is *The Study of Second Language Acquisition* published by Rod Ellis (1994). In his work, he equated "strategy" to "some form of activity, mental or behavioral that may occur at a specific stage in the overall process of learning and communicating" (1994:712). Ellis believed that "learning" is the "development of conscious knowledge of an L2 through formal study." He also considered "learning strategy" as "a device or procedure used by learners to develop their interlanguages." Ellis further argues that strategies are of seminal importance to the way learners "acquire and automatize L2 knowledge" and "how they develop specific skills." He eventually distinguishes language learning and skill learning strategies as "the behaviours or actions that learners engage in, in order to learn or use the L2" (Ellis 1994: 712).

Our survey based on learners' perceptions prompts us to assume that language learning strategies appear important for language learners. Participants' responses indicates first that in many

ways foreign and second language trainings should consider appropriate strategies to attain the learning goals and develop learners' metacognitive skills in order to overcome particular language learning difficulties as in item 26 in our next table.

Rate the statements below: 26 - During pair / group work:	<i>strongly agree</i>	<i>N/A: No Answer</i>	<i>strongly disagree</i>
I can use my skills at best	60	48	8
I feel no inhibition and can learn better	66	40	5
I can understand the perspectives of my peers	70	44	3
I can reflect on my own perspective	69	41	2
I try to explain issues until my partners understand me	87	23	5

Table 3: (Adapted from Gao Y., Cheng Y. and Zhao Y., 2007; Onwuegbuzie and DaRos-Voseles, 2001)

Through the answer to the statement “During pair or group work, I try to explain issues until my partners understand me”, we deduce that most students are capable of learning more efficiently through active participation. Caught in the process of acquisition and learning, most learners constantly develop a host of stratagems and mechanisms in order to cope with the challenges posed by the new language in group work, for instance. Such efforts often bring major changes and help them conquer learning barriers. So, we can conclude with Ellis (1994) that the use of appropriate strategies boosts efforts and brings success no matter how difficult learning conditions are or how unfavorable the environment might be, or how scarce the language use or adequate learning materials and teachers are. Additionally, we can infer that the

lack of any strategy or the use of inappropriate ones may be one of the reasons why some students, after so many years of formal learning, are unable to use target languages in real contexts or why they frequently encounter problems with their acquired knowledge and skills.

As we can infer from item 32, respondents favor the conveyance of socio-cultural aspects of FL and SL approaches to language learning, and emphasize the socio-cultural aspects of language acquisition.

Rate the statements below: 32 - Do you believe that:	<i>strongly agree</i>	<i>N/A: No Answer</i>	<i>strongly disagree</i>
Language and culture are closely connected?	104	00	5
It is necessary to be familiar with culture to acquire the language?	71	01	7
Instruction about Intercultural communication is very important?	93	00	15
Socio-cultural knowledge should be incorporated in in-class activities	86	02	21
Students must develop socio-cultural skills in the new language?	90	02	15

Table 4: (Adapted from Gao Y., Cheng Y. and Zhao Y., 2007; Onwuegbuzie and DaRos-Voseles, 2001)

Failure of a teacher to consider effective approaches may lead to subtle conflicts such as frustration, anxiety, and lack of motivation, of participants with the language class. A combination of strategy and methodology facilitates and promotes a conducive learning atmosphere both inside and outside the classroom, build self-confidence in students, and reduce their anxiety.

Experiments in the field of education (Pica et al., 1996) suggest that learners can acquire specific language features only through given strategies and interaction with native speakers. This could also be

achieved through the use of modern technology as well as the use of selected songs, situations and role plays that students perceive to be more "authentic" in mediating elements of culture. Generally, multi-media tools allow and facilitate the access of language in context. In my own case, I acquired some structures, idioms and slang expressions not in the language class, but rather through interaction and practice with modern technologies. This experience greatly impacts my methodology and I strongly recommend the use of video, audio and other contemporary aural resources at earlier stages in FL/SL contexts. This offers one of the best didactic tools to complement traditional skills and expose students to contemporary foreign cultures.

Howard Gardner and the Theory of Multiple Intelligences

In recent years, many scholars have expressed dissatisfaction with the traditional methods in FL teaching. One of the leading voices among them is Howard Gardner, an educational and developmental psychologist at Harvard. Gardner argues that most FL and SL didactics and curricula are not context-oriented or relevant. He therefore sets out to explore the human mind and launched an innovative teaching strategy. In his book entitled *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (1983), he introduces his theory of Multiple Intelligences (MI) and explains how teachers can use diverse methods to enhance understanding and stimulate performance in effective language learning processes.

In his publications *Multiple Intelligences: The Theory in Practice* (1993) and *Intelligence Reframed: Multiple Intelligences for the 21st Century* (1999), Gardner aggrandizes his initial categories of intelligence from seven to eight. In fact, he considers these cognitive abilities as various modalities, inner talents, skills or competences that merge in a unique way in almost everyone, depending on education, cultural origin and life experience. Gardner believes that human beings are not endowed with one single intelligence, but rather with a total of

eight different types of intelligence regardless of gender, ethnicity, and cultural identity.

The theory's eight currently accepted intelligences are: Spatial/ Visual, Verbal/Linguistic, Logical/Mathematical, Bodily/Kinesthetic, Musical, Interpersonal, Intrapersonal and Naturalistic (Slavin, 2012).

Spatial/Visual Intelligence denotes someone with spatial judgment and a high sensitivity. People with this intelligence visualize both artificially, virtually, mentally or through the mind's eye. They have a good notion of place and space. These are for instance graphic artists, navigators, architects.

Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence represents the capacity to handle language in an effective manner. People with high verbal-linguistic intelligence are good at memorizing words and tend to learn best by discussing and debating. They learn foreign languages very easily because of their capacity to understand, remember and manipulate difficult structures. They favor reading, writing, storytelling and are able to convince others through their use of language. They express complex meanings easily and are, for example, poets, writers, politicians and education professionals.

Logical/Mathematical Intelligence denotes the skill to use logic and abstract reasoning well and handle numbers effectively. It is assumed that people in this category are naturally good at mathematic sequencing and solving problems. This intelligence also places emphasis on scientific reasoning and investigation. It is often associated with traditional ideas of "intelligence" or IQ. People who display this intelligence are mostly scientists such as engineers, logicians, computer programmers.

Bodily/Kinesthetic Intelligence refers to the control of one's bodily motions to solve problems. It is also the ability to handle objects and express abstract concepts such as thoughts skilfully. Gardner believes that individuals can train this skill into reflexes. They

revolve around movements as a component of the learning experience. Activities could be sports, dancing, cooking, performing. Individuals in this category are, for example actors, athletes and dancers who favor learning by doing.

The area of Musical Intelligence is associated with the ability to express emotion and feeling through sounds, rhythms, and music. Though people with a high musical intelligence will favor situations where they use songs or rhythms to learn, they may also gain knowledge by reading texts loudly. Composers, disc-jockeys, conductors are some of the professionals who are strong in this category.

The Interpersonal Intelligence entails the ability of interaction that an individual has with others. In theory, these persons can understand their peers and show sensitivity to other people's behaviors, moods, and motivations. Besides, they show great ability to work with different people as part of a group. They communicate effectively through verbal and non-verbal channels, can motivate, show empathy and care for others. We can cite here religious leaders, salespersons, politicians, social welfare officers, recreational and team leaders.

Intrapersonal Intelligence involves individuals with the capacity of and tendency to self-reflection, self-awareness and introspection. People with traits of intrapersonal intelligence tend to work alone and might appear introverted. Suitable careers for them include philosophy, psychology, theology, law, and creative writing. Despite the fact that the interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences remain the most controversial in his theory, Gardner regards them as "the personal intelligences" (1999: 43).

Naturalistic Intelligence denotes the ability to nurture and understand one's natural environment. These people value plants, animals and various species. Gardner states that "A naturalist

demonstrates expertise in the recognition and classification of the numerous species – the flora and the fauna – of his or her environment” (1999: 48). Careers in which they will fit in are biology, environmental sciences, gardening and farming.

No less challenging is the Existential idea. Some proponents of the multiple intelligence theory propose spiritual or religious intelligence as a possible additional type. Gardner in his book *Intelligence Reframed* (1999) describes this intelligence as:

“The capacity to locate oneself with respect to the furthest reaches of the cosmos - the infinite and the infinitesimal - and the related capacity to locate oneself with respect to such existential features of the human condition as the significance of life, the meaning of death, the ultimate fate of the physical and the psychological worlds, and such profound experiences as love of another person or total immersion in a work of art.” (Gardner, 1999: 60)

Yet, Gardner did not want to commit himself to a spiritual intelligence, but suggested that the hypothesis of an "existential" intelligence could further be explored (1999: 60-66). On the whole, he rebukes the idea of intelligence as a “rigid and static constructs.” He criticizes the tendency to describe cognitive faculty by putting it as a single attribute and states that:

“In its strong form, multiple intelligences theory posits a small set of human intellectual potentials, perhaps as few as seven in number, of which all individuals are capable by virtue of their membership in the human species.” (Gardner, 1983: 278)

In order to apply MI in the field of language teaching, Howard Gardner recommends that educationists should distance themselves from traditional method and rely on teaching models that contribute to a better assessment of students' skills and bring FL and SL method close to near-life contexts (Gardner, 1993). He also insists that language specialists and institutions should feel the urgent need to reframe language instruction. He advocates the necessity for building competent

language trainers with methodological tools to enable intercultural competence and engage students with multicultural backgrounds. The assumption is that instructors should carry out tasks in order to stimulate strategies in a way to best assist language learners, enhance performance and increase effectiveness as well.

With the theory, we learn that intelligence is multidimensional. Moreover, we understand that every human being has his or her own different talents or potentials that can be reinforced. Besides, Gardner is among those who believe that each society has its own set of rules, norms and values, so that the way we value a person, his /her faculties and abilities differs from one culture to another. So language instructors should take this into consideration with regard to students' populations. Apart from that, he suggests that language teachers should refrain from passing an overall judgment on intelligence as human beings interpret events and meanings in different ways. He therefore expresses his dissatisfaction with traditional assessment models used commonly in language classes. Human intellectual ability should not solely be measured through yardsticks such as formal IQ models everywhere or similar tests as the ones practiced in Western societies⁵. For him, this concept of intelligence is specifically rooted in the old psychometric models, and the related instruments assess only a few of our eight intelligences, especially the verbal, logical-mathematical and spatial ones. Relatively little or no attention has been paid to the assessment of other competences and cognitive abilities. Gardner states:

“So long as these tests continued to do what they were supposed to do - that is, yield reasonable predictions about people's success in school - it did not seem necessary or prudent to probe too deeply into their meaning or to explore alternative views of what intelligence is or how it might be assessed.”
(Gardner, 1999: 13)

⁵ A few of them are: SAT: Scholastic Assessment Test; GRE: Graduate Record Examination; TOEFL: Test of English as a Foreign Language for English; DSH & Test-Daf for German learners.

An overview of each of Gardner's eight intelligences and the implication for practice is presented by Campbell, Campbell, and Dickinson (2004) in their book, *Teaching and Learning through Multiple Intelligences*. This shows that MI builds on a new model of language instruction and that the theory offers a variety of options for teachers and practitioners to create methodological tools that take into account various strategies used by learners. The reason why MI has won the hearts of language teachers and become popular in the field of language education lies certainly in the basic conception that human beings display other types of intelligence that reveal important aspects of their capabilities. In that respect, Gardner urges new patterns of evaluation in schools that should also reflect learners' visual/spatial, bodily/kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, and intrapersonal intelligences. The theory of Multiple Intelligences suggests the need for a non-uniform curriculum that uses methods with various approaches to address the increasing number of language learners with different "cognitive profiles."

MI theory urges teachers, especially L2 teachers, to be creative in mapping out near-to-life situations, encouraging students to use their talents and, most of all, solve problems rather than sticking to the old methodological skills. Multiple Intelligences offer some insightful ideas to respond to the challenge encounter in language training. In an effort to stimulate social transformation, foreign and second language institutions need to redefine new teaching methods and encourage students to develop adequate strategies.

Multiple Intelligences in Foreign Language Classes

For learning strategies to be efficient, they have to be supported by corresponding methods in environments in which learners engage in specific tasks. Here, we will cast a look at the way the theory of Multiple Intelligences relates to the concepts acquisition, learning and participation earlier discussed. Generally, traditional methodology and teaching practices in L2 only focus on a few of the eight Multiple

Intelligences, especially those related to language and logic and, thus, neglect learners with strengths in other talents. The reasons lie partly in the fact that teachers often have to work with predetermined materials and books. Most of the courseware does not allow modifications in its progression and does not motivate students to active participation either. Because of external pressure to meet curriculum requirements and the need to achieve good results, teachers often are unable to invest much time to conceive new materials in order to supplement exercises in traditional books. Such inability could also be attributed to factors such as both personal and teacher identities which may influence his/her ability to learn and be creative with the teaching material they have. People who have well-established identities can conceive new materials easily and are more creative in the dissemination of the content. For learners, identity development is also crucial especially when it comes to learning a language. When teachers apply the theory of MI, they could identify and develop more effective series of tasks and activities around the daily life experiences of students. In order to stimulate instructions, most educators actually implement Gardner's theory consciously or unconsciously.

My experience with foreign language teaching began in Benin. My prior involvements as a learner in different countries have always influenced my choice of pedagogical approaches. My first attempt with MI came with the teaching of German as a foreign language at the Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz. So, after being exposed to MI, it occurred to me that it was something I had in mind for a very long time. Then, I started doing more readings on the topic until I decided to put Gardner's theory into practice.

MI suggests the immersion of learners in near-to-real-world situations and the generalization of multimedia tools. The implementation of technology as a new teaching facility usually has a significant impact on language learners. This gives the students the impression of experiencing the target language live. Another important aspect is that the theory has always favoured diversity, and Gardner

holds the conviction that learners perform better when they work together with those who are both similar to and different from them.

Applying the MI Theory through the means of devising some related materials improves methodological tools, reinforces learning styles and students' application of various strategies. This enables learners to use their individual abilities, draw from their hidden potentialities, and creates a learning environment which tackles group diversity. Gardner, thus, shifted 12 methods gradually from teacher-centred to learner-centred experiences, and eventually towards students' self-learning. His theory highlights the reinforcement of less-developed learning areas in students. Personally, I had the opportunity to be exposed to different methods as an SL and FL student. Nowadays, reflecting on those experiences, I can assume that what has stayed with me is whatever I acquired through dedicated efforts rather than what I learned from my textbooks. This does not mean that I deny the importance of formal language teaching - I am a foreign language teacher myself! - or I do not acknowledge the roles of formal institutional language classes. In fact, both gave me the solid basics and very useful fundamentals at the beginning. However, I consistently believe that what helped me improve my language learning abilities was eventually my self-learning, my degree of commitment and later my autonomy. In her research, Zevenbergen (2006) highlights the disconnect between theory and practice in the development of the habits which could explain and substantiate such experience. This is why MI urges language planners to access students' individual or group needs in order to supplement materials accordingly. They could support the development of a sound sense of identity among learners and also be a means to encourage development of the MI if one has to take the learner centred approaches. Effective language classes should appeal to all of the intelligences and account for culturally-based learning "differences" in a language class. MI offers a more inclusive approach, one that does not prioritize any one of the intelligences over the others. However, the model does not recommend the use of all the intelligences for every single task. The general implication of Gardner's theory is that students'

minds are different, and an educational system should take account of those differences. Teachers should be trained to be competent in the application of the various theories and methodological tools in practice. MI has numerous advantages. It might help students to overcome their anxiety and reduce embarrassment in the classroom. I believe that the main idea the theory supports is that language schools need to direct much more resources to a method that addresses all the abilities of students, connects with their realities and stresses, therefore, the importance of an effective curriculum and method applicable to international learners. The theory contrasts with the common opinion of many psychologists who consider intelligence as a single continuum. For Gardner, our cognition “is organized vertically” as a sum of different faculties. This implies that students can be intelligent in each intellectual dimension or stronger in some dimensions and weaker in others.

Howard Gardner and his Critics

In his Theory of Multiple Intelligences, Howard Gardner proposes the coexistence of seven and later eight, distinct intelligences that blend together to create an individual profile. Reception from the scientific community as regards the model was mixed. For a variety of reasons, criticism has been leveled at the potential of Gardner’s theory. A number of articles have surveyed the use of the core ideas he has developed and conclude that there is no evidence that MI theory works in practice. For example, Nathan Brody assumed that Gardner has probably not consulted the extensive literature about analyses of intelligence tests and believes that Gardner “either ignores it or makes misleading assertions about what is known about g. g is a ubiquitous component of virtually all measures of cognitive ability” (Schaler, 2006: 91). He revealed that MI has not generated much success yet as generally assumed and that a number of research works about the effective impact of the theory are inconsistent. Looking at the impact on education, the generalization of the MI approach in FL institutions has

encountered some skepticism and usually remains an individual choice among teachers. Major obstacles to the successful implementation of Gardner's model are time constraints and curricular requirements. Some schools also express some "fear of intellectual relativism." This means that teachers might justify students' failure on account of different kinds of intelligence, instead of tackling learners' deficiencies properly, or questioning their own methodological concepts. For, even if all children are equally blessed with common sense, they still learn and perform differently. Gardner deplores the misinterpretation of his ideas, especially as he has

"witnessed applications of multiple intelligence theory that are unproductive and perhaps even destructive - for example, the labelling of certain racial and ethnic groups as possessing some intelligence but not other." (Schaler, 2006: 323)

Another major criticism discredited the assumption that students may be good in one intelligence but not in another. As far as logicians are concerned, they maintain that every cognitive faculty must be accessed through specific yardsticks⁶. Similarly, many critics disclaimed the work of the education psychologist on account that he did not produce adequate assessment tools or objective variables for his own MI theory. Gardner, however, vehemently rejects the common psychometric tools as objective test instruments. For him, any relevant evaluation scheme should allow "people to do things" and observe their skills in accordance with the performance of those tasks. Only then could teachers and language instructors be able to look directly at the skills and capacities that are of importance in the culture of learners. In short, intelligences are faculties expressed through the ability "to carry out tasks valued by society." So, the "Multiple Intelligences theory, on the other hand, pluralizes the traditional concept" (1993: 15). Gardner considers intelligence as "a bio-psychological potential to process

⁶ There are assumptions that IQ tests, Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale, Graduate Record Examination, the SAT, the PSAT, the ACT, etc... have demonstrated that a student who excels in one of the "multiple intelligences" usually achieves similar good results in others. This is in contradiction to Gardner's theory.

information that can be activated in a cultural setting to solve problems or create products that are of value in a culture” (Gardner 1999: 33-34).

Among psychologists, opponents to the model deplore Gardner’s failure to establish an algorithm to clearly classify and determine the profile of each of the multiple intelligences. Some maintain that intelligence should only be measured by fixed variables. To this, Gardner answers:

“But I came to realize that human psychology is not always logical, and that empirical findings can - and often do - trump an analysis which seems impeccable on rational grounds.” (Schaler, 2006: 30)

Nonetheless, the theory boasts greater acceptance among language teachers (Schaler, 2006: 68) and has contributed largely to educational reforms. Today, there are still many MI training seminars going on around the world and various books on MI application. On the whole, Gardner’s model profoundly affects the way we view our students. It encourages us to identify learners’ needs, brings change into foreign and second language learning environments, and opens up our mind to diversity. Aside from the above-mentioned criticisms, another bone of contention is that the theory does not set a clear demarcation line between “developmental stage” and “intelligence.” Scholars are still divided on the way MI should meaningfully fit into instructional curricula and its virtues to affect learners’ performances, especially its appropriateness in the case of international students with diverse socio-cultural backgrounds. With regard to methodological implications, some educators dismiss the theory as irrelevant and maintain that Gardner does not add much to the general knowledge that people learn in different ways. Obviously, a sustained learning based on the introduction of a variety of materials (songs, stories, multimedia tools, etc.) usually motivates students, engages people with different skills and maximizes language learning outcome. In this case, these observers remain skeptical about MI’s impact of methods on their teaching. Although the acceptance and implementation of MI has

increased over the past several years, some sceptics hold the view that Gardner's subsequent work has done very little to convince those who are doubtful about his theory.

On the whole, Gardner has been attacked for his failure to expand or, better, his denial of the existence of the traditional concept of intelligence⁷. The only thing he has achieved, according to many psychologists, is to replace the word "intelligence" by another concept most people will call "ability." This practice has been criticized by David Goleman (1995) and Robert J. Sternberg (2003). In fact, according to the theory of Multiple Intelligences, individuals possess many intelligences which combine differently. Gardner corroborated his position saying: "Most psychologists endorse the picture of intelligence as a single faculty, but I reject that perspective" (Schaler, 2006: 29). Gardner, therefore, rejects the idea of a general intelligence factor "g" or the General Intelligence Factor (g) and stresses the fact that multiple intelligences are independent, as students can learn and perform in various ways. The theory also suggests a full reconsideration of pedagogical resources and testing instruments in contemporary education. And as far as my understanding of Gardner's ideas permits, we cannot deny the fact that some of the criticisms may be the fruits of a certain misconception of his ideas. With his definition of intelligence, Gardner enlarges the scope of human cognition and contrasts it with the classical conception. Moreover, he highlights that "intelligence is not the same thing as will, purpose, motivation, attention, personality, style, temperament, and other well-known topics of psychology" (Schaler, 2006: 305). The fact that Gardner assigned further mental qualities to human processing mechanisms better reflect the various ways in which individuals process and learn languages. Commonly, intelligence is equated with the cognitive or mental capacity of an individual. As a matter of fact, traditional psychologists usually value standardized assessment devices, as I.Q. tests for instance. In contrast, I believe that Gardner has brought about paradigm shift in the education landscape.

⁷ Some critics argue that many of Gardner's "intelligences" actually correlate with the g factor, a view which corroborates the theory of a single type intelligence.

Therefore, didactic models have to incorporate new approaches in instruction as well as in testing models that better reflect language learners' achievement.

Summary

This chapter began with the distinction between acquisition and learning, and demonstrated their complementarities with regard to participation. Meanwhile it shows the complexity in making a demarcation between what is considered a “conscious” and “unconscious” process in foreign and second language contexts. We try to understand the concepts of foreign languages, second languages according to the traditional view. We notice that their use in modern linguistics does not always incorporate the socio-historical aspects of the language concerned. We discussed the effect between methodologies applied by teachers and strategies chosen by language students in order to ease the learning process. The outcome is that selected strategies coupled with the adequate methodologies impact on the performance process, if students' feelings and interests are taken into account. In this respect, teachers can choose various steps to tackle this situation. In addition, instructors can select materials which are culturally and linguistically relevant and based on content. Music videos or TV shows can be helpful either to introduce new and specific themes or as a means of reinforcing what has been previously taught. This view was corroborated by the theory of Multiple Intelligences, in which Gardner puts forward the idea that our intelligence is made up of the sum of eight different types of intelligences or cognitive abilities that combine in a unique way. Multiple Intelligences informs us that people usually show differing abilities in learning and invite language professionals to expand the existing ones in our students and, at the same time, develop curricula with contents that engage reflection on their lived experiences. A synthesis of these supporting ideas coupled with my personal experiences has produced some evidence to show

that the different intelligences that Gardner mentioned are complementary rather than isolated and rigid. In addition, we see that a combination of selected aspects of Multiple Intelligences with regard to students' specific talents and skills in language teaching may be beneficial for assisted language learning. We concluded that foreign language teaching in MI contexts requires joint participation and effort by both learners and teachers. The latter should design courseware with regard to students' learning styles, with emphasis on specific learning strategies while presenting adequate materials in a variety of methods. Students are encouraged to use the target language in a flexible way with less emphasis on structural correctness and working sometimes in heterogeneous groups. Teachers should therefore propose tools or also ask learners to come up with resources that can ensure that both personal experiences and the cultural environments of learners are valued equally. Though the theory generates ideas for changes and supports innovation in foreign and second language contexts, Gardner faced a mixed reception from some psychometricians and logicians. Yet, his conceptualization of intelligence should deserve more consideration than criticism. Since we cannot draw any conclusive generalizations from this survey, could not be conducted over the expected periods of time, there is a need for further research. Nevertheless, we believe the chapter could present some recommendations for language educators, specialists and practitioners for a better adaptation of classroom methods and curricula in L2 teaching in order to inject new impetus into foreign or second language classes.

Chapter 3

An Intercultural Approach in Language Teaching: Teaching Foreign Languages with Multiple Intelligences in Benin

Introduction

The case studies I will discuss cover two periods of teaching and were carried out at the secondary school Collège d'Enseignement Général (CEG) Zogbo in Cotonou, Benin Republic, during the years 2007 and 2008. In this ethnographical research, I will mainly relate my teaching and observations in an attempt to investigate the methodological imbalance in curricula with regard to the needs and expectations of L2 learners. The theory of Multiple Intelligences which stipulates that learners have different intelligence profiles and access learning through their individual channels would help make students' language learning a little bit different than during my own school years. Part of my interest was to look into the ways L2 instruction has been conducted in public schools, language schools or formal language learning institutions in the West African country over the past years. I realized that carrying out the teaching task would enlighten me about L2 learners' opinions and beliefs on what the students consider important to them in their learning journey. Therefore, by reporting on my experiences as a foreign language teacher of English and German in Cotonou, I want to provide information on some perspectives on foreign and second language acquisition and learning with the main focus being on the latter. In this connection, I will also look into the way cultural values and perceptions of learners that are linked to historical and sociological circumstances in Benin can impact on students' motivation.

The Context

Having got an opportunity to train learners in my hometown, I was seduced by the idea of putting into application the different methods of teaching that I have acquired in the years before. At the onset, I was aware that I would obviously have to overcome some physical and organizational limitations. For instance, I had to monitor classes that were made up of groups which were certainly not homogeneous in terms of knowledge and language proficiency as no prior placement test was conducted. Student participants were English and German language learners. They were majoring in the arts and languages and had learned English for 5 to 6 years and German for 3 to 4 years. I consider their levels to be basic in German and elementary in English. Some of them, for instance, were still unable to construct simple grammatically correct sentences in German. Classes generally took place twice a week for two-hour sessions each.

Course Structure and Content

The German courses were structured as follows: In the first four weeks we covered the basic aspects such as alphabet, phonetics, how to tell the time and dates. Students were made to read out loud so that I could check their pronunciation. They were introduced to the elementary grammar in order to enable them to gain knowledge of or revise the basic structures. After that we started with their textbooks "*Wir und Ihr*" which we used in the following months. As for the English course, we reviewed the elementary structures, spent time going over specific topics of grammar which were backed up with practice questions. Thereafter, we worked mainly with the course book "*Go for English.*"

The Challenges

Early, I realized that I needed to redefine the nature of my language teaching methods and my role as a teacher because of the many unique challenges I faced on a daily basis. The obvious limitations were caused by either insufficient or lack of technical materials, time constraints and constant electricity shortage. Overcrowded classes made it impossible to offer a more individualized instruction. Unfortunately, the only opportunity offered through the few hours of practice in classrooms was insufficient. The course manuals for English and German could not be properly supplemented by relevant audio media and listening practices, and I could hardly introduce computer activities. It was very tedious to try out various interactive models or to simulate some situations, since most of my students were not computer literate, nor did the school guarantee access either to the internet, or to the computers. Apart from that, other historical and socio-cultural factors, especially the way foreign languages had been taught, from the colonial era to the present, have shaped students' predisposition to language acquisition and learning process.

Teaching Approaches in Historical Context

In order to understand the current attitude of some language learners, one needs to take a look at the history of language teaching in education and its development over the last decades in Benin. Language in the former French colonies has a rather long and complicated past, from its implementation during colonization and thereafter in the early 1960's to its present relevance in the 2000s. In fact, education in the early days was essentially directed towards further studies in the metropolis and at that time the use of foreign languages was not widespread in Benin. Curricula were modelled after the old

French system and monitored by l'Institut Pédagogique Africain et Malgache (IPAM)¹. Actually, the introduction of international languages in schools in those days was to provide a workforce for the colonial administration and industry. In school, teaching took place in the classroom for very few hours weekly. Generally, practical communicative skills were still relegated to an inferior status in comparison to that of grammar and linguistics. Basically, teachings methods focused on teachers who offered predominantly a frontal instruction. School books were centered on absorption of rules and sentence translations. There was very little emphasis on the listening and speaking aspects of the languages. Recalling my own experience some few decades after independence, I will have to say that foreign language learning tasks were sometimes quite traditional and frustrating. Some teachers were pedantic and instruction did not promote either notions of critical thinking nor collaborative or constructivist learning. Students were learning by heart, using mostly pencil and pens and had seldom access to extra materials. There was very little room for the use of additional and interactive tools. So, I strongly believe that the way language training was conducted in former colonies, needs to be redefined, as these still affect the current teaching and learning approaches today.

Funding Issues

In the past few decades, there was a growing concern to enhance the quality of language teaching. Unfortunately, this vision did not fully materialize as an austere period came in the 1990's and led to a forced cuts in the education budget nationwide. In the higher institutions, faculties of arts and languages suffered the biggest setback

¹ Institut Pédagogique Africain et Malgache (IPAM) is a post-colonial institute for education research in the French-speaking countries in Africa south of the Sahara.

and gradually lost relevance in society. As school boards increased funding for sciences at the expense of languages, this contributed to the loss of interest into the arts among students. Today, however, the educational system in Benin offers many more foreign languages at the secondary and post-secondary levels and the demand for these subjects has been increasing.

The Teaching Experience

One of my main apprehensions during the fieldwork was the applicability of teaching resources in cross-cultural contexts. To accomplish learning tasks, I provided students with an abundance of practice material ranging from form-focused exercises to resources for communication. For instance, some of these materials were to be used in class, with the purpose of observing the way MI theory could be applied to communication activities in a different setting. After using Gardner's chart (see Appendix C) to identify the dominant types of learners that make up classes, I had to find out exercises which would involve the different personalities of learners. I definitely wanted to keep away from the old-fashioned grammar–translation method which only promoted the mastery of linguistic rules and, unfortunately, neither knowledge on socio-cultural nor intercultural inputs. It did not provide practical knowledge for students to try and communicate in L2, nor did it foster creative and constructive aspects of language training. So, I wanted to distance myself from teacher-centered methods, especially the common frontal teaching and, therefore, I gave prominence to speaking and listening skills. Neither did I want to stick to the linear use of one course book as it has been commonly practiced in Benin during my school days. So, whenever I was working with my groups of German or English learners, I endeavored to help my students develop proficiency in the four traditional skills of speaking, listening, writing, and reading. My first experience with MI was made easier through works by Christison (2005)

and Berman (1998). According to Berman, teachers should discover their own intelligence profile first, and thereafter stimulate those in students by finding out what suits the learners best. He presents and discusses in detail particular instructional methods and suggests a range of practical steps for in-class activities as well. Another useful and interesting reference that has helped me with the everyday application of grammar is the grammar books series called "*Grammar Dimensions: Form, Meaning and Use*". Unlike traditional grammar books, they contain remarkable visual and practical resources and do not follow the traditional mechanical routine of textbooks' linear conception. The manual offers practice exercises ranging from games, linking meanings to forms, puzzles, stories and situations. In addition, a lot of activities motivate learners to engage into the contextual use.

While I was working with those groups, I tried not to lose focus of my objective. I wanted to teach not only the grammar, but also generate situations in which learners of German or English are confronted with language use for specific goals. I made an effort to supplement the course books with activities² which highlighted most of the intelligences developed by Gardner in his theory of Multiple Intelligences. I simulated MI lessons to engage learners in songs, dramatized dialogues, collective story and various experiential activities (exhibitions, arts...). By doing so, I was trying to concentrate more onto the procedure where students were required to use language in contextualized ways. This would enable them to acquire language not only in isolated patterns, but in real situations. Irrespective of progress checks during the semester, which generally allow learners to assess their performances, they also receive weekly assignments. In the course of the semester, each group was assigned a project, received some useful vocabulary and was made to answer some questions. The intention of this collaboration on small projects was to guide learners to research on some culturally related topics or any other

² <http://www.uni.edu/becker/German2.html#games> (last retrieved: March 11, 2012) offers online games and interesting fun activities for teachers to use in the German classroom and to be adapted to other languages.

they were interested in. These were for instance going shopping, going to the market, giving descriptions of their hometown or a place they like, etc... I wanted to tap into what I learnt about how course attendants absorb L2 during their training process, especially with regard to Gardner's model of human cognition. On the whole, most of the tools were meant to generate a more practical approach to the use of both German and English, engage learners in truly communicative activities and make them reflect on their own experiences at the same time.

Comments

My teaching periods in Benin enabled me to examine L2 didactic practices in the country and above all experiment on the theories, techniques and methods I had been exposed to. I especially set out to investigate how the application of Multiple Intelligences could provide opportunities for students to better perform in language and to improve their overall competence and skills. I deduced that students need to practice new languages frequently. Unfortunately, they have hardly any out-of-class support and once they leave school, there is no other possibility to enable them to improve their speaking skills. In comparison to students in FL contexts, learners in SL environments are known to face more communication problems. These problems could be accentuated through the incompatibility of the cultural content of the textbooks and the home cultures of students in Benin. It was not easy to convince some of the learners to put in the required effort in class and help them overcome their anxiety generated by the new communicative approaches. Another factor which may contend with students' performance in SL situations is that some language learning manuals often involve chapters and items which do not reflect the local contexts. This fact does not promote interactive activities, unlike the situation in my FL classes in Germany. Throughout the practical time, a big challenge too was to train course attendants to gradually work unaided,

as most of them are still being molded through traditional teaching practices. They usually want to learn by rote. These realities call for a redefinition of current pedagogy and a need to involve adaptations of teaching activities in such a way that they will be more useful to the L2 learners. Despite plans and attempts to devise more suitable materials, didactic tools contain few regional and local elements. They are less centered around interaction and place low emphasis on oral competence. Due to the traditional ways language used to be instructed, course participants are not always willing to speak at the beginning. Such behaviors do not help improve neither their auditory, nor oral skills in the new language rapidly. In most cases, the institutional environment does not question how teachers are working with these realities, nor does it offer enough special training programs to preparing for these difficulties. The explanation partly lies in the fact that institutions do not have means to provide teachers with the tools they need to enable them sustain good quality education.

Multiple Intelligences in the Context of the Study

In his theory of Multiple Intelligences, Gardner sees personality as a sum of many intelligences. He refutes any master didactics and expresses the need for a new teaching which seeks to generate change from inside. Teaching resources should emphasize psycholinguistic and socio-cultural aspects of FL and SL learning. MI articulates that in homogeneous or heterogeneous groups, each student thinks and has access to knowledge in his or her own way. Therefore, it suggests the development of approaches with consideration for differences in learners' personalities. The theory is a plea to FL and SL teachers that they should keep familiarizing themselves with new situations as language teaching is dynamic in nature, fluid and expansive. Instructors should also identify linguistic habits of the source language which are different from the target language and might frequently result in errors.

In addition, didactics must account for contrastive knowledge and explanation, thereby placing more emphasis on culture-specific items.

In this respect, I have realized among other things, that the most prevalent errors result from the interference by learners' first or functional languages. A simple illustration of this experience is when my French L1 students are asked to come up with the German or English translation of the French word "froid" and then they construct sentences like "Ich habe kalt" instead of "Mir ist kalt" or "I have cold" instead of "I am cold," which are literal translations of the French sentence "J'ai froid". Thus, examples like the above give us an insight into the cross-cultural and cross-linguistic awareness in L2 classes, which has been of concern for a long time to researchers in the field (Sajavaara, 1988). Furthermore, these examples demonstrate that our understanding is subjective and meaning is linked to our linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Therefore, I personally believe that educators should work together with specialists in other fields such as psychology, anthropology, and sociology in order to devise more comparative models in language training. Some of my francophone students, at least in the case of beginners who were learning English, were often tempted to say in English "I have 21 years" rather than "I am 21," as they tried to transpose the French sentence. Conversely, an English speaker might need some time to internalize for instance that "I was born," should, in French, more appropriately be rendered as "Je suis né" and not as "j'étais né."

The few data gathered in the course of the fieldwork clearly demonstrate that language students favor an environment where learning makes use of multidisciplinary resources. Besides, the findings point out the need to rethink current teaching practices in the former French colony. As a result, there is a call upon educationists and curricular specialists to create a more conducive learning environment in the language classroom. Considering the fact that language course participants in Benin work within the constraints of existing rules and

within an environment that does not sustain the learned language, they still manage to take advantage of identical elements in the different linguistic contexts. Usually, these learners try either to contrast or generalize a lot of items, then use the knowledge obtained in one language into the other. When they run this process successfully, we can say that learning has occurred. This concept draws on the theory of situated learning, suggested by Lave and Wenger³ (1991), who warn that teachers should ensure that these habits of learners do not turn into demotivating factors. The two authors emphasize learning as situated in a particular setting and social contexts. It is acquired by experience and practice and goes beyond the transmission process of theoretical knowledge. The theory suggests that students should be put in authentic contexts which activate their cognition in order for them to assimilate faster. Thus, learning is tightly related to the context. According to Krashen (1985), second language learners usually undergo a rite of assimilation of the structures and contexts in the target languages. Thereafter, students start using the knowledge they gain to produce their own structures. In my opinion, the transition period in language training may vary, depending on resemblances or dissemblances in languages. Language elements cannot be transferred easily to new contexts unless they are nearly the same. For instance, it may be easier for a Dutch citizen learning German and relatively difficult for a Thai person learning the same language.

Suggestions

Foreign language training is definitely a creative process that should constantly incorporate knowledge gained through observation

³ The assumptions of the Situated Learning Theory are closely link with Gardner's concept of Multiple Intelligences.

and adapted to the communicative needs of course attendants. With MI theory, L2 instructors learn to become more observant of students, sharpen their intelligence and make their learning experience worthwhile. Whatever method language instructors apply, they should ask themselves: will it promote practices that increase both linguistic and non-linguistic skills in language teaching? Do they meet learners' needs? Do the teaching methods I use help learners improve their language proficiency?

In order to be more stimulating, textbooks should contain more reference to the native environment and local context as well. But a critical look at the way materials used in the past in Benin were conceived reveals that a lot of books did not follow that trend. Hence, they did not really help learners improve practical communicative skills or do not always enable the transfer of skills from the native language into the target language. In the worst case, some of them were barely applicable to any first or native learners' cultural contexts. Nevertheless, publishers and editors also argue that such language teaching materials are designed in such a way as to help second or foreign language teachers use the books in any country, regardless of the fact whether teachers are familiar with the L1 contexts of their students or not.

As a FL or an SL teacher, I therefore acknowledge the need for a didactic model that is hinged on student-centered pedagogy, makes use of new teaching methods and puts forward the adaptation and applicability in local contexts. As Howard Gardner indicates in his theory, the main focus while designing class programs should be to touch on students' multiple intelligences so as to encourage in-class participation. With all this said, a good theory alone does not guarantee the quality of teaching. If teachers are not well-trained, they will not be able to make the best use of resources available to them and, therefore, their efforts will not bear the desired fruits. So, it is of paramount importance that school administrations and political authorities should make available some incentives to encourage teachers' training, their participation in workshops or on exchange platforms to share ideas.

More significantly, the experience reinforces my beliefs that overseas-trained language teachers are sometimes confronted with the inappropriateness to transpose “foreign-designed” methods to another country. This was revealed through the constant need to modify my teaching approaches and readapt materials on the one hand, and on the other hand, through the conflict between theoretically acquired knowledge and traditional forms of behaviors rooted in students. Despite my previous teaching experience, I have to admit that I was disillusioned. In fact, institutions should promote content-based approaches of didactics in which learning and teaching focus on learner needs and foster cross-cultural understanding. I have found out that the application of the MI theory can be very useful in this regard. The theory enhances learning and enables students to not only focus on grammars and structures, but also gives learners the opportunity to explore their personal experiences and their emotional identities.

It is also my contention that institutions should refrain from teaching a language only for the purpose of examinations, as it is practiced in many schools. Rather, there is a need for various activities and the application of new methods, including more task-based works. Yet a great number of institutions in Benin are still ill-equipped. School administrations need to expend more resources on the training of foreign and second language teachers. L2 should no longer be instructed as a system of isolated rules. In order to make them beneficial to learners, grammar and linguistic should be taught for their contextual applications. In case the local culture is alien to some content of courseware, the latter is generally not appreciated by language learners. This becomes worse when learners expect to be exposed to a particular version of the target culture which the teacher does not dispose of. I concur with Richard & Rodgers (2001), who call for the use of real-life situations and urge teachers to create contexts that their students are likely to encounter in daily life in order to use language creatively. We cannot deny the fact that lack of adequate

vocabulary structure and cultural discrepancies inhibit language learners' motivation for communicative needs in the classroom.

In recent years, educators have persistently insisted on a reconceptualization of didactics in language learning in Benin. There have indeed been noticeable improvements lately, despite the fact that some series of books still lack cultural relevance. These manuals seem to not speak to students who are as a result put at a disadvantage given this irrelevance. The specificity of the Beninese context was for me a bitter reality that changed the way I understood the role of a language teacher in the classroom. Of course, it must be exaggerated to generalize these results to all FL or SL teaching environments. These findings are not necessarily negating or raising arguments against traditional paradigms in L2 either. Rather, they are proposing an extension or improvement of the scope of language teaching through better didactic models which facilitate free interaction among students and promote the development of local elements and cultural components. Language curricula need to stimulate the use of more relevant textbooks, which are supplemented with both local and regional elements. Furthermore, methods using non-text materials will aim at developing what is known as the four macro skills, which are listening, speaking, reading and writing. In addition, classroom teaching approaches in practice should be modified with the aim of improving overall language competence through participative learning. Courseware contents will focus on more experiments and put emphasis on communicative skills through discussions that lead to generalizations of students' own experiences and that highlight the local cultures.

In retrospect, I will say that I encountered a number of constraints in the local context in Benin while trying to implement the theoretical knowledge I acquired in Germany. Some learning processes were not possible due to a number of technical factors and the cultural backgrounds of learners. Power outage does not support the introduction of the target culture by adequate exposure to up-to-date media and audio-visual materials. We can assume that the teaching

environment in Benin is very different from that of Germany, so students' needs and learning expectations may differ in the two countries. In Mainz, German language learners are offered an immersion opportunity and a lot of them who come from other European countries have some cultural closeness to the German culture. Contrary to the experience in Germany, textbooks used in the past in Benin were not helpful in making language learners to easily contrast their cultures with the new ones. Learners in effect did not feel motivated by reading such books. Yet, in the country, projects had sought to understand the local culture with the expressed intention of informing and improving the implementation of didactic methods. As a result, recent textbooks are inserting local elements and offering a variety of contextual activities. Currently, workbooks in Benin contain items of the local culture to some extent. Such learner-centered manuals awaken participative enthusiasm and emphasize the oral aspect of language learning as well. Though this trend appeared to be one of the issues on the priority list of the government's education policy, funds allocated for the promotion of such instruction books seem to be insufficient. Another big challenge was to get rid of some enculturated behavioral patterns. A first step would consist in moving language learners away from a teacher-centered style and give hesitant students the confidence they require in reading, speaking and writing. Students' poor vocabulary leads sometimes to loss of self-esteem, making some to believe that their inputs during discussions are not good enough. I managed to persuade such students not to be unnerved by these learning contradictions. I also explained to them that their hard journey in the new language is one in which they have to reckon with.

On the whole, this study could be criticized for its design and procedure. However, it gives us cultural perspectives in language acquisition and suggests that teaching practices which are rooted in the past need to be improved seriously. In addition, it indicates the possibility to identify the extent to which cultural limitations and foreign

or second language learning could be at odds. In order to reassert FL and SL learning in Benin, MI challenges us to rethink traditional pedagogy rooted in the dominant discourse of the west, and thus, disapprove the legacies of colonial methods.

Analysis of Textbooks: Profile, Activities and Components

Course books have always been a major tool in L2. This is due to the fact that they are generally prescribed by school managements. There are other factors that contribute to the widespread use of books. For instance, many teachers do not have time to conceive activities themselves and course books offer a variety of exercises to assist language teachers and learners in that regard. According to Richards and Rogers (2001), the choice and usage of textbooks present certain advantages. They help “train teachers”; thus, they “maintain quality” and “provide effective language models and input” (pp.1-2). However, the use of textbooks might also “present some disadvantages such as lack of authentic material, inflexible structures and higher prices.” In order to select adequate teaching manuals, L2 instructors need to check if the distributions of exercises match the Multiple Intelligences as described by Gardner. The American psychologist identifies the following types of intelligences: verbal linguistic (VL), logical-mathematical (LM), spatial visual (SV), body kinesthetic (BK), musical rhythmic (MR), interpersonal (IR), intrapersonal (IA), naturalistic (N) and to some extent existentialist (E)⁴ (see pp. 37-39).

A good selection of textbooks can contribute to reduce socio-historical marginalization and inequalities. As Aldana (2009) has commented, “young people need books that are mirrors in which they can see and learn about themselves, and books that are windows open

⁴ Howard Gardner never really claimed the existence of the existentialist intelligence.

to the rest of the world.”⁵ Such a statement indicates that manuals which are supportive of learners’ environment engender perceived interest of students. With the assessment of four course books for English and German - one book at beginners’ level and one at an intermediate level in each language - I want to identify existing activities in order to see how they engage each of the multiple intelligences, especially which ones are available, frequent or predominant.

Generally, when language educators try to elaborate on each of the multiple intelligences profiles, they have to establish criteria to determine their exact nature. In addition, they may be confronted with the difficulty of defining the degree of a specific “intelligence” in activities because some exercises imply more than one intelligence. As a matter of consequence, it is not always an easy task to categorize multiple intelligences properly. For the current overview, I have compiled a list of possible activities and techniques in language teaching tasks. The criteria used in my identification of the different intelligences and their number of occurrences were drawn from Christison (2005), McKenzie (2005), Palmberg (2002, 2001) and Lazear (1994). A detailed overview is shown in Appendix C. Lexical and grammar were not included in the survey. Online activities were left out as well. My aim is to investigate how contents and learning activities do contribute in meeting students’ expectations or promote the implementation of multi-dimensional didactics in FL and SL training. As such, this overview was mainly limited to recognizing the types of intelligence concerned, look into exercises, categorize the distribution of activities and the common combinations of intelligence profiles. The tables below present the sum of activities, number of occurrences of each intelligence and their percentage.

⁵ Aldana, Patricia is a Canadian children’s book author, illustrator and performer.

Headway A1:

This edition is conceived for learners of English with German as a native language. It comprises ten chapters. Instructions for activities appear both in English and German until lesson 5. Thereafter, only some instructions are also given in German. In addition, the table “Grammar Spot” provides valuable suggestions in learning and a number of contrastive inputs. At the end of each chapter is a section called “Extra Practice.” Most instructions here are in German. The course book shows a profile similar to the other books. It includes 4 predominant intelligences which are verbal linguistic (100), intrapersonal (100%), spatial visual (86,87%), and interpersonal (76,40%). Yet, there were some distinctions. For instance, the percentage of LM was 19,90% and therefore higher than in the other manuals. This is explained by the several matching activities and the exercises at the end of the book which relate to the table “grammar spot”. These activities usually require mental reasoning and learners have to draw conclusions. Interestingly, there were no activities that cater to musical rhythmic, naturalistic and existentialist intelligence. Table 6 gives detailed information.

Table 5: Textbook – Headway A1

Mutiple Intelligences (total of activities: 284)	Number of occurrences of the intelligence	Percentage of occurrences of the intelligence
Verbal Linguistic (VL)	284	100%
Logical-Mathematical (LM)	48	19,90%
Spatial Visual (SV)	247	86,97%
Body Kinesthetic (BK)	04	1,40%
Musical Rhythmic (MR)	00	0%
Interpersonal (IR)	217	76,40%
Intrapersonal (IA)	284	100%
Naturalistic (N)	00	0%
Existentialist (E)	00	0%

Go for English (4e)

This course book is used at secondary schools in Benin. It suits language learners at the intermediate level. It contains 15 units subdivided into 5 sections each. There is no separate exercise book. Activities are included in the units. Exercises appear in the section "Practice Page" at the end of the book. The research I carried out shows a predominance of verbal linguistic (100%), intrapersonal (100%), spatial visual (82,68%), and interpersonal (70,74%) intelligences. Verbal linguistic and intrapersonal intelligences occur in all activities. This is explained by the fact that the majority of instructions in the books usually call for one of the traditional skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing. These skills can be highlighted individually, be included in individual tasks and groups of tasks, which also results in the high percentage of intrapersonal intelligences. Since

course books display many illustrations in the form of pictures, photographs, caricatures or cartoons, there is no surprise regarding the pre-eminence of spatial visual intelligence (82,68%). Pictures also illustrate activities such as peer teaching and role plays which are related to interpersonal intelligence. The individual intelligence profiles are also connected to one another. For instance, we notice that combinations such as VL-IA, VL-SV, SV-IA and IR-IA occur frequently. In most cases, students work individually and then continue to learn in pairs or groups in order to compare their results.

Regarding the logical-mathematical (LM) intelligence, it appears basically in activities which consist of matching, ranking, analysing figures, discussing situations and drawing conclusions. The analysis hardly indicates activities with intelligence profiles such as body kinaesthetic (2,38%), musical (0,89%) and existentialist (0,29%). The latter can be seen in the first chapter of the book, which was dealing with horoscopes and students were required to make some predictions about the future. Finally, there is no activity which involves naturalistic intelligence here. Table 7 presents the results.

Table 6: Textbook - Go for English (4e)

Multiple Intelligences (total of activities: 335)	Number of occurrences of the intelligence	Percentage of occurrences of the intelligence
Verbal Linguistic (VL)	335	100%
Logical-Mathematical (LM)	49	14,62%
Spatial Visual (SV)	277	82,68%
Body Kinesthetic (BK)	08	2,38%
Musical Rhythmic (MR)	03	0.89%-
Interpersonal (IR)	237	70.74%
Intrapersonal (IA)	335	100%
Naturalistic (N)	00	0%
Existentialist (E)	01	0, 29%

Passwort Deutsch

This is a course book designed for learners of German at the beginner's level. I have concentrated on the edition with six chapters. Few exercises are included in this volume. There exists an extra exercise book and the book, offers a variety of online activities as well, which, given the scope of this study, will not be included in my analysis. As to be expected, activities with speaking, listening, reading and writing skills contribute here to the predominance of verbal linguistic and intrapersonal intelligences. These are followed by spatial, visual, and interpersonal intelligences. The high percentage of SV is linked to the pictures, tables and various types of illustrations used as visual inputs. Further activities with this intelligence are represented in listening, reading and dialogues. Interpersonal intelligences are present in interviews, role plays and pair works. These interaction patterns usually captivate the interest of beginners easily. Activities which benefit the

logical-mathematical (LM) intelligence are very few. This low occurrence (2,72%) is likely due to the fact that beginners are given more verbal and visual inputs and more emphasis is given to memorizing new elements and concepts. Since they have not developed enough confidence in the target language at this stage, they are exposed to fewer activities which require high reasoning degrees. Surprisingly, no activity in this book caters to intelligences profiles such as body kinesthetic (0%), musical rhythmic (0%), naturalistic (0%) and existentialist (0%). Table 8 provides detailed information.

Table 7: Textbook - Passwort Deutsch

Multiple Intelligences (total of activities: 220)	Number of occurrences of the intelligence	Percentage of occurrences of the intelligence
Verbal Linguistic (VL)	220	100%
Logical-Mathematical (LM)	06	2,72%
Spatial Visual (SV)	167	75,90%
Body Kinesthetic (BK)	00	0%
Musical Rhythmic (MR)	00	0%
Interpersonal (IR)	138	62,72%
Intrapersonal (IA)	220	100%
Naturalistic (N)	00	0%
Existentialist(E)	00	0%

Ihr und Wir: Textbuch 2

This course book for German is a regional edition for the following countries: Benin, Burkina-Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Mali, Central African Republic, Senegal and Togo. It is designed for secondary school language learners or students at the intermediate level. It contains 8 units. Unit 1 is an introductory one and gives country-specific information. It provides a cultural overview about Benin and people life and gives a brief insight into the works the German cooperation agencies in the country. The units 2 to 8 include 6 sections each. There are A: "Texte", B "Grammatik", C "Elemente", D "Erweiterung", E "Informationen" and F "Wörter und Ausdrücke." The latter recapitulates new words und expressions in the units. Though there is a separate exercise book, some activities are included in the units. Some instructions are in French. At the end of each unit, the section "Que dit-on en Allemand" points out intercultural specificities. Others such as "Conseils pour mieux apprendre" et "Comparons" focus on contrastive aspects in the grammar, expression and sometimes encourage students to share opinions. This survey shows that five intelligences appear in this book. As in the previous manuals, the predominant profiles are verbal linguistic (100), intrapersonal (100%), spatial visual (72,35%), and interpersonal (54,47%) intelligences. Exercises also cater for Logical-mathematical (LM) intelligence (20,32%). Verbal Linguistic and Intrapersonal intelligences occur in all activities. The course book includes a lot of illustrations in the form of pictures, photographs, which explains the high percentage of spatial visual intelligence (72,35%). For instance, pages 49-57 display 38 images to illustrate topics such as marketplaces, roads and transportation, the four seasons in Germany, public and road signs, the city of Berlin. This town will also remain the topic for another set of visual elements on page 93. Further pictures and image descriptions and illustrations are displayed on topics such as "Karneval in Köln" on page 77 or "Der Rhein – Ein Europäischer Fluß" on page 78. The possible intention is to give to learners a more accurate

image of Germany. The same reason explains why we have a high degree of logical mathematical profile. Learners are offered the opportunity to discuss, make deductions and build “a self-image” of the German people and culture by themselves. Logical-mathematical (LM) intelligence appears basically in activities which consist of matching, ranking, analyzing figures, discussing situations and drawing conclusions.

Surprisingly, no activity in this book caters to intelligences such as body kinesthetic (0%), musical rhythmic (0%), naturalistic (0%), and normally in the thesis, existentialist (0%). Since language learners have not developed enough confidence in the target language at this stage, they are exposed to fewer activities that require high reasoning.

Table 8: Textbook - Ihr und Wir: Textbuch 2

Multiple Intelligences (total of activities: 123)	Number of occurrences of the intelligence	Percentage of occurrences of the intelligence
Verbal Linguistic (VL)	123	100%
Logical-Mathematical (LM)	25	20,32%
Spatial Visual (SV)	89	72,35%
Body Kinesthetic (BK)	00	00%
Musical Rhythmic (MR)	00	00%
Interpersonal (IR)	67	54,47%
Intrapersonal (IA)	123	100%
Naturalistic (N)	00	00%
Existentialist (E)	00	00%

Comments

The section has been designed to bring to light the intelligence profiles and their combinations in the textbooks. The analysis of the four coursebooks reveals an unequal distribution of exercises that take into account each of the multiple intelligences. Generally, most manuals present materials with the predominant intelligences of verbal linguistic and intrapersonal in 100% of the activities, followed by spatial visual and interpersonal. A contributing factor for the predominance of VL is that the traditional skills of listening, reading, speaking or writing always appear in most instructions in language books. The same also applies to the intrapersonal profile since this occurs in activities in which learners perform individually, engage in talk and reflect on themselves. Interpersonal intelligence occurs in activities which require pair or group work. These are among other things, peer-teaching and role play. The four aforementioned profiles appear in most activities sometimes in various combinations. The most common are VL-IA, VL-SV, SV-IA, IR-IA intelligences. They are observed in grammar exercises in which learners work by themselves first, and thereafter compare their answers with peer students. The less common intelligence profiles are the logical/mathematical, bodily/kinesthetic, musical rhythmic and existential ones. However, in books for intermediate learners, there is a higher degree of the logical mathematical activities than in beginners' books. The few activities which cater to this profile are matching, guessing, and using surveys with graphs. There is no occurrence of naturalistic intelligence. The analysis shows that some activities can present more than one intelligence. For instance, the activity entitled "Practise Cities and Countries" on page 16 in *Headway A1* involves logical-mathematical, spatial visual and interpersonal profiles. The most frequent combinations can be seen in games, or extra activities which combine two skills such as listening and speaking skills.

On the whole, the results reveal that the profiles are roughly the same. However, there are some discrepancies when we look at the

books individually. The main distinction observed was that manuals for intermediate learners contain more activities which require mental processing. At the beginner level, greater emphasis is laid on visual inputs. Nonetheless, *Ihr und Wir: Textbuch 2*, an intermediate book contains a lot of pictures. Since most learners are likely to have never been to Germany and the source and target cultural environment are not similar, the possible intention is to allow them to build a more accurate image of Germany through a lot of pictures and illustrations. The lower occurrence of existentialist intelligences can be linked to the avoidance of topics which might generate controversies in the classroom. These intelligences deal with sensitive subjects from religion and politics. Additionally, they require a higher level of proficiency from learners in order to discuss these topics. Naturalistic intelligence deals with particular aspects of fauna and flora, among other things. Any related activity may require an advanced level of expertise and linguistic competence, which course attendants do not possess at this stage. This, therefore, may account for the zero or low occurrence of existentialist and naturalistic profiles among others.

In Benin the increasing demography of L2 learners calls for the need to improve textbooks. In recent years, there have been notable changes in the contents of manuals. This has been made possible through the support from international partners and overseas grants from the USAID, the UNESCO and the European Union. They have provided financial aids and brought together leading specialists with local teachers. The latter have benefited from trainings to new approaches in language teaching, having been exposed to new ideas in the field of L2. International donors have also assisted with the implementation of new methodologies and training technics. They have promoted the launching of new books with more relevance to students' lives and stimulating contents. There has been a gradual insertion of learner-centered curricula in all academic subjects countrywide, and all education levels from primary to higher school. In the field of language,

there is some responsiveness that has led to the development of content-based approaches involving learners' active participation. This is witnessed in the series of manuals "*Lis avec moi*"⁶, which has been conceived by the Institut National pour la Formation et la Recherche en Education (INFRE), an Institute of Teacher Training and Education Research with the financial support of the USAID⁷. "*Ecris avec moi*"⁸ was financed by the Projet de Développement de l'Education. "*Les Aventures de Finagnon*" is a product of the Centre Inter-Africain pour la Recherche en Pédagogie active (CIRPA). The new manuals tend to promote more local realities. The new books depict practical situations, thus becoming more relevant and motivating for youngsters. "*Go for English*" stems from a collaboration between British and African authors. "*Ihr und Wir*" is the result of a regional project launched by the German Goethe Institute, which also brought together African and international authors. Students mostly do not have to learn grammar rules and translation sentences by heart. Rather they have to engage in interaction and perform common tasks orally. Activities endeavor to perfect their communicative competence and enhance the four skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing. In this context, language learners have the opportunity to develop more self-confidence through the new medium.

Is There a Universal Didactics in Language Teaching?

The experience in Benin reveals that the nature of teaching, and to some extent of courseware, makes language training alien to the learners, and hence, there is a need to consistently provide additional materials. This dilemma has compelled me to reconsider some "exclusive" didactics and to wonder if there is anything like a universal teaching model in L2. Any teacher will admit that there are no definite answers as to how to establish universal norms, so that a foreign or a

⁶ Edition INFRE, Porto-Novo, Benin; EUROPRESS

⁷ United States Agency for International Development

⁸ Edition INFRE, Porto-Novo, Benin; EUROPRESS

second language could be best taught. In this line of thinking, Howard Gardner advocates a model of didactics which will stimulate the various aspects of language teaching and therefore the manifestation of languages in its various contexts. The theory of Multiple Intelligences (MI) takes into consideration learners' experiences and their intelligence profiles, and moves beyond the limits of the curricula. MI promotes more interaction based on local and home-related elements. It offers a means of overcoming the difficulties of teaching communicative language by supplementing selected materials. It proposes a pedagogy which caters to each and every language learner. It opens up possibilities for L2 teachers to establish social justice through the selection of tools. MI raises controversial issues that will stir students to ask questions. The theory puts in-context methods at the core of instruction and encourages group-oriented activities as well. We have learned from the fieldwork that putting MI into practice in a student-centered classroom is the best thing to do. After few weeks, the students I worked with in Cotonou were filled with the sudden realization that they could deliver more than they thought. The theory offers a number of tangible alternatives to tackle obstacles in L2 classes. Then, with the appropriate method and teaching practices, learners' skills can be improved reasonably. In addition, classroom techniques based on Multiple Intelligences may deepen the interest of students in language learning and impart positively on L2 teaching. Gardner's ideas can be useful in reducing the problems and contradictions linked to the transposition of the westernized methods, which affects the skills and knowledge, which Beninese language students may bring with their cultural background.

Contemporary theories of learning indicate that the human cognitive faculty is characterized by great individual variations. Referring to Howard Gardner or Lave and Wenger⁹, a common L2 classroom should

⁹ The assumptions of the Situated Learning Theory are closely linked with Gardner's concept of Multiple Intelligences.

not be a mere teacher-dominated space. It should rather create a social setting of interactions that stimulates learning through exposing students to new experiences. Gardner believes that any language training practice should engage and serve all students in an egalitarian way. It motivates those who are largely passive and hesitant in engaging in communicative activities. It encourages language learners in their journeys of self-discovery and cognitive development. As such, it determines the position students adopt in the classroom and impact on the constructions of identities. Trying to apply some western teaching models in Benin shows limitations and leads to the conclusion that there is no universal didactic methodology in L2. In my opinion, no didactic method is better, if not worse than any other in FL and SL as long as they emphasize elements of both source and target cultures. However, effective method should provide course attendants with the elements of communication that can vary between cultures, to understand the target culture and the meta-communication of the foreign countries being studied. It is therefore important for language teachers to be familiar with and to use pluralistic approaches with cross-cultural activities in language training.

Teaching a foreign language is also teaching a foreign culture. Therefore, the cultural paradigms of the L1 and L2 should be sometimes brought into contact, in order to facilitate language transfer and develop language and cultural awareness of students. It has been widely recognized that culture and language are closely connected. As Stern (1992) points out, "one of the most important aims of culture teaching is to help the learner gain an understanding of the native speaker's perspective" (p. 216). Leveridge explains that language teachers should train learners within the cultural context and on the cultural background of the target language . The reason is that L2 training must give them deep insights into the culturally based linguistic differences in order to counteract misconceptions or prejudices. (2008: 100).

In recent years, language professionals and scholars has been challenging the old, conventional L2 models and have been urging for the promotion of multicultural competence and cultural awareness in L2 teaching. In his theory, Howard Gardner suggests a new methodological paradigm which emphasizes an outcome-based approach as the underlying goal of language training. When teachers try to put the theory of Multiple Intelligences into practice, pedagogical methods have to be considered carefully to fit students' expectations and their use of strategies. Campbell, Campbell, and Dickinson (2004) provide meaningful clues for a practical implementation of Gardner's ideas. As Howard Gardner developed his theory, he did not posit it as a new curriculum or teaching model in school. However, his approach seems to have been given special consideration in L2 teaching. Since the implementation of MI is time-consuming, many teachers, therefore, still prefer their traditional methods. In fact, the model is a shift from teacher-centered frontal lessons to more student-oriented class activities. With Gardner's model, teachers can perform some experiments, since there is no limitation or restriction for creativity. They might try out several linguistic and cultural varieties of activities which include understanding of the forms and the functions of language systems, and find ways and means to combine them with their own methods.

Though foreign language instruction in Benin has made considerable progress recently, there is a need for appropriate activities and new paradigms which promote a more integrative development of language skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing), multicultural competence and cultural awareness. Contrarily to the situation in Benin, the sociolinguistic dimension of language training has been portrayed in documents such as the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). The CEFR encourages language trainers to carry on instructional tasks which place emphasis on linguistic and cultural aspects of language training. It provideses teachers effective instructional strategies and the necessary tools to ensure that whatever

method they adopt is going to work. Nevertheless the experience reveals that approaches to method in FL teaching in Benin which combine socio-cultural views of the target language and intercultural communication, are likely to generate high levels of student satisfaction and enhance overall performance. Likewise, the theory of multiple intelligences advocates the search for methodological models that meet the expectations of learners. Obviously, this fieldwork cannot provide a one-fit-all answer to the question whether there is a universal didactics or which teaching approach to second or foreign language is the best. Nevertheless, the work shows that some teaching practices which integrate the pluri-cultural dimension of L2 could have transformative potentials and be better adapted to a certain group of learners. Lastly, MI suggests that L2 training should also be considered from a cultural and social practice approach rather than in terms of educational universality of practices about good and bad methods.

Summary

In view of the results that are partly discussed in this analysis, there are many challenges facing FL teaching, particularly in Benin. The major ones are scarcity of authentic audio materials, poor teaching and learning environment. This situation is exacerbated by overcrowded classes, especially in public schools. These logistic and physical limitations can be a hindrance to effective language training. The work also reveals the incompatibility between western didactical practice and some traditional classroom culture in Benin. Curricular and teaching practices, which were framed within colonialism and discriminatory discourse, still impact on the way L2 course attendants approach learning tasks. Upon return home, I was confronted, like many teachers who have been trained overseas, with that bitter reality. The use of existing materials seems to not always include authentic texts. In an L2 context teachers may have to work with textbooks in which repartition of

activities is unequal and which do not always meet their entire satisfaction. The differences between the home culture and the target culture in course books in L2 put learners in Benin at a great disadvantage. The survey of four language books reveals that they do not generally cater for all Multiple Intelligences profiles. The replacements or cultural enrichment of manuals and primers raise a number of material and technical questions. Between school administrations and the state there is also no clarity on which side should bear the accompanying costs in promoting new language teaching materials. International publishers may not be willing to include cultural specificity or to insert contrastive elements into textbooks as most of them are driven by financial profits. As teachers, we constantly have to make didactic choices, apply alternative teaching tools and distance ourselves from old materials built on "scholastic intelligences". For Gardner, there is a need to offer a more "learner-centered" curricula, that is to say, paradigms and approaches that reflect students' life experiences in SL contexts. His MI theory allows teachers to focus on the improvement and transformation of what we see as barriers in that respect. The theory represents an extension of school curriculum and offers invaluable benefits to learners. In Benin, a few improvement attempts have helped increase students' motivation and have led to positive outcomes.

We can therefore encourage FL and SL specialists and scholars to keep on making use of the MI theory in order to integrate these inputs into their various classroom teaching strategies. The findings should not be generalized because they are based on feedback from students. The nature of the respondents, their attitudes, interests and motivations may present some limitations. Therefore, more case studies should account for the gradual reform in language training, especially in Benin and investigate if this trend is confirmed over the few years on a large scale. Then the findings could enlighten educationists on new aspects in conceiving future teaching materials.

Chapter 4

The Psychology of Foreign Languages

Introduction

As has been mentioned in the previous chapters, Howard Gardner, put forward some didactic suggestions through his Multiple Intelligences. His theory was designed in order to improve didactic models and facilitate a positive emotional learning space. A great number of studies that have been examined so far seem to approach the didactics of foreign languages (FL) and second languages (SL) from a theoretical perspective, hence placing less emphasis on the role of affective constructs in the language acquisition process. Regardless of utterances and the phonetic realization of speech acts, there are paralinguistic elements in communication such as inflection of the voice, gestures, mimics and various facial expressions, which also seem to play important roles in both foreign and second language (L2) learning. Further culture-related variables that build this “meta-communication” are sociological and emotional elements of language; these are mainly part of speakers’ and hearers’ cultural heritages and are not always compatible in the source and target languages.

Recent findings in the educational sciences raise questions about the psycho-linguistic aspects of foreign and second language acquisition and the extent to which these may affect students’ performance. These research works look into affective constructs as language acquisition variables and point out the pre-eminence of such factors in L2 acquisition¹. The various models which, in fact, extend the traditional Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, have been readapted over the

¹ Attempts are still being made to expand the scope of L2 motivation and redefine the framework of the concept.

years. As a result, these affective variables are now considered as constructs which play a significant role in the performance of language learners (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2009; Kaplan, 2002; Dörnyei 1994, Horwitz, 1986). Contrary to the dualism² idea put forward by René Descartes, which has prevailed since the 17th century and which has suggested a distinctive mind and body, modern psychologists reject the concept that these two entities are autonomous. The American-Portuguese neurologist Antonio R. Damasio shows that both the human body and the brain – and, therefore, emotion and reason - are not separate forces, but rather represent two systems working in concert. Likewise, findings in Neuro-Linguistic Programming (e.g. O'Connor and Seymour, 2003) and in psycholinguistics (Damasio, 2012, 2006, 1999) indicate that language manifestly influences thoughts which in turn affect emotion. Depending on the contexts, this interconnection between perception and emotion may promote language training or also become a hindrance to students' performance (Onwuegbuzie and DaRos-Voseles, 2001; Nunan 1999; Bruner, 1996; Horwitz et al., 1986).

In this section, I am mostly interested in finding out what could be learned by looking into students' experiences from students' own perspectives. Most opinions in this study were obtained through informal conversations, open-ended interviews and observations of participants. Notes of classroom teachings were collected in the course of ten semesters or five academic years, in order to gather useful data on students' perceptions and some reflections on their basic concerns in language training. On the whole, learners' opinions provide some elements that could be taken into consideration in the future with regard to curricula conception and teacher's conduct in the language classroom.

² Dualism is linked to the French philosopher René Descartes (1596-1650), who addressed the mind-body problem or cleavage by putting a clear divide between the mental or immaterial and material spheres.

Definition of Concepts and Limitations

The main aim in this chapter is to look into the roles of affective and psychological variables in foreign and second language acquisition as well as teaching contexts. From the onset, I restrict the scope of emotion and motivation to the psychological aspects. I limit myself to the common definition in the mainstream research put forward by Gardner and Lambert (1972), Gardner (1983) and Damasio (2006). Emotions, as defined by Damasio, are bodily or mental changes which occur in reaction to various stimuli. When the body goes through these physiological variations (e.g., in muscle tone, rate of heartbeat, sweating, facial expression, etc.), certain signals are transmitted to the brain. This generates an emotion, conveys a message about the stimulus one has experienced and causes the individual to be aware of the stimulus he or she has encountered. Further, Damasio makes an important distinction between primary or early emotions, which are innate and universal, and secondary or adult emotions, which are acquired through personal experience and social interactions. With time, individuals learn to associate particular stimuli and emotions and their ensuing bodily changes with particular states and circumstances or with positive or negative outcomes (Wilson, 2012).

In this work, the two concepts of emotion and motivation will be referred to often alongside with “attitude” and “beliefs” as the research’s central focus. The latter, “beliefs,” will be used, with reference to Ramirez (1995: 165), as a set of opinions that a learner holds about a new language, develops towards the target community, and the nature of learner’s views about the language learning process. Education psychologists believe that anybody who is driven by a combination of effort and will power can achieve success in L2 learning, as well as reach a significant level of performance. Hence, motivation is considered as an attitude that is generated through expectations and beliefs in the L2 training process.

Attitudes, Beliefs, Emotion, Motivation and Foreign Language Learning

In psychology, emotions are considered to be related to certain activities in the human brain, which monitor our attentiveness, stimulate our behaviour, and regulate some of the actions around us. Social emotions are therefore generated by the response we provide to our social surroundings. A study was conducted by Paul Ekman et al. in the 1970s to determine if a certain number of emotions are universal. By providing a deeper understanding of a few manifestations which were closely connected to emotion, the research particularly found evidence that humans share at least five basic emotions, which are fear, sadness, happiness, anger and disgust. However, these states manifest themselves in individuals in different ways. In recent years, research on emotions has developed vibrantly. New ideas from cognitive linguistics, experimental psychology and language evolution have shed more light on the nature of human feelings. Damasio explains that the brain interprets emotions, which are themselves purely physical signals of the body reacting to external stimuli. Thus, the somatic marker mechanism is the way in which cognitive representations of the external world interact with cognitive representations of the internal world - where perceptions interact with emotions. Damasio hypothesizes that our decision-making process is highly informed by "somatic markers." Therefore, most people would favour making decisions or taking actions which they associate with positive outcomes or memories. Damasio addresses the notion of somatic markers by explaining that

"they are acquired by experience, under the control of an internal preference system and under the influence of an external set of circumstances which include not only entities and events with which the organism must interact, but also social conventions and ethical rules." (Damasio, 2006:179)

In behavioral psychology, the focus, more than in earlier studies, has been on different natures of emotion, ranging from our positive, negative, and happy states, to happiness, ecstasy and euphoria. Here,

emotion is believed to generate a multitude of mental states that we humans – and to some extent some animals – go through. In the field of education, especially, several authors suggest that what makes us happy contributes to lift up our levels of achievement and motivate us to pursue certain behaviors. According to Damasio,

" Feelings are a powerful influence on reason...the brain systems required by the former are enmeshed in those needed by the latter...such specific systems are interwoven with those which regulate the body." (Damasio, 2006: 245)

Thus, “emotion” can be seen in the field of language learning as a mechanism that generates effort and the willingness in us to perform well in our engagements. Yet, the inner experience of emotion and the degrees to which learners experience this is subjective and varies from one individual to the other, from context to context and might not be similar in the same situation. Cognitive psychology reveals that our positive state of happiness contributes to boost our level of motivation

Broca (1978), among others, has shed some light on these mechanisms. In fact, emotion is located in an area in the center of the brain called the limbic system, which includes the hypothalamus, cingulate cortex, and the hippocampi. This faculty is therefore considered to be linked to certain activities which take place in our brains that stimulate us to consciousness, and influence our behaviors. Like most human psychological constructs, emotion is relative and variable. It might be affected by the environments, as well as by our goals in life. This point of view is clarified by Damasio when he states:

"Somatic markers are special instances of feelings generated from secondary emotions. Those emotions and feelings have been connected, by learning, to predicted future outcomes of certain scenarios. When a negative somatic marker is juxtaposed to a particular future outcome the combination functions as an alarm bell. When a positive somatic marker is juxtaposed instead, it becomes a beacon of incentive." (Damasio, 2006: 174)

Firstly, the findings of the activities covered in this research are presented on the following pages through tables and diagrams. The

answers, in fact, cover major aspects of language use and the beliefs held by English, French and German course attendants in Benin and in Germany. By taking this step, I want to focus mainly on learners' opinions. Most data, which were collected through open questionnaires and interviews, reveal interesting, though, at times, contradictory opinions as regards the way foreign and second languages should be best learned. What the participants said during the research is quoted verbatim, to help support my understanding of the phenomenon. Despite the fact that respondents try to give realistic answers to questions, some responses appear to be contradictory. Few others seem to be influenced by prior language learning experiences on the one hand, or by sociological variables on the other hand. At this point I acknowledge that since emotion-related themes are not put explicitly in the answers provided by the participants, I will allow myself a metaphorical reading of some of the texts, interpret and fit them into relevant contexts. An effort will be made to link such verbatim statements to the literature or anecdotal and personal experiences, where applicable. In an endeavour to elucidate the impact or influences of psychological factors on the process of language acquisition, I will apply my own knowledge of the issues and insights from the literature reviewed (Gao et al., 2007; Pavlenko, 2006, 2003, 1998; Pavlenko and Norton, 2005; Onwuegbuzie and DaRos-Voseles, 2001; Pavlenko and Lantolf, 2000; Norton, 2000, 1995; Krashen, 1985). As such, some statements of the participants may be used more than once to explain different points. Finally, a brief comment will be provided. Since the findings portray students' opinions, needs and learning styles, they should be taken into consideration to help experts improve on their instruction models.

In the following assignment, each participant was given this task: "List all factors which can have negative or positive effects on your motivations." We notice that their answers are instructive. Depending on the context and personal experience, learners indicate that environmental, cultural, and affective factors could be either highly facilitative to language learning or play a negative role in the process,

and thereby constitute some form of hindrance to performance. In addition, the responses reveal that human and professional factors, especially learning facilities, group dynamics, and teacher's attitudes, are highly determinant in the way learners engage in the language learning process. Elaborating on the emotional context of L2, Ramirez (1995) argues that good performance in language acquisition is corroborated by many interconnected variables. He provides evidence that socio-psychological factors such as social context of learning, cultural beliefs, personal traits and anxiety types of motivation can enhance or inhibit the process of language learning. Depending on the learning environment, a student can exhibit anxiety or develop strong self-confidence with relation to a target language (Gardner and MacIntyre, 1993; Krashen, 1985).

In the table below, which is divided into three main subcategories for the purpose of analysis and clarity, I start with a five-point Likert³ scale ranging from (1) "Strongly Disagree" to (5) "Strongly Agree," for the analysis of such concepts like affect, beliefs, attitudes and motivation. In the course of the research, it became evident from the early data we were collecting that the initial boundaries within which we have framed the research were in many senses inappropriate. Particularly some feedback from participants alerted us to the fact that the options provided were in many senses not adequate as answers. On the initial five-point tools, the response "No Answer" (N/A) has been added during the evaluation, as some questions would be left unanswered by respondents (see appendix B). In most cases, participants only have to tick the most suitable responses. They were allowed to give alternative answers or to make extra comments if they felt the need to do so. It is important to keep in mind that learners emphasize a connection between teachers' attitudes to a target language and students' academic performance. As a matter of fact,

³ This is a psychometric scale commonly used in research based on questionnaires and named after its inventor, psychologist Rensis Likert. Here, I will mainly employ rating scales with data measurement items at the ordinal level such as numbers from 1 to 5 or values such as "wrong/false" vs. "right/true" or "completely agree" vs. "completely disagree", "yes /no."

teaching activities should be designed in order to allow for a more holistic teaching of the foreign or second language in class. In a foreign country, the teacher should take into consideration some cultural and sociological aspects of teaching with regard to target and learners' countries, the need to insert contextual clues and not be confined to westernized and euro-centric didactic models and curricula. In this regard, Howard Gardner suggested in his MI theory that foreign and second language programs should, in a way, embody given socio-cultural elements of language teaching and learning as part of class activity, test schemes and devices.

Read each statement below, and tick a number that indicates your opinion: 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Uncertain; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
1. I fell in love with German at first sight, without specific reasons.	22	21	38	21	07	02
2. I began to study foreign languages (_____) because my parents/school required me to learn it/them.	23	15	15	34	24	00
3. Before entering university, the purpose why I was learning foreign languages was to obtain high scores in the university entrance examination.	47	31	13	16	04	01
4. Before entering university, my effort at foreign languages learning depended to a large extent on whether I liked my teacher (s) or not.	36	30	23	20	05	01
5. Before coming to Germany, my effort at German learning depended to a large extent on test scores.	43	28	28	08	02	02

Table 9: (Adapted from Gao Y., Cheng Y. and Zhao Y., 2007; Onwuegbuzie and DaRos-Voseles, 2001)

Since the 1980s, there has been a shift in the traditional ways of viewing foreign and second language learning and teaching in the body of literature, and much emphasis has been put on affective factors. As a matter of fact, the concept of motivation has moved on to an important variable in the field and has become a focal point in education psychology. The answers to questions 3 and 5 are clear indications that not only do higher marks matter to L2 learners, but that there are other reasons which influence readers' opinions. These belief systems, which sometimes have an impact on the way language students approach learning, undergo changes in the light of differing encounters.

In my own experience of language encounters, environmental factors and psychological constructs such as beliefs, expectations and efforts, were constantly part of the learning process. Whether I was in a second or foreign language context, these variables were integral to my personal will, to my motivation, and evolved through different stages. Very often, they varied across time or fluctuated, depending on the commitments I usually made in order to achieve specific goals.

Read each statement below, and tick a number that indicates your opinion: 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Uncertain; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
6. After entering university, my effort at foreign language learning has been linked to a large extent with test scores.	38	33	24	12	02	00
7. After entering university, my performance with regard to foreign language learning has been linked to the fact of whether I like my language teachers or not.	34	29	27	18	04	00
8. After coming to Germany, my effort at learning German has been linked to a large extent with the quality of German lessons and the textbooks.	22	18	25	37	09	00
9. After coming to Germany, my performance with regard to learning German has been linked to a large extent on whether I liked my German teacher or not.	30	29	24	18	11	00
10. After coming to Germany, my effort at learning German has been linked to a large extent to whether I like my fellow students in the German class.	28	29	29	19	06	00

Table 10: (Adapted from Gao Y., Cheng Y. and Zhao Y., 2007; Onwuegbuzie and DaRos-Voseles, 2001)

Education psychologists made, in recent times, distinctions as to the nature of affective constructs, and motivation is seen initially as a main psychological variable in FL and SL. In order to become productive, high motivation needs to be geared by students themselves through affective-related and performance-related efforts as well as their strong desires and their commitment to learning the foreign language. This accounts for the reason why motivation can be linked to external and internal factors or being intrinsic or environmental as well (Krashen 1985). Some authors (Nunan 2010; Kaplan, 2002; Norton

2000) will enlarge the scope of motivation by stressing its sociological aspect. For them, motivation mainly occurs in relation to a specific action.

When we look at questions 5 to 10, we particularly note the shifting nature of students' beliefs in the course of time, and then can link this change to the periods before and after their coming into contact with the new language. Attending university offers FL students some interaction opportunity with the target culture, and going abroad – in this case, the exchange students in Germany, for instance – they are able to immerse themselves into the target environment. Considering the time aspect, we could find explanation in the level of competence. That is to say, beginners and advanced learners may have a diverging outlook. Once students discover the benefits of their additional languages, they seem to put more effort and work into achieving good results. This is exemplified in statements 12 in the following table, where we have the feedback, “Learning German is important to me because foreign languages represent very useful tools in contemporary society” and 13: “Learning foreign languages can give me a sense of fulfilment” or achievement (Table 12, p. 89). So, it would be legitimate to assume that the more advanced students are, the better they can appraise and value the new languages, and even more when they live in the target environment.

Read each statement below, and tick a number that indicates your opinion: 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Uncertain; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
11. The main reason why I am learning German is to obtain university credit points/high scores in examinations/a degree	54	26	16	11	04	00
12. Learning German is important to me because foreign languages are very useful tools in meeting the challenges in contemporary society	02	01	13	32	68	00
13. Learning foreign languages can give me a sense of fulfillment	02	03	12	44	55	00
14. I learn foreign languages in order to facilitate the learning of other academic subjects (to read academic books in the original languages)	09	19	32	35	21	00
15. I learn foreign languages because I have special interest in languages	03	11	26	32	46	00

Table 11: (Adapted from Gao Y., Cheng Y. and Zhao Y., 2007; Onwuegbuzie and DaRos-Voseles, 2001)

Students' answers to question 12: "Learning German is important to me because foreign languages are very useful tools in meeting the challenges in contemporary society" and 15: "I learn foreign languages because I have special interests in languages" are clear indications that an affective variable cannot bring any success on its own, least of all as it is directed towards a specific goal. In these cases, beliefs will engender high motivation once learners are aware of the benefits they gain from that. Motivation becomes relevant only when combined with learners' efforts or investments.

With reference to the next table (12), emphasis is placed on the shifts in beliefs and motivations, as well as by the majority of the respondents in answers to questions 17 to 19. A possible explanation is that once a learner has the opportunity to practice the relevant

language in its social context, he or she feels more connected to the new language and his or her degree of interest grows. We suspected that in this case the acquisition and learning processes are less influenced by cultural biases and false assumptions.

Based on these observations, few themes have emerged with regard to the correlation between learners' personality development and learning environment. Among other things, this will be discussed intensively. A number of authors (Dornyei, 1994; Gardner and MacIntyre, 1993, 1994; Krashen, 1985) consider motivation as learners' response to a target language community, whereby environmental factors also exert a direct, indirect, or positive influence on learning. Here, the dichotomy of the instrumental or integrative motivation in the L2 context is vehemently expressed through the statement of this respondent: *"Without any of these factors, a person could see no utility to put effort in learning a FL."*

Read each statement below, and tick a number that indicates your opinion: 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Uncertain; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
16. I learn German because I am interested in German peoples and cultures.	01	18	25	39	35	00
17. After staying in Germany for some time, I have become interested in German speaking peoples and their cultures	03	10	23	40	33	00
18. Now that I have achieved a better command of the German language, I have developed a great interest in the language and the culture.	03	07	26	49	28	00
19. The acquisition of a better command of German gives me a sense of personal achievement and helps me live up to my expectations	02	03	18	53	33	00

Table 12: (Adapted from Gao Y., Cheng Y. and Zhao Y., 2007; Onwuegbuzie and DaRos-Voseles, 2001)

Furthermore, our analysis leads us to deduce a strong correlation between motivation types and investment. This reinforces findings by Norton and Pavlenko, who made contrasts between integrative and instrumental orientation of motivation. When we look at the statements 16: “I learn German because I am interested in German peoples and cultures” and 19: “The acquisition of better command of German gives me a sense of personal achievement and helps me live up to my expectations,” the answers provided by students reflect their personal desire to become part of the new environment of learning and to show their orientation in using the new language as a tool to get more recognition.

These facts lead to the assumption that FL or SL learners – whether individually or collectively – negotiate social and psychological variables in their process of learning. We also believe that responses to the item 19 refers to the desire of learners who approach L2 as a

means of integration, and, therefore, bear the strong wish to become full members of the target environments. Through instrumental orientation, a learner acquires a new language in order not only to gain recognition from the natives, but also to enhance his or her social status. More often, he or she will endeavour to get professional and economic advantages through the new medium.

This is opposed to the previous tables which concentrated on self-perception of students about their performance, their beliefs and motivations in language learning. Expectedly, respondents emphasize more on topical discussions, and the nature of interaction among peers. The survey also noted, with only isolated exceptions, that an overwhelming majority of learners favour a positive “working” atmosphere or classroom atmosphere. Surprisingly, “teachers’ attitudes” to respective target languages also matters a lot to the students as we can see below:

Rate the statements below: 25- <i>The following aspects are important in a language class?</i>	Very	Neither /nor	Not at all
The working atmosphere	102	12	0
Having discussions on actual topics	91	21	4
Having the opportunity to practice my skills	94	12	0
Interaction between a small group and the whole group	89	24	2
The teacher's attitude to the target language	105	8	4

Table 13: (Adapted from Gao Y., Cheng Y. and Zhao Y., 2007; Onwuegbuzie and DaRos-Voseles, 2001)

Other beliefs or perceptions contend that learners clearly indicate their preferences for contexts of use for their second language. Practicing in the new language helps students overcome their apprehensions or anxieties, a phenomenon that is observed among those who avoid

making difficult utterances in the target language. In this particular case, their effort to find a replacement or alternative statement can engender low motivation or lack of self-confidence, particularly at the beginners' level. Sometimes, course participants are unable to recall previously-learned grammatical rules, vocabulary, and phonetic structures. Their fear can be accentuated when they are looked down upon by other students; this can even get worse in evaluative situations. Some learners rather favour pair work or group activities in order to lessen this contra-productive feeling. In these interactions, such students feel a low degree of inhibition. Participants can easily look for substitution mechanisms to alleviate communication problems with self-devised strategies. Hence, it seems appropriate to claim that well-managed pairs works and interesting group activities can promote engagement in the acquisition process.

Rate the statements below: <i>26 -During pair / group work:</i>	Very	Neither /nor	Not at all
I can use my skills at best	60	48	8
I feel no inhibition and can learn better	66	40	5
I can understand the perspectives of my peers	70	44	3
I can reflect on my own perspective	69	41	2
I try to explain issues until my partners understand me	87	23	5

Table 14: (Adapted from Gao Y., Cheng Y. and Zhao Y., 2007; Onwuegbuzie and DaRos-Voseles, 2001)

In our present analysis, we uncovered little that could lead to an overall generalization. Yet, our assessment is consistent with the findings of MacIntyre and Gardner (1994), who have revealed the occurrence of affective variables, especially of anxiety, at the input, processing, and output stages. Referring to anxiety at the input stage

(input anxiety), these authors defined this occurrence as the apprehension felt by learners when they are dealing with information reception in the new language. The processing anxiety indicates the apprehension linked to learning and thinking in the foreign language. As regards anxiety at the output stage, it is observed when course participants try to avoid making comments during speech or writing activities in the target language. These states of apprehension make many students feel helpless and over-stressed. At worst, this can become an issue in classroom atmosphere, course progression and peer students relationship. This is expressed by those participants who admitted, for instance, “to be embarrassed in speaking in front of people who can speak well”, and who need “peer support.” As language professionals, we cannot deny that a conducive environment for L2 acquisition is where anxiety is low and, therefore, where learners feel no inhibition to use the target language so that they will not “feel lost.”

With reference to these stages of emotion, Krashen explains these fluctuating states of anxiety that learners experience through his theory of “Affective Filter Hypothesis.” He thus introduced a new line of thinking and advocates that some affective variables such as motivation, self-confidence and anxiety all affect language acquisition occasionally. This can occur in a positive way or, at worse, be a mental impediment to learning or acquisition, especially when students aim at error-free performance.

On the whole, this section of the survey has set out to investigate some interpersonal aspects of language acquisition and learning, particularly those that were judged as very important by students. The different tables presented so far show that beliefs and learners’ opinions cannot be dissociated from the language learning process. The findings also reveal that environmental and human factors such as group atmosphere and peer students’ behaviors can be conducive or deterrent to effective language learning.

I believe that once teachers follow appropriate approaches and develop activities that incorporate near-to-life experience of participants, learners will develop a higher self-esteem. They will, therefore, express

less anxiety, and show overall more motivation in their foreign or second language learning experience.

Impact of the Teacher's Personality on Foreign Language Learners

A further objective of this chapter is to find out how students view the role of language teachers in the classroom. We especially look at the perceptions that second and foreign language students hold about their teachers and the extent to which this may impact in a positive or negative way the acquisition and learning process. When we consider statement number 7 (Appendix A), we discover that a high percentage of respondents disagree with the assumption "After entering university, my performance in foreign language learning is linked to whether I like my language teachers or not." However, this should be nuanced by one respondent who says that: "If the teacher is good, this helps a lot." This brings us to hypothesize on the question: "Who is a good teacher?"

Since the beginning of my career, I have been trying, like probably many others in this profession, to understand what should be the role of the language teacher. The questions I ask are: Am I in class specifically to instill knowledge and language facts to students? How much flexibility does curriculum allow? Am I expected to only work within the limits of curriculum requirements and school prescriptions, or can I sometimes move beyond institutional frameworks? Is there any spontaneity required from me or should the lesson flow be restricted to course book sequencing, in the face of inadequate courseware? Should I take full responsibility for the selection of learning strategies and, therefore, for learners' success or failure? Is it legitimate to listen to students' wishes, offer alternatives or incorporate extra-curricular activities? During communication activities, should I put more emphasis on meaning in context or rather stress the correct grammatical and structural forms in order to fulfill students' wishes? How can I activate learners' prior knowledge in order to help them negotiate meaning in context? Is it legitimate to reward individual efforts or must only

performance and good results matter? Yet another question I ask myself is: Should I develop some form of friendship with course participants, or should I not be open to them?

Generally, learners' perceptions are shaped by a variety of factors and can contribute to progress or success in language learning. The statements above imply that language teachers are likely to play a key role as regards the kind of opinions students hold. When we look at the answers related to item 25 or table 13 (p.90), we can see that students are not neutral to teachers' attitudes towards the target languages and towards the students themselves. The verbatims to items 26 or table 14 (p.91) and 27 below unveil that learners, especially a vast majority of the students, expect their foreign or second language teachers to apply a method which helps them overcome inhibitions. Moreover, class activities should contribute to "reinforce learner's self-esteem", guide and "force them to put in more effort" in L2 learning.

Rate the statements below: 27 - <i>The teacher's perceptions of language learners:</i>	Yes	N/A: No Answer	No
Can reinforce learner's self-esteem	107	02	04
Can challenge and force students to put in more effort	103	00	13
Can inhibit a learner's motivation	91	00	22
Can affect learners' perceptions of the target language	96	02	16
Can be frustrating and confusing	59	02	52

Table 15: (Adapted from Gao Y., Cheng Y. and Zhao Y., 2007; Onwuegbuzie and DaRos-Voseles, 2001)

Interestingly, some responses show that few opinions are inconsistent with regards to curriculum requirements, didactic tools and class activities. For example, in their answers to item 28 presented in the next table, a large number of the learners assumed that the teacher

“should correct every mistake appropriately” and added that “If s/he always corrects mistakes, s/he motivates students.”

Rate the statements below: <i>28 - The Teachers' impact on learning:</i>	<i>Completely right</i>	<i>N/A: No Answer</i>	<i>not right</i>
S/He should correct every mistake appropriately	71	02	36
S/He should only correct some mistakes	47	03	67
If s/he always corrects mistakes, students are motivated	71	01	42
If s/he always corrects mistakes, s/he inhibits students	36	02	77
S/He must help students pronounce excellently	89	02	30

Table 16: (Adapted from Gao Y., Cheng Y. and Zhao Y., 2007; Onwuegbuzie and DaRos-Voseles, 2001)

The answers of students to error correction practices often reveal very contradictory views. The research literature in L2 contains a great range of supportive approaches which indicate that systematic error correction does not seem to have a direct or strong impact on learning a new language. There is no doubt that learners who master the rules of the target language assimilate faster than their peers who do not. Yet, various schools of thought share differing viewpoints on the correction of learners' errors. The belief that all errors must be corrected systematically or immediately used to be presented as self-evident and as the correct way in which this situation should be dealt with. This view has been disputed by contemporary research, which shows that such steps do not appear to support the mastering and transferring of knowledge across languages by students. In fact, adolescents and adults acquire grammar forms and structures in a “pre-determined, inalterable order”, sometimes by analogy to their first language. Students better internalized this feedback when they discover these mistakes by themselves, so that a constant corrective input does nearly

change this. On the contrary, this fact affects students' feelings or self-esteem. They often felt unsure and confused about what should be the more appropriate way to proceed (cf. Russell, 2009).

It has been established that an effective method in language teaching does not rest solely upon a constant correction of mistakes. On the contrary, teachers would fear that such behavior could reduce learners' interest in the learning process. One will agree with Horwitz, (1988) that sometimes learners' beliefs are contradictory and unrealistic. For Richards and Schmidt, in order to find out learning strategies which learners use in L2 learning and identify difficulties they encounter, error analysis has to be carried out (cf. Richards and Schmidt, 2002:184). However, errors and mistakes should be considered as part of the acquisition process at beginners' level, especially when course participants are engaging in communication activities. For instance, when teachers use their communicative approach with beginners, they should be aware that some course participants may be unhappy at the onset, especially when students are much more focused on speech correctness. However, communicative competence refers not only to a learner's speaking ability in the target language and correct use of grammatical and linguistic structures. It is also the skill of finding suitable words or appropriate utterances in context through the use of modality and turn-taking rules. Any language teacher has then to find his or her own way of dealing with these issues. A constant error correction obstructs communication. In certain cases, instructors should decide if they wish to let students recognize their own mistakes and, consequently, develop new strategies or their own compensatory mechanisms. Russell (2009) refutes any approach which would consist in the strict corrective grammar instruction, especially error correction, and urges teachers to define for themselves exactly which kinds of improvements are the most worthwhile for course attendants. Instructors should find adequate forms of tackling these fallacious beliefs at the beginning of the acquisition process; else it will be difficult for learners to discard these misleading opinions later on.

Usually, L2 beginners believe that any errors should be addressed by the teacher in order to improve learners' linguistic competence. Those who hold these views do not fully participate in learning activities if the teacher does not correct them constantly. The answers of the majority of students (71 vs. 42) to the comment of item 28 (p.95): "If the teacher always corrects mistakes, students are motivated" do not encourage communicative activities in the classroom. Also, a "recast" (when the teacher repeats a learner's mistake by using the correct utterance) have proven to not be the most effective step. According to Russell (2009), adolescent and adult assimilate better when their instructors help them identify and correct their error on their own or through their active self-participation. Only then they will get a feel for what is correct and what is not.

Rate the statements below: 29 - Do you think that:	<i>strongly agree</i>	<i>N/A: No Answer</i>	<i>strongly disagree</i>
Error correction helps students learn or speak correctly	102	00	8
Correction is very important in the language acquisition process	103	00	7
Only few errors need not to be corrected in the class	43	02	67
Teachers are responsible for failure or success of students	38	07	68
Teachers must be sensitive to students' cultural backgrounds	92	05	14

Table 17: (Adapted from Gao Y., Cheng Y. and Zhao Y., 2007; Onwuegbuzie and DaRos-Voseles, 2001)

Besides, the investigation reveals that also other factors are to be considered in the L2 classroom. For instance, language learners expect teachers to be sensitive. However, most participants disagree with the assumption that "Teachers are responsible for the failure or success of students." In order to meet learners' needs, the instructor should adopt an attitude that engages and challenges students' mind and intellect.

The instructor has to improve some of his personal skills by listening to learners' needs as well as constantly expanding his knowledge and experience. Teachers should not allow students to challenge their authority and must ensure that learners comply with instructions. Unrealistic perceptions are also highlighted with responses to the following statement on item 30 below: "Which errors must always be corrected?" The figures below speak for themselves, and we will not need any further comment, as a lot of students felt that it was important to have a good command of grammar. Whether we consider language use, content, phonological, lexical or the grammatical aspects of FL and SL, the correction of mistakes in second language acquisition still remains a controversial issue. Furthermore, the answers given in the table below indicate that the students expect teachers to also put a lot of emphasis on the phonetic aspect of learning. Obviously, speaking with a "good accent" is more important for many participants than acquiring lexical knowledge.

Rate the statements below: 30- Which errors must always be corrected:	
<i>Grammatical</i>	83
<i>Phonetics</i>	61
<i>Lexical</i>	51

Table 18: (Adapted from Gao Y., Cheng Y. and Zhao Y., 2007; Onwuegbuzie and DaRos-Voseles, 2001)

Further interesting aspects of the survey revealed that almost 70% of the participants advocate that not only the standard form of language should be part of institutionalized teaching. They also expect to have some "knowledge about non-standard language and idioms" (87 vs 23: see table 20; p. 100). Such a opinion, again, stands in paradoxical view to students wishes of systematic error correction.

Rate the statements below: 31 - <i>I like receiving from the teacher:</i>	<i>strongly agree</i>	<i>strongly disagree</i>
Knowledge about non-standard language and idioms	87	23
Linguistic explanations and relevance of new terms	102	11
Contextual examples of new concepts	101	11
Encouragement and recognition for my performance	99	12
Tips and advice to help me reach my goals and high standards	103	6

Table 19: (Adapted from Gao Y., Cheng Y. and Zhao Y., 2007; Onwuegbuzie and DaRos-Voseles, 2001)

Although these figures aim to offer some general overview of learners' perceptions, it is too early to make some definitive assumptions, as data discussed in this analysis present some limitations. Many other factors could have impacted on answers of participants. However, we cannot discount the fact that language learning performance and students' emotional states are interrelated. We can concur with Ellis (2008, 1997) that cultural background, life exposure and past experiences play a major role in shaping the way students approach the language learning experience. Certain personality traits may also govern learners' beliefs. This survey also reminds us that students and teachers have different beliefs and contending expectations about language learning. Teachers' approaches, training practices and methodological choices may impact on the way in which learners perceive language learning. Language teachers' attitude, their choice of activities and their linguistic input in FL teaching may prompt some specific beliefs. It is the duty of any teacher to endeavour and find a balanced method in order to prevent false opinions taking root, since this might turn out to be the major hindrance to students' investments.

As language educationists, we constantly have to implement up-to-date pedagogical models in the fields of foreign and second language. These practices should not neglect student's cultural learning style. Foreign and second language teaching tasks need to be

done by dedicated teachers who are confident teaching international students, keep expanding their own structures of knowledge and are aware that students expect them to teach more aspects than the grammar, phonetics and linguistic structures of the language.

Rate the statements below: 34 - Please, answer "Yes" or "No"	Yes	N/A: No Answer	No
Formal institutions must only be places to teach the standard form of a language	33	02	75
Good teachers should be confident teaching international students	106	00	4
A good teacher must arouse students' cultural interests	101	02	8
Interpersonal knowledge is more important than grammar and phonetics	30	00	78
Interpersonal knowledge is as important as grammar and phonetics	81	00	30

Table 20: (Adapted from Gao Y., Cheng Y. and Zhao Y., 2007; Onwuegbuzie and DaRos-Voseles, 2001)

Contending expectations between learners and teachers about the way the learning experience should be best conducted can have either a positive or negative emotional impact on students. As a result, students might become less confident and will not fully participate in classroom activities.

It is important to keep in mind that there is an undeniable relationship between teachers' attitudes to the target language and students' academic performance. As a matter of fact, language instructors must continue to design more activities with a holistic view of the foreign or second language in class. In a foreign country, the teacher might include "the cultural and sociological" aspects of both target and learners' countries, insert contextual clues and keep away from only westernized and euro-centric didactic models and curricula.

Comments and Implications

Our brief overview of the main opinions and expectations of students as regards the L2 process and teachers' attitudes indicates that learners' perceptions are multiple and variable. We believe that the inclusion of the perspectives of the students can bring about changes in the ecology of the language class. Likewise, they can serve as a catalyst in promoting effective teaching methodologies, which are aimed at meeting learners' expectations. From the feedback that we received, we could also infer that individual and group opinions may not always be the same. In addition, foreign and second language learning should offer curricula that demand the application of the skills of most students and also relate to students' affective and emotional intelligence.

The survey endeavours to identify the perceptions integral to motivation and to provide useful recommendations for effective learning and teaching practices. However, caution is needed because of the small number of participants involved. Besides, it is not always possible to transpose empirical analyses easily. The same experiment may yield dissimilar results in another setting. Diverse interpretations of circumstances, cultures and languages can lead to a different understanding of teaching contents. Furthermore, learning activities should enable interaction and stimulate discussions about topical issues that could still engage students' minds outside the classroom. It follows that language institutions and experts need to implement adequate training programs for language teachers.

Overall, with regard to the reasons underlying the learning of a new language and concomitantly to the shift in perception, we believe that this causality in some cases may stem from the students' limited language knowledge and contact with the target environment. To some extent, there are erroneous beliefs which need to be eliminated. According to Horwitz (1987: 126), erroneous beliefs about language training lead to less effective language learning strategies. As we can infer from responses to the comments in item 25 (p.90) in the overview, a majority of the participants favor a conducive learning atmosphere

that stimulates class discussions, well-managed peer interactions and group work. In addition, these participants express strong preferences for very challenging activities and communicative interactions. This corroborates the common knowledge that language is best acquired if students use the opportunities offered by the target environments. In foreign language contexts, where learners do not have direct contact with the target environment, the use of multimedia tools becomes an efficient alternative to reinforced communication strategies. Recalling my own experience with foreign or second language learning, I will say that I had most of my best experiences outside the classroom, where I could put into practice some of the things I was learning.

We cannot deny the fact that conditional effects generated by teachers' attitudes can raise the self-esteem of learners who mostly welcome correction of their errors as portrayed in responses to items 27 and 28 (p. 94, 95). However, linguistic proficiency does not represent the only ability to speak or perform in an acquired language without making mistakes. Regarding this topic, language theorists and pedagogues do not all agree on what constitutes the most important issue in language teaching. Though the majority of learners in this study are very much concerned about grammar and correctness, few of the participants acknowledge that mistakes are part of the learning process. The language teacher should therefore be flexible, and understand that teaching and learning complement each other and make students remain engaged through a variety of activities in class (item 27; p.94). The instructor should encourage learners to work toward autonomy in given tasks; but he or she should not be reluctant to try out a multitude of methods, to explain the importance of a standard and a non-standard language and the appropriate use of each of them (item 31; p.99).

During pair or group work, most participants consent to the idea of shifting or switching topics if they could not find appropriate words in speech situations. It is therefore the duty of language teachers to identify suitable strategies to deal with relevant misconceptions, wherever they may arise. In order to enhance the effective use of learning and communication strategies, the instructor needs to help his

or her students make the best use of their conversational skills. This also means that the teacher should constantly adopt courseware that is helpful to the students' aptitude.

In sum, this survey on beliefs and perceptions held by learners also informs us about the strategies various learners adopt. It also reminds us that some sets of beliefs conform to what has been described by some authors as the effective strategies and attitudes in language acquisition process (Dornyei and Ushioda, 2009; Pavlenko and Norton, 2005; Onwuegbuzie and DaRos-Voseles, 2001; Horwitz, 1986). In addition, the study has demonstrated that learners have sometimes preconceived ideas about methodological practices and the extent to which errors should best be tackled in class (Richards and Schmidt, 2002). We believe that a person's cultural background plays a role in shaping that person's perception about a new language. Our review also indicates some direct and indirect effects of students perceptions of their teachers on emotion (items 25 and 27; p. 90 and 94). This therefore affects motivation. Teachers should try individually to find the best strategies to deal with some perceptions or expectations that are unrealistic. As long as erroneous beliefs about language prevail, students will not be fully motivated and language learning will lead to less success. In effect, it is the duty of the teacher to explain that "trial, failure and mistakes" are concomitant to language learning processes and that reward does not come instantly.

In Benin

Participants were French first language speakers and foreign language learners of English and German. Most of them were learning the new languages as part of their study requirements for their secondary school and higher education. They mostly complained about the lack of opportunities to practice the new languages in the classroom or outside the school premises. Unfortunately, there are very few exchange

programs in English between schools in Benin and schools in English-speaking countries in the West African region⁴; there exists no German-speaking countries nearby, for instance. The traditional methods still favoured by many teachers put great emphasis on the learning of grammar rules rather than on communicative skills. Nevertheless, the vast majority of students still hold the view that foreign or second language teaching is a rewarding tool in the job market. Other obstacles encountered are linked to the environmental and language teaching situations in Benin, where classes are overcrowded and students enter courses with discrepancies as regards competence levels. Constant power outage does not usually allow for a regular use of multimedia equipment. Unfortunately, language course attendants still hold onto some traditional beliefs and mainly view the teacher as a figure of authority. Course participants often partly rely on the language instructor as a dispensator of absolute knowledge. For them, the teacher's knowledge is not to be questioned or challenged. This clearly demonstrates how non-academic factors can obscure other important aspects of the teacher's work. In this respect learners expect their instructors to be sensitive, caring and to offer guidance. Consequently, when some of the students' mistakes are not corrected, the students might experience some personal conflicts, given the way they regard their teachers. Despite educational reforms and curricular changes in Benin, some traditional teaching traits are still firmly rooted in teachers' practices, thereby influencing the collective mind of learners, a concern that is expressed by the participants in this study (item 29; p.97).

Germany and Benin: FL versus SL Contexts

Respondents generally gave interesting views on their own experience. Yet, detailed explanations of some findings are beyond the scope of this work, and I believe experts in the field will provide the

⁴ Nigeria is a neighboring country and Ghana is located just a few hundred kilometers away.

suitable answers. Nevertheless, the overall result is that participants both in FL and SL environment are generally concerned about grammatical correctness when speaking. But further feedbacks from students indicate that this concern about linguistics and grammatical correctness is much more pronounced at the beginners' levels than at the advanced levels. We can assume that some beliefs gradually changed, as levels of competence and understanding improved. Learners have closer contact with the target languages and cultures. The needs of these learners are not limited to grammar and phonetics anymore. This is because every learner understands the rules of the language better and aspire for something more challenging.

A lot more students in the SL environment make the contrary claim, that they need to develop their language competence and aspire for a better phonetic realization. This is legitimate and understandable, as they wish to use the opportunity to practice more often.

On the whole, students' opinions could provide the means and the implication for change in pedagogy and curriculum. The comments have shown that learners in most cases favour formal or informal exposure to the new language and welcome being more actively involved in the target culture. The contention is that apprehension levels are either elevated or lessened when language learners work in pairs, or are involved in group activities. The part of emotion in the process is expressed through the nature of their investment. With regard to the perceptions of participants, the study reveals core elements, through which the process of acquisition and learning of an additional language occurs and how they correlate with motivations. Following in-depth discussion of the data analysis, different themes have emerged that are related to personal beliefs, emotions and motivation types. These were validated through a literature control (Gao, Cheng and Zhao, 2007; Pavlenko, 2006; Onwuegbuzie and DaRos-Voseles, 2001; Norton, 2000, 1995; Horwitz 1987; Krashen, 1985) hereafter interpreted through the existence of different categories as follows:

- Intrinsic interest: Appreciation or likeness of the target language and certain aspects of its culture (items 15, 16, 17 and 18: see Appendix B, p. 198 ff.)
- Short run and professional achievement: Learning the target language to obtain satisfactory results in exams, e.g., for university entrance or graduation (items 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 11: see p. 198 ff.)
- Learning facilities: Learning a foreign or a second language because of features of the learning environment, such as the quality of teaching, teaching materials, teachers, and affiliation with the learning group (items 4, 7, 8, 9 and 10: see p. 198 ff.)
- Individual development and achievement: Learning a new language to increase one's own ability and social status for future development. This may imply the wish to find a good job and developing a sense of accomplishment as exemplified in the responses to items 12, 13, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24 (p. 198 ff.)
- Information means or tool of success: Learning additional languages to obtain first-hand sources or information and to gain access to the academic resource (items 12, 14 and 20: see p. 198 ff.)

When we recapitulate the above-mentioned categories, we can assume that immediate achievement, information tools and personal development indicate that the target language is considered by learners as an instrument with which to attain specific goals. This points to the instrumental motivation in the classical model, with language learners aiming at different objectives. The intrinsic motivation is related to learners' interest in the target culture. However, the frequent use of the concerned language might also serve certain immediate purposes, encouraging students to score higher marks in order to obtain certain

diplomas or certificates. This immediate achievement can also be driven by professional reasons, especially if learners wish to increase their status in the new environment. In this case, we also talk about integrative motivation. On the whole, we conclude that our analysis reasonably evidenced a strong causality between foreign and second language learners' perceptions and emotions. The latter eventually influences learning through various types and degrees of investments.

Language Use and Identity Construction

My main aim in this section is to ascertain how personality and identity developments are negotiated in a pluri-linguistic environment. I will address the way social relations and institutional decisions still determine the status of a language in many African countries. Then I will hypothesize on how social interactions can either constrain or facilitate language learning and use of language, which in turn influences speakers' self-perception and identity construction. To arrive at some conclusions, I will elaborate on some factors which go a long way to show why English, French, Portuguese and Spanish, among others, still remain the dominant languages in most former colonies in Africa. In an attempt to understand why this is the trend in Africa south of the Sahara, especially in Benin, I will document some of the language learning experiences of the local students, elaborate on the utilization of international, second, foreign and native languages in various domains of the lives of people and then elucidate on what roles these factors play in shaping personal identity. Thereafter, I will show how personal and internalized attitudes of Africans, particularly Beninese citizens, toward their own languages, could be traced back to historical contexts.

Explanations of the Concept of Identity Construction

Identity is a very complex concept and is more frequently used in two ways. In a societal sense, it indicates the coexistence of people from many different backgrounds and ethnicities, as in “multi-ethnic societies.” In an individual sense it characterizes persons who are members of a group. Scholars and theorists have attempted to look into this process from different perspectives so as to understand the fluid and dynamic phenomenon of identity construction. They have faced many challenges in their effort to come up with a common framework that will take into consideration the complex interrelation between the socio-cultural and psychological factors that affect the making of human identity (Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009). Identity can be seen as self-conception that is linked to cultural orientation, group experience or individual life story.

Here we will try to delve into the connection between identity and L2 learning by questioning the role of emotion in this process as well as the factors that may promote or impede the construction of identity (Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009: 176). Drawing from a psychosocial perspective, the concept of identity has been employed interchangeably in literature. Erikson (1968) has referred to it as the “ego.” Furthermore, Erikson elaborates on what he calls “silent doings” (p. 209) which, can be understood as the inner processes of the ego that is linked to constant integration of self-images. This endless process engages the integration of self-images of oneself and a sense of self within social reality (Erikson, 1968: 211). Identity is also seen as constituted by the self, especially the tool that we use to give meaning to our experiences and make sense of self-relevant constructs, what we reflect on and attach meaning to. Identity can also be subcategorized, namely, as the personal and social identity (Hogg and Abrams, 1988: 25). The first indicates specific attributes of the individual, whereas the second stresses membership identity or common traits of a group. Identity is also dynamic and is characterized by a continuous process. This denotes a progressive fluidity over time and contexts. Therefore, a

person's identity is a continuum which goes through impacts and influences.

The concepts of identity situate themselves within two distinct interpretations, namely, essentialism and non-essentialism. The essentialist view of identity puts forward the notion that our core identity is given at birth. It generates our sense of "Self" and belonging to a collective group and, as a fixed construct, it is determined by objective criteria such as common ancestry and common biological characteristics (DeLamater and Hyde, 1998; Giddens, 1991). The essentialist view assumes that an individual, as well as groups, are bearers of a unique character related to race and kinship, past histories or collective memories. The anti-essentialist explanations emphasize the social construction of identity as a more viable basis of "collective Self." Social constructionism recognizes the central role played by language in facilitating construction and communication of selves through social interaction (DeLamater and Hyde, 1998). This social constructionism sees identity as an artefact which is continually molded, re-fabricated and mobilized in accordance with reigning cultural scripts and centers of power. It manifests itself across a developmental trajectory and within a variety of contexts.

African Attitudes toward Native and International Languages

In the past, the colonialists used to send some Africans to England, France, Portugal or Spain to learn the colonial masters' languages, and to return to be engaged as interpreters, civil servants or clerks. There was then a widespread view among Europeans that African languages were, in comparison with European ones, deficient. Apart from that, the linguistic heterogeneity of Africa was said to also have contributed to the imposition of European languages as official mediums of communication and as the languages of formal education on the local peoples during the colonial rule. At that time, spoken and written competence in the colonialists' language was a passport for a white-

collar job. As a result, English, French, Portuguese and Spanish became more popular among both people with Western education and those without Western or formal education.

The situation did not change much in the post-colonial years. This is highlighted by the words of Milton Obote. In his opening address at a Seminar on "Mass Media and Linguistic Communication in East Africa" in Kampala, Uganda, in 1967, Mr. Obote, the then president of Uganda at the time, said:

"I want to say briefly that Uganda finds difficulties in identifying herself, and that Uganda has a serious language problem. Our present policy as a government is to teach more and more English in schools. We are not unmindful of the disadvantages inherent in this policy. We know that English, before independence, was the language of the administrator. It was the language of the people who were rulers and by which Uganda was ruled. We also know that many of our people learned English in order to serve in the Administration, at least to serve our former master. It would appear that we are exactly doing the same; our policy to teach more English could in the long run just develop more power in the hands of those who speak English, and better economic status for those who know English. We say this because we do not see any possibility of our being able to get English known by half the population of Uganda within the next fifteen years. English, therefore, remains the national language in Uganda when at the same time it is a language that the minority of our people can use for political purposes to improve their own political positions. Some of our people can use it in order to improve their economic status." (Mazrui, 1975: 211-2)

The statement above, which still applies to many former colonies, makes it clear that politics plays a significant role in building the status of languages in a given society. When we cast a look at the current situation, with regard to the spread of local languages and their comparison with the colonial ones, we see some shocking results. Many African languages and existing mediums of wider regional communications are totally neglected to the advantage of the languages of international communication or European languages. Unlike English, French, Portuguese or Spanish, which are used in day-to-day administration, the Pidgin and Creole varieties, for example, have no

official status. Nor do some non-European languages with official status, such as Swahili, Amharic or Zulu among others, benefit from the type of recognition given to any of the former colonial languages. The same holds true for regional or local languages like Wolof⁵ or Lingala⁶, which are, in most cases, only used informally. This is a reality that applies in various degrees to many sub-Saharan countries.

Scientific evidence in psycholinguistics clearly shows a close connection between language acquisition, its status, learners' or speakers' attitudes towards the specific language, and the speakers or learners' personality development. But the very disturbing fact is that the use of indigenous languages in French-speaking countries in Africa sometimes evokes feelings of shame in some individuals. In Benin, for instance, it is normal for some educated people, whenever they meet, to embark on a competition of speaking "good" French. If a person fails to display some sound abilities in speaking French, s/he might fear he might lose esteem or respect among his/her peers. It is thus not surprising that Benin has been glorified as "Le Quartier Latin de l'Afrique," which stands for remembrance of the heart of cultural and literary revival in post-war Paris. The explanation for such attitudes partly lies in the fact that most governments have not succeeded in introducing real language planning policies with regard to regional and local languages. And I do think that this development sustains a certain type of class stratification by perpetuating a demarcation between the official and non-official languages. Elitism in these West African countries is, therefore, the tendency to 'fit' in with the language of the powerful; hence, the mastery of the language of the powerful personalities is essential for someone to become part of the elite. English and French, among others, still remain the languages for mass mobilization, although they are only spoken by a minority. This linguistic imbalance was also reinforced by the fact that a good command of an

⁵ A language spoken by around 5 millions people in the region of Senegal, Gambia, and Mauritania.

⁶ A lingua franca and language of commerce for more than 10 million people, and spoken throughout the northwestern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo, in a large part of the Republic of Congo and, to some extent, in Central African Republic.

international language served as a very decisive factor in receiving overseas grants in those days. Recalling his own experience in the post-independent Kenya, the scholar Ali A. Mazrui, who obtained a scholarship in English rather than in journalism as he wished, reveals:

“I was now launched on the first important stage of my career since my miserable results in the School Certificate in 1948. The English paper in the School Certificate had in fact won me my best grade in the examination as a whole. My credit was the best. But my results in the examination as a whole certainly were not. It took further linguistic and oratorical accidents in the years ahead to re-open the gates of academic advancement for me.” (Mazrui, 1975: 29)

Such a statement implies that Mazrui’s success was equated to his score in language tests. In other words, an individual's intellectual ability was measured by that person's performance in the official language; in most cases the language of the former colonizers. It is therefore understandable that most Africans were orientated towards disregard for non-European languages. Obviously, the mastery of an international language means to equip oneself with the skills essential to one’s self-improvement and to the betterment of one’s social conditions. But the question is: Why does this not apply to local languages in Africa south of the Sahara, when we know that the interconnection between language and identity in human societies need not be proven any longer?

Currently, there is no country in Africa which is strictly monolingual. Most African populations identify virtually with one of some thousand ethnic groups of unequal sizes. The average African learns corresponding ethnic varieties as his first language or mother tongue. In this modern age, populations have been moving rapidly from rural to urban areas. Countries are becoming just mixtures of different peoples who have as much in common as they have differences. As a result, mostly European languages brought in with colonization remain predominant. In many countries, however, the so-called Pidgin and Creole versions of English and French have emerged. We can mention

for example the widely well-known “Camfranglais”⁷ and Nigerian Pidgin, which have established themselves as important *linguas francas* and also have become strong identity landmarks in Cameroon, and Nigeria respectively. Consequently, many contemporary Nigerians would like to see Pidgin English receive more recognition in education. The reality is that when a large number of people identify themselves with these very languages, the use of the languages will ineluctably turn out to be an identity issue. As a matter of fact, there are increasing voices among proponents of the regional mediums for the official recognition of the concerned languages. Advocates of this move challenge the dominant discourse of the West and criticize what they feel are “latent legacies of colonization.” For these champions of linguistic plurality, the languages in question are vehicles that will bring children with various mother tongues together; the sole languages in which the children can easily communicate with one another better than through “standard” English. But opponents of the idea think that Pidgin languages, instead of making learning easier for African school children, will rather lower their interest in “standard” English and thus become “a splendid opportunity for natives to murder proper English.” For instance, Talbot, a former colonial official, anthropologist and biologist, vehemently scorned at Nigerian Pidgin and describes it as:

“A *lingua franca* spoken over the greater part of the West African countries where there are British firms [...]. With the spread of education, there is a very little doubt that it will die out.” (Emenanjo, 1990: 219)

A few decades later, however, this prophecy has not yet materialized and all the predictions about the decline of these *linguas francas* indicate the little recognition given to these forms of expression in academic circles. Since most of the languages are not officially recognized mediums, there is a tendency among Western scholars to

⁷ The first one, English, is a language used in Cameroon consisting of a mixture of French, English and several words borrowed from many local languages. Camfranglais uses vocabulary, intonation, and syntax rules of those languages in such a way that they are no longer recognised by standard speakers. However, these forms are common among young people in the cities and urban centre.

describe these forms of communication which blend features of official and local languages as weak. These discriminatory arguments lead to the perception that pidgin or Creole forms do not bear the potential to be used like the international ones, or to assume effective functions in intercultural communication. The special case of Pidgin English and Camfranglais definitely shows that a language that does not gain official recognition and does not appeal to the elite, can still assert itself as a lever of identity construction. The active promotion of the languages of the former colonizers at the expense of national or regional ones in some countries does not seem to fulfil the primary objective of education, which is to serve the interests of the majority.

Language Distribution and Interrelation in the Public Sphere

In many West African countries, the functional distribution of languages in various domains, in government and in administration, ensures the overwhelming dominance of English and French. There are twenty-four countries in Africa, most of them south of the Sahara, in which English is the only official language. This figure increases when we consider English as one of the official languages of some countries. In Africa, French is also used officially by an estimated 115 million people in 31 countries⁸. As enshrined in most national constitutions in these countries, English and French remain the official languages, and records are kept only in the colonial languages. Therefore, English and French are the mediums of communication in the civil service, the judiciary, in science and technology circles, and in commerce and industry. These languages are used in all written communication, including letters, notices, regulations, minutes, and other records. The mass media, particularly the print media, are heavily Western language-dominated and articles are published mainly in French or English. This

⁸ Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (2007). *La Francophonie dans le monde 2006-2007*. Nathan, Paris (http://www.francophonie.org/IMG/pdf/La_francophonie_dans_le_monde_2006-2007.pdf : Accessed on 08 June 2012)

pre-eminence of the foreign languages contributes to the spread of these mediums at the expense of the local ones. This development enhances the status and esteem of the former and definitely impacts on the attitudes of the local population. Therefore, in sub-Saharan Africa, language policy in the public domain needs to be redefined, so that local languages will be given more recognition. Due to the increase of private radio and TV broadcasting corporations, these local languages are becoming more significant in people's lives, especially in the cultural domain. Nevertheless, it is to be expected that the governments in Benin and many other African countries employ strategies aimed at developing plans to enhance the recognition of the said languages in the public sphere as a step toward local languages' empowerment, in order to reinforce group identity.

Education is, according to *The Columbia Encyclopaedia*, "the conscious effort by society to impart the skills and mode of thought considered as essential for social functioning" in individuals (Chernov and Vallasi, 1993). Thus, it is the systematic training, especially of the young generation, which is to enhance people's participation in society and their advancement. Education is essentially the training of the mind, heart, head and hand. Educated people are better equipped for the job market and can therefore benefit in terms of wages. They also become more politically aware and are able to contribute in a meaningful way in most endeavours. So, education is a means of improving material and social standings and also plays an integral part in identity construction. Given these facts, the choice of language in which education is to be conducted is of paramount importance and, as such, appears highly complex. Thus, a participant to our survey pointed out: "*Sprache zu erzwingen halte ich für schlecht. Jede Person definiert sich auch über ihre Muttersprache.*" Freely translated, it means, "*I believe that it is not good to impose languages on people. Each person defines himself or herself through his or her native language.*"

New studies in psycholinguistics show that affective and cultural factors stimulate cognitive and psycho-motor development. Instruction in the local language facilitates the learning process because it allows

one to express oneself in the language one knows best. To quote one of the respondents of this survey,

“La manière dont les langues internationales sont apprises dans les anciennes colonies nous force non seulement à les accepter, mais aussi et surtout, au détriment de nos langues maternelles qu’on nous force de rejeter à certaines occasions.”

When translated, this means

“The way international languages are taught in the former colonies leads us not only to accept them, but also and above all puts us in an awkward position towards our native languages, which we are forced to reject on certain occasions.”

Such a situation does not follow the objective of equality in the acquisition of education and should be addressed in such a way that the incalculable social and economic costs on the less privileged are reduced. In the light of this, there is an on-going debate over mother tongue literacy, or alternatively, the suggestion to expose students from the beginning to two languages; to both the student’s mother tongue and a second language. Evidence shows that proficiency of a learner who has been exposed to a second language later in the process of language acquisition is less than his or her counterpart who has received a dual instruction from the beginning. Thinking in the same direction, some respondents acknowledge that “It is a wealthy opportunity because you learn something about multicultural values.” A similar opinion is also expressed by another student whose views transcend the personal dimension in the following words: “Learning different languages helps a nation to better communicate and understand people from different regions of the world.” Thus, a “mother-tongue-based bilingual education⁹” could reinforce self-esteem,

⁹ “African languages mother-tongue-based bilingual education” is a term coined by the late Dr. Allexander Neville. Dr Neville was a member of the board of the African Academy of Languages (<http://www.acalan.org/>) and director of Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa

whereas literacy in a foreign language makes the mechanics of learning very tedious. This is corroborated by a pilot project in South Africa¹⁰ which demonstrated how the intellectualisation of African languages can help native students overcome historical disadvantages that still affect the native students' education. For a majority of the black population in South Africa, English and Afrikaans still remain the 'functional' languages in education in the country, even though the country's constitution recognises eleven official languages.¹¹ Since 2003, the University of Limpopo in the northernmost province has launched a dual-medium degree program in Contemporary English and Multilingual Studies (BA CEMS) as the country's first program, in which an African language, Northern Sotho, and English are used as mediums of instruction and assessment. Professor Esther Ramani, coordinator of the program, comments on this with the following words:

"The degree represents a model of additive bilingualism because it develops students' competence in English while simultaneously developing their knowledge and use of their home language for higher-order cognitive work."¹²

Despite the fact that some academicians and students believe that African languages lack prestige or cannot be used as efficient instruction tools at secondary and higher education levels and so discourage new students from registering for the students' degree programs, feedbacks are very positive. Many graduates agree that using both their local languages and English gives them more confidence in exhibiting their abilities and that they easily relate what they learn to their own experiences. This special program also helps in the development of new strategies, particularly in the transfer of knowledge from one language to the other. I believe that studies like

(PRAESA) at the University of Cape Town (www.praesa.org.za). He has researched extensively on linguistic diversity and multilingualism in education in the post-apartheid South Africa and was a strong advocate of the intellectualisation of African languages Studies.

See: *The potential role of translation as social practice for the intellectualisation of African languages*:

In: PRAESA Occasional Papers No. 33 (<http://www.praesa.org.za/files/2012/07/Paper33.pdf>)

¹⁰ <http://www.mg.co.za/article/2010-04-19-with-many-tongues> (Retrieved July 12, 2012).

¹¹ Afrikaans, English, Ndebele, Northern Sotho, Sotho, Swazi, Tswana, Tsonga, Venda, Xhosa, Zulu.

¹² <http://www.mg.co.za/article/2010-04-19-with-many-tongues> (Retrieved July 12, 2012).

these demonstrate that teaching in both languages will help students to achieve better results in first and second languages as well as positively impact on the students' personality development. Moreover, similar dual medium modules will be useful in making students become excellent personalities, who will contribute positively in the upliftment of their societies. The students will in turn equip the younger ones to work effectively with other people in their own communities or in the job market (Mignolo, 2000). This will ensure that leadership qualities are passed from one generation to the other and also reassert the purpose of education in relevant societies, which is to produce citizens with desirable attitudes who will be able to transfer and communicate essential knowledge onto others, and thus, have the ability of changing certain anti-social behaviours of those around them.

Since the 1990s, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has been initiating a world-wide campaign for global education. In Benin, through the promptings of UNESCO, the country's parliament has passed a few laws in the last decade to grant free access to primary schools for girls, making gradually education accessible to all. In spite of this expansion policy, formal school education has always been conducted in French until recently. In October 2013, the government in Benin implemented a pilot project to boost instructions in native or mother tongues at the primary level¹³. Countrywide, thirty primary schools have been pioneering this dual-medium scheme with French - the only official medium of education since the colonial days - and one of the local languages used as a medium of instruction and assessment. In the long run, the results of the 6-month pilot project "École et langues nationales" could be extended to secondary and higher institutions. An assessment of the

¹³ <http://www.afriquinfos.com/articles/2013/6/15/benin-veut-experimenter-lenseignement-langues-nationales-dans-systemes-educatif-formel-223942.asp>
<http://www.afriquinfos.com/articles/2013/11/2/langues-maternelles-introduites-dans-systeme-educatif-235274.asp>
http://www.notrebenin.com/?action=view_article&id=6647&subtheme= none&module=article module&src=520981a751bc7

success of this project is expected to occur during the first semester of 2014. The alternative use of French and one of the following: Fongbé, Adjagbé, Yoruba, Baatonu, Dendi and Ditamari would contribute to restoring and homogenizing the identity of learners in the early school years. Another aim of the project is to stimulate the use of the home-language for cognitive work and to ascertain whether young Africans can be academically competent in learning in their mother tongues. The results could echo the findings in neuro-linguistics which evidence that a child removed from her or his native culture might become an adult who cannot contribute effectively to the advancement of her or his society. For, only a didactic model based on mother tongue instruction would fully support the psychomotor, the cognitive and affective development of the youngsters.

To date, few lessons are conducted in local languages all over the former European colonies in Africa. As a result, many young school goers do not perform well in school. They are unable to read, write and understand brief or simple exposés of facts that relate to their daily lives. Such shortcomings affect these students' educational performance and reduce their ability to participate effectively in the educational programs, which are part of nation building. If there is no policy to raise the status of regional languages in higher educational institutions, students' performance might keep declining. The fact is that a good command of foreign languages still remains the preserve of a handful of people in Africa. In Benin, more specifically, many people equate the idea of being an intellectual with the acquisition of Western values, especially of European languages and, in the worst cases, the rejection of one's true identity.

Having said that, let me try to exemplify as far as my humble experience permits another situation in multilingual environments.

I started school in a country where French, for many children, took the place of our mother tongue. So, being educated in the language of the former colonizers from early childhood, a vast majority of young people become more fluent in the colonial language than in their native tongues. As we have already seen, the mastery of official

languages is a kind of incentive for various benefits. Generally, many people with formal education would prefer French in a professional milieu, whereas they would use the local languages in order to show and maintain network with close friends and family members. While international languages are preferred because they allow for better opportunities and social benefits, the native ones will usually take over to assert closeness, a sense of belonging and a common identity. Being inarticulate or “dispossessed” of the home language may eventually result in the loss of identity. A participant in this survey expresses some anxiety with regard to this situation by saying, «*Ma langue maternelle constitue une richesse culturelle; et je n’aimerais pas amoindrir la valeur de ma richesse.* » Freely translated, this means: “*My mother tongue represents a cultural richness, and I would not like to reduce the value of my cultural richness.*”

Today, in the emergent technological and economic world structure, the mastery of so-called international languages is seen by the youths as an asset in the professional sphere. This corresponds to the comment by a participant in this research in the following words:

« Je les ai toujours considérées (mes langues) comme source d’enrichissement personnelle. Néanmoins, il ne faut rien réinventer. Il faut que l’école enseigne les langues internationales, et que l’enseignement soit assuré dans la langue officielle. Les langues maternelles doivent continuer à être pratiquées dans les familles. »

This is translated as:

“I have always considered them [my languages] as personally enriching. However, we cannot rewrite history. School should keep teaching international languages, and education need to be offered in the official language. Nevertheless mother tongues should continue to be used among family members.”

In the majority of the developing countries, the languages of instruction remain solely the so-called international languages, the languages of the former colonial powers, since students in affected

countries are expected to be internationally competitive. Unfortunately, education, which is meant to ensure racial and class equality, turns out to be a means of establishing class differentiation on the African continent; the knowledge of English, French, Portuguese or Spanish becomes an instrument of marginalisation and social stratification. Therefore, one of the major tasks of language planning should be to ensure that the disadvantaged majority is not denied fair treatment and justice in those domains where some knowledge of international languages is required. This thinking is voiced in German by a respondent as thus: *“In den ehemaligen Kolonien werden soziale und finanzielle Hierarchien durch Bildungsunterschiede gepflegt.”* Freely translated into English, this means, *“In the former colonies, the differences in the levels of education contribute to the perpetuation of certain social and financial hierarchies.”* Since learning new languages exposes us to new ideas, our identities are in a relentless formation process and undergo frequent alterations. Almost each encounter or experience affects our personality in a different way, be it directly or indirectly. The introduction of adult education using local languages, for instance in Benin, may remove some of these inherent disabilities, rebuild self-esteem and identity of the youngsters and facilitate the development of students’ intellectual abilities. This fact is re-echoed by a learner, who points out

« S’aimer, c’est aussi savoir accepter et respecter ses langues maternelles qui sont des éléments importants de ses racines, de sa culture de base, de son identité »

When translated into English, it means

“To love oneself also means to (be able to) accept and respect one’s own mother tongue, this being an important element of our roots, of our basic culture, and our identity.”

This implies that identities are more than the mere sum of linguistic and cultural membership. It is fluid, dynamic, not fixed, and rather “a learned

value” done through social engagement. It is a way of thinking, a sum of values, tastes, and references. For a polyglot speaker, each of his or her acquired languages contributes to his or her identity construction. Research has shown that learning different languages and cultures influences cognitive processes. The reason lies in the fact that language students are exposed to different values, beliefs and symbols. From a sociological perspective, identity is developed in and through linguistic and social interaction. In recent years, social learning theorists have come to believe that interactions have symbolic aspects and stipulate that identity is not an abstract idea which rests upon a person’s title or personality trait. It is an experience lived and rendered through language. So, the acquisition of an L2 plays a significant role in the constitution of our identity (Mead, 1934; Bourdieu, 1991).

But the pre-eminent position of the European languages and their use in practically all official transactions in the former colonies still poses some challenges, which are voiced by another student in the following words: « *Cela m’éloigne franchement hélas de ma communauté, car une langue véhicule toujours une culture.* » The English translation reads: “*Unfortunately, it sets me apart me from my community, because a language always conveys a culture.*” Identity is the resultant of certain influences around us in our day-to-day experiences, moulded and reshaped in the light of new encounters, of our individual or group interactions, reflected and rendered through our use of language. Identities are situated in and mediated by the nature of social and linguistic interaction. So, on this issue, a participant has to say this:

« *Parlant une langue plus forte que la mienne, j’ai perdu quelques sensibilités et jeux de mots, qui sont et constituent la richesse linguistique de tout individu.* »

What it means in English is that:

“Speaking a language which is stronger than my native one, I have lost part of my sensitivity to the way the language is used, the play on words. These provide linguistic richness to any individual person.”

On the other hand, the lack of support as a result of official policies reinforces the perception that African languages cannot be used efficiently in education; this jeopardizes efforts at emphasizing the significance of local, regional or national languages in the affected countries.

For this reason, a bold agenda with far-reaching implications for policy and practice should be drafted for improvement in local language learning at all stages. It is my belief that it will be rather beneficial to multilingual countries, especially to a nation like Benin Republic, for instance. Such a move will provide an impulse to the learning capabilities of youngsters, allowing them to become strong academic achievers and, at the same time, reinforcing individual students' self-identity. For, our identity is not just determined by our surroundings, place of birth, cultural norms or the communities where we were raised in. Identity construction is an integral process and among them the various experiences which adolescents undergo in their daily lives contribute significantly to their personality development. For, every one of us is especially influenced by our daily encounters, our life experiences, our interactions with family members, peers, people in the religious community, and our exposure to popular culture, among other things. All these things are made possible through the use of language.

Comments and Implications

The foregoing discussion is a general topic on the opinions of language learners. It could be a starting point for actions and reconceptualizing practices and models in foreign and second language teaching. This points out that learners' attitudes toward the target languages, learning situations, and the roles that these forms are

expected to play within a given learning situation strongly determine the nature of the language learning procedure. Learner characteristics such as personality traits, learning style, learning strategies and attitudes have also been identified as significant features playing some roles in determining learning outcomes (Nunan and Lamb 1996; Ramirez 1995). Language learners indeed hold a set of beliefs about the nature of language learning, which, according to Ellis (2008, 1997) and Horwitz (1987), impact the way these learners make their commitment with regard to practices. Language theorists should understand the correlation between expectation and motivation in order to conceive theories, curricula or activities, which could:

- challenge language students;
- develop strategies for learners to feel more positive about the second and foreign language learning experience;
- endeavour to meet the diverse needs of all learners;
- promote student's autonomy and self-confidence.

Finally, the findings suggest that affective factors, especially learners' beliefs and expectations, represent instruments of motivation and remain indicators of success in L2 acquisition and learning.

During the learning or acquisition process, students at the lower levels often assume that all errors should be systematically addressed. Even among scholars, there is no agreement on error treatment, and the extent to which errors are to be dealt with in communicative models. In the meantime, teachers have to face the question of meaning versus form as well as fluency versus accuracy. Whilst not representing a sample from which generalizations can be drawn in the field of language teaching, the statements by students trigger a number of different interpretations. Based on our understanding of the verbatim, we also hypothesize the correlation between learners' beliefs, language learning and identity construction. We did not intend to elaborate a model or theory of identity development, as the nature and understanding of these interrelations transcend what we have seen.

Nevertheless, our series of survey document how the acquisition of a subsequent language by students might have transformed or influenced their initial identity. We also looked into the decline in the status of African languages or other mixed varieties in comparison with European languages. As it was earlier observed, European languages have been accorded a very high status in Africa since the colonization era. This trend leads to a rather hazy and uncertain future for the local and national mediums of communication in official domains. In the recent past, disenchantment with former colonial languages as sole mediums of instruction has led to increasing calls in favor of native tongues in schools. Generally, most populations tend to strongly stick to their linguistic heritage as an affirmation of expression of a common social identity. In Africa, this inevitably generates conflicts as well as personality clashes among young people. Aside from that, enculturated behavioural patterns, historical and political factors force the young, educated people to disregard their own linguistic heritage; and this development places a wedge between the adolescents and their immediate cultural environment. In the worst case, these youngsters may suffer from some identity crisis. Many parents, who send their children to school, demand instruction in European languages for the children, because of the social benefits and the value associated with relevant languages. In some households, European languages have become the primary mediums of communication and at times completely replace the local tongues. These latter performs a specific function as they strengthen social and familial ties. While swapping from one language to the other, individuals can be seen as having a “pluralistic identity,” for they are negotiating a suitable identity amidst their multi-layered identities, which are conferred to them by their linguistic repertoire.” (Djité, 2006: 12)

There is likewise a new attitude in favor of Pidgin, Creole and African languages. The contending views of some scholars about the importance and role that these local mediums can play on the continent have resulted in their gradual neglect in formal contexts. Research conducted at the University of Limpopo in South Africa provided a

useful insight into how a dual program can positively promote the regional dimension of languages and empowers students. Mother-tongue-based literacy equips students with knowledge and the zeal to become better citizens. Unfortunately, politicians up till now have still underestimated the disadvantages of a “European-languages-only” policy as a means of education in Africa. As a matter of fact, very few pedagogical innovations have been introduced in schools, and the disparity between the statuses of various official and non-official languages keeps growing. When we consider the reality in the media and in educational circles and in public institutions, we see that all is not well with the local languages and that our languages are in triple jeopardy. It is hoped that governments will implement effective policies to encourage the recognition of national languages as a way of investing in future youths, since language constitutes a lever in identity construction.

Summary

In this chapter, we have attempted to examine students’ opinions in order to learn more about the roles of affective factors and their impact on the L2 learning process. Contrary to the traditional approach, we conducted a mixed methodological analysis and postulated that affective factors in language training are constructs but not abstract concepts. We started by presenting the reasons underlying the choice of a new language, looked at affective variables and highlighted their variation through time. Our aim was to identify attitudes, beliefs and perceptions of learners that could shed more light on the acquisition and learning patterns in additional languages, and to encourage the development of adequate methods. Unfortunately, space and time did not allow us to illustrate our analysis further. However, the data show fascinating insights into how affective aspects impact language learning, especially the connection between attitudes, beliefs and learners’ motivation. In addition, these data revealed to us the various

ways in which perceptions of teachers are constructed and expressed. Yet, we have learned that motivation is the sum of factors such as learners' goal, students' and teachers' combined efforts as well as other psychological variables. We have analyzed the factors which are at interplay and their correlation with foreign and second language learning processes. This shows that language learners hold beliefs that may influence the ways in which they acquire and perform in target language situations. Not less is the nature of emotion and motivation geared towards investment. On the other hand, this is influenced by variants such as personal profile, pre-conceived ideas about the target language and culture, and the point in time. Even though these beliefs are not always explicitly observable, they could sometimes generate anxieties, which is a distressing state that affects learners' confidence and leads to low performance. We then concluded that learners' opinions and beliefs influence language learning in various ways with regard to inherent emotions and the way these students approach the new language. Our observation during the research process, as well as the interpretation of the verbatim, have showed that how socio-historical trajectories contribute to the process of personal identity construction in the language learning experience. Though the concept cannot be clearly defined, it however has some influence on the second language learning process and to the learners' personality development. A thorough investigation that specifically focuses in-depth on the role of affective variables and their impact on students' performance in foreign and second language contexts will provide more information on the ways and means of reassessing traditional methods. Our aim has been to identify attitudes, beliefs and perceptions of learners that could shed more light on acquisition and learning patterns in L2. The intention was also to encourage the development of adequate methods. Yet, the empirical data used here do not offer a solid basis for resolving questions raised in the research. Therefore, future research projects might conduct ethnographic works and look into autobiographies written by L2 learners as they will relate their own experiences with language learning and the way this influences their identities.

Chapter 5

Multilingualism in Foreign and Second Language Contexts

In this section I will discuss some current issues in language acquisition and teaching. These include the definition of concepts such as mother tongue, native tongue and first language, among others. I will try to examine their linguistic and sociological boundaries, direct my attention to the changing patterns of language utilization and investigate these aspects within a psycho-sociological framework. I will look at language construction from a sociological perspective and then I will make assessments based on findings from my surveys, which will be illustrated with my personal experience, with the aim of analyzing common views on bilingualism and multilingualism. Some comments may occur more than once, as they fit into different themes. I will provide an in-depth discussion on which aspects of these phenomena are considered the most important by populations living in societies marked by lack of written materials and elaborate on competence and performance in multicultural contexts so as to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. I will also try to discuss the correlation made sometimes between language learning and intelligence. Finally, I will elaborate on the debate over standard and non-standard forms in the learning and teaching of foreign and second languages.

Introduction

The classification of “languages” heavily depends on linguists’ definition of the term. In most multi-ethnic environments, the distinction between “language” and “dialect” is not always clear. A dialect is generally described as a distinct variety of a language that is spoken in a specific geographical area. In Africa, there are an estimated 2000 to 3000 spoken languages (Habeeb and Rotberg, 2004). A quick

examination of the linguistic situation in Sub-Saharan Africa reveals a super-position and overlapping of local and regional forms. This fact does not always make it easy to draw a line of demarcation between languages; and any classification is likely to be problematic. Because of the complex nature of contacts and variations, I will mainly use the term “language” to designate any variety of human speech in this work, with little regard to geographical location.

Limitation and Definition of Concepts

Throughout this work, especially in order to avoid repetition, I will alternately use the umbrella terms “bilingual speaker” and “multilingual speaker” to describe bilingual, trilingual, multilingual, and polyglot subjects, or any affiliated derivatives. Besides, while describing the “abilities” of bilingual and multilingual individuals, there are a number of misleading terms that are used very often and which need to be clarified. Namely, there are language ability, language achievement, language competence and performance, language proficiency, and language skills. Here is what the *Encyclopaedia of Bilingualism and Multilingualism* has to say about the foregoing:

“Language skills tend to refer to highly specific, observable, clearly definable components such as handwriting, spelling and grammar. In contrast, language competence is a broad and general term, used particularly to describe an inner, mental representation of language, something latent rather than overt. Such competence refers usually to an underlying system inferred from language performance. Language performance is the outward evidence (e.g. from language tests, conversations) for language competence. By observing general language comprehension and production, underlying language competence may be assumed.

Language ability and language proficiency tend to be used more as “umbrella” terms and therefore used somewhat ambiguously. For some, the term “language ability” represents a general, latent disposition, a determinant of eventual language success. Others use it to mean an outcome, similar but less specific than language skills, providing an indication of current language level.

Similarly, the term “language proficiency” is sometimes used synonymously with language competence; at other times to mean a specific, measurable outcome from language testing.

Both language proficiency and language ability are distinct from language achievement (attainment). Language achievement is normally seen as the outcome of formal instruction. Language proficiency and language ability are, in contrast, viewed as the products of a variety of mechanisms: formal learning, informal uncontrived language acquisition (e.g. at home, on the street) and of individual characteristics such as “intelligence” and an “aptitude” for languages.” (Baker and Jones, 1998: 5)

Mother Tongue, Native Language, First Language: What Else?

The magnitude of migration in recent years and the spread of intercultural interaction force us to question the meaning of terms such as “native language”, “first language”, “mother tongue” in current usage and what should be considered as the linguistic norm in language use. It is common knowledge that language cannot exist without a society in which it is used. Based on social factors and economic considerations, the acquisition of international languages is of vital importance in our global world.

As an African living in Germany for some years now, I always find myself confronted with the following question from my non-African friends or colleagues: “*Was ist deine Muttersprache?*” This means, “*What is your mother tongue?*”

It is such an easy question, one might think. Ironically, many people link the idea of a mother tongue to the conception of native speakers, whom they perceive as monolingual speakers. So, “as the term implies, nativeness has been linked with language acquisition from birth onwards.” (Hackert, 2012: 10). Per extension, native speakers grew up and were educated in a mono-lingual environment with a mono-cultural background, where mostly their first language fits into the basket mother tongue.

Although one should not answer a question with another question, my answer always goes like this: “*Meinst du meine Muttersprache oder*

die Amtssprache in meinem Land?” Translated into English, my reply means: „Do you mean my mother tongue or the official language in my country?”

When we consider the majority of the world’s population, who lives in a multicultural environment and have been exposed to multiple languages since their birth, such a statement should not come to anyone as a surprise. Therefore, what is a native language? What is a mother tongue? Or rather what is actually a first language? Is it the language one speaks in the early years of childhood? Or is it the functional primacy of one language over the others, the first in importance, and the language which comes to dominate one’s life?

In my own case, it is somehow difficult and complicated for me to make a distinction between my mother tongue, my native language and my first language. My father and mother have different linguistic backgrounds, Fon and Goun. Since my mother had lived many years in my father’s region, Abomey, she has up till now been speaking the latter’s language fluently alongside her own to her children. During my childhood, my family moved from Porto-Novo, our capital city and home of the Goun people, to Cotonou, the multi-ethnic and largest city in Benin¹. I attended kindergarten when I was three, and came into contact with the French language. French had remained the language of my primary and secondary instruction throughout my adolescence and, thereafter, also of higher education. At one time, we had a nanny from the Mina region in Togo. So, I was exposed to at least four languages during that same period of my childhood, as it is the case among many Africans and Asians. Later, I spent some time at the University of Ibadan in Nigeria, and thereafter moved to Germany. To quote Gupta (2001, 366), a native speaker of a language is “one who acquired the language in infancy, before any other language was acquired.”

Based on what has preceded, will I say that I possess one mother tongue Goun, two native languages, Fon and Goun, and three first

¹ For geographical locations in Benin, please see: <http://www.freeworldmaps.net/africa/benin/map.html>

languages Fon, Goun and French? French is the official language in my country, Benin Republic. Given its chronological primacy over my other international languages, do I have to consider French to this date as my first international language? Nevertheless, this language has not been my only functional or dominant one over the last decades. Having started my university education in an English speaking country and graduated later at university in Germany, I became exposed to English and German cultures and languages as well, and eventually have been giving classes in English, French and German for the past few years. Hence, I have acquired successive dominant languages at different periods.

Obviously, the definition of native language in the traditional sense remain questionable. The main problem is that “the conventional view of a native speaker thus envisions a person being born into and growing up in a – preferably monolingual - speech community, in which he or she imbibes his or her native language with the mother’s milk (Hackert, 2012: 10).

In his book *Two First Languages: Early Grammatical Development in Bilingual Children* (1990), the German linguist Jürgen M. Meisel² acknowledges the development of two languages simultaneously in the early period of childhood. He demonstrates that languages do not exist as stratified entities; neither do they operate in a vertical distribution. Rather they are juxtaposed and could either evolve in overlapping manners or independently. Commonly, the view that ‘native speakers’ are mainly people who have been acquiring a language in their childhood in a natural environment has been predominant. The British linguist Peter Matthews indicated that a “native language” is “a language that people have acquired naturally as children, as opposed to one learned later, e.g. through formal education.” (1997: 238)

In many countries in Africa, Asia or Latin America which had been under European domination, English, French, Portuguese and Spanish remain in a functional sense the dominant languages of the

² Currently a Professor Emeritus, he has been teaching French, Portuguese and Spanish in the Department of Romance Languages at the University of Hamburg.

majority of the populations. So, considering the West African region, there is a new generation of Africans who raise their children, and conduct their lives and public engagement in these colonial languages. These languages will, as a matter-of-fact become chronologically the first languages of many youngsters, but as yet not the languages of these children's communities, nor their mother tongues. These European languages are also the languages of education, that is the languages through which many of us will first come into contact with the Western world, and in which we take our first steps in critical thinking. Native language and mother tongue may be somewhat challenging to assess, depending on situations. In fact, these terms do not denote genuine entities but are rather socially constructed. This has prompted scholar to express their dissatisfaction with the close connection between the terms native speakers and mother tongues and promote the revaluation of the concept (Hackert, 2012: 13-15; Bonfiglio, 2010: 8-10). The concepts can become even more confusing when we consider all the children who live in societies in which they acquire their father's language as their first tongue, and at times, as their sole language. Besides, migrant children born to parents of mixed nationalities may feel closer to and fit better into the cultures they live in; which might not necessarily be the cultures of their mothers or fathers. In this case, I don't believe that the children's linguistic and cultural exposures will necessarily lead to the acquisition of a "mother- tongue culture." When we illustrate this point further, we will come to realize that the traditional monocentric perceptions on language poses further questions. In the light of globalization, growing interethnic and intercultural relationships among the world population, this hegemonial view of native language and mother tongue has been heavily criticised by authors such as Kachru and Widdowson (in Hackert, 2013, 23-25). This concern has also been voiced by Bonfiglio, (2010, 2013) who has suggested a reconsideration of the non-native speaker. For him, the etymological conceptualisation revolves around the biological mother and reinforce the primacy of mother tongue and the supremacy of a native accent.

Eventually, it will become clear that the mathematical and logical correlation between mother and tongue in the biological sense is not appropriate any more. In most of the cases illustrated above, the term “mother tongue” is restrictive in the biological sense. I do believe that such a concept is politically and sociologically incorrect or at least inaccurate. Depending on the criteria we are using, one should probably look for answers in terms such as “major,” “functional” or “primary”- not “first”- language at different points in time.

So, all I am trying to suggest here is that “mother tongue,” “foreign languages”, “first” and “second” languages are not easy to define and that language specialists should begin to relativize these notions. It is the task of contemporary linguists to rethink socio-linguistic realities in language interactions. Scholars should distance themselves from straightforward frameworks and make room for better terms to denote language situations and speakers. This differentiation is even more complex in multi-ethnic environments in developing countries, where language acquisition is very often achieved outside the school or intuitively in early childhood. Now, let me just ask: Can we still differentiate easily between mother tongue, native language, first language, foreign language or subsequent languages?

Bilingual or Multilingual Speakers and Language Use

Today, our planet is said to be a global village. Human beings are living in an era of unprecedented population migrations. Contacts among peoples of different origins are being made easier through modern communication means and information technologies. Inter-ethnic marriages keep increasing. Children from mixed unions reared by parents who speak a language different from the official ones are no longer a rarity. Some of these children may have the opportunity to learn the languages of their respective parents, and also to pick up the mediums of their environments or countries of adoption.

The foregoing examples clearly give an insight into contemporary sociological realities with regard to bilingualism or multilingualism. But what does it actually mean to describe an individual as bilingual or multilingual? Or, better still, who is bilingual or multilingual? Which persons should consider themselves as bilingual or multilingual? Is a bilingual or a multilingual person anyone who is able to speak more than one language, or someone who can write in more than one? Or should we describe a bilingual and multilingual speaker only as a person with speaking ability and written competence in more than one language? Let us think, for instance, of a Dutchman who has never attended a German language course. Although this person has been living in Germany for many years, he cannot speak German. However, he is able to read and understand German newspapers. Should we describe such a person as a bilingual speaker? How can we assess his knowledge and his competence in German? What do we have to say about a large number of the populations in developing countries most of whom make use of several languages but do not possess any written abilities in them? What is the level of bilingualism involved here? Should we assert that students from industrialized countries who have more opportunities to learn maybe foreign languages through education and modern technologies and take part in various exchange programs are more multilingual than their African counterparts who only speak different local languages? What do we say regarding a South African native³, who can fluently speak Xhosa, Zulu, Tsonga, Venda, English and Afrikaans but unfortunately can produce no written materials in any of these languages? Considering these examples, one should really wonder who is actually bilingual or multilingual and who is not. Or can we assume that some people are more bilingual than others?

One can see that the scope of bilingualism and multilingualism is very wide and that contemporary scientists are taking into account the

³ Post-Apartheid South Africa's democratic Constitution of February 4, 1997 recognises eleven official languages: Afrikaans, English, Ndebele, Northern Sotho, Sotho, Swazi, Tswana, Tsonga, Venda, Xhosa and Zulu. But Afrikaans and English are still the dominant mediums in education and professional environments.

sociological patterns of these terms, as they allow no static definition. Therefore, part of my focus in this section will be, first of all, to examine some of the above-mentioned situations and to find out some pragmatic approaches to what bilingualism and multilingualism actually mean. I will present opinions expressed by language learners, in order to draw valid conclusions. In so doing, I will restrict myself to literacy and orality, and avoid sign and computer languages. I will therefore consider the degree of proficiency among bilingual and multilingual speakers as well as the level of competence they have to show and the functions of their various languages, among other aspects. With selected verbatims by L2 learners, I will examine the conditional effects of these phenomena on personality development and speakers' sense of identity.

Spoken or Written Bilingualism and Multilingualism

In contemporary society, multi-ethnicity is not the exception anymore, but rather describes what the norm in many regions on earth is. Thus, multiculturalism has become the normal human experience (cf. Goodenough, 1976), and the majority of people living in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and the Indian subcontinent are bi- or multilingual from birth (cf. Hackert, 2012). It is the same thing as well in some populations in a few countries of Western Europe. If we consider the individuals who have once learned foreign or second languages in formal institutions, the figure is much higher. Commonly, multilingualism is defined as the existence and use of two or more languages by a person or among some individuals. This definition describes the ambiguity one has to deal with when discussing the phenomena. The difficulties always lie in the unclear specification whether one is referring to individuals or to communities. To avoid confusion, I will try as far as possible to focus on the multilingual individual as an entity. Further sections of this work are mainly devoted to the interconnections between bilingual or multilingual speakers and their identity constructions.

The term bilingualism is thus described in *The Columbia Encyclopedia* as “the ability to use two languages.” The encyclopedia goes further:

“Fluency in a second language requires skills in listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing, although in practice some of those skills are often considerably less developed than others. Few bilinguals are equally proficient in both languages. However, even when one language is dominant, performance in the other language may be superior in certain situations.”⁴

As far as multilingualism is concerned, it denotes the use of more than two languages by an individual in a given society. Multilingualism usually results from the presence and coexistence of many languages in a particular region or countries, mostly in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Most of these populations often speak the local languages and can communicate in regional varieties as well. If they attend school, they also learn international languages. A typical case will be a native South African from Durban in the province of KwaZulu-Natal⁵ who uses Zulu at home, attends secondary school in Port Elizabeth and acquires Xhosa, a local language spoken in the Eastern Cape region in South Africa. His/Her whole education has been conducted in English and Afrikaans since these are two of the eleven official languages of the country. If eventually this person studies the French language and literature at Stellenbosch University near Cape Town, she or he will then be able to speak Zulu and Xhosa, two African languages, as well as speak and write Afrikaans, English and French. This only elucidates one of the many ways in which people become multilingual speakers.

So, from a linguistic perspective, bilingualism and multilingualism are considered to be the results of languages in contact. Hakuta defines a bilingual as “someone who controls two or more languages.” (Bright, 1992: 5). According to Kachru, the terms “bilingualism” and “multilingualism” designate the “competence in the use of two or more

⁴ Chernov, B. and Vallasi, G. (Eds.), (1993). *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, 5th ed. Columbia: Columbia University Press.

⁵ See map of South Africa: <http://www.freeworldmaps.net/africa/southafrica/political.html>

languages by the same person.” (Bright, 1992: 182). Usually, the language first learned by a person is said to be his/her native or “mother tongue.” Recent data in psycholinguistics have shown that beyond genetic considerations, children are endowed with the ability to acquire new languages quickly. As we know, rapid population shifts, displacement of groups of persons, as well as forced or voluntary migration may compel some people to learn new languages, often with uneven competence in those languages. In cities like Berlin, Bombay, Douala, Johannesburg, Lagos, London, New York, and Paris, the cohabitation of so many ethnic groups exemplifies the extent of linguistic diversity. In the USA, for instance, immigrants and their children have to learn Standard English, since this remains the only medium of education in most of the federal states, and thus the sole means of integration for newcomers. In Bombay, Douala or Lagos, the need for the various ethnic groups to communicate with one another results in the emergence of a kind of Pidgin or regional English used as a vehicular language or a blend of French and English with a native dialect known as Camfranglais, as the case may be. Consequently, many children in multicultural environments have the opportunity to become multilingual if their parents make the effort to rear their offspring in their respective languages. Very often, it appears that these children possess no written competence in their parents’ languages, and their spoken ability is also limited to everyday needs. So we can conclude with the Italian Franco Fabbro that a bilingual subject is any person “who masters, understands and speaks: (a) two languages, (b) two dialects, or (c) a language and a dialect.” (Fabbro, 1999: 103). In his attempt to resolve the issue, Grosjean described a bilingual as anyone who uses more than one language or dialect in everyday activities. However, he nuanced that language aptitude is linked to social factors, frequency of use and geographical mobility (Grosjean, 2004). This takes us to the topic of competence and fluency.

Competence and Performance

Language competence is a common term used particularly to describe a person's knowledge of a given language, whereas language performance denotes the actual use of language in concrete situations. Central to concerns regarding competence and performance in the current socio-linguistic debate are the yardsticks by which multilingualism has been measured in the last decades. Long ago, there was the misleading belief that somebody who claimed to be multilingual should master any language he or she speaks to meet the level spoken by native speakers.

Definition of the Concept: from Chomsky to Gardner

Since the late 1960s, there have been attempts to define the two terms competence and performance, especially in the context of "communicative competence" and "communicative performance." The first definition is traced back to Chomsky's book *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* (1965). Drawing on de Saussure's⁶ idea of *langue* and *parole*, Chomsky elaborates on the distinction between competence - the monolingual interlocutor's knowledge of language - and performance, which denotes the actual use of language by speaker and listener in real situations. Chomsky's model has been challenged in the 70s by the advocates of a more communicative approach in L2. For instance, Savignon (1997, 1972) and Hymes (1972) rejected this idealized view which did not fit into the traditional methods for learning, teaching and testing languages. For them, competence is rather the ability to use grammatical rules appropriately in a variety of speech situations. This conceptualization of competence has been expounded by Widdowson (1983), who stressed the distinction between competence and capacity. Widdowson equated capacity with the knowledge of linguistic and sociolinguistic conventions, namely the ability to use knowledge in a

⁶ The Swiss professor of linguistics distinguished the meaningful utterance and speech acts: *parole* from the system of a language regulated by the group, an institution of norms: *langue*.

multimodal way as a means of creating meaning in social contexts. Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983) understand communicative competence to be the mobilization of linguistic resources, pre-existing knowledge and grammatical principles of using language in a social context in accordance with discourse principles and social norms. Savignon reminds us that competence is not static but dynamic and is largely determined by the use of context. In addition, she refers to competence as a speaker's underlying abilities, and to performance as an open manifestation of competence. Later, Le Boterf (1994) and Gardner (1999) see in competence the combination or deployment of pre-existing resources and newly acquired knowledge to be transferred into action by learners in order to perform a task and to solve a problem.

Competence is not a fixed state. Some people may have linguistic knowledge or ability, yet they are not competent in a particular language if they are unable to utilize their knowledge properly to interact culturally. Competence in language is relevant only in the context of use. This is corroborated by Le Boterf, who includes in competence the ability to transfer knowledge across disciplines and cultures. Furthermore, competence is the ability to learn through a process of developing and updating skills (Le Boterf, 1994: 22). This was also highlighted in the guidelines for a Common European Framework of Reference for Languages⁷ (CEFR) released in 2006. The manual which proposes a reference tool for European Union (EU) countries, defines key competences in adult education and training as a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to respective contexts. These are the abilities to express, interpret and mediate concepts in order to interact linguistically and interculturally in an appropriate and creative way.

⁷ See: The European framework for key competences for lifelong learning, http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/key_en.htm

Competence and Performance versus Competence-in-Performance

Any attempt to give an overall definition of these two concepts with regard to multilingualism runs the danger of omitting some important aspects of bilingualism. Until the 1950s, there was a tendency to assess multilingual speakers in terms of native-like competence. The publication of a series of works by authors such as Lenneberg in the 1960s marks the beginning of a period which heralds the end of acquired beliefs on the kind of ability bilingual speakers have to display. Few decades later, many voices such as Grosjean suggest that the phenomenon of bilingualism should be seen as “the practice of alternately using two languages.” In fact, there rarely exist situations which allow bilinguals to use their languages alternately. But the most comprehensive attempt to clearly solve the dichotomy of competence and performance has been made by Edda Weigand. The German linguist places human beings at the centre of discourse and claims that dialogues cannot be described in terms of rules, but speech strategies. In addition, she explains that speakers and hearers negotiate the meaning of speech acts in accordance with their cultural surroundings. Linguistic interaction is thus embedded in negotiations of meaning and understanding in a game that is best characterized as a “mixed game.” Therefore, competence and performance could not be evaluated as single and isolated entities; rather should any analysis look into the human being’s ability with regard to competence-in-performance (Weigand, 2009: 238). The reason is that language does not exist in isolation. Speech utterances only appear bounded by a number of other factors, which actually influence its production and reception. With this fundamental shift in perspective, Weigand argues that:

“Language used by human beings can neither be represented as abstract competence nor as totally irregular performance. Linguists who try to find the way from abstract competence to performance are the victims of a methodological fallacy: there is no bridge from artificial constructs to performance. Human beings orient themselves in performance according to a complex ability which I called competence-in-performance [...] The scientific

challenge then results from the fundamental methodological issue of how to address the complex. If we try to tackle the complex – which is more than the addition of pieces – we must start from the right point, i.e. from the whole.” (Weigand, 2009: 202)

It is a known fact that linguistic knowledge keeps changing. Yet, it is still uncertain whether this change may be of a qualitative or a quantitative nature. If individuals do not use their other languages for quite some time, these languages lose their stability and their fluidity as well. Bilinguals use languages for different purposes and over a wide range of situations in life (Grosjean, 2004).

Based on that, it is very important to relativise and reconsider, for instance, the level of competence and performance, and the kind of language knowledge which should be expected from a person who learns multiple languages at home, at school or university, with friends or during a short stay abroad. Likewise, in order to discuss performance and competence, one has to provide some answers to the question whether the acquisition process in second language learning is the same as in the first one, and if learners of a language could be objectively evaluated.

The verbatim in our survey reveals that the acquisition of new languages is seen by students as a key factor to achieve success. This view has been pointed out by learners in items 12 and 20, as shown below:

Read each statement below, and tick a number that indicates your opinion: 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Uncertain; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
12. Learning German is important for me because knowledge of foreign languages represents a very useful tool in contemporary society.	02 01 13 32 68 00
20. Acquiring good foreign language skills enables one to be successful in life.	01 03 08 50 49 00

Table 21: (Adapted from Gao Y., Cheng Y. and Zhao Y., 2007; Onwuegbuzie and DaRos-Voseles, 2001)

Interestingly enough, almost all learners disagree or disapprove of a native-like competence in L2, which in their opinions “should be an aim, but no necessity.” Learners may aspire to that level without reaching that point. The justifications are given by two respondents as follows:

- “a multilingual speaker can have the aim of just speaking many languages at an advanced level, but not at bilingual [*native*] level”
- “No, [*acquiring*] any foreign language is difficult, and it is very hard [*for a bilingual speaker*] to master all the languages.”

Another student agrees that this goal is legitimate but nuanced, saying, “Yes, though I think it is nearly impossible” to achieve that [*level of competence*]. A number of respondents assume that it is sufficient to be able to switch from one language situation to the other and not necessarily master the target language. The reason why one may need L2 and for what purpose is stated in the following verbatim statements:

- “No, just what a situation necessitates.”
- “No. Satisfying your needs is OK.”

Meanwhile the table below indicates learners’ awareness about the importance of the traditional four common skills in L2 training, whereas the great emphases are on speaking and listening skills:

Do you think bilingual skills can be best measured by	Yes	No
a) Speaking skills?	101	04
b) Writing skills?	72	21
c) Reading skills?	79	14
d) Listening skills?	94	06

Table 22: (Adapted from Gao Y., Cheng Y. and Zhao Y., 2007; Onwuegbuzie and DaRos-Voseles, 2001)

Further statements showed that bilingual speakers seldom acquire their languages simultaneously. Hence, they are unlikely to display the same level in each of these abilities because, as one of the respondents says, “that is impossible. There is always one *[language]* you use more often.” In most cases, one of the languages is acquired in early childhood; this often remains the dominant one.

Participants in their majority corroborated the view that Eric Lenneberg hypothesized in his publication *Biological Foundations of Language* (1967). The German-born American neurologist postulated the concept of a critical period for language development. He believes that after a certain age, it is not easy for language learners to use the target language in a typically “native” way. The reasons are many and complex in nature. Lenneberg explains that early acquisition of language is an intuitive and implicit learning process. He theorizes that children, at this stage, have no awareness about grammar rules, but infer meaning and structures from sentences they hear. Based on his approach to language, developing a foreign or second language learning ability is likely to be incomplete for those individuals who come into contact with a new language after age 9 to 10.

During the acquisition process, before the onset of puberty, all languages are located in the same brain area, in contrast to adult

learning. Therefore, early and late learners do not share the same channels. This indubitably influences acquisition and proficiency. A respondent concurs by saying, “No! It is impossible for most (learners) to master a (foreign) language after age 12.” Another one stated “*Nein. Nach einem gewissen Alter sowieso unmöglich*”, which means “*No. From a certain age, this is almost impossible (to achieve).*”

This may explain why very few adult learners aspire to achieve the same competence in their subordinate languages as in the dominant ones. And their motivation depends on the usage frequency of the language.

The seminal arguments about the human-specific biological ability for language postulated by Lenneberg were elaborated on by the Belgian linguist François Grosjean, who indicated that a bilingual or multilingual speaker is not a sum of individual monolinguals. Being aware that language is not static but rather fluid, its state can go through additive or diminutive alteration processes. This could result in shift of dominant languages at different points in time. Thus, it would be presumptuous to give a generally accepted definition of who is bilingual or multilingual with consideration to native-like competence and performance, since a number of factors are to be taken into consideration. One has to wonder whether multilingual speakers actually must display the same range of skills in each language as native monolinguals are supposed to.

During my studies, I noticed sometimes that native students may not be able to present a good paper in their mother tongue, whereas their foreign counterparts can do that brilliantly. Some people still hold to the belief that perfect bilingualism should be the goal of any second language learner or speaker. Moreover, they assume that a polyglot speaker is someone who can speak each language flawlessly. These views have been dismissed by respondents who expressed the following opinions:

First Respondent: “No. Because you cannot expect (learners) to reach the same levels *[of competence in all languages]*.”

Second Respondent: “*Nein, man kann eine Sprache gut sprechen und die andere weniger gut*”, which when translated means “*No, you can speak a language very well but the other one less fluently.*”

Third Respondent: “*Sich gut ausdrücken können, reicht*” translated as “*It is enough if one can express oneself properly or adequately.*”

The Guinness Book of Records lists one Ziad Youssef Fazah, up to the 1998 edition, as the world’s biggest polyglot alive⁸. Ziad Fazah is a Lebanese immigrant born in Liberia and currently living in Brazil. Apart from his mother tongue Arabic, he maintains that he can communicate with native speakers of a large number of the following 58 foreign languages: Albanian, Amharic, Armenian, Azeri, Bengali, Bulgarian, Burmese, Cambodian, Cantonese, Czech, Cypriot, Danish, Dutch, Dzongkha, English, Fijian, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hebrew, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Kyrgyz, Lao, Malagasy, Malay, Maltese, Mandarin, Mongolian, Nepali, Norwegian, Papiamentu, Pashto, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Singapore Colloquial English, Sinhalese, Spanish, Swahili, Swedish, Tajik, Thai, Tibetan, Turkish, Urdu, Uzbek, Vietnamese, and Wu Chinese.

His claim has been disputed, so as to know if he really speaks 58 languages or possesses the level of competence he has claimed. But no one can contest Ziad’s talents even if his claimed abilities have been criticized⁹ and doubted sometimes. As he pointed out, he has been only using Portuguese and Arabic on a regular basis for the past decades. Nonetheless, he still has a good command of French, Spanish, Italian, Swedish, German, Danish, Papiamentu, English, and Russian. Though his competence in the other languages fluctuates, he assumed that after getting involved with any of those 58 languages again, he would be able to speak with the native speakers.

⁸ The greatest linguist in history is believed to be Cardinal Giuseppe Gaspardo Mezzofanti (1774-1849), who is reported to have spoken up to a hundred languages fluently (Cf. Russell, 1858: 471).

⁹ He regrets that only videos in which he was performing badly have been posted on YouTube instead of those in which he gave many correct responses.

Ziad Youssef Faza acquired these languages at different points in time, in school and in various contact situations, since his family and later he himself moved to many countries. He undoubtedly boasts different levels of competences in each language. However, I do not believe one can realistically expect native speaker fluency from him in each and every language. Besides, it is difficult to offer an objective description of what is required to be "native-like" fluency. Such an expectation will be idealistic, and this is corroborated by learners' answers below. These verbatim clearly indicate that students' desire will always be at the crossroads with the reality. This is what the respondents say:

First Respondent: "No, that is impossible. There is always one [*language*] you use more often."

Second Respondent: "No, I think that it is good to get near that point, but not absolutely necessary. It always depends on individual circumstances; where you are, what you need for your specific situation, what you want, etc..."

Third Respondent: "*Fast unmöglich so was zu erreichen. Wichtiger sind kulturelle und soziale Verhältnisse zu verstehen als die Sprache akzentfrei zu beherrschen.*"

which is freely translated as

"It is almost impossible to reach such a level. What matters is to be able to understand cultural rules and social norms rather than to master the language without an accent."

As a multilingual speaker, I cannot recall any situation whereby a person stops speaking a particular language or switches it off while speaking the other. A polyglot will always find it hard to turn off his or her functional languages and just let the other ones process or vice versa. Nor can a speaker put one of his or her languages on standby and then alternate them on and off deliberately as if they were TV channels. Languages are stored in our brains, and depending on level of fluency, we try to prevent them from interfering with one another in communicative contexts. Therefore, the lexicons of bilingual and

multilingual speakers are not built as full monolingual lexicons of the various languages, but are juxtaposed in such a way that they sometimes overlap. Some concepts might be acquired in “hybrid structures” in worst case scenarios and linked or missing in one language (Jarvis & Pavlenko, 2008). Speakers will then resort to transfer mechanism, try to shift some aspects of a language structure into another to fill in lexical and structural gaps (Weinreich, 1953). This step might have possible influences on performance. There are also some social and cultural features which are particular to a language environment and are not transferable. This being the case, the mastery of any new language may be easier if differences between that language and the languages students have to learn are contrasted and not ignored.

Balanced or Perfect Bilingualism versus Semilingualism

In the current research practice, classification of bilinguals makes a distinction between different kinds of individuals. These individuals can be generally classified based on their abilities to use languages. Furthermore, they can be categorized according to language acquisition over a certain period of time. In this case, individuals are classified as *early* or *late* bilinguals. These terminologies point to the fact that such individuals have acquired both languages either simultaneously or at different periods of time. The terms *equilingualism* and *ambilingualism* are also used as synonyms for balanced bilingualism. Our main concern here is to discuss whether balanced bilingualism exists and how it can objectively be assessed. What can be used as a yardstick to measure the level of competence and performance?

Bilinguals use languages in diverse situations, and for different purposes. There is a widespread belief that a balanced bilingual is supposed to have the same linguistic competence as natives in their respective languages. Such an assertion does not take into consideration the fact that a language which is not used regularly alters

and loses its fluidity in the speaker's tongue. Generally, bilinguals – even in multi-cultural environments – do not have such equal competence, and seldom aspire to it. To the questions *“Do you think that the aim of any bilingual or multilingual speaker should be to master all languages in which s/he is competent at the same level? Why or why not?”* many respondents reject the concept of balanced bilingualism as overly perfectionist by stating:

- “No, I think that it is good to get near that point, but not absolutely necessary.
- It always depends on individual circumstances; where you are, what you need for your specific situation, what you want, etc...”
- *“Ziel schon, aber in der Tatsache fraglich”* which means *“This should remain a goal, which in reality is questionable”*
- *“Das Ziel sollte es sein... aber dafür braucht man Zeit, Geduld und Wille!”* freely translated as *“It should be a goal... but one needs time, patience and will to achieve this!”*

For our respondents, the need and use of the languages are usually quite variable, and most people do not endeavour to develop equal skills in all languages in which they are proficient. Grosjean has provided arguments against the notion of balanced bilingualism. He points out that competence in bilinguals should no longer be equated with that of native speakers. For him, the reason lies in the fact that the former use each of their languages in specific domains and for definite purposes, sometimes in a complementary way. For that reason, he explains that:

“Bilinguals are now starting to be viewed not so much as the sum of two (or more) complete or incomplete monolinguals but rather as specific and fully competent speaker-hearers who have developed a communicative competence that is equal, but different in nature, to that of monolinguals. They make use of one language, of the other, or of the two together depending on the situation, the topic, the interlocutor, etc. This in turn has led to a re-definition of the procedure used to evaluate the bilingual's competencies. Bilinguals are starting

to be studied in terms of their total language repertoire, and the domains of use and the functions of the bilingual's various languages are now being taken into account." (Grosjean, 2004: 22)

Grosjean argues that bilingual and multilingual speakers should thus be considered as unique linguistic entities and can no longer be seen as "two monolinguals in a single person." For him, a fair assessment of bilinguals should rely on their "general communicative competence."¹⁰ Therefore, the concept of balanced bilingualism is a purely theoretical concept.

Answers to these questions are provided by respondents who say that the mastery of different L2s should:

- "not be all at the same level as long as one is able to communicate"
- "*Sich gut ausdrücken können, reicht,*" rendered into English as: "*It is enough if one can express oneself properly or adequately.*"

Another participant reacts and says, "Not really. If you [*have a better opportunity*] got more chance to improve one more than another, [*that should suffice*] it's just alright."

Most of the expressed views could be linked to Grosjean, who explains that the reasons that bring languages into contact and hence foster bilingualism occurs in different forms. A number of factors create various linguistic needs and:

¹⁰ In his book *Life with Two Languages: An Introduction to Bilingualism*, the author compares bilinguals and monolinguals to athletes competing in different disciplines. He argues that, since a high-jumper and a sprinter use different techniques, any comparison of the two will be awkward. Bilingual and multilingual speakers use their speeches for different functions. Thus, their competence should not be compared to that of monolinguals. For an extensive comment on that book, see: Baker, C. & Jones, S. P. (1998). *The Encyclopedia of Bilingualism and Bilingual Education*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 11.

“New situations, new interlocutors, new language functions will involve new linguistic needs and will therefore change the language configuration of the person involved. Extreme cases of restructuring are language forgetting and a return to functional monolingualism, be it in the person's first, second or third language. [...] In their everyday lives, bilinguals find themselves at various points along a situational continuum which induce different language modes. At one end, bilinguals are in a totally monolingual mode in that they are speaking (or signing or writing) to monolinguals of one - or the other - of the languages that they know. At the other end, bilinguals are in a bilingual language mode in that they are communicating with bilinguals who share their two languages and with whom they normally mix languages.” (Grosjean, 2004: 22-23)

As far as semilingualism is concerned, it simply denotes people with supposedly “insufficient” language proficiency. Such an individual's speaking ability and practical competence, especially with regard to reading and writing skills, are termed to be very low. A semilingual subject is said to have a limited vocabulary and to lack subconscious processing of a certain language. Semilinguals are assumed to hardly express their emotions in their subsequent languages. In other words, there are individuals with a supposedly “latent deficiency” in language competence when compared with monolinguals. In the past years, the notion of semilingualism has been vehemently criticized and rejected by many linguists.¹¹ Research in neuro-linguistics (cf. O'Connor and Seymour, 2003; Damasio, 2012, 2006) indicate that the speech faculty is based in both hemispheres, but the ability to use abstract words and sentences is made possible by the left hemisphere. In case of an injury or cerebral accident, this function can lead to the constriction of one's language ability. Actually, we know that the dominant language of a bilingual or multilingual speaker can change over time. Besides, non-monolingual speakers use their languages in various situations. A person who extensively uses within his community a language different from the one she or he uses at school or in the workplace, might not always be able to express the same feelings through each medium.

¹¹ Personally, I do not like the concept of "semilingualism." Given the fact that people coming from societies marked by the lack of written material are unable to write and read in some of their languages, will they be termed de facto as semilingual?

My own experience may help us to understand this phenomenon, as my linguistic repertoires and levels of competence are not the same in what I consider to be my native, first and functional languages. In addition to my native languages Fon and Goun, I acquired fundamental linguistic skills in French during my early childhood and school years. Later, I learned English and German. The three international languages have remained my functional languages. Up till now, I can assume that I am still more fluent in French than in my other languages. However, my lexical register on topics such as wine, art, culture and in the computer field is broader in German than in French. When I use English, I can hardly express my feelings. In fact, I do possess a more restricted emotional register in English than in German, and the largest one is French. For me, discussing childhood experiences in German or English is always a tedious exercise, whereas I can find professional and technical terms more easily in German than in English. Interestingly, when I try to elaborate some highly affective discourses in my native African languages – my mother tongues – I will sometimes end up producing incoherent or rather confusing emotional speech patterns. Generally, my lexicon in art and science is miserable. Due to the fact that African societies are societies where oral tradition prevails, I do not have any written ability in African languages. Considering all these factors, should I label myself a semilingual speaker or a kind of “non-balanced” bilingual?

These explanations point to the reality that someone's mother tongue may not necessarily be the one in which the person expresses himself or herself better in various topics. Moreover, not all native speakers have an inbuilt ability to attain a very high competence in their native languages (Gupta, 2001: 366). Therefore, a mother-tongue like ability is a misleading concept in itself. This is not necessarily a realistic yardstick if we consider that some people could live for many years in a country and still be less fluent in their initial languages or are unable to express their feelings in their source or target languages. Whoever has lived for a while in different linguistic environments or has been exposed to new languages will agree that multilingual speakers feel much more

capable of expressing themselves in one language, while being less articulate in the others. We should first of all keep in mind that the level of proficiency in a language heavily depends on socio-affective factors, on the learners' motivations, goals and feelings, rather than on people's cognitive capacities. Secondly, what is commonly termed mother tongue does not necessarily represent the major form of expression, but other acquired languages may substitute our mother tongues. In the following tables, our respondents reiterated by their answers that anyone who uses two or more languages can be defined as bilingual or multilingual, regardless of his or her degree of fluency in the traditional four skills – listening, reading, speaking, and writing

In which of the following cases will you not describe a person as bilingual/multilingual speaker?	No
a) To understand other languages without being able to speak them?	34
b) To be able to speak many languages but not the 'international language'?	12
c) To understand and speak languages without being able to write them?	13
d) To be able to read in some languages without being able to speak them?	29

Table 23: (Adapted from Gao Y., Cheng Y. and Zhao Y., 2007; Onwuegbuzie and DaRos-Voseles, 2001)

Yet, the rejection of the concept of balanced bilingualism by respondents is reinforced in the following statements:

First Respondent: "No. There is no need to master all aspects of a [second or foreign] language."

Second Respondent: "No, that is impossible. There is always one language you use more often."

If one does not speak or use other languages for a long period of time but can recollect them when needed, one is said to be a dormant bilingual or multilingual speaker. A bilingual speaker who has not used one of the two languages for some years might become increasingly monolingual. Maybe, it will be very interesting to find out whether a person can move from multilingualism to dormant bilingualism and finally fall completely back into monolingualism.

Foreign Language Acquisition and Intelligence

The question concerning the correlation between bilingualism and brain activity is sometimes raised in the field of L2 teaching. Common beliefs tend to connect closely the ability to learn languages formally - in school and similar institutions - to the student's intelligence. Such a fallacious conception tries to link L2 acquisition to cognitive capacity and leads to misconceptions. The conclusion to be deduced from this tenet is that less intelligent children might not reach the same language proficiency as their more intelligent peers. Though studies have focused on variations in performance of students in L2, no empirical evidence has so far explained whether there may be a causal relationship between the cognitive faculty and speech processing mechanism.

In his publication *Biological Foundations of Language* (1967), Lenneberg introduced the hypothesis of a critical period in language acquisition and the idea that a certain age is appropriate for learning a new language. In a broader sense, the earlier a person begins the study of a foreign language the better he or she is able to acquire and perform in that language. Thus, in Lenneberg's view, it becomes very challenging to achieve full competence after a certain point in time. This idea still remains topical and contemporary language specialists try to differentiate between performance and intelligence. Following Howard Gardner's ideas, an individual intelligence profile is the sum of the multiple intelligences possessed by each human being. Hence, our

cognitive profile is the combination of different intellectual abilities and aptitudes that occur in each individual. Gardner believes that human beings seldom develop these intelligences at the same pace, so that some profiles might become stronger than others. He posits intelligence as “a bio-psychological potential used to process information that can be activated in a cultural setting to solve problems or to create products that are of value in a culture” (Gardner, 1999: 33-34). The combination is always unique and is shaped by personal experience, cultural environment and educational background. Therefore, a cognitive profile is dynamic and subject to continuous change. Gardner, thus, remarks:

“If I were asked to assess someone’s intelligence, I would not be satisfied until I had observed him solving problems and fashioning products in a number of settings. This is usually not practical. And even then, I would have no guarantee that the intelligences profile would remain the same a year or two later.” (Gardner, 1999: 139)

Gardner does not believe that the human mind, especially with regard to intelligence, is fixed at birth. According to him, cognitive development occurs through education, exposure to cultural environment and personal experience. He adds that intelligences are

"potentials – presumably, neural ones – that will or will not be activated, depending upon the values of a particular culture, the opportunities available in that culture, and the personal decisions made by individuals and/or their families, schoolteachers, and others." (Gardner, 1999: 34)

This is a revision with far-reaching consequence. Depending mainly on the values of the culture in which one grows up, “intelligences arise from the combination of a person’s genetic heritage and life conditions in a given culture and era” (Gardner, 1999: 45). This profile can change constantly. Recent research in psychology supports the idea that human brainpower has the capacity to expand in order to meet new challenges. Through gradual training, new skills are learned and can be easily transformed into more complex processes. This phenomenon, known as neural plasticity, allows the human intellect,

given the exposure it gets, to develop throughout a life time. It is shaped differently and we train it consciously or unconsciously. Moreover, modern psychology has postulated that the acquisition of subsequent languages can contribute to foster learning abilities in other subjects; and most people who study foreign languages for several years show improvements in vocabulary, grammar, and composition skills in their own languages. Hancock (1977) demonstrates that the exposure of learners to various languages and cultures at an early age offers broader experiential advantages in perception and concept development.

The theory of MI challenges the fact that traditional definitions of intelligence do not adequately encompass the wide variety of abilities humans display. Gardner's model promotes diversity and a methodology that breaks the rules of traditional teaching in order to achieve better learning outcomes. In this view, the correlation made between language acquisition and intelligence is misleading. For instance, a child who masters the mathematical equations or linguistic rules easily is not necessarily more intelligent than a child who struggles to achieve the same results. The second child may be stronger in another kind of intelligence, and therefore may best learn the given material through a different approach. This implies that a person is intelligent to the extent that the person could solve problems and adapt effectively to that person's environment using the body and thinking skills relevant to the social world. However, Gardner believes that intelligences are not interchangeable. For instance, individuals can be low in logical-mathematical profile but high in musical intelligence. Most teachers will make connections to help a student who has difficulties in one area. Nevertheless, they cannot somehow substitute these aptitudes so that the student understands math through music. Besides, Gardner's model advocates persuasively that teachers need to explore cultural resources and integrate them in classroom exercises. This means that teachers need to be trained to have specific skills and knowledge so that they can enhance "intelligences" of learners.

As an anecdote, I would like to add how some of my colleagues would often comment in exasperation that had course attendants been more proficient in their knowledge of grammar in the source languages, they would have been able to acquire English, French or German language more easily. Such a statement might be true for native speakers of Romance languages, but not for all learners. Speakers of languages with structural or cultural closeness to the target one, or those with prior language experiences may comprehend better. The learners are inclined to build similarity and mental associations faster than learners whose languages and cultures have few similarities with the new languages. Yet, this occurrence does not mean that the latter have relatively low cognitive abilities or lack intelligence. Regarding this particular case, I have noticed that not all learners can transfer rules from one language into the other easily or transpose schemata and background knowledge during their learning process. And no matter how smart and bright students are, the wider the cultural gap, the harder they struggle with the L2 acquisition process.

Research from numerous studies has found that transfer of linguistic knowledge and natural acquisition do not always go the same way (Ellis, 2003, 2008). Experiments have also revealed that hereditary and socio-psychological factors play an important role in the shaping of individual learning orientations and predispositions. Yet, proficiency which misleadingly related to cognition is still measured by competence in international languages. The following example might support the assertion that in West Africa, particularly in Benin, knowledge of the language of the former ruling power is equated with intelligence.

Between the 1970s and 1980s, Nigeria experienced an economic boom from oil export. Large numbers of people from the neighboring countries moved to that country in search of better living conditions. Many Beninese citizen who also joined that migration wave lived in that West African country as industrial or construction workers, and some even were busy in the cross-border trade. With the passage of time, most of them “correctly” learned Nigerian Pidgin, although a large number were illiterate. Today, a lot of Beninese travelling to Nigeria are

unable to communicate in Nigerian Pidgin, and consequently require the services of such “middlepersons.” It is in the company of one of those women that I first followed my uncle to Nigeria. In fact, I was very impressed by the way the lady was communicating swiftly with other market women, bargaining at a filling station, whereas my uncle, who had studied in Britain, displayed a total incapacity of uttering a single word. Back home, I immediately related the whole story to my playmates. The lady as a result became the object of mockery among some of us for many years. Whenever she walked by, we would say some Pidgin words, and would burst into laughter. The whole thing lasted for many years until I happened to realize one day that the reason for our deriding behaviour could be traced to our educational system. We had been conditioned in school at that time to ridicule any language that was different from the official one. Consequently, anyone who speaks a variety of English or French other than the standard one in the former colonies is considered ignorant, lazy and lacking in “intelligence.”¹² As a result, that lady who was only one among many Pidgin speakers, could never earn our respect and was regarded as unintelligent.

Nowadays, considering also the correlation which is very often being made between intelligence and education, I always wonder which one of the two protagonists was more intelligent. In contrary to my uncle, the lady neither had the opportunity to receive any formal education, nor to attend a language course during her stay in Nigeria. However, nobody can doubt the way she had acquired the corresponding means of communication for her survival and the improvement of her social condition in the then Nigerian socio-economic context. Anecdotal evidence such as this uncovers the fact that language learning and speakers’ competence are not just about what people learn in linguistic or grammar courses in the classroom.

¹² The situation has not changed much. In some countries, pupils are still severely punished for speaking their own languages. During my school years and to date, a pupil could be spanked or beaten by school authorities, or have to wear heavy metal on his or her neck until he or she caught somebody else speaking a non-official language and passed the “*signal*” over to that person.

Language takes place above all outside the classroom, where speakers are exposed to various contexts. To quote Gardner, intelligence is "a bio-psychological potential to process information that can be activated in a cultural setting to solve problems or create products that are of value in a culture" (Gardner 1999: 33-34). Maybe, the lady I referred to above does not fit into the "intelligence concept" of the intellectual world. Nor could she acquire standard English. Yet, the standard language of my "educated" uncle could not help him in that particular case at all. All said and done, knowledge in international languages is unfortunately the only means used as a yardstick to measure one's intelligence. All over Africa or other continents, specifically in countries which have been under domination, people hence equate the ability to speak the language and adopt the culture of the colonial empires with intelligence. The mere ability to speak these languages well, especially the standard forms, commands tremendous respect.

Standard Form in Foreign and Second Language Classrooms

Language specialists and educators at various levels are now faced with the challenge of teaching L2 with efficacy and enhancing students' achievement. At the same time they have to comply with curricular requirements, which very often impose a national or international "standard on language."

Ordinarily, for the common opinion, a good competence equates mastery of the highest standard of a language. Thus, L2 training seems to link competence, performance and standard closely. As we have discussed previously (cf. p. 139f), the complex task of framing competence and performance in multilingual contexts gives rise to divergences or differences. For instance, could we impose a standard in foreign and second language learning? Or better still, should we also teach non-standard language in L2 classes? Contrary to

French¹³ and German,¹⁴ there is not only one standard form of English. Therefore, Standard English is a learned skill, and a skill on which there is not always an absolute agreement. (Gupta, 2001: 367).

In my years of learning languages, I have realized that the nature and place of what is considered a standard form have always been a matter of personal concern. Generally, the vast majority of L2 learners would admit that the standard language should be taught in the premises of formal institutions. As the table below indicates, respondents visibly point out their wishes for alternatives to standard language teaching in the classroom.

Rate the statements below: 31 - <i>I like receiving instructions from the teacher:</i>	<i>strongly agree</i>	<i>strongly disagree</i>
Knowledge about non-standard language and idioms	87	23
Linguistic explanations and relevance of new terms	102	11

24: (Adapted from Gao Y., Cheng Y. and Zhao Y., 2007; Onwuegbuzie and DaRos-Voseles, 2001)

Instructional policies and programs, however, tend essentially to portray the view that proficiency in the standard language should be the sole aim of any language course attendant. Some academicians even assume that teachers who are positively disposed toward students who speak non-standard varieties can make their students perform poorly (Christian, 1997). Rickford (1997) oppose such a view and cites ample support that non-standard language awareness in L2 teaching can promote language and literacy learning. He gives evidence from both

¹³ L'Académie Française: the French Academy established in 1635 is France's official authority that regulates matters related to the French language. It has no legal power and can only make recommendations.

¹⁴ The Gesellschaft für deutsche Sprache (GfdS) is a government-sponsored organization which endeavors to research on and propagate the German language. Through its recommendations, it focuses on the preservation and promotion of the current German language.

the United States and Europe to show that mastering the standard form of a language might be easier if the differences in the students' native tongue and Standard English are made explicit rather than entirely ignored.

Depending on the theoretical approach they favour as well as their teaching methods, some teachers adopt an excessive drive toward acquisition of the standard language and tend to correct any utterance that deviates from the "norm." In addition, a lot of language assessment tools are developed according to "standard" models. In most cases, such tools which are conceived within western-orientated frameworks are resented by non-Western learners as inadequate and not so easily transposable into all learning contexts. In the verbatim statements below, language learners mostly reject the fact that the level of competence of L2 speakers should be compared to the performance of an educated native speaker of the target language. The first learner says, "I think the aim of any learner is to become competent in as many languages as possible" and adds that, however, "everyone has different skills and abilities." For a second respondent "Learning [*a foreign language*] is a [*continuous*] process. Since "people have different goals and they can aspire to whatever level they want to."

Through my teaching experience, I have learned that keeping to the standard in language learning in the classroom is always an on-going struggle, especially in SL contexts. In their daily encounters in the target environment, students are always exposed to the ambivalence between the contextual use of language and the requirements of the educated forms of languages. Usually, this "exclusive" language taught in formal institutions, which is actually spoken by a tiny minority, eventually defines the standard, although it does not always allow swift communication in the target environment. According to Widdowson (1994), "the majority of native speakers speak non-standard English and need to be taught the standard form at school." In fact, "Standard English is claimed by a minority of people who have the power to impose it." Talking about the English language, Gupta (2001) states that "standard English seems to be an arbitrary concept created by Anglo-

centric ideas and focused only on a narrow version of either US or UK English.” Based on the aforementioned, I believe that the common discourse in the field of language should move away from the argument about standard versus non-standard and engage learners through a learning method that includes more real life experience. The aim of any language teaching should consist in helping individuals to know how to switch properly, choose the right language register and learn consistently. Teaching practices should encourage students to develop both their communicative and sociolinguistic aptitudes. I am not saying that we should not follow any rules or let anarchy take over in language learning classrooms. We should simply make learners aware of the fact that, unfortunately, the standard language is often the only variety that brings economic and social benefits to them. It remains a personal asset and a means of promoting one’s personal career, especially social advancement. Nonetheless, I think it’s time for language specialists to examine ways and means of developing adequate models and for us to revise our stance on the standard, which is the form of any language that is sometimes elaborated by committees with limited teaching experience. With regard to this, Bonfiglio outlined the reconsideration of the standard forms based solely on native speaker concept, written and accent to determine proficiency in language.

How Representative and Objective are Traditional Test Instruments?

There are a number of measures invented to evaluate bilingual and multilingual speakers’ abilities and competence. Considering the phenomenon of bilingualism as one of languages in contact, these various measurement schemes have been designed either to check the bilinguals’ knowledge with regard to native speakers, or to establish a direct comparison between the subjects’ respective languages. Commonly, tests are based on psychometric measurements or on verbal and word associations. Most psychometricians, who devise and

interpret tests as a way of probing the nature of intelligence, conceive of intelligence as unitary. In one or the other case, only the level of pronunciation, vocabulary, comprehension, and spelling attained by individuals are evaluated. This tendency has been challenged by Gardner. In his book *Intelligence Reframed: Multiple Intelligences for the 21st Century* (1999) Gardner writes:

“In the ongoing debate among psychologists about this issue, the psychometric majority favors a general intelligence perspective.

The general public, however, generally focus on a second, even more contentious question: Is intelligence (or are intelligences) predominantly inherited? Actually, this is by and large a Eurocentric question. In the Confucius-influenced societies of East Asia, it is widely assumed that individual differences in intellectual endowment are modest and that personal effort largely accounts for achievement level.” (Gardner, 1999:14)

The same opinion is echoed by the Welsh psychologist Colin Baker, who believes that IQ tests have been developed with the specific goal of investigating the significance of intelligence in language learning (Baker, 1993 and 1995). It is commonplace among western scholars to give high credits to students' IQ score, which these scholars consider as the ultimate indicator of a person's intellectual abilities. Gardner suggests a reassessment model of intelligence in the context of debates about procedures which claim to measure intelligence (or aspects thereof) and to indicate whether they are objective. Gardner refers to intelligences as a 'potential,' and, thus emphasizes the fact that cognitive faculty is not a fixed construct. He strongly urges for a more pluralistic viewpoint for measuring human mental capacities. According to him, there should not exist a cognitive-only based assessment model to evaluate adequately all the intelligences. He reiterates his stance that any formal measurement based only on logical and linguistic IQ-type tests is short-sighted. He vehemently opposes the existence of a single intelligence known as “g” that is maintained by the majority of the logic-oriented theorists of his time. For him, the human cognitive faculty is organized “horizontally” and not “vertically.”

Nowadays, most of these evaluation methods are more and more criticized, as works in neuroscience instruct us that intelligence is no stable variable and can only be evaluated with regard to specific situations. Moreover, language is not a fixed variable. Gardner has laid an important groundwork by disputing the restrictive view prevailing among psychometricians. He suggested that they should implement new procedures that show more objectivity in accessing skills people use to solve problems they encounter in their daily lives (Gardner, 1993; 1999). If we concur with Grosjean that a bilingual person should not be considered as a sum of two monolingual speakers in one individual, the inclination to compare bilingual to monolingual speakers by means of such measurement methods seems to be very exaggerating.

In contemporary discourse, proficiency in L2 does not only relate to a mastery of a linguistic system nor does it mean correctness of use. Above all, this denotes the ability to communicate effectively in the target language (Ellis, 1997; Krashen, 1981). We know, for instance, that even all natives of a language do not have the same ability. The competence of a German television anchorperson is not necessarily the same as that of a farmer; and the proficiency of a university professor or a bank manager certainly differs from that of a salesman or a lorry driver. To be bilingual or multilingual is rather a “psychological state of the individual who has access to more than one linguistic code[s]” (Hamers and Blanc, 1982:15) and displays a specific behaviour to each of the given languages in different domains.

Having said that, what we make of people who only show speaking and listening aptitudes in their second or subsequent languages. We know for instance that multilingual speakers, most of the time, could use their other languages with perfect syntax, but with less linguistic variety than in their mother tongues. A multilingual speaker can be fully proficient in all languages but does not have the same repertoire in them as in her or his native or functional language. And what should be the appropriate testing model for people who only have an intermediary knowledge in their second or successive languages,

but use these languages regularly? Are we looking at language acquisition from a qualitative or quantitative perspective? How should we classify that market woman from Benin who was able to use many languages “perfectly” – at least in her everyday life – but was unable to write or read a single word in the given languages because of lack of written materials?

In some regions in Africa and Asia, written materials are not available in local languages. Since contact takes normally place in the local languages and languages of adjoining areas, people easily acquire so many languages as different varieties. Thus, language acquisition in these multilingual environments takes place naturally and spontaneously. Yet, elsewhere in the world, patterns of second language acquisition depend on where individuals live and on the amount of formal education they receive. We also know that beliefs, perceptions, emotions and personal goals play a key role in the process. A typical example is the case of a native of the Fon community who grew up in Cotonou¹⁵, in an area named Saint-Michel, and learned Hausa and Mina by interacting with his peers. As his family later moved to Sêgbêya in Akpakpa, the other part of the city, he ended up mastering Yoruba. The multicultural neighbourhoods, within which he had been living, obviously had given him the opportunity to master several spoken languages. He, therefore, is like many other Africans who attend school, and acquire as a matter of fact the official language French in a formal way, a phenomenon which can be seen as “a late natural acquisition.” As we know, the linguistic environment in Africa and the ensuing language distribution from the historical perspective to date usually makes this possible. It is worth mentioning here that contact between official and local languages in many areas have resulted in varieties such as Pidgin and Creole.

¹⁵ For a geographical map of Cotonou, please check:
<http://www.vertetplume.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/cotonou.jpg>

These situations clearly exemplify opinions on individual multilingualism and prompt us to ask the question whether the degree of bilingualism can be satisfactorily evaluated. The main problem in assessing bilingualism with accuracy lies not only in finding the border line between each of the learners' respective languages, but also in defining a new and objective status for other varieties with regard to "standard forms," and determining with accuracy the degree of interference that occurs in the use of each language. For the most part, I believe that existing language measurement patterns contain some flaws and hardly make the learning process easier for multilingual speakers. This is because the yardsticks do not take into consideration the domain and situation of use of languages by polyglot speakers. Other important factors to consider when measuring competence among other things are age, the context of acquisition, the nature of motivation and personal goals.

In line with the foregoing assessment, testing procedures in foreign and second languages still remain a difficult exercise. Far from giving any recommendation, this survey clearly states that any attempt to compare an L2 achievement with any "standard" form or "native competence" is inadequate and short-sighted.

On the whole, there is a need for reliable and valid assessment instruments which will measure and train broader forms of intelligence. It is believed that inadequate assessments generate a negative feedback and students do not benefit from the results obtained on such tests. In this case, learners will not make full use of their potentials, feel uncomfortable, and the outcome will not be satisfactory.

Summary

In a multi-ethnic and multicultural environment, patterns of language acquisition are numerous and are linked to a variety of factors. This does

not always facilitate a clear distinction between native language, first language or mother tongue. Cumulative evidence tells us that it is unwise to provide an overall definition of the terms bilingualism and multilingualism, as these phenomena manifest themselves within individuals in different ways. In past decades, the ability as well as the competence of bilingual and multilingual speakers was often compared to those of monolingual speakers. Authors such as Lenneberg and Grosjean were among the pioneers to underline that the concept of balanced bilingualism is far removed from reality. Though children could acquire different languages simultaneously, the level of acquisition and development of the languages can vary. Our survey interestingly points out that bilingual and multilingual learners do not acquire new languages in order to perform like native speakers. This chapter has further discussed the concepts of performance and competence. Since language manifests itself at various levels, we can see that the dimension of a bilingual speaker's competence and her or his abilities in the given languages do not represent constant variables. We therefore conclude with Weigand that multilingual speakers' ability can be best assessed as a continuum of "competence-in-performance". Our findings show that a native-like attainment of competence as a yardstick for measuring language knowledge is unrealistic. Most of the time, people learn new languages in order to increase their spheres of communication. With regard to the often-established link between L2 acquisition and intelligence, contemporary psychologists such as Howard Gardner express a strong disapproval of this tendency. Any language may get weaker or stronger owing to social factors and personal motivation. According to Gardner, human cognition can only be considered in connection with an action. In fact, Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences (MI) is a rejection of traditional testing methods. It emphasizes that language acquisition and subsequently competence and performance are subject to certain social and psychological factors, which play a major role. However, aptitude is not indicative of any kind of correlation between acquisition and cognition. The use of traditional test models is also a major area of concern to Gardner, who criticizes most of

the existing tools, especially IQ-based procedures. He believes that, in general, the models only measure language and logic and are incidentally inappropriate. In fact, by using this method, the intellectual potentials of students' minds and related aspects of their practical aptitude are neglected. Consequently, these various measurement models of bilingualism have demonstrated their inability to fully assess the phenomenon in its entirety. Gardner says, "dissatisfaction with the concept of IQ and with unitary views of intelligence is fairly widespread" (1993: 7). Though his model is not yet generally accepted, Gardner has pressed for changes in the perception, which still considers low performance as a lack of intelligence, and advocates a fairer evaluation method. In his own words,

"Taking human differences seriously lies at the heart of the MI perspective. At the theoretical level, this means that all individuals cannot be profitably arrayed on a single intellectual dimension. At the practical level, it suggests that any uniform educational approach is likely to serve only a small percentage of children optimally. (Gardner, 1999: 91)

His idea may be termed idealistic and utopian, but it challenges language specialists and educators to adopt a new culture, since human beings do not have the same minds. Regarding the call for and use of standard forms, there are various views on how "standard" or "non-standard" forms can be handled in the classroom. Though we need some rules and norms in L2 training, we should not hold firm on standard variations, but should rather promote a broader and a more realistic alternative view.

General Conclusion

This work has attempted to look at some paradigms in L2 (foreign and/or second language) training and to explore the role of psychological and cultural variables in the process. The aim of the research is to understand concepts such as foreign language, second language, language acquisition, learning and participation. It has found that all these processes are complementary and that any attempt to draw a line between them in L2 contexts is very difficult. It has further indicated that in a multi-ethnic and multicultural environment, patterns of language acquisition and interaction do not always allow a clear distinction between native language, first language and mother tongue.

This study also has discussed Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences, which validates the co-existence of many intelligences. Given the fact that the human cognitive faculty is characterized by great individual variations, each student thinks and approaches the L2 training in a unique way, "through multiple entry learning channels." Gardner's theory provides teachers with new opportunities to reinforce areas of both strength and weakness. It is a model that advocates a combination of curriculum requirements and students' desire for more participation.

The project has also addressed non-adapted methods and curricula in L2. Fieldwork in Benin has confirmed that teachers, based on the geographical environment, need to optimize their classroom techniques, develop new paradigms and didactic practices and fit these into a culture-specific framework. There is a growing awareness in this regard. In Benin, this has led to the implementation of new course books that have local and regional content. The scheme was supported by international partners such as the USAID, UNESCO, and the European Union, which greatly contributed to teachers' training programs as well.

The analysis of intelligence profiles and their combinations in a few SL and FL textbooks reveal that the predominant intelligence profiles are verbal, linguistic and intrapersonal. They are followed by spatial, visual and interpersonal intelligence profiles. Generally, manuals for learners with prior knowledge contain more activities which require mental processing, whereas beginner's books have more visual input. Some intelligence profiles, such as the existentialist and naturalistic ones, rarely occur, since they often deal with topics which might be sensitive and emotional, or require greater linguistic competence or profound expertise of the learner. The research could not provide a definite answer as to how to establish universal norms to best teach a foreign or a second language.

The paper further examines students' opinions, in order to learn more about the roles and the impact of emotion and other psychological constructs (Damasio, 2006, 2012) on the L2 learning process. The findings thus informed us about the ways students' beliefs and perceptions are constructed and expressed (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2009). The foregoing supports the view by Ellis (1994, 2008), Richards and Schmidt (2002) and Horwitz (1988, 1990), who maintain that learners sometimes have preconceived ideas about language teaching practices and about the extent to which errors should best be tackled in class. Whether in FL or SL contexts, students are generally concerned about grammatical correctness, whereas this concern is much more pronounced at the beginners' levels. The students' beliefs, as mentioned above, influence in turn the ways in which language learners acquire and perform in target language situations (Onwuegbuzie, A. J., Bailey, P., and Daley, C. E., 2000, 2002). Some of the results we observed reverberate the close connection between personal motivation, learners' self-investment and their immediate achievement, as shown in the studies conducted by Gao Y., Cheng Y. and Zhao Y. (2005); Onwuegbuzie and DaRos-Voseles, (2001); Bailey, P., Onwuegbuzie, A. J., and Daley, C. E. (2000). The figures in the surveys

also indicate the correlation and mutual interaction between learners' beliefs, language learning and identity construction.

In addition, the study is concerned with the different views about the importance and roles local languages can play on the African continent as mediums of education. A project conducted at the University of Limpopo in South Africa provides a useful insight into how a "mother-tongue-based bilingual education," especially a dual program with an African language and English, can empower students and greatly contribute to the improvement of learners' performance.

This work further discusses the phenomena of bilingualism or multilingualism both in spoken interaction and learning context, and confirmed that bilingualism manifests itself in various ways in individuals. Furthermore, it appears that the definition of common concepts such as mother tongue, native language, and first language can be misleading, depending on the society in which the people concerned live (Hackert, 2012; Bonfiglio, 2010). In the African pluri-lingual environment, new language varieties resulting from contacts between European and local languages are emerging. It is for such reasons that sociolinguists are having difficulty in agreeing upon an overall definition of bilingualism, and the classification of subjects as balanced bilinguals or semilinguals. The majority of bilinguals interviewed in the course of this dissertation project claim that the aim of any bilingual should be to be as proficient as a native speaker in a given language. Nevertheless, the contradictory realization is that most of the respondents realize the fact that the attainment of such a goal is very difficult, or even almost impossible. There is also notable disagreement among authors with regard to various assessment methods of multilingualism. Gardner (1999) disapproves of the common psychometric tools used to test students' knowledge, since he believes that these forms of evaluation do not enable "people to do things" and observe their skills accordingly. However, his model and conceptualization of intelligence have been criticized for being too broad and with a limited impact in the field.

This investigation corroborates opinions of Lenneberg (1967) and Grosjean (2006) who see the concept of balanced bilingualism as being idealistic. They strongly argue that bilingual and multilingual learners do not acquire new languages in order to perform like natives speakers. These authors believe that neither competence, nor ability in additional languages is a constant variable (Bonfiglio, 2010). The question is even more complex in developing countries, where some languages do not exist in a written form and where the dimension of multilingualism is not fixed, whether considered as an individual state or as a societal manifestation. At no point does our research provide evidence that corroborates the misleading correlation between individual intelligence and the process of second language acquisition. Anecdotal evidence clearly indicates that not only educated persons can acquire an L2, but also people living in societies marked by orality. On the contrary, experiences have shown that progress in second language acquisition – formal or informal – heavily depends on many social factors, such as personal motivation, personal attitude, goals, socio-economic necessity and the influence of the linguistic environment.

Africa is a continent noted for the coexistence of former colonial and local languages. This dissertation particularly examines the nature and the role of language policy in education, the relationship between language use, the process of language socialization and identity construction. In most of the African countries examined, only European languages – English, French, Portuguese, Spanish - have been given official status, and hence the status of power in social interaction. Similarly, these colonial languages remain the sole mediums of education in almost everywhere in Africa South of the Sahara. This fact forces young people to denigrate their local languages. Africans' negative attitudes towards their languages might in the long run have disastrous effects on the individual and academic performance of young people. We know that language is an essential part of human thought, the transmitter of culture and of national identity. For bilingual children,

language bears meaning in their symbolic world, and there is an undeniable relationship between language acquisition and the process of thinking within a given symbolic worldview (Mead, 1934; Bourdieu, 1991). Since language is integral to identity construction, language planning policies in some African countries should define new approaches into practice regardless of the costs involved. The programs should incorporate both local and international languages as mediums of education and implement effective policies to promote the recognition of national languages as a way of providing sustainable education. It is only through such steps that the teaching of different languages in a multicultural environment can boost cultural diversity and enhance the appreciation of personal roots, thus avoiding the risk of linguistic and cultural extinction.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings from this research, the following is recommended:

- The implementation of new methods and paradigms in L2 training, which should include more task-based work and the promotion of practical language knowledge.
- The use of multidisciplinary resources and interactive approaches to stimulate the “Multiple Intelligences” of language learners and to improve the four traditional and intercultural skills in L2.
- Reinforced teaching of language-mediated concepts, thereby helping students develop confidence in oral communication.
- The importance of tailoring didactic models within the context of appropriate language teaching techniques.

The results of this work, therefore, highlight the need for reforms, in which language institutions, specialists, and teachers work together in order to:

- counteract obstructive conditions in the field of L2
- encourage assessment models that serve a valid educational purpose rather than the purpose of examinations only
- provide incentives and encouragement for teacher training schemes as a valuable means of ensuring quality L2 teaching
- approve textbooks which are supplemented with both local and regional contents.

It is hoped that the findings presented in this study will be considered in the field of foreign and second languages, leading to a better understanding of the role language learners' beliefs, perceptions and emotions play in self-motivation. The results provide evidence that false perceptions and expectations can be negative or counterproductive in L2 adult learners' investment in the acquisition or learning process, and can affect identity development as well. In addition, it highlights how mother tongue-based instruction empowers young learners and significantly contributes to their holistic intellectual development and identity construction. From the foregoing, it is clear that the power and potential of emotion and cultural identity can be exploited in language instruction to enhance student performance. Therefore, it is imperative that policymakers, school administrations, language institutions, and regional actors think about further innovative methods in the field of L2 teachings, methods which take the psychological aspects of language into consideration when pondering future reforms.

Addenda

Appendix A

First set of surveys conducted for a postmaster research between 2004 and 2006.

(A total of 126 participants: 54 Europeans, 43 Africans, 29 non-Europeans living in Western countries).

8 – Do you think bilingual skills can be measured by the following skills?

	Europeans (Germany)	Non-Europeans living in Europe	Africans (Benin)	Total
Speaking skills	42/54: 77%	22/29: 76%	29/43: 68%	123/126: 98%
writing skills	34/54: 63%	15/29: 52%	10/43: 24%	59/126: 47%
reading skills	30/54: 56%	16/29: 55%	16/43: 37%	62/126: 49%
Listening skills	37/54: 69%	22/29: 76%	20/43: 47%	79/126: 63%

11– In which of the following cases will you describe a person as bi/multilingual?

Please, answer with “Yes” or “No”

	Europeans (Germany)	Non-Europeans living in Europe	Africans (Benin)	Total
to understand other languages without speaking them?	6/54: 11%	3/29: 11%	22/43: 51%	31/126: 24%
to speak many languages but not the internat. one	25/54: 47%	17/29: 59%	8/43: 19%	50/126: 40%
to understand and speak lang. without writing them?	24/54: 45%	14/29: 49%	5/43: 12%	43/126: 34%
to read in some languages and be unable to speak them?	5/54: 10%	3/29: 11%	9/43: 21%	17/126: 14%

13 - Are you an advocate or an opponent of bilingual education? Please, argue.

	Europeans (Germany)	Non-Europeans living in Europe	Africans (Benin)	Total
Advocate	54/54: 100%	29/29: 100%	43/43: 100%	126/126: 100%
Opponent	0/54: 0%	0/29: 0%	0/43: 0%	0/126: 0%

14 - Have you (ever) been exposed to two or more languages from your birth?

Europeans (Germany)	Non-Europeans living in Europe	Africans (Benin)	Total
7/54: 13%	26/29: 90%	43/43: 100%	76/126: 61%

22 – Do you think that attending school and learning an international language affects your ties with your local community (unites you or distances you from them)?

	Europeans (Germany)	Non-Europeans living in Europe	Africans (Benin)	Total
Unites you	50/54: 93%	4/29: 14%	6/43: 13%	/
distances you	1/54: 2%	25/29: 87%	35/43: 82%	/

26- What kind of feelings does the use of your own language with your (country) mates evoke in you? (Many answers are possible. Therefore, the total might exceed 100%)

	Europeans (Germany)	Non-Europeans living in Europe	Africans (Benin)	Total
No particular Feelings	3/54: 6%			/
It is Something normal	50/54: 92%			/
Pride & Satisfaction	1/54: 2%	27/29: 93%	39/43: 90%	/
Inner Joy & Delight		22/29: 75%	23/43: 54%	/
Rebirth & Sense of Belonging		8/29: 28%	28/43: 65%	/

33 - Do you think that you speak / use all your languages with the same competence?

	Europeans (Germany)	Non-Europeans living in Europe	Africans (Benin)	Total
Yes	0/54: 0%	0/29: 0%	2/43: 5%	2/126: 2%
No	54/54: 100%	29/29: 100%	41/43: 95%	124/126: 98%

34– Do you think that the aim of any bilingual/multilingual speaker should be to master all his languages at the same level? Why or why not?

	Europeans (Germany)	Non-Europeans living in Europe	Africans (Benin)	Total
Yes	20/54: 56%	12/29: 41%	28/43: 65%	60/126: 53%
No	24/54: 44%	17/29: 59%	15/43: 35%	66/126: 52%

40 - Do you think that personal feelings, feelings toward one's environment and individual goals might influence the way one learns a new language?

	Europeans (Germany)	Non-Europeans living in Europe	Africans (Benin)	Total
Yes	54/54: 100%	29/29: 100%	43/43: 100%	126/126: 100%
No	0/54: 0%	0/29: 0%	0/43: 0%	0/126: 0%

Questionnaire:

Personal data:

Name* **Sex** **Age** **Profession**

Country of birth **Country (ies) of Residence**

Marital Status **Nationality**

(...)*: not necessary.

Important!

Thank you very much for your availability and your collaboration. You need not answer all the questions.

- *Please, do not forget to mention your age, profession and nationality*
- *In case you may have lived in many countries, mention each of them with the period or duration of stay*
- *Answer most of the question with yes or no, or underline your answer. Be brief and concise*
- *If you do not understand a question, leave it*
- *In case you might need more space for your answers, continue at the bottom of the page or on the other side; in that case do not forget to rewrite the NUMBER of the question.*

I am at your disposal for any further questions.

With my sincere gratitude.

Before answering the questions below, please try first to differentiate between:

- a) native language(s), which you use with your parents, brothers, sisters, relatives**
- b) a language of religious observance in your community in case it might be different from the native one (Arabic,...)**
- c) a language of wider communication (lingua franca): often a regional language, sometimes used across borders**
- d) a national language: often a regional language recognized as the country's language; in former colonies, frequently used along with other international languages**
- e) international languages, originally the languages of European countries which spread over the world through conquest and colonization. In many countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America they still remain the sole official languages.**
- f) dominant language: the language which dominates in your daily communication at a given period of time; this may change over time because of migration, studies abroad, etc...**

Questions:

Individual Bilingualism / Multilingualism:

- 1 - How do you describe yourself? Are you bilingual or multilingual? (Speaking two or more languages with at least one international)
- 2 - How many languages are you able to speak? List them all please. How long have you been using/learning them?
- 3 - How or where did you acquire/ learn your languages?

at school/ or in a lang. course	in the workplace	in your relig.commun.	at play in the neighborhoods	Others (trip/ housemaid)

- 4 - Did you learn each of your languages in their “natural (home)” environment or mostly in an alien country?
- 5 – Has your education been conducted in your local language or in an international one? Please, specify.
- 6 – How often do you use each of these languages? (almost every day; very often; sometimes; occasionally)
- 7 - What kind of ability and competence do you possess in each your languages (good, average, basic)?

Language	speaking	listening	reading	writing

8 – Do you think bilingual skill can be measured by

- | | | |
|----------------------|-----|----|
| a) speaking skills? | yes | no |
| b) writing skills? | yes | no |
| c) reading skills? | yes | no |
| d) listening skills? | yes | no |

9 - Which of your languages do you use in the following spheres?

home	with friends	Religious area/ prayer	workplace	school

10 - Which of them did you learn first at home; at school? In case you use different languages in the above-mentioned places, please compare your competence and ability in each of them.

11 – In which of the following cases will you describe a person as bi/multilingual?

Please, answer with “Yes” or “No”

- a) to understand other languages without being able to speak them?
- b) to be able to speak many languages but not the international language?
- c) to understand and speak languages without being able to write them?
- d) to be able to read in some languages without being able to speak them?

12 - Have you ever had a bilingual education? What do you think about it?

13 - Are you an advocate or an opponent of bilingual education? Please, argue.

14 – Did you grow up in a two family house or in a polygamous family with spouses speaking different languages to their children? Have you (ever) been exposed to two or more languages from your birth?

15 - Did you get support and encouragement from your family to learn new languages?

16 - If your parents come from different language areas, do they speak with you in their respective language(s)? Do you and your family members (siblings) speak to one another in the same language?

17 - Is your family geographically stable or mobile with changing language needs? How about yourself? Please, explain.

Assimilation / Integration versus Cultural Isolation / Low Self-esteem:

- 18 – Have you ever been punished in the course of your school education for speaking an unofficial or your native language?
- 19 - Could you have passed a final school exam without good result in the test of the international language?
- 20 - Have you ever suffered from adjustment problems caused by your inability to speak a particular language at home or in a foreign county/ new environment?
- 21 - Did your native language suffer or is still suffering from the contact with other languages? Please, specify (new words from technology, fashion...).
- 22 - Have you ever been confronted with negative views of some of your languages, or have you ever thought of abandoning / discarding one of your acquired languages, especially your native one in favor of another (an international) one?
- 23 – Do you think that attending school and learning an international language affects your ties with your local community (unites you or distances you from them). How? Please, explain.
- 24 - Do you think that international languages in former colonies affect the relationship between rich and poor, widen the gap between educated and uneducated (illiterate) people?
- 25 - How could a new cultural / linguistic balance of values be achieved in former colonies? What role would the international language play in such a process?
- 26 - What kind of feelings does the use of your own language with your (country) mates evoke in you?

Bilingualism/Multilingualism and Cognition:

27 – How easily/ comfortably can you use your languages in activities such as:

Languages:	watching T.V.	speaking on the phone	doing shopping	holdg a normal conversation

28 - Do / can you listen to the news, read newspapers, follow T.V. programs in your native/national language and understand everything? Why not?

29 – In which of your languages do you usually dream? Can you dream in each of them?

30 - In which language can you hold a normal written correspondence; an official one? Compared with your first/dominant language, how long would it take you to write the same letter in another language? (twice longer; ...)

31 – (how long) Can you speak your native language without using a single foreign word?

32 - Does the structure of your native tongue sometimes/often affect the way you speak your dominant language/ your other languages? (intonation, grammar).

33 – Do you think that you speak / use all your languages with the same competence? Explain.

34 – Do you think that the aim of any bilingual/multilingual speaker should be to master all his languages at the same level? Why or why not?

35 – In case you are a multilingual speaker and have to translate sentences not from or into your dominant or first language, how do you usually proceed?

a) translate straight from one language into the others

b) translate first into my dominant/first language, and then into the others

36 - Why do you think that you involuntarily use foreign words in your conversation language? Do you do so consciously or unconsciously?

37 – With whom and how often do you voluntarily alternate two or more languages?

38 - Is it more difficult for you to learn new languages now than some years before? Explain? (motivation, goals,)

39 – If you do not use one of your languages for a long period of time and start using it again, what difficulty do you encounter?

40 - Do you think that personal feelings, feelings toward one’s environment and individual goals might influence the way one learns a new language? Explain.

41 – In case you and your spouse have different languages, will you bring up your children as bilingual speakers? Why? How?

In case you might already have had an experience with bring up children bilingually, please elaborate briefly on that.

Questionnaire:

Nom*

Prénom*

Age

sexe

Profession

Lieu de naissance

Pays de résidence

Situation Familiale

Nationalité

(...)* : Données facultatives

IMPORTANT :

Merci d'avoir accepté de répondre à ce questionnaire. Vous n'êtes pas tenu (e) de répondre à toutes les questions.

- *N'oubliez surtout pas votre âge, votre profession actuelle, et votre nationalité*
- *Au cas où vous auriez résidé(e) dans plusieurs pays, précisez-les chacun ainsi que la période (de quelle année à quelle année ?)*
- *Répondre à la plupart des questions par « oui » ou « non » ou souligner la bonne réponse ; soyez bref et concis*
- *Laissez les questions qui ne se rapportent pas à votre personne (14, 16, 23, 24, 26, 28, 35)*
- *Au cas où vous ne disposeriez pas d'assez de place pour vos réponses, continuer au bas de la page ou au verso tout en indiquant le NUMERO de la question.*

Merci !

Quelques essais de définition :

- a) langue « maternelle »; pratiquée très souvent au sein de la famille; ne désigne pas nécessairement la langue des parents biologiques
- b) langue religieuse ; pratiquée au sein d'une communauté religieuse (Hausa, Arabe, Hébreux, Yoruba...)
- c) langue véhiculaire ou langue de communication régionale (lingua franca) : très souvent langue régionale parlée au-delà des frontières nationales (exp: mina)
- d) langue nationale : dans quelques anciennes colonies, langue régionale reconnue comme langue officielle et parlée parallèlement avec la langue de l'ancienne métropole (Swahili, Yoruba, Ibo...)
- e) langues internationales : initialement langues des pays d'Europe ; répandues dans le monde à travers les campagnes expansionnistes et les conquêtes coloniales. Elles demeurent encore aujourd'hui la seule langue officielle dans nombre de pays d'Asie, d'Afrique et d'Amérique Latine (français, anglais, espagnol, portugais, italien, allemand....)
- f) langue dominante : varie à travers le temps (migration, études) et désigne chez l'individu la langue la plus pratiquée à un moment bien précis de sa vie.

Questions :

Bilinguisme et multilinguisme au sein de l'individu.

- 1 - Comment vous décrivez-vous ? Etes-vous bilingue ou multilingue (parlant deux ou plusieurs langues)? Citez-les.
- 2 – Combien de langues savez-vous parler ? Depuis combien de temps les pratiquez-vous ou les apprenez-vous ?
- 3 – Indiquez quelles langues vous avez appris aux endroits ci-après :

à l'école/ au cours de langue	au travail	au sein de votre commun. religieuse	en jouant avec vos amis	en compagnie d'autres pers (Indiquer)

- 4 – Avez-vous appris chacune de vos langues dans les pays où elles sont parlées ou ailleurs?
- 5 – Avez-vous reçu votre éducation dans votre langue maternelle, régionale ou plutôt dans une autre langue (langue internationale...) ? Précisez.
- 6 – Les parlez-vous quotidiennement ? Si non, à quelle fréquence ?
très souvent parfois par moments
- 7 – Quel est votre niveau de connaissance dans chacune de vos langues ? (très bien, assez bien, moyen presque pas)

Langues	parler	comprendre	lire	écrire

8 – Sur lesquels de ces critères vous baserez-vous pour évaluer le niveau de connaissance linguistique d'un bilingue ?

- | | | |
|---------------|-----|-----|
| a) parler | oui | non |
| b) écrire | oui | non |
| c) Lire | oui | non |
| d) comprendre | oui | non |

9 – Dans quelles circonstances pratiquez-vous vos langues ? Ou plutôt lesquelles parlez-vous:

à la maison	avec des amis...	cérémonies religieuses	au travail	à l'école

10 – Laquelle de ces langues avez-vous acquise à la maison/ apprise à l'école ? Au cas où vous ne pratiqueriez pas la même langue à l'école et à la maison, veuillez comparer vos compétences et aptitudes dans chacune d'elles (cf. questions 7, 8 et 9)

11 – Dans lequel des cas suivants considérez-vous qu'un individu soit bi/multilingue ?

- a) Comprendre plusieurs langues et ne savoir parler qu'une seule
- b) Parler plusieurs langues sans savoir parler la langue internationale
- c) Comprendre et parler plusieurs langues sans pouvoir les écrire
- d) Savoir lire plusieurs langues sans vraiment pouvoir les parler ?

12 – Avez-vous déjà reçu une éducation bilingue ? Qu'en pensez-vous ?

13 - Etes-vous pour ou contre une éducation bilingue ? Pourquoi ? Justifier

14 – Etes-vous issu (e) d'une famille polygamique dont les épouses parlent différentes langues aux enfants ? Avez-vous grandi ou été mis en contact de deux ou plusieurs langues depuis votre naissance? Expliquez.

15 – Avez-vous été encouragé(e) par vos parents ou par les membres de votre famille à apprendre d'autres langues ? Avez-vous observé des réactions positives dans votre entourage?

16 – Vos parents parlent-ils avec vous dans leur(s) langue(s) respective(s) ?

17 – Votre famille est-elle stable? Avez-vous dû déménager plusieurs fois et dû vous retrouver à plusieurs reprises dans un nouvel environnement linguistique ?

Assimilation/ Intégration : Isolation culturelle/ conflit d'identité

- 18 - Avez-vous déjà été puni(e) à l'école pour avoir parlé une langue autre que la langue officielle ?
- 19 - Auriez-vous pu être admis(e) à vos examens sans avoir obtenu la moyenne en épreuve de langue ?
- 20 – Avez-vous déjà été confronté(e) à des problèmes d'intégration causés par votre incapacité à vous exprimer dans une langue particulière ?
- 21 – Votre langue maternelle, a-t-elle été affectée par le contact d'une autre langue (au contact de la langue officielle par exemple)?
- 22 – Avez-vous déjà été confronté(e) à des ressentiments par rapport à vos langues ? Avez-vous déjà été animé(e) par l'idée d'abandonner une de vos langues au profit d'une autre ? Pourquoi ?
- 23 – Pensez vous que l'accès à l'éducation et l'apprentissage des langues internationales vous unit ou vous éloigne de votre famille (communauté)?
- 24 – Pensez-vous que la pratique de la langue de la métropole au sein des anciennes colonies influe sur les rapports entre riches et pauvres, et élargit le fossé entre les personnes alphabétisées et non alphabétisées ?
- 25 – Sans vouloir rejeter la pratique des langues internationales dans les pays en voie de développement, comment pensez-vous qu'un nouvel équilibre linguistique pourrait être créé ?
- 26 - Que ressentez-vous lorsque vous parlez votre langue « maternelle » avec vos pairs ?

Bilinguisme et Cognition

27 - Pouvez-vous mener sans difficulté les activités suivantes dans chacune de vos langues?

Langues:	suivre des émissions télé.	mener une convers. téléphq.	faire des achats	tenir une convers. normale

28 - Pouvez-vous suivre des émissions médiatiques (Radio ; T.V.), lire le journal dans votre langue maternelle ? Si non, expliquer pourquoi.

29 - Dans quelle langue rêvez-vous le plus souvent ?

30 - Dans quelle langue êtes vous en mesure de rédiger une correspondance officielle ? Comparer le temps qu'il vous faut dans chacune d'elle pour rédiger une correspondance du même contenu (2 fois plus longtemps,...).

31 – Etes-vous en mesure de tenir une conversation dans votre langue maternelle sans utiliser des mots ou des expressions d'une autre langue

32 – Pensez-vous que la structure de votre langue maternelle/ première langue affecte parfois la façon dont vous parlez les autres?

33 – Maîtrisez-vous toutes vos langues de la même façon (au même niveau)?

34 - Etes-vous de l'avis que tout bilingue/ multilingue doit s'efforcer à maîtriser ses langues de la même façon ?

35 – Comment procédez-vous lors des exercices de traduction dans des langues dont aucune d'elles ne représente votre première ou votre langue dominante ?

a) traduire directement d'une langue à l'autre

b) traduire dans votre première langue d'abord, et ensuite dans la langue finale

36 - Si vous êtes multilingue, comment expliquez-vous le fait que vous utilisiez les mots de plusieurs langues au cours d'une conversation? Est-ce volontaire ou involontaire ?

37 - Avec quelles personnes vous arrive-t-il d'alterner deux ou plusieurs langues ? Pourquoi ? Expliquez.

38 – Vous est-il maintenant plus difficile d'apprendre une langue étrangère qu'il y a quelques années ?

39 – Lorsque vous ne pratiquez pas une langue pendant longtemps et vous remettez à la reparler un jour, à quelles difficultés êtes-vous confronté(e)?

40 - Pensez-vous que l'état d'esprit de l'individu, l'environnement, ainsi que les objectifs personnels influent sur la façon d'apprendre une langue ? Expliquez.

41 - Au cas où vous ne parleriez pas la même langue que votre partenaire, souhaiteriez-vous éduquer vos enfants de façon bilingue ? Pourquoi et comment ? Au cas où vous auriez déjà fait une telle expérience, raconter brièvement.

Fragebogen:

Vielen Dank für Ihre Teilnahme an dieser Umfrage!

Bitte,

- vergessen Sie nicht Ihr Alter, Ihren Beruf und Ihre Staatsangehörigkeit anzugeben
- wer in mehreren Ländern gewohnt hat, bitte die Dauer des jeweiligen Aufenthaltes angeben
- Sie müssen nicht alle Fragen beantworten
- die meisten Fragen mit „ja“ oder „nein“, oder die passende Antwort unterstreichen
- die Fragen, 14, 16, 23, 24, 26, 28, 35 sind nur für bestimmte Personen geeignet
- beantworten Sie nicht die Fragen, die Ihnen unklar sind oder die auf Sie nicht zutreffen
- falls Sie noch mehr Platz für Ihre Antworten brauchen, schreiben sie die *NUMMER* auf und benutzen Sie entweder den unteren Teil oder die Rückseite des Blattes
- den Fragebogen dürfen Sie gerne mit beliebigen aber passenden Fragen und Antworten zusätzlich ergänzen

Bei weiteren Fragen, Anregungen, Hinweisen oder Vorschlägen Ihrerseits, stehe ich Ihnen gerne zur Verfügung.

Vielen Dank!

***Name**

***Vorname**

Alter

Geschlecht

Beruf

Geburtsort

Wohnsitz (e)

Familienstand

Staatsangehörigkeit (en)

(*): fakultative Angaben

Individual Bilingualist/ Multilingualist:

- 1 – **Wie(als was) bezeichnen Sie sich selbst? Sind Sie eine zwei-, oder mehrsprachige Person? Wie viele Sprachen können Sie und welche sind sie?**
- 2 – **Wie lange benutzen Sie oder lernen Sie diese (jede Sprache)?**
- 3 – **Welche Sprachen haben sie wo erlernt?**

in der Schule	am Arbeitsplatz	in der Gemeinde	am Spielplatz	Sonstiges

- 4 – **Haben Sie Ihre Sprachen in den jeweiligen Ländern erworben, in denen sie gesprochen werden? Erläutern Sie bitte!**
- 5 – **Haben Sie Ihre Schul-, oder Ausbildung in Ihrer Muttersprache oder in einer anderen Sprache gemacht? Genau angeben bitte.**
- 6 – **Wie oft benutzen Sie diese Sprachen?**

Sprachen	täglich	sehr oft	manchmal	Selten

7 – Wie bewerten Sie Ihre Fertigkeiten und Kenntnisse in diesen Sprachen (gut, durchschnittlich, Grundkenntnisse)?

Sprache	schreiben	lesen	hören	Sprechen

8 – Sind Sie der Meinung, dass die Bewertung von Sprachkenntnissen bei den zwei-, und mehrsprachigen Personen gemessen werden sollte durch:

- | | | |
|----------------------|----|------|
| a) Sprechfertigkeit | ja | nein |
| b) Schreibfertigkeit | ja | nein |
| c) Lesefertigkeit | ja | nein |
| d) Hörverständnis | ja | nein |

9 - Welche Sprachen benutzen Sie:

zu Hause	im Freundeskreis	in der Gemeinde	am Arbeitsplatz	in der Schule

10 – Falls sich Ihrer Schulsprache von der Haussprache unterscheidet, vergleichen Sie bitte Ihre Fertigkeiten in den jeweiligen Sprachen: (siehe Fragen 7, 8 und 9)

11 – In welchen von den unten genannten Fällen würden Sie eine Person als zweisprachig bezeichnen?

- mehrere Sprachen verstehen ohne sie sprechen zu können
- mehrere Sprachen sprechen ohne eine einzige Weltsprache zu können
- mehrere Sprachen verstehen und sprechen ohne sie schreiben zu können
- Texte in mehreren Sprachen lesen zu können ohne Sprechfertigkeiten

12 - Waren Sie schon mal in einer zweisprachigen oder internationalen Schule?

13 – Sind Sie für eine zweisprachige Schulbildung? Erläutern Sie.

14 – Sind Sie in einem Zweifamilienhaus oder in einer poligamischen Umgebung aufgewachsen, in der die Kinder von ihren Müttern in ihren eigenen Sprachen angesprochen werden?

15 – Haben Ihre Eltern und Freunde Sie zum Erlernen von (anderen) Fremdsprachen ermutigt?

16 - Sprechen Ihre Eltern mit Ihnen in verschiedenen Sprachen?

17 – Hat Ihre Familie oder haben Sie schon mal in einer neuen Sprachumgebung umziehen müssen? Genau angeben.

Anpassung und Entfremdung:

- 18 – Waren Sie in der Schule schon mal bestraft oder verhöhnt worden, weil Sie die inoffizielle Sprache in der Schule gesprochen haben?
- 19 – Können Sie eine Schulprüfung bestehen, ohne die Prüfung in der internationalen Sprache bestanden zu haben?
- 20 – Haben Sie schon in einem fremden Land Integrationsschwierigkeiten erleben müssen, weil Sie die Sprache nicht können? Erläutern Sie, bitte.
- 21 Hat Ihre Muttersprache gelitten oder leidet sie immer noch dadurch, dass Sie fremde oder andere Sprachen lernen?
- 22 – Sind Sie schon mal auf die Idee gekommen, Ihre Muttersprache /erste Sprache für eine andere aufzugeben?
- 23 – Glauben Sie, dass der Besuch der Schule und das Erlernen von Fremdsprachen Ihr Verhältnis zu Ihrer Gemeinschaft beeinflusst?
- 24 – Glauben Sie, dass vorhandene internationale Sprachen in ehemaligen Kolonien, eine große Rolle in den Verhältnissen zwischen reichen und armen, zwischen gebildeten und ungebildeten Menschen spielt? Erläutern Sie bitte.
- 25 – Wie können ein neues kulturelles und sprachliches Gleichgewicht in diesen Ländern erreicht werden? Welche Rolle könne die internationalen Sprachen dabei spielen?
- 26 – Was für ein Gefühl empfinden Sie, wenn Sie Ihre eigene Sprache mit Ihren Kommilitonen/innen oder Landsleuten sprechen?

Bilingualist / Multilingualist and Kognition:

27 – Wie können Sie folgende Aktivitäten in den jeweiligen Sprachen durchführen:

Sprachen	Fernsehen	einkaufen	telefonieren	einfache Gespr. führen

- 28 - Können Sie in ihrer Muttersprache und ohne Schwierigkeiten Nachrichten hören, Zeitungen lesen und Programme im Fernseher folgen? Warum nicht?
- 29 - In welcher Ihrer Sprachen träumen Sie oft? Träumen Sie in allen?
- 30 – In welchen Sprachen können Sie formlose / formelle Korrespondenz führen? Wie lange brauchen Sie ungefähr, um einen Brief mit dem gleichen Inhalt in jeder Sprache zu fassen? (doppelt so lange,...)
- 31 – Können Sie Ihre Muttersprache benutzen, ohne Fremdwörter einfließen zu lassen?
- 32 – Beeinflusst die Struktur Ihrer Muttersprache ihre Fertigkeiten in anderen Sprachen?
- 33 – Glauben Sie, Sie können alle Ihre Sprachen genauso gut sprechen wie Ihre Muttersprache?
- 34 – Sind Sie der Meinung, dass das Ziel jeder mehrsprachigen Person sein sollte, Ihre jeweilige Sprache genauso gut zu sprechen wie die Einheimischen?
- 35 – Nehmen wir Sprachen, von denen keine Ihre Muttersprache, Hauptsprache oder Amtssprache ist. Wie führen Sie eine Übersetzungsübung durch?
- a) direkte Übersetzung
- b) in die eigene Sprache erst mal übersetzen und dann in die anderen
- 36 - Warum glauben Sie, dass Sie mitten in einem Gespräch fremde Wörter benutzen? Machen Sie das immer bewusst oder unbewusst?
- 37 – Mit wem und wie oft wechseln Sie Sprachen während eines Gesprächs?
- 38 – Ist es für Sie jetzt schwieriger eine Fremdsprache zu erwerben als früher? Erläutern Sie bitte.
- 39 - Wenn Sie lange Zeit eine Sprache nicht mehr benutzt haben, und müssen sie dann wieder benutzen, welche Schwierigkeiten haben Sie?
- 40 – Glauben Sie, dass die eigenen Gefühle, die durch die Umgebung bedingt sind, und persönliche Ziele die Art und Weise beeinflussen, in der man eine neue Sprache erwirbt?
- 41 – Falls Sie in einer gemischten Ehe leben, würden Sie Ihre Kinder mehrsprachig erziehen? Warum?

Wenn vorhanden, eigene Erfahrungen kurz schildern.

Some Interesting Answers to questions:

12 - Have you ever had a bilingual education? What do you think about it?

13 - Are you an advocate or an opponent of bilingual education? Please, argue.

- It is a wealthy opportunity, because you learn about multicultural values.
- Learning different languages help a nation to better communicate and understand people from different decent.
- En Afrique, on a toujours besoin de plus d'une langue pour pouvoir communiquer.
- Contribuer à l'équilibre psychologique de l'enfant dans le contexte Africain.
- Erweiteter Horizont und mehr Berufschancen.
- Mobiler und flexibler Mensch für Unternehmen.

14 - Did you grow up in a two family house or in a polygamous family with spouses speaking different languages to their children? Have you (ever) been exposed to two or more languages from your birth?

- Mon père et ma mère parlent la même langue. Après le décès de ma mère, mon père s'est marié à une nouvelle femme qui ne comprenait pas notre langue. J'ai dû être obligé d'apprendre sa langue pour pouvoir communiquer avec elle.
- Mes parents vivant séparés, Mina chez le père et Yoruba pendant les vacances chez ma mère.
- Des frictions généralisées avec mon père et l'incompréhension avec ma belle-mère me forçaient à me rendre dans une autre famille presque d'adoption dans laquelle on parlait Mina.

22 - Have you ever been confronted with negative views of some of your languages, or have you ever thought of abandoning / discarding one of your acquired languages, especially your native one in favor of another (an international) one?

23 - Do you think that attending school and learning an international language affects your ties with your local community (unites you or distances you from them.) How? Please, explain.

- I love learning languages, but my native one is the closest to me because it is the one that expresses my feelings at best.
- S'aimer, c'est aussi savoir accepter et respecter ses langues maternelles qui sont des éléments importants de ses racines, de sa culture de base, de son identité.
- Ma langue maternelle constitue une richesse culturelle; et je n'aimerais pas amoindrir la valeur de ma richesse.
- Non. non. Parce que je ne suis pas complexée.
- Parlant une langue plus forte que la mienne, j'ai perdu quelques sensibilités et jeux de mots qui sont la richesse linguistique.
- Internationale Sprachen in der Schule verbessern und verstärken Verhältnisse zwischen verschiedenen Menschen bzw. Völker.
- Sprache zu erzwingen halte ich für schlecht. Jede Person definiert sich auch über ihre Muttersprache.

24 - Do you think that international languages in former colonies affect the relationship between rich and poor, widen the gap between educated and uneducated (illiterate) people?

25 - How could a new cultural / linguistic balance of values be achieved in former colonies? What role would the international language play in such a process?

- La manière dont les langues internationales sont apprises dans les anciennes colonies nous force non seulement à les accepter, mais aussi et surtout au détriment de nos langues maternelles, qu'on nous force de rejeter à certaines occasions.

- Le monde avance aujourd'hui à une vitesse telle (globalisation, Internet...) où je vois mal comment nos langues nationales (pourtant très riches) peuvent tenir la concurrence internationale.
- Jamais, je les ai toujours considérées (mes langues) comme source d'enrichissement personnelle. Néanmoins, il ne faut rien réinventer. Il faut que l'école enseigne les langues internationales, et que l'enseignement soit assuré dans la langue officielle. Les langues maternelles doivent continuer à être pratiquées dans les familles
- Arriver à enseigner quelques langues locales. Le choix de ces langues n'étant pas chose facile, j'en conviens.
- Emploi parallèle des langues locales dans le cursus scolaire, car aucune langue ne prime sur l'autre

26 - What kind of feelings does the use of your own language with your (country) mates evoke in you?

- La joie du retour à mes racines originelles.
- Une fierté et une satisfaction indicible.

34 - Do you think that the aim of any bilingual/multilingual speaker should be to master all his languages at the same level? Why or why not?

- Why should I? No, I don't use them all in the same way.
- It should be an aim, but no necessity.
- Yes, though I think it is nearly impossible.
- Nein. Nach einem gewissen Alter sowieso unmöglich.
- Ziel schon, aber in der Tatsache fraglich.
- Fast unmöglich so was zu erreichen. Wichtiger sind kulturelle und soziale Verhältnisse zu verstehen als die Sprache akzentfrei zu beherrschen
- Das Ziel sollte es sein... aber dafür braucht man Zeit, Geduld und Wille!

Addenda

Appendix B

This second set of surveys was carried out between 2007 and 2011.

The investigation was conducted among 150 students in Germany. 122 answers came back. The majority of the respondents consisted of international and exchange students enrolled in different faculties at the University of Mainz and at the EBS Universität für Wirtschaft und Recht in Greater Frankfurt.

Questionnaire:

Important!

Thanks very much for your availability and your collaboration. You need not answer all the questions.

- *Please, do not forget to mention your age, profession and nationality*
- *In case you have lived in many countries, mention each of them with the duration of stay.*
- *Sometimes, you may choose more than one possible answer.*
- *If you do not understand a question, skip. Be brief and concise.*
- *In case you might need more space for your answers, continue at the bottom of the page or on the other side; in that case do not forget to rewrite the NUMBER of the question.*

Before answering the questions below, please try first of all to differentiate between:

- a) native language(s), which you use with your parents, brothers, sisters, and relatives**
- b) a language of religious observance in your community in case it might be different from the native one (Arabic, ...)**
- c) a language of wider communication (lingua franca): often a regional language, sometimes used across borders**
- d) a national language: often a regional language recognized as the country's language; in former colonies, frequently used along with other international languages**
- e) international languages; originally the languages of European countries that were spread all over the world through conquest and colonization; (in many countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America these languages still remain the sole official languages)**
- f) dominant language: the language which dominates in your daily communication at a given period of time; this may change over time because of migration, studies abroad, etc.**

Questionnaire:

Name* **Age*** ***Nationality** **(...)*: optional**

Sex **Profession** **Institution/University**

Country of birth **Country (ies) of Residence and Duration of Stay**

Individual Bilingualism / Multilingualism:

1 - How would you describe yourself? Are you bilingual or multilingual? (Speaking two or more languages with at least one of them being an international language)

2 - How many languages do you speak, and where did you acquire/ learn them? Please list all of them. How long have you been using / learning them?

Languages (Years of practise)	School / Formal course	in the workplace	religious community	with friends / relatives	Others (indicate ...)

3 - Did you learn each of your languages in the “natural (home)” environment of the language or mostly in a foreign country?

4 – How often do you use each of these languages?

Languages	almost every day	very often	sometimes	occasionally
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5 – What kind of ability and competence do you possess in each of the languages?

Indicate good, average or basic in the table below.

Language	speaking	listening	reading	writing

6 – Do you think bilingual skills can be best measured by

a) Speaking skills?

Yes

No

101

04

b) Writing skills?

72

21

c) Reading skills?

79

14

d) Listening skills?

94

06

7 - In which of the following cases will you describe a person as bi/multilingual?

Please, answer “Yes” or “No”

Yes

No

a) To understand other languages without being able to speak them?

34

b) To be able to speak many languages but not the ‘international language’?

12

c) To understand and speak languages without being able to write them?

13

d) To be able to read in some languages without being able to speak them?

29

8 - Does the structure of your native tongue affect the way you speak your foreign or other languages? (Intonation, grammar). Always 36 sometimes 60 never 10

9 – Do you think that the aim of any bilingual / multilingual speaker should be to master all languages in which he is competent at the same level? Why or why not?

10 List all factors which can have negative or positive effects on your motivations /

Factors	Negative Aspects	Positive Aspects
Environmental, Cultural, Affective	25	30
Human, Professional	10	28
Time factors, Teaching Facilities	12	12

Read each statement below, and tick a number that indicates your opinion:

1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Uncertain; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strong Agree

.....	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
1. I fell in love with German at first sight, without specific reasons.	22	21	38	21	07	02
2. I began to study foreign languages (_____) because my parents/school required me to learn it/them.	23	15	15	34	24	00
3. Before entering university, the purpose why I was learning foreign languages was to obtain high scores in the university entrance examination.	47	31	13	16	04	01
4. Before entering university, my effort at foreign languages learning depended to a large extent on whether I liked my teacher (s) or not.	36	30	23	20	05	01
5. Before coming to Germany, my effort at German learning depended to a large extent on test scores.	43	28	28	08	02	02
6. After entering university, my effort at foreign language learning has been linked to a large extent on test scores.	38	33	24	12	02	00
7. After entering university, my performance with regard to foreign language learning has been linked to the fact of whether I like my language teachers or not.	34	29	27	18	04	00
8. After coming to Germany, my effort at learning German has been linked to a large extent on the quality of German lessons and the textbooks.	22	18	25	37	09	00
9. After coming to Germany, my performance with regard to learning German has been linked to a large extent on whether I liked my German teacher or not.	30	29	24	18	11	00
10. After coming to Germany, my effort at learning German has been linked to a large extent on whether I like my fellow students in the German class.	28	29	29	19	06	00

11. The main reason why I am learning German is to obtain university credit points/high scores in examinations/a degree	54 26 16 11 04 00
12. Learning German is important to me because foreign languages are very useful tools in meeting the challenges in contemporary society.	02 01 13 32 68 00
13. Learning foreign languages can give me a sense of fulfillment.	02 03 12 44 55 00
14. I learn foreign languages in order to facilitate the learning of other academic subjects (to read academic books in the original languages).	09 19 32 35 21 00
15. I learn foreign languages because I have special interest in languages.	03 11 26 32 46 00
16. I learn German because I am interested in German people and cultures.	01 18 25 39 35 00
17. After staying in Germany for some time, I have become interested in German-speaking people and their cultures.	03 10 23 40 33 00
18. Now that I have achieved a better command of the German language, I have developed a great interest in the language and the culture.	03 07 26 49 28 00
19. The acquisition of better command of German gives me a sense of personal achievement and helps me live up to my expectations	02 03 18 53 33 00
20. Acquiring good foreign languages skills helps one's success in life.	01 03 08 50 49 00
21. Acquiring good foreign languages skills enhance my self-confidence.	03 01 11 56 53 00
22. The exposure to foreign languages makes me more open-minded	03 00 11 46 53 00
23. The exposure to foreign languages has influences on my personality	04 04 37 32 35 00
24. Learning foreign languages challenges my own cultural values and world view.	04 04 19 38 46 00

Rate the statements below:

25- The following aspects are important in a language class? *Very neither/nor not at all*

The working atmosphere	102	12	0
Having discussion on actual topics	91	21	4
Having the opportunity to practice my skills	94	12	0
Interaction between a small group and the whole group	89	24	2
The Teacher's attitude to the target language	105	8	4

26 - During pair / group work: *strongly agree* *neither/nor* *strongly disagree*

I can use my skills at best	60	48	8
I feel no inhibition and can learn better	66	40	5
I can understand the perspectives of my pairs	70	44	3
I can reflect on my own perspective	69	41	2
I try to explain issues until my partners understand me	87	23	5

27 - The teacher's perceptions of language learners: *Yes* *N/A* *No*

Can reinforce learner's self-esteem	107	02	04
Can challenge and force students to put in more effort	103	00	13
Can inhibit a learner's motivation	91	00	22
Can affect learners' perceptions of the target language	96	02	16
Can be frustrating and confusing	59	02	52

28 - The teachers' impact on learning: *completely right* *N/A* *not right*

S/He should correct every mistake appropriately	76	02	36
S/He should only correct some mistakes	47	03	67
If s/he always corrects mistakes, students are motivated	71	01	42
If s/he always corrects mistakes, s/he inhibits students	36	02	77
S/He must help students pronounce excellently	89	02	30

29- Do you think that: *strongly agree* *N/A* *strongly disagree*

Error correction helps student to learn or speak correctly?	102	00	8
Correction is very important in the language acquisition process?	103	00	7
Only few errors do not need to be corrected in the class?	43	02	67
Teachers are responsible for failure or success of students?	38	07	68
Teachers must be sensitive to students' cultural backgrounds?	92	05	14

30- Which errors must always be corrected: lexical **51** grammatical **83** phonetics **61**

31 - I like receiving from the teacher:	<i>strongly agree</i>	<i>strongly disagree</i>	
Knowledge about non-standard language and idioms	87		23
Linguistic explanations and relevance of new terms	102		11
Contextual examples of new concepts	101		11
Encouragement and recognition of for my performance	99		12
Tips and advice to help me reach my goals and high standards	103		6

32 - Do you believe that:	<i>strongly agree</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>strongly disagr.</i>
Language and culture are closely connected?	104	00	5
It is necessary to be familiar with culture to acquire the language?	71	01	37
Instruction about Intercultural communication is very important?	93	00	15
Socio-cultural knowledge should be incorporated in in-class activities?	86	02	21
Students must develop socio-cultural skills in the new language?	90	02	15

33- If a language teacher is working abroad, s/he:	<i>strongly agree</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>strongly disagr.</i>
Must be familiar with multicultural theories and concepts	102	00	8
Should use adequate multicultural resources and materials	95	00	13
Cannot be a good teacher if s/he fails to speak the target language	73	01	36
Cannot be a good teacher if s/he fails to understand the target culture	79	00	31
Should develop strategies to improve students' learning styles	98	02	11

34- Please, answer "Yes" or "No"	<i>Yes</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>No</i>
Formal institutions must only be places to teach the standard form of a language	33	02	75
Good teachers should be confident teaching international students	106	00	4
A good teacher must arouse students' cultural interests	101	02	8
Interpersonal knowledge is more important than grammar and phonetics	30	00	78
Interpersonal knowledge is as important as grammar and phonetics	81	00	30

A few Interesting Statements and Comments to questions or items:

7 - Does the structure of your native tongue affect the way you speak your foreign or other languages? (Intonation, grammar).

Always **36** sometimes **60** never **10**

8 - Do you think that the aim of any bilingual / multilingual speaker should be to master all languages in which he is competent at the same level? Why or why not?

- No, one has to know the language to some extent, but not perfectly.
- No, because a multilingual speaker can have the aim of just speaking many languages at an advanced level, but not at bilingual (native) level.
- Not necessarily. The quality of speaking/reading/listening could vary.
- No, (acquiring) any foreign language is difficult, and it is very hard for a bilingual speaker) to master all the languages.
- No, I think that it is good to get near that point, but not absolutely necessary. It always depends on individual circumstances, where you are, what you need for your specific situation, what you want.
- It depends on the aim! To do one's best is the main idea.
- Not really. If you got more chance to improve one more than another, it's just alright.
- Well, not necessarily at the same level but at least be competent more or less in each language learned.
- No, everyone has different skills and abilities.
- No, it (learning a foreign language) is a (continuous) process.
- No! It is impossible for most (learners) to master a (foreign) language after age 12.
- Nein, man kann eine Sprache gut sprechen und die andere weniger gut.
- No. Effective communication does not require equal mastery of all languages.
- No, because nearly everybody prefers a language. And therefore, it is more important to master the one you love.
- I think the aim of any learner is to become competent in as many languages as possible.
- No. It depends on the abilities of the person. For example, if s/he has problem with pronunciation, it seems impossible.

- No. People have different goals; they can aspire to whatever level they want to.
- No. It is difficult to master more than two languages (at native level).
- No, but s/he should at least try to speak, read, listen, write in all languages they are competent in.
- No. just whatever a situation necessitates.
- No. Satisfying your needs is OK.
- The speaker should be able to understand and communicate the dominant language or learned language, using the correct (standard) form.
- Not all at the same level as long as one is able to communicate.
- No. The aim of any multilingual speaker is (should be) to understand different ways of thinking through the (target) language.
- No. Then competence of a person (in various languages) differs with others.
- No, I don't think so. The aim of learning a language must be, in the first place, to be able to communicate.
- No. The key aim is communication... Learn the language to communicate better.
- No. only languages that they have a practical interest or/and passion for.
- No. Because you cannot expect (learners) to reach the same levels (in all languages).
- No. It depends on the usage frequency of the language.
- It depends what s/he uses for.
- No. The aim is to understand and be understood in each language.
- No. Just have to write and speak fluently.
- No. There is no need to master all aspects of a (foreign) language.
- No, that is impossible. There is always one you use more often.
- No. Because you can never learn a language as good as your mother tongue.
- A multilingual speaker should be competent in at least two languages.
- Yes, more or less. Anyway, because in order to say that you are fluent in a language, you should have some level of competency that should reflect equally on all the languages you speak.
- Yes, because it is important to know how to write, read listen and speak (well) in the target language.)
- Yes, but it is difficult. One will always have a favored language.

- Yes. We cannot call someone bilingual just because he know how to express himself (in some languages.)
- Yes, because a bi/ multilingual should master 2 or more languages.
- Of course, the best is to get a good level in the languages he is learning to be multilingual. But a multilingual person may also not have the same level in the languages he knows.
- Yes, you need to be able to communicate and understand (perfectly).
- Yes, a multilingual person ought to be fluent in all of his/her languages.
- Yes, because if s/he a foreign language, s/he must master it.

9- List all factors which can have negative or positive effects on your motivations / Negative Aspects / Positive Aspects

- Without any of these factors, a person could see no utility to put effort in learning a FL
- To be forced; no choice

Environmental, Cultural

- The only way to get out of linguistic depression is to reach out and improve
- Applicability

Affective, Human

- If the teacher is good, this helps a lot
- Rising students' curiosity
- Confusing and reducing learners' interests
- Introverted / linguistic isolation
- Stress, isolation, feeling terrible
- Involvement fear, lack of purpose

Professional, teaching

- Working on every aspects (comprehension, grammatical, speaking)
- Job prospects, Personal Developments or interests, self-learning
- Competition
- To be embarrassed to speak in front of people who can speak well
- Peer support; feeling lost

Addenda:

Appendix C:

Multiple Intelligences (M.I.) Inventory

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PART I

Complete each section by placing a "1" next to each statement you feel accurately describes you. If you do not identify with a statement, leave the space provided blank. Then total the column in each section.

Section 1

- I enjoy categorizing things by common traits
- Ecological (environmental) issues are important to me
- Hiking and camping are enjoyable activities
- I enjoy working on a garden
- I believe preserving (saving/keeping) our National Parks is important
- Putting things in hierarchies (system of levels) makes sense to me
- Animals are important in my life
- My home has a recycling system in place
- I enjoy studying biology, botany and/or zoology
- I spend a great deal of time outdoors

Total number of 1's
used in Section 1:

Section 2

- I easily pick up on patterns
- I focus in on noise and sounds
- Moving to a beat is easy for me
- I've always been interested in playing an instrument
- The cadence (rhythm/speed) of poetry intrigues me
- I remember things by putting them in a rhyme
- Concentration is difficult while listening to a radio or television
- I enjoy many kinds of music
- Musicals are more interesting than dramatic plays
- Remembering song lyrics is easy for me

Total number of 1's
used in Section 2:

Section 3

- I keep my things neat and orderly
- Step-by-step directions are a big help
- Solving problems comes easily to me
- I get easily frustrated with disorganized people
- I can complete calculations quickly in my head
- Puzzles requiring reasoning are fun
- I can't begin an assignment until all my questions are answered
- Structure helps me be successful
- I find working on a computer spreadsheet or database rewarding
- Things have to make sense to me or I am dissatisfied

Total number of 1's
used in Section 3:

Section 4

- It is important to see my role in the "big picture" of things
- I enjoy discussing questions about life
- Religion is important to me
- I enjoy viewing art masterpieces
- Relaxation and meditation exercises are rewarding
- I like visiting breathtaking sites in nature
- I enjoy reading ancient and modern philosophers
- Learning new things is easier when I understand their value
- I wonder if there are other forms of intelligent life in the universe
- Studying history and ancient culture helps give me perspective

Total number of 1's
used in Section 4:

Section 5

- I learn best interacting with others
- "The more the merrier"
- Study groups are very productive for me
- I enjoy chat rooms
- Participating in politics is important
- Television and radio talk shows are enjoyable
- I am a "team player"
- I dislike working alone
- Clubs and extracurricular activities are fun
- I pay attention to social issues and causes

Total number of 1's
used in Section 5:

Section 6

- I enjoy making things with my hands
- Sitting still for long periods of time is difficult for me
- I enjoy outdoor games and sports
- I value non-verbal communication such as sign language
- A fit body is important for a fit mind
- Arts and crafts are enjoyable pastimes
- Expression through dance is beautiful
- I like working with tools
- I live an active lifestyle
- I learn by doing

Total number of 1's
used in Section 6:

Section 7

- I enjoy reading all kinds of materials
- Taking notes helps me remember and understand
- I faithfully (routinely/always) contact friends through letters and/or e-mail
- It is easy for me to explain my ideas to others
- I keep a journal
- Word puzzles like crosswords and jumbles are fun
- I write for pleasure
- I enjoy playing with words like puns, anagrams and spoonerisms
- Foreign languages interest me
- Debates and public speaking are activities I like to participate in

Total number of 1's
used in Section 7:

Section 8

- I am keenly aware of my moral beliefs
- I learn best when I have an emotional attachment to the subject
- Fairness is important to me
- My attitude affects how I learn
- Social justice issues concern me
- Working alone can be just as productive as working in a group
- I need to know why I should do something before I agree to do it
- When I believe in something I will give 100% effort to it
- I like to be involved in causes that help others
- I am willing to protest or sign a petition to right a wrong

Total number of 1's
used in Section 8:

Section 9

- I can imagine ideas in my mind
- Rearranging a room is fun for me
- I enjoy creating art using varied media
- I remember well using graphic organizers
- Performance art can be very gratifying
- Spreadsheets are great for making charts, graphs and tables
- Three-dimensional puzzles bring me much enjoyment
- Music videos are very stimulating
- I can recall things in mental pictures
- I am good at reading maps, atlases and blueprints

Total number of 1's
used in Section 9:

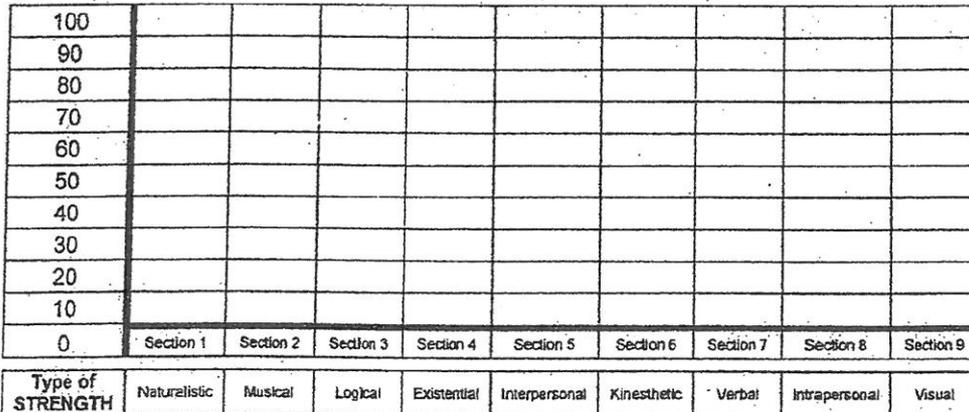
Part II

Now carry forward your total from each section and multiply by 10 below:

Section	# of 1's	Multiply	Multiplied Score
1		x 10	
2		x 10	
3		x 10	
4		x 10	
5		x 10	
6		x 10	
7		x 10	
8		x 10	
9		x 10	

Part III

Now plot your scores on the **bar graph** provided... colour in the blocks up to the multiplied score.



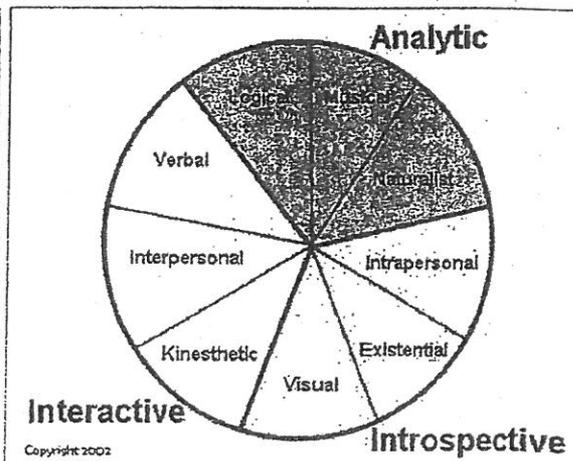
Look at the 9 sections above

What are your top 3 types of learning styles?

Bottom 3 types of learning styles?

Do you see a pattern in the group (analytic, interactive, introspective) that they fit into?

What do you think your learning style tells you about the career you might get into?



ANALYTICAL

These three intelligences as analytic because even though they can have a social or introspective component to them, they most fundamentally promote the process of analyzing and incorporating data into existing situations. The analytical intelligences are by nature heuristic (speculative formulation) processes.

Logical (Mathematical)

Children who display an aptitude for numbers, reasoning and problem solving. This is the other half of the children who typically do well in traditional classrooms where teaching is logically sequenced and students are asked to conform.

Musical (Rhythmic)

Children who learn well through songs, patterns, rhythms, instruments and musical expression. It is easy to overlook children with this intelligence in traditional education.

Naturalist

Children who love the outdoors, animals, field trips. More than this, though, these students love to pick up on subtle differences in meanings. The traditional classroom has not been accommodating to these children.

INTROSPECTIVE

These three intelligences as introspective because they require a looking inward by the learner, an emotive connection to their own experiences and beliefs in order to make sense of new learning. The introspective intelligences are by nature affective processes.

Intrapersonal

Children who are especially in touch with their own feelings, values and ideas. They may tend to be more reserved, but they are actually quite intuitive about what they learn and how it relates to themselves.

Existentialist

Children who learn in the context of where humankind stands in the "big picture" of existence. They ask "Why are we here?" and "What is our role in the world?" This intelligence is seen in the discipline of philosophy.

Visual (Spatial)

Children who learn best visually and organizing things spatially. They like to see what you are talking about in order to understand. They enjoy charts, graphs, maps, tables, illustrations, art, puzzles, and costumes - anything eye catching.

INTERACTIVE

These three intelligences as interactive because even though they can be stimulated through passive activity they typically invite and encourage interaction to achieve understanding. Even if a student completes a task individually, s/he must consider others through the way s/he writes, creates, constructs and makes conclusions. The interactive intelligences are by nature social processes.

Verbal (Linguistic... to do with words)

Children who demonstrate strength in the language arts: speaking, writing, reading, listening. These students have always been successful in traditional classrooms because their intelligence lends itself to traditional teaching.

Kinesthetic (Bodily)

Children who experience learning best through activity: games, movement, hands-on tasks, building. These children were often labeled "overly active" in traditional classrooms where they were told to sit and be still!

Interpersonal

Children who are noticeably people oriented and outgoing, and do their learning cooperatively in groups or with a partner. These children may have typically been identified as "talkative" or "too concerned about being social" in a traditional setting.

Remember:

- Everyone has all the intelligences!
- You can strengthen intelligence!
- This inventory is meant as a snapshot in time – it can change!
- M.I. is meant to empower, not label people!

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http://esl.about.com/library/vocabulary/bl_relatives.htm

Multiple Intelligences and Teaching Resources:

- Multiple Intelligences Research Study (MIRS): Prof. Marjorie Hall Haley
<http://gse.gmu.edu/research/mirs/>
- Project Zero at the Harvard Graduate School Of Education
<http://pzweb.harvard.edu/>
- Walter McKenzie's Multiple Intelligence Pages
<http://www.surfaquarium.com/MI/>
- Multiple Intelligences Survey
http://www.paec.org/teacher2teacher/gotthehots_multi_intell_survey.pdf
- Multiple Intelligences (M.I.) Inventory
<http://www.kerstens.org/alicia/planning10/Multiple%20Intelligences%20Inventory.pdf>

- <http://midas-profile.wikispaces.com/Multiple+Intelligences>
- <http://midas-profile.wikispaces.com/MIDAS+Overview>
- Abiator's Online Learning Styles Inventory Test 1
<http://www.berghuis.co.nz/abiator/lsi/lsitest1.html>
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<http://www.berghuis.co.nz/abiator/lsi/lsitest2.html>
- Intelligences Self-Inventory.
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