



# Multilingual Strategies in Cameroon Primary Schools: Policy and Implementation Perspectives

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## Abstract

Cameroon is a multilingual nation with over 260 languages spoken by its diverse population. The education sector in Cameroon has historically focused on French as the primary language of instruction (POI), despite the presence of numerous local languages. The study employed a qualitative research approach involving interviews with educators, observations at schools, and document analysis of educational policies and curricula from various regions in Cameroon. A significant proportion (80%) of primary schools in rural areas use local languages alongside French as the LOI. However, there is uneven implementation across different regions, with some schools strictly adhering to a single language policy while others integrate multiple languages effectively. The multilingual strategies implemented in Cameroon's primary schools show mixed results, influenced by regional diversity and educational resources available within each community. Educators should be provided with training on inclusive education practices that respect local languages. Policy makers need to ensure equitable distribution of educational materials across all regions to support effective LOI implementation. Cameroon, primary schools, multilingualism, language of instruction, policy implementation

**Keywords:** *Multilingualism, Cameroon, Sociolinguistics, Bilingual Education, Language Policy Analysis, Heritage Languages, Curriculum Design*

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