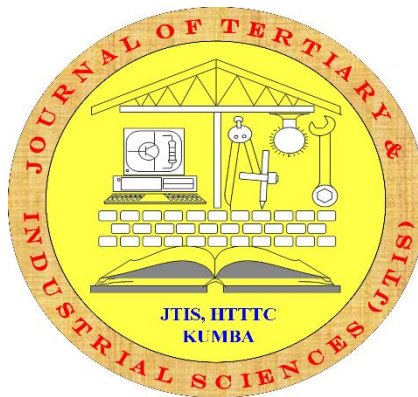


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**Table of Contents**

<b>Assessment of Examination Malpractice and its Impact on Students' Academic Success in Secondary and High Schools in Yaoundé, Cameroon</b> .....	<b>1</b>
By .....	1
Kenneth Yuomeyse .....	1
<b>Youth Risk Behaviors and School Engagement: Perceived parental support and hardiness as mediators</b> .....	<b>20</b>
By.....	20
Bakoma Daniel Nanje, Oben Terence Ojong .....	20
<b>Foreign direct investment and structural transformation in the CEMAC sub-region.....</b>	<b>43</b>
Etah Ivo Ewane, Ngouhouo Ibrahim, Akume Daniel Akume .....	43
<b>Silent students: reluctance to classroom interaction, poor familiarity with other learning resources and reliance on the teacher to learn.....</b>	<b>62</b>
Blandine Tamelo Tindo.....	62
<b>Scientific Evidence in Cameroon is of Low Ebb: Diagnosis of the Problems and reforms.....</b>	<b>77</b>
By.....	77
A. B. Ebako Dibo (Ph.D.) and K. N. Ebako Dibo (Ph.D. Student).....	77
<b>Design and implementation of an expert system for the diagnosis and treatment of water related diseases.....</b>	<b>102</b>
By.....	102
Godwin Kuate Kamgue <sup>1</sup> , Aubin Kinfaek Jeutsa <sup>2</sup> , Paune Felix.....	102
<b>Multiband GNSS low cost receiver and theirs performance in accuracy.....</b>	<b>121</b>
By.....	121
Benjamin Bahel*, Raphael Onguene, Loïc B.D Tedongmo, Blaise and Thomas Stieglitz..	121
<b>Customer Service Optimisation and Corporate Performance at Mobile Telecommunication Network: the Context of Cameroon and Nigeria.....</b>	<b>140</b>
By.....	140
Neba Noela Buwah.....	140

## **Silent students: reluctance to classroom interaction, poor familiarity with other learning resources and reliance on the teacher to learn**

**By**

**Blandine Tameo Tindo**

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### **Abstract**

This work seeks to understand how silent students learn, since their academic performance is satisfactory despite the fact that they hardly participate in classroom interactions. The researcher conducted the research on nineteen silent students of level 300 of the Higher Technical Teachers Training College of Kumba, selected using the purposive sampling technique. The descriptive survey research design was used, with qualitative technique in gathering data. The respondents were studied by collecting and analysing data obtained from the interviews, observations, and documentary review. These investigations on the field reveal that silent students mainly rely on the teacher to learn, by memorizing his notes and by grasping everything that he says in his explanation in class, because they hardly learn through other learning resources. They do not create tension, so they memorize the teachers' knowledge and hardly elaborate their own judgement and reasoning. As these students are trained to become teachers, the researcher believes that this situation needs to be given a serious consideration.

Key words: silent students - classroom interactions - ZPD - mediation - learner autonomy - learning resources

### **1. Introduction**

Socioconstructivists like Vygotsky (1998) and Barnes (1976) argue that learning goes from outside to inside, that is, it is co-constructed in contact with others before being adapted by an individual. Therefore, a lot of emphasis is laid on classroom interaction today because it is believed that it is by interacting with others, especially with the more knowledgeable ones (Bruner, 1998), that the student progresses in his zone of proximal development. The teacher is the more knowledgeable one in a classroom, so it is important that students interact with him, so as to learn significantly. But the researcher observed that some students remained totally silent in class, despite all the opportunities that the teacher sets in class for interaction. Others even make efforts not to be seen by the teacher, helped by the fact that they are many in class. From what has been said on the importance of classroom interaction for learning, it appears that the lack of involvement

in classroom interaction should normally lead to learning difficulties. However, the researcher noted that despite their silence in class, the academic performance of these students is instead satisfactory. Therefore, the main objective of the study is to find out how silent students learn. Specifically, the study aims at finding out if silent students rely on other learning resources, and looking into other possible strategies that they use to learn. Thus, the main question that this work seeks to answer is: how do silent students learn? The hypothesis of the study is that these students mostly rely on the teacher to learn. The study is supported by the socioconstructivist theory of learning which mainly states that learning is a social process in which a more knowledgeable one guides the learner to progress in his zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1998, p. 353).

## **2. Literature Review**

### **-The socioconstructivist theory of learning and the notion of mediation: The learner's autonomy**

Among the great ideas developed by Vygotsky (1998) in this theory, the notion of mediation is more pertinent for this study. In fact, the author argues that the learner mostly constructs his knowledge when he interacts with others; during this social interaction, the learner is likely to progress in his zone of proximal development (ZPD), defined as:

The greater or lesser possibility that the child has of moving from what he is able to do alone to what he can do in collaboration with another person is precisely the most notable symptom that characterizes the dynamics of his development and the success of his intellectual activity. It coincides entirely with its zone of proximal development<sup>1</sup> (p. 353).

Vygotsky (1978, 1998) believes that learning should therefore be mediated, that is, the learner should be accompanied in the learning process. Bruner (1998) argues that the mediator should be a more knowledgeable person than the learner, while Feuerstein (1994) emphasizes that the mediator should be a person who has been trained for that matter. In fact, one needs to be skilful in the mediation process because as Barnes (1976) argues:

The fact that it (knowledge) is "out there" and known to a teacher doesn't mean that he can give it to children merely by telling them. Getting the knowledge from "out there" to "in here" is something for the child himself to do: the art of teaching is knowing how to help him to do it. (p. 79)

In its development, the notion of mediation has given rise to related notions such as the learner autonomy (Little, 1991). In fact, it has been demonstrated that a learner who takes initiatives in his learning, makes his own free choices (Trebbi, 2008) and learns independently always learns a lot and meaningfully. Therefore, even without interacting in class with the teacher, an autonomous learner is likely to learn a lot. A skilful mediator

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<sup>1</sup> Translated from French by us

is one who is able to guide and help his learners learning on their own, that is, in an exploratory manner. When learners are autonomous, they can rely on other learning resources than the teacher's notes, such as written documents, the internet, the radio or television, seminars, conferences, to learn. This argument is emphasized by Houssaye (1988) in his description of the educational triangle. In his model of pedagogical understanding, Houssaye defines any pedagogical act as the space between three vertices of a triangle: the teacher, the student, the knowledge. The sides of the triangle are the relationships necessary for this educational act. Among them, the learning relationship has to do with the relationship that the student builds with knowledge in his approach to learn. According to Houssaye, the learner needs to invest himself in the search of knowledge, by exploiting learning resources at his disposal like the internet technologies that can facilitate synchronous and asynchronous learning (Siemens, 2008; Dunaway, 2011; Sangra and Wheeler, 2013). Nussbaum-Beach and Hall (2012, p.11) even believe that today's students are 'do-it-yourself' learners because internet technologies offer them abundant, diverse, reliable and sustainable information from millions of sources. In this process, he can count on the teacher to guide him. It is in this perspective that this study will find out if our respondents learn through other learning resources.

#### **-The socioconstructivist theory of learning and the notion of mediation: classroom interaction**

Silent students here refer to those students who hardly involve themselves in classroom interactions with the teacher. They remain silent on their seats and do not seize opportunities given by the teacher to express themselves. Therefore, it becomes difficult to determine whether even at the intrapersonal level they engage in cognitive activities that are prerequisite to learning. According to Costermans (1998, p. 13), a cognitive activity that he names «behaviour» refers to a series of information processing activities called « mental » or «cognitive» operations. He argues that even if the behaviour is latent, it can be manifested concretely through an individual's expressions or attitudes. If the teacher's objective in a classroom is to facilitate learning, that of the student is to learn. This is the reason why they both engage in classroom activities, namely, the mediation activity for the teacher and cognitive activities for the student. Classroom interactions then play a fundamental role in this process because it is the moment for the teacher to guide the student in the construction of his knowledge. Concretely, the student is the one to construct his knowledge.

*«It is in the cognitive activity that this construction truly takes place, because this process consists of manipulating the knowledge presented by weaving links between the different knowledge (old and new). It is this obvious manipulation, supported by the teacher which is likely to allow the student to develop his knowledge»<sup>2</sup> (Tameló, 2015, pp. 154-155)*

In this situation, the didactic contract (Brousseau, 1998) finds itself well executed in the sense that both the teacher and the student fill their part of the contract. In the

<sup>2</sup> Translated from French to English by us

socioconstructivist perspective, didactic interactions should be occasions to build didactic negotiations (Tameló, 2021a, pp. 83-84). In this pedagogic situation, the teacher's mediation activity influences the student's cognitive activity and vice-versa. Silent students in this configuration fail to fill their own part of the didactic contract, making it difficult for the teacher to fill his. In fact, if the student does not express himself, that is, if he does not expose his understanding, his ideas, his worries or his difficulties to the teacher, it becomes difficult for the teacher to efficiently guide him in his learning. In this condition, they will be taught in a haphazard way, making difficult to know if they understand the new lesson or not. In the context of crowded classrooms, the teacher generally applies what Ngamassu (2005, p. 5) calls 'group therapy', that is, he applies the same solution to the whole group, and ignores timid students who remain silent. On the other hand, unless they learn through other means or proceed by particular techniques to learn, silent learners will tend to memorize notes presented by the teacher, with the aim of reproducing it during the evaluation: this is a sort of mimicry.

### **3. Methodology**

This research was carried out in Kumba in Cameroon. The sample population was made up of nineteen students of level 300 of the Higher Technical Teachers' Training College of Kumba of the University of Buea, selected using the purposive sampling technique. The descriptive survey research design was used, with the qualitative technique in gathering data. The respondents were studied by collecting and analysing data obtained from the observations, interviews and documentary review. In fact, the researcher taught these level 300 students last year in a general course (98 students enrolled) when they were in level 200 and had been observing them. She then identified 21 silent students in class. The observation was completed this year as the students got to level 300 and that the researcher still teaches them in another general course. Out of the 21 silent students identified last year, it was noted that this year, two of them became expressive in class and therefore, she selected the 19 students who continued to be silent for this study. For reliability purpose, the researcher discussed with the course delegate to check if for some reasons they were silent only in her class. He confirmed that the 19 learners are always silent in general classes<sup>3</sup>. The researcher then checked in her records to find out how these students performed in her subject last year. Moreover, an interview guide was elaborated. The first part aimed at collecting information from the 19 students on their Department, their sex, their age, their general grade or score in level 200, in part I. This information was to find out if their silence may have anything to do with their department, sex, and age. The information on their general scores was verified to check if there is a cause and effect relationship between their attitude in class and their general academic performance. They filled this part themselves. In part II of the interview guide, the researcher found out from the respondents if they learn through other learning resources and the strategies that they use to learn. These were totally opened questions as the idea was to allow the respondent to express his mind without being influenced or oriented by the teacher. They

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<sup>3</sup> These are courses shared by students from various departments.



were free to provide more than one answer for an item. The researcher was listening and taking down answers herself. Finally, the researcher conducted a documentary review to find out how the respondents performed last year in the course she taught, named EDT 203: Introduction to Pedagogy and Didactics. The objective was to check the reliability of the data on their performance, by checking if these learners also performed well in her course. Data obtained in the main part of the interview guide, that is part II, was analysed using the content method. Therefore, answers that came up more often retained our attention and were then interpreted. The other data gave us additional information needed to better understand the situation.

The validity of this study was tested through the convergence of information from different sources (triangulation). To test for reliability, the inter-rater method was used. The researcher worked with seven students of level 600 II selected using the purposive sampling technique, to see how consistent the research instruments are. The findings from the pilot study proved that the research instruments were good enough to measure what they were supposed to measure. Ethical consideration for this study included communicating the aims of the investigation to the respondents, establishing rapport with the respondents and being always honest. The researcher took necessary precautions for the confidentiality of both the data and the respondents. The researcher dealt with participants with the mind-set that they are autonomous. As such, any participant in the research did so out of freewill. Participants were given an informed consent. This means the participants were clearly told what their participation in the research entailed and were made to understand that they had the right to refusal.

#### **4. Presentation of the Results**

##### **4.1. Results obtained from classroom observation**

During the participative observation, the researcher did not only identify these nineteen silent students, but she also observed their attitude in class. They always manage to sit at the backside of the class, in such a way that the teacher cannot easily see them from the front side. They also avoid eye contact with the teacher. They never show the will to say anything to the teacher on their own initiative. If they are having a particular worry, they prefer to refer to their close neighbour or to let it go. They are always quiet and are either listening or taking down notes when interaction is going on in class. When the teacher requests them to speak by choosing them to answer a question or to comment something for example, they do so very timidly and most of the time, their voice is hardly audible. But one thing is that they hardly miss a class.

##### **4.2. The interview guide results**

###### **Part I: General information**

**Table 1: Distribution of the respondents per departments**

Tourism	Administrative techniques	Law	Home economics	Civil eng	Mechanical eng	Management science	Computer science
5	2	2	3	2	1	2	2

This table indicates that silent students are not a specificity of a particular Department.

As it can be seen, they are from all the Departments. In fact, 5 of them are from Tourism, 2 are from Administrative Techniques, 2 are from the Law Department, 3 from Home Economics, 2 from Civil Engineering, 1 from Mechanical Engineering, 2 from Management Sciences and 2 respondents from Computer Science. This tells that their silence is not linked to their specialties or to their Departments.

**Table 2: Distribution of the respondents per gender**

Male	Female
2	17

As the table indicates, out of 19 respondents, only 2 are males while 17 are females. The important difference in numbers here is representative of the gender aspect of the class. The class is highly female dominated, thus, the silence of these students is not correlated with their gender.

**Table 3: Distribution of the respondents per age**

18-22	23-27	27 and above
7	10	2

The table tells that silent students are from different age groups, representative of the classroom. 7 out of 19 are aged between 18 and 22, while 10 are aged between 23 and 27 and 2 are aged from 27 and above. Again, their silence seems not to be linked to their age.

**Table 4: Distribution of the respondents per general grade in level 200**

A+	A	B+	B	C+	C	D+
0	3	6	6	1	2	1

The table above shows that the majority of these students, that is 15 out of 19, scored at least a B grade. Only 1 student's score is below C. This shows that despite their silence in class, their general performance is satisfactory.

## **Part II- Understanding silent students**

At this level, the respondents had to answer open-ended questions. Some respondents proposed several answers for the same question. The tables below present the most recurring answers per question, with their frequencies.

### **Part A: Learning through other learning resources**

1-Do you use the internet for learning purposes?

-If yes. Why? When? How?

-If no. Why?

**Table 5: Presentation of findings on the respondents' use of the internet for learning purposes**

Do you use the internet to learn?	Why?	When	How
Yes (18 occurrences)	1-Because I easily get the information needed (11 occurrences)	1-When assignment is given (11 occurrences)	1-On google search (15 occurrences)

	2-To complete my understanding of lessons done in class (4 occurrences)	2-When necessary, no specific time (4 occurrences)	-On google translate (4 occurrences)
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Table 5 shows that 18 respondents out of 19 affirm using the internet in learning. 11 of the 18 use it to easily get the information needed for their class assignment. 4 respondents say that they use the internet to complete their understanding of lessons done in class when necessary. Those four students who happen to be French speaking students say that to do this, they mainly use Google translate while in total, 15 respondents use Google search to get needed information.

2- Do you use other media (radio, TV) for learning purposes?

-If yes. Why? When? How?

-If no. Why?

**Table 6: Presentation of findings on the respondents' use of other media (radio, TV) for learning purposes.**

Do you use the radio or the TV to learn?	Why?	When?	How?
Yes (8 occurrences)	1-To learn new things (6 occurrences)	When I am free at home (8 occurrences)	Any programme on any channel that I come across and that is interesting for my objective. (5 occurrences)
No (11 occurrences)	1-I do not have access to any of them (6 occurrences)		
	2-Not interesting/no need (i have my mobile phone) (4 occurrences)		

This table indicates that out of 19 respondents, 8 use the radio or the TV to learn and 11 affirm that they do not. 6 out of the 8 respondents argue that they use these media to learn new things, 8 say that they use the media when they are free at home and five affirm that they watch any programme on any channel that they come across and that they find interesting. On the other hand, 6 out the 11 respondents who do not use these media explain that they do not have access to them, while 4 respondents do not find radio and TV interesting to them.

3- Do you usually read in the library?

-If yes. Why? When? How?

-If no. Why?

**Table 7: Presentation of findings on the respondents' use of the library for learning purposes.**

Do you usually read in the library?	Why?	When?	How?
No (18 occurrences)	1-No library available (9 occurrences)		
	2-I do not like reading, it is difficult, time consuming and boring (8 occurrences)		

This table shows that almost all the 19 respondents, that is 18, affirm that they do not read in the library. 9 of them explain that no library is available, so they do not have access to libraries. 8 respondents explain that they do not like reading because it is a difficult, time consuming and boring activity.

4- Do you read other written documents related to your class subjects than your notes?

-If yes. Why? How do you get them?

-If no. Why?

**Table 8: Presentation of findings on the respondents' use of other written documents for learning purposes.**

Do you read other written documents?	Why?	How do you get them?
No (16 occurrences)	I have no access to books/they are not available (16 occurrences)	
Yes (3 occurrences)	Books help to learn and they increase knowledge in courses (3 occurrences)	I download them from the internet (2 occurrences)
		I borrow from relatives, friends and from teachers (1 occurrence)

As indicated in this table, 16 out of 19 respondents do not read other written documents apart from the notes provided by their lecturers. They explain that they do not have access to books. Only 3 respondents read other written documents because they believe that they help to learn and they increase knowledge in courses. 2 out the 3 respondents download the documents from the internet and 1 borrows from relatives, friends and teachers.

5- Do you attend conferences, seminars or any scientific event?

-If yes. Why? How often a year?

-If no. Why?

**Table 9: Presentation of findings on the respondents' attendance of conferences, seminars or any scientific event for learning purposes.**

Do you attend conferences, seminars or any social or scientific events?	Why?	How often a year?
No (18 occurrences)	1- No opportunity offered to participate (9 occurrences) 2-Not heard of any (7 occurrences)	

From this table, it is seen that almost no respondent attends scientific events. 9 out of the 18 respondents explain that they have not got an opportunity to participate in one, while 7 respondents say they have not heard of any.

### **Part B: Strategies that silent students use to learn**

How do you learn / what are your learning strategies?

**Table 10: Presentation of findings on the respondents' learning strategies**

Learning strategies	occurrences
I read/revise my notes many times (not to forget), especially when close to exams)	18
I pay great attention in class to the teacher to grasp everything and note down when he/she emphasises	15

This table indicates that almost all the respondents adopt two main learning strategies. The first one is reading or revising notes provided by the teacher many times so as not to forget, especially when close to exams and the second one is paying great attention to the teacher in class to grasp everything that he says and note down emphasized points of the course.

### **4.3. Results from the document research**

**Table 11: Grades obtained in EDT 203: Introduction to pedagogy and didactics**

A+	A	B+	B	C+	C
0	1	4	8	1	5

Table 11 shows that all of them passed the course, with 13 respondents who obtained at least a B grade. This performance matches with their general performance (Table 4).

## **5. Discussion**

### **5.1 Findings and interpretation**

#### **5.1.1 Learning through other resources**

The first specific objective of this study was to find out if silent students rely on other learning resources to learn. Investigations and analyses on the field reveal that the great majority of these students do not learn through other resources. In fact, data collected show that they mostly use the internet as other learning resources (Table 5). In fact, the great majority of them have access to an android phone. With the internet connection,

they can visit web pages and learn more. Just that data show that they use the internet mainly when a home assignment is given to them, to easily get the answers needed by searching on google website. Few (4 respondents) declare that they use it to complete their understanding of lessons done in class, but they equally indicate that they do so by connecting to Google translate. These are francophone students trying to translate their notes or some challenging words from their notes. Translation is not research. Therefore, one can wonder if using the internet is really helpful as the objective here seems to be less on learning and understanding than on fast picking up of answers for the assignment, and trying to get the original message of a text. Few of these learners say they learn through the radio or the television when they are free at home and that they come across any interesting programme (Table 6). This means that it is not really a planned activity with clear objectives. It is a random activity. So not so much value is given to it. Also, when it comes to reading in the library (Table 7), reading other written documents (Table 8) or attending scientific events (Table 9), they are totally out. Some students even admitted that they do not like reading because it is difficult, time consuming and boring. All these testifies that these learners are not autonomous in their learning. Today, emphasis is laid on active learning, which has to do with the learner engaging in his learning, taking initiatives and making efforts to learn on his own. As Holec (1979); Little (1991, pp. 3-4) and Ushioda (2011) put it, learner's autonomy is important in learning because an autonomous learner dedicates himself to his learning. A student who learns on his own will always learn more. So these students neither interact in class with the teacher nor learn through other learning resources. So the question is how do they learn then, so as to perform well in evaluations?

### **5.1.2 Strategies that silent students use to learn**

Not surprisingly, the respondents declare that their learning strategy consists of reading or revising their notes several times, especially when exams are close, so as not to forget (Table 10). They also affirm that they learn by paying great attention in class to the teacher so as to grasp everything and take down notes (Table 10). The fact is that as they hardly use other resources to learn, what is left for them is to rely on the teacher. So they rely on the notes provided and the explanation given in class. Some of them even said during the interview that they are silent in class because they prefer to listen not to miss out what the lecturer says, and gather information from the teacher. So they are totally dependent on the teacher to learn. Our research hypothesis is therefore confirmed. The fact that these students do not create « tension » (Richterich, 1992) highly forces the teacher to impose knowledge on them. In fact, learning has to do with establishing links between knowledge in order to solve given situations or in order to understand, and to manifest the tension that arises from the process. The tension here refers to the determination manifested by the learner to understand when he faces a socio-cognitive conflict (Doise et al., 1998). In the absence of this tension, the teacher has no other choice than to impose norms and contents on the learners (Kasongo, 2014, p. 111). Learning is not downloading the

teacher's knowledge but it is the learner constructing his own knowledge, mainly with the help of the teacher or with the help of another person (Varonis et Gass, 1984; Swain and Lapking, 1998; Barth, 2004, 2013).

## 5.2 Implications

Even if silent students do manage to obtain good academic performance, the problem is that they depend too much on the teacher to learn, simply swallowing the teacher's view and understanding. Their learning strategies are more of the nature of leading them to memorise the content proposed by the teacher, instead of understanding and assimilating. Even if it is difficult to get access to other learning resources, by interacting in class with the teacher, the student can get to create tension that will at the end help him in making changes in his reflection as he engages in the process of solving his cognitive (Piaget, 1970) and socio-cognitive conflict. According to Doise et al. (1998, p. 90), « A characteristic of these changes is that to a great extent, they do not highlight a process of imitation, but a constructivist elaboration of new judgements and a new form of reasoning». So in a context where access to other learning resources is difficult, more emphasis should be laid on classroom interactions, because they become the main occasions for the learner to significantly learn. Kuchah (2011) argues that in difficult circumstances, the teacher should develop innovative teaching strategies to help his learners. Given that our respondents are future teachers, one needs to worry on what kind of teachers they will be, if they cannot speak in public, if they cannot learn independently, if they simply graduate with school knowledge that they are unable to use in real life situation. Barnes (1976) defines school knowledge as

*« The knowledge which someone else presents to us. We partly grasp it, enough to answer the teachers' questions, to do exercises, or to answer examination questions, but it remains someone else's knowledge, not ours. If we never use this knowledge we probably forget it. »*  
(p. 81)

This means that something needs to be done to change the situation.

During the interview guide, the majority of these students looked too shy. Even in a face to face situation with the researcher, it was difficult to them to look her in the face and to some, to speak, or to speak aloud. The researcher sometimes had to motivate them to talk. Therefore timidity might be the reason or one of the reasons of their silence in class. Avodo (2012) found out that the cameroonian school milieu is a place of tension between social, school, family norms, and pair groups norms and one of the consequences of this tension is educative violence (p. 456), in the form of linguistic impoliteness in classrooms. Linguistic impoliteness has to do here with the way teachers and students continuously agress each other's face and territory (Goffman, 1973a). This is done through language: verbal, non verbal and paraverbal language. Concretely, learners and teachers sometimes use rude language, they sometimes laugh, mock, humiliate or insult in the didactic milieu. This goes in all directions: students to teachers, teachers to studentss, students to students. In such a classroom context, shy students will tend to be silent. Therefore, the teacher

should set a conducive learning classroom environment in which all the students feel at ease. It is his responsibility to install an environment in which all the students feel safe to talk without fear to lose their face or their image (Goffman, *ibid.*). This will go along with motivating (Ryan and Deci, 2000; Viau, 1994) these students, through positive and negative reinforcement (Skinner, 1948) for example. Also, the teacher should place learners in situations where they are forced to talk, not only to the teacher, because in a large classroom this can be too demanding to a teacher, but also to each other. This means that classroom activities should include social interactions like asking questions to individual students, asking them to explain notions or situations, pair work and group work in class, but also outside the class through the implementation of exploratory teaching methods. Moreover, students should be guided and encouraged to consult other learning resources, again, through the learning activities that the teacher proposes.

The findings of this study corroborate with those of another one conducted by Elangwe (2023), in Government Teachers Training Colleges in Buea and Kumba aimed at ascertaining if library resources have an impact on users' satisfaction. He found out that, libraries were rarely visited by the learners of these schools who said not to be satisfied with library resources.

The findings of this research also corroborate with a research conducted by Begum (2020), on Socio-Cultural Factors in Promoting Learner Autonomy Among Tertiary Level EFL/ESL Learners. The researcher based his research on the observation that it is difficult to implement learner autonomy in Bangladeshi classrooms because learners rely so much on the teachers to learn. One of the objectives of this study was to reveal the causes behind the learners' tendency of being dependent on someone superior or more capable than themselves. The researcher found out that the learners have a huge expectation from the teachers. They expect that it is the teacher's responsibility to make everything easy and understandable to them. They tend to think that teachers are there to help them entirely, that the teachers are supposed to prepare every task related to the study, because it is their job and they are paid for it (pp. 123-124). The study also revealed that learners rely on the teacher to learn because they are so shy that they abstain from participating in classroom activities.

## **6. Conclusion**

This study was motivated by the observation that certain students are always silent in class. Since classroom interaction is fundamental for learning, the researcher wondered how silent students learn, since their academic results are good. The objective of this study was then to find out how silent students learn. The data collected on the field through classroom observation, documentary review and mainly the interview guide showed that silent students mostly rely on the teacher's notes and explanations to learn. They hardly create tension, therefore they hardly elaborate their own judgement and reasoning. The researcher pointed out the fact that this situation poses a serious problem since these learners are trained to become teachers. To help silent students interact in class, teachers should install and maintain a conducive learning environment, so that all the learners feel



free to express themselves without any fear to lose their face. Also, it will be important that teachers motivate these learners in different ways, so as to help them development self-confidence and to encourage them in their efforts. Finally, the teacher should invite silent learners to participate in classroom interactions by giving them the floor or by asking them questions directly. He should also plan and propose learning activities that involve collaboration with others like pair or group work, he should make use of active teaching methods which are student-centered, so that silent students will be pushed to interact with others.

In this study, the researcher chose to focus on how silent students learn, since they do not participate in classroom interactions which are very determinant for learning. This is just an aspect of the topic concerning silent students. It will be interesting in further studies to look thoroughly at the reasons of their silence in class, so as to better understand their attitude. Another study could implement the solutions that this study has suggested, through an experimental research design, and check if at the end of the experiment, the students who were silent will become more interactive in class.

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