Eric A. Anchimbe *Editor*

Structural and Sociolinguistic Perspectives on Indigenisation

On Multilingualism and Language Evolution

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Springer

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Thalia
&
Ryan
for the many smiles they bring to us daily

Preface

The notion of indigenisation and its instantiations under different societal conditions have been investigated and labelled variously in the literature on transplanted languages, especially English and French in postcolonial communities. The most recurrent labels include: non-native varieties, L2 varieties, localised varieties, indigenised varieties, and for the English language; new Englishes, postcolonial Englishes, and recently the more encompassing term world Englishes. Although several studies have critiqued the naming tradition behind these labels (e.g. Mufwene 1994: "New Englishes and criteria for naming them" *World Englishes* 13(1): 21–31, Anchimbe 2008: "Giving English-speaking tongues a name" *Issues in Intercultural Communication* 2(1): 29–44), today these varieties and the processes of their emergence and evolution no longer constitute a point of controversy. Rather the approaches and perspectives used to investigate them have expanded and become more sophisticated.

This volume further expands the investigation of processes and instantiations of indigenisation to include sociolinguistic and pragmatic phenomena through perspectives that view indigenisation within the domain of daily social interaction. The book begins with a structural description before introducing aspects of indigenisation in patterns of politeness, respect, compliment response, naming and address forms, linguistic identity construction, and ethnic accents. Focus is on Cameroon and the indigenised varieties of three extensively used languages, namely English, French, and Cameroon Pidgin English (CPE).

The chapters collected here rely on both natural and elicited data in describing the syntactic forms, pronominal usage, pronunciation patterns, and collocational possibilities of Cameroon English (CamE), Cameroon French (CamF), and CPE, along with the socio-pragmatic choices speakers make in interactions in and across these languages. From the findings made in this volume, we can say that a consistent system of social multilingual interaction seems to have emerged being a hybrid of indigenous cultures and patterns and those introduced during colonialism. Within this system, speakers' multilingual repertoires, ethnic allegiances and stereotypes, language choices, and sociolinguistic identities play substantial roles. The exact extent of each of these factors can only be determined through extensive studies that engage with naturalistic data and corpora. It is, therefore, my wish that more

studies follow this one, with a broader scope that includes phenomena in the indigenous languages and CPE, since most previous research endeavours have focused extensively on English and French.

With this book, we honour the short life of our friend, colleague, and classmate, Yves Talla Sando Ouafeu, who left this world abruptly on 3 January 2011 after a cardiac arrest in his home in Montreal Canada at the age of 36. His chapter in this volume was submitted only a few weeks before his passing on and is published here posthumously. Shortly before this volume was published, our colleague, Charles Belinga B'Eno also passed away. May your souls rest in peace, Yves and Charles!

Bayreuth, 20 November 2013   Eric A. Anchimbe

Map of Cameroon

Administrative regions and the anglophone and francophone parts

Source: Anchimbe, Eric A. 2013. *Language Policy and Identity Construction: The Dynamics of Cameroon's Multilingualism.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins, pp. xxi.

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Contributors

Eric A. Anchimbe   teaches English Linguistics at the University of Bayreuth, Germany. His current research is on offers and offer refusals in postcolonial communities from a postcolonial pragmatics perspective, and also political discourse from below in Africa. Among his recent publications are the monograph *Language Policy and Identity Construction* (Benjamins, 2013), the special issue of the *Journal of Pragmatics* entitled *Postcolonial Pragmatics* 43(6) (2011, ed. with Dick Janney), *Language Contact in a Postcolonial Setting* (ed., De Gruyter, 2012), and *Postcolonial Linguistic Voices* (ed. with S.A. Mforteh, De Gruyter, 2011). His research interests are in world Englishes, linguistic identity construction, and postcolonial pragmatics.

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Charles Belinga B'Eno(†)   holds a Doctorat Nouveau Régime from the Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales (Inalco-Langues'O) Paris (1996). His initial research was on the concept of language sciences and specifically on what he terms 'written orality' (oralité écrite). This concept, founded in text linguistics, approaches written African literary texts as products of verbal narratives, i.e. performance. Before his death in 2012, he was a Senior Lecturer at the University of Yaounde I, Cameroon. A number of his publications are on the indigenisation of French in Cameroon.

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Bernard Mulo Farenkia   is Associate Professor of French and Linguistics at Cape Breton University, Canada. He received his PhD (1997) and Habilitation (2004) in Applied Linguistics and German from the Saarland University, Germany. His research interests include sociolinguistics, discourse pragmatics (interlanguage, postcolonial, and variational), and contrastive genre analysis. He is the author of numerous articles in French, German and English in peer-reviewed journals such as *Journal of Pragmatics*, *Linguistik Online*, *Pragmatics*, *Lacus Forum*, *International Journal of English Linguistics*, *Cahiers franco-canadiens de l'Ouest*, *Linguistica Atlantica*, *Le Français en Afrique*, *Deutsch als Fremdsprache*, *Zielsprache*, *Deutsch*, and *Nordic Journal of African Studies.* He recently published *Des Formes d'Adresse en Français au Cameroun* (Presses Universitaires Européennes, 2011). He is currently working on regional pragmatic variation in French and pragmatic competence/ performance in French as a second language.

Kelen Ernesta Fonyuy   obtained her PhD in English Linguistics from the University of Bayreuth, Germany, where she also worked as a teaching and research assistant. Her research interests cover the fields of sociolinguistics, sociophonetics, contact linguistics, applied linguistics, variation linguistics, peace linguistics, ethnic Englishes, and less dominant varieties of English. She is the author of *Ethnolects of Cameroon English: Pronunciation, Education, and Evolution* (Peter Lang, 2013), and a number of book chapters and journal articles on English and ethnolects in Cameroon including "The rush for English education in urban Cameroon: Sociolinguistic implications and prospects" *English Today* (2010).

Paul N. Mbangwana   is Emeritus Professor of English. Currently, he works with the Cameroon Christian University Bali, Cameroon. He has held administrative positions at the Universities of Yaounde I, Buea, and Dschang in Cameroon. He has published widely in the area of phonology, lexicology, semantics, Pidgins and Creoles, and world Englishes, and in international journals like *English Today*, *World Englishes*, *International Journal of Humour Research*, *Lore and Language*, and *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*. He is author of *Cameroon English Morphology and Syntax: Current Trends in Action* (with B.M. Sala, 2009, Lincom), *An Introduction to English Speech* (with Augustin Simo Bobda 2004, B&K Language Institute), and *English Patterns of Usage and Meaning* (2002, University of Yaounde Press).

Joseph Nkwain   is a Graduate Assistant Lecturer in the Department of Bilingual Studies, University of Yaoundé 1, where he teaches English for Academic Purposes, English-French comparative and contrastive studies, translation, and English grammar and lexicology. He has published in international journals like *Acta Linguistica Hafniensia*: *International Journal of Linguistics*, and *Linguistik Online*. His current research focuses on the functional and pragmatic aspects of Pidgin English in Cameroon Anglophone Literature. He has completed and is awaiting

the defence of a PhD thesis on politeness in Cameroon Pidgin English. Among his research interests are sociolinguistics, applied linguistics, pragmatics, and the New Englishes.

Yves Talla Sando Ouafeu(†), before his passing on in January 2011, worked for the Montreal School Board in Canada. His PhD in English Linguistics was awarded by the University of Freiburg in Breisgau, Germany, in 2006. He also held the following academic and professional qualifications obtained from the University of Yaounde I in Cameroon: a BA and a Postgraduate Certificate in Education in English and French Linguistics and Literature, and an MA in Linguistics. His book *Intonational Meaning in Cameroon English Discourse: A Sociolinguistic Perspective* (CSP, 2010) covers his major research interest, i.e. intonation in varieties of English. His papers have appeared in refereed journals such as *English World-Wide*, *World Englishes*, and *English Today*.

Bonaventure M. Sala is a Senior Lecturer in English Grammar and Stylistics in the English Department at the University of Yaounde I, Cameroon. He holds a PhD in English Grammar from the same university and is interested in the syntactic description of the New Englishes, with special focus on Cameroon English and Cameroon Pidgin English. He is co-author, with Paul N. Mbangwana, of *Cameroon English Morphology and Syntax: Current Trends in Action* (2009, Lincom). His scholarly articles have appeared in international journals like *English World-Wide, English Today, Alizés*, *PhiN* and *World Englishes* and in edited volumes.

Chapter 1
Introduction—Indigenisation and Multilingualism: Extending the Debate on Language Evolution in Cameroon

Eric A. Anchimbe

Abstract This introductory chapter outlines the aims and objectives of this book, i.e. to further illustrate, using authentic, naturally-occurring data, processes of indigenisation in two ex-colonial languages, English and French, and a Pidgin, Cameroon Pidgin English, in Cameroon. Additionally, the volume investigates patterns of indigenisation beyond the level of grammar but at the level of discourse and social interaction from pragmatic and sociolinguistic perspectives. To achieve these aims, and by way of explaining the line of thinking in the chapters, this chapter defines the concept of indigenisation and situates it within current descriptions of postcolonial language varieties. It identifies the linguistic levels of indigenisation expounded on in the volume; explains the varied sources of indigenised features; and discerns the status of each language and their contribution to indigenisation within this multilingual setting.

Keywords Indigenisation · Identity construction · Gendered discourses · Pragmatic perspectives · Adstrate · Substrate · Superstrate

1.1 Overview and Aims

This volume extends the investigation of processes of indigenisation and the ecological evolution of ex-colonial languages in different (e.g. postcolonial) communities by factoring in the centrality of multilingualism, multiculturalism, and multiethnicity. Focus here is on postcolonial multilingual Cameroon and three of its most widespread languages: English, French (the official languages), and Cameroon Pidgin English (CPE; a cross-cultural, cross-ethnic, and cross-lingual lingua franca). The volume approaches indigenisation from two major perspectives; the structural, which covers system-based features in grammar, phonology, lexis, semantics, and syntax, and the sociolinguistic, which investigates social interaction focusing closely on pragmatics (e.g. politeness, respect, deference), identity construction, gendered discourses, and naming or address strategies. With these two perspectives, we aim to further illustrate the processes and linguistic and sociolinguistic

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instantiations of indigenisation of English, French, and CPE in Cameroon beyond the system-based level, where extant research already exists, by investigating social interactional patterns and choices in interpersonal and intergroup communication across languages and cultures.

The authors use both authentic, naturally-occurring data and elicited questionnaire survey data collected from speakers of the indigenised varieties of these languages, referred to in the literature as Cameroon English (CamE), Cameroon French (CamF), and CPE, to arrive at findings that illustrate how the multilingual nature of the society and individual speakers' multilingual repertoires shape patterns in, and the trajectory of, indigenisation. Most of the data are from L1 speakers of these varieties or languages, suggesting that besides grammatical and lexical indigenisation, there is already a consistent community of native speakers who use these languages not only for formal, official, or professional purposes but also for their regular, daily, and interpersonal social interactions.

The sociolinguistic and pragmatic perspectives are chosen here to complement earlier research which dwells mostly on system-based linguistic components such as phonology (e.g. Simo Bobda 1994a), lexis (e.g. Equipe IFA 1988; Mendo Ze 1999; Anchimbe 2006), lexicography (e.g. Kouega 2007, 2008), morphology and syntax (e.g. Todd 1979; Mbangwana and Sala 2009), intonation (e.g. Ouafeu 2006a, b), and semantics (e.g. Biloa 2006). As Table 1.1 shows, not much has been done on the pragmatics of CamE, CamF, and CPE. This volume seeks to fill this gap by investigating patterns in the realisation of politeness, the use of names and address forms for respect and deference, the impact of gender in everyday discourse, and the discursive construction of linguistic and social identities.

Given that there is apparently a norm of social interaction that has emerged from the complex sociolinguistic constitution of the country, as illustrated by some of the authors, it can be said that CamE and CamF have crossed the nativisation stage of Edgar Schneider's (2007) dynamic model of postcolonial Englishes. With a dictionary of CamE already published in 2007 by Jean-Paul Kouega, this variety could be said to be in the early stages of the endonormative stabilisation phase of the dynamic model. This certainly adds to the changing facets of world Englishes as far as local norms, emerging standards, and language teaching are concerned. These aspects, however, fall outside the scope of the present volume but could be relevant topics for future research.

Bringing together papers in English and French, as this volume does, is intended to give readers a feel of the equally complex multilingual nature of social interactions in the country as borne in some of the data discussed here. Although the tradition of describing indigenisation in Cameroon has a longer history for the English language than French, this volume includes two chapters on the indigenisation of French in Cameroon in a bid to encourage more researchers to engage with it.

Table 1.1 Linguistic levels of indigenisation investigated in earlier research

Linguistic level	Specific issues discussed	Major proponents	Variety
Lexical integration	Neologisms, loan words	Simo Bobda (1994b, c); Kouega (2006, 2007, 2008); Anchimbe (2006)	CamE
	Types of loans: additive and replacive		CPE
	Sources of loans: substrate, adstrate		
	Inventory of loans, new words	Equipe IFA (1988); Mendo Ze (1999); Biloa (2003, 2006)	CamF
	Impact of the substrate: indigenous languages		
Phonological features	Phonemic realisations, accents	Mbangwana 1992; Simo Bobda (1994a, 2004); Ngefac (2010)	CamE
	Vocalic and consonantal processes		
	Regional accents, pronunciation	Zang Zang (1999); Nkwescheu (2010)	CamF
Prosody	Intonation	Ouafeu (2006a); Simo Bobda (1986, 2010, 2011); Kouega (2000)	CamE
	Word stress		
Pragmatics	Politeness and respect	Anchimbe (2008, 2011); Mulo Farenkia (2008b)	CamE
	Address forms and strategies		
	Politeness, compliments responses	Mulo Farenkia (2008a, c, 2009, 2010); Feussi (2008a, b, 2010)	CamF
	Address forms, naming strategies		
	Address forms, names and politeness	Echu (2008); Nkwain (2011)	CPE
Morphology	Word structure and composition	Anchimbe (2006); Mbangwana and Sala (2009)	CamE
	Word formation processes		
	Reduplication, language elaboration	Sala (2012); Weber (2012); Mühleisen and Anchimbe (2012)	CPE
	Lexical borrowing		
Syntax	Sentence structure, functions	Sala (2003, 2006); Mbangwana and Sala (2009)	CamE
	Clause structure, syntactic norms		
	Question structure, left dislocations	Ngué Um (2010); Simo-Souop (2011); Biloa (2012)	CamF

Table 1.1 (continued)

Linguistic level	Specific issues discussed	Major proponents	Variety
Multilingualism	Urban youth communication	Mbangwana (1991, 2006); Kouega (2003); Anchimbe (2004)	CamE
	Innovative usage of English (by youths)		
	Code-switching, code mixing	Féral (2006); Kouega (2003); Schröder (2007); Anchimbe (2013)	CamF and CamE
	Mixed languages: Camfranglais, youthspeak		
Linguistic variation and indigenisation	Features of CamE or CamF	Todd (1982); Mbangwana (1992); Simo Bobda and Chumbow (1999); Nkemleke (2011)	CamE
	Analytic frameworks		
	History and evolution		
	Acculturation, deculturation, and nativisation	Féral (1991); Mendo Ze (1999); Biloa (2003); Tsofack and Feussi (2011)	CamF
Pidgin and Creole studies	Sociolinguistic status	Schneider (1960); Todd (1985); Mbangwana (1983); Féral (1989); Ayafor (2008); Kouega (2008); Schröder (2003a, b); Sala (2012)	CPE
	History and evolution		
	Linguistic features of CPE		
	Lexical innovation in CPE		

1.2 Indigenisation: Multilingual Ecologies and Repertoires

Indigenisation is understood in this book to mean the inclusion, adaptation, and adoption of local or indigenous linguistic, geographical, ethnic, and cultural (i.e. ecological) elements into a language that is transplanted to a new ecology. The trajectory of, and features involved in, indigenisation depend on the specific mix of each community: i.e. status and uses of co-existing languages (e.g. immigrant vs. native languages, official vs. home languages), the linguistic structure of the society (e.g. monolingual, bilingual, diglossic, or multilingual), the functions of co-existing languages (e.g. medium of education vs. home or trade languages), and the types of languages involved (e.g. Pidgins or Creoles vs. other languages). Indigenisation, irrespective of societal mix, is not limited to the grammatical and lexical levels alone but includes patterns in code choice and other macro-linguistic elements that ensure successful communication between interlocutors.

Pragmatics and conversation or discourse analysis have often been ignored in the investigation of indigenised languages in postcolonial communities. Given that these spaces are highly multilingual and the inhabitants also multilingual, it is understandable that communicative or discursive choices in grammar and lexis could be strongly motivated by pragmatic intent. For instance, choosing to call someone 'an uncle' when meeting him for the first time suggests far more than is borne in the English lexeme 'uncle'. As explained by Anchimbe (2008, 2011), it could be for various reasons, e.g. (1) the desire to reduce the gap between interlocutors who are strangers to a familial space where cordiality normally rules; (2) it is easier to negotiate social distance and power when social roles are already clearly sorted out: uncle (older) and niece, nephew (younger); and (3) it is a politeness or respect strategy in which real names are avoided. A system-based approach alone would not explain these complexities. This volume seeks to extend the debate further and to invite more investigations of postcolonial contexts from social interactional perspectives (see also Mulo Farenkia 2008a).

Colonialism played a key role in the transplantation of European languages to other parts of the world where other languages were already in use. The new languages were added to the existing ones, creating complex scenarios for language acquisition, language policy and language planning, and language standardisation. On account of this, these transplanted languages have been called differently, with some names suggesting interference of the substratum, others insufficiency or inappropriate acquisition by the new speakers, and some more deviation from the foreign standards. They have been called non-native varieties, L2 varieties (though some people acquire them as L3, L4), postcolonial varieties, localised varieties, nativised varieties, or indigenised varieties. For Mufwene (2001, p. 108),

> the term *indigenised* reflects the struggle for legitimising them, a stand that is consistent with the position that every dialect has its own set of distinctive features and norms by which a speaker is identified as a typical or nontypical member of the community with which it is associated.

Calling these new varieties, especially of English, vernaculars, Kachru (1991) signals that they generally emerged and are employed in historically specific contexts of acculturation or indigenisation; i.e. contexts in which these languages could not remain the same as in their historical home or in other regions to which they were transplanted. Mufwene (2001) implies in the quote above that they are effectively *dialects* of English. Indigenisation, according to these perspectives, is inescapable, and although it is not predictable, the structures and patterns it yields are systematic and describable in linguistic terms. The papers collected in Anchimbe (2012) focus on specific features of CamE and CPE as indigenised varieties. The current volume adds sociolinguistic and pragmatic perspectives to the system-based and language contact perspectives covered in that volume.

The next section focuses on the linguistic levels of indigenisation, especially in Cameroon, and the role the multilingual ecology has played in shaping them.

1.3   Linguistic levels of Indigenisation

In the literature on CamE, CamF, and CPE, a number of linguistic components have been extensively studied, mostly from a language contact perspective (see e.g. Anchimbe 2012). The research on the distinctiveness of these varieties has concentrated exceedingly on illustrating substratum elements at the level of phonology, grammar, lexis, semantics, and only recently pragmatics. Besides the substratum, the features have also generally been treated as *deviations* from the intended norm based on foreign native varieties, especially British English, and also as interferences and (negative) transfers from the background languages. These varieties have also been viewed as *maturing*[1] into stable codes. Today, however, it is unanimously accepted in the literature that these varieties are indeed instantiations of stable sociohistorical communities that make use of them according to the demands of their interactions, identities, and social accommodations. In other words, the varieties have been so deeply indigenised or nativised that constant reference to a foreign norm no longer makes sense to speakers who have them as their communal language for both social interaction and professional advancement or who have them as their first language.

Previous and current research allocates a lot of importance to the impact of the local ecology in shaping these varieties. They, as Mbangwana (1992, p. 96) says in relation to English, consider them as foreign "only in form but essentially Cameroonian in mood and content."

At the level of phonology, Simo Bobda's (1994a) work establishes, using a generative phonology approach, that CamE has achieved a stable and describable system of phonology. His meticulously done research has inspired other investigations

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[1] The issue of *maturation* of indigenised Englishes has been critiqued by Anchimbe (2009a). Some scholars who have in one way or the other implied that CamE is maturing or has matured are Simo Bobda (1994b: iv) and Ngefac (2005: 50).

of the variety. In a recent study, Ngefac (2010, p. 3) identifies certain specific features of CamE which he says is

> characterised at the phonological level, by a heavy simplification of consonant clusters, devoicing of final voiced consonants, reduction of long sounds to short ones, the monophthongisation of diphthongs and different stress and intonation patterns.

Other aspects that have been researched include prosody, i.e. stress (e.g. Simo Bobda 1986, 2010, 2011; Kouega 2000), intonation (Ouafeu 2006a, b), ethnolectal phonemic features (e.g. Sala 2011; Fonyuy 2012), pronunciation (e.g. Simo Bobda 1993), accent (e.g. Ngefac 2010), and intelligibility (e.g. Atechi 2006). For more on the phonology of CamE, see Simo Bobda (1994a, 2004), Kouega (1998), Simo Bobda and Chumbow (1999), etc. Not much has been done on the phonology of CamF and CPE.

Research on CamF has concentrated more on lexical features and meaning change. The lexis of CamE and CamF have received much attention from linguists both in Cameroon and beyond. In most of these studies, indigenisation through the incorporation of lexical elements from indigenous languages and other background sources is projected as the main indicator of distinctiveness. The description of these lexical elements is generally accompanied by explications of their meanings. In CamE research, several studies have investigated the origins of new lexical elements (e.g. Kouega 1998; Anchimbe 2006), their incorporation into a dictionary of CamE (e.g. Kouega 2007; Wolf 2012), their integration into the norm of CamE (e.g. Simo Bobda 1994c; Anchimbe 2009b), their grammatical functions and collocations (e.g. Nkemleke 2004), and their pronunciation (e.g. Simo Bobda 1993; Ngefac 2005). Similar extensive research exists on CamF, e.g. the Cameroon Equipe IFA team's (1988) work on *Inventaire des Particularités Lexicales du Français en Afrique* (Inventory of Lexical Specificities of French in Africa), Mendo Ze's (1999) collected volume on French as an African language, Zang Zang's (1999) research on loan words and norm in CamF, among many others. More recent research which focuses on lexis alongside other features include Feussi (2008a), Mulo Farenkia (2008b), and Nzesse (2009). For more on CamF lexis and other aspects, see various volumes of the journals *Le français en Afrique* (www.unice.fr/ILF-CNRS/ofcaf) and *Sud Langues* (www.sudlangues.sn), and Manessy (1994). A major publication that describes the lexis of CPE is Kouega's (2008) dictionary of CPE.

A number of studies have focused on grammar, especially aspects of syntax and morphology. For CamE, the most recent include Sala (2003) on the CamE sentence, Sala (2006) on the grammatical norm of CamE, and Mbangwana and Sala (2009) on morpho-syntactic trends in CamE. In the case of CamF, discussions of grammar are spread out in studies like Mendo Ze (1990), Féral (1991), Biloa (2003), Ntsobé (2003), Wamba and Noumssi (2003), and Tsofack and Feussi (2011). As far as CPE is concerned, research has focused on grammar and other aspects (e.g. Féral 1989), syntax (e.g. Bazergui 1997), tense and aspect (e.g. Schröder 2003a, b, 2012), morphology and syntax (e.g. Ayafor 2008), reduplication (e.g. Sala 2012), pronouns and pronominal usage (e.g. Atindogbé and Chibaka 2012), orthography and writing (e.g. Ayafor 1996; Sala 2009; Mühleisen and Anchimbe 2012), etc.

A research field that has only recently been explored is pragmatics. This volume offers some papers in this direction on CamE (Dashaco and Anchimbe's paper), CamF (Mulo Farenkia's paper), and CPE (Nkwain's paper). They are intended here to further attract research attention to this rich field which will certainly help foster the investigation of indigenised languages in multilingual postcolonial communities. The importance of pragmatic choices in social interaction in these contexts is very salient due to the complexity of the mix of cultures and linguistic norms. Several socio-cultural norms are at work during social interaction, being the outcome of processes of hybridism triggered by colonial contact and globalisation. For instance, as explained by Adegbija (1989, p. 169),

> in most contexts of discourse in Nigeria, an elder is usually not referred to by name by a younger person; doing so would be considered rude and patently uncouth. In order that this discourse cum cultural norm not be violated, adjectives such as 'senior' or 'junior' have been adopted for use in Nigerian English in reference to older or younger people.

Cameroon is no different as illustrated by Anchimbe (2008, 2011) who demonstrates that CamE speakers resort to name avoidance or name escapism as a form of politeness, respect, and deference, especially towards older members of the society. Ouafeu (2006c, p. 541) postulates that CamE speakers use the pragmatic particles, *na*, *ya*, and *eihn*, as a means of reducing "the social gap between themselves and their interlocutors." As far as CamF is concerned, a few phenomena have been investigated, among them, patterns of politeness (e.g. Feussi 2008b, 2010), compliment responses and naming strategies (e.g. Mulo Farenkia 2008b, c, 2009, 2010), respect and social decorum (e.g. Dassi 2008), among others. CPE, on its part, has been studied from a pragmatic perspective by Echu (2008) who focuses on address strategies and their politeness and flattery functions and Nkwain (2011) on compliments as an appraisal speech act used to manage face in interactions.

The above research review, selective as it may be, can be represented as in Table 1.1. Only a few publications are mentioned here, and most of them cover more than one linguistic level. The possible origins or sources of the features introduced into CamE, CamF, and CPE, some of them investigated in the studies listed in Table 1.1, are explained in Sect. 1.4 below.

1.4   Sources of Indigenised Features

Three major sources donate new elements to the three languages or varieties studied in this volume. Since they all exist in the same linguistic and sociocultural ecology, they donate features to one another in various domains, or put differently, they tap from the same sociocultural source for lexical, semantic, and pragmatic features. The most common elements borrowed from this sociocultural source are names of, and references to, food, dressing, cultural beliefs, and local concepts. Most of these do not belong to the original native home of English and French, hence local indigenous counterparts or equivalences have to be found for them. We can, therefore, talk of features supplied by the substrate linguistic base, i.e. principally the
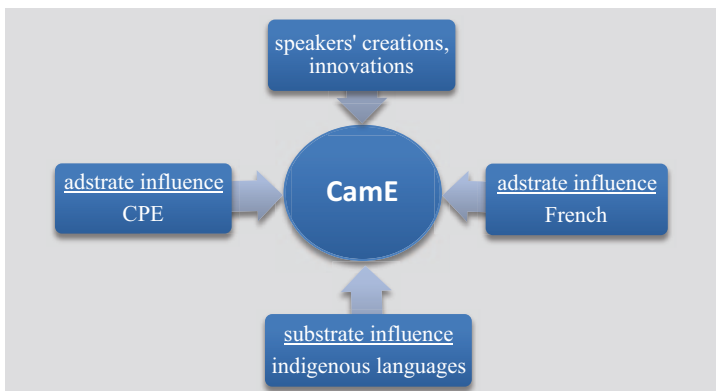
Fig. 1.1 Sources of indigenised features in CamE
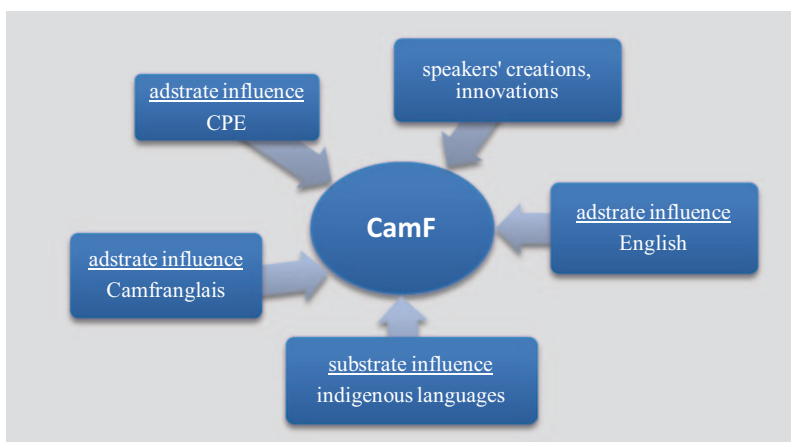
Fig. 1.2 Sources of indigenised features in CamF

indigenous languages; adstrate features, supplied by other languages which do not belong to the substrate base; and speakers' innovative creations within each of these language varieties. As illustrated in Figs. 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3, English, French, and CPE are adstrate languages for each other while the indigenous languages serve as the substrate base for all of them since most Cameroonians have one of the indigenous languages as their L1 or mother tongue.

With these many potential sources of new elements, indigenisation becomes a complex process. Words from different sources that are synonymous tend to compete for selection (Mufwene 2001) into the variety or language. Those that finally get filtered into its norm (Anchimbe 2006) are selected according to a number of criteria: their use in official domains, e.g. writing, on radio, or television; the social power of its source users; the mobility of its most prominent users, e.g. students and
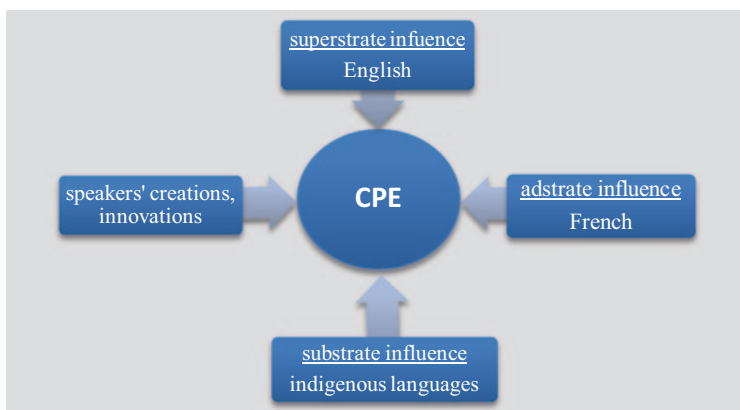
Fig. 1.3 Sources of indigenised features in CPE

youths, etc. The interesting thing is that, as soon as these words and structures are integrated and are used by many speakers, their origins cease to matter.

As can be seen in Fig. 1.1 about CamE, four sources contribute new elements to the norm of the variety. It cannot be easily said which of them has the highest impact on the variety as a whole, but various registers of the variety tend to be influenced by languages with which it shares that domain. For example, the CamE register of administration is likely to be influenced by French since administration in the country is principally done in French (see Kouega 1999). According to Simo Bobda (1994c, p. 245), "French does not only donate direct loans, but also permeates every other lexical innovation process" in CamE. Even though apparently amplified, this quote suggests that CamE lexicon is flooded with French words or words modelled on French counterparts. Kouega (1999) illustrates the influence of French on the registers of administration and finance.

The indigenous languages also constitute a major source of lexical features for CamE. This is because the sociocultural ecology of the country is more deeply written into these indigenous languages than it is in the foreign, indigenised English and French languages. The indigenous languages form the substrate base and are generally acquired first at home in childhood. Kouega (1998) and Anchimbe (2006) have illustrated the domains of loans from the indigenous languages in CamE, the most recurrent of them being food, dressing, belief, and cultural systems.

For CamF, mostly English and CPE contribute adstrate features. The influence of English on CamF has not been proven to be as high as that of French on CamE. A possible reason is that more people speak French in Cameroon than English, and since much of the administration takes place in French, French words easily cross over into CamE in this and other related registers. Besides English and CPE, the bilingual mixed language, Camfranglais, is also a potential source of new elements in CamF. As shown in Fig. 1.2, it is an adstrate source even though its structure is basically French with English and the indigenous languages providing lexical and morphological features.

As with CamE and CPE, indigenous language words are inevitable in CamF (Fig. 1.2). While the indigenous languages function as the substrate base, English, CPE, and Camfranglais are the adstrates. They also contribute features of different types to CamF. A common CPE expression that has entered both CamE and CamF is *buyam-sellam*, which designates petty traders who buy foodstuff and resell them in open markets.

CPE, being a pidgin, has the indigenous languages as substrate and English as its superstrate since its grammatical structure and the bulk of its lexicon are predominantly English-based (Fig. 1.3). However, the indigenous languages continue to be the substrate because they provide the sociocultural background through which CPE speakers commune and interact coherently.

Since CPE is not yet fully standardised, the borrowed words that form its lexicon are determined by spread and usage. However, Kouega's (2008) dictionary is a commendable start in the direction of codification. As discussed above, the bulk of studies on CPE have been on its grammar (e.g. pronouns, tense, aspect, reduplication, etc.) and sociolinguistics (e.g. identities, acceptance, and rejection, etc.). More lexical studies that explain word origins, etymologies, collocations, and meaning are needed.

1.5 Structure of the Volume

This book is divided into two parts. Each part seeks to foster the overall aim of the book by focusing on the structural aspects of indigenisation (Part I) and the sociolinguistic and pragmatic aspects of indigenisation (Part II). Part II of the book makes a call for more in-depth investigations of these varieties using pragmatic, discourse analytic, and intercultural approaches that prioritise emic stances.

1.5.1 Part I. Structural Perspectives on Indigenisation: Syntax and Phonology

Part I, *Structural perspectives on indigenisation—Syntax and phonology*, comprises five chapters that deal with the clause structure of 'that-clauses' in CamE, the use of pronoun-like elements in CamE, a typology of *Camerounisms* in CamF, as far as syntax is concerned, and intonation and ethnolinguistic variation in CamE pronunciation. The chapters all use both naturally-occurring and elicited data that place emphasis on the use of these languages as integral parts of the multilingual Cameroonian ecology.

In Chap. 2, '*That-clauses*' *in Cameroon English*: *A study in functional extension*, Bonaventure M. Sala investigates the different functional extensions of 'that-clauses' in CamE. Focusing on two types of 'that-clauses,' i.e. 'that-complements' and 'echo-questions,' he identifies syntactic transformations and patterns that are peculiar to

CamE, and hence suggestive of the extent of its indigenisation in its local ecology. He arrives at the conclusions that in CamE, 'that-complement' clauses undergo a structural patterning "with extra-nuclear arguments being attached to verbs after they have taken all their complements" while in 'echo-questions,' "apart from wh-words resuming the positions of questioned constituents, an additional transformation occurs, erasing the super-ordinate clause." His chapter adds to the little research work available on the syntax of CamE and also perhaps other indigenised Englishes in Africa.

The illustration of syntactic structures of CamE continues in Chap. 3, *Pronoun-like usage in Cameroon English: The case of copy, resumptive, obligation, and dummy pronouns*, where Paul N. Mbangwana describes the use of certain words as pronouns. Using data from CamE speakers of various walks of life, he illustrates how these words represent copy, obligation, resumptive, and dummy pronouns. By comparing these with examples from Awing Ngemba, an indigenous Cameroonian language, he arrives at the intermediary conclusion that these usages are probably motivated by substrate influence. For him, these usages "constitute part of the mainstream norm of the variety, and should, when the time comes, be incorporated into its grammar during standardisation."

Chapter 4, *Les camerounismes: Essai d'une* (*nouvelle*) *typologie*, by Gratien G. Atindogbé and Charles Belinga b'Eno takes a more general perspective on *Camerounismes* or *Cameroonianisms* in CamF, categorising them according to linguistic form and meaning and setting them apart from *errors*. After introducing some specific semantic and socio-pragmatic features of CamF, the chapter settles on a typology that separates simple Cameroonianisms (i.e. *les camerounismes simples*) from complex Cameroonianisms (i.e. *les camerounismes complexes*). This typology covers grammatical features including the morphological structure of words, new syntactic collocations, variant phrase and clause structures, and their meanings. Again, some of these structures and their meanings are attributed to background indigenous languages (e.g. Gunu or Yambassa) which, as illustrated in Figs. 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 above, form the substratum for indigenised languages in Cameroon.

From grammar and syntax, Yves Talla Sando Ouafeu moves the discussion to phonology, specifically to *Intonation in Cameroon English*, in Chap. 5. Also a less studied aspect of indigenised Englishes, the chapter characterises, elaborates on, and presents CamE intonation in an illustrative manner. After examining tones at the intermediate and intonation phrase boundaries using speech samples of educated Cameroonians, Ouafeu observes that CamE speakers more often use two major tone types on items in lists, namely the rising tone and the level tone. This specificity does not exclude the use of the other tones in the variety, which are realised in other speech situations apart from lists. Though a panoramic overview of the intonation patterns of CamE, the chapter provides a succinct account of this prosodic feature and opens the way for more in-depth investigations.

In Chap. 6, *Ethnolinguistic heterogeneity in Cameroon English pronunciation*, Kelen Ernesta Fonyuy makes a rapid appraisal of ethnolinguistic variation in the pronunciation of English in Cameroon. Taking up the contemporary issue of ethnolects, the chapter shows how substrate ethnic language forms are determinant in the emergence of ethnic pronunciation patterns. The Nso' and Mbum ethnic groups studied

exhibit vocalic processes such as diphthong reduction or simplification, vowel lowering, and vowel shortening in English speech. Since these processes are common in their Lamnso' and Limbum indigenous languages, a possible reason for their persistence in these ethnolects is substratum influence. Again, the local linguistic ecology plays a huge role in the progression of indigenisation, not only of the mainstream variety, CamE, but also of ethnolects of the language in Cameroon.

1.5.2   Part II. Sociolinguistic Perspectives on Indigenisation: Sociolinguistics and Pragmatics

The four chapters in this part focus more precisely on the major objective of this book; that of extending the debate on indigenisation beyond grammar, phonology, semantics, or syntax, to include social and pragmatic interaction in, and attitudes towards, indigenised languages. What speakers think of their variety, how they use the variety for strategic social communication, and their attitudes towards the variety and others who speak or do not speak it, suggest the extent of indigenisation of the language in its current multilingual ecology. The chapters in this part cover the three language varieties studied in this volume: CamE, CamF, and CPE. The authors describe attitudes towards CamE, the place of gender in the use of tags in CamE discourse, Cameroonians' perceptions and realisations of politeness in CamF, and the use of address terms for socio-pragmatic impact in CPE.

In Chap. 7, *Attitudes towards Cameroon English: A sociolinguistic survey*, Eric A. Anchimbe describes the complex web of identification with CamE as an identity icon and the quest for a foreign variety (e.g. British English) as a source of social prestige and a potential key to international prospects. The results of his survey show that although many Cameroonians agree that a variety of English has taken root in Cameroon, and is evidence of the way Cameroonians use and relate to the language, they are often reluctant to overtly say they too speak this Cameroonian variety of English. However, the fact that these speakers use it as a marker of their linguistic and social identity as Cameroonian speakers of English indicates how entrenched the language is among them, hence supporting the premise that indigenisation has reached the identity stage. These speakers are often fast in rejecting or stigmatising, through an attitudinal filtration process (see Anchimbe 2006), those ways of speaking that they consider grotesque to them, foreign to Cameroon, and idiosyncratic markers of certain speakers. This rejection pushes those speakers who may be interested in imitating foreign accents to adhere to local speech forms.

Still on CamE, Veronica A. Dashaco and Eric A. Anchimbe explore the different types of tag questions commonly used by Cameroonian men and women in both formal and informal and single-sex and mixed-sex interactions in CamE discourse in Chap. 8, *Gender and the use of tags in Cameroon English discourse*. They analyse naturally-occurring data in three domains: at home (i.e. family interactions), on the street (i.e. interactions among friends), and at work (i.e. interaction on radio), and observe that though women tend to use more tags, the functions of the specific

tag types used are shared by both men and women. However, women are more likely, their data show, to use affective, i.e. polite, relational, distance-closing, tags than men who rather prefer authoritative and less compromising tags. Overall, they conclude that tag usage is highly context-dependent with regard to

> the physical location, the discourse context (e.g. formal or informal), the participants involved (e.g. age, parent-child, gender), the sociocultural norms that apply to the context (e.g. taking and keeping the floor), and the relationship between the participants (symmetrical or asymmetrical). (Dashaco and Anchimbe, this volume)

Bernard Mulo Farenkia in Chap. 9, *Ethnicité, politesse et représentations au Cameroun*, returns to CamF by investigating perceptions of compliments in interethnic encounters as a means of understanding the impact of ethnic stereotypes on politeness and the construction of sociolinguistic identities. Using the recent approach, 'postcolonial pragmatics' (see Anchimbe and Janney 2011), the chapter explores interview respondents' potential response to compliments offered by people from certain ethnic groups in Cameroon. With these responses, the chapter explains, it is possible to identify "the social representations that would underline positive and negative perceptions of compliments in interethnic encounters." The perspective on multiethnicity and multilingualism adopted by Mulo Farenkia in this chapter fits well with Fonyuy's in Chap. 6 and also corroborates Mbangwana's (Chap. 2) and Atindogbé and B'Eno's (Chap. 4), indicating clearly that any investigations of patterns of nativisation or indigenisation in such multilingual and multiethnic communities have to seriously take into account local attitudes and attributes in social interaction alongside the system-based features.

Turning to CPE, Joseph Nkwain in Chap. 10, *Address strategies in Cameroon Pidgin English: A socio-pragmatic perspective*, studies the strategies CPE speakers, whom he refers to as *pidginophones*, name, address, or call other interlocutors during formal and informal interactions. The naturally-occurring examples discussed reveal that "users internalise various sets of sociolinguistic and pragmatic norms or patterns drawn from different cultures and languages existing in Cameroon, which they then use strategically in their interactions in CPE." These strategic usages enable interlocutors to save their own faces, to avoid threatening other interlocutors' faces, realise respect and politeness, and to play their roles as accepted and competent members of their multilingual society. The chapter exemplifies these linguistic choices or tasks with address forms based on modified personal names, kinship terms, general honorifics from the religious, cultural, and professional domains, indexical naming, and in-group markers and references. The chapter adds more evidence to the relevance of the social and cultural ecology in sociolinguistic instantiations of identity and social cohesion through language, also discussed in other chapters of this volume.

In all, the nine chapters, each in its way, contribute to establishing the place of the local ecology in the itinerary and processes of indigenisation. Apparently, all three languages seem to follow a predominantly similar indigenisation itinerary, dominated by previously learned languages and cultures, adstrate influences, and speakers' linguistic innovations and (positive) attitudes towards the indigenised varieties. What future research may find important to dwell on is the extent, in statistical terms, of these influences in the stabilisation of these varieties.

1.6 A Few Closing Remarks

Indigenisation is not an exhaustible topic in the description of postcolonial varieties of English and French. This volume does not, therefore, claim to have exhaustively covered it. What it has attempted to do is to extend the debate to include macro-linguistic aspects such as identity, discourse analysis, pragmatics, gender and discourse, and politeness. Further studies supported by larger corpora of natural data in different contexts of interaction could expose even more startling aspects of communication in these varieties and in these multilingual and multiethnic societies.

I surmise that with more research that focuses on indigenisation as an emic phenomenon, we will be able to understand more not only about these languages as regional codes for social identity and communication, but also the patterns of hybridism common in these highly complex societies. The hybridism is visible in the mix of various types of languages (i.e. substrate, adstrate, and superstrate), the specific functions of these languages (i.e. official, home, and religious languages), the varied cultures and cultural values in contact since colonialism (i.e. written vs. oral cultures, individual-based vs. group-based cultures), and the multilingual repertoires of inhabitants in these societies. Complex as these societies and varieties may be, the predominantly monolingual and monocultural western theories and frameworks often used to investigate or explain them are bound to be ineffective. This is a call for more emic approaches, frameworks, and theories that take these complex mixes and hybridism into account.

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Part I
Structural Perspectives on Indigenisation—Syntax and Phonology

Chapter 2
'That-clauses' in Cameroon English: A Study in Functional Extension

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Abstract This chapter sets out to study some of the functional extensions that have been attributed to Cameroon English (CamE) "that". This involves two phenomena, namely, that-complements and echo-questions. As for that-complements, it is seen that some verbs in CamE select that-complements in contexts that are not attested in British English. This is the case of what I call "abuse-verbs", which are re-categorised to rhyme with the verb "say", thereby having an orienter and content. On their part, echo-questions are achieved following the process of super-ordinate clause deletion. When this happens, the that-complementiser introduces the subordinate constituent clause, which stands alone. This very process is also used for reporting. CamE echo-questions are categorised into yes/no echo-questions and constituent echo-questions. The peculiarity of the category yes/no echo-questions lies in the modal property they have, as they show the speaker's attitude either of surprise or of disapproval.

The overall conclusion in the paper is that syntactic variation in the New Englishes is likely to be more significantly marked at the level of tasks given to function words than at differences in word order. This is a kind of covert variation, which is subtle. It is shown that this kind of variation is occasioned by local meaning, so that grammatical variation in the Englishes would be caused by local meaning or what purists would call "non-standard meaning" leading to non-standard structures. This is how English adapts to the ecologies of its various habitats.

Keywords *That*-clauses · Functional extension · Syntactic variation · New Englishes · That-complements

2.1 Introduction

The indigenisation of English is, apart from sociolinguistic and ethnographic considerations, a descriptive account of the twists and turns the English language has taken in "new" habitats. It is a clear testimony of language coming to meet a people in a particular region and bowing to its culture (including linguistic conventions)

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and world view. The point in indigenisation studies has been the investigation of the various forms these adaptations take in the various Englishes at all linguistic levels.

As far as Cameroon English (CamE) is concerned, considerable work has been done in this direction in the domains of phonology, lexicology and, recently, syntax and sociolinguistics. Some such outstanding works include Simo Bobda (1994), Sala (2003), Anchimbe (2006), Kouega (2006, 2007), Ouafeu (2006), and Mbangwana and Sala (2009). Researchers in CamE have said in different ways that the scientific and/or social relevance of their investigations is to lay the foundation for an eventual standardisation of this sub-regional variety of West African English. While considerable research findings have been achieved at the levels of CamE phonology and lexicology, the domain of syntax is still indeterminate, barely bourgeoning. This situation seems to prevail in other New Englishes, to judge from the call made by scholars the world over for more research in the domain of syntax (see Kirk-Greene 1971, p. 57; Kachru 1992, p. 319; Trudgill and Chambers 1995, pp. 413–414; Hartford 1996, p. 92; Newbrook 1998, p. 57; D'souza 1999, p. 272; Bamgbose 2001, p. 360; Igboanusi 2006, p. 393). In addressing the very issue, Kortmann (2010, p. 418) even puts it more dramatically as "more detailed description of the grammars of individual varieties, not just of the forms and structures available, but also of their uses" is still lacking. It is clear that studies of New Englishes (NEs) will not be complete without due consideration of their syntax. In this light, the purpose of this work is to attempt an understanding of some of the structural and functional extensions that CamE has given to the English that-clause. The focus is on two *that*-clauses: *that*-complement clauses and *that*-clauses used for echo-questions and reporting.[1]

Syntactic research in the New Englishes also faces some problems. First, unlike phonology and specifically lexicology, syntactic variations are subtle by not always being distinctively marked, and as a result are not readily visible for description. The slimness in overt distinctive marking of syntactic peculiarities in the New Englishes has as corollary a normative problem, that of drawing the line between error and norm. As Sala (2006) argues, syntactic innovations, unlike the multivariate forms phonological (and at times lexical) innovations take, in the New Englishes are typically binary in nature. A feature is either "English" or it is not, and where it is not, then it belongs to the local norm. At the level of pronunciation, the word "Cameroon" has several segmental (/kamerun/, /kamarun/, /kemerun/) and prosodic (depending on whether you place the stress on the first syllable or on the last syllable) variations even in Cameroon, even though sociolinguistic, democratic procedures could help decide which one is most used. But a syntactic category like wh-questions in CamE has just one variation from BrE. CamE has "You are going where?" where BrE has "Where are you going?" There is no other variation in word order for this category in CamE. For example, we would not have structures like "*Where you are going?" for the very category, a structure that would be considered an error in CamE.

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[1] It should be noted in passing that these structures have also been heard in the English used in Nigerian and Ghanaian films, and could presumably be a feature of West African English.

Theorists have disagreed over the syntactic contents of a New English. Bamgbose (1998) proposes that, for us to ascribe a feature to a local norm, that feature must, amongst other qualifications, be widely used by educated speakers of that variety. To him, the norm is the acrolectal variety. The acrolectal variety may be prestigious, but it is what the educated professionals think is BrE. But unfortunately, it is not always the mesolect, where the majority of speakers fall. The acrolectal is what Sala (2006) calls Institutional English and the mesolect is what he calls Community English. If syntactic variations are binary (after we have taken away learners' performance varieties) then they cannot be placed on a lectal continuum the way we will for phonological features. Deciding, therefore, between error and norm has been the common thread in most debates on whether there is anything like the New Englishes.

2.2 That-complement Clauses

The focus of this section is on that-complement clauses. Naturally, the selection of that-complements in BrE is not an arbitrary affair, depending arguably on the general property of verbs as a whole. When we consider the following possible CamE sentences, we see some variation:

(1) a. A woman abuses the Isaac's family [that they are black]
   b. He phoned [that he is coming]
   c. He refused [that he is not coming]
   d. He insulted me [that I am a thief]

The bracketed strings in the sentences in (1) vary from the BrE norm in (2). The sentences in (1) share a common feature in that they take that-complement clauses, but do so in a variant manner. In BrE, verbs like *abuse, phone, refuse* and *insult* do not select that-complements. The closest equivalences of (1) in BrE, therefore, could be (2) below:

(2) a. A woman abuses the Isaac family (by) saying that they are black
   b. He phoned saying/to say that he is coming.
   c. He refused to come/[the fact that I am his friend].
   d. He insulted me (by) saying that I was a thief.

A close observation shows that the sentences in (1) are generally verbs of saying. But unlike the verbs *say*, *inform*, *promise* and *tell*, which select that-complements in BrE, they do not select that-complements in most standard varieties of English. The difference between (1) and (2) is that, as seen in (3) below, that-complements have introducers such as the verb *say*. In a sentence like "He said that he was coming," the configuration [that…] gives the content of what was said. This could mean that *say* in BrE has no content and simply means *to utter*. The content of *say*, therefore, comes obligatorily with the use of the that-clause. I suggest that verbs like *abuse,*

phone and *refuse* have additional content in BrE. They do not simply mean *to say* but to say in a particular way, or to say a particular thing. Hence, *phone* means "to say over the telephone", *refuse* means "to say 'no'" and *abuse* means "to say an unjust or severe thing to somebody or about somebody." There is no need therefore in BrE to state the particular thing that was said.

However, if the speaker deems it necessary to state the particular thing that was said unjustly, he could insert either the verb *say*, which has no content, or the expression "the fact that" (2c). The use of the expression "the fact that" in BrE heralds a full noun or nominal clause, though many see it as stylistically inappropriate. A that-nominal clause could be a that-clause as seen in (2c): "He refused (to acknowledge) the fact that I was his friend." The insertion of the verb *say* and *the fact that* are strategies used in BrE to introduce that-complements to verbs that do not (naturally) select them. This is verifiable from the variant nature of (3) below, where "the fact that" is tacked to a verb that selects a that-clause naturally:

(3) *He wants the fact that I should come.

There is, therefore, something in the non-insertion of *say* and *the fact that* in the sentences in (1). It could be proposed that *abuse*, *phone* and *refuse* in CamE are ranked with *say*, that is, they have no content. They mean [utter - (minus) content] and their content comes in the that-complement that follows them. If we take the case of *abuse*, we see therefore that it means "[say + content]" in BrE and "[say - content]" in CamE. Larson (1984, p. 291) distinguishes between head constituents and support constituents in embedded structures. She argues that some complex sentences have an orienter and content, so that the orienter serves to introduce the content as seen in the way (5) is derived from (4):

(4) a. The boy said (it)   (orienter)
     b. He was hungry   (content)
(5)   The boy said he was hungry.

Hence, abuse-verbs are re-categorised in CamE to have the same status as *say* and to have an orienter and content. Larson's (1984) "orienter" could mean [say - content].

So, in (1) above, the verbs in CamE take complements in a manner different from BrE. This has implications for the Theta Criterion, which holds that "each argument is assigned one and only one theta role, and each theta role is assigned to one and only one argument" in a sentence (see Haegeman 1992, p. 63). This implies that the lexical information contained in a verb determines the number of arguments that such a verb can minimally take to be completely grammatical and meaningful. Therefore, an additional argument is mapped on the verbs' idiosyncratic structures. According to standard BrE, the clausal complements introduced by "that" are structurally unnecessary. This is because they are formally considered in CamE to be arguments and all the verbs have received enough. For the sentences to be meaningful in BrE, they need to be rewritten as in (2) above.

   It is necessary to notice that that-complements generally explain the content of an abstract and intellectual event described by an abstract verb. Hence, in English, mono-transitive verbs can be classified into two groups: those that can govern that-complements and those that cannot. Consider the following expressions in which the verbs govern that-complements:

(6) a. He expects that … (expectation)
     b. He thinks that … (thought)
     c. He wants that … (desire)
     d. He remembers that … (remembrance)

The transitive verbs in the above expressions govern that-complements and can as well govern NP-complements. As seen from the words adjacent to them in brackets, what the that-complements express can be nominalised. For instance, what someone expects is an *expectation* and what someone remembers is *remembrance*. A close look at the verbs shows that they are verbs, not of state, but verbs that express a mental event. *Expect*, *think*, *want, remember* and *feel* express mental events. They are also abstract verbs by not being concrete or ocular, that is, their events are not observable. They, therefore, have corresponding abstract nouns that describe or define what the that-complements express. When we say as in (6a), "He expects that …", the sentence can be rephrased as "His expectation is that …". It is, therefore, assumed that that-complements in BrE generally express the content of the events described by the verbs, giving them the status of content-clauses. One other characteristic of the expressions in (6) is that their subjects do not play the role of agent, as no action is involved in the verbs.

   On the contrary, typical verbs of action in BrE do not select or govern that-complements as seen in the ungrammaticality of the following examples:

(7) a. *He ate that …
     b. *He built that …
     c. *He slapped that …

Even in a sentence like "He saw that the boy was lying", *saw* entails a different meaning which is more intellectual than ocular, by indicating a mental perception. The question is why action verbs in English do not select that-complements. I assume that that-complements have the function of describing the abstract content of abstract events. They are themes that are not concrete, but intellectual. It would, therefore, be tautologous and vague if one said, "I expect an expectation" or "I want a desire." What expectation or what desire is what is expected in object position. "That" is a complementiser signalling the explanation of the content of the abstract event. Action verbs do not need this because an action is visible and observable. Also notice that a physical event cannot be performed on an abstract object. Hence, sentences like the following in (8) are not grammatical, unless we use extra-linguistic knowledge, or give the verbs abstract interpretations:

(8)   a.   He ate the insult.
      b.   He built his honesty.
      c.   He fought the temptation.

Finally, the conclusion one could draw here is that *that* in that-complements has the features [+ explanation (of content)].

   As stated above, the CamE variant embedding in (1) above is an instance of overgeneralisation of the lexical entry of *saying*-verbs in BrE. The verbs lack content and the variant complementation results from the fact that that-complements provide contents of abstract events. It is postulated that the problem is intensified by evidence from the languages that co-exist with CamE. Consider the sentences in (9) below from Cameroon Pidgin English (CPE):

(9)   a.   John kosh me say a get big head.
           John abuse me that I have big head
           "John abused me that I have a big head."

      b.   E   deny say e no   di   come
           He refuse that he NEG ASP come
           "He refused that he is not coming."

The use of *say* to mean *that*-complement in CPE could have an incidence on the feature [+ explanation (of content)] of *that* in CamE as seen above. The structures in (9) are supposed to have been borrowed from indigenous languages. Consider the sentences below from Lamnso, a language spoken in the North West Province of Cameroon:

(10) a.   Wuu kùu   mo dzi m wa ker kitu ki   faŋ- in
           he   abuse   me that I   ASP have head that big ASP
           "He abused me that I have a large head."

      b.   Wu ten   dzi   wu   yoʔ wa wiy-   i
           he refuse that   he   NEG ASP come ASP
           "He has refused that he is not coming."

The use of the double negative in (10b) buttresses the supposition that *refuse* is [- content] in CamE. While *refuse* means *say* 'no' in BrE, it simply means, *say* in CamE in this context. Thus, the negation on the embedded clause in (10b) has no effect on CamE -*refuse*, as would be the case in BrE, where *refuse* is inherently negative. It can be concluded that in CamE, because of the analogy from other BrE verbs and evidence from local languages contemporaneous with CamE, *abuse*-verbs such as *curse* and *abuse* have no content, unlike in BrE. *Refuse* and

phone too lack content. In addition to the above verbs, *mock* and *laugh* can be included as seen in (11):

(11)   a.   He mocked me [that I failed my exams.]
       b.   He laughed (at) me [that I had no money.]

Hence, the idiosyncratic properties of the above-mentioned verbs are re-categorised in the direction of native languages. The sentences are formally correct, though with a variant structural organisation. This is, therefore, an example of English yielding to pressure from indigenous languages, which is testimony to the creativity of bilingual and multilingual speakers. It is necessary to mention, in passing, the existence in Cameroonian indigenous languages of predicates such as "smile a dry smile", "laugh a terrible laughter", "abuse an abuse", "lie a lie", "die a good death", "live a life" and "cry a cry". In these cognate object predicates, the complement is a copy of the verb's information. These are cases of the lexical properties of verbs in indigenous languages in Cameroon. Occasionally, we find these kinds of properties in the very verbs in CamE.

2.3   Super-ordinate Clause Deletion for Echo-questions

In BrE, echo-questions are used as a reaction to a statement or to a declarative sentence. Speakers who wish that their interlocutors should repeat part of their statements use them. Forming echo-questions in BrE does not call for any re-ordering of constituents in the sentence. Echo-questions are realised by a process whereby wh-words resume the base positions of the constituents in questions. Other transformations include supra-segmental adjustments, a secondary phonetic issue in which a drawn rising tone is placed on the last word, be it a wh-word or some referential expression. Consider the sentences (12)–(14):

(12)   a.   Thomas ate the banana.
       b.   Thomas ate what?
(13)   a.   Thomas slapped the thief.
       b.   Thomas slapped whom?
(14)   a.   Thomas is coming at noon.
       b.   Thomas is coming when?

Sentences (12a), (13a) and (14a) are declarative sentences and the (b)-sentences are echo-questions. The variation of the wh-words according to the syntactic position and the quality of the noun replaced shows that the listener has recognised the exact element in the sentence and needs to have it repeated either for emphasis or because he did not get the constituent in question.

The data from CamE show some variation as far as echo-questions are concerned. Consider the following sentences (15)–(16):

(15) a. I am going home.
      b. That you are going where?
(16) a. Thomas is going home.
      b. That who is going home?

(15b) is an echo-question in CamE. The only relation it shares with BrE is that a wh-word is generated at the base position of the echoed constituent. Also, there is a drawn rising tone on the last word as is usually the case for (12b) above. However, an additional transformation is also applied as seen in the presence of "that", which introduces (15b). According to the BrE-norm, the construction is deviant for two reasons. First, "that", a complementiser, introduces a subordinate constituent clause and cannot, therefore, stand alone in any utterance, lest it sounds like a sentence fragment. Second, in BrE grammar, apart from cases of echo-questions discussed above, wh-constituents cannot be generated or be the target of movement where their landing sites, a precondition for that generation, that is, the COMP-position is blocked. "Where" in (15b) will have to move to the same position with "that". The doubly filled COMP (DFC) filter filters out such constructions the way they have been analysed in BrE. WH-movement can only attract the auxiliary to that position. Two wh-words or elements cannot land in the same place, given that the auxiliary and the complementiser "that" are both hosted by COMP. It is important to notice that, because CamE wh-words generally prefer the base position, it is possible to have direct questions in subordinate clauses in CamE as in "He said that he is going when?" The above arguments show that (17) is impossible:

(17) *Where that are you going?

Having motivated the fact that (15b) is "deviant" in BrE, we now turn to the situation as it is in CamE. I do not assume that sentence fragments are a feature of CamE. There should, therefore, be a context that recovers the grammaticality of what is absent in (15b). Echo-questions are situations in which a speaker has uttered something and the listener wants to have a particular constituent of that sentence repeated. Echo-questions are, therefore, strictly conversational and may involve a defect in the transmission of an idea. It is posited that what is absent from (15b) is some notional main clause, probably [you say …]. Hence, the original forms of (15b) and (16b) would read as (18) and (19) below:

(18) (You say) that you are going where?
(19) (You say) that who is going home?

The postulation of the notional existence of the verb "say" in a deleted super-or-dinate clause is borne out because it is a universal property of echo-questions to repeat what someone has said and have them repeat and emphasize a portion of it. If (18) and (19) are taken to be the "original" full utterance, then (15b) and (16b) are realised by a rule that deletes the main clause. Let this rule be called "Superordinate Clause Deletion" and be stated as follows:

(20) Superordinate-clause deletion: Delete the super-ordinate clause to have an echo-question.

When the rule in (20) applies, (18) and (19) will be the deep structures of (15b) and (16b) above, respectively. These kinds of transformations are not licensed in BrE where the cyclic node principle applies. As shown in Radford (1981, p. 200), rules apply strictly in a bottom-to-top order, that is, they apply to subordinate constituents before applying to super-ordinate ones as formalised in (21):

(21) Cyclic principle: Any rule application whose domain is D must precede any rule application whose domain includes D. (Radford 1981, p. 200).

If D is taken to be the subordinate clause, then no rule in English will involve the main clause and not involve the subordinate clause. Radford (1981) further explains that a node which can be the domain of application of at least some rules is called a cyclic node. Every cyclic principle is, therefore, a cyclic node. A cyclic transformation is one that obeys the cyclic principle stated in (21). Seen from this perspective, (15b) and (16b) are not cyclic transformations and are, therefore, ungrammatical in BrE.

From another perspective, if (15b) and (16b) are considered to be cases of ellipsis, then they could be acceptable. Quirk et al. (1994, p. 883 ff.) define ellipsis as a grammatical omission, and state that it operates according to the principle of verbatim recoverability. This means that the actual words whose meaning is understood or implied must be recoverable. Among the conditions cited by Quirk et al. (1994) to govern the *ellipting* of material in a sentence are textual and contextual recoverability. They continue that the *ellipted* construction could be grammatically defective as in the sentence, "Thanks", which could mean, "I owe you my thanks" or "I give you thanks." In the latter case, ellipsis is only formulaic in status. It can, therefore, be concluded that the derivation of (15b) and (16b) in CamE is formulaic and does not depend on some pre-stated material.

Talking about incomplete sentences, Lyons (1987, p. 175) says: "The ellipsis that is involved in their derivation from the alternative versions of the same sentences… are purely a matter of grammar and are independent of the wider context." He distinguishes between grammatical completeness and context completeness. Context completeness is governed by supplementary rules for the deletion of contextually determined elements in the sentence from which the utterances of correct discourse are derived. Hence, "Got the tickets?" is derived from "Have you got the tickets?" Again, the fact that the deleted subject and verb are contextually completed does not rule them out of grammatical considerations.

The question one needs to ask is whether all languages have common principles of ellipsis. Larson (1984, p. 315) concludes that languages do not have the same rules concerning when information may be left implicit. Hence, as to the kind of words whose meaning could be left implicit, it is a language-specific issue. In English, textual recoverability is the surest guarantee of ellipsis as in "She cannot sing, so she won't tonight." Hence, leaving the super-ordinate clause implicit in echo-questions in CamE is peculiar to this variety of English.

It is also important to note at this point that the rule "delete the super-ordinate clause" is not used solely for echo-questions in CamE. It is also used for reporting as seen in (22):

(22) a. [Your father has asked me to tell you] that you should come.
     b. Thank Thomas for the effort he is making [and tell him] that he should continue in that way.

If we remove the bracketed strings from (22), we will have the sentences (23), which are typical CamE sentences:

(23) a. That you should come.
     b. Thank Thomas for the effort he is making that he should continue in that way.

The sentences in (23) are typical CamE sentences. They show that the rule "delete the super-ordinate clause" is also a strategy for reporting, whereby the deleted verbs must be a "say-verb". But how is reporting linked to echo-questions? It is suggested that echo-questions are one way of reporting because the speaker reports his listener's utterance to him or her (the listener), replacing a constituent with a wh-word. Hence, "That you should come" is a sentence derived from "(He says) that you should come." In the same vein, "That I should do what?" is an echo-question derived from, "You say that I should do what?"

Let us somehow conclude that the context of echo-questions and of reported speech, as demonstrated above, recovers the lost super-ordinate clause and leaves the subordinate constituent clause to read like an echo-question in CamE. The question now is why CamE has to resort to this derivation, given that the same procedure used in BrE to derive echo-questions could be used in CamE as seen in the wh-*in situ* rule. I propose that the reason is the avoidance of ambiguity since wh-questions are realised in CamE using the same formal organisation like echo-questions in BrE as seen below in (24).

(24) BrE echo-question   CamE direct question
     a. You are going where?   a.   You are going where?
     b. You are looking for whom? b.   You are looking for who(m)?
     c. You ate what yesterday?   c.   You ate what yesterday?

Two question-types cannot use the same structural patterning. They need to be distinctive as is the case in BrE where the choice is between reordering the words and allowing the wh-word *in situ*. Also consider the question-type in the following sentences (25)–(26):

(25) a. I am going home.
     b. That you are going home?
(26) a. Will your Highness not sleep?
     b. His Highness will not sleep.
     c. That he will not sleep? (*The Crown of Thorns*, Asong 1995, p. 152)

The structure of (25b) and (26c) is similar to that of (15b) and (16b) above. Both groups of sentences can fit in the same structural description. But (25b) and (26c) differ in that "home" and "sleep" are not replaced by wh-words. They are, therefore, not purely echo-questions because what their utterers need is not the repetition of constituents. Yet, they are purely conversational and occur when the listener needs confirmation of what he or she heard. The listener got the whole sentence and is challenging the speaker to repeat it again to satisfy his or her eagerness or surprise at such a pronouncement. The answer to be expected from such a question is either a "yes" or a "no". In CamE, therefore, such a construction is a yes/no question. In the grammar described here, it is proposed that this question-type be called a "yes/no echo-question" because what is echoed from the preceding speaker is a "yes" or a "no". The category of echo-questions seen in (15b) and (16b) are constituent echo-questions because what is echoed is a constituent of the sentence uttered by a preceding speaker.

    The motivation for distinguishing between yes/no echo-questions and constituent echo-questions in CamE is borne out if one considers the way yes/no questions are realised in CamE. Consider (27):

(27) a. You are going home?
     b. You are working on the farm?
     c. You want to buy bread?

(27) shows that yes/no questions in CamE do not require the movement of the auxiliary as is the case in the BrE "Are you going home?" In BrE, yes/no questions involve what has been called head-to-head movement. What distinguishes (27) from declarative sentences is just sentence intonation. The last word in the sentence is spoken with a falling tone. It is posited that this transformation comes from the fact that yes/no questions in most Bantu languages are grammatically marked by a question marker (QM) placed at the end of the sentence. This question marker often bears the falling tone. Consider (28) with the data from Lamnso':

(28) a. Chin   yi   kibán
        Chin   eat fufu
        "Chin   is eating fufu."

     b. Chin   yi   kibán   à?
        Chin   eat fufu   QM
        "Is Chin eating fufu?"

It is also necessary to note that yes/no questions in Bantu languages also have other parallel uses apart from just questioning. They are also the most familiar formulae for greeting or for establishing phatic communion between people. For instance, if I met someone working on a farm and intended to greet him, I would

simply ask him the "redundant" question (by BrE standards) to know whether he is working on the farm. The question is always redundant because context makes it so and the answer is always invariably "yes". Lamnso' will take the following formula:

(29) A lîm   súm   à?
     you work farm QM
     "Are you working on the farm?"

If the person supposed to be performing the action is not really doing so or is doing something else, he or she may explain what he or she is doing after answering with a "no". One can conclude that it is this indigenous structure that is transferred into English to give CamE its peculiarity. Hence, (30a) can either have (30b) or (30c) as answer:

(30) a. You are going to the farm?
      b. Yes.
      c. No, I just want to visit a friend.

Thus, if someone said "I am going to the farm" and I did not hear him or her well or was surprised at the fact that he or she could do what he or she has said, I would ask him or her the question in (31b):

(31) a. I am going to the farm.
      b. That you are going to the farm?

What, therefore, are the uses of yes/no echo-questions? It is postulated that they have some notional modal implications. They show the speaker's attitude towards what has been said, which he is repeating. The normal yes/no question simply de-mands emphasis of a constituent. A yes/no echo-question re-echoes what an inter-locutor has said and adds the speaker's attitude to it. The speaker in (26c) who said, "That he will not sleep" intended it to be a challenge. It shows that the speaker is not in accord with what he heard and is challenging his interlocutor to repeat it. If the speaker answers with a "yes", then some conflict may likely ensue. This could involve an exchange of bitter words or even blows. The better answer to a yes/no echo-question for challenge is always to remain silent because a "no" will be redun-dant, given that the statement has already been made. The attitude attached to such questions could be that of surprise as in (32):

(32) That your mother is dead?!

In the above case, the answer is "yes". Yes/no echo-questions, therefore, permit interlocutors in CamE to show their disapproval of, or surprise at, what has been said. They could also, under normal circumstances, ask for the confirmation of some pre-stated material. In this case, the listener needs to have mentioned it sometime (maybe in the course of the conversation) or the speaker is echoing what he or she heard from some other person. Hence, (33a) may have (33b) as answer:

(33) a. That you are going to Yaounde?
      b. Who said so?

(33a) is a reported speech in which the rule "delete the super-ordinate clause" has applied. (33b) is a question that only occurs if the person concerned is not recoverable. Inversely, such a question as in (33b) would not occur.

2.4 Conclusion

I have examined two kinds of *that*-clauses in this paper. In what concerns that-complement clauses, I have shown that a different structural patterning is noticed with extra-nuclear arguments being attached to verbs after they have taken all their complements. In what concerns echo-questions, it has been shown that, apart from wh-words resuming the positions of questioned constituents, an additional transformation occurs, erasing the super-ordinate clause. This rule has been called "delete super-ordinate clause." The argument is that the deleted super-ordinate clause is recovered by context, which presupposes that someone said something. Another discovery is that some echo-questions in CamE do not have wh-words but full NPs. This category has been called *yes/no echo-questions*. It has been seen that this category has two uses. Under normal circumstances, they are used for the confirmation of what was said, but in other circumstances, they could be used to express the speaker's attitude towards what has been said. Such an attitude could be that of disapproval or of surprise.

About the origin of this question-type, it has been shown that it comes from the fact that yes/no questions in local indigenous languages are realised by a question marker that always carries a falling tone. The same transformation in echo-questions in CamE also occurs in reported speech in CamE. Hence, the difference between a yes/no echo-question and reported speech in CamE is that the former is a question and the latter is a statement. Semantically, an additional question form-class, the yes/no echo-questions has been discovered. Structurally, the rule involved is the "delete super-ordinate clause" rule. These are peculiarities for CamE that are not present in BrE and may have come in to fill a gap as part of the indigenisation process. The dependence of CamE structures on the structures of local languages is handled in Mbangwana and Sala (2009, p. 260 ff.) in what they call the Grafting-over-Transfer Hypothesis. They define Grafting as "… a creative process in second language learning and use, whereby the second language vocabulary is

indiscriminately mapped unto indigenous structures so as to make them usable for communication within the community that has adopted it." This is in line with Kellerman's (1995) 'transfer to nowhere' and Pavlenko and Jarvis' (2001) 'conceptual transfer', formulations that try to capture the influence of world view in second language learning and use.

The use of the structures of the target language to give new meanings is an innovation. The analyses show that syntactic variation in the New Englishes may not come about because the learners find it difficult to produce simple sentences. The problem crops up when they try producing complex sentences involving embedding, as in the case of that-clauses. We cannot term such aspects of the CamE sentence performance errors because they arise from a describable, underlying rule-system as shown in Sala (2006). From the purist's perspective, they are errors, but when errors become a tendency and then a norm, we can no longer refer to them as errors. Error analysis has a remediation and reinforcement focus. Indigenisation starts where error analysis has ended. It is seen that CamE syntactic peculiarities are semantically imposed because they carry meanings not born to English at large, and translate the world view of Cameroonians. It could be concluded, therefore, that syntactic variation in the New Englishes is likely to be more significant at the level of tasks given to function words, than in differences in word order, compared with BrE. This kind of covert, subtle variation is occasioned by local meaning, so that one cause of grammatical variation in the New Englishes is that non-standard meaning leads to non-standard structures. This is how English adapts to the ecologies of its various habitats.

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Chapter 3
Pronoun-Like Usage in Cameroon English: The Case of Copy, Resumptive, Obligation, and Dummy Pronouns

Paul N. Mbangwana

Abstract With reference to Cameroon English (CamE), this chapter investigates certain structural variations at the level of pronominal usage. It describes the structure, syntactic environment, and possible origins of copy pronouns used in a resumptive, obligation, and dummy manner. When used in these ways, the pronominal elements insert pronouns in otherwise empty slots or traces. The dummy *they* is used predominantly to show passive meaning even if the syntactic structure of the sentence remains active. Since copy pronouns are dominant in Cameroonian indigenous languages, the chapter proposes substrate influence and users' creative innovations as the major sources of these variations.

Since detailed descriptions of CamE grammar are still few, this work contributes to the growing literature by illustrating that these pronominal usages, though variant as far as British English is concerned, constitute part of the mainstream norm of the variety, and should, when the time comes, be incorporated into its grammar during standardisation. This is because the forms are used by educated Cameroonians, the emergent native speakers of the variety (see Anchimbe 2012), and the accepted speakers of the variety (see Masanga 1983).

3.1 Introduction

Sociolinguists examine and describe how English has spread in an amazing upsurge worldwide. As English is transplanted to other parts of the world, it gets acculturated to the new environments in all linguistic aspects of usage and ends up acquiring multicultural and multinational identities. Such cultural identities of English make it a different brand or variety of English which some linguists label as deviations from, or innovations of, the mainstream Englishes, in this case, British English (BrE) and American English (AmE). The new varieties have been described using terms like indigenisation, nativisation, and localisation, and have been named

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variously, e.g. New Englishes, indigenised varieties of English, non-native Englishes, postcolonial Englishes, localised Englishes, and world Englishes. In describing these Englishes and the processes of their emergence or evolution, researchers have focused mostly on lexical, semantic, and phonological features. Grammatical features have only recently been taken up in the research (see Schneider et al. 2004; Mesthrie 2008).

In the literature on Cameroon English (CamE), only a few aspects of grammar have been investigated, e.g. grammar in general (e.g. Mbangwana 1992), syntax (e.g. Sala 2003, 2006; Mbangwana 2004), morpho-syntax (e.g. Anchimbe 2006a; Mbangwana and Sala 2009), phrasal verbs (e.g. Ngefac 2004), and modal verbs and modality (e.g. Nkemleke 2003, 2004, 2012). This chapter aims to add to the existing literature on CamE grammar by investigating pronoun-like usages in CamE. Attention is paid here to usages that take the form of four types of pronouns, namely copy, resumptive, obligation, and dummy pronouns. With many examples, I try to explicate the structures of these usages, their occurrence in certain syntactic environments, and their possible origins. As the discussion illustrates, some of the forms are the outcome of indigenisation since they are borrowed from the indigenous languages co-existing with English in Cameroon. While some of the usages may sound ungrammatical to non-CamE speakers, they are highly intelligible to its speakers and are systematically motivated as far as the grammar of the variety is concerned.

Since this investigation focuses essentially on pronouns functioning as copy, resumptive, obligation, and dummy elements in various usages in CamE, a brief overview of pronouns and their broad classification is necessary at this point. To begin with, Heffernan and Lincoln (1982) define a pronoun as a word that commonly takes the place of a noun or noun phrase that has been used. This is done to eliminate awkward repetition which often results in redundancy. Pronouns that have anaphoric effect include personal pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, and relative pronouns. They can be termed 'referring back expressions'. The analysis below takes into account this definition which prioritises the anaphoric status of pronouns.

The data used for this study were collected mainly from journalists, reporters, and interviewees on the radio service of the Cameroon National Radio and Television Network (CRTV) in 2007. This source provided predominantly oral or spoken data. As for the written data, they were collected from written assignments and examination scripts of students in the Departments of English at the Universities of Yaounde 1 and Dschang in the 2006–2007 academic year. Using both written and spoken data was intended to establish if some of the syntactic structures identified for CamE are only written, spoken, or both. For most previous researchers, CamE speakers use similar syntactic forms in speech and in writing.

The rest of the chapter is structured thus: Sect. 3.2 introduces the notion of indigenisation and explains its relevance to the evolution of CamE; Sect. 3.3 focuses on some of the semantic pressures that make Cameroonians choose certain syntactic forms to portray special, local meanings. The analysis of pronoun-like usages in CamE is carried out in Sect. 3.4, with close attention being paid to copy pronouns (3.4.1), resumptive pronouns (3.4.2), repetition of noun phrases as a result of trace guilt (3.4.3), pronouns of obligation (3.4.4) and dummy *they* for passivisation

(3.4.5). The last section concludes the chapter with a call for more grammatical descriptions of not only CamE but also other indigenised varieties of English.

3.2   Indigenisation: On Cameroon English and its Ecology

The process of indigenisation accords a previously foreign language new phonological, lexical, semantic, and pragmatic innovations and colorations that make it represent its new social and linguistic ecology. Its new speakers speak it with predominantly local or indigenous accent features, and integrate lexical elements and meanings that are reminiscent of their geographical and cultural contexts into it. This investigation, taking this perspective into account, argues that such New Englishes and their variant usages are not deviations but new varieties of English with their own norms and processes. Although these varieties have been generally accepted today by both conservative native speaker scholars and other scholars, the battle for their acceptance was a long one. Modiano (1999) reminds us how as early as 1982, Kachru (1982) called for a paradigm shift which must displace native speaker privileges, since English was progressively becoming the property of all who use and depend on it for interpersonal interaction with others and for formal official transactions. Crystal (1988, p. 265) advocates bidialectism for English predicting that: "we may, in due course, all need to be in control of two standard Englishes. The one which gives us our national or local identity and the one which puts us in touch with the rest of the human race." Note that Crystal (1988) is talking about two standard forms of usage and not one being used as a standard and the other as a sub-standard. Anchimbe (2006b, p. 7) commenting on the local identities English has acquired says that "it is now the tool of many varied communities which associate it with scores of functions diverse in both form and content."

CamE is one of these new varieties. As earlier research (e.g. Mbangwana 1992; Simo Bobda 1994) says, its structures, achieved exceedingly through indigenisation and innovation, are systematic, void of structural complexities, and very convenient for communal communication. One of the grammatical features that make CamE distinct is its use of forms such as copy, resumptive, obligation, and dummy pronouns; the object of this chapter. When one examines the rules and processes involved in their realisation, one finds that they are so predictable and so systematic that they give, according to Sala (2003, p. 112), "evidence of a certain degree of competence underlying their users' creative usage." CamE users' innovative performance is seen to be void of subordinate clauses with movement position (see Chomsky 1981, 1995) and replete with certain patterns of usage that are rare in BrE and AmE. This is perhaps because, as Mbangwana and Sala (2009, p. 252), point out

To learn a language is to learn its linguistic culture. The English child acquires English and English culture simultaneously as an entity. A Cameroonian learns English with a different cultural background, including a different linguistic culture. S/He may master the English linguistic culture but when s/he has to communicate appropriately with their kith and kin of the same culture, they have to mix their linguistic culture with that of English.

In a similar vein, Mbangwana (1992, p. 94) indicates that Cameroon Standard English (CSE)[1] "exists against a Cameroonian socio-cultural background [...since its] patterns, though deviant in terms of BrE, engender no confusion amongst CSE users as they are not even aware that they are using a different variety of English." What this tells us is that the impact of the ecology (Mufwene 2001) in indigenisation is significant and inevitable.

Such thinking fosters the theory of the force of source culture (i.e. cultural idealism) on subsequent linguistic performance of users. Studies on the indigenisation process of English consist in identifying how and at what levels cultural idealism has affected the indigenes in the way they relate to, and make use of, English in various parts of the world. This polyglossic nature of English should, therefore, not be viewed as *deficiency* but rather as the acquisition of different *textures* and *structures* that suit the local contexts of its usage. For more on the indigenisation and use of English in different parts of the world, see Platt et al. (1984), Mesthrie (1991, 2008), Bokamba (1992), Bamgbose (1998), Schneider et al. (2004), Kortmann et al. (2004), and Kachru et al. (2009).

3.3 Semantic Pressure

It is pertinent to indicate that the difference between a second language and a foreign language is that the former is used in the receiving community for interpersonal communication while the latter is used in the receiving community only for casual or international transactional purposes. This semantic dichotomy is important because the second language must be seen to be useful to the receiving community by helping its users to express their vital needs and meanings which reflect the structure of their society. The structuring of society and the resultant culture are things that relate to the source language and not to the target language. In keeping with this, the Cameroonian does not learn and use English so as to express the Englishman's ideas and outlook or communicate and transact with him. For CamE to be usable, it must adapt itself to the Cameroonian's experiences which scholars like Sala (2003) call pressures.

One of these pressures is semantic pressure whereby the English language is adapted at the level of meaning; in this way, rendering structures either covertly or overtly variant. Covert variance refers to usage cases where Cameroonians alter an English sentence and attach a different semantic value to it. This is done by adding to the functions of the sentence certain local functions which can be so illuminating and useful to the users. Due to semantic pressure, variant meaning becomes interference which is not linguistic in form. Thus, a Cameroonian can alter an English sentence and attach a different semantic value to it as it will be seen from the

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[1] This is one of the earlier terms used for Cameroon English. Another appellation that has also been used in the past is Standard Cameroon English. In contemporary research, the term Cameroon English (CamE) is generally accepted and used.

dummy pronoun *they*, which in addition to the function it plays in English takes additional local functions as in (22d), (23d), (24d), (25d) where its form is active but its meaning is passive.

Semantic pressure often follows communicative exigencies of the context and ecology. These exigencies sometimes override the norms and standards taught in school or in English language classes. This study also examines how some of the syntactic Cameroonianisms used in CamE are not structures that were overtly taught in class but have emerged gradually as a norm for Cameroonians using English fluently and freely.

3.4   Pronoun-Like Usages in Cameroon English: An Analysis

Taking the notions of semantic pressure and indigenisation into account, certain words in CamE which look like pronouns for different functions are analysed below. For example, the pronouns *it*, *she*, *they*, and *he* are treated here as left dislocation marking pleonasm; dative pronouns like *me*, *him*, *her*, *us*, and *them* signalling obligation; and the dummy *they* as playing the role of an expletive which simply fills gaps that users feel exist. The next sub-sections deal with these pronouns in further detail using examples from both written (student scripts) and spoken sources (radio communication).

3.4.1   Copy Pronouns

According to Storch et al. (2011a, p. 3), copy pronouns are "one of the most puzzling features of African pronoun systems". For them, a copy pronoun is a "repeated pronoun, designating the subject or agent in a phrase." A major feature of this type of pronoun is that it is always intransitive, and occurs immediately after the noun or noun phrase (including its post-modifiers) it refers back to. In contrast, a resumptive pronoun occurs in an object position that would normally be empty in BrE or AmE.

CamE exhibits a left dislocation construction in which an initial noun phrase (NP) is co-referential with a following resumptive pronoun. In the literature, it is called a copy pronoun. In examples (1) to (4) below, the following pronouns are copy pronouns: *it* (1), *she* (2), *he* (3), and *they* (4). The examples are culled from students' examination scripts in the English Department of the University of Dschang.

(1) The ripe *pear, it* fell from the tree and split into two.
(2) Manyi's *mother, she* is seventy years old now.

(3) *William Shakespeare, he* is the epitome of the English language just like Goethe in Germany for German.

(4) The *students* of the University of Dschang, *they* like reading agronomy and agriculture.

It is very fashionable these days in Cameroon to use copy phrases just like copy pronouns to preface appositional functions as in (5) and (6) below:

(5) *The Minister of state, minister of* Territorial Administration and Decentralisation, Mr. Marafa Hamidou Yaya, has installed the Governor of the Littoral region in his functions.

(6) *The vice Prime Minister, Minister* of Agriculture and Rural Development is on the meet-the-people tour in the North West region.

Sentences (5) and (6) take these forms simply to label some ministers as senior ministers. That is, the rankings of *minister of state* and *vice prime minister*, though still ministers anyway, are higher. Each time they are called, they are juxtaposed and prefaced by their specific high titles to indicate this status. Such parenthetical use is a way to mark honour and respect. The same idea of using the word *minister* is expressed in prefacing certain titles in CamE to mean that those titles are equal to the rank of minister, for example:

(6a) The *minister*, assistant secretary general in the presidency of the republic
(6b) The *minister*, director of cabinet in the prime minister's office
(6c) The *minister*, delegate general of national security

The prefatory use of the word *minister* in all these cases is to mark the fact that they are assimilated as *ministers*. As an aside, this decorum in respect for administrative officials could also have been borrowed from the extensive system of royal decorum and respect in most Cameroonian fondoms and villages where the traditional rulers are often showered with honourable names and appellations. So, as illustrated by Mulo Farenkia (this volume), indigenisation is not only a grammatical feature but also a pragmatic one.

Given that copy pronouns are a pertinent feature of African languages (see Storch et al. 2011b), it is possible that their use in CamE is as a result of substrate influence from these indigenous languages. The examples in Sect. 3.4.2 from Awing Ngemba, an indigenous language spoken in the North West Region, support this substrate claim which further points to the direction indigenisation takes in varieties of English.

3.4.2   Resumptive Pronouns

For McKee and McDaniel (2001, p. 114), a "resumptive pronoun is a pronominal variable that appears in the position from which movement is proposed to occur". They add that resumptive pronouns, however, behave differently in English where "their distribution is very limited and appears to be influenced by linear distance, depth, and extractability" (2001, p. 114). Extractability is an important criterion which is fostered not only by the syntactic environment but also by the semantic and

pragmatic meaning sort after. This meaning is indispensable for communication in English in its new ecologies.

The CamE resumpive pronoun is another instance of copy pronouns. Appearing also in subordinate clauses, it fills in slots that would naturally be left empty in BrE subordinate clauses. Observe how they are used in (7a), (8a), (9a), (10a), (11a), and (12a). The other versions, i.e. (7b), (8b), (9b), (10b), (11b), and (12b) are their possible BrE calques or glosses.

(7a)   The female engineer *that* you wrote to *her* is not happy with the tone of your letter.

(7b)   The female engineer *to whom you wrote/who you wrote to* is not happy with the tone of your letter.

(8a)   Dschang *where* you see the capital of Menoua division *there* is an old German station.

(8b)   Dschang where you see the capital of the Menoua division is an old German station.

(9a)   The labourer *who* I was talking with *him* the order day has resigned.

(9b)   The labourer with whom I was talking the other day has resigned.

(10a)   Some of those workers *that* the trade union leader was speaking *with them* are demonstrating on the streets.

(10b)   Some of those workers *who… with/with whom* the trade union leader was speaking are demonstrating in the streets.

(11a)   There are some women *who* the agricultural extension officer is teaching *them* how to farm across contours.

(11b)   There are some women *who* the agricultural extension officer is teaching how to farm across contours.

(12a)   The way those boys can dance, the girls can dance *it* even better.

(12b)   The way those boys can dance, the girls can dance even better.

Moved elements in sentences, from a generative grammar perspective (see Chomsky 1981), leave traces which are empty categories that carry all the features of nouns or operators that have been moved from the empty spaces. Traces are, therefore, these pronominal features that have been indicated above. Whenever NPs move in CamE, as the above examples demonstrate, the tendency is for them to have the traces they leave filled by copy and resumptive pronouns as (7a), (9a), (11a), (13d), (14d), (15a), (16a) can attest.

Even though resumptive pronouns exist in English, as attested by McKee and McDaniel (2001), their predominance in CamE is probably also the result of interlingual and substrate influences. The sentences in (13) and (14) below show similarities in resumptive usage in Awing Ngemba and equivalents in Cameroon Pidgin English (CPE) and CamE. (13e) and (14e) are BrE glosses:

(13a)   Awing: Momengye a aghen ndea nwule.

(13b)   Lit. trans: The girl *she* (asp) go house school.

(13c)   CPE: The girl dong go school.

(13d)   CamE: The girl, *she* has gone to school.

(13e)   BrE gloss: The girl has gone to school.
(14a)   Awing: Edzi ndea yen a ke dzia nu a yen eyed ne ako zhipo.
(14b)   Lit. trans: This chop house *he* (neg) know thing what he (aux) do with throne this.
(14c)   CPE: This chop chair, yi no know weti yi go do with this throne.
(14d)   CamE: This successor, *he* does not know what he will do with this throne.
(14e)   BrE gloss: This successor does not know what to do with this throne.

In the examples above, the resumptive element in the CamE and CPE sentences occupy the same position as in the Awing Ngemba language. The first possible explanation here is that the Awing Ngemba substratum supplies this structure to CamE. The second is the psychological explanation or the processing effect of resumptive pronouns discussed variously in the literature under the notions: 'accessibility hierarchy' (Keenan and Comrie 1977), 'person hierarchy' (Bresnan et al. 2001), and recently 'performance-grammar correspondence hypothesis' (Hawkins 2004). Following the latter explanation, it could be proposed here that the CamE examples are used in order to avoid the feeling of using wrong or ungrammatical constructions. The resumptive and copy pronouns are used as an attempt to avoid the task of interpreting them.

Intra-lingual and inter-lingual explanations may shed light on the process. Intra-lingual trace management is a serious cognitive exercise and to by-pass the psycholinguistic problem of processing time, resumptive and copy pronouns are inserted. Inter-lingual explanation indicates that Cameroonian indigenous languages use resumptive and copy pronouns which are reflected in CPE and the literal translation versions. It is postulated here that if the grammar of Cameroonian indigenous languages, in matter of movement, is the underlying competence of their users, these speakers somehow feel guilty of some linguistic ungrammaticality. This linguistic ungrammaticality otherwise called indigenous competence resulting from matters of trace management uses subordinators which subordinate or embed no element in the sentence.

As examples (7)–(14) above illustrate, simplification which is an inter-lingual phenomenon seeks to render complicated patterns more convenient and usable, thus achieving indigenous competence from home languages co-used with CamE which impose themselves on English structures.

3.4.3   Trace Guilt: Re-occurrence of Noun Phrase

The concept of trace guilt, initially proposed by Sala (2003) and taken up by Mbangwana and Sala (2009, p. 200) is a "process in CamE whereby the tendency (in writing and mostly in speech) is to fill these spaces [i.e. traces left open by moved elements] with pronouns". Occasionally, the traces are filled with full noun phrases by having the very NP repeated. In BrE, we do not always need to repeat the same word at complement position within the same clause. But in CamE, it is proposed here that simple movement, movements by adjunction as well as long movements

provoke the filling of traces, as sentences (15a) and (16a) show. But why fill them in CamE? The management of traces is always a serious cognitive exercise. Using pronouns and full NPs in trace positions is evidence of CamE users' inability to manage traces or of an attempt to escape the task of interpreting them.

In (15a) and (16a), some parts of the NPs, i.e. *colleges* and *meals* respectively, are repeated at the end of the sentences.

(15a) Colleges like CPC, Sacred Heart, Saker, Sasse are *very famous colleges.*
(15b) Colleges like CPC, Sacred Heart, Saker, Sasse are very famous.
(16a) Meals made from cocoyams, plantains, Irish potatoes, are *delicious meals*
(16b) Meals made from cocoyams, plantains, Irish potatoes are delicious.

It is also posited here that the desire not to use a structure wrongly or ungrammatically and the attempt to resolve it by filling the trace is trace guilt. Trace guilt and its resultant filling occur in the cases of long movement and adjunction, as seen in (15), (16). Trace guilt is, therefore, a psycholinguistic process that stems from the desire to simplify trace management. Cameroonian indigenous languages also use resumptive pronouns and even full NPs in an extensive manner. The existence of resumptive pronouns in these languages has the consequence that traces are not interpreted in the same way as in English since they are based on these substratum languages. In fact, in English they are interpreted as empty spaces but in the indigenous languages, they are interpreted as a copy of the element that has been moved merely by transferring them. Due to this process of transfer, traces are avoided in CamE and there is a preference for resumptive pronouns instead.

Let it be supposed, for the sake of argument that the grammar in these indigenous languages relating to movement is the underlying competence that the speaker of CamE has internalised and that, according to it, traces are interpreted by being filled. Let it also be supposed that the speaker of CamE feels guilty of some ungrammaticality because s/he is being called to interpret traces as empty categories. The guilt stems from the fact that the speaker is not familiar with having empty syntactic positions after movement in their grammar. They, therefore, fill those empty positions after movements in their grammar. They then fill those empty positions with corresponding object pronouns or nouns since this is what appears natural to them, though sounding superfluous in BrE as 15a and 16a tend to suggest.

The concept of traces is a fundamental strategy in the syntax of English. The tendency in CamE is to fill them with copy and resumptive pronouns and occasionally with full referential NPs. Trace guilt is the feeling of wrong usage or ungrammaticality and the attempt to fill the empty categories as the various exemplifications from speakers of CamE have borne out.

3.4.4   Pronouns of Obligation

There are some cases of usage in which copy pronouns express a sense of obligation. These include dative pronouns like: *us, him, me, them,* and *her* as in (17a)–(21a).

(17a) *We* are eating *us* our food now
(17b) We *have* to eat our food now.
(18a) *The actors* are dancing *them* that thrilling Makossa.
(18b) The actors *must* dance that thrilling Makossa.
(19a) *Marian* is sleeping *her* in that room.
(19b) Marian *has to* sleep in that room.
(20a) *I am* going *me* that way.
(20b) I *must* go that way.
(21a) *Lucas* went *him* away without any warning.
(21b) Lucas *had to* go away without any warning.

Since obligation is sometimes expressed by the dative in many case-bearing languages, it seems logical to describe the constructions (17a), (18a), (19a), (20a), and (21a) above as dative of obligation. This is because such an active pronoun of obligation is a mark of redundant usage which seems to mark emphasis.

3.4.5   They as Dummy in CamE

In certain cases in CamE, the pronoun *they* has no antecedent and is, therefore, non-referential when it functions in this way. *They* is freely and abruptly used without any anaphoric reference. One recurrent construction in which it appears as a dummy is in passive sentences. Passivation in CamE is also expressed using the dummy *they* as in examples (22d), (23d), (24d), and (25d), which are respectively the counterparts of the BrE passive constructions (22e), (23e), (24e), and (25e)—with or without a 'by-phrase' expressed overtly.

(22a) Awing: Pe te dzek ndea.
(22b) Lit.Trans: They (aux) clean house.
(22c) CPE: *Dem* de clean house *dem*.
(22d) CamE: *They* are cleaning the dormitories.
(22e) BrE gloss: The dormitories are being cleaned (*by the students*).
(23a) Awing: Pe pette ndzob mekie me shine.
(23b) Lit. trans: They (asp) sing (pl) song (pl) fine.
(23c) CPE: *Dem* don sing fine song *dem*.
(23d) CamE: *They* have sung beautiful melodies.
(23e) BrE gloss: Beautiful melodies have been sung (*by the choristers*).
(24a) Awing: Pet e ndzutte mename mbereloo.
(24b) Lit.trans: They (asp) kill (pl) animal
(24c) CPE: *Dem* de kill cow *dem*.
(24d) CamE: *They* are slaughtering cows.
(24e) BrE gloss: Cows are being slaughtered (*by butchers*).
(25a) Awing: Pe pette sign ape result.
(25b) Lit. trans: They (asp) sign the results.
(25c) CPE: *Dem* don sign the result *dem*.
(25d) CamE: *They* have signed the results
(25e) BrE gloss: The results have been signed (*by the registrar*).

In the above cases, plural NPs exist in preceding co-text that are co-referential but in Awing Ngemba, *they* is basically dummy, though in an ambivalent manner; it can also function as a normal pronoun. When passivisation takes place in CamE, the action of the verb is emphasised rather than the agent or the performer. During the conversion of active sentences into passive expressions NP-movement is usually involved by giving the verb's complement complete prominence as it assumes the subject positions. Though passive verbs exist in CamE their subject positions are usually empty.

In many African languages, especially the Bantu languages, passivisation is realised by using different syntactic strategies and processes. In Cameroonian languages like Ngemba (22a)–(25a), Lamnso, and Ewondo, 'by-phrases' do not exist since prepositions do not assign agentive case in those languages. In addition, a 'by-phrase' is not opportune in such constructions because there is no NP-movement. The VP maintains its original position by remaining at base. In (22)–(25), the only thing that has changed is that *they* has replaced the referential NPs: i.e. *students* (22), *choristers* (23), *butchers* (24), and *the registrar* (25), more or less according to the structure of the Awing Ngemba examples (22a)–(25a), also replicated in the CPE versions (22c)–(25c) where the dummy pronoun *dem* is very noticeable. The structure above represents agents or performers of action in favour of the action itself. This makes the actor to appear only in a parenthetical manner as can be gleaned from (22e), (23e), (24e), and (25e).

All the CamE examples above, i.e. (22d)–(25d), have the meaning of passivisation even though the structure still remains active. The pronoun *they* has no antecedent in these CamE constructions and is, as said above, non-referential. It is not a personal pronoun. In keeping with this, *they* is neither anaphoric nor cataphoric since it cannot be linked to an obvious NP. Because the four instances of *they* in (22d)–(25d) have no antecedent, it will be more reasonable to consider the function of *they* as a slot filler in the same manner as dummy pronouns such as *it* and *there* which usually operate like expletives in BrE.

Conventionally, when passivisation takes place in this way, prominence is given to the predicate to the disadvantage of the subject NP, thus highlighting action and not actor. In doing this, *they* has been inserted into an empty subject position. The implication of what is going on is that the transformation for passivisation in CamE as in (22d)–(25d) above is to drop the subject NP and to insert the unbounded *they*. This is as a result of the avoidance of NP movement. This can be seen as part of the simplification process in CamE which makes English more simple, convenient, and usable. Elements preferably remain in their base positions and the transformational interpretations are achieved using different principles and parameters, e.g. the use of dummy *they*, rather than movement.

In example (22d)–(25d) above, passive verbs have not been used. Active verbs have been used freely. This passive transformation neutralizes the importance of the subject position. Such a strategy simply argues that there is a degree of incompatibility between structural organisation and structural meaning in CamE compared to BrE. This also shows that formal signals are deceptive in CamE if they are to be interpreted by a speaker of BrE. In this way, CamE may have the same

lexical and grammatical items (like pronouns) as BrE, displayed in the same manner, but the variation will lie at the level of semantic interpretation. Mbangwana and Sala (2009, p. 182) use the following two examples, (26) and (27), to illustrate this point:

(26) They have stolen my purse.
(27) My purse has been stolen.

These two sentences (26) and (27) are possible in BrE, while (27) is absent or rare in CamE. Yet (26) and (27) have the same functional representation, which is the semantic interpretation of passivisation. (26) can be used in CamE in the context in which it is used in BrE. This means that, whereas BrE has only one interpretation (i.e. simple sentence (26), CamE has two interpretations for it (i.e. simple sentence and passive sentence). CamE has, therefore, forced two interpretations on the same form; a 'bounded *they*' for a simple sentence and an 'unbounded *they*' for a passive sentence. If *they* in (26) is interpreted as being bounded, then the sentence is a simple one, but if *they* is considered unbounded, then it gives CamE *they* an additional function which replaces the subject NP for the purpose of passivisation. CamE, in this case, can be defined as English surface structures with indigenous language functional representations.

Such innovations, creative processes, and norm generation in CamE make it clearly a product of acquisition rather than learning (Krashen 1989), suggesting that the variety has stabilised significantly, and has crossed the nativisation stage in which Schneider (2007, p. 212–218) places it in his dynamic model of postcolonial Englishes. Such stabilisation may have been achieved through the emergence of generations of native speakers of the variety as suggested by Anchimbe (2012, p. 12–14).

So, passivisation in CamE, as shown above, is marked by the unbounded *they* in a rule that deletes the subject and inserts the expletive *they*. It has been observed that the structure of CamE is transferred from the Cameroon indigenous languages, and this tallies well with other syntactic processes in this variety, according to which elements feel better at home by remaining at their base positions in order to sound original and authentic.

3.5 Conclusion

The interpretation of English pronouns by their users can make a contribution to getting a standard for CamE through adequate description. This is of crucial importance in that the acceptance, recognition, and eventual standardisation of CamE will define clearly which aspects of this variety of English are deviant and which can be labelled authentic features. The description of the pronoun-like usages carried out in this chapter has sought to identify some of these authentic features, to account for their possible origins, and to explain their occurrence in specific syntactic environments.

My wish here is that more research work be carried out in a descriptive manner not only on CamE but also other New Englishes in order to understand the rules

and processes involved in their structural indigenisation. Cameroonianisms should not only be studied as problems but also as resources to their users. For one thing, structural variations serve as norms that have been generated to serve the community needs of those who use them. They are part of the community's creativity, which is an important characteristic of language evolution and enrichment. There is, therefore, the need to understand why the so-called 'deviant' structures occur in CamE and the rules and processes underlying them. The local identity Crystal (1988) refers to, like CamE, has norms; it is not a set of variants and errors that are the result of poor acquisition of BrE (see Simo Bobda 1997; Sala 2003; Mbangwana 2004; Anchimbe 2006a, etc.). CamE possesses norms that are defined by its society and community of speakers. These norms are what make CamE normal and natural, and a complete medium of communication that serves its community of speakers who use it for their daily communication. This chapter, therefore, contributes to the growing literature by illustrating that the pronominal usages investigated here constitute part of the mainstream norm of the variety, and should, when the time comes, be incorporated into its grammar during standardisation.

To return to the issue of indigenisation, the overall subject of this volume, let me briefly revisit a methodological challenge raised in the early 1990s by Spencer (1990). Spencer (1990, p. 14) raises a very pertinent question whether the study of English in its African forms and varieties should be carried out "as a branch of Anglistics or Africanistics." Africanisms in English are inevitable reality in African societies which should be reckoned with. To answer Spencer's question explicitly, it is being proposed here that the Africanisation, and for that matter, the Cameroonisation of English, should be studied as a branch of Africanistics. Thus, it should be seen from the perspective of English in its African context or ecology, bestowing it with its African touch, replete with its interesting twixts and turns. CamE, through the use of copy, resumptive, obligation and dummy pronouns described above (besides many other features), attributes certain local specificities to English that make it indigenous to its speakers. These structural peculiarities in the form of pronominal usages convey certain nuances like: expressing redundancy, emphasis, and attention-driven structures similar to those in Cameroonian indigenous languages.

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Chapter 4
Les camerounismes: Essai d'une (nouvelle) typologie

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Abstract One of the outcomes of French colonialism of Cameroon from 1914–1960 is the adoption of the French language as one of the official languages. The ecology in which French evolves today has made it adapt new elements and be adapted by Cameroonians irrespective of their social status or age. As one may use terms like *Beninisms*, *Ivorisms*, *Gabonisms*, or *Senegalisms* to designate the specific usages of French or varieties of French in former French colonies in Africa (Benin, Ivory Coast, Gabon and Senegal), the terms *Cameroon French* (CamF) or *Cameroonisms* or *Camerounismes* are apt in defining the extent of indigenisation the language has undergone. It is, therefore, time to start talking about *the Frenches* just like the well-known and accepted concept of *the Englishes* used to accommodate the diverse ways people speak and write the English language around the world.

In this paper, we describe and categorise structures and features of CamF, what we call *Camerounismes*, taking into account the impact of the multilingual and multiethnic ecology in which it exists. Before focusing closely on simple and complex *Camerounismes*, we establish the widespread nature of some lexical, morpho-syntactic, and semantic features of CamF, and how these are no longer treated as *errors* but rather as part of the Cameroonian variety of the language. The simple and complex *Camerounismes* described here reflect local patterns of interaction and capture meanings that make communication fluid among speakers. By expanding the definition of *Camerounismes* to include multi-word constructions, our aim is to introduce a reliable taxonomy for describing the indigenisation itinerary of the language in ways that suit the sociolinguistic, cultural, multilingual, and multiethnic ecology within which CamF evolves.

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Résumé Héritage du passage de la France au Cameroun de 1914–1946 (Mandat) et de 1946–1960 (Tutelle), le français est, avec l'anglais, l'une des langues officielles du Cameroun depuis la toute première constitution de 1960. L'écologie de cette langue aujourd'hui, c'est-à-dire des décennies après son introduction en terre camerounaise, révèle que la langue de Molière est désormais adoptée et adaptée par les Camerounais de toutes les couches sociales et de tous les âges. Autant on parlerait de "béninismes", "ivoirismes", "gabonismes", "sénégalismes" etc. pour accommoder les spécificités de la langue française dans les ex-colonies africaines de la France, le terme "camerounismes" est tout simplement une réalité linguistique et discursive avérée, tout comme les panoplies d'anglicismes qui font dorénavant parler de "the Englishes" pour désigner les nombreuses variétés de la langue de Shakespeare à travers le monde.

Dans cet article, nous nous proposons d'observer la langue française dans son milieu ambiant afin de répertorier et d'analyser les particularités de cette langue au Cameroun et de dégager les tendances d'utilisation récurrentes qui permettraient de parler de "camerounismes" de façon empirique. Nous essayerons de définir ce terme qui, dans son utilisation actuelle, semble englober sans distinctions des notions éparses telles que fautes grossières, erreurs, calques et formes interférées. Il s'agira donc de faire la part des choses afin de déboucher sur une classification qui permettrait de faire avancer le débat scientifique sur cet aspect de la sociolinguistique et de l'écologie de la langue francaise au Cameroun.

Keywords Cameroonisms · Cameroon French · Language ecology · Simple and complex cameroonisms · Errors

Mot clefs Camerounismes · Français camerounais · Ecologie linguistique · Camerounismes simples et complexes · Fautes

4.1   Introduction[1]

La faute est une notion complexe qui dépend de certains contextes pour être considérée comme telle. La linguistique appliquée prouve, dans de nombreux cas, que les règles qui régissent l'usage de la langue portent en elles-mêmes les germes de la faute. Si cela s'avère vrai pour les langues en situation de monolinguisme, le cas est encore beaucoup plus complexe en contextes plurilingues où se produisent mille phénomènes qui, dans certains cas, pourraient être appelés fautes ou non. Les particularismes géographiques ou sociétaux dans l'usage d'une langue étrangère, en dehors des emprunts, ne constituent-ils pas des "fautes" au regard de la norme endogène? Comment apprécier la faute et la distinguer du particularisme en l'absence d'un cadre formel fixant les règles de cette norme?

Le cas d'application de cette analyse se situe dans les *camerounismes*. Comment établit-on un camerounisme? Est-ce l'influence des langues sources (des langues camerounaises, par exemple) et/ou l'appropriation de la langue cible (par exemple, le français) par les locuteurs qui en fixent les règles de définition? Quels en sont les mécanismes de créations? Qu'est-ce qui est camerounisme et qu'est-ce qui est faute par rapport à la définition du camerounisme?

Toutes ces interrogations constituent certaines des conséquences actuelles de la situation de contact linguistique dans laquelle vivent les Camerounais depuis le départ des colons allemands, britanniques et français. La colonisation du Cameroun est unique en ce sens, et a engendré des conséquences linguistiques uniques. Du coup, la question de la faute, de la norme, de la déviation ou enfin des camerounismes, loin d'être seulement une affaire d'appropriation linguistique, nous impose d'autres questions inévitables, celles des perceptions et/ou constructions identitaires au Cameroun. Les contributions de la première partie de cette collection, "Sociolinguistic perspectives on indigenisation: Sociolinguistics and pragmatics", en dit long sur les réalités sociolinguistiques des décennies après les indépendances. Cet article s'inscrit donc dans une logique d'appropriation, pas seulement linguistique, mais aussi d'une situation de crises identitaires qu'il faut apprivoiser afin d'envisager un changement qualitatif dans nos vies postcoloniales. Aussi, voudrions-nous voir cette étude contribuer à la "normalisation des écarts par rapport à la norme hexagonale" (Biloa 2012: 121).

Sur la base des travaux menés sur la langue française au Cameroun (Equipe 1988; Mendo Ze 1990; Tabi-Manga 1994; Féral 1993, 1994, 2006; Zang Zang 1998; Feussi 2008; Nzesse 2009; Tsofack 2010; Sol 2010; Nde 2010; Eloundou 2010; Ngue Um 2010, 2012; Tsofack et Feussi 2011; Biloa 2012, etc.), nous nous proposons d'observer les "camerounismes", cette notion fourre-tout, qui mêle à la fois, erreurs, fautes grossières, calques et formes interférées. Notre méthodologie consiste, non seulement à puiser dans la panoplie d'exemples disponibles dans la littérature, mais aussi à faire usage des données recueillies lors d'enquêtes de terrain menées à plusieurs reprises sur la question dans les villes de Yaoundé, Douala, Bafoussam, Limbé et Buéa. Les médias constituent également une source inépuisable de données.

Notre objectif n'est pas seulement de reprendre certains aspects de ce qui a été dit, mais aussi et surtout d'attirer, une fois de plus, l'attention sur les aspects pouvant contribuer à une avancée qualitative dans la sociolinguistique du français au Cameroun. Après avoir défini ce qu'il faut entendre par *camerounisme*, nous tenterons d'en tracer les seuils d'acceptabilité avant de dégager les fautes de français dans son contact avec les langues camerounaises pour finalement proposer une nouvelle classification.

4.2   Ecologie du français au Cameroun

Le français vient en 3ème position dans la succession des langues étrangères qui se sont relayées au Cameroun par le truchement de la colonisation. D'abord, l'anglais est parlé dès 1840 après que les missionnaires anglais et les hommes d'affaires aient signé divers traités avec les dignitaires locaux. Ensuite l'allemand est im-

posé comme langue de l'administration et de l'éducation après la signature du traité Germano-Douala du 12 juillet 1884. Enfin, après le traité de Versailles en juin 1919 où la Société des Nations met le Cameroun sous Protectorat anglais et français, les deux langues se partagent le territoire. 4/5 de la population est francophone et occupe 91 % du territoire et les anglophones le reste. Alors que l'anglais est la langue de l'administration et de l'éducation dans ce qu'on a appelé le 'Cameroun anglais', le français joue le même rôle dans le territoire administré par la France, le 'Cameroun français' (Ze Amvela 1989). Les deux langues ont vécu séparées sur deux territoires différents jusqu'en 1961 date à laquelle le référendum de février 1961 permit au Cameroun Occidental d'acquérir son indépendance aux côtés du Cameroun Oriental. La constitution de la République Fédérale du Cameroun octroie à l'anglais (Cameroun Occidental) et au français (Cameroun Oriental) le même statut de langue de l'administration et de l'éducation. Avec la naissance de la République Unie du Cameroun en 1972, la constitution du Cameroun réunifié confère le statut de langues officielles au français et à l'anglais.

La fonction véhiculaire que le français assume dans le pays, ainsi que son utilisation massive par toutes les couches de la population (lettrées comme illettrées) et dans tous les domaines de la vie des Camerounais font de cette langue une "langue camerounaise" (Mendo Ze 1999a). Le français est d'autant plus important au Cameroun qu'il est devenu la première langue de socialisation de 14,61 % de Camerounais (Vigner 1991). A la suite Onguéné Essono (1999: 287), on peut dire que la langue française au Cameroun assume les fonctions suivantes: langue officielle, langue seconde, langue maternelle, langue véhiculaire, langue de l'école et langue étrangère. Cette perception du français se justifie très bien par la théorie de vernacularisation et d'appropriation de Manessy et Wald (1984: 40), théorie basée sur les concepts fondamentaux tels que "continuum, fautes, interférences, refonte, appropriation":

> l'apprentissage naturel d'une langue est conçu comme une succession de tentatives, d'essais, l'apprenti construisant à partir de ces structures élémentaires (et non pas directement à partir des structures élaborées de sa langue maternelle) des 'systèmes approximatifs de communication' de plus en plus semblables à celui de la langue-cible. Or selon toute apparence, ces étapes successives ne sont pas effacées et subissent dans le répertoire du locuteur qui peut y recourir en cas de besoin. […] C'est parce que les systèmes approximatifs de communication sont logiquement ordonnés entre deux pôles constitués par les structures élémentaires du langage et la norme académique que le continuum "français d'Afrique" se présente comme un tout cohérent et non pas comme un chaos d'usages individuels.

Renaud (1976: 23) reconnait quatre variétés du français parlé au Cameroun: 1) *dialectes régionaux et de "quartier"* parlé par les illettrés et les très peu scolarisés, 2) *français commun* parlé par les semi-scolarisés (ceux qui ont à peine terminé leur études secondaires), 3) *argots* (par les jeunes scolarisés mais en mal de parlers identitaires), et 4) *français langue étrangère* (dans les milieux dits hautement scolarisés tels les lycées et collèges et l'université). Echu (2003) réfute cependant cette distinction quadridimensionnelle pour une catégorisation simple et duelle:

> In view of the present day evolution of the language, these varieties are rather difficult to distinguish. In reality, one may talk of Standard Cameroonian French (SCF) used in formal situations such as the school context, newspapers, radio, television, administrative offices, etc, and Cameroon Popular French (CPF) which is used mostly for informal everyday com-

munication by illiterates and semi-illiterates alike. Both varieties of French borrow lexical
items not only from CPE but also from Cameroon English and the indigenous languages.

Entre 1976 et 2012 où nous faisons cette étude, le français au Cameroun a évolué au
point où la distinction quadridimensionnelle de Renaud (1976) ne reflète que très par-
tiellement le statut actuel du français parlé au Cameroun. Si en effet l'on peut encore
distinguer les *dialectes régionaux et de "quartier"* des trois autres variétés, il est ex-
trêmement difficile, voire impossible de tracer une ligne de démarcation nette entre le
français commun, les *argots* et le *français langue étrangère* dont parle Renaud (1976).
De plus, même s'il existe un argot, il est forcément différent de celui de 1967 car les
réalités des jeunes de 1967 ne sont pas celles des années 2000, caractérisées, par ex-
emple, par la globalisation, une utilisation excessive des nouvelles technologies de
l'information et de la communication (NTIC), et des médias de masse, une améliora-
tion notoire dans les modes de transport qui favorisent les déplacements rapides d'un
continent à un autre ainsi que les échanges des biens et personnes, tout cela faisant
du monde un village planétaire. On pourrait en dire de même pour les *français* dits
commun et *langue étrangère* qui, compte tenu des raisons suscitées ainsi que des dy-
namiques démographique, linguistique et culturelle (multitude de langues et de cul-
tures en contact) dans lesquelles baigne le français de nos jours, ne peuvent pas être
identiques à ceux décrits par Renaud en 1976. Enfin, la langue étant par définition un
phénomène dynamique il serait scientifiquement irrationnel de continuer à considérer
une taxonomie établie il y a presqu'un demi-siècle sur la sociolinguistique du français
au Cameroun.

La distinction bidimensionnelle d'Echu (2003) quant à elle semble être plus
proche de la réalité d'aujourd'hui bien qu'il y ait déjà une décennie entre son étude
et la nôtre. Toutefois, cette distinction ne donne aucune information sur les conte-
nus et caractéristiques du français camerounais standard (Standard Cameroonian
French) car ce n'était pas le but de l'étude d'Echu (2003). De plus, cette distinction
duelle est trop simpliste, neutralisante et englobante au vu des multiples utilisateurs
du français et surtout de l'écologie de cette langue au Cameroun de nos jours. En ef-
fet les études récentes sur les rituels de salutation en français camerounais (Farenkia
2008), les conflits entre la norme du français et les représentations et attitudes socio-
linguistiques des camerounais (Sol 2010), la pluricenticité du français au Cameroun
et ses pratiques régionales (Tsofack 2010), les occurrences et récurrences du parlé
dans l'écrit dans la presse camerounaise (Nde 2010, Ngue Um 2012), la gestion
du plurilinguisme à travers les enseignes publicitaires (Eloundou 2010), la valeur
illocutoire de l'interrogation du français parlé au Cameroun (Ngue Um 2010), les
constructions disloquées dans le français parlé au Cameroun (Simo-Souop 2011), la
normalisation de l'écart en vue de rendre visible une norme linguistique endogène
en émergence au Cameroun (Biloa 2012), exigent une distinction plus pointue reflé-
tant les différents types de ce français décrit dans les travaux de recherche actuels.
Joubert (1992: 11) écrivait à juste titre que:

> Cette appropriation croissante et rapide de la langue française n'est pas sans conséquences
> quant à la diffusion de la norme, mieux, des normes qui se créent. Aussi, "des néologismes
> nombreux, des usages divergents font germer plusieurs variantes du français".

C'est fort de cette réalité indéniable que nous proposons six variétés de français
parlés et écrits au Cameroun:

a. Le français approximatif des Camerounais non-scolarisés ou sous-scolarisés, ce que Renaud (1976) a appelé *dialectes régionaux et de "quartier"* et qui existe depuis l'avènement du français au Cameroun. Ce français, par exemple présent dans le roman *Le vieux nègre et la médaille* (1956) de Ferdinand Oyono (exemple: *Sans l'armée toi connais-moi où?*, c'est-à-dire: *Si ce n'est pas l'armée où m'auriez-vous rencontré*), est caractérisé par un vocabulaire limité chez le locuteur, une ignorance avérée des règles de grammaire et une utilisation instinctive, imitative du français. Ce dernier n'ayant fréquenté aucune école ou n'ayant appris la langue dans aucun cadre formel, se contente juste d'un alignement de mots appris çà et là sans souci de cohérence syntaxique et esthétique, et de déclinaison. Ce genre de locuteur généralement ne sait ni lire ni écrire. C'est ce qu'on désignait à l'époque coloniale comme *français petit-nègre*, c'est-à-dire une langue incorrecte et difficile à comprendre. Dans les exemples ci-dessous, on peut observer que la syntaxe est défectueuse et n'est même pas proche de ce que l'on pourrait espérer du français standard:

(1) Français des non-scolarisés   Français standard
    – Toi vouloir faire quoi?   Que veux-tu faire?
    – Moi n'a pas argent pour payer   *Je n'ai pas d'argent pour acheter les*
      médicaments   *médicaments*
                                        (Enquête de terrain des auteurs 2011)

b. Le français des lettrés influencé par les normes endogènes au Cameroun (Mendo Ze 1999a) et que Hountondji (1967: 27), dans un autre contexte, décrit sommairement comme un "étrange mélange" de français et de la langue maternelle du locuteur, "avec bien entendu, une prédominance d'éléments africains" (Manessy 1979: 342).

(2) Français aux normes endogènes   Français standard
    Il faut savoir se sauver lorsque l'eau ne nous   Il faut savoir prendre les déci-
      envahit encore que jusqu'aux genoux.   sions à temps.
    Depuis quand le pot de terre va-t-il en guerre   *Il faut éviter de se mesurer à*
      contre les gourdins?   *plus fort que soit*
                                                           (Mendo Ze 1999a: 56)

c. Le français des élèves des lycées et collèges, décrit par Tourneux et Iyebi-Man-djeck (1994) constitue ni plus ni moins des "fautes" par rapport à la norme. Il s'agira par exemple d'une utilisation erronée des articles ou des prépositions chez les apprenants du français dans un cadre formel mais qui pour diverses raisons ont du mal à maitriser les règles de grammaire:

(3) Français des lycéens   Français standard
    – Il boit le lait chaque jour.   *Il boit du lait tous les jours*.
    – Quitte sur la route./ quitte en route.   *Quitte la route*.
    – C'est Patou qui lui ai poussé.   *C'est Patou qui l'a poussé*.
    – Donne la son argent.   *Donne-lui son argent*.
                                       (Enquête de terrain des auteurs 2012)

d. Le phénomène d'alternance codique tel que le franglais, une espèce de code-switching ou de mélange de codes (code-mixing) parlé beaucoup plus dans les bureaux par les fonctionnaires (Chia 1990), et aussi par les élèves et étudiants (Ebongue et Fonkoua 2010):

(4) Alternance codique   Français standard
  – Gars tu **know** que le prof a interrogé *Gars, sais-tu que le prof a interrogé*
    hier? Il a **tell** que ceux qui n'étaient *hier? Il a dit que ceux qui n'étaient*
    pas au school auront zéro.   *pas au cours* (*à l'école*) *auront*
                                              zéro.
                                              (Ebongue et Fonkoua 2010: 261)

Les étudiants francophones de l'université de Buéa, la seule université de tradition anglo-saxonne où les cours sont en majorité dispensés en anglais, ont développé ce phénomène et s'en servent désormais comme langage courant dans leur milieu:

(5) Alternance codique   Français standard
  – J'ai un *clash*.   J'ai un *télescopage* entre deux cours.
  – Je vais *graduate* en décembre.   Je vais recevoir *solennellement* mon
                                              diplôme en décembre.
  – Est-ce que tu as déjà fait le   Est-ce que tu as déjà fait le *devoir* de
    assignment en English 101?   English 101?
                                              (Enquête de terrain des auteurs 2012)

e. Le français fossilisé de l'intelligentsia camerounaise (Atindogbé et Bélinga b'Eno 2004). Les auteurs ont étudié les déviations à fréquence fixe des diplômés camerounais censés parler un français standard, normatif et ont suggéré que l'apprentissage du français par cette cible s'est arrêté sans être achevé. Les auteurs parlent de la "fossilisation de l'interlangue des diplômés":

(6) Français fossilisé de l'intelligentsia   Français standard
  – La table ronde dont j'ai l'honneur   La table ronde que j'ai l'honneur de
    de présider.   présider.
                                              (Atindogbé et Bélinga b'Eno 2004: 178)
  – On ne sait vraiment pas qu'est-ce   On ne sait vraiment pas ce qu'on va
    qu'on va faire.   faire.
                                              (Atindogbé et Bélinga b'Eno 2004: 190)

f. Le camfranglais, c'est-à-dire une langue hybride obtenue grâce à un mélange de langues nationales camerounaises, de pidgin-English camerounais, de français et d'anglais. Depuis le travail pionnier de Chia (1990) dans lequel l'auteur identifiait le camfranglais comme l'une des nouvelles formes de parlers émergents dans les villes camerounaises en croissance exponentielle, le camfranglais n'a pas cessé de nourrir la curiosité des chercheurs. Les études descriptives de ce "parler jeune" (Mbah-Onana et Mbah-Onana 1994, Biloa 1999a, b, Kouega 2003a, Féral 2006, Ntsobe et al. 2008, Ebongue et Fonkoua 2010, Ebongue 2012), les travaux sur sa genèse et ses manifestations (Mbah-Onana 1997), sur le processus de formation

des mots (Kouega 2003b), et sur ses fonctions linguistiques et sociolinguistiques (Schröder 2007, Ntsobe et al. 2008) etc. témoignent de sa dynamique interne et par conséquent de l'intérêt scientifique qu'il suscite chez les chercheurs de la sociolinguistique du français au Cameroun. Grâce à des investigations de plus en plus raffinées et rigoureuses, Ebongue et Fonkoua (2010) préfèrent parler "des camfranglais" et en distinguent trois variétés en fonction du profil socio-intellectuel des locuteurs: a) *le camfranglais simplifié des lettrés ou des jeunes intellectuels*, b) *le camfranglais des moyens scolarisés*, et c) *le camfranglais des peu scolarisés*. Voici quelques exemples de camfranglais:

(7) Camfranglais   Français standard
   – Tu **know** que comme il y avait les   *Tu sais, comme il y avait les filles, il*
     mbindi, [a] il voulait nous sortir sa part   *voulait se mettre en évidence.*
     de **higher level.**
                                                        (Biloa 1999a: 173)
   – Toute la musique que les Papas   Toute la musique que les Papas
     Wemba ont faite là, ils doivent en   Wemba ont faite là, ils doivent en
     principe avoir les **do**…   principe avoir de l'argent …
   – Je dis hein, tu as déjà **nje** sa **piaule** au   Je dis hein, tu as déjà vu sa maison
     Zaïre?   au Zaïre?
                                                        (Féral 2006: 261)

[a] Le mot 'mbindi' vient de la langue ewondo et signifie 'petit'. Dans le jargon des jeunes Camerounais, le terme 'petite' est aussi utilisé pour désigner une fille.

Avec les travaux d'Ebongue et Fonkoua (2010), nous avons des exemples compartimentés:

a. *Le camfranglais simplifié des lettrés ou des jeunes intellectuels* caractérisé par des phrases comprenant exclusivement les mots anglais et français:

(8) Camfranglais   Français standard
   – Gars, on do how?   Gars, que faisons-nous?
   – Je veux win, je ne veux pas lost   Je veux gagner, je ne veux pas perdre
   – Le prof-ci va me finir, je n'ai pas do Le professeur va me punir, je n'ai pas
     son work qu'il a give hier   fait le devoir qu'il a donné hier
                                              (Ebongue et Fonkoua 2010: 261)

b. *Le camfranglais des moyens scolarisés* caractérisé par des phrases comprenant beaucoup de mots anglais et des langues nationales camerounaises (soulignés), avec des mots français ayant subi des glissements sémantiques:

(9) Camfranglais   Français standard
   – Gars, came on go play la game boy   Gars, vient jouer à la game boy chez
     à la long.   nous.

– Ma meuf, bonjour. Tu no que je te *ya mo* mais ma big rémé n'aime pas que je go chatte les meufs du lage parce qu'elle sont gniè. Je go all les day au school pour *falla* les *mounas* de mon kwat.

Bonjour ma chérie. Tu sais que je t'aime beaucoup. Mais ma grand-mère n'aime pas que je traîne avec les filles du village parce qu'elles sont vilaines, négligées. Je vais tous les jours au lycée pour chercher les filles de mon quartier.
(Ebongue et Fonkoua 2010: 263)

c. *Le camfranglais des peu scolarisés* ou *camfranglais pur* ou *authentique*. Selon les auteurs, c'est une variété complexe, caractérisée par des mots tirés des langues nationales camerounaises (soulignés) (et quelques fois même les mots des langues nationales des pays voisins du Cameroun), les mots anglais, le verlan (en italique), le français et beaucoup de néologismes ou créations spontanées (gras):

(10)   Camfranglais   Français standard
– Go me bay les **wé** au market, ma *rémé* ne veut pas me **lep** comot, mais tell lui que les wé là sont pour la bringue de ta **kota**, lom la after, tu lui tell qu'on a vite back. Gnon vite, tu no qu'on doit go au kwat la bàs gnè no potes. Wait moi au **kwat** for soirée je vais te call et te tell où on se mise. Je go d'abord tum les kakos pour **falla** les dos de tongos.

S'il te plait, va me faire quelques courses en ville, ma mère ne veut pas que je sorte. Dis-lui que les articles sont pour la fête que donne ton amie. Ensuite, mens-lui en disant qu'on rentrera tôt. Disparait vite, tu sais qu'on doit aller voir nos amis du quartier voisin. Attends-moi au quartier dans la soirée, je vais t'appeler et te dire où me trouver. Je dois d'abord aller vendre quelques objets pour chercher l'argent des bières.
(Ebongue et Fonkoua 2010: 264)

Ces divergences de vue sur les types de variétés de français parlé au Cameroun témoignent, non seulement de la vitalité de la langue française au Cameroun, mais en justifient également le caractère *approprié* ou *apprivoisé*. Le français est prioritairement la langue d'enseignement dans le système éducatif. Chumbow et Simo Bobda (2000: 46) parlent de 70 % de taux de participation (school attendance rate) et de 65 % de taux d'alphabétisation. Biloa (2012: 122) reconnait que:

> Les progrès de la scolarisation le rendent familier et facile d'accès à une proportion grandissante de la population. En devenant la première langue de scolarisation et de socialisation du pays, le français s'adapte à de nouvelles conditions et à de nouvelles situations sociolinguistiques (de contact et d'interaction entre autres).

Malgré le cadre formel dans lequel le français normé ou standard est enseigné, la langue a subi des transformations radicales qui tendent de plus en plus à devenir la

norme. La réalité, c'est que même les enseignants n'enseignent pas le français standard, mais 'leur standard', ou ce que Atindogbé et Bélinga b'Eno (2004) ont appelé 'une interlangue fossilisée'. En d'autres termes, nous sommes dans un cycle productif ou les formateurs eux-mêmes n'utilisent pas toujours le français standard ou "du livre" mais un français phagocyté, qui pourrait équivaloir à ce qu'Echu (2003) a appelé 'Standard Cameroonian French'. Cette variété se caractérise par l'abondance des camerounismes.

4.3   Qu'est-ce qu'un camerounisme?

Les camerounismes ne sauraient être considérés comme des fautes ou écarts linguistiques par rapport à une norme, comme le laisse sous-entendre Touzeil (1979). Ce sont, à notre avis, des usages particuliers, spécifiques du français, décryptables par les "initiés". Le camerounisme peut alors s'observer au niveau de la prononciation, d'un lexème, d'une locution, etc. Il n'empêche pas la fluidité de la communication entre Camerounais ou tout locuteur compétent. En d'autres termes, ce sont tous les usages qui, sans forcément enfreindre les normes établies, sont particuliers aux locuteurs camerounais. Ces usages leur permettent ainsi de s'identifier/se reconnaître par rapport à/dans une langue exogène. Il en résulte une réduction de la fluidité de la communication avec des locuteurs d'autres espaces francophones.

   Les études sur le français parlé au Cameroun révèlent que les camerounismes se retrouvent sur plusieurs paliers de la grammaire. Par exemple, Zang Zang (1999) établit que le français camerounais calque son système phonétique/phonologique sur celui des langues nationales camerounaises aussi bien sur le plan quantitatif que qualitatif ou fonctionnel. En conséquence, "le français parlé au Cameroun présente un système phonétique constitué de 20 consonnes, 11 voyelles et 3 semi-voyelles" alors que "le français standard en revanche est constitué d'un système comportant 17 consonnes, 3 semi-voyelles et 16 voyelles" (Zang Zang 1999: 112). En guise d'illustration, nous avons:

(11) Français camerounais   Français standard
     syllabe fermée   *syllabe ouverte*
     banc   baŋ   bã
     bon   bɔŋ   bɔ̃
     bain   bɛŋ   bɛ̃
     un   Œŋ   Œ   (Zang Zang 1999: 114)

4.3.1   *Les camerounismes morphosyntaxiques*

Les interférences morphosyntaxiques des langues camerounaises[2] dans le français sont discutées par Biloa (1999b)[3] avec des exemples empruntés aux langues basaa et éwondo[4]. Les interférences de la langue basaa dans le français consistent en des asymétries entre les systèmes temporels (cf. 12a et 12b), modaux (cf. 12c et 12d), aspectuels (perfectif et imperfectif) (cf. 12e, 12f et 12g) du français et du basaa, ainsi que dans l'utilisation du pronom relatif que (12h) et des propositions (cf. 12i, 12j, 12k).

(12) Français camerounais (Basaa)   Français standard

    a. vous *disez* que   vous *dites* que

    b. j'*étais* mangé   j'*ai* mangé

    c. je voudrais partir avant qu'il ne   je voudrais partir avant qu'il ne *vienne*
       vient

    d. il faut que tu *finis* ton travail d'ici   il faut que tu *finisses* ton travail d'ici
       demain   demain

    e. il s'installé à Yaoundé depuis   il *s'est installé* à Yaoundé depuis
                                              longtemps

    f. il *répète toujours* de me battre   il *dit continuellement* qu'il me battra

    g. pour atteindre ma maison, *tu*   pour atteindre ma maison, tu *marches*
       marches, tu marches, tu marches,   *pendant longtemps*
       tu marches

    h. la femme *que tu as volé* s'est   la femme *à qui tu as volé* s'est suicidée
       suicidée

    i. j'ai confiance *à* toi   j'ai confiance *en* toi

    j. il dort *à* la chambre des étrangers   il dort *dans* la chambre des étrangers

    k. ma mère est prête *de* se venger   ma mère est prête *à* se venger
                                              (Biloa 1999b: 151–156)

En ce qui concerne les interférences morphosyntaxiques de la langue éwondo dans le français, Essono (1979) évoque les exemples ci-dessous. Ces interférences sont justifiées par des discordances modales (indicatif vs. subjonctif, cf. 13a et 13b); temporelles (cf. 13c, 13d et 13e); des confusions lexico-syntaxiques avec une utilisation fautive des auxiliaires *être* et *avoir* (cf. 13f, 13 g et 13h); des divergences

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[2] Les interférences des langues nationales camerounaises dans le français ne sont qu'une source parmi tant d'autres: l'anglais camerounais, le pidgin English, les créations spontanées, les néologismes, les glissements sémantiques à partir du français standard, les calques, etc.

[3] Biloa (1999b) a aussi discuté les interférences morphosyntaxiques de la langue ghomala dans le français.

[4] Il est toutefois important de noter que ces traits attribués aux locuteurs natifs des langues basaa et éwondo peuvent être liés à des difficultés d'apprentissage de tout apprenant du français sans distinction d'ethnie.

dans l'utilisation de la transitivité (cf. 13i et 13j) et des prépositions (cf. 13k, 13 l et 13m); et des utilisations pléonastiques (cf. 13n, 13o, 13p, et 13q):

(13) Français camerounais (Ewondo)   Français standard
      a. tu peux quand même manger   tu peux quand même manger
         quoique tu *es* malade   quoique tu *sois* malade
      b. je veux laver les habits avant que la je veux laver les habits avant que la
         pluie tombe   pluie *ne* tombe
      c. toute cette nuit là, je ne *dormais* pas toute cette nuit là, je n'*ai* pas *dormi*
      d. le soulard ne savait plus ou *est* la   le soulard ne savait plus ou *était* la
         route   route
      e. on coupait le bois et on *fait* des   on coupait le bois et on *faisait* des
         fagots avec   fagots avec
      f. les militaires *ont emparé le* pouvoir les militaires *se sont emparés du*
                                                 pouvoir
      g. il *s'est expiré* hier soir dans la nuit il *a expiré* hier soir dans la nuit
      h. le prix de la viande *est* augmenté   le prix de la viande *a* augmenté
      i. moi je *fréquente* encore   je *vais* encore *à l'école* (au collège)
      j. j'ai touché le 15   j'ai pris *mon salaire* le 15 *du mois*
      k. la fumée sortait *dans* la case   la fumée sortait *de* la case
      l. je suis prêt *de* partir   je suis prêt *à* partir
      m. mon grand-père était marié de beau-   mon grand-père était marié *à* beau-
         coup de femmes   coup de femmes
      n. tu as manié le ballon *avec les mains* tu as manié le ballon
      o. les oiseaux volent *en l'air*   les oiseaux volent
      p. je marche *à pieds* quand je vais à   je marche quand je vais à l'école
         l'école
      q. il faut s'entraider *mutuellement*   il faut s'entraider
                                                (Essono 1979: 158–187)

En dehors des particularités phonétiques, phonologiques et morphosyntaxiques, le français camerounais génère des sens particuliers: des "camerounismes séman-tiques".

4.3.2 Les camerounismes sémantiques

Dans ce cas, les locuteurs font usage des mêmes mots et expressions utilisés en français standard: pour la même combinaison de mots, nous auront un sens 'X' en français standard et un sens 'Y' en français camerounais[5]. Il serait plus opportun de parler de "particularisme". Le français parlé au Cameroun a acquis des traits si spécifiques que l'on ne saurait faire autrement que de le qualifier de *français Came-rounais*. En effet, comme le dit si bien Mufwene (2001), la langue baigne dans un

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[5] Des exemples sont fournis en Sect. 4.5.1 et 4.5.2 respectivement.

milieu écologique qui l'engage dans un processus irréversible de transformation qui lui confère sa spécificité nationale. Donc au-delà du fait que les camerounismes sont d'abord un ensemble de traits définitoires caractéristiques du français parlé au Cameroun, le camerounisme est toute une "culture", un art de vivre et de penser, une façon d'exprimer des joies et peines, une philosophie et une vision du monde. Ainsi, dans les camerounismes ou particularismes du français au Cameroun, nous n'envisageons aucune confusion dans l'emploi de "trop" et "très", "savoir" et "connaître", "payer" et "acheter" ou encore entre "fréquenter" et "aller à l'école" mais plutôt un processus d'attribution de sens nouveau(x) à un vocable ou locution de la langue française, d'introduction de vocables appartenant aux langues camerounaise ou encore d'interférences et de sémantaxe.

En fait, les camerounismes doivent être vus comme une entreprise spontanée d'innovation systématique visant à s'approprier une langue dont on se serait bien passé en d'autres circonstances. Comme exemple, nous citerons le mot 'géancir' utilisé dans la phrase: "si ta fille ne cesse pas de géancir elle ne pourra plus porter aucun habit d'ici l'année prochaine" et la question: "tu ne trouves pas que X géancit trop?" Le néologisme 'géancir' (c'est-à-dire 'grandir') est construit, nous le pensons, sur le modèle 'grandir'.

Une enquête menée à Yaoundé en Mai 2009 auprès de jeunes étudiants en année de licence révèle que les ressortissants de la Région de l'Ouest préfèrent l'adjectif 'géant' à l'adjectif 'grand'. Ils disent, pour la majorité des personnes enquêtées, "cet enfant est géant", ou "un monsieur géant comme ça est venu" au lieu de "cet enfant est grand" ou "un grand monsieur/un monsieur de grande taille est venu". Alors, il n'y a donc aucune surprise à entendre de la bouche d'un locuteur de l'Ouest le verbe 'géancir' sorti de façon spontanée, naturelle et sans donner l'impression qu'on crée un mot. Dans le même ordre d'idées, on peut également compter une séries de vocables nés à la suite des petits métiers informels engendrés par les conditions de vie très difficiles des camerounais.

4.3.3   Les camerounismes lexicaux

Les exemples de particularités lexicales foisonnent (cf. Nzesse 2009) et confirment bien l'hypothèse selon laquelle la langue est une construction sociale déterminée par une évolution et une dynamique des pratiques sociolinguistiques dans un milieu créatif d'intertolérance et d'interconnaissance avérées (Feussi 2008). Il faut noter, en effet, non seulement l'aisance et la spontanéité avec lesquelles les mots émergent dans ce contexte (quelle que soit leur source), mais aussi l'intelligence et la subtilité de leur intégration dans la structure du français, comme si les créateurs s'attribuaient la tâche supplémentaire de leur donner un cachet officiel, une autorité grammaticale incontestable. Donc, de façon spontanée, une multitude de procédés d'innovations lexicales sont utilisés. Une étude des particularités lexicales répertoriées par Nzesse (2009) permet d'identifier les techniques ci-après:

(14) Création par dérivation suffixale:
  – *Budget, budgét-ivore*: "personne qui utilise à son propre compte l'argent public dont il est le gestionnaire" (Nzesse 2009: 67).
  – *Écraser* (quelqu'un): "faire l'amour avec", *écras-age* "rapport sexuel" (Nzesse 2009: 83).
  – *Gombo*: "pourboire, pot-de-vin, honoraires, argent", *Gombo-tiser* "corrompre", *gombo-tique* "relatif à la corruption" (Nzesse 2009: 99–100).

(15) Création par composition populaire:
  – *Démocratie-éprouvette*: "Démocratie dont le principe essentiel est la protection des intérêts égoïstes des gouvernants au détriment de l'intérêt national" (Nzesse 2009: 79).
  – *Ça gâte-ça gâte*: "soulèvement, rébellion" (Nzesse 2009: 69).
  – *Candidat-alibi*: "candidat sans poids électoral réel" (Nzesse 2009: 71).

(16) Création par composition complémentaire:
  – *Affameurs de population* "prébendiers de l'État qui s'enrichissent sans cesse sur le dos des populations de plus en plus pauvres" (Nzesse 2009: 53).

(17) Création par composition savante:
  – *Démocratie, démocrato-phobe* "qui a peur de la démocratie" (Nzesse 2009: 79–80).

(18) Création par composition épithétique:
  – *Gros lot* "importante somme d'argent" (Nzesse 2009: 102).
  – *Intégration nationale* "Conscience ou sentiment d'appartenir à une même nation" (Nzesse 2009: 104).

(19) Création par siglaison:
  – *DVD*: "Dos et ventre dehors" (Nzesse 2009: 82).
  – Ivac: "Instituteur (trice) vacataire" (Nzesse 2009: 104).

(20) Création par télescopage, mot-valise:
  – *Chômecam* (mot-valise: condense "chômeur" et "Cameroun"): "Association des chômeurs du Cameroun" (Nzesse 2009: 73).
  – *Cleptocratie, kleptocratie* (mot-valise: condense "cleptomanie" et "démocratie"): "Exercice d'un pouvoir politique dans lequel l'influence déterminante appartient à une minorité d'individus animés par une impulsion pathologique qui les pousse à détourner comme par réflexe les fonds publics" (Nzesse 2009: 73).

(21) Création par emprunt à l'anglais, langue en contact avec le français:
  – *Full-contact*: (de l'anglais) "Rapport sexuel sans préservatif" (Nzesse 2009: 97).

(22) Création par emprunt aux langues nationales camerounaises:
    – *Kaba* (du duala) n. m.: "Vêtement ample de femme" (Nzesse 2009: 106).
    – *Kaï, kaï wallaï* (du fufuldé): "Attention!" (Nzesse 2009: 106).
    – *Kon* (de l'éwondo) "Sorcellerie" (Nzesse 2009: 108).

(23) Création par calque sur les expressions venant des langues nationales
    camerounaises:
    – *Attacher la Fig.* (calque des langues camerounaises) "Être fâché" (Nzesse
    2009: 57).
    – *Mettre quelqu'un à terre* (calque des langues camerounaises) "Ruiner ses
    économies" (Nzesse 2009: 120).
    – *Parler pour parler* (calque des langues camerounaises) "Parler pour ne
    rien dire d'important" (Nzesse 2009: 137).

(24) Création par emprunt de particularités lexicales d'autres ex-colonies de la
    France:
    – *Gaou* (popularisé au Cameroun avec la musique et les téléfilms ivoiriens):
    "naïf, ignorant" (Nzesse 2009: 98).

(25) Création par glissement sémantique:
    – *Griot* "journaliste des médias d'État" (Nzesse 2009: 101)

(26) Création par abréviation:
    – *Kamer* "Camerounaise" (Nzesse 2009: 106).
    – *Kwat* "quartier" (Nzesse 2009: 109).

4.3.4   Les camerounismes morphologiques

Dans le domaine du transport urbain par exemple, le *benskin*[6] (moto-taxi) est né,
avec ses dérivés lexicaux tels que *bensikineur* et *bensikineuse* (conducteur/conduc-
trice de moto-taxi). Le terme *benskin* (de l'anglais "bend skin") est à l'origine un
genre musical et une dance de la Région de l'Ouest du Cameroun où le danseur
penche son corps vers l'avant et fait bouger le postérieur et les pieds de façon par-
ticulière. C'est certainement l'image du corps penché du danseur qui suggère l'idée
de désigner la moto *bend-skin* (*benskin* par simplification) car, non seulement il faut
se pencher pour s'y jucher, mais aussi l'on prend une position assise penchée pour
tenir le conducteur afin de ne pas tomber. On entend donc couramment les phrases
du genre: *pour aller vite et éviter les embouteillages, j'ai pris le benskin. Le bensiki-
neur était très bon car il faufilait parmi les voitures fium fium fium!*

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[6] Nzesse (2009, p. 61) a préféré l'orthographe: *Bendskin, bend skin, Benskineur, bendskineur,
bendskineuse.*

Dans le domaine des nouvelles technologies de l'information et de la communication (NTIC), la téléphonie mobile a emprunté le terme anglais "call box" qui a engendré les termes tels que *callboxeur* et *callboxeuse* (cf. Nzesse 2009: 70). Le *callbox* (à la camerounaise) c'est une chaise avec ou sans parapluie, ou un arbre en guise d'abri, ou encore une espèce de boite en bois construite en matériaux provisoires, légère et qui est facilement transportable. Sur la chaise du *callbox* est assis pendant toute une journée un individu avec un téléphone portable qui permet aux usagers ou clients de passer leurs coups de fil contre payement. On peut également *créditer* son téléphone ou acheter du *crédit*, c'est-à-dire recharger son téléphone. En fin de journée le *callbox* est transporté de la route vers un endroit sécurisé. On entend donc dans les conversations: *pardon, dis à la callboxeuse de m'envoyer le crédit de 1000 francs*. Les *bippeurs* (cf. Nzesse 2009: 64) sont les usagers du téléphone qui ne rechargent pas très souvent leur téléphone, et qui se contentent d'avoir juste la recharge nécessaire pour faire sonner le téléphone d'un interlocuteur potentiel afin que ce dernier rappelle. Les expressions: *j'ai vu ça sur internet* ou *je vais browser* font partie des innovations langagières favorisées par les NTIC.

De même, l'endroit où la *beigneteuse* (vendeuse de beignets) frit et vend ses beignets est appelée *beignetariat* (cf. Nzesse 2009: 60); le vendeur de *soya* (viande grillée à couper ou en broche) est appelé *soyasier*; le cordonnier ambulant est désigné par l'onomatopée *kokok* [kɔkɔk] ou *kokoko* [kɔkɔkɔ] d'après le bruit que ce dernier produit en frappant sa caisse à réparer les chaussures en vue d'attirer l'attention de potentiels clients; le berger, éleveur et/ou propriétaire de bœufs est appelé *bœufeur*, et l'agent de la Société d'Electricité (SONEL) qui relève la consommation des usagers et dépose les factures à domicile est appelé *sonelier*; et les tâcheron sont désignés par le terme *les fini-partis*.

4.3.5   Les camerounismes sociopragmatiques

Il y a aussi des cas de camerounismes sociopragmatiques. Les exemples foisonnent où des francophones, natifs ou non natifs, parviennent difficilement (quelquefois pas du tout) à suivre une conversation en français conduite par des Camerounais. Par exemple, lorsqu'un locuteur nouvellement débarqué au Cameroun entend "on va faire comment?", il est loin d'imaginer que cette expression, typiquement camerounaise d'un point de vue purement pragmatique ou contextuel, marque un aveu d'impuissance fasse à une situation et non une interrogation. Cela signifie: "il n'y a rien à faire", "c'est comme cela", "il faut accepter la situation telle quelle". Si le locuteur est dans une situation où il veut vraiment savoir ce qu'il faut faire, c'est-à-dire l'attitude à adopter fasse à une situation compliquée, il dira "on va faire comment maintenant?" ou "on fait comment donc?" "on fait comment?" vs "on va faire comment?".

Ces deux questions ne marquent aucun aveu d'impuissance comme dans l'interrogation "on va faire comment?". Ici, il s'agit de savoir l'attitude ou le comportement à adopter fasse à une situation. En français standard on dirait: "qu'est-ce

qu'on fait?", "qu'est-ce qu'il y a à faire?" ou "qu'est-ce qu'il y a lieu de faire?" L'ajout de l'adverbe temporel 'maintenant' à "on va faire comment?" permet de passer d'un sens à un autre complètement différent. En d'autres termes, maintenant ne modifie pas la fausse interrogation "on va faire comment?" en introduisant la temporalité comme pour dire: *il n'y a rien à faire* maintenant, mais plutôt une véritable interrogation sur le comportement à adopter fasse à un dilemme. Aussi, il est important de préciser que l'expression "on va faire comment?" en français camerounais est attestée en français hexagonal (oralité) et en français canadien où elle fonctionne comme une question: "tu disais qu'on va faire comment?" ou même "on va faire comment?" (avec une voix montante sur le comment).

L'un des foyers discursifs les plus favorables à la création et à l'utilisation des camerounismes est la chanson camerounaise. L'inspiration artistique devient un moule, un foyer et un réservoir ou les artistes camerounais inventent et réinventent le français. La chanson permet une diffusion très rapide du nouveau mot, de la nouvelle allocution qui, très vite aussi est adopté et utilisé par tous. Voici un texte extrait de l'album "Dans la tanière" de l'artiste camerounaise Coco Argentée.

> L'homme c'est l'homme tant que ça se lève! […] Il va te toucher comme s'il venait de Kondengui. Comme s'il avait un peu d'Eto'o, un peu d'Achille, un peu de Song, un peu d'Alex, un peu de Wome, un peu de Bill, un peu de … un peu de …un peu de aan [ã:], […], un peu de Njitap, un peu Chatoh Bill, un peu Kameni, un peu Ndjefi, un peu de Ndoumbe, beaucoup de Bill [bi:l], […] un peu de kankan [kãkã], un peu de kola, un peu de mbitakola (bitter kola), beaucoup de Guinness, un peu d'excitant [dɛksi-tã]. Mais qu'est-ce qu'il a pris ce soir?Il m'a touché, il m'a corrigé, […]. L'homme fort! […]. (Coco 2011, "Dans la tanière")

Ici, il faut voir non seulement un choix lexical et un agencement particulier de l'émetteur au décodeur Camerounais, mais aussi une symbolique ou socio-pragmatique que seul les Camerounais ou les locuteurs vivant au Cameroun peuvent percevoir. *L'homme c'est l'homme tant que ça se lève* veut dire qu'un homme peut revendiquer son statut d'homme tant qu'il peut avoir une érection et être/rester viril. *Il va te toucher comme s'il venait de kondengui* veut dire qu'il te fera l'amour (*toucher*) comme s'il venait d'être libéré de prison (*Kondengui*), étant entendu que son séjour dans les geôles l'aura privé de femme pendant un moment et l'envie, l'anxiété sont telles que le prisonnier fera l'amour à une femme pendant longtemps, avec puissance et fougue.

L'évocation des grands noms du football camerounais tels que *Eto'o, Achille, Song, Alex, Wome, Bill, Njitap, Kameni, Ndjefi, Ndoumbe* est une allusion à la puissance, la force. L'équipe nationale du Cameroun s'appelle "Les Lions Indomptables" et les joueurs les lions. Donc, que ce soit le lion-animal ou le lion-joueur de football, la chanteuse voit en l'homme avide de sexe un mélange, un petit bout de tous les lions, de tous les talents pour assurer la puissance, la résistance et la témérité dans l'acte sexuel dans une *tanière*, comme le suggère le titre de l'album et de la chanson. Et lorsqu'il se fait aider du *mbitakola*, du *kankan* et de la Guinness qui, dans l'imagerie populaire au Cameroun, sont réputés être des existants efficaces, le tour est joué. En bref, il a tous les ingrédients pour *toucher* et même *corriger* (correction sexuelle) la femme.

Nous répartissons les différents types de camerounismes cités plus haut dans deux classes majeures: les *camerounismes simples* et les *camerounismes complexes* Le critère employé à cet effet est l'origine des mots utilisés. Ainsi, les came-

rounismes simples résultent essentiellement des glissements sémantiques des mots/ expressions du français standard. Les camerounismes complexes, quant à eux, puisent leur matériau linguistique dans plusieurs langues.

4.4   Entre camerounismes simples et camerounismes complexes

4.4.1   Les camerounismes simples

Ce sont les camerounismes dans lesquels le mot ou l'expression provenant du français standard a un sens particulier, un sens camerounais notamment. Il s'agit donc des glissements sémantiques. Considérons les exemples suivants:

(27)   Quelques mots ayant subi un ou plusieurs glissements sémantiques
– *Tracer*: "Le gars a tracé" (*Le gars a fui/ a pris fuite/ a pris la poudre d'escampette, s'est enfui*)
– *Bouger*: "Je bouge" (*Je m'en vais*)
– *Finir*: "Il voulait finir avec la petite" (*Il voulait coucher avec la fille*)
– *Rails*: "Aah! Va aux rails." (*Aah! va te suicider/ va te faire foutre/ va au diable*)
– *Pièce*: "Chauffeur, j'ai une pièce" (*Chauffeur, j'ai 100F CFA*)
– *Preneur*: "C'est un bon preneur" (*Il boit beaucoup-/,C'est un ivrogne*)
– *Déballage*: "Je vais au déballage" (*Je vais acheter de la friperie*).
– *Tuer*: "Le gars voulait seulement nous tuer" (*Le gars nous a émerveillés/ épatés/ impressionnés*)

(28)   Quelques expressions ayant subi un glissement sémantique
– *Faire son possible*: "Fais ton sale possible" (*Tu ne peux rien me faire/ tu es impuissant*)
– *Etre dépassé*: "Le gars était dépassé" (*Le gars n'en revenait pas/ il était abasourdi/ il était impuissant*)
– *Etre frais*: "Monsieur, vous êtes frais" (*Monsieur, vous êtes bien habillé/ élégant/ bien mis*)
– *Etre en haut*: "Mon frère est nommé, je suis en haut" (*Mon frère est nommé à un poste juteux, je serai nanti/ j'aurai des avantages*)
– *Faire quelqu'un*: "Il m'a fait ça dur!" (*Il a été intransigeant/ sans pitié/ Il m'a eu/ Il m'a baisé*)
– *Deux à 5*: "Je n'aime pas les deux à cinq" (*Je n'aime les choses de moindre qualité* (*bon marché*)
– *Axe lourd*: "Regarde son axe lourd!" (*Regarde sa calvitie!*)

Dans cette catégorie, l'on pourrait aussi classer les réponses aux questions-de-salutations, exemples de camerounismes sociopragmatiques. En effet, à la

question "C'est comment?", on peut répondre: " on est là", "(je) suis là" ou "on se bat!" pour dire (*ça va*) ou bien "c'est fort" pour dire que (*ca ne va pas, j'ai des problèmes*), ou encore "j'ai les rasta" pour signifier (*je suis stressé*).[7] De telles réponses présupposent la bonne humeur ou de bons rapports avec la personne qui pose la question. Sinon on peut réagir en disant: "comme comment?", "comme quoi?", "tu as vu quoi?" ou "que quoi a fait?" pour exprimer un mécontentement.

Un mot peut avoir plusieurs sens. Par exemple, en dehors du sens de "finir" identifié plus haut et qui signifie *faire l'amour avec passion et pendant longtemps*, on peut aussi avoir: "finis avec moi" pour *libère-moi, paye-moi, donne-moi mon argent*; "le gars voulait me finir" pour *le gars voulait me tuer*; "le gars voulait seulement me finir" pour *le gars voulait m'éblouir, m'impressionner, m'épater*. Il en est de même avec les mots "comportement" et "se comporter" qui présentent les acceptions suivantes:

(29) *Comportement/ se comporter*
   – Bonne conduite/ bien se tenir, être digne: "Eh! Monsieur, comportez-vous" (*Soyez digne/ Tenez-vous bien*).
   – Se goinfrer, manger copieusement: "Le gars s'est comporté devant la nourriture" (*Le gars a copieusement mangé, sans retenue et goulûment*).
   – Frimer, se pavaner, se montrer: a) "Les gars vont se comporter ce soir à la fête" (*Les gars vont bien s'habiller et frimer ce soir à la fête*); b) "Le comportement était de taille, c'était mortel" (*La frime était très prononcée*).

Nous constatons que dans toutes les phrases ci-dessus qu'il n'y a aucune entorse aux règles grammaticales. Tous les mots utilisés sont des mots de la langue française. Les règles syntaxiques sont respectées. Seulement, ces mots ont subi des glissements sémantiques qui font que seuls les participants vivant dans un contexte camerounais peuvent comprendre et réagir au message. C'est pour cela que Mendo Ze (1999b: 54) écrit:

> La première forme d'enrichissement du français est constituée par les particularités lexicales. Il s'agit soit des néologies lexicales, soit des périphrases permettant aux locuteurs de restituer certaines réalités qui n'existent pas ou dont ils ne connaissent pas l'existence en français, soit des variétés du français employé au Cameroun. Ces lexies sont très souvent employées dans un sens différents de celui qu'elles ont en français courant. De fait, il s'agit généralement de glissements sémantiques provenant de l'emploi métaphorique ou métonymique des mots considérés.

Un regard attentionné des pratiques langagières montre que certaines de ces expressions peuvent s'accompagner d'une image qui renforce ou justifie le choix desdites expressions. Par exemple, dans le cas de "*le gars a tracé*", le locuteur peut bien dire: "*Le gars a tracé, fjum!*" '*fjum*' étant une onomatopée pour décrire la vitesse à laquelle le gars a couru. Il y a dans le psychique des intrants de la conversation l'idée de rapidité, de flèche, et de droiture. C'est pourquoi pour le même sens, on peut aussi dire *Le gars a pris une ligne droite* ", ou bien "*Le gars a pris une tangente* ". Un camerounisme consisterait aussi à dire: "*le gars a pum*" où '*pum*' est une onomatopée qui signifie littéralement "détaler", "fuir à grande vitesse".

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[7] L'expression "j'ai les rasta" vient de la déformation du mot anglais "stress" qui est interprété "tresses". Et comme les rastas sont un type de tresses, on dit "j'ai les tresses" ou "j'ai les rasta".

4.4.2   Les camerounismes complexes

La différence fondamentale avec les camerounismes simples est relative à l'origine du matériau employé. En effet, les camerounismes complexes font état d'un mélange de vocables français et de langues camerounaises. Ils ont diverses formes. Le premier consiste en une insertion de mots/lexèmes de langues camerounaises dans un discours tenu prioritairement en français. Il s'agit en fait ici du phénomène d'alternance codique. Les deux types d'alternance codique (c'est-à-dire de compétence et d'incompétence)[8] répertoriés dans la littérature se retrouvent dans ce genre de camerounismes.

Un troisième type, que nous appelons "alternance codique de manque ou d'absence" est également récurrent. Il consiste à alterner deux ou plusieurs codes (à switcher d'un code à l'autre) parce que le/les mot(s) dont on a besoin pour désigner une réalité particulière n'existe pas en français. Par exemple, "ce garçon a été mangé au <u>famla</u>" ou encore "on lui a lancé le n<u>song</u>". Dans ces deux exemples, les mots "famla" (présent en ghomálá' et d'autres langues de la Mifi) et "nsong" (langue basaa) qui pourraient être approximativement traduits par "sorcellerie" et "mauvais sort, envoûtement" respectivement n'ont pas d'équivalents parfaits en français. Le locuteur se trouve par conséquent contraint de code-switcher pour combler un vide linguistique inhérent à la langue en usage à un moment précis de l'interaction verbale ou écrite.

(30)   Voici quelques exemples du premier type de camerounismes complexes:
    – "Elle est au <u>nkane</u>": *Elle est dans un bordel*.
    – "Il est entré dans les <u>sissongo</u>": *Il a fui/ a pris fuite/ a pris la poudre d'escampette*.
    – "<u>Ekiéé</u>! Tu veux tuer la fille là": *Heee, tu veux émerveiller/ épater/ impressionner cette fille*.
    – "Il a pris les <u>mapan</u>."[a]: *Il a fui/ a pris fuite/ a pris la poudre d'escampette*.
    – "Tu es trop <u>ndok</u>": *Tu es trop gourmand*.
    – "Cette fille aime faire le <u>nyanga</u>": *Elle aime bien se mettre/ bien s'habiller, elle est coquette*.
    – "Ah! Elle a fait le <u>mazembe</u>!": *Ah! Elle s'est décapée la peau/ Elle s'est blanchi la peau!*
    – "Tu as mis le <u>manyanga</u> ou quoi?": *Tu as mis de l'huile fabriquée à base de palmiste comme pommade?*
    – "C'est un <u>nyoleur</u>": *C'est un buveur invétéré*.
    – "La petite est dans ses <u>munyengue</u> mal!": *La fille est très amoureuse de lui*.
    – "Pourquoi tu me refuses le <u>munyengue</u>?": *Pourquoi tu refuses de me donner du plaisir/ de coucher avec moi?*

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[8] L'alternance codique de compétence, c'est lorsque le locuteur passe d'une langue à l'autre parce qu'il possède une maîtrise suffisante des langues en contact qui lui permet de jouer avec les termes. L'alternance codique d'incompétence c'est lorsque le locuteur se trouve obligé d'emprunter un terme à une autre langue parce que sa compétence de la langue utilisée à ce moment précis est limitée.

- "Ah bon! Vous pensez que je suis votre Bamenda (votre moins cher)": *Ah bon! Vous pensez que je suis votre imbécile/ idiot/ celui qui accepte tout.*
- "Au menu, du <u>ndomba</u> de porc, des légumes aux <u>bifaka</u> et du <u>mbongo tchobi</u>."[b]
- "Cette femme croit beaucoup au <u>ngambe</u>": *Cette femme croit beaucoup aux propos des marabouts/diseurs de vérités.*

[a] Cet exemple est synonyme de "il a tracé" mentionné plus haut
[b] Ce procédé est très productif dans le domaine de la gastronomie. Le "ndomba" est une prépara-tion de viande ou de poisson à l'étouffée. Le "bifaka" c'est du hareng séché. Le "mbongo" est une épice qui permet d'avoir de la sauce noire. Pour de plus amples informations on pourra consulter Kouega (1998) et Echu (2002).

Le deuxième type consiste en une traduction de formes ou expressions idiomatiques de langues camerounaises en français. Il s'agit ici des calques comme l'illustrent les exemples ci-dessous:

(31) – "Depuis cet incident, chaque fois qu'il me voit, *il jette la face en brousse.*"
    (*Depuis cet incident, chaque fois qu'il me voit, il évite mon regard*)
   – "Il me *coupe les yeux.*" (*Il me toise*)

L'expression "jeter la face en brousse" est une traduction littérale de la phrase *gùm-bè bùsíó náà* gὲsɔ̀gɔ̀ du Gunu ou Yambassa, langue Bantu du Cameroun parlée dans les arrondissements d'Ombéssa et de Bokito (Région du Centre):

(32) a. Gùmbè   bùsíó   náà   gὲsɔ̀gɔ̀
       Jeter   la face en   brousse
     b. À   ùmbè   bùsíó náà   gὲsɔ̀gɔ̀.
       Il   jette   la face en   brousse

Quand à l'expression "couper quelqu'un des yeux", elle vient de l'éwondo: "tsík mòdò mĭs" (33), langue bantoue parlée en majorité dans la Région du Centre.

(33) a. tsík   mòrò   mĭs
       couper   homme   yeux
     b. À   tsík   mà   mĭs
       Il   coupe   me   les yeux

4.5   Camerounismes et fautes

En réalité, parler de camerounismes, c'est de fait admettre des "déviations" par rap-port à une norme fixée. Ces "déviations légitimées" se sont imposées aux utilisateurs de ce patrimoine légué, et semblent être acceptées de façon tacite et consensuelle. Dans la mesure où elles permettent aux locuteurs camerounais non seulement de se forger une identité propre par rapport à la langue, mais aussi de communiquer aisé-ment, les déviations peuvent être considérées comme une adaptation spontanée du

français à leurs réalités, leurs besoins et leur confort. Ces "déviations légitimées", dans d'autres circonstances, seraient plutôt vues comme des fautes, c'est-à-dire des entorses sérieuses à la langue, qu'il faut corriger. Tourneux et Iyebi-Mandjeck (1994), Echu (1999) ont bien parlé de fautes, et d'"abus de langage" respectivement. Touzeil (1979) de son côté, bien qu'ayant parlé de camerounismes, a proposé systématiquement des corrections à ces déviations, car pour lui, il s'agit là bien d'"écarts":

> Loin de vouloir détruire l'originalité linguistique du français parlé au Cameroun, […] il s'agit principalement de mettre à jour une préoccupation pédagogique visant à faire prendre conscience de l'écart existant par rapport au français standard, de l'acception locale de tel ou tel mot afin que cet écart ou cette acception n'engendrent pas une langue hermétique qui à la limite, rendrait toute communication impossible avec les autres francophones" (Touzeil 1979: 10).

Dans cette optique, mieux que "faire prendre conscience", il corrige "les écarts existant par rapport au français standard". Comme l'indique le titre de son ouvrage, Touzeil (1979) a appelé les erreurs répertoriées " les camerounismes", concept que nous contestons car non seulement trop perméable, mais également très peu réaliste vu les faits auxquels nous faisons face en matière d'usage des langues d'une façon générale et de la langue française en particulier. Perçu dans la perspective de l'auteur des "camerounismes", toute erreur, toute déviation par rapport à la norme établie est très vite devenue camerounisme. Ainsi donc, qu'il s'agisse de *faute*, d'*abus de langage* ou d'*écart*, les camerounismes ont un statut particulier qui fait d'abord penser à une violation flagrante de règles qu'il faut corriger. C'est aller très vite en besogne que de penser ainsi car à cette allure les Camerounais parleraient bientôt une langue suffisamment distante du français standard pour qu'on cesse de parler de dialecte (en ce qui concerne cette variété du français) pour parler plutôt de pidgin.

Fort heureusement, la perspective de l'entreprise collective vient prendre en charge cette inquiétude et dissipe de ce fait toute confusion, tout amalgame. La collectivité de l'entreprise engendre à son tour sa "consensualité" et par conséquent sa conventionalité. Toute langue étant donc le fait d'une convention entre les utilisateurs, on ne saurait plus parler de fautes par rapport à la norme qui pousserait à l'utilisation d'une telle terminologie. En d'autres termes, si une déviation est appropriée par la collectivité et transcende les barrières ethniques, tribales et sociales, on ne saurait parler de faute, mais tout simplement de camerounisme. Si par contre la déviation reste marginale, comme les exemples de Tourneux et Iyebi-Mandjeck (1994) on peut conserver le label "faute".

4.6   Conclusion

La métamorphose du français plus de 50 ans après son imposition au Cameroun apparaît comme la manifestation d'une distanciation spontanée et inéluctable par rapport à une langue étrangère. Il ne saurait en être autrement car "lorsque vous vous mettez sous la pluie, si fine soit-elle, vous êtes forcément trempé au bout d'un certain temps" (dicton camerounais). Le français parlé au Cameroun est condamné à prendre en charge la dynamique des rencontres interculturelles (Mendo Ze 1999b:

52). Ainsi, les termes 'vernacularisation et appropriation' (Manessy et Wald 1984), 'Standard Cameroonian French' (Echu 2003), 'une interlangue fossilisée' (Atindogbé et Bélinga b'Eno 2004), etc. sont révélateurs de la dynamique du français dans un pays multilingue et multiculturel. Cette dynamique pourrait aboutir à la formalisation des particularismes du français au Cameroun.

Une première étape dans ce processus pourrait consister à faire une différenciation entre les *régionalismes* (les particularités du français propres à une région, par l'exemple l'Afrique), *les camerounismes* (les particularités du français propres à un pays, par exemple le Cameroun), les *ethnismes* (les particularités du français propres à une ethnie dans un pays) et les fautes proprement dites (écart ou violation marginale, restreinte des règles de grammaire dû à un mauvais apprentissage de la langue). L'on pourrait alors, dans la problématique camerounisme-faute, se poser la question de savoir s'il est opportun de parler de fautes à l'intérieur des camerounismes? Est-on autorisé à "dévier" de la norme camerounaise? Cette norme existe-t-elle? Où la trouve-t-on? Ne sommes-nous pas désormais interpellés pour une standardisation du français camerounais?

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Chapter 5
Intonation in Cameroon English

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Abstract The focal point of this contribution is to review, elaborate on, and characterise some aspects of intonation in Cameroon English. In other words, it aims to provide, though not exhaustively, a somewhat panoramic account or overview of the intonation patterns of this variety of English. It will, first of all, revisit the intonational highlighting or marking of information in Cameroon English discussed in Ouafeu (2006): *Intonational Meaning in Cameroon English Discourse: A Sociolinguistic Perspective;* and Ouafeu (2007) in *English World-Wide* 28(2): 187-199 before, secondly, delving into some intonational phenomena in Cameroon English. Also investigated here is the use of tones at intermediate phrase boundaries as well as at intonation phrase boundaries. Examining tones at intermediate and intonation phrase boundaries is intended to help arrive at a preliminary establishment of the frequency of tone distribution in Cameroon English.

Keywords Intonation · New information · Given information · Phrase boundary · Pitch · Intensity · Duration

5.1   Introduction

Intonation in New Englishes still remains an area of linguistic research more or less uncharted. Unlike fields of linguistic research like lexis, syntax, morphology, and especially sociolinguistics, which have received intense scholarly attention over the years, studies on intonation have been very few, especially on African varieties of English. As regards African English accents, a close look at most published materials reveals that intonation has not until very recently really featured on African linguists' priority lists (cf. Adejuwon 2003). The fact is that the first few attempts at describing the intonation of some African varieties of English were made by

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[†]This chapter is published posthumously in profound memory of my friend, colleague, and long time school mate, Yves, who passed away suddenly on 3 January 2011 after a heart failure. He had submitted the paper a few months before. He was a young and dedicated scholar. We will always miss him. RIP! (Eric A. Anchimbe).

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non-African linguists, *inter alia*, Singler (1981) with his description of tone and intonation in Liberian English negation, Jowitt (2000) and Gut (2005) with their recent accounts of the patterns of Nigerian English intonation.

The relatively low interest in intonation research in New Englishes, generally, could be attributed to the lack of an agreed universal theoretical framework—on the same lines as the generative phonology framework for segmental phonology and stress—within which the intonation systems of each variety of New Englishes could be delineated. Note, notwithstanding, that such theoretical frameworks as the Auto-Segmental Metrical framework (cf. Liberman 1975; Bruce 1977; Pierrehumbert 1980; Pierrehumbert and Hirschberg 1990) and the discourse intonation framework (cf. Brazil 1975, 1978, 1984, 1997; Brazil et al. 1980) exist and were designed primarily for the description of specific varieties of English, namely American English or General American English (GenAm) and British English or Standard British English (SBE) respectively. The auto-segmental metrical approach has achieved a lot of success over the last three decades since its first application in the description of American English by Pierrehumbert (1980).

On the strength of this approach to intonation analysis, an annotation system, namely the Tone and Break Indices (ToBI) notation was developed for the transcription of the intonation of American English. Scholars working on other varieties of English and other languages have adapted ToBI to suit their own descriptions and transcriptions. Therefore, labelling conventions based on ToBI like the following have been conceived to characterise other varieties of English and languages: K-ToBI (Korean ToBI) designed by Beckman and Jun (1996) for Standard Seoul Korean, J-ToBI (Japanese ToBI) by Venditti (1995) and Campbell and Vinditti (1995) for Japanese, GlaToBI by Mayo, Aylett and Ladd (1997) for the transcription of Western Scottish (Glasgow) English, and GToBI (German ToBI), shaped and reshaped by Baumann, Grice and Benzmüller (2001), Grice and Baumann (2002), Grice, Baumann and Benzmüller (2005) for the transcription of the intonation of German.

As mentioned earlier, all these transcription conventions are based on the original ToBI conceived initially for American English. This diversity in the annotation systems of intonation in other varieties of English and in other languages provides substantial evidence that intonation description must take into account cross-dialectal as well as cross-linguistic differences. It should be noted that no attempt seems to have been made so far at designing a framework or a transcription system for intonation in African varieties of English in general and Cameroon English (CamE) in particular. Despite the huge differences between New Englishes and the so-called native Englishes, the few studies on intonation in the New Englishes have generally been anchored in the existing theoretical frameworks referred to above, i.e. the discourse intonation framework and the auto-segmental metrical framework (cf. Jowitt 2000; Gut 2003, 2004, 2005; Adejuwon 2003; Ouafeu 1999, 2006a, b, 2007).

Cameroon English intonation has, therefore, not received extensive attention. Apart from Masanga's (1983) brief statement on the intonation of Moghamo speakers of English in Cameroon and a few passing references to intonation in CamE in studies dedicated to other language components (e.g. Atechi 1996), the

first comprehensive study on the prosodic system of Cameroon English is Bafuh's (1988) unpublished MA Thesis which, unlike the others, makes direct reference to CamE intonation. Apart from Bafuh's groundbreaking survey, other more recent studies on intonation in CamE have appeared, among them, Ouafeu (1999, 2001, 2006a, b, 2007).

The purpose of this study, therefore, is to review and elaborate on a few aspects of intonation in CamE. It is based on published and unpublished works on CamE intonation as well as data of spoken CamE collected between March and September 2003 and between April and May 2006. Attention is paid in Sect. 5.3 and 5.4 to the use of tones at intermediate phrase boundaries and intonation phrase boundaries, the intonation highlighting or marking of information, and the use of tones in some sentence types.

5.2 Some Previous Statements on Cameroon English Intonation

Most previous studies on CamE were essentially concerned with language components like lexicology (cf. Simo Bobda 1983; Kouega 2006), error analysis, interlanguage issues, segmental phonology and stress (cf. Simo Bobda 1986, 1994, 2002, 2004b; Simo Bobda and Mbangwana 1993). Intonation was mentioned only occasionally in some of these studies (cf. Masanga 1983). Bafuh's (1988) study on paralanguage and prosodic features of CamE was actually the first attempt at describing the prosody of this variety of English. It is important to note that Bafuh's (1988) survey did not focus exclusively on intonation but also on rhythm and stress. Ouafeu's (2006a, b, 2007) recent publications have thrown much light on CamE intonation.

Masanga (1983) has often been quoted as the first real attempt at exploring who counts as accepted speakers of CamE. Placing the acceptability bar on those who at least completed secondary education, Masanga confirms one of the major characteristics of New Englishes, viz, that they are education-based varieties. In his description of the speech of, or pronunciation of certain English words by, Moghamo speakers of English, Masanga (1983) actually made some of the first major references to CamE intonation. According to him, Moghamo people, because of the tonal patterns of their local Moghamo language, "tend to transfer the patterns of their tone language onto English" (Masanga 1983, p. 29). Although Masanga does not use a substantial corpus to prove this, it is understandable that such intonation variations were or are inescapable in World Englishes.

Atechi (1996, 2006) consistently adopts an error analysis focus in his approach to CamE intonation. Although his research is not directly on intonation but rather on phonology and intelligibility, he however argues that CamE speakers generally have the tendency to wrongly identify the nucleus in a tone unit. Furthermore, these speakers, he maintains, incorrectly segment utterances into tone units, which perhaps is a potential cause of unintelligibility with other varieties of English. While it

is true that intonation variation could result in unintelligibility, it is important to say here—apparently overlooked by Atechi—that the segmentation or breaking down of utterances into tone units is largely dependent upon the context of interaction. An utterance out of context could be divided into as many tone units as possible subject to what meaning is associated with each tone unit and with the whole intonation unit. The same applies to an utterance within a specific context of interaction. So, unintelligibility could only be situational and not general.

From a similar perspective as Atechi (1996, 2006), illustrates that CamE speakers deviate from Standard British English (SBE) in their choice of nuclei in tone units and in their segmentation of utterances into tone units. Kouega, however, does not provide cases in which speakers of the two varieties are compared in similar contexts or data samples or examples. Nevertheless, he relies on his CamE data and makes assumptions of SBE speaker productions based on existing research on the subject. Since his work is not dedicated to intonation, not much is said about the role of the context of interaction and other non-linguistic elements, e.g. mood, which are important to the analysis of intonation.

In perhaps the first extensive work on CamE prosody, Bafuh (1988) investigates the rhythmic patterns and several other aspects of intonation in CamE. Using English-speaking journalists of the national radio and television network as case studies, she identifies features such as wrong allocation of tones to given speech functions, deviant grouping of words, ambiguous statements, and inappropriate words within certain utterances. Although these journalists belong to the group of most heard speakers of CamE, they cannot be said to be accurately representative of the rhythm and intonation of CamE. This is simply because these journalists, in the contexts in which they were recorded, read scripted news out of real speech contexts, i.e. in front of a camera (on television) or a microphone (on radio). There are, therefore, bound to be several idiosyncrasies due to the speaking style.

In a number of studies on CamE intonation, Ouafeu has consistently illustrated, first, the specific features of CamE intonation (1999), its deviation from SBE (1999, 2001), and its realisation in real life contexts of interaction (2006a, b, 2007). Like all of the others, he concludes that both CamE speakers and SBE speakers are dissimilar in three major intonation parameters: tonality, tonicity, and tone. Arguing from the same prescriptive and error analysis perspectives like the others, Ouafeu (1999) observes that CamE speakers generally wrongly divide their utterances into more tone units than SBE would in the same contexts. He advances that CamE speakers 'favour' the last lexical item in the utterance as the nucleus—a phenomenon pointed out a year later by Jowitt (2000) with respect to Nigerian English intonation. Further, in CamE, as opposed to SBE, speakers often select unpredictable tone or pitch movement. In other words, when a rising pitch movement is expected, speakers use a falling pitch movement and vice-versa. Like all of the other studies, Ouafeu's (1999) study is based on utterances out of context. Although he makes references to SBE, there is no SBE data in similar contexts as the CamE data he analyses.

There have, however, been significant advances in both the methodological approach to data collection and the analytical framework. While more natural data in real life contexts have been collected, these data have been analysed as belonging to a *normal* variety of the language and so MUST not be judged in terms of

correctness, deviation or inappropriate learning. Ouafeu (2006a, b, 2007) makes a clear effort in these two directions. His findings, some of which are expanded upon in this chapter, are based on naturally occurring data, which represent the natural speech of CamE speakers in their ecology (Anchimbe 2006a). The data for these studies were collected through interactions between the author and the informants or interviewees, who were all speakers of CamE.

The tradition of treating New Englishes as clines of errors, incorrectness, and wrongness practised between the 1960s and 1990s influenced most of the studies reviewed above. However, today, as Bamgbose (1998, p. 1) declares:

> few serious scholars of the English language will insist that a non-native English is used only in a narrow range of domains, that it is a transitional and unstable code striving for perfection, that its continued encouragement and use will lead to linguistic fragmentation and/or deterioration of the language, or that only native English is a suitable model for all English language users.

So, any idea of the wrongness or the incorrectness of the intonation in one variety of English vis-à-vis another no longer holds sway, due to several factors: these varieties have been succinctly entrenched in their local ecologies, they have acquired native speakers of their own, have educational norms since they emerged principally through education, and have substantial literature including dictionaries written in or for them. Variation in intonation, therefore, should not be a sign of incorrectness because a huge body of evidence exists that shows how American English intonation differs, for example, from British English; or how Australian English or New Zealand English display intonation patterns that are not necessarily found in SBE or American English (cf. Guy et al. 1986; Horvath 1985; Pauwels 1991; Benton 1966; Alan 1990; Britain 1992; Ainsworth 1994; Warren and Britain 2000). Yet, these varieties of English exhibit a high degree of mutual intelligibility. In the case of New Englishes and of African Englishes in particular, the notion of the wrongness of a given intonation pattern has often been equated with unintelligibility. Rather, the intonation patterns of these Englishes should be described as original and typical of the English-speaking communities in which they are spoken. While unintelligibility may occur, it should be a normal outcome of first-time contacts susceptible to happen between speakers of the so-called native varieties as well.

5.3   Intonational Highlighting of Information in Cameroon English

This section focuses on the issue of intonational marking of new and given information in CamE, referred to here and elsewhere as, the intonational highlighting of information. Succinctly, the intonational highlighting or marking of information refers to the process whereby a specific word in a sentence or phrase is spoken with a higher prominence than another with which it stands in contrast. In the analysis, I have used concrete data, statistical tables, and graphs or figures to illustrate the different intonational marking phenomena in CamE (for more see also Ouafeu 2006a,

2007). From the data of spoken and read CamE speech, the patterns of tone distribution and their frequencies are investigated and accounted for. Furthermore, the distribution of tones at intermediate phrase boundaries and at intonational phrase boundaries has been discussed in the light of lists, compound and complex sentences or utterances.

5.3.1 Data

The data presented and analysed in this chapter were collected in Cameroon between 2003 and 2006. The respondents come from a wide range of linguistic backgrounds; the only uniting factor among them being that they were all speakers of CamE. For the purpose of this study, a total of 100 respondents are used for the two styles: conversational style and the passage reading style (50 respondents each). There was no equitable distribution as to anglophones and francophones or males or females. For instance, for the conversational style, the 50 respondents (28 female and 22 male) were randomly selected from a pool of over 169 respondents recorded between 2003 and 2006. Of these 50 speakers, 15 were francophones, i.e., they spoke English but had French as second language—of course, on top of their first language, which was a Cameroonian indigenous language. The rest ($n=35$) were anglophones, with an indigenous Cameroonian language as first language and English as second language. In both cases, the majority were secondary and high school students but there were also university graduates. These speakers interacted with me and were interviewed in formal contexts and asked clear questions aimed at eliciting specific intonational features. A sample conversation or interview is provided in Appendix 1. The reason why I refer to these conversations as interviews is that they were organised in a way that many questions were asked to elicit the targeted intonational features. In addition to the conversations or interviews, some of the respondents were given a text (Appendix 2) to read aloud. Only 50 of them selected randomly are used in this paper (see 4.1). The text contains clear and identifiable items which were targeted for given and new information. The data in both situations were collected with the help of a voice-activated tape-recorder. Table 5.1 shows some of the phrases which were targeted in the conversations for new and given information.

In Table 5.1, the items in bold are the new information items by virtue of their non-recoverability or non-traceability (cf. Chafe 1976; Lambrecht 1994) from the previous context while the items in capital letters are the given or old information items, given that they are recoverable from the previous context. In other words, the new information item in each of the phrases is the item which does not appear anywhere in the previous discourse or which is not implicitly or tacitly traceable from the previous context. On the other hand, given or old information represents information mentioned explicitly or implied in the previous discourse. For instance, in a phrase like "**ten** TEACHERS" in response to question 1: "how many teachers have you got?", the word 'ten' is new information because it does not appear in the question or it is the information the interviewer more or less expects from

Table 5.1 Questions and sample replies for new and given information. (Adapted from Ouafeu 2006a)

| Questions	Sample replies
How many teachers have you got?	I have got **ten** TEACHERS.
How old are you?	I AM **fourteen** (years old).
Who is/was your best teacher?	My best teacher is/was my **Math** TEACHER.
How many seasons are there in Cameroon?	There are **two** SEASONS in Cameroon.

Table 5.2 New/given information items in the passage reading style. (Adapted from Ouafeu 2007)

New information	Given information
Rainy	SEASON
Dry	SEASON
Four	SEASONS
Drop	RAIN
Fairest	GIRL
Driving	RAIN
Wonderful	GIFT
Heavy	CLOTHES
Lighter	GARMENTS

the interlocutor while the word *teachers* is given or old information because it is traceable to the interviewer's question (cf. Halliday 1967; Grosz and Sidner 1986 for more on recoverability and non-recoverability of information from previous discourse).

Note again that Table 5.1 displays the new and given information contrast only in the conversational style (CS). Another style in which this information contrast was investigated is the passage reading style (PRS). As pointed out earlier on, a text was shown to 50 speakers to read aloud. This text contained target items embedded in carrier phrases. Table 5.2 displays the new and given information contrast in the PRS.

As can be seen in Table 5.2, new information is written in bold (left column) whereas given information is printed in capitals (right column). Again, a piece of information like 'rainy' is new in comparison with given information like 'season' because at this level in the text, it is not traceable or recoverable from the previous context (see Appendix 2). The analyses in the next sections for features typical of intonation in CamE are based on data collected from these two sources.

5.3.2   Analyses

The data were processed both auditorily and acoustically. The acoustic analyses, preceded by the digitisation of the data and their transfer onto one of the workstations of the phonetic laboratory of the University of Freiburg in Breisgau in Germany, were carried out with the help of a computer software called

Table 5.3 Sample auditory analysis

Questions	Sample replies
How many teachers have you got?	I have got **ten** (P) TEACHERS (NP).
How old are you?	I AM (NP) **fourteen** (P) (years old).
Who is/was your best teacher?	My best teacher is/was my **Math** (NP) TEACHER (P).
How many seasons are there in Cameroon?	There are **two** (P) SEASONS (NP) in Cameroon.

PRAAT www.praat.org designed and continuously developed by Paul Boersma and David Weenink of the University of Amsterdam in the Netherlands. This computer software displays fundamental frequency traces, intensity traces as well as the waveforms of the speech recordings. The fundamental frequency traces (Fo) appear in Hertz and the intensity traces are displayed in Decibels (dB). The auditory analyses consisted in listening to the tape-recorded speech and marking new and given information as deaccented (D) or accented (A). For the sake of convenience, I will exceptionally refer to the accented and deaccented nature of new and given information as prominent (P) and non-prominent (NP) respectively. The concept of prominence subsumes acoustic properties such as intensity, length, and pitch movement. Table 5.3 shows sample auditory analyses with the letters in parentheses standing for the status of given or new information.

As can be noticed in Table 5.3, the new information item written in bold was marked (P) when it was heard as being prominent and (NP) when it was heard as being non-prominent. The same applies to the given or old information item written in capitals. The reliability and validity of the auditory analysis was tested through a listening session with three native speakers of British English and some German English speakers. Far from checking for correctness in the intonation patterns, these speakers were brought in to corroborate the initial analysis I had arrived at. More on the prominence or non-prominence of new and given information will be discussed in Sect. 5.3.3.

As for the acoustic analyses, the phrases containing targeted new and given information items were processed with the PRAAT software as illustrated in Fig. 5.1. As noted above, the data, originally recorded on mini-cassettes, were digitised and transferred onto the computer for phonetic analyses.

Figure 5.1 is an exemplification of the acoustic analysis of the utterance "I am twelve years …" in response to the question "How old are you?" put to one of the speakers. The top of the graph displays the Fo trace of the utterance, the middle half shows the intensity trace of the same utterance while the bottom part exhibits the spectrogram. From Fig. 5.1, the intensity trace of the word—'*am*',—which is given information by virtue of its traceability or inference from the question, is lower than that of the word—'*twelve*,'—which represents new information. This is enough evidence that the speaker utters the new information item more loudly than the given information item. Correspondingly, the mean Fo of the word—'*am*'—is lower than that of the new information item—'*twelve*'. The speaker, therefore, utters new information on a higher mean pitch than given information, which proves that
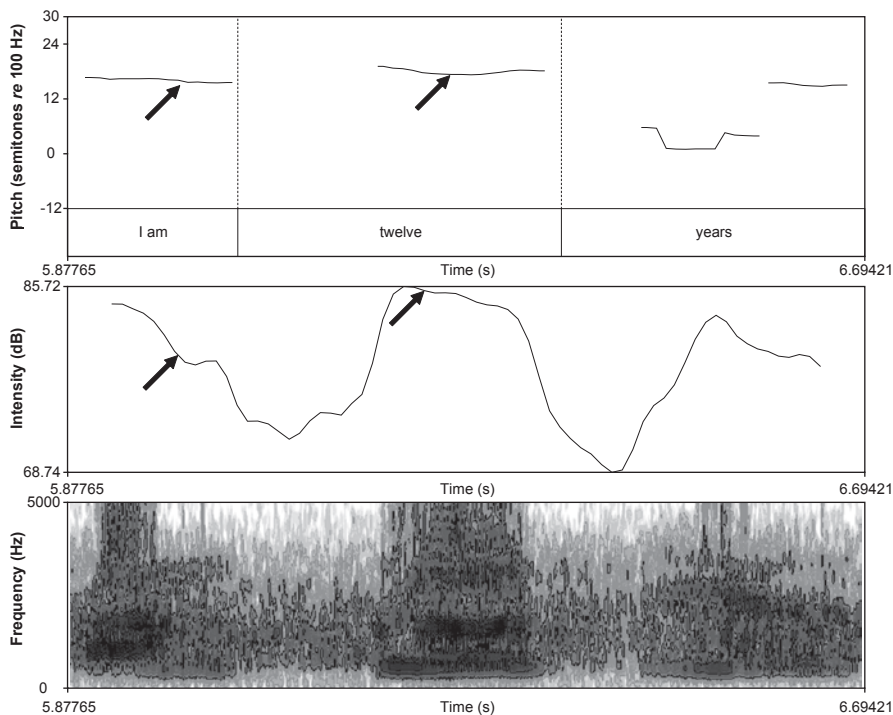
Fig. 5.1 Exemplification of acoustic analysis: Fo, intensity traces and waveform of the utterance. "I am twelve years" in response to the question "How old are you?"

new information is highlighted intonationally or is given more prominence than old or given information, which is weakened as a result of its predictability from the previous context. It is important to note that measurements were taken at the centre of the stressed vowels of each targeted item as the arrows on Fig. 5.1 clearly indicate. Sect. 5.3.3 presents some major findings.

5.3.3   Auditory and Acoustic Analyses of Intonational Highlighting of New and Given Information

Results of both auditory and acoustic analyses show that CamE speakers, unlike speakers of some other New Englishes (cf. Gut 2003, 2005 for Nigerian English; Gumperz 1982 for Indian English), generally make new information more prominent than given information in the discourse structure. In other words, CamE speakers intonationally highlight new information in the discourse structure in comparison with given or old information, which is generally weakened or given less prominence. Table 5.4 displays the results of the auditory analysis for the 50 speakers (picked among the 169) involved in the conversational style (CS). It also

Table 5.4 Results of the auditory analysis of new/given information

Items	Passage Reading Style		Conversational Style	
	New	Given	New	Given
Prominent	50	0	50	15
Non-prominent	0	50	0	35
Total	50	50	50	50

shows the results of the auditory analysis for 50 speakers (chosen among the 83) who took part in the passage reading exercise, i.e. for the PRS.

Table 5.4 shows that as regards the conversational style, all new information items were heard to be prominent. On the other hand, there were 15 cases where given information items were heard to be prominent. On the whole, results of the analysis indicate, firstly, that the difference between the accenting of new information and deaccenting of given information in the conversational style is statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 50.81$, $p < 0.0001$). Secondly, in the case of the PRS, all new information items were heard to be accented or prominent in comparison with the given information items, which were heard to be non- or less prominent. This represents again a highly statistically significant difference ($\chi^2 = 36.1$, $p < 0.0001$).

As for the acoustic analysis, the results, summarised in Table 5.5, show the average pitch height difference, average intensity difference and average duration difference between new and given information in both the conversational style and the passage reading style.

Note that the average pitch heights on both new and given information items in the CS were 0.78 and 0.44 ST respectively; with the average pitch height difference between both types of information being 0.34 ST. This average pitch height difference was found not to be statistically significant ($t = 1.41$, $df = 98$. $p = 0.16$). In the PRS, the average pitch heights on new and given information are 0.76 and 0.50 ST respectively, which gives an average pitch height difference of 0.26 ST. This average pitch height difference was also found not to be statistically significant ($t = 0.11$, $df = 98$, $p = 0.90$). Furthermore, the average intensities on new and given information in the CS are 76.15 and 64.32 dB, the difference being 11.83 dB. The average intensity difference between both types of information was found to be highly statistically significant ($t = 16.15$, $df = 98$, $p < 0.0001$). In the PRS, the average intensities recorded on both types of information were 64.11 and 56.29 dB. The average intensity difference in this case is 7.82 dB, a difference which reached statistical significance ($t = 8.51$. $df = 98$, $p < 0.0001$). The average durations on new and given information in the CS are 0.15 and 0.08s respectively. In the PRS, the average durations on both types of information were 0.12s and 0.07s. The average duration differences between new and given information in both speaking styles are 0.07s for the CS and 0.05s for the PRS. The average duration differences were found to be statistically significant for both the CS ($t = 7.83$, $df = 98$, $p < 0.0001$) and the PRS ($t = 6.35$, $df = 98$, $p < 0.0001$).

Table 5.5 Average pitch height, average intensity and average duration differences between new/given information

Items	Conversational Style			Passage Reading Style		
	New	Difference	Given	New	Difference	Given
Pitch height	0.78 ST		0.44 ST	0.76 ST		0.50 ST
Intensity	76.15 dB		64.32 dB	64.11 dB		56.29 dB
Duration	0.15s		0.08s	0.12s		0.07s
Average pitch height difference		0.34 ST			0.26 ST	
Average intensity difference		11.83 dB			7.82 dB	
Average duration difference		0.07s			0.05s	

5.4   Tones at Intermediate and Intonational Phrase Boundaries

This section deals with the frequency distribution of tones or tone types at intermediate and intonational phrase boundaries in CamE. The intonational phrase was initially postulated by Pierrehumbert (1980) as the only constituent in American English intonation, but later work by Pierrehumbert and Beckman (1988) suggests a second level of intonationally-defined constituent, namely the intermediate intonation phrase. The intermediate intonation phrase has been defined as an intonation domain which consists of one or more pitch accents or phrase accents, but no final boundary tone. The key difference between an intermediate intonation phrase and a full intonation phrase lies, therefore, in the fact that the full intonation phrase has a final boundary tone and can be made up of one or more intermediate phrases. In other words, the intermediate intonation phrase is included in the full intonation phrase. In this section, focus will be, on the one hand, on the tone types at the end of intermediate phrases, i.e., phrases which according to the discourse intonation framework (cf. Brazil 1978, 1997) are incomplete phrases and, on the other hand, on the tones at the boundaries of full intonation phrases, which from the discourse intonation viewpoint, are the tone units.

There is, however, a problem with the delimitation between both types of intonation phrases in the sense that an intermediate intonation phrase which is made up of only one pitch accent could at the same time be an intonation phrase. In other words, there are cases where a constituent will consist of only one pitch accent and one boundary tone. In this case, such a constituent will qualify for both an intermediate intonation phrase and a full intonation phrase. In this section, emphasis will be laid on sentence constructions from the data where there is a clear expectation that a pitch movement occurs at the end of the first intermediate phrase and another pitch movement takes place at the end of the construction as a whole. Typical examples

include compound utterances, complex utterances as well as lists. Naturally, compound sentences are those which are linked by coordinating conjunctions like in the sentence "I went to the cinema yesterday AND met a lovely person" while complex sentences are those connected via subordinating conjunctions like the following: "He is very intelligent WHEREAS his sister is harebrained." As for lists, pitch movements will be examined at the end of each item preceding the last in the list.

5.4.1 Data Elicitation and Analysis

The three levels of analysis, i.e. compound utterances, complex utterances, and lists were elicited through the styles mentioned above: conversational style and passage reading style. 50 speakers were pooled out of the 169 who participated in the (original) research in the CS. For the PRS, 50 speakers were pooled out of 83 speakers who partook in the passage reading task. This leaves us with a total of 100 speakers pooled randomly from the original research population. However, the two levels CS and PRS are quantified separately here. To elicit compound sentences in the CS, an open question like "Which two things do you do after school?" was posed. An expected answer was "After school, I do my homework and watch TV." To elicit complex sentences in the CS, questions like "Why did you like your geography teacher most?" and "How many subjects do you study at school and what are they?" were put to the respondents. Anticipated complex sentences included: "I liked my geography teachers most because s/he explained topics well." For lists, a question like "Which subjects do you study?" was often posed. Expected responses included things like: "I study six subjects, namely geography, French, English, history, mathematics and biology." Table 5.6 displays sample intonational phrases elicited for the purpose of examining tones at intermediate and intonation phrase boundaries in the three levels: compound, complex sentences, and lists.

The letters in parentheses in Table 5.6 stand for the tones heard during the auditory analysis. F stands for a falling tone, L for a level tone, and R for a rising tone or pitch movement. As mentioned above, the acoustic analysis was carried out with the help of the PRAAT software. Technically, the purpose of the acoustic analysis was to validate the auditory analysis by coming up with more visual evidence. The double vertical bar ‖ represents the boundary of a tone unit (cf. discourse intonation) or an intonation phrase boundary (cf. auto-segmental metrical framework).

5.4.2 Results: Tones at Intermediate and Intonation Phrase Boundaries

Results of the analyses show that speakers used a wide range of tone types at intermediate phrase boundaries in the construction types outlined in Sect. 5.4.1. These tones include the falling, the level, the rising and the falling-rising tones. This notwithstanding, at full intonation phrase boundaries, only the falling tone

Table 5.6 Sample intonation phrases for tones at intermediate and intonation phrase boundaries

Compound sentences	Complex sentences	Lists
Conversational style		
I am going to go straight to my parents (F) and show them (F).	When their mother called for them, (F) they would not come back (F).	They are my Biology teacher (L), my Chemistry teacher (L), my Math teacher (R), my English teacher (R), my Civics teacher (R), my Physics teacher (L), my Geography teacher (F).
He congratulates me (R) and tells me to work hard (F).	When they used to go out (F), the mother always advised them not to go far (F).	I have those compulsory subjects like Math (R), English (F) and French (R), then we had Biology (R), Geography (R), History (F), then we had, mm, Physics (F), Chemistry (F).
She teaches well (F) and I understand better than other teachers (F).	If I am promoted to Form Two (L), I will do, I will work more [sic] harder to be promoted to the next class (F).	
Passage reading style		
The rainy season usually starts from MARCH (F)|| and ends in OCTOBER (R)|| and witnesses the planting of CROPS (F)	The oracle told the people in the village that if no sacrifice was MADE (R), famine would wipe out the whole population because the God of their ancestors was angry with them.	In the temperate, there are four seasons, namely WINTER (L), SUMMER (L), SPRING (L) and AUTUMN (F).
Winter is the coldest SEASON (R)|| and people wear thick and heavy CLOTHES (F)		

was recorded in all the cases, especially as the boundaries of the intonation phrases coincided with the end of the sentences. Yes/no questions or wh-questions are discarded from the analysis. The bottom line about these tone types at intermediate phrase boundaries is that they occurred with varied frequencies, thereby giving a clear picture of the most used tone types in these sentences. Table 5.7 summarises the frequency of tone distribution at intermediate phrase boundaries in declarative sentences as mentioned above.

In the conversational style, a count of tones at intermediate phrase boundaries in compound sentences shows five tone types occurring in the following descending order of frequency: falling tone (52 occurrences), rising tone (47 occurrences), level tone (22 occurrences), mixed tones (18 occurrences) and falling-rising tone (11 occurrences). By mixed tones, I refer to cases where an intonation phrase combines several tone types occurring at various intermediate phrase boundaries within the same intonation phrase. In the same list, some items were said with the rising or level tone while others were said with the falling or falling-rising tone. As the

Table 5.7 Frequency of tone distribution at intermediate phrase boundaries

Tone types	Compound sentences	Complex sentences	Lists
Conversational style			
rising	47	38	78
falling	52	41	59
level	22	45	63
falling-rising	11	17	2
mixed tones	18	9	86
Total	150	150	288
Passage reading style			
rising	53	19	39
falling	46	22	34
level	30	9	66
falling-rising	0	0	1
mixed tones	21	0	10
Total	150	50	150

numbers show, it is obvious that the falling tone at intermediate phrase boundaries in compound sentences in the CS outnumbers the other tone types. The rising tone follows, but it should be noted that the Grubb's test (Grubbs 1969) or the ESD (Extreme Studentised Deviate) method (Rosner 1983) shows the Z value for the falling tone (1.20) to be furthest from the rest, but not to be a significant outlier (p>0.01).

As for complex sentences in the CS, the tones at intermediate phrase boundaries are, from the most recurrent to the least recurrent, as follows: level tone (45 occurrences), falling tone (41 occurrences), rising tone (38 occurrences), falling-rising tone (17 occurrences) and mixed tones (9 occurrences). Here, evidence shows that the level tone is numerically greater than the other tone types. It is followed by the falling tone which, in turn, is followed by the falling-rising tone. Although, the level tone outnumbers the other tone types, the Grubb's test shows that there is no significant outlier (p>0.01). Lastly, as regards lists in the CS, statistics indicate that tones at intermediate phrase boundaries occur with the following descending order of frequency: mixed tones (86 occurrences), the rising tone (78 occurrences), the level tone (63 occurrences), the falling tone (59 occurrences) and the falling-rising tone (2 occurrences). The Grubb's test again shows no significant outlier (p>0.01).

From Table 5.7, there is a general trend whereby the falling, the level, and the rising tones occur at intermediate phrase boundaries in compound sentences, complex sentences and lists in the CS with roughly the same frequency. Sometimes, the falling tone outnumbers the other tones and occasionally the rising tone is greater in number than the other tone types. But the general tendency is that in situations or contexts where the rising tone is expected at intermediate phrase boundaries to show incompleteness of information, the falling tone is heard as if to signal the end of the intonation phrase. This trend has also been observed in Nigerian English (cf. Jowitt 2000) and may lead us to postulate, pending of course further investigation, that it is an intonational phenomenon or feature which typifies CamE and other New Englishes.

A look at the PRS also shows that the tone types at intermediate phrase bound-
aries are distributed more or less evenly. With regard to compound sentences, the
count shows that the tone types occur with the following descending order of fre-
quency: rising tone (53 occurrences), falling tone (46 occurrences), level tone (30
occurrences), and mixed tones (21 occurrences). Although apparently certain tones
(cf. rising and falling) occur with higher frequencies than others, the Grubb's test in-
dicates that there is no significant outlier (p>0.01). As regards complex sentences,
the tone types at intermediate phrase boundaries occur as follows: falling tone (22
occurrences), rising tone (19 occurrences) and level tone (9 occurrences). There
are no traces of either the falling-rising tone or the mixed tones type. The Grubb's
test shows the falling tone to be furthest from the rest but not a significant outlier
(p>0.01). Still in the PRS, evidence indicates that the level tone occurs with a
higher frequency (66 occurrences) than the other tone types. The rising tone comes
next (39 occurrences) followed closely by the falling tone (34 occurrences). The
falling-rising tone occurs once and the mixed tones type occurs ten times. Accord-
ing to the Grubb's test, however, there is no significant outlier (p>0.01) although
the falling tone type (66 occurrences) is furthest from the rest (Z=1.40).

In both the CS and the PSR, the falling tone types at intermediate phrase bound-
aries total 254 occurrences against 227 for the rising tone, which again confirms
Ouafeu's (2006a, p. 169) statement that "the falling tone does a lot of work in Cam-
eroon English intonation."

5.5   Conclusion and Discussion

The purpose of this contribution has been to review, elaborate on, and characterise
some patterns of intonation in CamE. Relying mostly on data collected in previous
research, this contribution has established the patterns of tone marking in CamE at
intermediate and intonation phrase boundaries. Firstly, prominent among the find-
ings from the auditory and acoustic analyses is the fact that, unlike other New Eng-
lishes, CamE speakers make new information more prominent than given informa-
tion in the discourse structure. Verifiable as it is from the statistical evidence, CamE
speakers generally accent new information but deaccent or de-emphasise given or
old information in the discourse structure. Secondly, from an acoustic point of view,
CamE speakers, unlike native British English speakers (Wennerstrom 1994), use a
number of parameters to highlight new information, two of which are very recur-
rent, namely intensity and duration. Pitch accent is also used, but statistically, it
generally does not prove to be a significant acoustic parameter.

One indisputable conclusion of course is that, on the strength of accumulated
auditory and acoustic evidence, CamE speakers produce new information louder
than given information. This evidence confirms Kochanski et al.'s (2005) recent
conclusion, following a survey on seven dialects of British and Irish English, that
loudness, in contrast to fundamental frequency, is the better cue to prominence. This
means that CamE speakers use intensity more often to emphasise new information

in comparison with given information. Also, the vowel of the stressed syllable of the new information item has a longer duration than that of given information. This lengthening of the vowel of the stressed syllable of the new information item is a phonetic strategy used by speakers to emphasise the item which they would like to see stand out among the others in their speech.

One possible reason why CamE speakers generally make new information more prominent than given information in the discourse structure may be that, as they are being more and more exposed to native English varieties like British English or American English through the media (television, internet, etc.), their speech is also gradually changing towards these varieties. It should be noted that due to the economic and social supremacy of the United States of America in the world today, there is a general tendency in Cameroon, especially by young people through admiration, to copy the values of this superpower especially from a linguistic standpoint (see Anchimbe 2006b). This hypothesis could be confirmed or disconfirmed through a diachronic study of the intonational marking of new and given information in CamE. Besides, most of the participants in the various data collection tasks came from diverse linguistic backgrounds, among them 15 from French-speaking homes. This means that the majority of these French-speaking participants attending English-medium schools, who admitted not to be able to speak their indigenous languages well, somehow belong to the "in" generation that lay greater emphasis on values copied from economically powerful countries like the USA or the UK. Again, this is purely hypothetical or conjectural and can only be confirmed through extensive diachronic studies of this intonational phenomenon in CamE.

Auditory and acoustic analyses of tones at intermediate and intonation phrase boundaries also point to the fact that CamE speakers use a variety of tone types at these boundaries. Sentence types like compound sentences, complex sentences, and lists were analysed and evidence accumulates that CamE speakers basically use four tone types, namely the falling tone, the rising tone, the level tone, and the falling-rising tone. In some situations, there were cases of what I have termed "mixed tone types." In these situations, speakers use two or more tone types in the same construction. This was noticeable mostly in the case of lists where speakers used both the level tone and the falling tone in the same list. The bottom line is the frequency with which these tone types occur. A statistical analysis indicates that the falling tone generally outnumbers the other tone types, which led Ouafeu (2006a) to conclude that the falling tone is more prevalent than any other tone type in CamE speech. It should also be mentioned that in lists in the PRS, the level tone was the most common, but no definitive statement can be made at this level as to whether the list was a 'routine list' or not. It is true that participants were shown a text containing the four seasons in the temperate zone and some may be tempted to say that listing these seasons was a routine activity. Note that in the CS, the rising tone in lists outnumbers the other tone types. Participants in the task, mostly students, were asked to name the subjects they studied at school. The expectation here would have been for students to name their subjects using the level tone in the sense that these school subjects are somewhat a matter of routine for them.

The conclusion that can be drawn at this level, pending future investigations, is that CamE speakers more often use two major tone types on items in lists, namely

the rising tone and the level tone. They also use other tone types like the falling or falling-rising tones on items in lists, but their frequency distribution shows that they are used less often than the level or rising tones. A task for future researchers would be, for instance, to determine what constitutes a routine list in comparison with a regular or normal list in CamE. Then, further analyses could determine whether the level tone is used on routine lists, as has been claimed in some varieties of English like British English (Tench 2003, p. 229; Watt 1994).

Appendix 1: Sample Conversation. (Conversation No. 155 with Female Speaker)

Interviewer: Good morning, my dear.
Informant: Good morning.
Interviewer: How are you?
Informant: Fine, thanks.
Interviewer: So what about your age? […]?
Informant: I am called […] and I am twenty years old.
Interviewer: Now tell me something about your level of education.
Informant: I am in the University of Yaounde I, second year, bilingual studies.
Interviewer: Ok. You said you were born and bred in Bamenda.
Informant: Yes.
Interviewer: What […] brought about that situation?
Informant: … my father was transferred there, […].
Interviewer: I see. […]. Throughout was in Bamenda, am I right?
Informant: Yes.
Interviewer: Which school did you go to?
Informant: GBHS, Bamenda.
Interviewer: Bamenda?
Informant: Yes.
Interviewer: I see. […], could you remember a number of things?
Informant: Actually.
Interviewer: All right. Now, tell me: could you remember the number of teachers you had when you were there?
Informant: Mm, approximately seven. I had seven teachers.
Interviewer: Yeah, in terms of the subjects they taught you…
Informant: Yes, you wish to know…
Interviewer: The subjects, not…
Informant: Ok, we had Mr […].
Interviewer: Their names are not important.[…].
Informant: We had a Geography class, History class, Chemistry, Math, Biology, French and English.
Interviewer: Right. And, er, […]. Who was your favourite teacher then and why did you like him best?

Informant: I think my favourite teacher was Mr […].
Interviewer: Who was that?
Informant: The French teacher. He was somebody very calm and also very
                      welcoming.
Interviewer: So is that the reason why you decided to […]?
Informant: Not really. […].
Interviewer: All right. And you are doing really well. Fine. What about a book
                      you read […]?
Informant: […] a tragedy. Yes. It was, er, er,
Interviewer: What is that?
Informant: La Croix du Sud.
Interviewer: La Croix du Sud, Ngoue.
Informant: Ngoue.
Interviewer: So what is it about, *La Croix du Sud*?[…].
Informant: Yes, it's a type of a representation of those dramas from 18th century
                      and it is talking about […] racism in that time, the main subject
                      was, er, […].
Interviewer: All right. […]. So what is the moral lesson that you can draw from
                      La Croix du Sud?
Informant: Actually (fall), something very sticking that I remember, that I still
                      have in my head till today is that one has not to reject his origin.
                      […].
Interviewer: All right. […]. So what are the main seasons in Bamenda and what
                      characterises each of those seasons?
Informant: I think there are just two main seasons: what actually characterises
                      them is that namely the rainy season is that there is too much rain.
                      There are days when one cannot even step outside […].
Interviewer: Ok. […]. … yellow shoes… which one will you choose?
Informant: I prefer dark colours.
Interviewer: Dark.
Informant: Yes.
Interviewer: It means that you […] choose black…
Informant: Black shoes, […].
Interviewer: So why don't you like those colours? People like flashy things, you
                      know.
Informant: I know but […]. I think I prefer the dark colour (fall) because it
                      brings out the colour of my skin.
Interviewer: Right, when do you intend to go to your village and pay a visit to
                      your family members?
Informant: […] in my plans, but I would think of it.
Interviewer: All right. Ok, thank you very much indeed.
Informant: Yes.

Appendix 2: Text

In tropical Africa, there are two main seasons: these two seasons vary in terms of the proximity or nearness of the region to or its distance away from the Equator. The rainy season[1] usually starts from March and ends in October and witnesses the planting of crops. The dry season[2] starts from October and ends in early March. A farmer relates the plight of the villagers in his area in 1993: "In 1993, there was a terrible dearth of food supply in the village due to drought. All farmers were expecting rain to begin in March as usual. In May, there was still no drop of rain[3] in the village. The farmers decided to consult the oracle to find out what was wrong. The oracle told the people in the village that if no sacrifice was made, famine would wipe out the whole population because the God of their ancestors was angry with them. Then the villagers asked the oracle: 'What type of sacrifice should we make to appease the God?' The oracle told them: 'There are many girls in this village. You should look for the fairest girl[4] and give her to the village chief as the 15th wife'. The sacrifice was performed and within a few days a driving rain[5] pelted down in the village. After the rain, the villagers thought about the gift to offer the oracle. They decided to sacrifice a goat for him. The oracle told the villagers: "This is a wonderful gift[6] indeed. I thank you very much for your gratitude."

In the temperate, there are four seasons[7], namely winter, summer, spring and autumn. The types of clothes or garments people wear vary from one season to another. Winter is the coldest season and people wear thick and heavy clothes[8]. In summer, people wear lighter garments[9] because the temperature is usually hot.

NB: The superscript in the above text represents the carrier phrases embedding the new/given information contrast.

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Chapter 6
Ethnolinguistic Heterogeneity in Cameroon English Pronunciation

Ernesta Kelen Fonyuy

Abstract The investigation of ethnolects or ethnic varieties of languages has been around for a while now. While most previous studies have focused on immigrant ethnolects, the present work focuses on an indigenised variety of English, Cameroon English, and how the phonological (pronunciation) features of indigenous Cameroonian languages are represented in English. This study, therefore, lists and describes the major features of two ethnolects of Cameroon English: Nso' English and Wimbum English. Using data collected from primary school children and university students and graduates, the chapter identifies and describes processes such as diphthong reduction or simplification, vowel lowering, and vowel shortening. Though these processes are common in most ethnolects, their realisation and the vowel phonemes affected are different and specific to each ethnolect.

Given that these vocalic processes resemble processes in the indigenous languages, a possible reason for their persistence in these ethnolects, this chapter illustrates, is substratum influence. Because the major ethnolectal features are also used by acrolectal speakers (i.e. university students and graduates), they are considered here authentic markers of these ethnolinguistic varieties, and pointers to the heterogeneity in (ethnic) accents in English in Cameroon.

Keywords Ethnolinguistic heterogeneity · Etholect · Vocalic processes · Substrate influence · Diphthong reduction

6.1 Introduction

Previous studies on ethnic varieties or ethnolects of English in Cameroon have identified both similar and dissimilar ethnolinguistic features, especially in pronunciation. The aim of this chapter is to describe those salient phonetic features which identify ethnic-influenced pronunciation within Cameroon English (CamE), and to account for their retention in the speech of educated, acrolectal speakers. The dialectological approach is used to describe the variation in the pronunciation of

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English segmental features by some ethnic group members in Cameroon. Substrate influence from the ethnic languages is the major source of the variation witnessed, and is used here to validate the presence of ethnolects in CamE pronunciation (see also Fonyuy 2012). The ethnolectal speech is described in relation to CamE and RP pronunciation norms, CamE being the input model and RP the *de facto* reference for teaching English in Cameroonian schools.

Using empirical evidence from data collected in Cameroon in 2010, this chapter illustrates firstly, that ethnic heterogeneity in CamE pronunciation is verifiable in the speech of speakers who double as L1 speakers of a Cameroonian ethnic or indigenous language and as L2 speakers of CamE. Secondly, the level of education and exposure to Standard Englishes impact the ethnolectal pronunciation choices. That is, even though the vocalic processes focused on in the case studies, Nso'[1] and Wimbum[2] ethnic Englishes, are systematic, they vary with speakers' level of education. In spite of the educational impact, some of these ethnic language features are retained in acrolectal speech. This type of retention, occurring in spite of level of education and exposure, signals variety or ethnolectal stabilisation, and also captures the degree of ethnolinguistic heterogeneity in CamE pronunciation.

The linguistic plurality of Cameroon makes it an interesting destination for various types of linguistic investigations. The country has a population of about 20 million (National Population Census 2005) belonging to around 200 ethnic groups, who speak over 277 indigenous languages (Lewis 2009). There are two exogenous languages, English and French, which function as co-official languages of education, media, law, administration, etc. Additionally, there is the widespread Cameroon Pidgin English (CPE) serving as a language for wider, inter-ethnic communication, and the bilingual mixed language, Camfranglais, spoken mostly by the youth. Given this multilingual background, bilingualism or multilingualism is the norm for most Cameroonians, making heterogeneity in pronunciation almost inevitable. CamE pronunciation, therefore, exhibits some ethnolinguistic features which could be attributed to this multilingual status of the speakers. General references are made in this chapter to the Nso', Kom, Bafut, Bakossi, Moghamo, and Wimbum ethnic communities and the common linguistic variables identified with the way they speak English, while the case study focuses closely on two ethnolects: Nso' English (NsoE) and Wimbum English (WimE).

6.2   Ethnolects and Substrate Influence

Although the place of substrate influence has been disputed in immigrant ethnolects, it seems inevitable in non-immigrant multilingual communities where languages play different roles in people's daily lives—as official languages, home languages,

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[1] Nso' refers to the land and the people, and Lamnso' is the language of the Nso'.

[2] Mbum refers to the land, Wimbum means people of Mbum, and Limbum is the language of the Wimbum.

etc. Though inherently controversial in certain contexts, in most postcolonial mul-
tilingual communities, "differences in linguistic behaviour among ethnic groups
are usually assumed to result from substrate transfer from the languages originally
or still spoken by each ethnic group" (Hoffman and Walker 2010, p. 42). In some
cases, these ethnic variations give the local variety of English its new ecological
distinctiveness.

Ethnolinguistic diversity in mainstream national varieties of English also ex-
ists in other postcolonial communities other than Cameroon. For instance, Adjaye
(2005, p. i) presents ethnolinguistic heterogeneity in Ghanaian English, stating that
although "Akan languages have phonemic distinctiveness of /u/ and /ʊ/ as well as
/i/ and /ɪ/ … only the latter is maintained in Akan speakers' English." This suggests
that 'ship' and 'sheep' are synonymous in the English of Akan speakers. In Nigerian
English, Banjo (1996, p. 76) gives the phonological bases for ethnolinguistic varia-
tion in Nigerian English noting that

> [n]one of the three major Nigerian languages (Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba) has up to ten pure
> vowels, and only Hausa has a diphthong…and in many cases, RP diphthongs are monoph-
> thongised…While some languages (like Hausa and Igbo) do have the phoneme /z/, others
> like Yoruba do not have it and so a Yoruba Variety 1 [basilectal] speaker would substitute
> /s/. Similarly, for the speakers of some languages (again including Yoruba) /f/ is substituted
> for /v/ and /ʃ/ for /tʃ/.

In correlating ethnic pronunciation patterns to sociolectal hierarchy, Banjo (1996,
p. 76) explains that some of the features, especially, homophony due to the ab-
sence of vowel length, occur more in basilectal speech than in acrolectal speech.
For instance, according to him, in Nigerian English, "Variety 1 [basilectal] /li:v/ is
equivalent to RP /li:v/ and /liv/ (leave and live)…, /faja/ represents RP /faiə/ (fire)."
However, he (Banjo 1996, p. 79) further states that

> Variety III…represents the acrolectal use of English in Nigeria…As noted elsewhere
> (Banjo 1971), it shares the same deep structure with RP but has Nigerian phonetic features.
> Sometimes these phonetic features, though not impeding intelligibility, are strong enough
> to mark the speaker's provenance.

Using data from Tswana English, Van Rooy (2002, p. 148, 154) explains that in
South African English, there is the /a/→/ɑ/ variation in medial positions in the
words /arrant/ (around), /abɑt/ (about), and /dinɑnsas/ (denounces). It is the impact
of Tswana phonology, Van Rooy suggests, that models this variation.

These ethnic variations indicate how important substrate influence is to the
emergence of not only ethnolects but also mainstream national varieties. Interest-
ingly, the segmental features affected are similar across ethnic languages and variet-
ies of English. These include diphthong simplification, the absence of vowel length
distinctions, and the substitution of voiced sounds for voiceless sounds.

From all these illustrations, it is evident that ethnic heterogeneity in African Eng-
lishes is based on substrate influences, which may or may not disappear along the
speakers' educational achievement or exposure to other varieties of English. The
following section locates ethnolinguistic heterogeneity in CamE pronunciation by
comparing ethnolectal features to CamE and RP. It also reviews some related litera-
ture on CamE ethnolects.

6.3 Ethnolinguistic Heterogeneity in CamE Pronunciation: An Overview

Although the phonologies of some Cameroonian indigenous languages form part of the base of CamE phonology, some of their consonants are significantly different from CamE consonants, especially coarticulated consonants as in Lamnso' <dz>, <kp>, <gb>, <dr> and Limbum <rk>, <rts>, and <rb>. The realisation of RP <and> and CamE <an> as <andr> in the NsoE accent is a result of the absence of the phoneme /d/ in word-final positions in Lamnso'. Lamnso' speakers of English, therefore, introduce this structure into English since it is identical to another structure in their L1 phonology. Despite such differences, CamE shares a number of similar vowel features with most of its ethnolects, but as summarised in Table 6.8, vowels in the same word environment undergo different types of phonetic modification in some of the ethnolects. The phonemes of CamE and some ethnolects are also significantly different from RP especially in vowel length, voice quality, and the permissibility and realisation of diphthongs and triphthongs. CamE and RP generally share the same consonant features, except for the RP inter-dental fricatives [θ, ð] where RP [θ]in (thin) and [ð]em (them) are produced in CamE respectively as [t]in and [d]em (see Simo Bobda and Mbangwana 2004, pp. 200–204).

Different researchers have analysed deviations from RP in ethnic English pronunciation in Cameroon. For instance, the variant forms of pronunciation in the English speech of some educated Nso' people are discussed by Yusimbom (1992). Under the sub-title *use of foreign vowels*, Yusimbom (1992, p. 47) states that "[i], [a], [o] are vowels foreign to English" and cites the example in which educated Nso' speakers "use [wil] for English/wɪl/ <will>." Other pronunciation phenomena discussed include vowel insertion and monophthongisation. In analysing the possible causes of Lamnso' influence on NsoE and the negative effects that such interference has on intelligibility, Yuyun (1996) revisits some aspects of NsoE identified by Yusimbom (1992). In addition, Yuyun (1996, p. 44) arrives at the finding that "words with /iː/ preceded by the nasals /m/ and /n/ are rare in Lamnso', so that NsoE bilinguals replace English /iː/ by /e/"[3] yielding realisations like the following:

Word	Nso English	RP
meat	/met/	/miːt/
neat	/net/	/niːt/
knee	/ne/	/niː/

Similarly, Sala (1999) investigates some major vowel alternation processes in Lamnso' speakers' English. Using vertical and horizontal counts, Sala (1999, p. 36) identifies different environments in which the /i/ for /e/ alternation phenomenon occurs. He explains that it is as a result of "alternation and neutralisation of [i] and [e] after nasals within Lamnso' itself." Focusing on the evolution of some vowel pronunciation features in NsoE associated with level of education, Fonyuy (2003,

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[3] Yuyun (1996) and other previous researchers use the variant /e/, but in this chapter, I have used /ɛ/.

2013) proves that along the lectal continuum, i.e. from the basilect up to the acrolect, ethnic English features become less recurrent, but do not disappear completely even when speakers advance in education. From these contributions, the substrate effect of Lamnso' phonology on English seems significant.

Not much research has been done on the English accent of the Wimbum. Nforgwei (2004, p. 12) briefly mentions the sociolinguistic aspect of the English spoken by the Wimbum: "Today, we can hear native speakers say 'sútɛ', pidgin word for 'until', 'háràbàda' fulfulde word for 'until' and 'ìntí' for the English word 'until'." This is an interesting case because we identify the WimE [i, u, ɛ] features not only in English, but also in CPE. Although the Nso' and Kom ethnic groups also realise the word as 'suté', CPE generally realises it as 'soté' with the main variation being [u] → [o]. Neither CamE nor the NsoE speakers realise 'ìntí', which is characteristically a WimE feature. However, a more extensive study is that of Tamfu (1989), who analyses vocalic variation in the spoken English of some educated Wimbum people. With the exception of WimE [ɛ] and [u] for RP /eɪ/ and /əʊ/ respectively, most of the variables he analyses are similar to CamE. On diphthong reduction, his example of t[ɛ]ble for t[eɪ]ble is an exclusive feature of the WimE accent (see Tamfu 1989, p. 109 ff.). CamE rather realises it as t[e]ble.

Even less has been done on the Kom English accent. One reason may be that it has over the years evolved towards mainstream CamE pronunciation. But from folk discussions, the Kom are remembered for substituting /l/ for /r/ or inserting an additional vowel /i/ after an existing, mostly, back vowel between consonants in English. This creates diphthongs like [ai] and [oi]. One noted example of this process is Kom English realisation of l[ai]ndl[oi]rd for RP l[æ]ndl[ɔ:]d, and CamE l[a]ndl[o]rd (landlord). An example of this folk reference to Kom English is the following quotation from a Cameroonian online community. The writer is from Kom and so tries to use some of the features identified with the Kom, more for humour on the forum:

> I am coming from Bikom land … The journey was not easy because … lain loba nobi fit loin for sain sain.[4] (English: *land rover could not run on sand*)

Two main features of Kom English can be identified in this excerpt. First, there is the substitution of /l/ for /r/ noticeable in [r]over → [l]o[b]a and run → [l]oin. Second, there is an epenthetic /i/ inserted after the vowels in s[æ]nd → s[ai]n and r[ʌ]n → l[oi]n, resulting in the diphthongs [ai] and [oi].

Song (1996) investigates phonological processes such as vowel substitution and vowel insertion in the spoken English of some educated Kom people. The vowel insertion feature which is often quoted as a marker of the Kom English accent is absent in Song's work. She (Song 1996) illustrates that vowel insertion is rare in the spoken English of most educated Kom people. From this, it can be hypothesised that the Kom English features which folks often refer to is a phenomenon of non-educated Kom speakers. In any case, it still remains a marker of ethnolinguistic variation in CamE pronunciation.

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[4] The writer's identity is withdrawn in respect of privacy. The message was posted online on 21-06-2012 at www.lesaglobal.org. The last part of the excerpt is in CPE.

On his part, Masanga (1983) analyses the spoken English of educated Moghamo people with focus on vocalic processes such as vowel insertion, substitution and the introduction of foreign vowels. His results show that Moghamo English introduces an epenthetic vowel in an environment where CamE generally does not. An example he advances is Moghamo English quic[ki]ly for RP and CamE quic[k]ly (see Table 6.8).

In spite of all these attempts at describing ethnic English accents in Cameroon, not much has been done on these ethnic variations as belonging to, or departing from, mainstream CamE pronunciation. This gap is what this chapter endeavours to fill. Apart from the generative perspective on CamE by Simo Bobda (1994) and Simo Bobda and Chumbow (1999), who use the "trilateral process" to analyse CamE phonology, most researchers on CamE and its ethnolects attribute these variations in CamE pronunciation to substrate influences. The analysis below follows a similar substrate approach with the aim of illustrating the heterogeneity that exists.

Noteworthy is that Hoffman and Walker (2010) dispute the substrate influence explanation basing their argument on generation gap and the absence of empirically tested interpretations. Their argument is substantial in that, firstly, they use a multi-generational approach in analysing ethnolects in immigrant communities in Canada, where English or French and not ethnic languages dominate daily speech, and immigrants are likely to take on the speech patterns of their host country. It is obvious that in such a context, the English speech of first generation speakers will exhibit more ethnic features than that of subsequent generations, in whose English, ethnic features may have disappeared. Secondly, their criteria for eligibility of informants are based more on ethnic decent and ethnic affiliation and not so much on an ethnic language as L1.

So, while Hoffman and Walker's (2010) perspective on substrate influence is valid for the Canadian context, the Cameroonian is different. The respondents are not immigrants and are hence not pressured to integrate linguistically or otherwise; they live in communities where their native language is often dominant especially in informal, home domains; and there is no generational gap in the transmission of the native language. English is used in education and official and formal employment domains. I return to this briefly again in Sect. 6.4.3 below. The next section presents a brief overview of the ethnolinguistic history of Lamnso' and Limbum.

6.4 Ethnolinguistic Overview of Lamnso' and Limbum

Like a number of other ethnic groups in the Bamenda Grassfields, the Nso' and the Wimbum trace their origin to the Tikar area, which lies to the North–East of the Bamun territory in the North–West Region of Cameroon. The main differences between Limbum and Lamnso' languages are, while Limbum belongs to the Mbam Nkam, Nkambe cluster of languages, Lamnso' belongs to the Ring, East cluster. Unlike Limbum which has more dialects, Lamnso' is more homogeneous.

6.4.1   Limbum

Limbum is classified as a Niger-Congo, Atlantic-Congo, Volta-Congo, Benue-Congo, Bantoid, Southern, Eastern Grassfields Bantu, Mbam-Nkam, Nkambe (see Fransen 1995; Fowler and Zeitlyn 1996; Nforgwei 2004). It has several dialects, though linguists do not agree on the exact number. Fiore (1987) identifies three dialects while Nforgwei (2004, p. 10) identifies four, i.e. Linti, Liwarr, Liyaa, and Lintumbaw. The main differences between these dialects are consonantal. However, the major ethnolectal features in WimE are rather at the level of vowels, not consonants. This means, therefore, that dialectal variation in Limbum itself does not affect the classification or types of ethnolectal features that surface in the speakers' production of English.

6.4.2   Lamnso'

Lamnso' is a Benue-Congo language that belongs to the Ring group of the Western Grassland Bantu group (see Grebe and Grebe 1976). A more extended classification describes it as a Niger-Congo, Atlantic-Congo, Volta-Congo, Benue-Congo, Bantoid, Southern, Wide Grassfields, Narrow Grassfields, Ring, East.

    Lamnso' is not as heterogeneous as Limbum. For instance, Grebe and Grebe (1976) observe that Lamnso' does not have any dialectal variation. So, the features identified with its speakers of English apply to all geographical regions where the language is spoken. An interesting aspect of its phonology is that, Lamnso' modifies the vowels in borrowed words to suit its phonology, especially the realisation of /əʊ/ as [u]. Examples of some English loans that undergo this modification are /windu/ (window) and /tumatus/ (tomatoes).

6.4.3   The Uses of Endogenous and Exogenous Languages in Mbum and Nso'

As mentioned earlier, English and French are the official languages of Cameroon, and are hence used as medium of education, and for other official, formal business in administration, media, law, and formal employment. Speakers of Lamnso' and Limbum are, therefore, exposed to these languages, but more extensively to English since it is used more in the anglophone part of the country. In these two locations, French is not regularly used outside the classroom as compared to English, and by extension CPE. There is also an extensive scenario of language contact in Mbum and Nso' involving, besides these two languages, English, CPE, Fulfulde, French, and for parts of Mbum, Lamnso'. This is due to cosmopolitanism in Nkambe, a major socio-political town in Donga-Mantung Division and the vibrant economy of Ndu, a smaller town in the division. In addition to these, many Wimbum people also

Table 6.1 Description of informants

Ethnic group	L1	Level of education	Males	Females
Nso'	Lamnso'	Primary 6	09	10
Wimbum	Limbum	Primary 6	10	10
Nso'	Lamnso'	University +	10	10
Wimbum	Limbum	University +	10	10
Total: 79			39	40

speak Fulfulde, spread mostly through Islam. Interestingly, Lamnso' is also spoken in the South of Mbum which shares geographical boundary with Nso'. A linguistic outcome of this could be the similarity between the two groups in the pronunciation of some English phonemes.

The Nso' people, on the other hand, make a unique difference in language loyalty. They are loyal to Lamnso', their ethnic L1, since they use it very often among themselves in almost all domains of society, e.g. at home, in the market, on the farms, at play, in church, for business, for broadcast on community radio stations, and in workplaces. Here, English and CPE are used mostly for communication with non-natives. This loyalty to, and constant use of, Lamnso' could explain why certain ethnolectal features persist in NsoE irrespective of exposure to other varieties and education.

Substrate influence, being one of the rudimentary reasons for the existence of ethnolects or ethnolinguistic variation, is central here. The contact of languages, especially between Limbum and Lamnso', is also important because it sets the pace for variation or similarity in the patterns the two groups produce English sounds. Before illustrating the phonological phenomena that these groups make use of in English speech, let me present the data collection method I used to elicit the data.

6.5   Data and Methodology

The data in the case study of NsoE and WimE accents used in this chapter are a portion of the data I collected in Cameroon in 2010 for my PhD research project. As already indicated in Sect. 6.4, both ethnic groups are located in the North West Region of Cameroon. As the description of the informants in Table 6.1 shows, I used primary school children, considered loosely here as representing the basilectal level, and university students and graduates, representing acrolectal speech. The aim was to check if ethnolectal features disappear as speakers acquire more education and are exposed to other varieties of the language.

In all, 79 informants were involved, with almost the same number of males and females.[5] The informants were from Nso' (39) and Mbum (40). They also had either Lamnso' or Limbum as their first language.

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[5] Even though Table 6.1 makes reference to gender, this was not found to be significant in the data. There were no clear trends identifiable with one gender or the other.

Table 6.2 Interview questions for the NsoE respondents

Questions/Answers at sentence level	Discrete word	Target phoneme
Q: What was the first language you spoke?	spoke	/əʊ/
A: The … I spoke was …		
Q: What is your favourite meal?	meal	/iː/
A: My … meal is …		

Table 6.3 Interview questions for the WimE respondents

Questions/Answers at sentence level	Discrete word	Target phoneme
Q: Are you able to eat in darkness?	able	/eɪ/
A: Yes/No I am (not) able to eat in darkness		
Q: What do you promise your parents/family?	promise	/ɪ/
A: I promise my …		

The data were collected through recorded interviews comprising a series of casual but tactfully structured questions, which demanded answers at sentence level. In each carrier sentence, a discrete word containing a target phoneme was embedded. These phonemes are variables or observable ethnic features which mark out the ethnic variation in NsoE and WimE pronunciation. Tables 6.2 and 6.3 show the interview questions used for the NsoE and WimE respondents.

The sounds targeted in the NsoE speakers were the diphthong /əʊ/ and the long front vowel /iː/ in the words 'spoke' and 'meal' (Table 6.2). In the case of the WimE speakers, focus was on the diphthong /eɪ/ and the short high front vowel /ɪ/ (Table 6.3).

The interviews were recorded using a digital micro track II recorder, and later transcribed and quantified using wave and MSXL programmes. The descriptive statistics method was used to find the frequency of the phonetic variants realised by the different respondents. In the analysis, attention is paid to both educational level and ethnic origin, as possible reasons for variation in pronunciation on ethnolinguistic lines.

6.6   Ethnolectal Features in NsoE and WimE: A Case Study

This section identifies some of the major features linked to these two ethnic varieties with the help of the data collected using the interviews. Three vocalic processes are taken up here: diphthong reduction, vowel shortening, and vowel lowering. In some cases, two processes occur together, for instance, in WimE, the diphthong /eɪ/ is first of all reduced to a monophthong and then lowered to /ɛ/. The results in Tables 6.4, 6.5, 6.6, and 6.7 are used as empirical evidence for the existence of ethnolinguistic variation in CamE pronunciation. Although only a few processes are illustrated here, ethnic-specific linguistic processes are also noticeable in these and

Table 6.4 Nso English: *spoke* → sp[u]ke (*n*=39)

Level	RP	%	CamE	%	BanE	%
Primary	/əʊ/	4	/o/	10	[u]	85
Tertiary	/əʊ/	6	/o/	55	[u]	35
Average	/əʊ/	5	/o/	32.5	[u]	60

other ethnolects at the level of vowel raising and lowering, vowel alternation, phonemic coalescence, epenthetic vowel insertion, and disyllabification of triphthongs. For more on these and other processes in African Englishes, see Jowitt (1991), Arua (1999), Van Rooy (2002), and Simo Bobda (2007).

6.6.1   Diphthong Reduction

Diphthong reduction or simplification is a common phonological feature of most New Englishes. From Asia across to Africa, it has been attested in various varieties by Platt et al (1984), Bamgbose et al. (1995), and by Simo Bobda (1994) in the case of CamE. For Simo Bobda (2007, p. 412), "All English diphthongs are prone to monophthongisation in African Englishes." Reduction occurs in different ways in different varieties of English. For example, a diphthong could either be reduced to one of its phonemes, e.g. /eɪ/ to either [e] or [i], or to a completely different phoneme, as in /eɪ/ to [ɛ] in WimE discussed below.

   Diphthong reduction is a shared pronunciation pattern of CamE and its ethnolects, but the segment which substitutes the diphthong and the word environment in which this occurs are specific to each ethnolect. As shown in Tables 6.4 and 6.5, NsoE and WimE reduce diphthongs to different sounds. The diphthong tested among the NsoE respondents is /əʊ/ (Table 6.4).

   From Table 6.4, it is seen that 60 % of the 39 respondents of the NsoE sample reduce RP /əʊ/ in sp[əʊ]ke not to CamE /o/, sp[o]ke (32 %) but to NsoE [u], sp[u]ke. A possible reason for this is the absence of the diphthong /əʊ/ in Lamnso'. If one follows the speech learning model (see Flege et al. 1997), which posits that if a phoneme is absent from the phonology of a parent language, then it will be difficult to perceive and realise it in the second language, then it is obvious that the reduction of /əʊ/ to [u] in NsoE is a substrate influence. Although /o/ and /u/ both exist in Lamnso', there seems to be no phonetic contrast between the two sounds in the phonology of NsoE where they both merged into [u].

   Also worth noting from the results in Table 6.4 is the high percentage for CamE realisations (32.5 %) and RP (5 %), especially among the acrolectal (tertiary level) respondents. These two percentages suggest that education and exposure certainly have an impact on the evolution of ethnolectal features. The basilectal speakers (primary level) have a much higher occurrence of ethnolectal features (Tables 6.4 and 6.5) than the acrolectal speakers. In Table 6.4, the reduction of /əʊ/ to [u] among the basilectal speakers registers 85 % as opposed to 35 % among the acrolectal. So, the features that do not move towards CamE and RP later in education are effectively

Table 6.5 Wimbum English: *able* → [ɛ]ble (*n*=40)

Level	RP	%	CamE	%	WimE	%
Primary	/eɪ/	0	/e/	10	[ɛ]	90
Tertiary	/eɪ/	0	/e/	35	[ɛ]	65
Average	/eɪ/	0	/e/	22.5	[ɛ]	77.5

stable ethnolectal features. As speakers advance in education so too do they lose some of the ethnolectal features they used in primary school located in the village.

In the case of WimE, the diphthong tested was /eɪ/, and as illustrated in Table 6.5, it was not only reduced or simplified to a monophthong but was also moved one level lower than its individual components, i.e. to /ɛ/. Just as with NsoE above, the basilectal speakers produce more ethnolectal patterns than the acrolectal: 90% as opposed to 65%. Again, educational advancement and exposure could be accountable for this.

The results in Table 6.5 show an average of 77.5% of the 40 WimE respondents' realisation of the characteristic WimE [ɛ] in [ɛ]ble for RP /eɪ/ble and CamE /e/ble. In WimE, the RP diphthong /eɪ/ has not only been reduced to a monophthong as in CamE, it has also dropped one step lower than in CamE. The diphthong /eɪ/ is not attested in Limbum, the L1; so, this is also potentially a case of substrate influence where speakers substitute an unfamiliar sound by a familiar one, in this case /ɛ/. In Limbum, /ɛ/ is a recurrent vowel, which also observes length as in the words *lɛɛ* (bat), *tɛɛ* (stand), *sɛɛ* (slaughter), and *wɛɛ* (hunting) (see Tamfu 1999, p. 19).

Curiously, WimE does not replace the RP diphthong /eɪ/ by the CamE /e/ which is also a Limbum phoneme seen in words like *bep* (bad), *ye* (eat), *wep* (bitter leaves), and *be* (invite) (see Tamfu 1999, p. 17). It rather prefers the phoneme /ɛ/, perhaps because of its position at word beginning, since /ɛ/ is more open than /e/. Additionally, because /ɛ/ is more spread, it requires less articulation effort than /e/, and is, therefore, easier to realise especially in a second language. Here, we can talk of the principle of least effort (Wells 1982), which, as attested in the literature, is a common feature in the speech of second or foreign language speakers or learners.

6.6.2 Vowel Shortening Plus Lowering

The process of vowel shortening is also common in indigenised varieties of English. It generally occurs in closed syllables, although some varieties also realise it in open syllables. Sometimes, shortening is followed by another process, e.g. vowel lowering, in which the reduced vowel is actually realised as another vowel, lower in position of articulation in the mouth (Table 6.6).

The vowel targeted for this process in NsoE was the long, high front vowel /i:/ in the word 'meal'. The basilectal respondents realised it in two ways: reducing it to a lower vowel [ɛ] (65%) or diphthongising it into [ie] (5%).[6] The tertiary speakers

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[6] This is an outlier and is not taken into account in the average. It could be said to have disappeared along the educational line or due to exposure to other varieties.

Table 6.6 Nso English: *meal* → m[ɛ]l (*n*=39)

Level	RP	%	CamE	%	BanE	%
Primary	/iː/	0	/i/	20	[ɛ]	65
					[ie]	5
Tertiary	/iː/	20	/i/	25	[ɛ]	55
Average	/iː/	20	/i/	22.5	[ɛ]	60

Table 6.7 Wimbum English: *promise* → prom[ɛ]se (n=40)

Level	RP	%	CamE	%	WimE	%
Primary	/ɪ/	0	/i/	15	[ɛ]	80
					[ɨ]	5
Tertiary	/ɪ/	0	/i/	65	[ɛ]	30
					[ɨ]	5
Average	/ɪ/	0	/i/	40	[ɛ]	55
					[ɨ]	5

instead preferred only [ɛ] (55%). It could be assumed that the [ie] realisation disappears as the speakers advance in education and are exposed to other varieties of the language.

The results in Table 6.6 show that as high as 60% of the NsoE informants shorten the RP long /iː/ but realise it a level lower as [ɛ] yielding m[ɛ]l. CamE only shortens it to the short counterpart /i/ but does not lower it. From the example word tested, i.e. 'meal', it can be said that vowel lowering in NsoE occurs mostly after nasals.[7]

Again, education seems to be a deciding factor here: the 20% realisation of RP /iː/ is attested exclusively among the acrolectal speakers. CamE realisation increased by 5% between the basilectal (20%) and the acrolectal (25%).

6.6.3   Vowel Lowering

Reference has been made above to vowel lowering as a type of variation in ethnolectal accents in Cameroon. Lowering involves the replacement of a sound with another sound that is produced at a lower point in the mouth. The example chosen to illustrate this is from WimE. The RP short front vowel /ɪ/ as in the word 'promise' was tested in the interviews. Gathering from Table 6.7, 55% of the WimE speakers tested lowered /ɪ/ to /ɛ/.

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[7] However, lowering does not occur in all situations between nasals. For instance, when /eɪ/ and /ɛ/ occur between nasals, NsoE reduces /eɪ/ to [i], as in n[i]me for RP n[eɪ]me and CamE n[e]me; and raises /ɛ/ to [i] as in rem[i]mber for RP and CamE rem[ɛ]mber *remember*. The distinction is that while Nso' English speakers lower the /eɪ/ and /e/ to [ɛ] after nasals, they also raise them to [i] between nasals.

Interestingly, the realisation of the WimE accent feature [ɛ] here is not in a diphthongal space but in a monophthongal space. RP /ɪ/ is absent from both CamE and Limbum phonetic inventories. This is, apparently, one of the reasons why RP /ɪ/ is raised to [i] in CamE, while in WimE, CamE /i/ is moved two steps lower to [ɛ]. Unlike in Lamnso', in which the structure <mi> is rare, <mi> is permissible in Limbum as in *mì* (finish) and *tàami* (go across). In spite of this <mi> permissibility, the WimE speakers still lowered /i/ to [ɛ] realising RP prom[ɛ]se and CamE prom[i]se as prom[ɛ]se. Again, as in most of the examples above, the place of the substrate seems pervasive. It is natural to realise /ɛ/ in this position because of its dominance in Limbum.

In summary, Table 6.8 captures the major ethnolinguistic variation in CamE pronunciation. It is not based on the discussion above alone but also on other features identified by researchers, some of them presented in Sect. 6.3 above. These features, as the last two rows show, include consonants as well.

From Table 6.8 it can be deduced that there is significant ethnolinguistic dissimilarity as much as there is similarity in these ethnolects. The shaded portions show exactly where the variation is.

One feature that is shared by a number of ethnolects is the [u] for RP /əʊ/ and CamE /o/ phenomenon. It is shared by Nso', Kom, and Wimbum ethnic accents, although it is most recurrent in NsoE. Generally, Bafut speakers of English realise the CamE /i/ and RP /ɪ/ as [ɨ], suggesting that the Bafut language has a clipped vowel system which is transferred unto English. The NsoE and WimE speakers surveyed generally have [ɛ] in this position, indicating that they realise the CamE front vowel /i/ two steps lower when it occurs after a nasal consonant, but the recurrence of /i/ and /ɛ/ after nasal consonants alternates or freely varies more in NsoE than in WimE. In Lamnso' /i/ and /ɛ/ alternate between nasals and after nasals. When Lamnso' speakers transfer this alternation process to English, there is the tendency to lower RP /eɪ/ and CamE /e/ to [ɛ] after nasals, or to raise them to [i] between nasals in NsoE.

6.7   Conclusion

This chapter set out to identify and illustrate salient vocalic features of two ethnolects in CamE: NsoE and WimE. It focused on three main processes, namely, diphthong reduction or simplification, vowel shortening, and vowel lowering. Using data collected through interviews, the chapter has shown that the major source of the vocalic variations identified is the substrate influence from indigenous Cameroonian languages acquired as L1 by the respondents. We could also add the principle of least effort which facilitates the choice of certain sounds in given phonetic environments. However, this choice is not always the same across ethnolects. While some features may be similar across ethnolects, or with mainstream CamE, others tend to be either specific to particular ethnolects or are realised in specific phonetic environments.

Table 6.8 Phonological features highlighting heterogeneity in CamE

Phonological variants

Word	variable	RP	CamE	Nso	Wimbum	Kom	Bafut	Bakossi	Moghamo
Meat	/iː/	m[iː]t	m[i]t	m[e]t	m[i]t	m[i]t	m[i]t	m[i]t	m[i]t
Letter	/ɛ/	l[ɪ]tter	l[e]tter	l[e]tter	l[ɛ]tter	l[e]tter	l[ɛ]tter	l[ɛ]tter	l[ɛ]tter
promise	/ɪ/	prom[ɪ]se	prom[i]se	prom[i]se	prom[ɛ]se	prom[i]se	prom[i]se	prom[i]se	prom[i]se
Broke	/əʊ/	br[əʊ]ke	br[o]ke	br[u]ke	br[u]ke	br[u]ke	br[o]ke	br[o]ke	br[o]ke
Mister	/ɪ/	m[ɪ]ster	m[i]ster	m[ɛ]ster	m[ɛ]ster	m[i]ster	m[ɨ]ster	m[i]ster	m[i]ster
Judge	/dʒ/	[dʒ]udge	[dʒ]urch	[dʒ]udge	[dʒ]udge	[dʒ]udge	[dʒ]udge	[tʃ]udge	[dʒ]udge
Quickly	/kl/	quic[kl]y	quic[kl]y	quic[kl]y	quic[kl]y	quic[kl]y	quic[kl]y	quic[kl]y	quic[ki]ly

As far as the impact of education and exposure to other varieties are concerned, it has been shown that the higher respondents go in education the lower the amount of ethnolectal pronunciation features they use. The results in Tables 6.4, 6.5, 6.6, and 6.7 suggest clearly that the recurrence of ethnic features reduces significantly between the basilectal and acrolectal speakers. Conversely, the recurrence of CamE and RP realisations rather increase from the basilectal to the acrolectal. In some cases, the basilectal speakers do not even realise RP sounds, but these are realised by the acrolectal, e.g. m[i:]l → m[ɛ]l (meal) in Table 6.6 among the NsoE speakers where the RP variant m/i:/l is used by 20 % of the 39 respondents, all of them acrolectal speakers. This notwithstanding, education and exposure have not prevented ethnolectal features from surfacing in the speech of acrolectal speakers, sometimes reaching as high as 77.5 % (Table 6.5) or 60 % (Tables 6.4 and 6.6). What this implies is that, the features that do not disappear can effectively be treated as authentic markers of these ethnolects.

We could also factor in the sociolinguistic setting and how it possibly facilitates the retention of ethnolectal features. Given that the Nso' and Mbum areas make sustained use of English besides their L1s and other languages, and that the teaching of English in schools orients speakers towards a target norm, substrate features will continue to thrive in the ethnolects spoken there. Gut's (2007) norm-orientation hypothesis could be used to account for this. This means, therefore, that it is the predominant ethnic languages used as L1, whose features determine the way in which these multilingual speakers articulate English. Most of the results reported on above seem to testify to this.

The chapter is only the tip of the iceberg for a country that has more than 250 indigenous languages. Further research on both segmental and supra-segmental features, vocalic and consonantal features, and from synchronic and diachronic perspectives will certainly throw more light on ethnolects and their relationship to mainstream (national) varieties of English in both non-native and native communities, especially given the current spread of the language.

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Part II
Sociolinguistic Perspectives on Indigenisation—Sociolinguistics and Pragmatics

Chapter 7
Attitudes Towards Cameroon English: A Sociolinguistic Survey

Eric A. Anchimbe

Abstract The issue of attitudes towards indigenised varieties of English (IVEs), also called New Englishes, Postcolonial Englishes, within their respective contexts gives interesting insights into the acceptability and stability of these Englishes. Speakers usually identify with their varieties of English only if their and their fellow speakers' social attitudes towards them are positive. This chapter uses statistical data from a survey conducted in 2003 to establish to what extent Cameroonians accept and identify with Cameroon English. Even though most of them accept the variety exists, they are reluctant to overtly agree they speak it. They rather prefer to say they speak British English, hence refurbishing the historical link of colonialism or creating for themselves a sense of modernity or internationality. In spite of this, they are often fast in rejecting or stigmatising, through an attitudinal filtration process (Anchimbe 2006a), those ways of speaking that they consider grotesque, foreign, and idiosyncratic. This pushes those speakers who may be interested in imitating foreign accents to adhere to local speech forms, i.e. Cameroon English accent. This contradiction in attitudes and linguistic identity is inherent in most postcolonial communities and is not limited to language.

Keywords Attitudinal filtration process · Social attitudes · Prestige · Linguistic identity · Indigenised varieties of English

7.1 Prologue[1]

> [In Cameroon], when you try to speak British English, people instead get jealous and think you are crazy. So you are forced to use the pidgin others speak like English. (Male student in Buea, 17–25 years, L1 (unnamed) indigenous language)

The statement above was made by a student of the English-speaking University of Buea, Cameroon in 2003. For him, because Cameroon was colonised by Britain, it

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[1] This chapter originated from a significantly shorter study I did for the volume by Tsofack and Feussi (2011).

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is logical and normal that Britain bequeathed her English to Cameroonians. While he is convinced he speaks nothing but British English (BrE) or at least tries to speak it, he is at the same time vexed by his friends' and community's (jealous) rejection of his supposed BrE accent. In order to remain accepted within the speech community, he has to speak a locally accepted accent—what for him is highly pidginised or equal to Cameroon Pidgin English (CPE). Though I do not focus strongly on it in this paper, I have referred to the above experience or phenomenon elsewhere as the Attitudinal Filtration Process—the extra-linguistic component of the Filtration Theory initially proposed in Anchimbe (2006a) and later expanded upon in Anchimbe (2009a).

The Attitudinal Filtration Process explains the ways through which speakers of a variety or language maintain its standard accent by attitudinally rejecting those forms of speech they regard grotesque, idiosyncratic, and foreign to them and their community. Speakers who face such rejection, which could be in the form of mockery, correction, snub, or outright refusal, are often forced to fall back to the accent used by most other speakers within the community—i.e. the communal norm. The attitudes and preferences studied in this chapter show speakers' relationship to their (postcolonial) varieties of English as well as the subtle contradictions involved in attachment to, and identification with, indigenised varieties of English in postcolonial contexts.

7.2   Introduction

The English language has been in use in Cameroon for at least a century now since it was introduced in various ways by Christian missionaries and colonial administrations in the eighteenth century. The evolution of the language in this context has yielded several interesting features that account for its inception into the sociocultural and physical landscape and languagescape of the country. While in the early days of the teaching of the language focus was on spreading Standard British English (SBrE) (Todd 1982), this aim could not be sustained in later endeavours given the ecological differences between the two locations and the functions English was attached to in the Cameroonian context. As Todd (1982, p. 9–10) explains, "By 1884 the Baptist missionaries had established … 5 English-medium schools, which were highly regarded by Cameroonians and where the aim was to teach standard British English". The work of the missionaries in this endeavour is commendable as they introduced Cameroonians to classical texts like the Bible. Even though they were few, these missionaries were indeed native speakers of one of the accents of BrE. However, instead of SBrE (accent) taking root, a variety of the language, referred to severally as Standard Cameroon English, Cameroon Standard English, or Cameroon English (CamE), seems to have effectively emerged with distinctive features that have been described in the past by Simo Bobda (1994a) on phonology, Nkemleke (2003) on modal usage, Sala (2003) on syntax, Anchimbe (2006a) on lexical creation and integration, Ouafeu (2006) on intonation, Atechi (2006) on

intelligibility, Kouega (2007) on lexicography—a dictionary, Ngefac (2008) on social differentiation, Mbangwana and Sala (2009) on morpho-syntax, Nkemleke (2011) on academic writing from a corpus-based perspective, and Fonyuy (2012) on ethnolects of CamE. The predominantly system-based approaches adopted in the above works make the need for non-system-based, i.e. sociolinguistic, discourse, and pragmatic, studies relevant.

Studies of attitudes towards indigenised varieties of English (IVEs) within their respective communities abound in the literature. The battle for the acceptance of New Englishes as legitimate varieties of the language reached its peak in the 1990s with the expression of tough, emotional reactions to the (negative) attitudes expressed towards these varieties of the language. The stand-off between Randolph Quirk and Braj Kachru marked this battle of attitudes (see Kachru 1986, 1991; Quirk 1990; Abbott 1991; Chevillet 1993; Bamgbose 1998, etc.) especially through the use of catchy phrases like "half-baked quackery" (Quirk 1990, p. 6), "the Quirk concerns" (Kachru 1991), and "Kachru catch" (Abbott 1991). Today, the acceptability of these Englishes is no longer an issue, but how exactly they are accepted as local standards within their respective contexts is worth researching since contradictory attitudes and identities still seem to persist.

Two solid studies in the 1980s, i.e. Schmied (1985) and Kachru (1986), drew attention to how speakers of new English varieties related to their varieties of English. Schmied's (1985) survey on attitudes towards English in Tanzania yielded interesting results: One of the questions was: 'Which type of English should be learnt in Tanzanian secondary schools?' Two thirds of the twenty primary school teachers surveyed ticked 'British Standard English + RP'. However, only a slight majority in Kachru's (1986, p. 23) survey of graduate Indian students, i.e. 55.65 %, labelled the variety of English they spoke as 'Indian English'. Although the attitudes reported on in the studies above are mixed and somewhat contradictory, we are somehow forced to agree with Atechi (2006, p. 32) that "it will take some time to achieve a stable and predictable trend of even non-native English speakers' attitudes towards their own variety of English".

This is perhaps because the communities in which these Englishes are spoken are hybridising and adopting new glocal realities in various ways. These hybridising tendencies have been described variously in sociolinguistic literature, e.g. by Canagarajah (2005) as codemeshing which he defines as a mode of representing local identities; Pennycook (2007) as transcultural flows and global linguistic flows; Higgins (2009) as multivocality; and Garcia (2009) as translanguaging. Other studies have focused on various aspects of multivocality and hybridism now strongly recognised as features of modern multilingual urban Africa by authors like Anchimbe (2007) on linguabridity, Makoni, Brutt-Griffler and Mashiri (2007) on indigenous and urban vernaculars, McLaughlin (2009) on language and identity in the post-colonial city, and Banda and Bellononjengele (2010) on style, repertoire, and identities in multilingual discourses.

This chapter, therefore, sets out to investigate Cameroon English speakers' attitudes towards the variety and the extent to which they take prestige in it. Focus is also on speakers' preferences as far as standards of the language and the choice

of varieties of English as medium of education in Cameroon are concerned. While it is true, as the excerpt in the prologue indicates, that some Cameroonians would want to be identified with foreign varieties or especially foreign accents of the language, it is also true that there are many who take pride in being identified as speakers of the English variety typical of Cameroon—as explained by Fonyuy in her chapter in this volume. The following questions will be discussed: Are CamE speakers aware of the existence of the variety? At what levels do they think CamE is distinct? Do they accept they themselves speak CamE? And could they be said to be 'sitting on a fence' as far as standards of the variety and teaching/learning it in schools are concerned? Answers to these questions will provide clues to speakers' attitudes towards, and identification with, the variety. Furthermore, the answers will be weighed against the emerging numbers of L1 speakers of CamE as an indication that the variety has advanced significantly on the scale proposed by Schneider (2007) in his dynamic model of postcolonial Englishes.

The statistical data reported on here are from a survey administered in three Cameroonian towns (Bamenda, Buea, and Yaounde) in 2003 for a bigger research project. This chapter is based on one part of that survey (see Sect. 7.5 below). The results could be cautiously generalised to other English-speaking towns of the country. I insist on caution because several sociolinguistic changes are currently going on in the country provoked by the rush for English by francophones (see Anchimbe 2005; Mforteh 2007; Fonyuy 2010).

7.3   Indigenised Varieties of English: A History of Attitudes

The spread of English around the world has been accompanied by various attitudes. From intensive rejection to indifferent tolerance of varieties of the language, speakers as well as linguists have expressed different and often contradictory feelings about the language, its regional (i.e. non-native) speakers' accents and choice of words, supposed falling standards or *degeneration* of the language, and the emergence of regional, national and indigenised varieties which are tantamount to ownership of the language by those who are historically *foreign* to it.

In the study of indigenised varieties of English, several negative attitudes have been registered. From the conservative native-speaker linguist who feared *disintegration* of the language if left unchecked in postcolonial areas (see Quirk 1990; Abbott 1991) to the conservative postcolonial subjects and linguists who preferred—for prestige and social esteem reasons—foreign standards (Gyasi 1990; Oji quoted in Jibril 1987, p. 46), the story has not been very different. Also, the war of words between Randolph Quirk on the one hand and Braj Kachru on the other in the 1990s still resonates today. Because these Englishes were conceived of as *mistakes in acquisition* or *bad English*, they were often rejected, sometimes subtly and sometimes even violently. To address this point properly, Anchimbe (2006a, p. 35) proposes that "we need to define how bad 'bad English' must be before it is considered legitimately bad".

However, most of the negative attitudes are not based on the quality of the language but rather on attitudinal prejudices and stereotypes not only on the regions but also on the speakers of English from these regions. As an example of these negative attitudes, Ramato (quoted in Dako 2001, p. 46), declares, "People make the excuse that there is Ghanaian English. There is nothing like Ghanaian English. There is English and then the Ghanaian accent but it shouldn't stop us speaking and writing good English." Still in Ghana, Gyasi (1990, p. 24) laments, "English in Ghana is very ill. The cancerous tumours are countless". In Nigeria, Oji (quoted in Jibril 1987, p. 46), declares that "the death-knell of Nigerian English should be sounded 'loud and clear' as it has never existed, does not exist now, and will never see the sun of day"[2]. The picture gets even darker as Gyasi (1990, p. 24) refers to possible Ghanaianisms as 'cancer': "The cancer has spread too far and is to be found everywhere: in the English of teachers, journalists, other professionals, ordinary men and women, and students from the secondary school to the university."

The negative attitudes above, both from purist native speakers and conservative speakers of indigenised varieties of English, can be represented as in Table 7.1 below. While the former are concerned about the standards and intelligibility of the language, the latter see the use of foreign standards as a source of authenticity and higher social prestige. The local standards, both groups seem to believe, are not yet good enough to take on such tasks such as education.

Not only negative attitudes have been registered but also positive ones. Speakers have also shown pride in the varieties of English they speak. Others, due to various forms of attitudinal filtration, have remained faithful to their local accents. For instance, "Only very few Nigerians or Ghanaians would like to surrender their African personality and speak the prestigious English RP" (Yankson 1989, p. 149). Similarly, those Ghanaians whose English "strives too obviously to approximate to RP [are] frowned upon as distasteful and pedantic" (Sey 1973, p. 1). And in Cameroon, "Cameroonians who insist on sounding like Britons are ridiculed rather than admired" (Mbangwana 1987, p. 423).

The above attitudes are not new in the history of English varieties, Pidgins and Creoles around the world. They simply show how the 'authenticity' of the language beyond the so-called native regions has been contested and is still being contested. We may at first sight think that some of the statements above are too old or far away from Cameroon, but, as the following sections will illustrate, similar attitudes still exist in Cameroon today. Some of the respondents in the survey demonstrate a strong allegiance to BrE norms, which they propose be adopted for education in Cameroon—see e.g. the male student from Buea quoted at the beginning of this chapter. Using a foreign, presumably more 'prestigious', accent like BrE's is met, according to him, with jealousy, and the local variety of English in Cameroon is only a pidgin or a pidginised form of English. The next section reviews some recent

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[2] The irony here is that in trying to *kill* Nigerian English, Oji himself uses it. The expression "the sun of day" is typical of African languages and presupposes there is "a sun of night." This expression is, therefore, either an approximation of the British English collocation "the light of day" or a transliteration from a mother tongue.

Table 7.1 Negative attitudes and the spread of english

Purist native speakers/linguists	Conservative IVE speakers/linguists
Standards or norms of the language	
Disintegration due to regional standards—heresy (Prator 1968, p. 473)	Local varieties equal bad acquisition, remediation needed (Hocking 1974)
Universal monochrome standard based on a native variety (Quirk 1985, p. 6)	Local varieties can cause a "total breakdown in intelligibility" (Gimson 1982, p. 141)
Local varieties are not used in many functions (Quirk 1990, p. 6)	Local standards are not meeting up with native standards (Gyasi 1990, p. 24)
Native standards should ideally be spread (Abbott 1991, p. 57)	Foreign standards are authentic (Gyasi 1990, p. 24)
Unintelligibility is the outcome (Chevillet 1992, p. 27, 1993, p. 32)	They are said to lack social prestige (cf. Banda 1996)
Respect and prestige have to be acquired (Trudgill 1995, p. 316 on Irish English)	Regional standards still maturing (Simo Bobda 1994b, p. 4)
	Local standards now mature but not taught (Ngefac 2005, p. 50)
English language teaching	
Call for 'stable well documented model' worldwide (Prator 1968, p. 473)	Native standards must be adhered to (cf. Schmied 1985)
Standard English best in "our highly technological and sophisticated society" (Honey 1997, p. 246)	No standards exist for local varieties, so no teaching is possible in them (Oji, cf. Jibril 1987, p. 46)
Native speaker teacher and standards preferred (Buckmaster 2000)	Native speaker-Englishes be used as models in the outer circle (Abbot 1991, p. 57)
	Shakespeare's or The Queen's language at all costs, it seems (cf. Anchimbe 2009b, p. 282)

studies on attitudes towards CamE and the prestige it pulls as an (national) indigenised variety of English.

7.4   Cameroon English: Some Recent Studies on Attitudes

Sociolinguistic studies on attitudes towards English (and later CamE) in Cameroon took steam in the 2000s. Among the most conspicuous of them are works done by Anchimbe (2006b), Ngefac (2009, 2010), and Ngefac and Bami (2010). Several other studies have investigated CamE acceptability and systematicity (e.g. Kouega 2007; Simo Bobda 2008), intelligibility (e.g. Atechi 2006), intonation (e.g. Ouafeu (2006), among others. The attitudinal studies adopt a binary perspective that pits CamE against native Englishes, mostly BrE and AmE. Though this binary perspective does not capture the intricacies of hybridism, codemeshing, translanguaging, linguabridity, and multivocality discussed above, it illustrates the main trends in attitudinal attachment and identification, which are certainly different from actual performance in the varieties.

   Anchimbe (2006b) investigates trends in identification with AmE in Cameroon. In a survey administered to 100, mostly young, Cameroonians as many as 64 % of these respondents said they "would most like to speak American English because it is either prestigious or used worldwide" (2006b, p. 7). 32 % indicated they would like to speak like the British because BrE is easy to articulate and is international, and only 4 % chose CamE advancing the reason that "it is the only one they know" (2006b, p. 7). Interestingly, 62 % of the respondents claimed "they feel they speak English like Americans". This strong interest in AmE in the early 2000s, Anchimbe (2006b) explains, is probably the outcome of America's prominence in audio-visual media, world music, film industry, and the physical presence of Americans in many parts of Cameroon as, e.g. peace corps volunteers.

   Ngefac (2009, p. 139) seeks to find out which of these varieties of English Cameroonians "wish to speak" and why: BrE, AmE, Nigerian English (NigE), and CamE. His survey, administered to "100 Cameroonians of different walks of life, randomly selected", revealed the following preferences: 37 % for BrE, 32 % for CamE, 30 % for AmE, and 1 % for NigE. The reasons for preferring BrE ranged from it being the officially recommended variety in Cameroonian schools (32.4 %) to love for British lifestyle and the Queen's language (56.7 %). For AmE, the major reasons, like in Anchimbe's (2006b) survey, were predominantly prestige-based, e.g. American lifestyle and strong influence on the world (70 %). The main reason for choosing CamE advanced by the 32 % who chose CamE was that "it enables me to project my cultural identity as a typical Cameroonian" (87.5 %) (Ngefac 2009, p. 143). Though 32 % prefer CamE, the pull towards foreign varieties still remained strong among these respondents in the mid-2000s.

   In a later study on CamE accents, Ngefac's (2010, p. 2) aim is to capture the attitudes of Cameroonians towards the different varieties of English pronunciation attested in Cameroon and on the recurrence of the features to elect the variety that can be standardised and promoted through pedagogic efforts for national identification.

   He discovers different attitudes towards what he classifies as basilectal (ethnolectal features), mesolectal (mainstram CamE features) and hypercorrected (foreign-based features) continuum of CamE. While most of his informants 'strongly discourage' the ethnolectal features (67 % of 100), as many as 32 % recommend that the hypercorrected features be 'seriously encouraged' in Cameroon. 55 %, nevertheless, say the mesolectal features be 'seriously encouraged'. Again, as in the other surveys, an attitudinal shift towards foreign accents is still visible here, cf. the 32 % preference for foreign accents.

   In the studies reviewed above, a few clear tendencies can be identified: 1) identification with foreign varieties remains significantly high, increasing for BrE from 32 % in Anchimbe's survey in 2006 to 41 % in Ngefac's survey in 2010. Conversely, AmE drops from 64 % in 2006 to 30 % in 2009. A steady increase is, however, witnessed for CamE; from 4 % in 2006 to 32 % in 2009 and then to 88 %[3] in 2010 (Table 7.2).

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[3] The 88 % should be taken carefully. Ngefac (2010) used a scalar technique, and I have added the results of the two positive levels to get 88 %, i.e. 'strongly encouraged' 55 % and 'encouraged' 33 %.

Table 7.2 Cameroonians' attitudes to Englishes: 2006–2010

Author	Respondents	BrE (%)	AmE (%)	CamE (%)
Anchimbe (2006b)	100	32	64	4
Ngefac (2009)	100	37	30	32
Ngefac (2010)	100	41[a]	-	88
Total (average)	300	36.6	31.3	41.3

[a] Ngefac (2010) rather uses the label "hypercorrect features" to refer to features "produced mostly by speakers with a high level of education who struggle in vain to utter SBE forms" (Ngefac 2010, p. 4). Since these speakers approximate Standard British English, I have placed them here under BrE.

What these results tell us is that attitudes towards indigenised varieties of English are still heterogeneous and conditioned by mostly non-linguistic factors such as economic benefit, social prestige, international opportunities, and sociocultural identity. At any given time that each of these factors is relevant; the corresponding identity coat is pulled up and portrayed. However, the increasing attachment to CamE may be a sign of further indigenisation of the variety beyond grammar and lexis, i.e. in the domain of social and pragmatic interaction. The drop in attachment to AmE could possibly be part of the general resentment to American foreign policy during the last years of George W. Bush's administration.

Figure 7.1 illustrates the progression of these attitudes using the percentages arrived at by each of the three authors in Table 7.2.

Taking into account these inconsistent attitudes towards BrE and AmE and a somewhat growing interest in CamE, the next sections focus on the survey I administered and its results. Although it was conducted before some of the studies reviewed above, its results are still reliable given that the attitudes registered so far have not been determined by chronological time but by stakes in identity and socioeconomic benefit.

7.5 The Survey

Linguistic attitudes are best collected using questionnaires or other survey methods that give speakers the chance to express themselves free of the imposing presence of the researcher, as it is the case with interviews. While this method may have its own limitations, i.e., the unreliability of self-reported language use habits, these should not derail us from our focus in this chapter which is speakers' attitudes and not speakers' proficiency. Usually, what subjects say or think they do is not necessarily the same as what they really do linguistically, but behind what they say they do, are their attitudes towards the language or variety they purport to speak or not to speak. Here, I am concerned with the contradictory trends in attitudes towards CamE and not with speakers' competence in the language which could be better investigated using corpus-based methods.
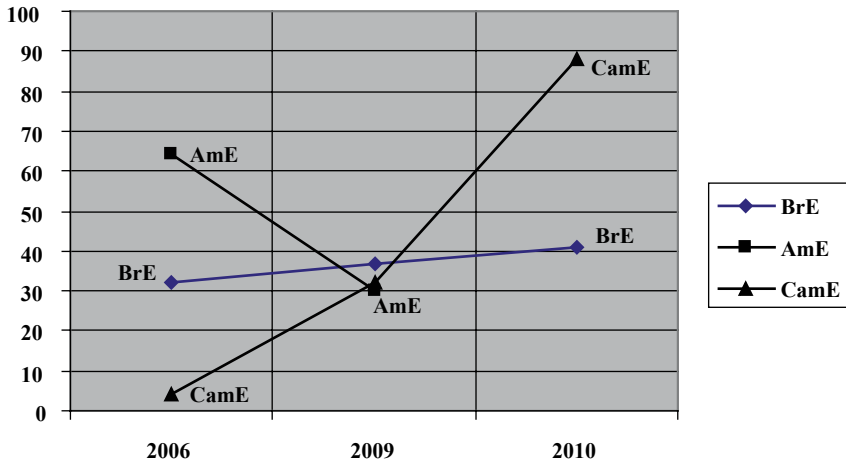
Fig. 7.1 Progression of attitudes towards Englishes in Cameroon

In order to understand CamE speakers' attitudes towards the variety, a section about opinion on the status of English in Cameroon was included in the survey I administered for a larger research project (see Anchimbe 2006a) in the three Cameroonian towns, Bamenda, Buea and Yaounde. The survey, in the form of a questionnaire, was administered in 2003 to 300 randomly selected respondents, 100 each from the three towns, further divided into 50 youths and 50 adults. The respondents comprised the accepted speakers of CamE, i.e. people who have at least completed secondary school (Masanga 1983). These included high school and university students and graduates, workers in the public and private sectors especially teachers, doctors, lawyers, and journalists. As far as gender is concerned, 52 % were males and 48 % females. The respondents were divided into two major groups; youths and adults. The aim was to investigate possible differences emanating from age and gender. All respondents were anglophones aged between 19 and 45 years.

The main objective of the survey was to establish if Cameroonians were aware that English is spoken in Cameroon differently from other countries, and if so, what peculiar features made it different or distinct. In other words, were they aware that CamE exists—its existence seems to have been established clearly within research circles but not yet among regular speakers of the variety. Further questions were asked that checked if they identified with the variety or rather purported to use a foreign, apparently more prestigious variety, especially BrE or AmE.

The following questions, all of them with multiple choice answers,[4] were asked. Q.73 and Q.78 were followed by 'why' and Q.67 and Q.72 by 'other' giving

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[4] Although some of the questions may not be ultimately easy for non-linguists, especially people who have not attended university, the multiple choice answers proposed were clear and simple, and served also as explanations.

respondents the chance to say more than was proposed in the multiple choice answers. Question numbers correspond to the original survey which comprised 80 questions. The responses to the selected questions are quantified and discussed below.

Q.67. Which variety of English do you feel you speak? [British English, Nigerian English, Cameroon English, American English]
Q.69. Have you ever listened to other Africans speak English?
Q.71. Do Cameroonians speak English differently?
Q.72. At what level do Cameroonians use English differently from other Africans?
Q.73. Which variety of English should be taught in schools?
Q.75. Do you think there is something existing in Cameroon as Cameroon English?
Q.78. Do you use French, Cameroon Pidgin English and home language (HL) words in English?

Follow up questions were not placed immediately after the main questions in order to avoid reminding respondents of the possible inherent contradictions, for instance, between the variety they think is internationally acceptable and the one they effectively use. For example, Q.67, Q.71 and Q.75 are related but are placed apart in order not to influence respondents' attitudes.

7.6   Results and Discussion

Attention in the following sections is on speakers' attitudes towards CamE. The four questions posed in the introduction will be discussed here in greater detail. Speakers' judgements about the existence and use of CamE help us understand if they attach prestige to it or prefer to be identified with foreign varieties or accents. In order to identify with a language or variety, respondents normally have to be aware of its existence (Sect. 7.6.1), be able to use the multilingual resources presented to them by other co-existing languages to communicate in it (Sect. 7.6.2), be able to discern its norms or standards from foreign or non-standard forms (Sect. 7.6.3), and be willing to identify with it to the point of using attitudinal filtration to sustain its standard accent (Sect. 7.6.4). These criteria are relevant to judgements on the statistics and speakers' opinions discussed below. The respondents in this study advance several reasons for their choice of CamE or BrE or AmE as medium of education in Cameroon. These, as shown below, revolve around the status of English as a colonial heritage in Cameroon and English as a global language for upward social mobility—both conditioned by international, socio-economic factors rather than the communal role of English among its users in Cameroon.

7.6.1   Existence of CamE: Are its Speakers Aware?

That CamE is known within linguistic research circles in Cameroon and abroad is not new. What seems yet unclear is whether CamE enjoys the same level of

Table 7.3 CamE speakers' awareness of the existence of CamE

Questions	Yes		No		I don't know	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Q.69—Ever listened to other Africans speak English?	292	97.3	6	2	2	0.7
Q.71—Do Cameroonians speak English differently?	278	92.6	13	4.4	9	3
Q.75—Does Cameroon English exist?	223	74.3	59	19.7	18	6

recognition among ordinary speakers of the language in Cameroon as it does within linguistic research circles. Do ordinary CamE speakers accept that it exists as a consistent code within Cameroon? Do they treat the variety as a stable code representative of local Cameroonian reality? Do they reject speech patterns, i.e. by means of attitudinal filtration, through consciousness of the existence of a communal variety or simply "out of jealousy" as the respondent quoted above claims? Although linguistic features identified with given communities may not be produced by all members, most of them are used by a large portion of the community.

Certain questions in the questionnaire sought to get the speakers' awareness of the existence of CamE. Table 7.3 recapitulates responses to questions 69, 71 and 75. Q. 69 serves as a precursor to their awareness of a distinct variety in Cameroon by first of all asking the respondents if they had listened to other Africans speak English. They would not normally be able to say if Cameroonians speak differently if they had not listened to non-Cameroonians speak the language. Q.70 asks them to name the nationality of those they had listened to. Q. 71 then focuses on the difference or specificity of English in Cameroon.

As reported in Table 7.3, 292 (97.3%) of the 300 respondents said they had listened to other Africans, particularly from Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, Zambia, and South Africa, speak English. On this basis, therefore, we can say that they are capable of filtering in those features and patterns that are Cameroonian (or theirs) from those that are foreign (or not theirs). As many as 278 (92.6%) respondents confirmed that Cameroonians speak English differently from these other African people (Q.71). If the questionnaire had ended at this point, then it could have been implied that the respondents were aware of the existence of CamE. But Q.75 was asked after three sub-questions, and the response trend changed slightly. 223 (74.3%) claimed CamE exists (Fig. 7.2), while 59 (19.7%) said it does not, and 18 (6%) said they did not know.

A difference of almost 18% is found between responses to Q.71 and Q.75, which is significant enough to indicate that while accepting that Cameroonians speak English differently, respondents are apparently reluctant to clearly state that a new variety of English has emerged. It is even more contradictory if we compare responses to Q.75 to responses to Q.67 below (Table 7.7). Only 118 (39.4%) said they
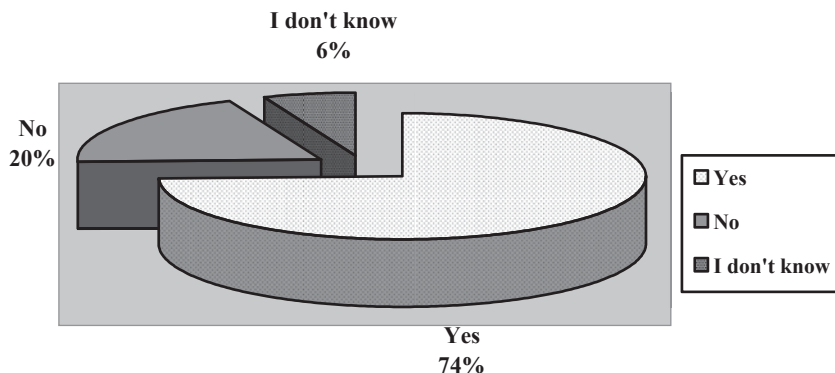
Fig. 7.2 Responses to Q. 75: Does CamE exist?

speak CamE, even though as many as 278 claimed Cameroonians speak English differently, and 223 confirmed CamE effectively exists. Fig. 7.2 illustrates the responses to Q.75 graphically.

  After establishing the existence of CamE, the next step is to identify its specific features. Q.72 was posed to elicit the linguistic levels at which the respondents think CamE is specific or distinct. They had to choose from four attributes or to add theirs (Table 7.4). Deciding on the existence of their variety can only be effective if speakers are aware of the features and speech patterns common to it; features they can set against those produced by speakers from other communities. Interestingly, as Table 7.4 shows, 'accent' was mentioned only a few times along with other prosody-based attributes like 'intonation' in Buea and Yaounde but not in Bamenda.

  As Table 7.4 indicates, pronunciation, with 247 respondents, seems to be the most glaring aspect in which CamE is distinct from other African Englishes. This is perhaps because variation in language is easily perceived through speech. So, major differences between varieties of languages are perceived easily in pronunciation patterns. The other attributes in Table 7.4 follow with less insignificant scores: sentence construction (38 respondents), usage of words (31), many native (indigenous) language words (22), and other, e.g. accent and intonation (6). It was normally expected, and as the literature on indigenised varieties of English suggests, that usage of words (e.g. speakers' innovations) and borrowing from indigenous languages (i.e. substratum influence), would be highly rated as well. This indicates that indigenised varieties of English are not only distinct in the extent of interference from indigenous background languages as earlier research has claimed, even if this influence exists.

  As far as saying CamE exists is concerned, speakers apparently have no negative attitudes.. Identifying the level of distinction of CamE is also not problematic. As Sect. 7.6.2 will show, using items from other languages in English seems to be

Table 7.4 Levels at which CamE is distinctive

Question no.	Linguistic levels	Respondent towns			Total
		Bamenda	Buea	Yaounde	
Q.72	Pronunciation	83	80	84	247
	Sentence construction	14	12	12	38
	Usage of words	2	11	18	31
	Many native language words	5	10	7	22
	Other (esp. accent, intonation)	–	1	5	6

positively evaluated as well. What seems to draw negative attitudes, we will see below, is the question of identifying with, or being identified as a speaker of, CamE.

7.6.2   Multilingual Choices as a Resource: Who Uses Them?

In a heavily multilingual community like Cameroon, it is expected that multilingual speakers, as Cameroonians are, make use of the multilingual linguistic resources at their disposal without necessarily branding them as negative linguistic habits or influence. These resources include borrowing, calquing, code-switching, and code-mixing with other languages in co-existence with English. Given that English is new to the Cameroonian ecology; its nativisation or indigenisation requires the borrowing and adoption of new words from the indigenous linguistic landscape. Interestingly, not only indigenous Cameroonian languages belong to this landscape but also the co-official language, French—an adstrate source, see the introduction to this volume.

Q.78 was asked to check the extent of the use of words from other languages in English. Implicitly, if speakers of a language do not consider borrowing from another language as negative, it could be claimed they consider it a legitimate process and that they identify with their language. If speakers of CamE think borrowing from French, CPE, and the indigenous languages *denigrates* English, then we could say their identification with the language as a local code is still shaky. The results in Table 7.5 seem to show the contrary.

As many as 248 (82.6 %) of the 300 respondents accepted they use words from these three sources when speaking English. 4 (1.4 %) did not know if they did so. The latter case can be interpreted in two ways: 1) they use such borrowed words but these have been so indigenised that they no longer sound *foreign* to them, and 2) the use of such words is limited and negligible. Because these speakers are inherently bilingual, the first reason seems more plausible in this case. It is even more plausible if we look at the reasons the respondents advance for using words from these sources in English. These reasons are recapitulated in Table 7.6 (Q.79).

From the survey results, 120 respondents indicated they use words from French, CPE and indigenous languages in English because they communicate better. This indicates that the local ecology is being extensively written onto the language. The

Table 7.5 Using words borrowed from other languages in English

Questions	Yes		No		I don't know	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Q.78—Do you use words from French, CPE, and indigenous languages in English?	248	82.6	48	16	4	1.4

Table 7.6 Reasons for using French, CPE, and indigenous language words in English

Reasons (Q.79)	Respondent town			Total
	Bamenda	Buea	Yaounde	
They communicate better	42	36	42	120
There are no alternatives	5	25	9	39
They are prestigious	5	5	2	12
They are English words	5	3	1	9
Other	2	3	4	9

lack of alternatives (39 respondents) is normal given that English is new in this context. The prestige argument (12 respondents) somehow ties with the identity argument (i.e. reasons (1) and (6) in Sect. 7.6.4 below) which shows that Cameroonians are proud of their indigenous linguistic heritages and hence make use of them without remorse when speaking English.

7.6.3 CamE Norms: Are Speakers Sitting on the Fence?

As explained in Sect. 7.4 above, opinion was divided over the status of indigenised varieties of English back in the 1990s (see Bamgbose 1998). A similar scenario seems to exist in Cameroon, where many CamE speakers are today torn between sticking to foreign norms, especially BrE (which they hardly get in contact with) and accepting local ones, i.e. CamE, to which they have been exposed. The historical claim to a BrE heritage through colonialism is pervasive in the choice of foreign norms. For some of them, Anchimbe (2006a, p. 207) explains, "it is unthinkable that they are speaking some variety other than BrE. Their country, they claim, was colonised by Britain and Britain, they insist, taught them her English". We could, therefore, conclude that they are 'sitting on the fence', especially because most of them support the CamE variety as a sign of patriotism but at the same time advocate BrE in education for the sake of *correctness* or social prestige.

Q.67 and Q.73 were designed to check this fence-sitting attitude of Cameroonians. The results, reported in Table 7.7 below, show great paradoxes and contradictions especially when compared to results in Table 7.3 above. For instance, 223 (74.3%) of the 300 respondents (Table 7.3) agree CamE exists but in Q.67, up to 179 (59.6%) respondents rather claim that they speak BrE (Table 7.7). The contra-

diction is: how possible is it that CamE exists if they, the accepted reference speakers of CamE, rather speak BrE?

Less than half of the respondents accepted they speak CamE (39.4%) while almost 60% claimed they speak BrE. Only 3 (1%) picked AmE, a score that is not as significant as the results in Anchimbe (2006b) and Ngefac (2009) that show 64% and 30% respectively of Cameroonian youths interested in speaking AmE (see Table 7.2 above). As said earlier, a possible reason for the little interest in AmE could be found in non-linguistic factors, e.g. in 2003 when the survey was conducted, the American immigration visa lottery programme had not yet gained extensive spread in the country, and the internet was still relatively expensive compared to a few years later in the mid-2000s (see Anchimbe's 2006b; Ngefac's 2009 surveys).

Ticking BrE, as most of the respondents in Table 7.7 did, is not based on any linguistic knowledge of, or competence in, BrE but rather on extra-linguistic factors like the following advanced by the respondents:

- Britain colonised us.
- British English is internationally recognised.
- Britain is the motherland of English.
- British English is good English.
- British English is Standard English.
- British English is prestigious worldwide.
- British English is the most used in the whole world.

Similarly, not identifying with CamE could also be motivated by extra-linguistic factors like the following advanced by the respondents:

- CamE lacks social prestige.
- CamE is full of errors.
- CamE is limited only to Cameroon.
- CamE is not standard.

These are all non-linguistic factors. Prioritising these factors suggests that opinions about English language varieties are a matter of social attitudes and prestige, and how these influence speakers' linguistic identities and preference for them.

Fig. 7.3 below is based on responses to Q.67 and graphically shows the varieties the 300 respondents claimed they speak.

A pointer to Cameroonians' inherent positive attitude towards foreign varieties is captured in their preference of BrE as medium of education (Table 7.7). As high as 82% of the respondents said BrE should be taught in schools. However, up to 39 (13%) respondents advocate the teaching of CamE in schools. Although this is insignificant compared to the 246 (82%) for BrE, it, nevertheless, indicates that there is some awareness on the existence and relevance of the variety within the country, especially in the formal domain of education. Does this, therefore, mean speakers find prestige in it? Do they use it as an identity marker? Sect. 7.6.4 goes further into this.
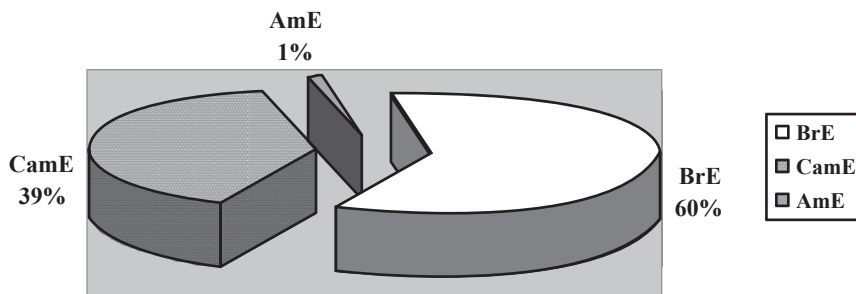
Fig. 7.3 Varieties of English respondents claim they speak

7.6.4 Linguistic Identity: Is it Identifying with CamE or Identifying its Features?

Many researchers have adequately illustrated that CamE is distinct and peculiar to Cameroon. For Mbangwana (1992, p. 96) CamE is "English … in form [but] essentially Cameroonian in mood and content". According to Nkemleke (2004, p. 610), the multilingual nature of CamE expression (through letters, for instance) "underlines the unique cultural and linguistic situation in Cameroon" within which the variety exists. If this status has to be maintained, then CamE speakers will have to overtly identify themselves with it. This is because, if speakers reject their own variety, it would continue to be treated as a set of *errors*; but if they accept and identify with it, then it will gain higher social status in and out of the society. As it is, CamE speakers are aware of its features; they are able to identify some of these features, but are apparently not yet fully ready to say they speak the variety—cf. almost 60 % of the 300 respondents claim they speak BrE.

From the responses to Q.75, it is clear that CamE exists and is apparently generally accepted by its speakers: 74.3 % (223) of the 300 respondents confirmed CamE exists, and 13 % of the respondents in Q.73 called for its adoption in education. The general feeling about the preservation and promotion of CamE through teaching could be seen in the following reasons (1)-(7) advanced by the respondents. All of these respondents are multilingual, speaking all or up to three of the following languages: English, French, an indigenous language, and CPE. A further fact is that the respondents in excerpts (3), (4), (5) identified English as their L1. Their identification with English seems no stronger than those respondents who have an indigenous language as L1. The follow up question to Q.73 was, why should CamE be introduced in education in Cameroon? Here are the most recurrent reasons culled from the survey:

(1) "it will help us maintain our identity." (Male journalist in Yaounde, 35–43 years, L1: Fulfulde)
(2) "we should be Cameroonians." (Male teacher in Bamenda, 35–43 years, L1: unnamed HL)

Table 7.7 Speaking and teaching CamE?

Questions	BrE		CamE		AmE		Other[a]		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Q.67—Which variety of English do you speak?	179	59.6	118	39.4	3	1	–	–	300 (100%)
Q.73—Which English be taught in schools?	246	82	39	13	12	4	3	1	300 (100%)

[a] *Other* refers to other Englishes listed in the questionnaire: Canadian, Nigerian, Australian, Educated West African Englishes, and CPE. Only 3 respondents ticked these

(3) "because it will enable Cameroonians to communicate easily with one another." (Male administrator in Buea, 26–34 years, L1: English)
(4) "because they understand themselves well when they speak." (Female student in Yaounde, 17–25 years, L1: English)
(5) "we are Cameroonians not British." (Male administrative staff in Buea, 35–43 years, L1: English)
(6) "because we are Cameroonians and should be proud of our own English as an identification." (Female student in Yaounde, 17–25 years, L1: Moghamo)
(7) "because we must speak the kind of English that suits our realities." (Female student in Bamenda, 17–25 years, L1: Batie)

From the seven reasons above, four (1), (2), (5), and (6) are concerned with the construction of a distinct and admirable linguistic identity as speakers of a variety of English and a national identity as Cameroonians. This is important for the spread and further stability of the variety. The other three reasons (3), (4), and (7) deal with communicability and understanding within the linguistic ecology. It could be claimed here that, while Cameroonians may be reluctant to overtly identify with CamE, they indeed consider it a marker of their linguistic identity and a code for communal communication.

Today, over ten years after the survey was conducted, more L1 speakers of the variety must have emerged, implying that overt identification is already being expressed for the variety, as responses to Ngefac's (2010) survey quoted above suggest. The next section traces the emergence of L1 speakers of CamE from surveys conducted between 1977–1978 (Koenig et al. 1983) and 2003 (Anchimbe 2006a). Again, these surveys are based on speakers' claims and not on any tested proficiency in the language.

7.7 Cameroon English as L1: Emerging Native Speaker Populations

The emergence of L1 speakers of CamE implicitly defeats the negative attitudes some speakers show towards it. From sociolinguistic surveys of urban centres conducted in 1977–1978 and reported on in Koenig et al. (1983) to smaller sur-

veys conducted in the 1990s and 2000s, there have been several respondents who identify English as their L1. Especially since the 1990s, township elites have found new social esteem in having their children acquire English as their first (and sometimes only) language. This group of children, Alobwede (1998) says, have English as their status mother tongue. Parents in urban centres have, in reaction to the supposed falling standards of education in public schools, preferred to send their children to posh private or mission boarding schools where English is the sole language of interaction since the use of CPE and indigenous languages is prohibited.

The outcome has been generations of L1 speakers of CamE, since all of these institutions are run predominantly by Cameroonians. The teachers of English in these schools are also Cameroonians whose input variety of English is CamE, since they too attended school in the country. An interesting social fact is that the children who attend these posh mission boarding schools believe they speak a socially superior and more correct type of English than others. They often feel they hold a higher social status because they speak only English and not CPE (which is claimed to be detrimental to performance in English) or an indigenous language. Again, these are generally social attitudinal assumptions.

To trace the emergence of L1 speakers of CamE, I will make reference to three surveys: Mbangwana (1983) conducted in 1977–1978 as part of the Koenig et al. (1983) survey, Alobwede (1998) based on the parameters of Koenig et al.'s survey, and Anchimbe (2006a) conducted in 2003. Focus in the three surveys is on three towns, Bamenda, Buea, and Yaounde.

In Table 7.8 culled from Mbangwana (1983, p. 87), the percentage of English L1 speakers is negligible, i.e. 1% (6 respondents) of 585 speakers in Bamenda; 7% (19) of 254 in Buea; and 4% (21) of 500 in Yaounde. One possible reason for this is that there was less exposure to the language outside the school, and so the few children who had more exposure were children of working class elites living in urban centres.

More than 15 years after Mbangwana's (1983) survey, Alobwede (1998) comes up with new percentages of children with English as L1. As he explains: "I have used the principles used in the 1977–1978 survey and have come out with these figures" (Alobwede 1998, p. 54). His calculations show minimal increases in the acquisition of English as L1 (Table 7.9) which he, however, applauds in comparison to the acquisition of CPE which registers even less increases. The increase in L1 speakers of English according to him is motivated by the banning of CPE in homes, schools, and other domains in Cameroon: "The dynamics of EdE [educated English] therefore show that the unofficial banning of PE is steadily gaining ground" (Alobwede 1998, p. 54).

In Table 7.9, the percentage of L1 speakers in each town almost doubles. Besides the banning of CPE advanced by Alobwede (1998), we could also add the increase in exposure to the language, the creation of more schools especially in sub-urban areas, and the spread of audiovisual media that use the official languages, English and French, as medium of broadcast.

Table 7.8 English as L1 for children in 1977–1978. (Mbangwana 1983, p. 87)

Town	Total population	Standard English	
		#	%
Bamenda	585	6	1
Buea	254	19	7
Yaounde	500	21	4
Total	1,339	46	3.4

Table 7.9 English as L1 in major cities in 1998. (Alobwede 1998, p. 54)

Town	Total population	English (%)
Bamenda	585	3.5
Buea	254	13
Yaounde	500	8
Total	1,339	6.8

Table 7.10 English as L1 in Cameroon in 2003[a]. (Anchimbe 2008, p. 33)

Town	Total population	English	
		#	%
Bamenda	64	25	39
Buea	89	17	19
Yaounde	70	23	32.8
Total	223	65	29.1

[a] For a more elaborate interpretation of this survey, see Anchimbe (2008)

In a recent survey in 2003 and reported in Anchimbe (2006a, 2008), I focused on adults in the age range 19–45 years in the three towns, Bamenda, Buea, and Yaounde (Table 7.10). The increase in the percentage of L1 English speakers is startling, even though the respondent population was significantly smaller. Bamenda registers the highest percentage of English L1 with 39 % of 64 respondents followed by Yaounde with 32.8 % of 70, and then Buea with 19 % of 89 respondents. The same reasons proposed above still hold sway here, even though the globalisation of English must have added to the pull of English in Cameroon not only among anglophones but also francophones (see Anchimbe 2005; Fonyuy 2010, etc.).

From the three surveys above, there is a constant increase in the number of people acquiring English as L1. This fits well with the increasing attachment to CamE illustrated in Fig. 7.1 using statistics from surveys by Anchimbe (2006b) and Ngefac (2009, 2010). What this suggests is that although negative attitudes may still be expressed towards CamE, it is steadily acquiring native speakers and improving in overt identification. Again, whatever negative attitudes speakers may show towards the variety seem to disappear when the need to portray their nationality, linguistic independence, and cultural identity arises. The excerpts in (1)–(7) above support this. The trends in Tables 7.8, 7.9 and 7.10 are represented graphically in Fig. 7.4.
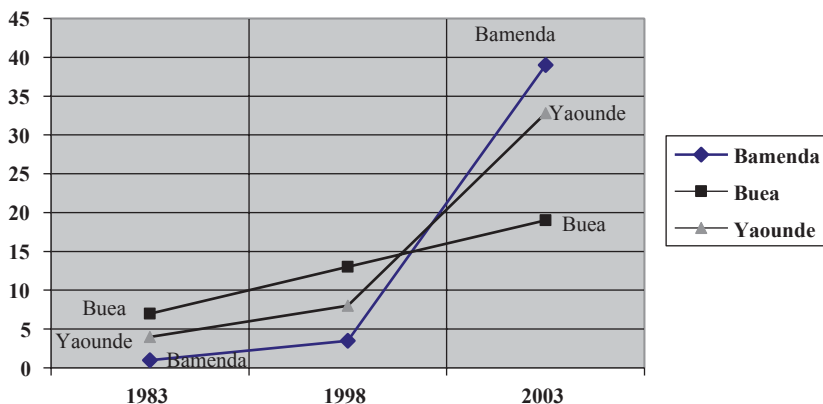
Fig. 7.4 L1 speakers of English across time: 1977–2003

7.8   Conclusion

This chapter has discussed CamE speakers' attitudes towards the variety in relation to the type of English they claim they speak, would like to speak, or would like to be taught in schools in Cameroon. Their preferences, the chapter has explained, show a double-directional trend: while they seem to prefer foreign varieties, especially BrE, for education and employment, CamE still remains a symbol of cultural and linguistic identity for them. The survey conducted for this study carries respondents' passionate support for CamE as a local variety (1)–(7) and high percentages for its existence in the country. If the speakers at some point declare they prefer BrE, it is apparently for particular reasons determined by context, issues of social esteem or prestige, notions of 'standard grammar', and socio-economic demands especially at the international level. These non-linguistic factors influence speakers' choices or rather wishes.

Speakers' attitudes and prestige desires are important in the sociolinguistic evolution of languages or language varieties. The attachment to, and defence of, a language or variety are dependent on how well speakers feel at ease in or with it and how they are treated by others who do not speak that language. Hence, as one of the respondents says above, CamE should be taught in schools because "we are Cameroonians and should be proud of our own English as an identification" (6). Such a strong attitudinal attachment pushes speakers to continue rejecting non-Cameroonian speech patterns in CamE, through attitudinal filtration, hence according the variety more overt prestige and acceptance.

Although age, gender, and place of origin of respondents are highlighted above, they do not really play a significant role in the respondents' choices registered in the survey. The identity choices are traceable in all speakers irrespective of age, gender, and town of origin. However, further research that takes into account ethnolectal variation may find interesting trends at these levels.

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Chapter 8
Gender and the use of Tags in Cameroon English Discourse

Veronica A. Dashaco and Eric A. Anchimbe

Abstract The aim of this chapter is to investigate the types of tag questions commonly used by Cameroonian men and women in both formal and informal and single-sex and mixed-sex interactions in Cameroon English. A major question we seek to answer is: do the tags used by Cameroonian women suggest tentativeness, hesitancy, and powerlessness as implied by literature in western contexts? The analysis of the naturally-occurring data carried out here reveals on the contrary that the use of tags, especially by Cameroonian women, is conditioned by the respect of sociocultural norms of society and the desire to be polite, deferent, and acceptable. From a more general point of view, tag usage is highly context-dependent, i.e. in relation to the physical location, the discourse context (formal or informal), the participants involved (age, parent-child, gender), and the relationship between the participants (symmetrical or asymmetrical).

   Although overall the statistics presented here show women as using more tags than men, the specific types of tags used are influenced by the contextual factors listed above. This chapter only opens up a field of sociolinguistic and pragmatic research that has still not been extensively explored within Cameroon English discourse. It is our wish that more in-depth studies be carried out that reveal inherent patterns of social interaction across gender and languages not only in Cameroon but also in other postcolonial communities.

Keywords Gender · Gender roles · Tag question · Cultural norms · Politeness

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8.1   Introduction

This chapter examines the use of tag questions by Cameroonian men and women in their interactions in Cameroon English (CamE) in both single and mixed-sex conversations and also in formal and informal situations. It challenges the assumption that tag usage by women indicates hesitancy, uncertainty, lack of authority, and tentativeness. The chapter uses illustrative, naturally-occurring examples from three main domains: at home, on the street, and at work (on radio) to corroborate statements made here about Cameroonian women's use of tags. In order to establish a trend in the use of tags according to gender, the second part of the chapter reports on a survey administered in Cameroon in 2007. In it, respondents were asked to say which gender is most likely to use the tag types presented in the questionnaire. Although the responses are simply opinions and not instantiations of natural language use, they are used here to further corroborate trends in the naturally-occurring data discussed in the first part of the chapter. A range of reasons why respondents attribute the tags to women or men is provided to correlate linguistic behaviour and social behaviour. We do not claim to establish exactly which gender uses which tags, but we try to identify possible trends in the choice of tag questions. We intend to provide answers to questions like what socio-pragmatic motivations guide the use of tag questions by men and women? Do women use tags more than men? What is the impact of cultural norms, social ideologies and politeness in women's choice of tags? The different types of data collected are intended to provide substantial clues to these questions.

The concept of gender harbours a lot of variability at the level of language usage and discourse habits. This variability suggests that linguistic behaviour is socially and culturally determined. Gender has been generally conceived of as a sociocultural concept which is based on the assignment of meaning and the social consequence of that meaning in the relationship between men and women in society. In the mainstream Cameroonian society, gender is mostly understood as a combination of the roles and obligations expected of males and females in both their social interactions (e.g. in marriage, education, employment, and community life) and their linguistic behaviour (e.g. respect, politeness, (dis)agreement, and authoritativeness). Since Cameroon is a predominantly patriarchal society, there is an inherent imbalance in men's and women's social and linguistic power and the type of discourses they produce or are exposed to. Discourse, Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003, p. 42) hold, is a "socially meaningful activity—most typically talk but non-verbal actions as well—in which ideas are constructed over time." And if men dominate most public domains in this patriarchal society, it is imaginable that they would tend to recreate this dominance in their discursive or linguistic behaviour by being, e.g. authoritative, indifferent, less polite, or resolute.

We can, therefore, talk in this vein of gendered discourses in Cameroon. Gendered discourses, as used in this chapter, refer to both spoken and written discourses produced by men and/or women suggesting the roles and obligations expected of them by society. These roles could be cultural, i.e. determined by indigenous

cultural patterns, norms, and beliefs, or ideological, i.e. inherited or acquired from social interaction within the society. As far as the ideological roles are concerned, Sunderland (2006, p. 17) explains that "Different men's and women's articulated positions depend on the discourses to which they have access and on which they draw." By articulating such positions, discourses are produced that place the genders in distinct categories, performing different social roles, and fulfilling various expectations. In a nutshell, Kunsmann (2000, p. 4) summarises that "[i]nteractional patterns in same-sex and cross-sex studies provide evidence for the fundamental difference between men's and women's linguistic behaviour." However, Cameron (2007) warns against simply confirming the gender stereotypes incorporated in popular notions of men as being from mars and women from venus.

The experiences of Cameroonian women as farmers, *buyam-sellams* (petty traders), housewives, mothers, and daughters, and Cameroonian men as professors, doctors, mechanics, public transport drivers, husbands, fathers, and sons suggest a gender-based division of roles. Social researchers have established that the division of roles in society could also be found in language, i.e. what has come to be referred to as "the linguistic division of labour" (Putman 1975, p. 228 ff.). This division allocates different levels of linguistic authority to the genders, and as shown in this chapter with the use of tags, the linguistic division of roles helps to legitimise the social or cultural division of roles. Focus here is on CamE and the choices men and women make in their use of tags.

We could loosely trace the origin of this stratified division of gender and linguistic roles in Cameroon (by extension CamE discourse) to the structure of Cameroonian indigenous cultures, societies, and languages. In these societies, men are said to belong to the public domain and women to the private (cf. Atanga 2010a). In the public domain, language use and the decorum that goes with it is different. It is also in the public domain that power is exercised since this is where major decisions concerning the life of the society are taken. The woman rather belongs to the private home domain where child bearing and home care are the major tasks. As Fig. 8.1 illustrates, men's and women's spheres of influence are differentiated, hence their speech. Even though we do not follow up on this line of discussion in this chapter, it is important because it helps us to understand potential gender-based variation in the use of English[1] in Cameroon.

As mentioned above, each of the men-dominated domains listed in Fig. 8.1 have decisive power relations. The differences in power relations and gender roles in these domains of society are also realised discursively. One of such discursive domains is the use of tags—the focus of this chapter.

The data used here were collected from two main sources: 1) recordings of real-life interactions at home (in the family), on the street (among friends), and at work (radio interviews). The examples of tag usage obtained from these recordings are used here for illustrative purposes and not as a consistent corpus of CamE tag usage.

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[1] As an official language, English already positions itself as a language of power. And since power traditionally belongs to men, it is predictable that their use of the language would bear traces of power and decisiveness.
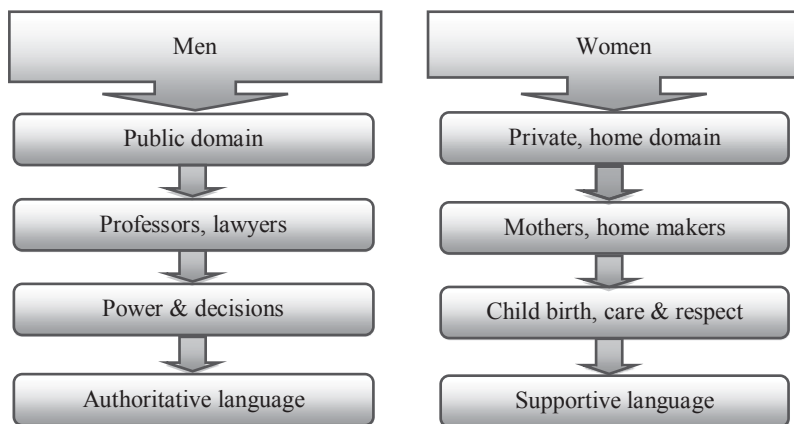
Fig. 8.1 Traditional patterns in division of roles in Cameroonian cultures

2) A questionnaire survey was also administered to 400 respondents; 200 men and 200 women in Cameroon in 2007 (see Sect. 8.3 below). The survey was based on the most recurrent tag types identified in the recordings. Respondents were expected to say which gender is most likely to use each of the tag types (see Sect. 8.3 below).

The rest of the chapter is structured thus: Sect. 8.2 makes a cursory review of literature on tag questions in the West and on language and gender in Cameroon. Section 8.3 explains how the data were collected and categorised. Section 8.4 is the core of the work. It analyses the data collected from the recordings of interactions in the three domains cited above. Section 8.5 uses results of the questionnaire survey to account for the variation in tag usage between men and women. Section 8.6 identifies potential areas for further research and also concludes the chapter.

8.2 Gender and Tag Usage across Cultures: Between the West and Cameroon

The use of tags and its relationship to gender has been disputed in the literature on language and gender since the appearance of Lakoff's (1975) book *Language and Women's Place* in the 1970s. Two main arguments have been advanced. The first, suggested by Lakoff herself, holds that women use more tags than men. The second, heralded in its initial stages by Dubois and Crouch (1975) and Spender (1985), contends that men also use tags, and sometimes even more than women.

According to Lakoff (1975, p. 14), "there is no syntactic rule in English that only women may use. But there is at least one rule that a woman will use in more conversational situations than a man…This is the rule of the tag-question formation". Clearly, for Lakoff (1975) tag questions are typical of women. She links the use of tag questions to hesitancy, powerlessness, and tentativeness, indicating that women's speech is characterised by these features.

   Several studies tested Lakoff's assumptions but arrived at different results. For instance, Dubois and Crouch (1975, p. 293) collected tag questions involving both formal and informal tags from recordings of a "small professional meeting" attended by both men and women. Their survey revealed that as many as 33 tag questions were used by men and none by women. The following examples (1)-(3) from Dubois and Crouch's (1975, p. 293) corpus were spoken by men:

(1)   You would miss it, wouldn't you?
(2)   That's not too easy, right?
(3)   Can't be very big, is it?

Apart from the two positions above, other researchers have focused on the functions of tag questions in discourse before relating these functions to speakers' gender. For example, O'Barr and Atkins (1980) illustrate in their study on courtroom language that the use of tag questions does not correlate with the sex of the speaker, but rather with other factors like social status and the speaker's previous courtroom experience. This contradicts Lakoff's (1975) description which identifies tag questions as part of women's language. They prefer to rather talk of women's language as being powerless language, but also argue that women use powerless language because they occupy less powerful positions in society than men. It is a social issue and not a gender-based one, since, as they explain, both men and women with low social status make use of powerless language.

   From a similar perspective, Holmes (1984) investigates tag questions in relation to the meaning they express: modal meaning or affective meaning (see also Holmes 1993). While tags "with primarily modal meaning signal the speaker's degree of certainty about the proposition expressed" (Coates 1986, p. 104), as in (4) below, those whose "primary function is affective express speaker's attitude towards the addressee" (Coates 1986, p. 104). The former is speaker-oriented and the latter addressee-oriented. According to Coates (1986), the latter type, i.e. affective modals, either support the addressee (facilitative tags) as in (5) or soften the impact of the negative affective speech act, as in (6).

(4)   She's coming around soon, isn't she? (Husband to wife concerning expected guest)
(5)   The hen's brown, isn't she? (Teacher to pupil)
(6)   That was pretty silly, wasn't it? (Older child to younger child) (Coates 1986, p. 104)

Holmes (1984, p. 54) concludes with empirical evidence from a corpus representing the speech of men and women that, overall, the difference between men and women as far as the use of tags is concerned is not great. However, men and women seem to use tags for different purposes. As illustrated in Table 8.1, more women in her corpus used facilitative tags (59 %) than men (25 %), but more men (13 %) used softening tags than women (6 %). In line with previous Lakoffian studies, her survey also reveals that men used more modal tags to express uncertainty (61 %)

Table 8.1 Use of tags according to gender. (Holmes 1984, p. 54)

Function of tag	Women		Men	
	#	%	#	%
Expressing uncertainty (modal)	18	35	24	61
Facilitative (affective)	30	59	10	25
Softening (affective)	3	6	5	13
Total number of tags	51		39	

Table 8.2 Use of tags according to gender. (Cameron et al. 1989, p. 89)

Function of tag	Women		Men	
	Powerful	Powerless	Powerful	Powerless
Expressing uncertainty (modal)	3 (5%)	9 (15%)	10 (18%)	16 (29%)
Facilitative (affective)	43 (70%)	0	25 (45%)	0
Softening (affective)	6 (10%)	0	4 (7%)	0
Total number of tags	61		55	

than women (35%). A possible reason for these sex-based differences in language usage, Sunderland (1994) says, could be the fact that men and women make use of different discourse norms during communication.

Holmes' (1984) results are supported by Cameron et al.'s (1989) study carried out a few years later. From their study of symmetrical and asymmetrical discourse, they discovered that powerless interactants never used affective tags in asymmetrical discourses suggesting that these tags are mostly used by powerful participants. As Table 8.2 shows, their findings differ from Holmes (1984) only in this respect. The overall trend in the use of modal tags remained unchanged, i.e. used more by men (39 tokens) than women (12 tokens).

Even though both surveys in Tables 8.1 and 8.2 indicate that overall women use more tags than men, a significant contribution they make is that speaker statuses (powerful vs. powerless) in discourses and the type of interactions (symmetrical vs. asymmetrical) often play a role in their choice of tags. Attributing tag questions to women has been, according to Spender (1985, p. 9), caused by "distortions in the research process" triggered by researchers' uncritical acceptance of the "initial hypothesis…that tag questions contained the key to women's hesitancy and tentativeness." Besides, this could also be the case of "double-standard at work here and that a tag question is being defined here as the *female* use of a particular form; when men use the same form it is called something else" (Spender 1985, p. 9).

Today, the debate is no longer topical due in part to the prominence of other feminist and gender discourses which focus on issues beyond just the use of language such as gender and societal roles, employment, and sexuality. Cameron (2007) revisits the debate by illustrating that the differences that exist between men and women are often the outcome of the desire to construct and portray personal meaning and identity by either men or women. For her, most of the gender-based peculiarities identified with women are simply popular stereotypes, e.g. "The idea

that women are more conservative speakers than men is a popular stereotype" (Cameron 2007, p. 148). For more on these and other gender-based investigations, see Coates and Cameron (1989), Coates (1998, 2004), Talbot (2010), Hepburn and Potter (2011), Cameron (2007), etc.

The studies above are all on Western contexts where monolingualism is often the norm, and where gender equality has been fought for over several centuries. To our knowledge, there is no study that focuses extensively on the use of tag questions[2] by men and women in Cameroon. This makes it difficult to relate the above studies to the Cameroonian context. However, the Cameroonian context is so significantly different that similar results would not have been expected. It is multilingual and multiethnic, and gender roles seem to be defined by both ethnic or cultural and official or formal norms and practices. This raises several questions: In which language is sexism most observable in this context, where two colonially-introduced foreign languages, French and English, serve as official languages, and the indigenous languages play the role of home languages? What about Cameroon Pidgin English (CPE) which is also very present as a language for wider, interethnic communication? The language situation in Cameroon makes it a typical postcolonial society. Investigating gender differences in language use is, therefore, an interesting enterprise. As said above, our focus in this chapter is on English alone.

A few previous studies have paid attention to the use of language by women in Cameroon. Atanga (2006, 2009, 2010a, b) has studied various aspects of gender in political discourse in the Cameroonian parliament. These range from 'modern progressive' gendered discourses, i.e. those that put the woman in front (Atanga 2009), to major gender differences in the parliament (Atanga 2010b).

Atanga (2010a) illustrates the different choices women in the Cameroonian parliament make during formal communication in the parliament. The language of female parliamentarians, she explains, is different from that of their male counterparts principally because of covert traditional discourses which attribute specific communicative roles to males and females. She concludes that in the parliament, both the discourses of the female and male parliamentarians strive to legitimise a 'model traditional Cameroonian woman' (Atanga 2010a, p. 93) who is respectful and not authoritative, especially in the presence of men.

Working on pragmatic particles in CamE, Ouafeu (2006, pp. 541–542) discovers from the

> analysis of data obtained in casual contexts from 16 female and 14 male speakers of Cameroon English…that the particles *na, ya* and *eihn* are used by both female and male speakers, but with a propensity by females to use them more frequently than their male counterparts.

A possible reason he advances for this is that, in general, women seem "to be more ready to share their intimacy with others" in a bid to "reduce the social gap between themselves and their interlocutors" (Ouafeu 2006, p. 541). Here, the need to

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[2] A chapter in Dashaco (2010) describes the use of tag questions by mostly women. Her overall aim in the study is not on tag usage but rather on differences in men's and women's use of English in Cameroon.

be polite and be accepted within the society, a feature often identified with women's speech, is highlighted in Ouafeu's (2006) analysis of CamE casual discourse.

In an earlier study, Mbangwana (1996) investigates the linguistic strategies Cameroonian women use in asserting their gender independence and progressiveness. He focuses on the ways women modify their first names, especially in spelling, and also how they affix their maiden surnames to the names of their husbands. Mbangwana (1996) gives examples such as *Janet* becoming *Jeannette* and *Jessie Atogho* becoming *Jessie Atogho-Ekukole* after marriage. Although none of these studies is on tag usage they, however, indicate that there is a feminist consciousness in Cameroon, which certainly impacts on language use.

The work of Dashaco (1999, 2010) focuses squarely on the issue of language and gender. She investigates the differences between men and women's speech in CamE discourse, and proposes possible reasons for them. While agreeing that educated Cameroonian women generally speak differently from uneducated ones, Dashaco (1999) also identifies a peculiar gendered trend in the speech of educated Cameroonian women. Their speech portrays them as educated, emancipated, progressive, and independent.

Other factors that shape women's speech, Dashaco (1999, p. 37) explains, include their mastery of the language in which the interaction takes place (especially English or French), their social rank vis-à-vis other participants (both males and females), and their family status, i.e. married or unmarried, mother or not. These factors, especially marriage and childbirth, confirm the traditional model qualities attributed to a 'real' woman (see also Atanga 2010a) in the Cameroonian indigenous cultures, and if missing could curtail the power of the woman to present herself as independent, accomplished, and progressive.

In her PhD thesis, Dashaco (2010) moves the discussion to discourse choices by focusing on, among other things, the use of tag questions by men and women. She concludes that while Cameroonian women make use of tags, they do so in a particularly Cameroonian way, which is different from the Western explained earlier. Although many women have adopted feminist positions to combat traditional conceptualisations of the relationship between men and women and also to project women as independent and progressive, Dashaco (2010) hints that the Cameroonian woman still faces various forms of marginalisation. So, the traditional division of labour represented in Fig. 8.1 still prevails albeit to different degrees based on interactional contexts and locations.

8.3   The Data and Categorisation

The data described here consist of tape-recorded conversations of regular English users in Cameroon. Most of the examples used are only a few from a bigger dataset consisting of recordings from both formal (church, public offices, seminars, public libraries) and informal (public gardens, traditional wedding ceremonies, family contexts) situations collected by Veronica Dashaco between 2005 and 2007 and later controlled in 2009. The people recorded had at least the GCE Ordinary Level

Certificate—a base for proficient users of CamE set by Masanga (1983) and generally accepted by researchers on the variety (e.g. Simo Bobda and Mbangwana 1993; Simo Bobda 1994; Anchimbe 2006). Some of the examples (11)-(12) are taken from the weekly programme 'Happy Birthday' (2009) broadcast on CRTV Bamenda.

The data were collected from the North West and South West regions (English-speaking) and the Centre and Littoral regions (French-speaking).[3] As mentioned in the introduction, the data were initially categorised in two ways. Firstly, there was a qualitative analysis that sought to identify gender-based specificities in the tag questions used in the natural interactions recorded. Conversations containing relevant gender-based tags were identified and then put into a smaller corpus. From this smaller corpus, five central tag types were identified, into which the most recurrent tags were now regrouped. These five types, listed below, were then presented to respondents in the questionnaire.

T1 Tag questions that express axiomatic knowledge known to participants, and that do not require a response.
T2 Tag questions that serve as obvious comments or directives.
T3 Tag questions that elicit general approval and/or support.
T4 Tag questions that express surprise, uncertainty or hesitation.
T5 Tag questions borrowed from Cameroon Pidgin English.[4]

Secondly, the five recurrent tag types were written into the questionnaire survey and administered to 400 (200 males and 200 females) respondents drawn from the four locations cited above. The aim was to understand if people generally relate gender to the choice of tags. The respondents had three options in attributing the possible source of each tag: to men, to women, or neutral (to both). The results of the questionnaire are presented and discussed in Sect. 8.5.

The use of both qualitative and quantitative methods in this study is quite important. The questionnaire was not only for respondents to attribute tags to their possible authors, but also to explain why they attribute each of the tags to men or women (see 8.5.3). Through these explanations, we get insights into the impact of culture and societal ideologies on gendered discourses. The outcome of the survey lends credence to the argument that the way people use language may at times differ from the way they say they do. Also, it confirms the supposition that issues concerning gender and language often generate strong feelings which may either contradict or confirm evocative anecdotes or stereotypes. The quantitative results partially establish the use of tag questions by men and women, but are not claimed to be readily transferable to tag question production in general and, even so, to other contexts and communities of speakers.

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[3] Since we use only a few illustrative examples here, these speaker origins do not really play a role in the analysis. Important in our categorisation is the focus on anglophone speakers of English.

[4] Although this tag is not thematic as the others, it indeed is endowed with pragmatic content. CPE tags create a closer relationship between interactants. They move interaction to informal, friendly, familial, and cordial spheres where cooperation is the default.

8.4   Analysis: Tag Usage in Different Contexts

The definition of a tag question adopted in this chapter goes beyond the grammatical definition which places it "midway between an outright statement and a yes-no question: it is less assertive than the former, but more confident than the latter" (Lakoff 1975, p. 15). It is not limited to the auxiliary + pronoun structure but includes all words or groups of words that come after a statement requesting or necessitating an affirmative or alternative response. In CamE and as the examples show, the following constructions are used as tags: *not so?*, *is that right?*, *can't you see?*, *is it not so?*, *is that not so?*, *is it a lie?*, *is that?*, and *you hear me?*. In CamE, the tag question must not replicate the auxiliary of the statement, nor must it use the dummy in its place. What motivates it is the pragmatic effect it is expected to have. The analysis below seeks to identify the function of the tag used in the exchanges, and to establish whether it suggests supportive, affective, or submissive speech (by women) or powerful and authoritative speech (by men).

   The first excerpt (7) was recorded in a home environment. The exchange is between a grandmother (GM) and her grandson (GS). They have just met after having not seen each other for about ten years. Focus here is on the use of the tag "aren't you?" by GM and the discursive role she wants it to play in this context.

(7) At home (grandmother and grandson meeting after 10 years)
     GM: My son, you are welcome back home after so many years!
     GS: Thank you grandma (*hugging grandma*). I missed you so much and all
            the spoiling…
     GM: You are still the same liar you always were, **aren't you**?
     GS: You don't mean that now, **do you grandma**?
     GM: Oh, you have not changed a bit, I see.
     GS: I am a grown up now, you know, and ready for marriage.

The grandmother's use of the tag "aren't you?", from first sight and if taken out of context could suggest a strict, direct, propositional question and could, therefore, be identified as a male way of speaking (modal function). On the contrary, it is a compliment that indicates that she still has confidence in her assertion. Although, the assertion seems negative, i.e. "liar", it is mitigated by the use of the tag in order to show how she appreciates her grandson. She makes him to understand that no amount of time can make her forget anything about him. Her use of the tag is an indirect way of expressing her affection for him.

   The above point of view is justified when GS neither refutes nor affirms her opinion, but rather returns the question to her—"You don't mean that now, do you grandma?"—from which his grandmother can only conclude that her 'little boy' has not changed, with "I see". So, GM uses the tag question "aren't you?" to tease and show great understanding of her grandson's behaviour, while he uses the tag "do you grandma?" to elicit a genuine response from his GM. The two seem to follow the gender roles described in the literature in this exchange; i.e. whereas GM uses the tag to affectively tease and reconnect to her grandson after so long, GS seems to

be more serious on getting a propositional response when he uses the tag question "do you grandma?"

One aspect that should be pointed out in (7), just as in (8), is the use of kinship terms for respect, deference, and politeness. GS does not end his tag sequence with a pronoun, but adds a respect-marker "grandma" after it. GM on her part prefers to call GS as 'my son' and not 'my grandson' in order to portray the close relationship that exists between them. In (8), the daughter uses "mama" and "papa" in order to show respect to her parents and the parents also use terms of endearment such as "my dear" on her. Though such usages go beyond gender divisions, they neverthe-less underscore the influence of sociocultural systems on speakers' linguistic ex-pression both in their mother tongues and the official languages.

The next excerpt (8) also takes place at home as the family is having supper. Three participants are involved: father, mother, and daughter. The daughter initiates the interaction to break the silence that has gone on for a few minutes. They are expecting to hear some important information from the father who has conspicu-ously remained silent. The interaction could, therefore, be treated as small talk that is intended to prepare the ground for the more important discussion.

(8) At home (family of four at the dinner table: parents and two kids, boy and girl)
    Daughter: Mama, this is a real supper, **na**?
    Mother: Of course, my dear. Don't you enjoy it?
    Daughter: I do. But Papa is so quiet and it is very unusual especially with
                 such a delicious meal served.
    Mother: Yes, I think your father has something bothering his mind…
    Father: (*Interrupting*) And from whom is this supposition emanating,
                 exactly? (*Looking directly at his wife*)
    Daughter: But you are not really eating, Papa, **is it a lie, Mama**?
    Mother: I have finished, you not Nje-eh?
    Daughter: I finished long before you, Mama.
    Father: Alright, alright …

All three speakers use tags; some of which are peculiar to CamE, e.g. "na?" bor-rowed from CPE—Type 5 of our classification above. The daughter's first turn does not pass on any propositional message but rather seeks her mother's approval of the small talk about supper. She uses the tag "na?" which suggests closeness and endearment between interactants. When she asks "is it a lie, Mama?", which in this case also functions as a tag, she leaves her mother with a choice, either to agree or disagree. But knowing that this is small talk, the mother definitely only has to be affirmative. The tags used by the females here are polite signals for starting and sustaining a conversation at table. The women do not seek to impose their points of view or opinions on others. This speech behaviour possibly emanates from the Cameroonian traditional set up in which women are brought up to show respect.

Engaging in small talk to get the father to provide the important information they are expecting, the women's speech could be said to be supportive. This is especially because they use an indirect strategy to get the father to talk—also indicative of

Cameroonian women's behaviour in asymmetrical situations where power relations are unbalanced, or tilting towards the men.

The father's turn begins with an interruption—also typical of men's speech—and continues with the use of an adverbial tag "exactly?" In his question, he is clearly seeking more details from his wife even though it also comes through as a rhetoric strategy. Contrary to the women who use tags that give alternatives, his tag rather asks for a clear content answer. Such a strategy of tag usage is generally observable in men's speech, and proves that they are in control, especially in a family domain where the father is considered the natural head.

The excerpts (7) and (8) involve people at home. These people are part of a family, and as Cameroonian family structures are, there is always a stable hierarchy based on age, natural roles (e.g. father, grandmother, son, or daughter), and gender. These roles are non-negotiable and are strongly engraved in cultural norms. The question is, does the same hold for situations where the interlocutors are not related, or are age mates, i.e. symmetrical contexts, and/or are of the same sex? Also, does the home context really matter? The next excerpt (9) is from an interaction between two friends, male and female, in their early 30s. It takes place on the road, i.e. in public space. The female (F) finds herself in a difficult situation and suspects sabotage. She expresses a lot of doubts and uncertainty through the tags she uses. The male (M) friend, on the contrary, uses definitive, authoritative tags which show he is absolutely sure and correct about what he says.

(9) On the street (two friends, male and female in their 30s)
    Male: Look, the person who did this has no intention of playing games with
                you, believe you me.
    Female: You think someone is out to harm me, **is that**?
    Male: I'm trying to help, **can't you see**?
    Female: (*Silence*) hmmn
    Male: We'll take the other road, **right with you**?

The tags used by the male friend, i.e. "can't you see?" and "right with you?" are not really questions requiring responses, but rather comments or directives that seem indisputable. They belong to the Type 2 tag, i.e. tag questions that serve as obvious comments. In such cases, any other remark by the interlocutor (F) is hardly taken into consideration. As can be seen from M's tags, he does not leave F with much choice since he basically imposes his point of view on her. Contrarily, F's tag "is that?" is open to both positive and negative responses. It suggests doubt, uncertainly, and insecurity, already borne in the delicate situation she is in. Again, like in the previous examples (7) and (8), gender roles between men and women seem to be projected in the choice of tags used here. The woman's tags are more polite and compromising whereas the man's are authoritative and less compromising.

In excerpt (10), two ex-lovers who separated several months before because of an error in judgement on the part of the male partner meet again unplanned at the reception of a hotel. They engage in a conversation which signals the male partner's surprise at meeting her and the female partner's apparent disapproval of his desire to win her back.

(10) At a public place (two ex-lovers meet unplanned)
    Female: So you have come back, **haven't you**?…
    Male: Not just now that I have found you again, **eh**?
    Female: Found who again? What do you mean by that? You must be joking.
    Male: Can we talk about this maturely over dinner?
    Female: Not on your life, **you hear me**?

The first statement by the female partner with the tag "haven't you?" serves as an accusation and an initiation into conversation. It is not an expression of uncertainty, as in the other examples, but a more direct demand for some form of an explanation. She probably adopts this posture because she is apparently in a vantage position given that the error in judgement was committed by the other. This vantage position makes the conversation situation asymmetrical. When the male partner reacts to the accusation by saying he is deciding to try to win her back just now that he has found her, it suggests he still wields some power, as supported by the tag "eh?" possibly from CPE.

The female partner does not use an affective tag but rather chooses the authoritative, modal tag, "do you hear me?" tag which further shows she is in a position of power. The tag leaves no room for an alternative response from the male partner. This is contrary to generally accepted assumptions that women use less authoritative tags than men. Any generalisation here should be cautious because the context places the woman in a vantage position over the man. It, nevertheless, supports later research on tag questions and gender (e.g. Holmes 1992, 1993; Coates 2004, etc.) which prioritises context and the relationship between interactants rather than just their gender.

The next excerpt (11) is from the radio programme 'Happy Birthday'. According to the design of the programme, the host, Marie Oben[5]—a woman in her early 50s, visits maternity wards in the hospitals and talks to or congratulates women who have just given birth. So, all the interactions are single-sex and often involve mothers who are significantly younger than the host. The tag used by the host, "not so", belongs to T3, i.e. tag questions that elicit general approval and/or support. It is a veiled reproach of the 23-year old lady for having a child while still in school and when she is not yet married. Given her age and natural role as mother, the host adopts a position of power and moves the interaction to a family domain where she advises the young mother in her capacity as a mother and as an older person in the community.

(11) On radio (a female radio host and a young mother in hospital)
    Host: (*Introducing the programme*) Our usual rendezvous, ladies and
            gentlemen, takes us to the post-natal section of the regional
            hospital right here in Bamenda from where we shall be reaching
            you. Please, don't go away. (*music*) Our first mother on today's
            edition is on Bed 23. She is so young and she is the mother of a
            baby boy. Who is this young lady?
    Host: (*To the lady*) Good morning.

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[5] We wish to thank Marie Oben for making recordings of the programme readily available to us.

> Lady: Good morning madam. I am called M.E.
> Host: How old are you?
> Lady: 23 years.
> Host: Are you married?
> Lady: No.
> Host: Are you in school?
> Lady: Yes.
> Host: (*Short pause*) And how come? You know it is not easy to start
>   breeding children when you are going to school, **not so**?
> Lady: Yes.
> Host: How? Are you happy about this? Was it a mistake?
> Lady: It was a mistake. But I just take it as it comes.

The host uses the tag "not so?", which offers little room for an alternative answer since the young mother simply has to confirm as she does in her turn with "yes". Here, cultural norms play a decisive role. In Cameroonian cultures, a mother is anyone old enough to be your mother; and being a mother entails performing that role (e.g. giving advice, providing food, etc.) to other people young enough to be your children. This is exactly what the host does in this sequence. She is neither cowed by her profession nor by the public domain in which the interaction takes place but sticks to the cultural norms.

As opposed to Lakoff (1975) who suggests that tag questions betray women's hesitancy and tentativeness, the host's use of the tag 'not so?' is rather authoritative. She adopts the position of a parent from where she can reproach and advise the young mother. The tag is also affective in that it tries to soften the force of the accusation borne in the preceding sentences: "And how come? You know…going to school". The motivation here is to be polite.

Later in the interaction, the host uses another authoritative, non-alternative tag, i.e. "is it a lie?" (12), to which the lady also obviously responds affirmatively "it is true". Here, two cultural norms are at play: 1) it is rude and disrespectful for younger people to say older ones are liars or are lying, and 2) the age difference between them limits the young mother's desire to differ or disagree, even if she wanted to. This tag belongs to T2 (i.e. obvious comments or remarks) and it is not negotiable.

(12) On radio (a female radio host and a young mother in hospital)
> Host: The child's father, has he been here to see you?
> Lady: No.
> Host: You don't want him to know?
> Lady: No, with time he will know.
> Host: With time, what does that mean? You are supposed to work hand in
>   glove, **you don't know that**? Because the two of you will have to
>   put your heads together to be able to raise this child, **is it a lie**?
> Lady: No, it is true.

From the interaction, the young lady certainly has a different opinion, given that she has not yet informed the father of her child that she has given birth. This automati-

cally counters the suggestion made by the host that she and the father "are supposed to work hand in glove", but as said above, she is bound by cultural norms of politeness and deference to agree with the older interlocutor.

The traditional division of labour discussed above is, therefore, not universal but dependent on contexts and the power relations between interlocutors. In (10), the woman wields (temporary) power because of the error committed by the other and also because he still wants her back. In (11) and (12), sociocultural norms determine the way interactions between the young and the old take place. Bearing this in mind, let us now move on to the second part of the study which elicits Cameroonians' opinions about the possible authors of the tag types exemplified above, and why they attribute them to either men or women.

8.5   The Questionnaire Survey: Who Uses Tags?

The second part of the chapter reports on the results of the questionnaire survey. It is to be noted here that the results may not be generalisable and replicable in other contexts since focus was on respondents' attitudes or opinions and not on the natural production of tag questions. However, the results consolidate the discussion of the natural data in excerpts (7)-(12) above, especially in relation to the impact of cultural norms and societal ideologies in the choice and understanding of tags in Cameroon English discourse.

The respondents were presented with the five types of tags described above and asked to say if the tags could most probably have been produced by a man or a woman, or by both (i.e. neutral). The figures in Tables 8.3 and 8.4 show the opinions according to respondents' gender, and the three options they were presented with. To begin with, below are the five types of tags identified in the recordings along with examples from the data. In the questionnaire, the contexts and examples were presented to help respondents understand the choices.

T1: Tag questions that express axiomatic knowledge known to participants, and that do not require a propositional response (11).

(11) You are still the same liar you always were, **aren't you**?

T2: Tag questions that serve as obvious comments or directives (12).

(12) I'm trying to help, **can't you see**?

T3: Tag questions that elicit general approval and/or support (13).

(13) When our relatives die we conduct memorial services on their behalf, **is that not so**?

T4: Tag questions that express surprise, uncertainty, or hesitation (14).

(14) You will be with us tomorrow at the meeting, **then**?

T5: Tag questions borrowed from CPE, and which require either 'yes' or 'no' answers, but mostly 'yes' (15).

(15) You promised to help me, **na**?

The results in Tables 8.3, 8.4, and 8.5 below are revealing about who supposedly uses tag questions. However, even though women are said to use more tags than men, the margin is fairly small, 11 %, i.e. women (44 %) and men (33 %) as shown in Fig. 8.2 (cf. Table 8.4). Also, as many as 23 % of the 400 respondents believe the tags tested could have been produced by women just as by men. The disparity between female respondents' attribution of T1 to women (129) as opposed to men (51) yielding a surplus of 39 % in favour of women, and also T5 (CPE tags) to women (133) as opposed to men (48) with a surplus 42.5 % in favour of women is statistically significant (Table 8.3). Let us have a closer look at the results.

8.5.1   Female Respondents on Tag Usage

The 200 female respondents indicated that overall, women use more tags than men. For instance, for T1 and T5 they indicated that women are more liable to use these tag types almost three times more than men, i.e. 129 (64.5 %) to 51 (25.5 %) for T1; and 133 (66.5 %) to 48 (24 %) for T5. However, they identified T2, 113 (56.5 %) and T4 103 (51.5 %) clearly with men.

What do these results say about the use of tags in general? One thing is clear; T1 and T5 used mostly by women offer interlocutors options from which they can choose. T1 is generally axiomatic and hence requires information that is not disputable. T5 uses CPE tags, and as said above, CPE is a code that unites people and shows closeness. Women, therefore, from this empirical evidence use less confrontational and less authoritative tags hence projecting their desire to keep communication smooth. As far as the men are concerned, their choice of T2 and T4, which carry unquestionable or modal tags (T2) and subsume surprise at interlocutor's earlier turns (T4) respectively somehow fits with the findings of previous researchers that men tend to use authoritative tags. It also corroborates the flow of the examples in (8) and (9) above.

Table 8.3 Female respondents' attribution of tag usage

Tag type	Women		Men		Neutral	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Type 1	129	64.5	51	25.5	20	10
Type 2	83	41	113	56.5	5	2.5
Type 3	93	46.5	79	39.5	28	14
Type 4	69	34.5	103	51.5	28	14
Type 5	133	66.5	48	24	19	9.5
Total	507 [$n=1000$]	50.5	324	32.5	100	10

Table 8.4 Male respondents' attribution of tag usage

Tag type	Women		Men		Neutral	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Type 1	71	35.5	29	14.5	100	50
Type 2	67	33.5	82	41.5	50	25
Type 3	69	34.5	38	19	93	46.5
Type 4	48	24	92	46	60	30
Type 5	119	59.5	27	13.5	54	27
Total	304 [$n=1000$]	30.4	268	26.8	357	35.7

8.5.2   Male Respondents on Tag Usage

Clearly, there are some differences in the opinion of the male and female respondents as to who uses the tags tested. Whereas the female respondents clearly distribute the tags according to gender, the male are more cautious, preferring to identify most of the tags as neutral. But their allocation of T5 to women is indisputable, i.e. 119 (59.5%) for women as opposed to 27 (13.5%) for men; and just like with the female respondents above, T5 seems to be a woman's tag in CamE discourse. As seen in Table 8.4, more men thought some of the tags were neutral; the neutral option was ticked as many as 357 times (35.7%) out of a total 1000 possible options for all five tag types. Comparatively, the option 'neutral' was ticked almost 100 times more than the option 'men', i.e. 357 times (35.7%) vs. 268 times (26.8%). Implicitly, the male respondents did not elaborately factor gender into tag usage, or as suggested above, were simply more cautious.

As opposed to the female respondents who attributed T1 mainly to women (64.5%), the male only ticked this one for women 71 times (35.5%). This notwithstanding, one of the trends remains the same: women are identified with T1 and T5. However, overall, the men are not clearly attributed T2 and T4 as is the case in Table 8.4. T3 seems to be a more moderately used and neutral tag since it does not obtain significantly high scores for any of the genders.

An overall view of the choices by both genders can be seen in Table 8.5. More tags are attributed to women (44%) than to men (33%). Equally high is the neutral option with 23%. Whether these trends would have been sustainable if natural data or a corpus of naturally-occurring speech were used can only be verified through further research.

Fig. 8.2 The allocation of tag usage by all respondents

they thought a given tag question was used by one or the other gender. The cultural factors explained in the introduction, notwithstanding, play important roles. Furthermore, the discrepancy observed in the attribution of tags to men and women could be explained by the fact that generally women are said to encourage cooperation, communion, and solidarity in social environments and during communication. They are more susceptible to grant interlocutors the chance to speak, challenge their positions, or give alternative proposals than men are. Respondents also advanced other interesting reasons for why they thought men or women use tag questions.

First of all, the major reasons advanced by the respondents explaining why women employ tags are different from those stated by earlier researchers in other societies where English is used as a native language. So, in the Cameroonian context, tag usage by women does not betray their hesitancy and tentativeness. Rather, for some female respondents the reasons for which women make more use of tag questions than men include the following:

- Women use tag questions because they want to 'sound soft spoken all the time'. About 87 % of the 200 female respondents advanced this reason.
- Women do not like to ask direct questions especially when dealing with sensitive topics, e.g. if their men are seeing other women.
- Women are natural educators in their role as mothers and home keepers and have, therefore, cultivated the habit of providing detailed explanations while at the same time involving others in the process. It is obvious sometimes that the explanations end with tag questions, which often are aimed at determining whether the interlocutor is following.
- Women are naggy, and tags make it easy for women to be naggy. 13 % of the women held this position.

As far as the use of tags by men is concerned, the female respondents advanced two major reasons. First, that men use tags to assert their authority during conversation. The types of tags they use do not call for challenge or alternative views. Second, men do not like 'long talks' or long explanations, and so prefer to use tags to catch the attention of their interlocutors.

The reasons the male respondents gave for the use of tags according to gender were different from, and fewer than, those provided by the females. For these males, women use tags because they like asking a lot of questions, sometimes unnecessarily. As for why men use tags, some male respondents also invoked the authority argument while others said men do so because they are inquisitive.

Again, whether these reasons are all plausible cannot be absolutely claimed here. What is clear, at least, is that the reasons also ascertain, although to varying degrees, the claims made in the discussion of the examples above and the trend in the opinions in Tables 8.3 and 8.4 above.

8.6   Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to illustrate, through tag usage by Cameroonian men and women, that gender is a social and cultural construct that reflects the social roles allocated to men and women in society. These social roles, we have argued, are not only limited to social behaviour in the society but also have linguistic counterparts, i.e. they are also realised in speech. It is, therefore, not a mistake that some of the respondents attributed women's predominant use of tags to their social role as first teachers and educators of children at home right from birth. The two data sources, i.e. recordings of natural interactions and the questionnaire survey, support the hypothesis that women use more tags than men and that they do so with different intentions. However, this does not limit the use of tags to women alone since men use them too. The point is that some of the tag types identified above feature more in women's discourse than in men's and also vice versa. The impact of the sociocultural context cannot be downplayed here since, as illustrated in Fig. 8.1, Cameroonians attach a lot of importance to their ethnic origins making them to abide by cultural norms even if they live in multicultural and multiethnic urban centres.

Apart from these cultural norms, the present study has illustrated that women also use tag questions in order to be polite, respectful, soft spoken, and acceptable. This is because the tags they choose, contrary to the very direct ones chosen by men, allow interlocutors other choices or the chance to make their own contributions during conversations, hence protecting or preserving their faces. The women's tags also often soften (12) the force of the utterances that precede the tag questions.

Researchers around the world have said women tend to be more polite than men. The CamE data used here seem to support this position, e.g. as some respondents wrote, women like to 'sound soft spoken all the time'. Of course, this is open to further empirical research not only on tag usage but also on other strategies used in interpersonal communication, among them, turn taking, interruptions, leave taking, (im)politeness, requesting, offering, accusing, and naming or name-calling (see Anchimbe 2011; Nkwain in this volume).

Finally, having been subject to several decades of colonialism, the Cameroonian society seems to have developed a system of cultural and linguistic hybridism that

is peculiar to it and perhaps similar to other postcolonial societies. Such a hybrid system has been studied under the framework of postcolonial pragmatics introduced recently by Anchimbe and Janney (2011). It is our wish here that more in-depth studies emerge that tackle gender using emic sociolinguistic models.

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Chapter 9
Ethnicité, politesse et représentations au Cameroun

Bernard Mulo Farenkia

Abstract Studies on politeness generally focus on speech acts, their linguistic realisation forms, contexts of usage and face-work strategies. Very few researchers examine perceptions or social representations of politeness. Although there are numerous studies on perceptions of language practices in Cameroon, there is, to the best of our knowledge, no analysis of perceptions of politeness. The present paper, a contribution to postcolonial pragmatics, attempts to provide such an analysis: it highlights the impact of ethnicity on perceptions of politeness in Cameroon. More precisely, it examines perceptions of compliments in interethnic encounters. The focus here is on the way informants who participated in interviews for this study would respond or react to compliments offered by Cameroonians of different ethnic backgrounds and the social representations that would underline positive and negative perceptions of compliments in interethnic encounters.

Résumé L'étude des pratiques de la politesse porte généralement sur les actes de langage, leurs formes de réalisation, et contextes d'usage ainsi que sur les stratégies mobilisées dans la mise en scène des faces. Très peu de chercheurs s'intéressent aux perceptions/représentations sociales de la politesse. Si les travaux consacrés aux représentations autour des pratiques langagières au Cameroun sont nombreux, il n'y a, à notre connaissance, pas d'étude sur les perceptions de la politesse. Le présent travail, qui rentre dans le cadre de la pragmatique postcoloniale, cherche à mettre en évidence l'impact de l'ethnicité sur les perceptions de la politesse au Cameroun. Y sont examinées les perceptions de l'acte du compliment en situation de communication interethnique. Les analyses mettent en lumière la manière dont les participants à l'enquête réagissent ou réagiraient aux compliments offerts par les interlocuteurs d'origne ethnique différente et les représentations à la base des perceptions (positives ou négatives) du compliment lors des rencontres interethniques.

Keywords Ethnicity · Politeness · Representations · Identity construction · Cameroon

Mots clefs ethnicité · politesse · représentations · construction identitaire · Cameroun

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9.1   Introduction

L'étude des pratiques de la politesse se focalise généralement sur les actes de langage, leurs formes de réalisation et contextes d'emploi ainsi que les stratégies mobilisées dans la mise en scène des faces (positive et négative). Très peu de chercheurs s'intéressent aux perceptions/représentations sociales de la politesse.[1] Si les travaux consacrés aux représentations autour des pratiques langagières au Cameroun sont nombreux,[2] il n'y a, à notre connaissance, pas de travaux similaires sur les pratiques de la politesse. Le présent travail, à l'instar d'autres analyses des pratiques interactionnelles et des représentations autour de celles-ci en contextes postcoloniaux, rentre dans le cadre de la "pragmatique postcoloniale" (*Postcolonial Pragmatics*)) (cf. Anchimbe 2007; Janney 2009; Anchimbe et Janney 2011). Cette étude tente de mettre en évidence l'impact de l'ethnicité sur les perceptions de la politesse au Cameroun. Nous nous intéressons tout particulièrement aux perceptions de l'acte du compliment en situation de communication interethnique. A cet effet, nous décryptons la manière dont les participants à notre enquête réagissent ou réagiraient aux compliments d'interlocuteurs originaires d'un autre groupe ethnique, ainsi que les représentations à la base des leurs réactions (positives ou négatives).

Après clarifictation de certains concepts (Sect. 9.2), nous présentons la méthodologie (le contexte pluriethnique camerounais, les données et leur méthode de collecte, Sect. 9.3), et, enfin, les résultats de l'analyse des représentations des personnes interrogées (Sect. 9.4).

9.2   Quelques précisitions terminologiques

9.2.1   L'acte du compliment

Défini comme une "assertion évaluative positive portant sur une qualité ou une propriété de l'allocutaire A ([c'est-à-dire] une louange adressée à la personne "concernée", ou bien encore, sur une qualité ou propriété d'une personne plus ou moins étroitement liée à A." (Kerbrat-Orecchioni 1998: 2002), le compliment est un acte valorisant pour la face positive de l'autre. Toutefois, la valeur affective (réelle) des compliments dépend du contexte situationnel ou culturel et des variables telles que l'objet du compliment, le type de formulation employé, le degré de connaissance ou la distance hiérarchique entre les interlocuteurs, leur sexe, statut social ou identité ethnique. Il s'ensuit que les réponses au compliment peuvent être positives ou négatives. Comme nous l'avons indiqué plus haut, la présente étude analyse

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[1] Voir par contre : Chang (2008), qui analyse et compare les perceptions de la politesse dans la réalisation de la demande d'excuse chez les Australiens et le Chinois ; Spencer-Oatey et. al. (2000) qui examinent les perceptions des réponses aux compliments chez les Anglais et les Chinois.

[2] Voir à ce sujet, entre autres, Harter (2005, 2007), Sol (2010).

l'influence de l'identité ethnique sur les types de réactions aux compliments lors des interactions entre interlocuteurs d'origine ethnique différente.

9.2.2 *L'ethnicité ou l'identité ethnique*

Si, de manière générale, la plupart des travaux consacrés aux espaces multiculturels et pluriethniques (comme le Cameroun), emploient le terme *identité* dans le sens d'*identité ethnique*, il faut préciser avec Deshaies et Vincent (2004: X) que l'identité d'une personne "n'est pas une indivisible". L'identité est "plurielle, […] hétérogène et mouvante. Elle est une pratique éclatée, métisse, transitionnelle, instable, en construction."[3] Qu'elle soit individuelle ou collective, l'identité est soustendue par des rôles ou attributs sociaux, des valeurs culturelles, des identifications situationnelles ou ponctuelles, des sentiments d'appartenance à des groupes aux contours plus ou moins définis. L'identité peut être culturelle, collective, nationale,… ethnique. L'identité ethnique/l'ethnicité se définit comme

> la conscience qu'un groupe (conçu comme partageant une même origine géographique, des caractéristiques phénotypiques, une langue ou un mode de vie communs – ou un mélange de tout cela) a de sa position économique, politique et culturelle par rapport aux autres groupes de même type faisant partie du même état (Dorais 2004: 8).

Selon Deshaies et Vincent (2004: X), l'identité est une

> construction subjective qui se façonne presque exclusivement en discours. […] C'est en effet dans l'usage du langage (quand on parle ou qu'on écrit) qu'émergent les représentations sociales et ce sont les faits de langue auxquels les individus ont recours qui peuvent éclairer la façon dont ils se positionnent socialement, dont ils se définissent par rapport aux autres et dont ils définissent les autres.[4]

Autrement dit, les perceptions des compliments offerts par les membres d'autres groupes ethniques au Cameroun sont de nature à nous éclairer sur les images de soi et de l'autre en œuvre dans les discours actualisés.

9.2.3 *Les représentations sociales*

Selon Jodelet (1989: 53), une représentation sociale est "une forme de connaissance, socialement élaborée et partagée, ayant une visée pratique et concourant à la construction d'une réalité commune à un ensemble social". Bien qu'il y ait un décalage entre les pratiques discursives et les discours sur ces pratiques, les représentations sociales d'un acte de langage ou d'un aspect de son fonctionnement permettent d'interpréter les pratiques et les comportements sociaux (en situation de

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[3] Létourneau (1994: IX), cité par Deshaies et Vincent (2004: X).

[4] Pour une discussion plus détaillée et édifiante de la construction identitaire au moyen de la langue, voir l'ouvrage collectif *Discours et constructions identitaires*, publié sous la direction de Deshaies et Vincent (2004).

face-à-face) à l'égard de cet acte de discours et d'enrichir les réflexions sur la place de l'acte en question dans le système des rituels de la politesse. Ainsi, les points de vue des personnes interrogées sur leur "savoir", leurs attitudes, pratiques et perceptions en rapport avec l'interprétation des compliments seront considérés comme des représentations sociales. Puisque notre travail consiste à relever l'impact de l'appartenance ethnique sur les perceptions du compliment, il serait important de présenter brièvement le carcatère multiethnique du Cameroun, le contexte de cette recherche, ainsi que les données et leur méthode de collecte.

9.3   Méthodologie

9.3.1   Le Cameroun : un contexte postcolonial multiethnique

En tant qu'espace de grandes diversités socio-ethniques, le Cameroun se présente comme un "pays carrefour" situé au confluent de "plusieurs courants migratoires [qui ont] ont abouti à la configuration ethnique actuelle et à la cohabitation d'une pluralité de cultures et de langues" (Harter 2005: 92). Dans cet espace de grande fluidité des frontières ethniques, linguistiques et culturelles, le terme *ethnie* est polysémique : il renvoie, entre autres, à un espace géographique ou émotionnel, à des valeurs, à un nom, à une communauté linguistique, un regroupement politique, aux unités administratives, à la religion.

On distingue les grands ensembles suivants : le *Grand Nord* qui couvre administrativement les régions[5] du Nord, de l'Adamaoua et de l'Extrême Nord et qui est majoritairement habité par les Peuls musulmans et où on parle le *fulfulde* (langue véhiculaire) et d'autres langues (minoritaires) comme le *kanuri, le wandala, le guiziga,* entre autres. Les originaires du Grand Nord sont communément appelés les nordistes. Le *Grand Sud*, majoritairement bantou, couvre les régions du Centre, du Sud, et de l'Est. Les principaux groupes ethniques sont les Ewondo, les Eton, les Yambassa (Centre), les Boulous, les Batanga (Sud), les Pygmées, les Maka, les Bayas, les Kakas (Est). On les appelle généralement les beti. L'*Ouest* est occupé par deux groupes ethniques, à savoir les bamiléké et les bamoun. Le *Littoral* est occupé par les groupes ethniques bantous dont les bassa et les bakoko qui se trouvent dans les zones proches du fleuve Sanaga et les douala (encore appelés sawa) principalement installés à Douala et les zones avoisinant l'estuaire du fleuve Wouri. La *Zone anglophone,* qui couvre les régions du Nord-Ouest et du Sud-ouest, est occupée par des groupes ethniques bantous et semi-bantous dont ont les Nguemba, Nso, Awing, etc. (Nord-ouest), les bakweri, balondo, bakossi, bayangi, etc. (Sud-ouest).

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[5] A la faveur d'un décret du Président de la république Paul Biya signé le 12 novembre 2008, les provinces s'appellent désormais "régions".

Comme nous l'avons déjà montré dans une publication récente (Mulo Farenkia 2011), certaines interactions en situation de communication interethnique au Cameroun peuvent se caractériser par des formes de "mise à distance" de l'altérité ethnique, c'est-à-dire des pratiques discursives destinées à dénigrer l'identité ethnique de l'autre. Ces discours tribalistes s'articulent autour de la construction et de l'argumentation des défauts (réels ou supposés) des membres des différents groupes ethniques du pays.[6] A partir de ce qui précède, il serait aussi intéressant de savoir si et comment l'échange complimenteur dans un contexte pluriethnique comme celui présenté ci-dessus est influencé par des préjugés tribalistes en circulation dans le discours social. Nos questions de recherche donc sont les suivantes :

1. Comment les préjugés ethniques structurent-ils la manière dont certains Camerounais perçoivent les compliments provenant d'interlocuteurs originaires d'autres groupes ethniques?
2. A quels types d'arguments recourent-ils pour expliquer ou justifier leurs réponses aux compliments offerts par les interlocuteurs d'origine ethnique différente?
3. Quelles sont les stratégies discursives employées pour verbaliser les représentations et les constructions identitaires autour des perceptions du compliment au Cameroun?

9.3.2 Les données et leur méthode de collecte

Pour répondre à ces questions, nous avons organisé une série d'interviews semi-directives avec plusieurs Camerounais vivant à Yaoundé (et originaires de plusieurs régions du pays). Les entretiens ethnographiques effectués (Boxer 1996) consistaient à faire prendre part à trois ou quatre personnes à une discussion d'une durée de quarante-cinq minutes chacune. Ces entretiens collectifs nous ont permis de "recueillir les stéréotypes que les […] communautés linguistiques [et culturelles] entretiennent l'une vis-à-vis de l'autre", des stéréotypes qui révèlent des "différences au niveau des habitudes langagières [et des valeurs culturelles] et [qui] se font souvent écho d'une communauté linguistique [et culturelle] à l'autre" (Béal 2000: 19). Les données recueillies constituent une source d'information particulièrement riche dans la mesure où les débats entre les différents intervenants ont favorisé une meilleure appréciation des différents points de vue défendus. Pour souligner l'importance de cette démarche, Auer (1995: 432) affirme que

> It may be useful to enlarge the participant constellation by interviewing two or three members of the community together who are well known to each other. […] There will always be some degree of interaction going on between the interviewees, which is of interest not only from the linguistic point of view […] but also an important resource for judging the reliability and sharedness of the statements made by the single interviewee in the community or network.

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[6] Pour une description déaillée des formes de dénigrement de l'altérité ethnique au Cameroun, voir Mulo Farenkia (2011).

Puisque les interviews n'étaient pas structurées selon le modèle classique de "question-réponse", les questions posées aux participants servaient essentiellement à donner un cadre thématique aux échanges[7]. Une telle démarche nous aura permis d'amener nos interlocuteurs

> to talk about what they know – of discovering what human behaviors mean to the individuals participating in those behaviors – it differs greatly from the traditional interview or questionnaire in that it seeks to uncover not only knowledge that is explicit but also knowledge that is tacit. The tacit knowledge that informants have about behaviour is brought out only after a rapport has been established between the researcher and the informant (Boxer 1996: 220).

Autrement dit, les discussions organisées ne visaient pas "à vérifier […] des connaissances sur un sujet donné pour en donner un rapport statistique, mais les questions [suivaient] les réactions des interviewés dans le but de comprendre leurs attitudes et leurs comportements" (Geoffroy 2001: 29). Au terme de cet exercice, nous avons pu obtenir plus de dix heures d'enregistrements de discussions auxquelles 51 personnes ont pris part, parmi lesquelles 45 étudiants, six collègues et connaissances. Dans ces entretiens, les séquences consacrées au lien entre l'ethnicité et la perception des compliments occupent un espace quantitatif et qualitatif assez significatif. Ces données ont été complétées par de nombreuses séances d'observation participante renforcées par la compétence tacite du sujet analysant (que nous sommes) qui se trouve être membre de la société dont il étudie les pratiques langagières. Ce mélange des données d'origines diverses (interviews, observation participante et intuition de l'observateur membre de la communauté en étude) semble une approche d'autant plus fructueuse que

> Researchers themselves who are native speakers of the community they are studying also possess knowledge that is tacit, and by interviewing other native speakers, their own tacit knowledge can be made explicit. Hence, by combining the researcher's own analysis […] with information gleaned from native informants through an ethnographic interview, a more complex analysis of the specific speech behavior can be made (Boxer 1996: 221).

9.4   Résultats et discussion

D'une manière générale, les analyses révèlent une série d'images et de représentations que l'on se fait de l'autre et de soi à travers les perceptions des compliments provenant des membres des différents groupes ethniques. Les clivages ethniques

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[7] Il faut noter que ces entretiens se sont déroulés dans le cadre d'une recherche plus vaste consacrée à l'échange des compliments au Cameroun. Les questions posées aux participants touchaient différents aspects du compliment et des réponses au compliment (formes de réalisation, fonctions, thèmes, impacts des variables sociodiologiques (age, sexe, etc.) et socioculturelles (statut social et institutionnel, etc.). D'autres questions portaient sur le rapport entre l'ethnicité et la pertinence de certains types de compliments, les réactions (individuelles et générales) aux compliments des Camerounais originaires d'autres groupes ethniques, etc. Les discussions ont beaucoup porté sur les compliments sur l'apparence physique (l'habillement surtout).

ou l'accent sur ceux-ci peuvent transformer la valeur affective d'une évaluation positive. Les différences ethniques peuvent transformer l'échange de compliments en "affrontement discursif" ou en "confrontation des systèmes de valeurs". Les enquêtes sur le terrain (observation participante, interviews semi-dirigées, récits d'expériences personnelles, etc.) ont livré de nombreux "discours" qui tissent assez aisément un lien inextricable entre l'objet du compliment, l'interprétation de celui-ci et l'appartenance ethnique, comme énoncé par l'un des participants aux interviews semi-dirigées que nous avons effectuées (voir *méthodologie*)[8] :

(1)   G: quand on est en face d'une personne […] de la même ethnie […] on se sent un peu plus libre de […] complimenter [et] on sait comment […] ceux de notre ethnie se comportent généralement […] / quand je complimente euh un confrère par exemple je sais à quelle réaction je dois m'attendre / par contre quand je suis avec un autre qui n'est pas de la même tribu que moi […] quand je lui avance mes compliments […] j'ai un peu de doute en moi je ne sais pas dans sa tribu comment est-ce que on accepte les compliments

Si cet exemple fait allusion au rapport entre l'ethnicité et les perceptions du compliment en général, la suite de l'extrait (ex. 2) présente un cas précis. L'informateur y relate la réaction des Camerounais originaires du Grand Nord (les nordistes) aux compliments faits sur leur teint par les compatriotes du Grand sud (les sudistes) :

(2)   G: généralement chez nous [au nord] […] on n'apprécie pas trop les […] sudistes / en général parce qu'on / ils se prennent / disons on les croit/ ils ils exercent un peu une sorte de supériorité sur nous [les nordistes] / ils se disent trop élégants / par exemple le TEINT compte beaucoup / par exemple ceux du sud sont de teint clair et nous sommes rarement / sont ceux qui ont un teint clair / donc quand ils avancent par exemple un compliment sur quelqu'un par exemple pour lui dire qu'il est beau qu'il est par exemple clair / ça ça ça laisse indifférent/ au contraire ça ÉNERVE même / c'est c'est on croit que c'est une insulte

Dans la communication interethnique/interrégionale entre les sudistes et les nordistes, le teint apparait comme un thème très sensible, susceptible de provoquer méfiances et malentendus. A cause des allusions ou associations négatives (réelles ou supposées) que le teint évoque en pareille situation communicative, le compliment d'un Sudiste sur le teint d'un interlocuteur originaire du Nord Cameroun, fût-il sincère, peut plutôt s'interpréter comme un acte menaçant pour la face individuelle

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[8] Les entretiens ont été transcrits selon ce code :

- / Rupture dans le déroulement discursif ou pause brève.
- ? Intonation montante
- Entre [] manifestations non verbales, comportement prosodique
- […] Passages omis ou inaudibles
- Les fragments soulignés sont produits simultanément
- Le nombre de : suivant une syllabe est proportionnel à l'allongement vocalique
- Les mots ou syllabes en majuscules sont produits avec une intensité vocale plus élevée
- G, AB, GA, MA, EV (enquête(e), Initiale des prénoms)
- I (Intervieweur)

et collective des nordistes. Alors que le même compliment aura un écho favorable auprès de l'interlocuteur, si l'acte laudatif est réalisé par un autre nordiste. On en veut pour preuve le récit ci-dessous d'un échange laudatif raté (ex. 3) entre une étudiante de l'université de Yaoundé, originaire de l'ouest (sudiste) et un étudiant originaire du Nord Cameroun:

(3)   A: je peux prendre un exemple par rapport à quelqu'un du nord […] / parce que une
              fois j'ai complimenté un camarade ici [université de Yaoundé I] sur son teint / et
              il a très mal pris […] / je lui ai dit qu'il a un très beau teint un teint noir noir pro-
              pre […] / bon il a pris ça pour une injure parce que me dit-il quand les sudistes
              arrivent au NORD ils ont un certain complexe de supériorité par rapport aux:::
              musulmans / donc euh le teint pour eux c'est je peux dire / ils prennent ça comme
              une injure […] / il n'a pas apprécié alors que moi je le complimentais tout court

Alors que les compliments sont considérés comme des actes flatteurs, les données recueillies font apparaitre l'ethnicité comme un facteur susceptible de (dé)faire la valeur affective ou sociale de certains compliments. En effet, la pertinence ou l'impertinence des compliments sur l'apparence (élégance vestimentaire surtout), les talents, les possessions, etc. dépend souvent des préjugés positifs ou négatifs sur certains groupes ethniques. La plupart de nos informateurs pensent que les défauts dont on affuble les membres de certains groupes ethniques ne les prédisposent pas à faire des compliments pertinents sur l'apparence physique (l'habillement surtout) des autres. En général donc, il plane un incessant soupçon d'insincérité, de maladresse, d'impertinence, de moquerie, d'insulte etc. sur les compliments offerts par les Camerounais de certains groupes ethniques. Alors que les membres d'autres groupes ethniques bénéficient le plus souvent de préjugés favorbales, lesquels sont à la base des réactions positives que leurs compliments suscitent auprès des autres. D'après les enquêtes, il y aurait, du point de vue de l'identité ethnique, deux catégories de compliments et/ou de complimenteurs au Cameroun : (a) les compliments "gauches", c'est-à-dire les compliments impertinents et dévalorisants, et les compliments pertinents et valorisants. Dans nos analyses, nous nous sommes surtout intéressé à la façon dont les personnes interrogées réagissent ou réagiraient aux compliments des autres[9] et les raisons qu'elles donnent pour défendre leurs réactions (positives ou négatives). L'analyse révèle deux catégories de représeantions majeures: les représentations négatives et les représentations positives.

9.4.1   Les représentations négatives

Cette catégorie regroupe surtout les représentations selon lesquelles les compliments faits par les membres de certains groupes ethniques, les Bamiléké et les Anglophones en l'occurrence, sont par essence dévalorisants et ne sont pas/ne

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[9] Par *autres* nous entendons ici les membres d'un autre groupe ethnique que celui de la personne interrogée.

pourraient pas être pris en considération par les autres. Il convient de souligner qu'il s'agit ici surtout des compliments sur l'habillement des Sawa, Beti, Bassa et même de certains Bamileke et Anglophones. Certains diront même que de tels compliments sont agaçants ou insultants. Ces perceptions négatives s'énoncent à travers diverses stratégies discursives et les personnes interrogées s'appuient sur un certain nombre de topoi, c'est-à-dire des "[schèmes] […] qui [modèlent] l'argumentation", des "moules dans lesquels un grand nombre d'énoncés peuvent se couler" (Amossy 2006: 110) pour défendre leurs points de vue. Les topoi les plus récurrents sont présentés ci-dessous.

9.4.1.1   Le topos du gauchisme vestimentaire

Pour disqualifier la pertinence des compliments énoncés par les Bamiléké sur l'habillement des membres d'autres goupes ethniques, les personnes interrogées s'appuient le plus souvent sur le *topos* du "gauchisme vestimentaire" qui consiste à voir les Bamiléké comme des gens essentiellement négligés, maladroits et sales. Les compliments des Bamiléké sont perçus comme menaçants pour la face des autres[10] parce les Bamiléké sont perçus comme des gens "peu civilisés", "sales", "habillés n'importe comment", comme des gens qui "ne sont pas élégants", qui "ne savent pas s'habiller", qui "s'habillent un genre [de façon bizarre]", bref comme des gens qui "ne connaissent pas ce qui est beau".[11] Les deux exemples (4) et (5) illustrent ces perceptions négatives.

(4)   ST: les bamiléké sont considérés au cameroun comme des gens peu civilisés / on dit qu'ils sont sales et ne savent pas apprécier le beau / le compliment d'un originaire de l'ouest portant sur l'habillement / la coiffure etc. ne sera donc pas pris en considération.

La stratégie adoptée par ST, étudiante originaire de la région du Centre, pour construire "l'incompétence laudative" des Bamiléké est d'éviter de prendre directement position. Elle se contente de reprendre le discours général sans toutefois faire entendre sa propre voix (sous forme de *je pense que*). Cette reprise énonciative, qui peut s'interpréter comme une marque de distanciation et/ou une forme implicite d'approbation (car le discours repris n'est pas accompagné d'un bémol explicite), se manifeste de plusieurs manières. Dans le premier énoncé, la locutrice parle des Bamiléké qui "sont considérés au Cameroun comme des gens peu civilisés", sans pour autant mentionner l'acteur/l'agent de la considération (par qui donc ?). Le deuxième énoncé est introduit par le "marqueur de la rumeur" *on dit que* et le dernier énoncé évoque juste le fait que "le compliment d'un originaire de l'ouest ne sera pas pris en considération". L'informatrice ne précise pas si elle

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[10] Les autres étant ici les Camerounais membres des groupes ethniques comme les Betis, les Sawa et même certains Bamiléké.

[11] Les termes entre guillemets sont bien entendu extraits des interviews enregistrées.

fait partie de ce groupe indéfini (*on*). Compte tenu de la participation directe d'autres personnes originaires de la région de l'ouest à cet entretien, on peut dire que la perception négative des Bamiléké à travers cette stratégie d'évitement sert à préserver la face de celle qui parle et celle des autres participants, membres du groupe ethnique-cible. Cela semble être la stratégie employée par CH dans l'exemple suivant.

(5)   CH: si un bamiléké fait des compliments à un bassa ou un douala ce serait difficile que
              ce dernier prenne les compliments en question au sérieux / […] il faudrait par
              exemple que le bamiléké se soit démarqué des autres bamiléké / généralement les
              gens se disent que lorsqu'on vient d'une région donnée / on ne sait pas s'habiller
              / si un ressortissant de cette région a fait l'exception / le compliment aura sa place
              / dans le cas contraire il sera tout simplement rejeté

Contrairement à ST (ex. 4) qui ne dit pas explicitement qui rejette ou rejetterait les compliments des Bamiléké, CH nomme explicitement les Douala et les Bassa comme les allocutaires potentiellement réfractaires aux compliments des Bamiléké. Alors que ST se prononce de manière péremptoire sur les perceptions négatives des compliments des Bamiléké sur l'habillement d'un autre ("ne sera pas prise en considérattion"), CH tente de nuancer ses propos en employant la formule "ce sera difficile", à la suite de laquelle elle explicite la condition qu'un Bamiléké devrait remplir pour que son compliment soit favorablement accueilli : "se […] démarquer des autres Bamiléké". Cette stratégie discursive est d'autant plus intéressante que CH s'en sert pour indiquer implicitement que le compliment valorisant d'un Bamiléké ne peut être qu'une "exception à la règle".

9.4.1.2   Le topos de la flatterie intéressée

Le gauchisme vestimentaire imputé aux Bamiléké a souvent été évoqué par les participants pour étayer le topos de l'insincérité laudative. Plusieurs informateurs ont en effet évoqué le fait que les compliments des Bamiléké s'interprètent comme une forme voilée de flatterie intéressée, c'est-à-dire comme un moyen pour obetnir quelque chose de matériel de la part de la personne complimentée. Cette interprétation s'explique par la perception des Bamiléké comme des gens "rusés", "calculateurs", "trop intéressés", comme des individus qui "ne sont pas directs" et "lorsqu'ils font des compliments, ils visent autre chose", comme l'illustre l'extrait ci-après:

(6)   MA: si un bamiléké me fait un compliment j'hésite toujours [à réagir] / je me demande
              'est-ce qu'il me flatte ou est-ce que c'est sincère?' / je ne prends pas souvent les
              compliments des bamiléké au sérieux parce que en général lorsqu'un bamiléké
              fait un compliment juste après cela il te dit 'je venais te voir parce que […] / je
              voudrais que tu m'aides' / […] en général j'attends qu'il me demande quelque
              chose lorsqu'un bamiléké me fait des compliments […] / en tout cas si un
              bamiléké me dit que je suis bien habillée ma réaction dépendra de son habille-
              ment/ en général ils sont habillés n'importe comment

MA construit l'image négative des Bamiléké à travers une juxtaposition de plusieurs stratégies moulées dans le topos de l'insincérité et celui du gauchisme vestimentaire. Elle entame son argumentation par un énoncé explicitant sa réaction au compliment d'un bamiléké. Ladite réaction, réalisée au style direct, est empreinte de perplexité et de questionnements : "j'hésite toujours [à réagir], je me demande 'est-ce qu'il me flatte ou est-ce que c'est sincère?'" Il faut signaler que le *si* dans la construction annonçant le discours direct a un double emploi : c'est une marque d'hypothèse et un indice d'itérativité (*quand, lorsque, chaque fois que*). Le recours au discours direct est une forme de mise en scène d'une attitude itérative qu'elle justifie par l'insertion, comme chez d'autres intervenants, du discours social général "parce que en général lorsqu'un bamiléké fait un compliment juste après cela il te dit 'je venais te voir parce que […] je voudrais que tu m'aides'".

L'emploi de la reprise énonciative sert ici à théâtraliser et à ridiculiser la propension à la flatterie, qui semble selon elle la raison d'être des compliments des Bamiléké. Cette mise en scène sert aussi à justifier la réaction habituelle que MA adopte face aux compliments des Bamiléké: "en général j'attends qu'il me demande quelque chose". Pour MA donc, les compliments des Bamiléké ne sont pas des rituels de la politesse tout court, mais des stratégies pour amorcer une requête ou demande d'aide. On assiste ainsi à la "refonctionalisation" du compliment, c'est-à-dire à l'attribution d'une autre fonction à l'acte laudatif. Alors qu'on a l'impression que MA veut nuancer ses propos par rapport au compliment des Bamiléké, en faisant croire que sa réaction dépendra de l'habillement de la personne qui la complimente, elle enchaîne immédiatement sur un énoncé dans lequel elle reprend le topos du gauchisme vestimentaire imputé au Bamiléké: "en général ils sont habillés n'importe comment". Un tel énoncé semble renforcer la valeur d'itérativité du *si* introductif.

9.4.1.3   Du gauchisme vestimentaire aux déviances comportementales plurielles

Les compliments des Anglophone*s* sont aussi généralement perçus comme dévalorisants. Pour soutenir cette perception négative, les personnes interrogées construisent une idiosyncrasie des Anglophones marquée par un gauchisme vestimentaire et comportemental à nulle autre pareille. En effet, les Anglophones sont perçus comme des gens qui "réfléchissent toujours à gauche" et qui "vont toujours à l'envers". En plus, ils "s'habillent mal", "aiment les couleurs bizarres": plus précisément "quand ils s'habillent, ils ont souvent toutes les couleurs sur eux". Puisqu'ils "ne peuvent pas apprécier les bonnes choses", "leurs compliments sont maladroits". Pour clore le tout, certains emploieront l'image selon laquelle les *Anglophones* "sont des gauchés", des gens maladroits. Et leur maladresse s'observe dans plusieurs domaines de la vie.

En ce qui concerne l'échange de compliments en contexte interethnique, "un compliment venant d'un anglophone en tout cas ne sera pas considéré[12]". Pour construire donc l'incompétence laudative des Anglophones, les intervenants recourent à plusieurs stratégies discursives, lesquelles consistent surtout à mettre en relief le gauchisme vestimentaire et la maladresse pluridimensionnelle des Camerounais anglophones. Raison pour laquelle plusieurs personnes interviewées pensent que les compliments des Anglophones constituent une grave menace pour la face des autres, notamment les sawa, les beti, les bamiléké (et même certains anglophones). Au-delà des stratégies citées plus haut, certains intervnants, comme DC dans l'exemple (7), recourent à la narration d'expériences vécues.

(7) DC: je vis dans un quartier des anglophones / emana ici à yaoundé / je sais que les anglophones aiment les couleurs bizarres […] / une fois une anglophone m'a fait un compliment sur mon habillement et j'ai réagi en disant 'hah c'est comme ça que vous vous habillez chez vous?' / je n'ai pas pris son compliment en compte / pour moi c'était plutôt une injure

Contrairement aux autres intervenants qui ne disent pas clairement en quoi consiste le gauchisme vestimentaire des Anglophones et des Bamiléké, EV dans l'exemple (8) insiste sur deux aspects, à savoir les "couleurs frappantes" et "l'extravagance (malaroite)" des Anglophones.

(8) EV: on dit qu'ils (les anglophones) sont sont gauches / il est bien vrai que je suis du nord-ouest mais sans mentir moi-même je n'apprécie pas trop leur habillement / ils aiment trop l'extravagance […] en fait ils ne s'habillent pas bien / c'est coûteux mais il y a d'abord ils aiment des couleurs frappantes et puis parfois par exemple pour venir à l'école tu n'as pas besoin de t'enrouler avec un gros pagne / il faut être simple / c'est par rapport à ça que je parle d'extravagance.

Dans son argumentation, EV part du discours général ("on dit que") qu'elle emploie comme procédé de mise à distance du comportement vestimentaire des Anglophones. Sur le plan référentiel, on note qu'elle évite, peut-être inconsciemment, le désignatif anglophones et utilise plutôt le pronom *ils* (*leur*) afin de prendre ses distances vis-à-vis de cette communauté dont elle-même est originaire. Pour décliner son appartenance ethnique, elle emploie l'énoncé "je suis du nord-ouest" au lieu de "je suis anglophone" comme un indice supplémentaire de son désir (inconscient peut-être) de se démarquer de ses 'frères et sœurs'. A travers cette stratégie, EV rejoint le camp du *on* qui traite les Anglophones de gauches et l'enquêtée se construit ainsi une identité différente de celle généralement attribuée aux Anglophones. Les procédés qu'elle combine avec les structures "sans mentir", "moi-même je n'aime pas trop leur habillement" servent à donner un statut véridique à l'image qu'elle projette des Anglophones. En outre, on remarque un effort constant de nuancer immédiatement tout propos pouvant donner l'impression d'une représentation positive des Anglophones. Lorsqu'elle évoque l'extravagance vestimentaire des Anglo-

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[12] *Considéré* signifie ici *pris au sérieux* ou *interprété comme pertinent et valorisant.*

phones, elle nuance avec "en fait ils ne s'habillent pas bien", le terme "coûteux" s'oppose aux "couleurs frappantes", le fait de venir "à l'école dans un gros pagne" s'oppose à la norme tacite "d'être simple".

9.4.1.4   Le topos du compliment trivial

La perception négative des compliments offerts par les Anglophones se justifie, selon certains informateurs, par le postulat qu'un compliment juste, pertinent et sérieux devrait porter sur des exploits et non des actions triviales. Il se trouve que les Anglophones ne respectent pas toujours cette loi quand ils disent leur admiration, comme l'expliquent ER et AN dans l'échange suivant :

(9)   ER: euh évidement moi [rire] je vais prendre d'abord ça [comme] un compliment un
              peu gauche parce que il y a des moments où leurs [les anglophones] apprécia-
              tions […] / ou des gens qui sont habitués à presque <u>tout complimenter</u> [rire]
       AN :   <u>et à dire toujours merci</u>
       ER :   <u>voilà</u> [rire] on ne sait même plus ce qui est vraiment sérieux dans les compliments
              qu'ils [les anglophones] avancent et ce qui n'est pas / pourquoi parce qu'il y
              a trop de de de compliments / je me demande même ce qui est que nous [les
              francophones] considérons usuel banal on compliment pourtant / je pense que
              les compliments généralement c'est vraiment lorsqu'il <u>y a un petit plus</u>
       AN :   <u>il y a un petit plus</u>
       ER :   mais même quand il n'y a pas ce plus là eux ils complimentent et à la fin ça devient
              on ne prend plus trop la chose au sérieux

Tous les intervenants dans l'extrait ci-dessus imputent aux Anglophones la propension à faire des compliments "ordinaires". Ils établissent une relation d'équivalence entre "l'habitude de tout complimenter" et la platitude ou le gauchisme des compliments réalisés. Comme on le voit, le gauchime vestimentaire engendre un "comportement laudatif gauche". Pour AN, originaire du Littoral, le comportement laudatif trivial des Anglophones n'est en réalité qu'un reflet de leur maladresse comportementale exemplifiée ici par la politesse excessive et la fréquence d'expressions de la gratitude. Autrement dit, le non respect d'une norme discursive (ne pas tout complimenter) s'accompagne d'une infraction notoire d'une autre norme (ne pas dire *merci* à tout moment).

Dans l'ensemble, la maladresse des Anglophones, leur manque d'esprit de discernement dans l'octroi des "cadeaux verbaux" surtout, est décrit et décrié selon le topos "quand c'est trop, c'est laid". Les personnes interrogées se sont abondamment appuyées sur les procédés suivants: relever la récurrence de la maladresse "ils sont habitués à tout complimenter… et à dire toujours merci"; faire allusion au dépassement d'une norme (tacite) "trop de compliments", mettre en évidence l'opposition entre le comportement implicitement jugé normal des francophones "même ce que *nous* considérons usuel banal" et le comportement déviant "on complimente", contraster le comportement laudatif des Anglophones avec les pratiques générales auxquelles personne ne devrait pourtant déroger "je pense que les compliments généralement c'est vraiment lorsqu'il y a un petit plus", "mais même quand

il n'y a pas ce plus là ils complimentent". D'où la conclusion d'un participant: "on ne prend pas la chose au sérieux". Cette conclusion peut s'interpréter de deux manières. D'une part, il s'agit du récepteur qui ne prend plus le compliment d'un anglophone au sérieux, parce que celui-ci est banal. D'autre part, il est question de l'Anglophone qui, en complimentant n'importe quoi et n'importe comment, montre qu'il ne prend rien au sérieux.

9.4.1.5   Le topos du compliment sarcastique

La perception négative des compliments est aussi sous-tendue par la récurrence de discours dévalorisants sur certains groupes ethniques, des discours qui apparaissemt sous forme d'histoires drôles, de vannes, d'insultes et de blagues diverses, etc. Ces paroles sont de nature à provoquer diverses réactions verbales et non verbales, les unes les plus aggressives que les autres. C'est dans cette optiquee que certains enquêtés pensent que certaines paroles élogieuses entre les interactants d'origine ethnique différente semblent dénuées de sincérité. Autrement dit, de tels compliments sont généralement considérés comme des formes déguisées de moquerie ou de condescendance. Pour DA, originaire de l'Est (ex. 10), par exemple, il est normal de réagir négativement aux compliments des Bamiléké (désignés comme "ces gens-là") dans la mesure où les gens de l'Est "ont une mauvaise image" des Bamiléké, parce que ces derniers "passent le temps à se moquer de nous [les gens de l'Est]":

(10)   DA: je ne prendrais pas le compliment d'un bamiléké au sérieux chez nous à l'est
              nous avons une mauvaise image de ces gens-là / parce qu'ils passent le temps
              à se moquer de nous leurs compliments à notre endroit ne peuvent être que des
              moqueries.

Si les Sawa sont généralement présentés comme des locuteurs aux compliments valorisants (voir Sect. 9.4.2), des voix discordantes expriment plutôt de la méfiance par rapport aux "cadeaux verbaux" offerts par les Sawa. Cette méfiance est surtout due au fait que les Sawa sont (aussi) perçus comme des gens qui s'estiment plus "évolués que les autres". En d'autres termes, ils sont "imbus d'eux-mêmes", "insincères et/ou condescendants". Et les protagonistes de ce contrediscours d'ajouter que "les Douala ne sont pas élégants mais crâneurs", qu'ils "sont moqueurs", et qu'ils "ont la réputation d'être de beaux parleurs[13]". La stratégie ici consiste à bémoliser l'idée de l'élégance natuerlle attribuée aux Sawa, et ce au travers d'une mise en évidence hyperbolique (*la réputation de, trop*) de leur manque de modestie. Ces attitudes, persiste-t-on, ne prédisposeraient pas les Sawa à faire des compliments sincères aux autres. Au-delà des moyens lexico-sémantiques choisis, les arguments présentés s'appuient très souvent sur le récit d'expériences vécues. C'est ainsi

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[13] Il faut préciser que le groupe nominal "beaux parleurs" à une connotation negative dans ce contexte.

qu'une intervenante déclare de manière péremptoire ne jamais prendre les compli-
ments des Douala au sérieux en se justifiant de la manière suivante :

(11)   AB: je sais que la majorité des des camarades des camarades venant du littoral que
             j'ai eu à côtoyer ils sont ils sont moqueurs […] / pour moi je ne prendrais pas
             ça [leurs compliments] au sérieux même s'ils peuvent être sérieux mais moi je
             ne serais pas tout à fait sûre/ je ne serais pas sûre […] / leurs compliments sont
             comme des moqueries

Pour ce qui est des interactions entre les Sudistes et les Nordistes, l'extrait suivant
résume la perception négative des compliments des sudistes, laquelle perception
s'appuie sur l'image de Sudistes "imbus d'eux-mêmes".

(2)   (suite) I:[a]   bon prenons par exemple un ewondo qui se retrouve au nord / est-ce que ses
                      compliments sont pris au sérieux ou est-ce que ces compliments euh sont
                      négligés comme ça / ne sont pas pris en compte parce qu'il appartient,
                      parce qu'il est sudiste
       GA :   oui dans une certaine mesure parce que généralement chez nous [au nord]
                      […] on n'apprécie pas trop les […] sudistes / en général parce qu'on /
                      ils se prennent/ disons on on le croit / ils ils exercent un peu une sorte
                      de supériorité sur nous [les nordistes] / ils se disent trop élégants / par
                      exemple le TEINT compte beaucoup / par exemple ceux du sud sont de
                      teint clair et nous sommes rarement/ sont ceux qui ont un teint clair / donc
                      quand ils avancent par exemple un compliment sur quelqu'un par exemple
                      pour lui dire qu'il est beau qu'il est par exemple clair / ça ça ça laisse indif-
                      férent/ au contraire ça ÉNERVE même / c'est c'est on croit que c'est une
                      insulte
       I :   aha hm et là la réaction c'est toujours par rapport à l'appartenance ethnique
                      de la personne
       GA :   oui
       I :   et si c'est quelqu'un du nord qui dit 'tu es beau' tu as-tu es clair' là il n'y a
                      pas de problème
       GA :   non il n'y a pas de problème il n y a pas de problème

[a] Lire *Intervieweur*. Ceci est une reprise partielle de l'exemple (2).

Du point de vue référentiel, on note l'opposition entre le *on/nous-nordiste* et le
eux-sudiste : des désignatifs par le biais desquels GA construit deux ensembles (eth-
niques ?) aux intentions relationnelles divergentes. En effet, les Sudistes vivant dans
le Grand-Nord camerounais semblent manifester de la condescendance à l'égard
des populations autochtones, une attitude qui est bien évidemment offensante pour
les Nordistes, "on n'apprécie pas trop les sudistes". Mais cette aversion envers les
Sudistes ne se présente pas comme un comportement zénophobe, mais plutôt com-
me la réplique aux railleries dont les nordistes font l'objet. A l'aide de la locution
adverbiale *en général,* GA attire, en effet, l'attention sur le fait que l'explication
qui suit est la cause majeure de cette méfiance envers les compatriotes du Sud. On
assiste alors à la description des Sudistes comme des gens qui affichent un certain
complexe de supériorité envers les autochtones. Pour étayer son argumentation, le
locuteur évoque les aspects suivants: le harcèlement des Nordistes "ils ils exercent
un peu une sorte de supériorité sur nous", l'arrogance des sudistes "ils se prennent

[pour]"; "ils se disent trop élégants"; l'*effet perlocutoire de l'arrogance et du har-cèlement sur les nordistes* "on on les croit [plus beaux]". Autant de variables qui légitiment la méfiance des Nordiste*s* par rapport aux compliments des Sudistes. Et la réaction des Nordistes semble chevaucher entre l'indifférence (le compliment "laisse indifférent") et l'agacement ("ça énerve même").

9.4.1.6   Le topos du fanatisme religieux et de l'autarcie culturelle

Le recours aux différences religieuses est l'une des stratégies argumentatives employées pour justifier la perception négative des compliments des autres. Le topos de l'intolérance religieuse sert en effet de base argumentative dans les séquences relatives aux interactions entre les Nordistes et les Sudistes. Répondant à la question de savoir comment il réagirait aux compliments des Nordistes, LA, un originaire de l'Ouest qui a passé plusieurs années dans la région de l'Adamaoua (Nord), fait remarquer que les compliments à un Nordiste doivent généralement se faire en rapport avec sa religion (l'islam). Les compliments qui dérogent à ce principe risquent de provoquer des réactions négatives. Cet intervenant semble ainsi décrier la refonctionalisation du compliment chez les Nordistes. Selon lui, le compliment pour le Nordiste aurait pour fonction essentielle de renforcer ses convictions religieuses.

(12)   LA: les musulmans aiment d'abord qu'on les complimente / parce que c'est comme si en les complimentant ça prouve qu'ils sont à la mode / parce qu'un musulman aimerait qu'on arrive chez lui et qu'on dise que 'non ta gandoura ci est […] / qu'on apprécie sa maison telle que celle d'un musulman […] / ils aiment étaler tout ce qui reflète leur statut social le tapis au salon / les assiettes de qualité / le complimenter par rapport à ceci qu'il est un bon croyant / là il est d'accord mais ne tente pas de dire qu'il ne croit pas en Allah

LA applique le désignatif *musulmans* à tous les Nordistes pour donner l'impression que le Grand Nord est un espace religieux monolithique. Et la plupart des intervenants convoqueront cette dénomination religieuse et le topos de l'intolérance religieuse pour décrire et décrier les partiques du compliment chez les Nordistes. Examinons à cet effet l'exemple (13).

(13)   I: qu'en est-il des compatriotes qui viennent du nord?
       ER :   déjà effectivement
       LE :   ce sont des gens un peu plus fermés / réservés
       ER :   et même quand on leur fait un compliment ils ne savent pas apprécier disons que peut-être que c'est souvent l'attitude de mutisme / c'est-à-dire que / comme on dit généralement ça laisse à trente sept [indifférent] les compliments avec eux / c'est-à-dire ça ne leur fait ni chaud ni froid
       I :   est-ce que ce n'est pas dû au fait qu'on ne sait pas ce qu'il faut apprécier chez eux? / en fait on ne sait pas ce qui / ce qu'ils apprécient dans leur société / communauté?
       ER :   ça se pourrait c'est possible

> JO : mais il y a le problème religieux / la religion est une grande barrière / bon il y a d'autres qui aimeraient que vous mettiez devant le 'salam alekoum'
>
> I : hum hum
>
> JO : et là les compliments ça marche bien ça marche bien / mais quand vous commencez 'bonjour' ce ne sera pas bien vu
>
> ER : effectivement comme il [ER] dit aussi sur le plan religieux étant donné qu'on sait que c'est des gens qui sont trop attachés à leur religion quand un compliment vient d'une personne autre qu'un musulman généralement / puisqu'ils ont eu l'habitude de qualifier toute personne non musulmane d'infidèle / qu'on considère d'impur / ce qui fait que le compliment n'a plus de poids n'a pas sa valeur
>
> JO : il y a un autre problème qui est très est important pour l'homme du nord / l'homme du nord est de tradition guerrière / en guerre ce ne sont pas les compliments ce ne sont pas les paroles douces ce ne sont pas des paroles enjoliveuses / et / or l'homme du sud n'est pas guerrier il y a aussi ça / donc l'homme du nord ne trouve pas la valeur / il ne trouve aucun intérêt dans les compliments / ça ne se trouve pas en guerre

Les Nordistes sont présentés comme des "gens un peu plus fermés/réservés" (LE). Il s'agit, aux yeux des intervenants, d'une attitude qui n'est pas loin du repli identitaire et de l'intolérance. Pour la plupart des informateurs, les Nordistes passent pour des gens pour qui les rituels de la politesse ne peuvent servir que la cause religieuse. Ainsi, JO pense que les salutations acceptables, aux yeux des Nordistes, ne sont que celles se référant à leur religion, laquelle est présentée comme une barrière infranchissable: "ils sont trop attachés à leur religion". En outre, ils "traitent les autres d'infidèles ou d'impurs". Selon les personnes interrogées, le fait que les Nordistes soient très attachés à leur religion les empêche d'accepter les compliments des autres et d'en faire aux autres. Le topos de l'intolérance religieuse est renforcé par une autre perception négative, à savoir la représentation des Nordistes comme des individus de culture guerrière, laquelle ne les prédispose pas aux propos doux et élogieux.

A côté des représentations négatives, il y a aussi des catégories positives. Nous en présentons quelques aspects dans la section qui suit.

9.4.2 Les représentations positives

9.4.2.1 Le topos de l'élégance naturelle

De manière générale, les personnes interrogées citent les Douala/Sawa (encore appelés Côtiers) et les Beti (dans une moindre mesure) comme ceux dont les compliments (sur l'habillement surtout) sont/seraient pris (très) au sérieux et considérés comme des actes essentiellement valorisants pour la face du complimenté, qu'il soit de la même ethnie ou d'autres groupes ethniques comme les Bamiléké, les Nordistes ou les Anglophones. Cette perception positive est sous-tendue par le fait que les Sawa et les Beti sont présentés/considérés comme des 'connaisseurs' en matière

de mode. Pour légitimer leurs points de vue, les personnes interviewées recourent abondamment au topos de l'élégance naturelle des Sawa.

Une idée (assez) répandue au Cameroun est en effet celle selon laquelle les Douala/Sawa sont naturellement élégants. Cette perception s'illustre déjà au niveau des désignatifs qu'on leur applique. En dehors des ethnonymes Douala, Sawa, on les appelle aussi "les côtiers", "les gens du littoral", et surtout "les blancs du Cameroun", etc. Il convient de relever ici la connotation positive attachée au désignatif *côtier* qui semble indiquer (indirecetment) que les Sawa, parce qu'ils ont été les premiers à entrer en contact avec le monde occidental, sont logiquement les plus modernes (les blancs) du pays. Les discours des enquêtés tissent ainsi un lien entre l'histoire coloniale, la modernité et la compétence laudative.

A la question de savoir si elles prendraient les compliments d'un Sawa au sérieux plusieurs personnes interrogées répondent par l'affirmative, en évoquant ce topos de l'élégance naturelle des Sawa. Il se dégage de leurs discours une pléthore d'axiologiques positifs employés pour qualifier les Sawa. Ceux-ci sont en effet (re)présentés comme des "viveurs"[14], "civilisés", "bons sapeurs" [des gens qui s'habillent bien], des "gens toujours chauds/élégants", des gens qui "savent s'habiller", qui "connaissent les bonnes choses", qui "peuvent mieux apprécier l'habillement", et qui "aiment/savent ce qui est beau", etc. Par conséquent, leur compliment sur l'habillement des autres ne peut être que valorisant. Examinons l'exemple (14)

(14)   CH: généralement on dit des gens du littoral les sawa qu'ils savent bien s'habiller /
               par conséquent ils peuvent mieux apprécier l'habillement que les bamiléké qui
               ne savent rien dans ce domaine / si un sawa me fait des compliments sur mon
               habillement je les prendrais vraiment au sérieux / par contre si un bamiléké me
               dis que je suis bien mise j'aurais du mal à croire à ce qu'il dit

On observe que CH, originaire de l'Ouest, recourt bel et bien au topos de l'élégance naturelle des Sawa pour faire prévaloir l'effet perlocutoire positif de leurs compliments sur elle. Son argumentation s'appuie sur un discours social récurrent symbolisé ici par l'adverbe *généralement* et le pronom indéfini *on*. En outre, elle établit une relation consécutive entre le fait de savoir s'habiller, une compétence qu'elle attribue sans détour aux Sawa, et la compétence laudative : faire des compliments pertinents sur l'habillement des autres. À partir de ce discours général CH insiste sur le fait qu'elle donnerait une réponse positive aux compliments des gens du littoral, à la faveur d'un contraste avec les compliments des Bamiléké, moyennant des tournures telles que *mieux apprécier ... que, par contre ..., avoir du mal à croire*. En matière de compétence laudative, CH place les Sawa sur un piédestal pendant que les Bamiléké occupent (dans son discours) la position inférieure. Il en va de même pour VI (ex. 15), lui aussi originaire de l'Ouest, qui a recours au discours général et contrastif pour donner de la teneur à ses réactions positives aux compliments des Douala.

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[14] Ce terme est, de toute evidence, employé dans un sens positif.

(15)   VI: c'est c'est la même chose dans certains domaines / puisque par exemple si moi
                quelqu'un peut me complimenter moi je prends ÇA totalement sans :: sans
                me faire des idées / mais une autre personne dans la société va dire si c'est un
                bamiléké qui dit 'gars mon gars tu es à la page' il va dire 'tais-toi qu'est-ce que
                tu en sais de l'habillement ?'/ 'pauvre bamiléké comme toi tu es toujours dans tes
                vestes chaque jour pour faire le commerce' / 'vas vas vendre les comprimés au
                marché' / 'qu'est-ce que tu pourquoi tu me juges?'' / alors que si par exemple c'est
                un côtier si c'est un douala qui dit que 'gars tu es à la page-hein!' bon moi je vais
                sentir que non 'les douala ils sont vraiment on dit vraiment que ils savent ce que
                c'est que l'habillement ce que c'est que l'esthétique' / donc je vais sentir que lui il
                a porté vraiment un bon jugement de valeur sur ce que j'ai sur mon paraître.

Il faut noter que VI fait partie du même groupe de discussion que CH et intervient juste après cette dernière. A travers l'énoncé "c'est c'est la même chose", VI valide le point de vue de CH et résume d'une certaine manière les points de vue qu'il ne tardera pas à dérouler. Mais sa stratégie est plus complexe que celle de CH. Pour ménager sa propre face, VI tente de se projeter l'ethos d'un Camerounais "ouvert", qui ne se laisse pas influencer par les préjugés tribalistes qui minent les interactions quotidiennes: "si moi quelqu'un peut me complimenter moi je prends ÇA totalement sans:: sans me faire des idées." Mais la suite de son argumentation donne l'impression que VI se présente comme une victime d'un discours social auquel il ne peut malheureusement déroger. Il semble vouloir prendre ses distances pa rapport aux attitudes négatives des autres membres de la société : "une autre personne dans la société va dire." Et cette mise à distance s'exprime par le recours au discours direct dans lequel VI reprend les réactions négatives aux compliments des bamiléké.

    Mais lorsqu'il s'agit de commenter positivement le compliment éventuel d'un Douala, VI passe, après le compliment énoncé dans le discours direct, à la forme élocutive (*je, moi, mon*). On observe encore une fois une construction comparative de la compétence laudative des Bamiléké et des Sawa. Pour donner un poids argumentatif considérable à sa propre perception positive des compliments des Sawa, VI emploie, entre autres, le style direct, les adverbes d'intensité (par exemple *vraiment*), les adverbes de la constance/de l'itérativité (par exemple *généralement*), les locutions verbales destinées à magnifier la compétence naturelle des Sawa (par exemple "ils savent ce que c'est que l'esthétique").

    Dans les deux cas analysés ci-dessus (ex. 14 et 15) et dans la plupart de nos exemples, on observe la tendance des interviewés à s'appuyer sur le discours populaire représenté, moyennant les locutions telles que "on dit (généralement) que" et "les gens disent que". Cette stratégie argumentative consiste à inscrire son discours dans une certaine continuité intertextuelle avec d'autres discours, de renforcer ses prises de positions et de désamorcer les attaques personnelles. Dans l'ensemble, les personnes interrogées construisent des Sawa une image de laudateurs compétents parce que, comme le disent la plupart d'entre elles, les Sawa "savent ce que c'est que l'élégance"; "l'élégance c'est leur propre".

    Pour certains informateurs, il faut adopter une position intermédiaire, consistant tout d'abord à déconstruire le clivage entre compliments valorisants et compliments

dévalorisants et à déterminer, par la suite, les domaines de pertinence des compliments formulés par les membres des différents groupes ethniques. Leurs perceptions sont, pour l'essentiel, ambigues.

9.4.3   Les représentations intermédiaires ou ambigues

Certains intervenants insistent plutôt sur la nécessité de tout relativiser dans la mesure où les valeurs et pratiques culturelles varient d'une ethnie-région à une autre. L'élégance vestimentaire en est une parfaite illustration. D'après les défenseurs de ce discours, l'importance de l'élégance vestimentaire, les types d'habillements valorisés, les fonctions sociales de l'habillement, entre autres, varient selon les pratiques culturelles, artistiques et religieuses des groupes ethniques du pays. C'est l'argument principal développé par BI dans les deux extraits ci-dessous. Le premier (ex. 16) porte sur les Bamiléké et il est question des Nordistes dans le deuxième (ex. 17).

(16)   BI: je crois que l'homme bamiléké […] ne voit pas l'importance de l'habillement en tant que tel / ce qui fait que ce serait difficile qu'il fasse des remarques pertinentes dans ce sens là / par contre si c'est un autre cadre de beauté / par exemple au niveau de l'art / je vois plutôt que […] les beaux arts c'est dans le pays bamiléké / j'ai eu à apprécier beaucoup de [beaux arts] là-bas / quand tu fais quelque chose ici [au centre], je ne sais pas si un bamiléké peut bien apprécier cela par rapport à ce qu'il fait [dans sa région] / donc tout dépend du contexte dans lequel on parle du beau

(17)   BI: étant donné que l'habillement des nordistes diffère du notre [ceux de centre] il est tout à fait difficile que les ressortissants du Nord sachent même apprécier [notre façon de nous habiller] / pour un compliment il faut savoir apprécier / quand un collègue musulman s'habille même s'il est mis comment je ne connais pas la valeur du gandoura par exemple / donc quelque part ce ne serait pas pertinent de lui faire des compliments / j'ai eu à faire un compliment un jour à quelqu'un qui n'était pas nordiste mais qui avait l'accoutrement des nordistes / je lui ai dit que son gandoura et son chéchia étaient très beaux mais c'est un autre collègue nordiste qui m'a dit que le compliment était déplacé / il a dit ceci 'quand tu vois quelqu'un avec ce genre de bonnet chez nous on ne la salue même pas' / cela m'a vraiment impressionné / il a ajouté 'le gandoura est peut-être bien mais le chapeau rend tout cela moche' / le monsieur en question a immédiatement enlevé son chapeau et a demandé à mon collègue quel genre de bonnet il devrait mettre avec ce type de gandoura / et mon collègue musulman s'est mis à lui donner des renseignements sur les types de chapeau et surtout sur la façon de les porter puisque disait-il la façon de mettre un chapeau suscite des compliments au nord / donc faire des compliments à quelqu'un qui n'est pas de son ethnie de sa région suppose que l'on sait dans quel domaine on devrait les faire

Tout en relativisant le "beau" et en cernant les "domaines de compétence" d'autres ethnies, BI valide inconsciemment le topos de l'incompétence laudative des Bamiléké et d'autres groupes ethniques. D'autres intervenants ajouteront que si les compliments des Bamiléké portent sur l'intelligence, ceux-ci ont toutes les chances de s'interpréter comme des actes flatteurs pour la face de l'autre, puisqu'il est communément admis que les bamiléké sont très intelligents. On a affaire ici à des formes de "stéréotypes positifs", selon les termes de Czopp (2008), lesquels sont

"evaluatively favourable and seem to confer some sort of 'advantage' to members of [the groups concerned] over non-members" (Czopp 2008: 413). Ces stéréotypes positifs sont certes mûs par la volonté de reconnaître des domaines de compétence exclusifs à certains groupes ethniques, mais une telle construction est " inherently restrictive because [it is] based solely on group membership rather than individualizing information " (Czopp 2008: 414). De telles conceptions semblent propager l'idée qu'il est inimaginable d'avoir des Camerounais capables de faire des compliments pertinents dans plusieurs domaines. Pour la plupart des informateurs donc, c'est l'ethnie qui (dé)fait le compliment.

9.5 Conclusion

La présente étude tentait de présenter le lien entre l'ethnicité et les preceptions de la politesse au Cameroun. Les analyses ont porté sur les perceptions des compliments offerts par les membres des différents groupes ethniques du pays et les types de réactions qui en découlent. Dans la plupart des cas évoqués ci-dessus, l'ethnicité (dé)fait le compliment. En effet, les discours des personnes interrogées laissent apparaitre des perceptions positives et/ou négatives essentiellemnt soustendues par des préjugés ethniques. Il faudrait préciser, toutefois, qu'il peut y avoir décallage entre ces discours et les interactions naturelles. Tous les échanges de compliments en situation de communication interethnique au Cameroun ne se déroulent pas toujours selon les schémas présentés ci-dessus. Nombreuses sont les situations dans lesquelles l'ethnicité n'est pas un facteur déterminant pour le déroulement de l'interaction (soit on ignore l'ethnicité de l'autre, soit on n'en fait pas un élément pertinent). Dans ces cas, les lois de la politesse s'imposent, et le complimenté accepte le compliment, du moins y réagit positivement, en valorisant aussi bien la face du complimenteur que sa propre face.

Toute proportion gardée, l'analyse des perceptions de la politesse en rapport avec la problématique de l'ethnicité pourrait permettre de mieux appréhender l'origine de certains types de réactions en situation de face-à-face au Cameroun. Il ne faudrait cependant pas oublier que les facteurs tels que l'âge, le sexe, le statut social, le choix du code, etc. sont aussi déterminants dans le fonctionnement et les perceptions de la politesse. Pour circonscrire les représentations de la politesse au Cameroun, la recherche à venir devrait examiner l'impact de l'ethnicité sur les perceptions d'autres types d'actes de langage ainsi que le rôle d'autres variables dans les pratiques de la politesse.

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Chapter 10
Address Strategies in Cameroon Pidgin English: A Socio-Pragmatic Perspective

Joseph Nkwain

Abstract This chapter investigates the linguistic behaviour of speakers of Cameroon Pidgin English (CPE)—pidginophones, in relation to the use of address strategies or terms of address. The analysis of naturally-occurring data carried out here reveals that users internalise various sets of sociolinguistic and pragmatic norms or patterns drawn from different cultures and languages existing in Cameroon, which they then use strategically in their interactions in CPE. These languages include Camfranglais (the emerging mixed language used mostly by urban youths), French and English (the official languages), and the over 270 indigenous languages. The choice of address form is determined to various degrees by social and relational variables such as age, sex, education, ethnicity, religion, societal status, occupation, geographical origin, and degree of familiarity.

The address terms discussed in this chapter help interlocutors avoid face threats and solidify interpersonal and group relations. These terms include modified personal names, kinship terms, general honorifics from the religious, cultural, and professional domains, indexical naming, and in-group markers and references. The use of these terms is always culturally-determined in line with contextual requirements.

Keywords Cameroon Pidgin English · Address strategies/forms/terms · Politeness · Respect · Kinship terms

10.1 Introduction

The way interactants address one another portrays sociocultural norms and linguistic realities within speech communities. In multiethnic, multicultural and multilingual communities, speakers make various strategic choices in naming and addressing other interlocutors that qualify them as competent members of their community. They constantly deal with questions like: How should I name or address others? What about younger or older interlocutors? Should I address them by title, first name, nickname? Or by some combination of these? Should I not simply avoid

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using their names, and possibly replace them with a kinship term or social address term? The above questions are triggered by two more central questions: 1) What is the impact of names on people and those calling them? and 2) What factors govern the choices people make when they address or name others? These are just some of the questions interlocutors grapple with when addressing others. Variations at the level of cultures seem to be at the root of the complexities which characterise these choices. Differences in the statuses of languages and contexts of interaction in multilingual societies also impact on the choice of address strategy. In postcolonial communities where different cultures and languages co-exist under the political entity called 'nation' or 'country', these strategic choices are a factor of the hybridising systems of interaction triggered by the contact of colonial institutions and local indigenous cultural systems and languages (see Anchimbe 2011; Anchimbe and Janney 2011). For instance, the use of an official language often necessitates the use of formal address forms as opposed to the use of Pidgin or indigenous languages which rather necessitate the use of social, traditional titles and nicknames.

Earlier statements on modes of address such as Wolfson and Manes (1986), de Klerk and Bosch (1997), Kajee (2005), Afful (2007), Agyekum (2006), Anchimbe (2008, 2011), Echu (2008) and Mulo Farenkia (2008a) corroborate the fact that in (cross-cultural) interaction, interlocutors show awareness of, and adhere to, established norms of usage in order to consolidate and foster solidarity, enhance camaraderie and engender warmth. In this way, they avoid threatening the face of others in the choice of address term or strategy chosen. Forms of address are, therefore, culture-specific and have their roots in the sociocultural context of the society. In postcolonial communities and Pidgin/Creole-speaking communities, interlocutors have several challenges to deal with, such as the sociocultural interpretations of age, social status, gender and social achievement. These factors play into the choice of address terms or strategies used by interlocutors in specific communicative contexts. From the Caribbean (see Mühleisen 2011) across to Cameroon (see Mulo Farenkia 2008b; Anchimbe 2011), these factors play substantial roles in determining what is considered polite and respectful and what is not.

The above statements can be verified in Cameroon which is a hugely multilingual, multicultural and multiethnic postcolonial country. The use of English and French as official languages over several scores of indigenous languages and Cameroon Pidgin English (henceforth CPE) makes communication a complex and adaptive process. This paper focuses on one of these languages, CPE, and investigates choices in naming interlocutors during communication. CPE is usually considered in Cameroon as a "corrupt" form of the English Language, and is often identified with non-literates. It has also often been accused of causing the falling standards of learners of the English Language in the country. These accusations have further engendered negative attitudes towards the language, despite its widespread use in most regions of the country and in semi-official domains like the radio and churches.

In order to challenge these negative conceptions about CPE, this paper aims at illustrating its vitality and relevance in daily social interactions as it expresses speakers' desire to commune with one another, perform daily social interactions, and achieve their communicative goals. This study investigates the language behaviour

of speakers of CPE with regard to the use of address terms by highlighting the different choices they make when they address others and how these terms of address reveal certain sociocultural and linguistic specificities inherent in this multilingual and multiethnic setting. Focus is on the use of modified (through clipping, blending, reduplication, etc.) first names, kinship terms, general honorifics such as social, traditional, and professional titles, in-group markers and indexicals as address forms. Besides, it attempts to demonstrate how the terms used influence interpersonal or group relationships as interlocutors interact in different situations.

Data for this paper were collected from four towns: Yaounde and Douala in the French-speaking part of the country, and Bamenda and Limbe in the English-speaking part—significant numbers of L1 speakers of CPE have been attested in these two towns[1] (see Neba et al. 2006). The data were obtained through observation of interaction in mostly informal interactions in CPE. The examples discussed below are not from a consistent corpus but rather from the data I collected from my observations of CPE speakers in different contexts. The examples are from naturally-occurring interactions and are used here for illustrative reasons.

10.2   Politeness and Address Modes in Multilingual Postcolonial Communities

The investigation of face and politeness in multilingual, non-Western countries and cultures is relatively recent. In Africa, for instance, the initial works that drew attention to the specificity of politeness and face were Nwoye (1992) on Igbo face, de Kadt (1994, 1998) on Zulu, and Kamwangamalu (1999) on *Ubuntu* in southern Africa. Later studies extended the focus to include the use of official languages, among them, Kasanga (2003, 2006), Kasanga and Lwanga-Lumu (2007), Anchimbe (2008), Anchimbe and Janney (2011), etc. However, these studies have described mostly interactions in official and indigenous languages but not in the pidgins or creoles existing in these contexts. This paper wishes to attract research interest in this direction by focusing on CPE.

In relation to terms of address, they have their roots in the socio-cultural context of a society and for Afful (2006a, p. 77), they "constitute an important part of verbal behaviour through which the behaviour, norms and practices of a society can be identified." According to Oyetade (1995, p. 516), they are used in "interactive, dyadic and face-to-face situations to designate the person being talked to." Aliakbari and Toni (2008, pp. 2–3) affirm that forms of address are likely to be different across languages and cultures since "different languages have different linguistic resources to express what is culturally permissible and meaningful." The use of address terms is either to show respect or to flatter in order to gain favours. In this way, variables such as gender, age, ethnicity, social status, and religion are important.

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[1] Speaker status and town of origin are not central in the analysis below.

From different perspectives, various scholars have investigated address patterns in several contexts. Apart from studies based on (monolingual) Western cultures such as Hymes (1964), Wardhaugh (1986), and Kiesling (1997), other relatively recent investigations have focused on multilingual, especially postcolonial, and Pidgin/Creole-speaking communities. These include Mühleisen (2005) on kinship address patterns in Trinidad, Mühleisen (2011) on the use of *allyuh* as a politeness marker in Trinidadian Creole, Anchimbe (2008, 2011) on kinship terms and social address patterns for respect and politeness in English in Cameroon, and Echu (2008) on address choices in CPE. In some ways, the naming strategies resemble those discussed by de Klerk and Bosch (1997) on nicknames in South Africa, Kajee (2005) on address patterns in online communities of practice, and Afful (2006a, 2006b) on address and naming strategies in Ghana.

10.2.1   *Focus on Cameroon*

As far as Cameroon is concerned, a few studies have been carried out that illustrate naming and address patterns in Cameroon English (CamE), Cameroon French (CamF), Cameroonian indigenous languages and CPE. I will briefly review some of them here.

Mbangwana's (1996) study on self-naming strategies by educated Cameroonian women illustrates how names are used to imply social status. Using a corpus of female first and surnames, he demonstrates that by re-spelling their names (e.g. *Janet—Jeannette*) or attaching their husband's name to their maiden name (e.g. *Jeannette Ampa-Nde*), the women underline their emancipation, independence, professionalism, and literateness.

Kouega (2007) examines names in CamE and establishes that they have a three-part structure which generally includes a forename which occurs in initial, medial or final position in the name sequence and originates from various sources including French, Latin and the Bible. Forenames tend to be pronounced as they are spelt and this causes individual consonant segments to be replaced by others and clusters to be simplified by way of vowel epenthesis. The study is a structural discussion of names and does not evaluate the impact of these names in social interactions.

From a cross-cultural perspective, Anchimbe (2008) establishes that variation in the use of address terms in CamE is inevitable due to differences in the socio-cultural systems of the many ethnic groups of the country. Focusing on kinship terms, he illustrates that these words have more elastic meanings in Cameroon than elsewhere. For instance, he identifies at least six different referents for the term 'brother', which could include village members or tribal members. In a recent study, Anchimbe (2011) extends the discussion to social terms like *manyi* (mother of twins), *tanyi* (father of twins), and *moyo* (in-law), and how they are used for strategic politeness and beneficial reasons in CamE.

In the case of CPE, Echu's (2008) study demonstrates how terms of address borrowed from various linguistic and sociocultural sources are used to smoothen

communication in Cameroon. These terms create and consolidate existing ties of friendship, establish a spirit of belonging, and portray politeness, as users effectively meet up with the face needs of their interlocutors. The study identifies three categories of terms depending on whether equals, superiors or inferiors are addressed. In addressing equals, camaraderie ties are reinforced either through the use of first names or terms such as *kombi/amueh, chick, asso, complice, old boy* and *massa* to address a friend, a girlfriend, a customer, a companion, and a mate, respectively (Echu 2008, p. 126). In addressing superiors, CPE speakers make use of *Chif*, *Mbe*, *Fon*, *Nchinda*, *Ni* (traditional titles), *Dokinta* or *Dokta*, *Officer*, *ticha* (professional titles), and *Fada*, *Alhadji*, *Pastor* (religious titles) as a mark of deference. In addressing inferiors, CPE speakers use kinship terms and other terms such as *baby, boy, smol broda, smol massa, small sista* and *pikin*. Where age boundaries and status are not evident, the use of more neutral and less face-threatening forms such as *broda* and *sista* are used.

Nkwain (2011), in a recent study, investigates the impact of compliments, an appraisal speech act, on face in CPE. Using an extensive discourse completion test to collect data, he arrives at the results that

> complimenting entails the pragmatic and discourse transfer of compliments to praise or show admiration, desire or envy. [since] compliments are culture-specific and more expressive when they are characterised by markers that make them genuine and thus face-saving. (Nkwain 2011, p. 60)

One way in which compliments are received in a bid to reduce the debt of accepting them, or are mitigated to normalise the praise value borne in them is to use a kinship address term on the speaker who is complimenting. This also softens the threat to the complimentee's positive face, since the kinship term moves the interaction to kinship space wherein the response to the compliment is easily accepted by the complimenter. Nkwain (2011, p. 67) illustrates this using example (1) in which, Nancy calls Flora *my sister* in a bid to mitigate the fact that she has too many dresses as suggested in the compliment utterance. Also, the second part of Nancy's response, "Man must live-oh", could be treated as pride or arrogance, but because she calls Flora *my sister*, this is simply less threatening or arrogant:

(1) Two female friends at home. Nancy presents her clothes to Flora.
    Flora: Na only you gettam so?
              '*Do they all belong to you*?'
    Nancy: **Ma sister**, just leave me so ya. Man must live-oh.
              '*My sister, just let me be. One has to enjoy life*.'

Example (1), though on compliment speech acts, exposes the importance of naming in social interaction in CPE.

In his discussion on CamF, Mulo Farenkia (2007) explains that address terms usually have a pragmatic value. He shows that in formal or informal contexts, the choice and function of address terms are determined by variables such as age, sex, status, education and the immediate communication context (commercial, religious,

educational, or occupational). The use of address terms is equally characterised by the re-appropriation and re-adaptation of cultural terms to suit specific communication situations and intentions. This is further portrayed in a later study (Mulo Farenkia 2008a) where nominal and pronominal address forms such as the French *tu, on* and *vous* are used strategically to address individual or collective interests, suggest inclusiveness or in-group belonging, depending on the immediate context of the speech event. Besides, the use of the nominal and pronominal forms are conditioned by the different extra-linguistic variables as shown through relations between interlocutors, for instance, acquaintances, parents and their children, superiors and subordinates, or sellers and customers in the market.

Using Gilbert Doho's play, *Le Crane*, Dassi (2008) focuses on the realisation of politeness in CamF. He illustrates this using cultural respect terms from the Bamiléké culture and language used in the play. For example, the word *andi!* (composed of the root *ndi*, the acceptance marker *a*) is a strong deferential response to praises. When used in this culture, the root *ndi!* has the meaning of a dignitary, a noble, or a notable in the kingdom or from another kingdom. But it is also strategically used in CamF for respect and politeness to address people who are not nobles.

Mba (2008) investigates naming strategies in Ghomala, a Cameroonian indigenous language. He explains that, in this language, there are established rules to express deference, solidarity, and power. The study demonstrates how the use of the inclusive pronouns '*we*' and '*our*' as well as kinship terms such as *maà* and *mamaà* for mother, *taà* for *ancestor,* and *kwyà* for *father* or *uncle*, consolidate solidarity ties between interactants, who, in the strict sense of the words, may not be the speaker's biological mother, father, ancestor, or uncle. The terms are used to safeguard societal cohesion.

The studies above attest to the importance of address terms in multilingual and multicultural societies like Cameroon. They further establish and highlight the sociocultural importance of factors such as age, status, gender, culture, and social achievement in communication and the choice of address strategy during interaction.

10.3   Findings and Discussion

Speakers of CPE use different expressions and names to address interlocutors in different contexts and for specific, often strategic, reasons. These address terms portray the vertical and horizontal relations between participants in speech events. On the vertical level where speakers are either subordinates or superiors, relations of power are clearly visible in the choice of name or address pattern. Such choices enhance the relationship through deference, respect, and politeness. On the horizontal level, intimate friends, family members, members of sociocultural and religious groups, classmates, and equals use terms that suggest reciprocal politeness and respect. The intention is to solidify social bonds, share common interests, and enhance intimacy. In the following sections, the realisation of communicative intent through naming will be addressed at five main levels: the use of modified first names, kinship terms, in-group markers and references, general honorifics, and certain indexical forms.

10.3.1   Modified Personal (First) Names

Personal names constitute both primary and secondary names. According to Afful (2007, p. 185), primary names refer to true names acquired at birth through a "culturally accepted arrangement." They are only changed following a change of status acquired through marriage or other related circumstances. Secondary names are acquired as one grows up, and could be given by family members, friends, neighbours or acquaintances in school, place of work, and the church. Primary names are made up of first names, some of which reflect the gender of the addressee.

In CPE, the use of personal names is determined by sociocultural and pragmatic factors. These names which usually mark horizontal relationships are often modified to adapt to the pidgin environment thereby, making them more expressive of the solidarity between interactants. This explains why it is possible for a personal name to have varying forms (phonological and morphological) in different contexts. It is not a consistent trend with the use of personal names in CPE in all contexts, but the use of the personal names is determined by the context of interaction and the interactants involved. For instance, I (Joseph) am addressed differently on various occasions by different interactants using variants of the same name, *Joseph*:

- Joboy: To show affection, my wife calls me *Joboy*. The marker of vertical relationship *boy* does not suggest she is superior to me in relation to age but is rather a strategy she uses to bridge the age difference between us. Since I am older, calling me *boy* reduces the deferential gap imposed by our cultural norms and hence, makes it possible for her to manifest her affection.
- Joey: During informal encounters where CPE is used, my francophone colleagues and friends address me as *Joey*. This reflects the French use of the diminutive of the name *Joseph*.
- Joja and Soja: When drinking with friends, they refer to me as *Joja* which eventually changes to *Soja* (probably a blend of *soldier* and *Joja*) to capture my courage on the football field during matches and training.
- Big Joe: In our extended family meetings, a deferential *Big Joe* is used to address me since I am the oldest of us all who bear the same name in the family. This differentiates me from the younger ones who bear the same name.
- Jojo: In casual encounters especially in opening greetings, intimates address me *Jojo*. This duplicated form of *Joe* or *Jo* is used both in formal and informal encounters.[2]

From the foregoing, it becomes evident that several variables determine the form of address appropriate for a specific context. Though these forms are not altogether

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[2] The last two examples, Big Joe and Jojo, happen to relate to well known names in popular culture, especially music, in the 1990s and 2000s. It is likely that popular culture may also have an effect on the way names are re-configured in social interactions. Additionally, the former Cameroonian football goalkeeper, Bell Joseph Antoine, is still fondly referred to as *Jojo*, and since Joseph (I) plays football, the choice of this diminutive could also be traced to this origin.

exclusive to CPE interactions alone, the choice of CPE as code of interaction motivates their use in especially informal situations.

Besides, some names are modified for a humorous effect, where they also often function like nicknames: *Alphonse* is often realised as *Afoin*, Aloysius as *Alosh*, Cyprain as *Cypro* and Walters as *Wally*. Mulo Farenkia (2007, p. 12) demonstrates how some names are re-adapted through word formation processes such as acronyms (*Lambo Pierre Roger* becomes *Lapiro*), clipping (Emmanuel is *Emma* or *Emmanu*), the doubling of diminutive forms (Joseph is *Jojo*), hypocorism (Patrick is *Paddy*), initialisations (James Tong is *JT*), and suffixation (Bernard is *Bernado*). In typical informal contexts, these re-adaptations create a feeling of acquaintance as the horizontal relationship between co-participants is highlighted. Bargielia et al. (2002) contend that the use of first names by foreign speakers of English in anglophone cultures like the British results to embarrassment because of seeming over-familiarity. Conversely, pidginophones, especially intimates rather re-adapt these terms in CPE to avoid distancing and embarrassment.

10.3.2   Kinship Terms

It is important to note that the kinship terms described here are also used in one form or another in CamE and CamF. They are also extensively used in CPE. Unlike in the West where nuclear family kinship terms are clearly limited to the persons they refer to, in most African contexts, they are extended to cover other relations and also strangers or first time acquaintances. The intention, according to Anchimbe (2008), is to reduce the distance between interlocutors and to make them feel like family relations. Within this relation, respect and deference are defined naturally according to age, status as parent or child, etc. For Echu (2008), such address strategies are intended to flatter interlocutors into responding positively to requests, apologies, or commands that normally infringe on their freedom of action.

In example (2), the term *mami* (mother) is used in place of the name of the person referred to. It is used together with the name of the daughter of the person referred to, i.e. *Mami Bessem* (mother of Bessem). This structure is generally borrowed from indigenous languages and cultures wherein calling older people by their names is considered disrespectful and rude (see also Adegbija 1989; Kouega 2006; Anchimbe 2008).

(2)   In town: Two male friends, aged between 30 and 35, as they leave a local
        restaurant in Limbe.
      Friend 1: (*Looking contented*) How you enjoy de eru?
                  Did you enjoy the eru?
      Friend 2: **Mami** Bessem really sabi yi head for eru.
                  Bessem's mother really knows how to prepare eru.

The term *mami* is an honorary title used either in isolation or appended to the name of the referent, or to the name of one of her children. The choice of this term is revelatory of the respect she is due in the community, both as a result of her age and also in recognition of the fact that she is a mother. There is, therefore, the tendency to refer to any

woman old enough to be one's own mother as *mami*. The same goes for men, who are referred to as *papa, ma old man* or *pa*. These kinship terms are only a few from a list of terms used to name or address people in CPE. To these we can add *sista, broda, uncle,* and *aunty,* and compounded forms like *big mami*, *big papa*, *big broda,* and *big sista*.

The CPE word for husband, *massa* (master) is generally used by the wife to address her husband or to refer to him. This reference is not limited to the husband alone but could also be used on the husband's brothers, cousins, step-brothers, and even farther relations. As a result, there are compound ways of referring to older or younger 'husbands', i.e. male relations of the husband. These include, *big massa* and *small massa*, for older and younger relations respectively. In (3), two female friends, both married with children, aged above 40 years, talk about the *big massa* who is visiting.

(3) After church in Yaounde. Two female friends, aged above 40 years, are about to separate.

Friend 1:   Ehh, why you just di hurry so?
            Ehh, why are you in such a hurry?
Friend 2:   **Ma sista**, ma **big massa** come this morning. I neva cook for house ohh.
            My sister, my big husband arrived this morning and I have not yet cooked.
Friend 1:   Ah, again? Ok. We go di tok.
            Ah, again? Ok. We will talk later.

As indicated above, *big massa* here could refer to her husband's elder brother, father, cousin or any of his relations. Reference to him this way marks deference especially as it is culturally impermissible to address him by his name. This is equally evident in the use of *small massa* to refer to any of the husband's junior brothers or relations. The adjective *small* does not underrate the referent but simply indicates age. In this way, the use of *big* and *small massa* depends on the age of the referent as compared to that of the husband.

In (3), Friend 2 refers to her friend as *ma sista*, also a kinship term. The aim here is to illustrate how close they are; hence making the message passed a familial matter. Immediately, Friend 1 hears of the *big massa*, she knows she can no longer keep her friend from leaving, since culturally, the *big massa*, deserves respect and deference from the *small wife*.

10.3.3   In-Group Markers and References

In-group markers constitute modes of address used to mark or identify members of social groups during interactions. They are directed both at acquaintances and also strangers whose wants and personality traits are admired by, known to, or relevant to the speaker and their future plan of action. They also include discrete linguistic elements (e.g. phrases, names, nicknames, etc.) understood only by members of particular (social and professional) groups such as gangs, students, smokers, driv-

ers, thieves, robbers, prostitutes, smugglers, soldiers, and hawkers. Through these special address forms, members are able to identify each other and conceal information from non-members. These forms, therefore, constitute a means of in-group bonding, and are relevant for discarding any element of distrust that could jeopardise communication between them since the address forms are generally appreciated positively by the members.

Amongst peers, in-group markers are frequent and can either serve identification roles or mark intimacy. Drawn from the Fulani language, *wai* is one of such terms which have gained widespread intelligibility among urban youths in, and also beyond, towns where speakers of Fulani reside. The following interaction (4) between two friends illustrates its use by university students on campus:

(4)   At the university in Yaounde: Two male friends, both aged between 22 and 25, greet each other.
  Friend 1: (*Shaking hands*) **Wai** na how?
       My friend, how is it?
  Friend 2: **Old boy**, no be your man dis? Na only ngeme di kill your man.
       My friend, here am I. It is only poverty that's killing your friend.

Wai and *old boy* as used in (4) refer to male acquaintances who recognise their status as equals during a speech event. As illustrated in (4), the two expressions are used mutually by friends during casual encounters, for example, in opening or closing conversations. Whereas the former term, *wai*, occurs predominantly in the speech of male participants, it is also used by females to males or other females indiscriminately in very cordial interactions. The latter term, *old boy*, (which has nothing to do with the age of the addressee) carries undertones of long time friendship and closeness. It is, therefore, similar in use to the French expressions *vieux* (old) and *ancien* (elder) equally used in CPE to recognise one's experience in the performance of a specific task, to refer to a retired colleague, especially in the military or any old acquaintance.

This category of terms equally constitutes what Afful (2007, p. 86) classifies as "secondary names." They include nicknames and other forms of endearment used directly or indirectly to evoke love sentiments for loved ones. Such names constitute an extended flattery strategy, especially when used for strategic, beneficiary reasons. In CPE, the following address forms could be classified as secondary names: *ma nga*, *ma chic*, *ma chap*, *ma small thing*, *ma madam*, *ma heart*, *ma love*, *sweet heart*, *baby*, or *bébé*, *show-show*, and *big mum/mummy* which are generally used to address a girlfriend or a female lover. In contrast to Wolfson and Manes (1980, p. 89) who observe that these terms of endearment are not always used reciprocally, pidginophones often use them loosely, depending on the context and the speech event. Also, showing deference is often thought to take a vertical dimension where low-status participants are always expected to show respect. This is not always the case in CPE because due to certain contextual imperatives, "beneficial politeness" or flattery could necessitate a reverse of roles or reciprocity.

In commercial circles, *asso* is commonly used in CPE by market vendors to invite potential buyers. It is a clip of the French word *associé(e)* (associate, acquaintance). It is generally used in this market context with a flattery undertone in order to lure potential buyers. In (5), there is a scramble as each of the vegetable sellers invites a customer to buy from them.

(5)   In the market in Yaounde: Two female vegetable sellers inviting a potential
    buyer.
    Buyer: (*Approaching the vegetables section and contemplating from
            whom to buy*)
    Seller 1:   (*Calling out to her*) Ma **asso**, na me dis for dis side. You don
            forget me today?
            My customer, here I am. Have you forgotten me today?
    Seller 2:   (*Also calling*) Na fine njamanjama dis for di side, **asso**. I go putam
            for you fine.
            There are good vegetables this way. I will make you a good price.
    Buyer: (*Hesitates and finally decides to buy from the first woman*)

The strategy here involves the use of an address term *asso*[3] which tries to place the vendor and buyer in an in-group wherein favours (e.g. good price, more vegetables) can be easily achieved. The use of the address term indicates to the buyer that she is already a friend, a member, or a close acquaintance, since she is apparently a regular customer (though not verifiable). Through the address term, the seller reminds the buyer of an already established relation between them. It is equally used on any potential buyers (male or female), not hitherto known, to attract them to the vendor's stall. The term reinforces the (supposedly) existing relation between them and this is effective in that it pushes the potential buyer into thinking that the existence of an intimate relationship could positively influence the bargain of the price. Also, the buyer may simply not find a reason to buy from a "stranger". Additionally, the use of the possessive *ma* by Seller 1 further reduces the distance between them.

10.3.4   General Honorifics

General honorifics as used here include occupational (7), religious, and traditional titles (6). In general, CPE honorifics suggest distance between interlocutors, social stratification, gender roles, and respect especially in vertical relationships. The traditional titles (obtained through traditional ordination, inheritance, or achievement) are drawn from indigenous cultures in which they are deeply inscribed. The religious titles are from two major religions, Christianity and Islam, while the occupational titles are mostly from official, formal, and educational domains linked to formal or Western education,

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[3] Another term used in CPE and CamE which has the same meaning as *asso* is the word *cus*, clipped from *customer*.

administration, and justice systems. These terms are also used in CamE and CamF but when they are used in CPE, they are often adapted to give them a CPE quality.

In typical traditional settings where the respect of established societal norms is not negotiable, titles play an important role. As earlier mentioned, these titles reveal societal stratification and their use constitutes a means of maintaining the existing status-quo established following birth rights, appointment or through the traditional ordination or initiation of notables. A case in point is *Baba* which is generally used in CPE to refer to elderly men, soothsayers, herbalists, and traditional healers. In the following scene, two female friends seek the intervention of a soothsayer:

(6)   A suburb in Bamenda: Two female friends visit a soothsayer.
      Friend 1:   (*Knocks at the door and they both wait*)
      Soothsayer: (*From within*): Na who dey dey? Enter come.
                    Who is there? Come in.
      Friend 2:   Morning-oh **baba.**
                    Good morning, baba.
      Soothsayer: Ashia for wuna. Na place dat for dey. Weti I fit do for wuna?
                    Welcome. There is space there. What can I do for you?
      Friend 1:   **Baba** wu come for see you for some small problem.
                    Baba, we came to see you for a little problem.
      Friend 2:   De problem **baba** na sey wu market no di waka no small. Wu
                        no know weti di really happen.
                    Baba, the problem is that our business is not doing well at all.
                        We do not know what is going wrong.

The address form, *baba*, is both honorary and deferential. Honorary because the person addressed probably has solutions for the problems faced by the speakers and, therefore, has to be honoured or flattered to provide them; and deferential because soothsayers are generally old people—the age variable. *Baba*, as shown in (6) is used in place of the soothsayer's name. In some cases, *baba* is also appended to the name of the addressee, as in *baba Atashiri*. The two friends make constant use of the title as a deference strategy in recognition of his age, status and (spiritual) power. They use it consistently probably for fear of offending the soothsayer and thereby endangering the aim of their visit. Calling him in another way may be regarded as a sign of dis-respect which is also tantamount to challenging his status and power as soothsayer.

In (7), the term *oga,* borrowed from Nigerian Pidgin English, refers to one's direct superior at the place of work. It is equally used with or without the referent's name. It is a marker of respect. In the following telephone exchange, a lady makes reference to her boss using the term *oga*.

(7)   In a home in Douala: A female and male friend on telephone.
      Female friend: (*Excusing herself*) Weh, I no go fit come ya. **Ma oga** don
                        travel and na me one dey office. I go fit only come next
                        week when **ma oga** come back.
                    Sorry, I'll not be able to come. My boss has travelled and
                        I'm alone in the office. I'll only be able to come next week
                        when my boss returns.

Even in the absence of her boss, she still does not refer to him by his name. This could either be due to habit since she uses this term often or respect for the boss. An interesting fact here is that, while in informal situations and interactions speakers use terms that reduce distance between them, in formal relations involving vertical stratification, deference, or respect remains and is reflected in the choice of terms used. It does not matter if he has been her boss for twenty years; he still remains and is called *oga*. This is because other factors such as age and social hierarchy weigh on the choice of address form. Other CPE terms used for bosses include *ma big man* and *ma madam* for male and female superiors respectively and *ma big* for one's superior in (especially boarding) school is equally revelatory of the existing rule of respect between the participants.

Apart from traditional titles such as *Fon* and *Mbe* (traditional ruler in the North West Region), *Chief* (conferred on rulers and dignitaries in the Centre, South, and South West Regions), *Nchinda* (custodian of traditional values), *Ntumfor* (conferred on a Fon's messenger), *Bobe, Ni, Shey/Fai* and *Babe* (dignitaries in the Kom, Mankon, Banso and Oku communities respectively) which are used freely in CPE, many religious terms have also been registered. Like in the other cases, they are sometimes used strategically, i.e. for people who do not play these roles. Examples include *Alhaji/Mallam* (Islamic teachers) and *Pastor*, *Reverend* (Christian preachers). Some occupational titles are either abbreviated or morphologically adapted to give them a CPE character, e.g. *dokinta* (doctor), *chicha* (teacher), and *capo* (French *caporal*, corporal). Generally, the titles can occur with or without the name of the addressee depending on the context, the norms regulating the use of a particular title, and the relationship between the interlocutors.

10.3.5   Indexicals

Whereas the strategies discussed above are motivated by "name-escapism" (Anchimbe 2008, p. 117), indexical address forms are used when the speaker does not know the addressee's name or when other forms of address do not suit the context. Indexicals in this sense include different ways of branding, cataloguing, attention-getting, and the use of neutral forms, which, in one way or the other, capture or represent the addressee accurately. This strategy makes recourse to an activity carried out by, or a visible physical or psychological trait of the referent.

Some common ways of indexing include: calling a vendor by the commodity they are selling, e.g. *orange* for an orange vendor in (8); using a significant positive[4] feature of their appearance, e.g. dressing: *agwada* to get the attention of someone wearing an *agwada*; or *Mercedes* for someone who owns a Mercedes car, etc. These

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[4] Indexicals are also used to insult interlocutors, or show rudeness and impoliteness towards them. In such cases, it is a negative or stigmatised feature identified with the interlocutor that is used to call or refer to them, e.g. *three-quarter* (*trouser*) for someone wearing a trouser that is not long enough, *eboa* for a handicapped person, *krobo* for someone who has shaved his head clean, *flying shirt* for a poor person, mostly young men who are still looking for a job, etc. These indexicals are rather denigrating for the addressee.

address forms are metonymic in nature since an element of the referent is used to name it. In (8), the orange vendor is identified and actually called *orange* because she sells oranges, and this is apparently the most effective way to attract her attention.

(8)   At the university in Yaounde: Several students sitting around and talking.
        One of them calls out to an orange vendor.
      Student: (*Shouting*) **Orange! Orange! Orange!**
      Orange hawker: (*Doesn't hear and continues to go*)
      Passer-by: (*To the orange vendor*) **Orange! Orange!**
      Orange hawker: (*Turns towards the passer-by*)
      Passer-by: Dem di call you for dey (*pointing in the direction of the
                                  student*)
                                They are calling for you there.

In the above case, reference is not made to the fruit sold but to the vendor through what she is selling. This seems to be the only strategy since the student does not know her name, and calling her *aunty*, *girl*, or *sister* would sound strange and imply something different from simply buying the fruits. This strategy pays off since she immediately identifies herself with the appellation. It is a more neutral and polite strategy as compared to the use of other attention-getters such as *eh!*, *oh!*, *hey you!* or the *s-i-i-i-p* sound which is socially rude and denigrating hence constituting a potential face-threat for the vendor.

10.4   On Choices in Addressing or Naming Interactants

Pidginophones make several terminological choices when addressing interlocutors. Speakers' social status, age, gender, and occupation play into these choices which are not always limited to CPE alone but also involve elements from other languages used in this multilingual and multicultural community: official languages, indigenous languages, the bilingual mixed language Camfranglais, etc. Being a traditionally stratified society in which older people deserve respect by virtue of their age in all contexts, the need to use address forms strategically for communicative success becomes higher. This is why most of the address strategies reoccur frequently in the speech of CPE speakers.

   For instance, interlocutors usually make an effort to avoid real names or address terms that would possibly threaten the face of their interlocutors. This somehow corroborates Kasper's (1990, p. 337) pertinent observation that the speaker, their status notwithstanding, has to choose appropriate strategies meant to evade imminent face threats. CPE speakers, therefore, often resort to the use of more intimate terms such as the following in order to consolidate their camaraderie: *bo'o* (friend), *kombi* (friend), *gai* (an appreciable friend), *tara* (a smart appreciable friend), *don* (an understanding friend), *paddy man* (a reliable friend), or *bao* (clipped from *bao-bab*, referring to a successful person), or *répé* (Camfranglais term for *father*; an anagram of French *père*, used in CPE to address male pals).

However, when the interactants' social status, level of education, age and state of material wealth are not evident at first encounters, rather than bridging the apparent gap between them, the above forms of address strain existing ties and as such, threaten face. This is common in some Cameroonian societies where younger persons, by virtue of their stable financial situation, comfortable state of material wealth or high traditional rank, tend to look down on the under-privileged, older interlocutors. The use of the terms by the younger interlocutors in such situations is considered rude, disrespectful and impolite, and so does not always leave the addressee indifferent.

10.5   Conclusion

This study has highlighted some of the linguistic and pragmatic choices that users of CPE make when addressing people in different contexts. These choices are determined by the sociocultural and linguistic variables at their disposal. The study has further demonstrated that CPE borrows extensively from English, French, the local languages and Camfranglais to enrich its stock of address terms. Some of these terms are transferred directly whereas others undergo morphological and phonological modification with a pragmatic intent. The transferred terms become more expressive as they adapt to the ecology of the receptor language making its use more interesting.

With focus on personal names, in-group identity markers, metonymic appellations, nicknames, social, professional, religious and traditional titles, the paper illustrates that these naming strategies have different socio-pragmatic motivations in the different contexts in which they are used. With regard to sociocultural norms, the use of address terms shows users' tendency to be deferential during vertical interactions involving subordinates and superiors, to be more familial (using kinship references) especially in vertical relations, thereby, bridging the "strangerness" gap (Anchimbe 2008) and fostering intimacy. The strategies described constitute an integral part of the sociocultural and linguistic behaviour of pidginophones who, through a flexible code, show dexterity, mastery and understanding of the dynamics of this multicultural and multilingual community. This investigation only touches the tip of a rich field of relevance to sociolinguistic and pragmatic research. More interesting findings could be arrived at if future research takes into account traditional influences, gender elements, religious impacts, and social factors on linguistic choices in CPE interaction. Furthermore, a corpus-based approach that makes extensive use of naturalistic data would be even more rewarding.

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