This sociolinguistic study on the Cameroonian variety of West African Pidgin English seeks to explain the apparent discrepancy between the widespread use of this language, as documented in the linguistic literature, and its ongoing official neglect by governmental authorities. In contrast to previous studies, which often stress the heterogeneity of this language, the present study assesses the degree of variability that exists in terms of speakers’ perceptions and mutual intelligibility. In addition, this study introduces a methodological approach to sociolinguistic research which conforms to the rules of empirical research and which is particularly suited to the African context because of its multimethodological, interactive and flexible design. It combines qualitative research methods with quantitative analytic tools, and consists of more than 50 qualitative interviews in combination with a quantitative questionnaire survey of almost 2000 questionnaires administered in 13 educational institutions in various urban centres located in 8 out of the 10 Cameroonian provinces. The study thus provides new and extensive empirical data on the sociolinguistic context of Cameroon Pidgin use and on the sociolinguistic situation in Cameroon in general.