

Aspects of Francophone Cameroon English Inflectional Morphology: The Case of the –s Inflection

Marcel Jaff Fornkwa

Catholic University of Cameroon, Bamenda P.O. BOX 782, Bamenda, Cameroon

Abstract :

This study examines the use of the –s inflection by Francophone learners of English in Cameroon. Focus is on analysing the use of this inflection in the verbs and nouns that these learners use in their English essays, in order to determine the frequency of its use, the various difficulties faced by learners, and the strategies employed to overcome these difficulties; so as to determine the general trend in the use of this morpheme by these learners. The study is carried out in four schools in Yaounde: the Government Bilingual Primary School Mballa II, Lycée d'Anguissa, College Adventist and The University of Yaounde I. Data is collected from forty scripts equitably selected from these schools using random sampling. The data are analysed based on the Principles and Parameters theory in Second Language Acquisition. The general trends revealed in the findings include: French interference in the morphological parameter settings for the use of this affix, omission of the use of the affix where its use is necessary and over-generalization of the use of the affix to exceptional situations. However, some learners, especially those of Terminale and Level III, succeed in correctly setting the morphological parameter for this affix and thus use it correctly in their written English.

Key Word :

inflection, affix, interference, omission, over-generalization

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