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*Presentation of the Our Mythical Childhood Project and the Our Mythical Childhood Survey to students of the English Department at the Ecole Normale Supérieure (ENS) Yaoundé during a class on Research Methodology*

## **How to write entries for Our Mystical Childhood Project? A class discussion on field research techniques**

As a tradition of the English Department at the Ecole Normale Supérieure (ENS) Yaoundé, each batch of new students is presented with the training programme of the department, including research projects lecturers are currently involved with. Last academic year, we dedicated a slot in our regular departmental lecture series to talk about the project. Since this year's lecture was circumscribed, I decided to take Our Mythical Childhood project to my class on Research Methodology. In a lecture on field research, I found a clear link to talk to the students about authenticating information obtained from informants. In this regards, we discussed the concept of consent as an essential requirement to guarantee that field research took place and that the said informants were contacted.

Our Mythical Childhood project was one of the good examples of a project that I used to illustrate this point. From here, we moved on to the practical modalities of writing an entry from a literature text or from a myth that is narrated. For those students who opted to participate in the project, a subsequent focused discussion group was organized three days, using my office space, to explain the templates, the ethical questions, and the procedure to locate possible informants. Although myths are only popular in rural areas in Cameroon, we also have people in the age range of 60 -70, who have worked and retired in the cities; and to whom myths were narrated to when they were growing up in villages. This category of persons is the target of myth collection in the cities, especially Yaoundé (capital city), the microcosm of the entire country. Among the many other issues we discussed was the requirement that a good myth should be elaborate enough to give a coherence story. It must be written as narrated, but edited for coherence and logic etc.

Divine Che Neba, a member of the project team and our home expert on mythology, advised the students on the differences between folktales and myths, citing examples from some of his collection of myths in the last year.



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