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# *Anglophonism and Francophonism: The Stakes of (Official) Language Identity in Cameroon*

## *Introduction*

The ethnolinguistic plurality of Cameroon and its French-English official bilingualism have in the past constituted various strata of linguistic identification for Cameroonians. They have at different times, for different reasons, and under different circumstances, demonstrated attachment (linguistic and emotional) to the many home languages (HL) that number up to 285 (*Ethnologue* 2001), the official languages: French and English, Cameroon Pidgin English (CPE) and the regional *lingua franca*: Fulfulde, Ewondo, Basa'a, Duala, Hausa, Wandala, Kanuri, and Arab Choa (Breton and Fohtung 1991: 20). This attachment which before the mid-90s was highly ethnological, since language and ethnicity are interwoven, has in recent times (last half-decade) evolved to stand for the official languages: French (francophonism) and English (anglophonism<sup>1</sup>) as major icons of out-group identification. Wolf (2001) illustrates how the ethnolinguistic identities are consistently or have adequately subsumed themselves into the more extensive and sweeping (official) identities, referred to in this paper as francophonism and anglophonism. Wolf (2001:223) observes that "the feeling of unity is so strong that 'being Anglophone' denotes a new ethnicity, transcending older ethnic ties". Such an identification, tantamount to group definition

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<sup>1</sup> This is evident, among other things, in the recurrence of the *The Anglophone Problem* through two historically significant conferences: the First All Anglophones Conference (2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1993) that issued *The Buea Declaration* and the Second All Anglophones Conference (May 1994) that issued *The Bamenda Declaration*; the secession attempts by the Southern Cameroons that led to the declaration of independence on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1999; the creation of several political parties for the secession of Southern Cameroons, for instance, Ambazonia Political Party (July 2004) (Adams 2004) and so forth. These examples indicate that the identities built on the official languages are strong and constitute levels of exclusion and opposition.

and membership is so strong that it excludes non-group members, and transcends ethnic contours. Like *Langas Cultural Linchpin* of the Catalonians, it has almost become to be considered:

Our language, the expression of our people, which can never be given up, is the spiritual foundation of our existence ... a people without a language of its own is only half a nation. (*The Catalan Cultural Committee*, qtd. in Fishman: 1972 46)

In spite of this individual official language identity, the prominence of English as a world language, with international prospects and international interaction, has launched an identity remake in Cameroon marked by the great penchant for the language among the francophones. The world today is diverging towards an English Language hegemony, which especially in the outer and expanding circles<sup>2</sup> (Kachru 1986), like Cameroon, results in several identity evolutions and reconsiderations.

### *Historical Development of English and French in Cameroon*

Cameroon had a complex history of colonialism. After the Berlin Conference of 1884, it was formally colonised by Germany. The First World War brought to an end German colonial authority but ushered a dual British and French colonial mandate that partitioned the country into two: Britain ruling a fifth of it together with its larger colony, Nigeria, and France governing the rest of the country. Various linguistic and political policies were adopted during the colonial period and after that shaped the development of the colonial languages English and French. After a long history of existence as official languages, first of two independent states in a loose federa-

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<sup>2</sup> The use of the Outer and Expanding circles of English is derived from Kachru's (1986) partition of the English-speaking world into three concentric circles following the functions and statuses of English in these areas. Inner Circle Englishes are the native varieties, *i.e.* British, American, Canadian, Australian and New Zealandan; the Outer Circle are those second language varieties that emerged through British colonialism, and the Expanding Circle are English foreign language varieties. Whereas the first two circles have historical links to Britain, the third does not.

tion and second of a bilingual united republic, the statuses and attachment to English and French have witnessed various changes that are, to some degree, linked to the interaction of their respective speakers.

### ***Pre-Independence Period (1919-1960)***

The defeat of Germany in the First World War marked the end of a decisive project to institute German as a “universal vehicular language” (Eco: 1995 331) had Adolf Hitler won the war and succeeded in reducing the USA “to a confederation of banana republics”. Having successfully annexed Cameroon in 1884 the German colonial administration decreed German to be the only official language. Several ordinances were proclaimed to foster the use of German. These include April 1910 Ordinance on grants-in-aid to mission schools that adopted German-language programmes (Chumbow 1980) and the March 1913 Ordinance that made the use of English illegal (Amvela 2001). In spite of these efforts, the Germans saw this linguistic scheme difficult to achieve because, (1) an English-based Pidgin was in extensive use, (2) English-medium and home language-medium missionary schools had gained substantial ground, and (3) since the primordial concern of the Germans was labour (for their industrial farms: CDC) CPE and English were loosely authorised or better still, permitted as labourers’ code. At the outbreak of WWI, the German colonial government had effectively set up only four schools in which German was the medium of instruction (Fonlon 1975). This paucity is grossly insignificant in the face of the 632 missionary schools (Mbassi-Manga 1976) set up by the missionary churches with English and HLs (Duala, Mungaka, Ewondo, etc) as media of education.

The mandatory occupation of Cameroon by France and Britain decreed by the League of Nations (1919) saw the introduction of French in the part (East Cameroun) ruled by France and a cementation of English in the area governed by Britain (Southern Cameroons). Since Britain had annexed Nigeria even before the outbreak of the war, and Southern Cameroons is a borderline territory to Nigeria, the British colonial government ruled Southern Cameroons from

Nigeria and in Educated English, which was reminiscent of Britain. So Educated English (opposed to Pidgin English and Creole English) was reinforced and projected as standard and official language of Southern Cameroons. Wardhaugh (1987 172) observes in relation to this that:

The British at first used the vernacular in primary education in the one fifth of Cameroon that was theirs. But over the years pressured by the Cameroonians, they began to place more and more emphasis on education in English so that by 1958, vernacular education was extinct.

The extinction of vernacular education increased the acquisition of educated English and promoted, directly and indirectly, its use in more spheres of life, for instance, between the colonialists and plantation headmen: teachers (Cameroonian, Nigerian, trained) and local pupils, missionaries and local church/school leaders, and among the indigenous people themselves for pride and status differentiation.

The French with their assimilatory colonial policy adopted a more totalitarian approach in which French men and women were made out of Cameroonians. The previous linguistic influence exerted by Pidgin English (P. E.), English, and German was summarily erased and these languages were banned from use within French Cameroon. Wardhaugh (1987 72) further upholds that:

French Cameroon was typically French in its governance [...] Under the French, the language alone became the language of primary education, and the vernacular and Pidgin English were banned from schools as obviously as German.

When French Cameroon obtained its independence of France in 1960, it automatically had only French as an extensive, educated and obligatory medium to adopt as official language. In 1961, upon independence, British Cameroon reunited with the French Cameroon, with English as its official language under the name, the Federal Republic of Cameroon. Constitutionally, these Federal states had to

maintain their respective official languages, French and English -- the legacies of colonialism.

### ***Post Independence Period (1960-2000)***

The status of French and English as codes of official transactions remained basically unvaried in East and Southern Cameroons respectively. As prospects for a unified nation increased in the late 60s right up to the early 70s, linguistic preparations through, especially education, were launched. The first bilingual secondary school was established in Man O wa bay (1963), which is present-day Bilingual Grammar School Molyko, Buea. Contrary to the separate bilingual education that was later instituted in the 80s, Man O wa Bay was founded on the bilingual immersion system. This was followed in 1966 by the introduction of bilingualism in other secondary schools in Yaounde and Douala. At the University a compulsory bilingual training course (which still exists even today) with English for Francophones and French for Anglophones, was instituted. When reunification finally came in 1972, it was the objective of the state to promote its principle of bilingualism as much as possible. A bilingual degree, created by a presidential decree, was started in the University of Yaounde and the Advanced Teacher's Training College (Yaounde). To push this further, a bilingualism allowance was paid to those civil servants that could adequately make use of French and English.

At this moment, attachment to both official languages was the replica of a tendency for national unity and integration. It was the image of Cameroon, united in its tribal and linguistic divergence, that was at stake and not the defence of French or English. At the dawn of the 80s, beguiled by territorial and numerical superiority, the Francophones (occupying 8 of the 10 provinces) exposed dominant qualities, assigning to themselves predominant political power, and imposing themselves together with French as the prestigious and "real" official culture and code of communication. A defence for official language identity was launched for French (francophonism) and for English (anglophonism) which hitherto being a political delimitation now degenerated to educational, cultural and emotional



clash. The extrapolation of French became extensive in the 80s and even later, as DeLancey aptly evaluates:

One cannot travel in Cameroonian cities without gaining a sense of the pervasiveness of French culture as an influence on Cameroon in terms of language, dress, foods, items for sale in shops and stores; and in numerous other ways, one is constantly reminded of France's role. (1986 202)

In the late 90s and even today, administration is conceived in French and only translated (if need be) into English, the military, the national assembly, treaties and diplomatic exchanges are arraigned in French (Kouega: 1999). Through a diverse score of factors, some exposed above, the attachment to English and French in Cameroon has undergone various evolutions. These evolutions created the identity icons existent in Cameroon today, some of which were tested on the questionnaire whose results are studied here.

To begin with, the status and attachment to English underwent various tests of time whose origins were linked to the perception of the Anglophone Cameroonian rather than of the language itself. This perception bears extensively on history, politics, power control and so forth. So, historical, political and prospective motivations have been determinant in actually creating the place of the official languages in Cameroon, especially English. A panoramic preview of the attachment to English since independence would render this position more clear.

### *Historical Landmarks in the evolution of attachment to English*

Over four decades, the attachment of Cameroonians, especially francophones, to English was conditioned by several factors. Most of these factors have to do with the relationship between Anglophones and Francophones, the balance of power between them, the collapse of the bilingualism scheme,<sup>3</sup> political equilibrium borne

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<sup>3</sup> The bilingualism policy in English and French, although highly publicised as the country's official language policy, lacked real focus, determination and suitable application strategies. It turned out to be a prestige-laden project that was

in the phrase, *the Anglophone problem*, and so forth. A highlight of some of these historical landmarks is given below:

#### 1960-1970

English was simply the official language of former British Cameroon, which being a state in the Federal Republic presented no linguistic or cross-political *threats* or challenges to East Cameroon. English and French enjoyed some degree of autonomy and equilibrium since each was used within its own respective region. Bilingual immersion education started in Man O wa bay and a few bilingual secondary schools were created.

#### 1970-1980

To consolidate Reunification (1972) bilingualism was reinforced in secondary schools, university and professional colleges. Pilot Linguistic Centres were created in some provincial capitals. English-French co-existence was favourable and motivated. National integration policies were directed at creating a national feeling that transcended the home languages and the English-speaking and French-speaking dichotomous division inherited from colonialism.

#### 1980-1990

The Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM) was launched in Bamenda, as a sign of national unity. The Advanced School of Translation and Interpretation was created in Buea. More bilingual secondary schools were created but contrary to the past the immersion system disappeared. Dominant French feelings heightened. French clearly surpassed English in official life. This sparked greater Anglophone / Francophone group feelings. It reverberated thoughts about the status of the former British Cameroon under the Republic of Cameroon. The *Anglophone Problem* became topical

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consumed by its own sumptuousness. For more on the failure of the bilingualism scheme see Tchoungui (1983), Kouega (1999), Anchimbe (forthcoming). However, this failure triggered firmer attachment to the official languages as higher group linguistic icons. The spirit of nationhood and national identity that ought to be created by bilingualism suddenly disappeared and was replaced by more consciousness in the linguistic difference of Anglophones and Francophones.



reaching peak after the reintroduction of multiparty politics in 1990.

1990 - 1994

Multiparty politics was reborn with the launching of the Social Democratic Front (SDF) (the main opposition party in Cameroon) in Bamenda, the North West Province. It became later considered and treated as an anglophone party. English received more scorn and disdain since it became linked to the anglophones.

Post 1992 presidential election violence and the state of emergency in the North West further reduced attachment to English. It was identified with opposition and violence by the out-group Francophones.

1994-2000

The admission of Cameroon into the Commonwealth of Nations with English as emblem of identification, re-launched attachment to English. Francophones, for instrumental purposes, beneficiary motives, started learning English (Commonwealth Scholarship).

The place of English and its range of function was particularly revoked and encouraged (see Prime Ministerial circular published in Cameroon Tribune (French version) N° 4951 of 3/08/1999, P.3 which outlines "the steps to take in order to project an image of a bilingual Cameroon").

2000-200...

The globalisation of English and its status as key to doors of international opportunities has aroused an unprecedented rush for English by Francophones.

Multiplicity of purely English-medium private nursery and primary schools (most of which are flooded by francophone children, see responses to questionnaire below). Multiplicity of private language institutes with intensive English language programmes for children and adults alike.

Increase in those learning English at language institutes such as the British Council language Institute, the American Language Center, the Pilot Centres, and so forth.

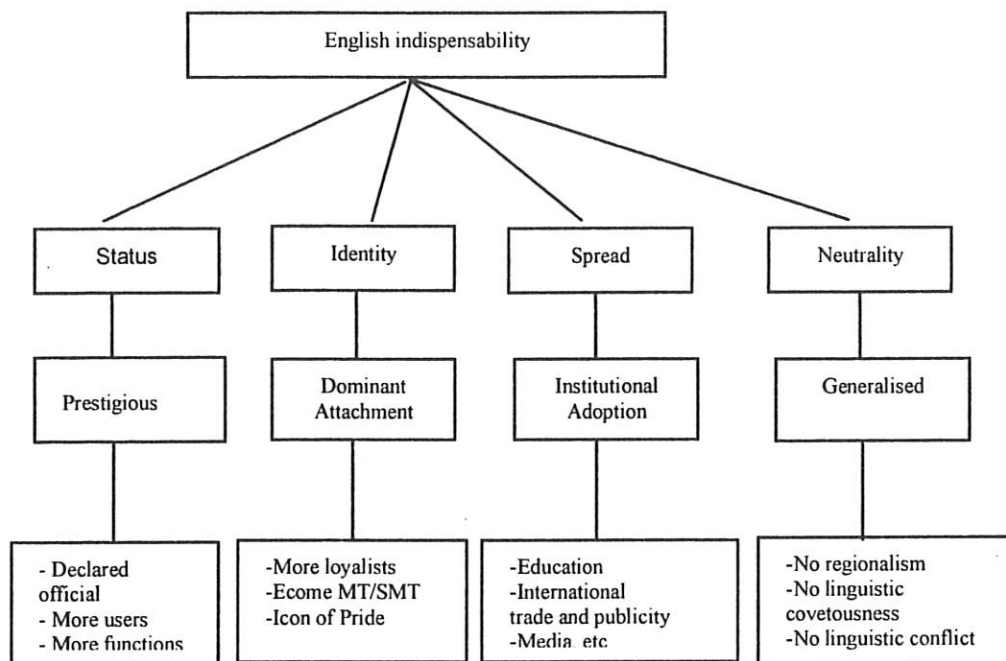
### *Language Identity and English In the World Context*

Language and identity are interwoven icons of individual and group membership. Even though Fishman (1977) identifies ancestry, religion, physiognomy and other dimensions of ethnicity, as dictates of such a membership, it has, especially through the evolution of English, been demonstrated that the more practical index is the linguistic, *i.e.* the language through which the values of the group are portrayed and transmitted. The vitality of language in group identification, according to Giles and Coupland (1991:96) exists at four levels. According to them, “language is often an attribute of group membership, an important cue for ethnic categorization, an emotional dimension of identity, ... a means of facilitating in-group cohesion”. These four levels make the group a complete entity whose feelings and social esteem have vocal dimensions.

It is also reasons such as the ones expressed by Giles and Coupland (1991), besides others like the vehiculation of a national identity and expression through a local language, that fuelled efforts in Kenya and Tanzania for the adoption of Gikuyu and Swahili as official languages. This gave English, which before then, was the colonial-bequeathed language of intra- and international communication, a reduced range of function and attachment. National literature and official texts (see Ngugi’s plays in Gikuyu) were published in these national languages. This fared well in the countries and provided avenues for the exposition of the local environment and prowess.

The age of globalisation and the projection of America to the limelight of technology and commerce, were accompanied by the promulgation of English to the status of a world language. With no delimitable tribal or linguistic barriers, English is used in the world in varied forms and for varied purposes to a point where it deserves not just a linguistic identity, but one superior to ethnolinguistic identity. This perhaps explains why Giles and Coupland (1991:98) conclude that “language is also potentially a stronger cue to an individual’s sense of ... belongingness than inherited characteristics (such as skin colour) .” With its dominant status in the world, “regardless of how well-established and well-protected local cultures, languages,

and identities may otherwise be” (Fishman 1996:628) English has evolved into a world language of unimaginable strength and utility. It is not only a simple language, but is now sailing round the world, through English (anglo-saxon) and English-medium educational systems and the prestige-determined American culture (in pop-culture, industrialisation and opportunity). In Cameroon and other third world countries the indispensability of English could be generated on a paradigm as in fig. 1.



\* MT- Mother Tongue, SMT - Status Mother Tongue

Fig 1: English Indispensability Paradigm

As a result of the progressive status of English worldwide, countries are continuously adopting English as an official language. This is the case with Mozambique that had Portuguese as sole official language. It is a similar experience with English as a Foreign Language and English as an International Language in countries of the Asian continent that are attaching much interest on English.

### *The Pull of English: The Cameroonian Experience*

It was only when the internationalisation of English and its opportunities in employment, interpersonal interaction, and cross-national integration, became very clear that Cameroonians realised

the official bilingualism system decreed in 1961 was a total failure. It was only when the Francophones, who considered themselves the *dominant* and *prestigious* group, found themselves ill-equipped, lacking and ineligible to benefit from the wide-range of opportunities offered by English through the Commonwealth and globalisation, that they dived for English, regretting having marginalised and reduced it to a *derogatory* and *stereotype* emblem of the Anglophones, whom they referred to as *backward* in such slang as *anglofou*, *anglo-fool*.

Kouega (1999: 39) accounts for the greater demand of English-medium schools in urban centres as a consequence of the failure of the equal promotion of English with French (as stipulated by Section 1.1.3 of the 1996 constitution). He observes that “some parents who are annoyed over the bilingualism policy of the country and are aware of the spread of the English language are now registering some of their kids in English-medium schools.” These children use French in in-group (at home with relations) communication but English in educational and out-group interaction, and demonstrate a highly *Anglophone-like* behaviour.

The prospects of benefiting from scholarships offered by English-speaking countries (Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand) through the Commonwealth and other bilateral agreements (USA, etc) have pushed more francophones into English language centres (American Language Centre, the British Council, B&K Language Institute and the Pilot Linguistic Centres) nationwide. The British Council, for instance, has since 2000 registered a consistent 70% increase in its francophone learners of English. As it is evident that more learners apply than they (like the other centres) have space in their classrooms for, there has been an increase in the number of semesters yearly to enable more learners to have a chance.

The desire of Francophones to continue their studies in English (see responses to questionnaire below) is at the base of the explosive increase in the demand for places in the Bilingual Studies Section and the postgraduate programme in English language and linguistics at the University of Yaounde I. Since the 1999/2000 school year, the population of Francophones in these disciplines has determinedly been on the increase (table 1).

Academic year	Enrolment	No of		No of	
		Anglophones	%	Francophones	%
1999/2000	52	41	78.8	11	21.2
2000/2001	56	31	55.3	25	44.7
2001/2002	59	17	28.8	42	71.2
2002/2003	127	75	59.5	52	40.5

Table 1: Department of English (Master's Degree Programme)

Since 1999, the number of Francophones in the Master's programme has been constantly rising. The statistics above are generalised to cover the four specialisations offered by the department, namely American Literature, English Literature, Commonwealth Literature and English Language. But if we had to look closely at the English language specialisation we will discover that in 2000-2001, 86% of the enrolment were Francophones, in 2001-2002, 89.6% and 2002-2003, 91.4% were also francophones. In the Bilingual Studies Section, there has also been a steady increase in the number of Francophones and a constant decrease in the number of Anglophones who enrol in level one since 1999-2000 (table 2). It indicates that more Francophones go in for English (to complement French) than Anglophones for French (to complement English).

Academic year	Enrolment	No of		No of Francophones	
		Anglophones	%		%
1999/2000	218	72	33	146	77
2000/2001	191	57	29.8	134	70.2
2001/2002	296	89	30	207	70
2002/2003	187	67	35.8	120	64.2

Table 2: The Bilingual Studies Section

It is interesting to note that while the Anglophones have since 1999/2000 not reached 100, the francophone population has on the other hand not fallen below 100. So contrary to the past when English was treated together with the Anglophones as instigators of violence and trouble, it is now the educational target for most Francophones.



Let us have the statistics of three institutions in Yaounde (table 3). These are nursery and primary schools situated in the heart of the city itself and offering education purely in English. French is only a subject on the curriculum.

Institution	Enrolment	N° of Anglo-phones	%	N° of Franco-phones	%
Franky Nursery and Primary School Yaounde	447	201	45	246	5
Jumping Jacks Nursery and Primary School Yaounde	485	145	39.9	340	0.1
Holy Infants School Yaounde	850	457	43.5	393	6.5

Table 3: Nursery and Primary Schools

These figures abound in sectors where English is taught or is used for exposure to the international market. The coming of the Commonwealth in 1995 provoked an instrumental quest for English by the out-group members, *i.e.* the Francophones. To them, English serves as a doorway to international avenues through scholarships, trade links, and business exchanges. It was not a language to identify with or be identified with together with the in-group Anglophones. This, to them, meant reducing them to the *derogated*, minority and native Anglophones that speak and use English. In their minds, there was no integrative motivation in English. But global trends and the increase in the status of English, explained earlier, have been determinant in shaping their attitudes to the language. As a result, the institution of purely English-medium nursery and primary schools defeats any prospects of separating, in a child, the instrumental and integrative motivations. These francophone children are brought up in the same environment, subjected to the same moral lessons, held down to a behavioural code, and trained together with anglophone children, according to the dictates of the Cameroonian *anglophone culture*.<sup>4</sup> As confirmed by feedback from parents, the schools visited for data declared that the francophone children are epitomes of the

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<sup>4</sup> This refers basically to the English-speaking zone of Cameroon which claims, taking cue from British colonialism, to have a distinct culture. It is this culture that is referred to here as *anglophonism*. Although within themselves, there are extant differences, the Anglophones still feel strongly related to one another by the strings of the English language and the colonial heritage they share.



organised, liberal, and systematic Anglophones, at their various homes. They are used as yardsticks by parents and neighbours to other children who never had anglo-saxon education. The children consider themselves Anglophones and pride themselves, (even in front of their English-illiterate parents) as Anglophones, English speakers and as bilinguals. This therefore is a pointer to the fact that, they do not only find in the language pride and prestige but actually an identity that puts them on top.

A four-item questionnaire was used to elicit the data on which this paper is based. This questionnaire was both in French and English and was administered to the parents, whose children attend the schools surveyed in table 3, through their children. The filled out copies were got back through the children. Question 1 sought to know if the parents had any of the language skills in English. Of the 194 questionnaires that came back, 15 parents indicated that they could hardly understand, write or speak English. The rest could try in one or more of these skills. Implicitly, these parents do not want their children to miss the bounty of English which they themselves are missing because they do not know the language. This is verifiable in their response to question 3 which inquired if they too, the parents, would like to speak English very well. A resounding 100% yes was registered with reasons not too different from those advanced for question 2 below. Question 2 was based on the reasons that pushed parents to send their children to purely anglophone nursery and primary schools. Alternatives were provided: 2.1 – English is the world’s language, 2.2 - English gives more job opportunities, 2.3 - English is a prestigious language, 2.4 - I want my child to study abroad (USA, UK), 2.5 - I want my child to be an anglophone. Here, various responses were registered but there was an almost equal pull towards 2.2 (instrumental function) and 2.3 (integrative function). The results are:

Q2	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6 (others)
Why did you choose to send your child to an anglophone school	93	158	152	100	86	30

Table 4: Choice of school for francophone pupils

Most of the respondents ticked more than one box. Of the 30 who gave other reasons, the following responses recurred: Anglophones love order and respect (33%); Anglophone education is profound and more effective (31.5%); I want my child to be perfectly bilingual (20.5%); and I wish to learn English through my child (5%). At this moment when everyone seems to want to directly or indirectly identify with English, there is bound to be a corresponding shake up in the previous official language identity. What then will happen? Will there be a linguistic identity restructuration / reconsideration or a complete identity breakdown?

### ***Official Language Identity Breakdown***

The issue of linguistic identity has been at the root of several conflicts in the world. National unity and integration could be threatened and rendered worthless in the face of repression of linguistic identity ownership. Giles and Coupland illustrate the coalescence of identity and language with English-French bilingualism in Canada: "In the summer of 1976, commercial air services at Montreal's airport were halted for a week when Quebecois air traffic controllers engaged in industrial action for not being allowed to use French as a work medium" (1991:93).

It is not the strike that is important but what it stands for. They continue that "Indeed this (essentially socio-linguistic) dispute was described by the Canadian Prime Minister at the time as potentially the most divisive the country had faced for 30 years." To the contrary, linguistic diversity is not automatically an indicator of conflict between minority and dominant language nor their users. Rather, as Fishman (1972) argues, the interaction may lead to significant renovations in both groups induced by other factors inherent in one or both of the languages. Several outcomes are possible, some of which Giles and Coupland consider to be a remake of both identities, especially because

the dominant group's ideologies, strategies, and language status are an important and dynamic set of contributing forces. If language is an important aspect of dominant group identity, changes in the status of minority language (through growth or decline), are likely

to have direct implications for dominant language identity. (1991 150)

This view somehow summarises the identity switch from francophonism and anglophonism to one built on English (fig. 2), but not linked exclusively to the historical or regional anglophonism observed in Cameroon. This switch has been sparked by a positive change in the status of the minority English Language. It carries with it the breakdown of the former identity stereotypes and potentially erases the old stigma on Anglophones and the so haughty perception of French and the French colonial culture as superior. It might not actually in the near future be erased; it will be reconsidered following current trends. This reconsideration of identity will, according to Ross, be encompassing on grounds that

in the process of self-definition, the group myths, and cultural values, including language, [...] may be substantially revised, altered and reinterpreted so as to fit with changing conditions [...] Identity is a distinctly modern phenomenon rather than a mere reiteration of primitive or traditional images. (1979: 8)

At both the infant and adult levels, a reinterpretation of identity is taking place in Cameroon. In the interviews granted by children in primary schools, there was a commendable discrepancy as to who they are, what identity they belong to: some maintained they were Francophones, others accepted they were Anglophones but after second thought all of them claimed they were bilinguals. They are undergoing a situation of identity admixture given that French overrides their home interactions and English, their academic activity. The parents also were torn apart as to the official language identity of their children. In question 4, "After schooling exclusively in English will you consider your child an Anglophone?" 106 (54.6%) of the 194 parents said yes while 88 (45.3%) indicated no. In 4.1, a follow-up question to question 4, the tendencies changed. In the question (4.1) "Would you call him/her (your child) an Anglophone just as you would call someone from Bamenda or Kumba?" 146 (75.2 %) said no while 48 (24.7%) said yes. Those who said no advanced reasons such as: the child is not from the anglophone zone

(34%); the child is simply bilingual (32%); the child is a Francophone by origin and an Anglophone in culture (26.5%) and the child studied English only to have a bright future (7.5%). The 48 respondents for yes advanced three basic reasons: the child has an anglophone breeding and behaviour (44%); the child studied and perfectly speaks English (42.5%); 'Anglophone' is a system and not an identity (13.5%). This indicates clearly that a new identity is building up which, although not yet clearly defined, will certainly move further away from the former larger ones, anglophonism and francophonism.

The linguistic identity breakdown is a gradual process of five major stages that can be represented as in fig. 1. A sixth stage is possible depending on the context, which may be multicultural or monocultural. In multicultural contexts, the new identity would carry patches of the diverse cultures (see Anglo-Cameroonian), whereas monocultural situations will be characterised by no other elements but those of the identity pulling language (See Fig. 1).

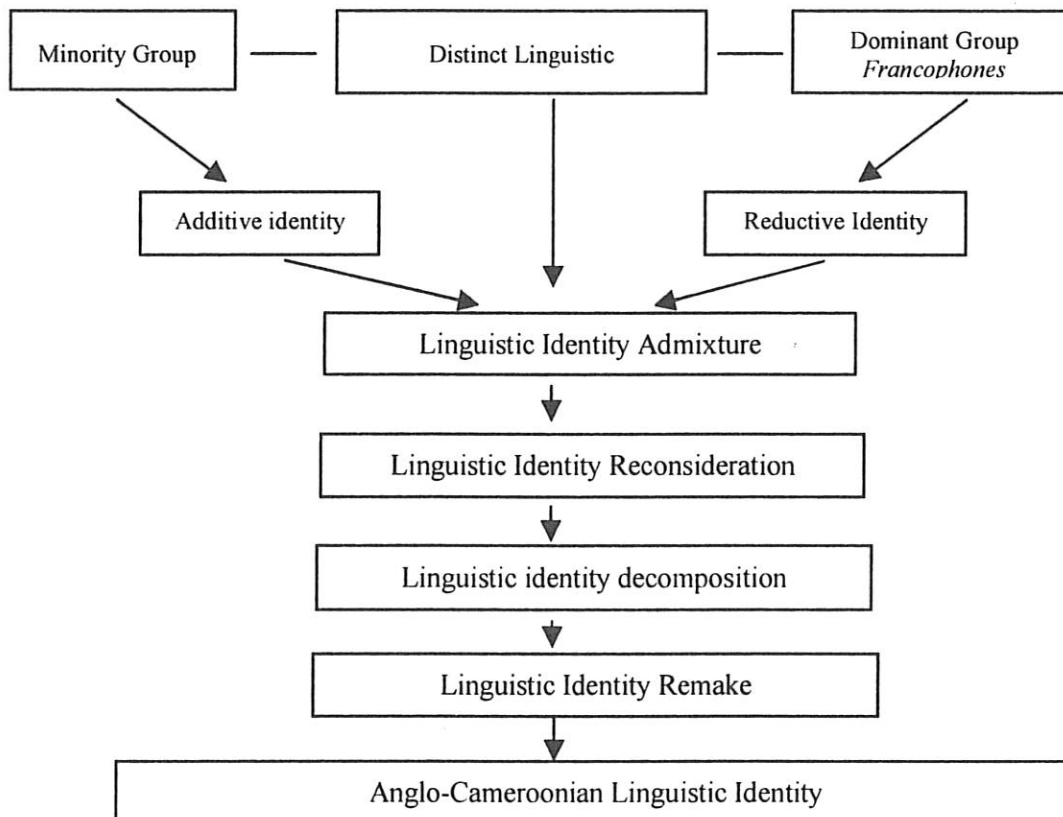


Fig 3: Process of linguistic identity breakdown

### *Linguistic Identity Remake*

Two processes are bound to occur in the process of redefining the official language identities of Anglophones and Francophones. With the Anglophones, there will be an additive identity evolution and with the Francophones a reductive identity evolution. This means that the increase in the users, functions and status-pride of English, which before now was a *derogated*, minority and limited-function code, would positively swell the Anglophone's loyalty to it. But the Francophones would go through a reductive identity evolution since they, hitherto loyal to French (favoured and broad-function code-thereby hated by the minority anglophones) now have to switch to English and identify with it.

By reductive identity it is meant that the speech and other linguistic features of the out-group (Francophones) will not be immediately and completely accepted as part of the norm or standard. It does not matter how well they perform in the language or how much they identify with it emotionally; they are considered imitators of the in-group (Anglophone) users. Simo Bobda and Mbangwana (1993 201) in an attempt to delimit the accepted users of Cameroon English (CamE) exclude Francophones. To them CamE stands in "contrast with the speech of francophone Cameroonians; some of these speakers may have a high command of English, but they are regarded as users of a performance variety and can hardly serve as a reference."

But in all, a reconsideration of the two earlier identities would take place given that a new identity would have been adequately visible. There is reconsideration on both parts because each group contributes to the new identity. It is not owned completely by one, although the Anglophones might appear to be a bit better placed. The process of reconsideration literally levels the mountains of differences and erases the stereotypes that existed before. This paves the way for the creation and existence of a more neutral identity, in this case, the anglo-Cameroonian identity. The term *Anglo* is used because this identity is generated through the attraction of and is built on English.



## *Conclusion*

This paper has examined directions in the loyalty, attachment, and identification with English (anglophonism) and French (francophonism) in Cameroon from the days of their institution through colonialism. From trends over time and under varying circumstances, among them, the indispensability of English, it was noticed that attachment to and identification with English had risen to commendable heights. As a result Anglophones would no longer simply be of North West and South West origin but rather those who use English in education, work, and as a marker of pride and elevated status. Moreover, the official languages, which in the past served as signposts of the dichotomous separation into Anglophones and Francophones would gradually cease to be that divisive because they would be shared by speakers from both regions. This is a precedence set by the children surveyed above and may set apace the bilingualism scheme envisaged by Fonlon (1969).

Eric A. Anchimbe<sup>5</sup>

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