

Multilingualism as a Literary Code in Cameroon Anglophone Literature: A Study of Tah Protus's *The Immortal Seed* and Bole Butake's *Lake God*

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Abstract: This paper demonstrates that the language of Anglophone Cameroon literature is a product of its multilingual ecology. Using Tah Protus's novel, *The Immortal Seed* and Bole Butake's play, *Lake God*, the paper analyses a corpus of 113,625 words and 10,787 sentences to reveal that though apparently written in English, the works are multilingual in the two Cameroonian official languages (European languages): English (the dominant and primary language of the text) and French; three Cameroonian local languages: Meta, Noone, and Fufulde, and one lingua franca: Cameroon Pidgin English (CPE) widely used in different varieties in Cameroon. The paper traces these languages to the authors' linguistic repertoires. Multilingualism was found to be achieved mainly through code-mixing, code-switching, coinage, semantic extension and culturally dependent speech styles expressed lexically 885 (0.21%), syntactically 54 (0.44%), semantically 114 (0.10%) and pragmatically 130 (1.21%). The paper exploits quantitative contents analysis and argues that this finding exhibits the daily linguistic habits in Cameroon.

Keywords: Multilingualism, Cameroon, Anglophone, literary texts

1. INTRODUCTION

Many studies have demonstrated that multilingualism has become 'the African lingua franca' because many people are learning English (and other international languages) alongside their indigenous languages (Cenoz, 2009). Cameroon with 283 languages and cultures (Eberhard, Simons and Fennig, 2021) with an official English/French bilingual policy and a widely used lingua franca which is a mother tongue to many Cameroonians in the North West and South West Regions (see Mbufong, 2001; Neba et al, 2006), provides a fertile ground for languages in contact (Chumbow & Bobda, 1995). One remarkable outcome of this contact situation, as Mbufong (2013) points out is that English has taken on local colourings as it gets in contact with home languages (multilingualism). He notes that local languages like Lamso, Bafut, Eton, Mungaka, and Mokpe have influenced English at the levels of phonology, vocabulary and grammar. Ngefacs, 2010 has also underscored this language mixture in urban centres. Ojong-Diba (2018) on her part demonstrates that it is possible for people in rural Lower Fungom in the North West Cameroon to have repertoires of up to ten languages. She then discusses how these multilinguals manipulate their linguistic repertoires. None of these works has discussed multilingualism in written texts.

In modern African literature, English serves as one of the main media of expression. Debates have emerged as to whether or not this colonial linguistic medium (English) is appropriate for African literature. This is because the question often arises as to whether the English language can adequately and authentically express the socio-cultural and philosophical realities in the writings of Africans, including Cameroonians. While one school still sees English as foreign, others argue that English Language in most African writings do not reflect the ecological, cultural and sociolinguistic realities of the host countries (Kachru, 1986; Anchimbe, 2006; Ngefacs, 2008).

Osundare (2004) identifies three schools of thought: accommodationists, moderates (gradualists) and radicalists (extremists). According to him, accommodationists (such as Leopold Sedar Senghor, Dennis Brutus, J.P. Clark, etc.) favour an outright use of imperialist languages in African literary works. According to them, nothing is wrong in writing African literature using the sophisticated formal English expression. On the other hand, moderates (among whom are Ali Mazrui, and Chinua

Achebe) share the view that European languages such as English, should be used in such a way that it bears the African cultural experiences while remaining intelligible internationally. Chinua Achebe in his 1975 *Morning Yet on Creation Day*, observes: "for me, I have been given a language and I intend to use it". To him, the English language has come to stay and so should be skilfully and imaginatively used to express Africans' feelings and heritage. On their part, the radicalists (among them, Ngugi WaThiongo, Obi Wali, and Levis Nkosi) favour an immediate adoption of indigenous African languages as the medium of literary expression. The present paper demonstrates that whether by choice or environmental pressure, the majority of African writers are moderates as they have adapted the English language to the realities of Cameroon, discernible in the multilingual characteristic of the language of expression. The paper demonstrates this through Tah Protus's (2015) novel, *The Immortal Seed* and Bole Butake's (1999) play, *Lake God*. As Foerster (2014) demonstrates, language takes centre stage in multilingual German literature not only thematically but also stylistically. She demonstrates that an analysis informed by linguistics research can help to determine how the author's multilingualism impacts the language of the text.

Multilingualism is used in this study synonymously with textual multilingualism defined by Miller & Norich (2016) as "the presence of multiple linguistic codes within one literary work or speech situation". It comprises *lexical* multilingualism, the use of non-English words in literature textbooks. *Syntactic* multilingualism occurs when authors use non-English expressions in their writings. We use the term *semantic* multilingualism when the authors coin new words from existing ones, transliterate and extend meanings of existing words and expressions to accommodate local sentiments. Finally, *pragmatic* multilingualism refers to the contextual meaning of some expressions. For example, the authors transliterate local proverbs, idioms, similes, metaphors, concepts of time and divination from their first language to English which is only meaningful in the contexts in which the texts are set.

The paper is structured as follows: after this introduction, section one briefly examines the linguistic background of the two authors, section 2 describes the methodology employed in the study while section 3 presents the results, which are followed by their discussion in section 4. The paper then ends with a conclusion.

2. THE AUTHORS AND THEIR BACKGROUNDS

It is important to note essentials about the linguo-cultural backgrounds of the authors so as to understand the sources of the codes used in each text. Bole Butake hails from Nkor, Noni Sub-Division in the North West Region of Cameroon. His first language (Mother Tongue) is Noone (Niger-Congo, Atlantic-Congo, Volta-Congo, Benue-Congo, Bantoid, Southern, Beboid, spoken in North West region: Bui division, Northwest, Kumbo subdivision) and his first official language is English while French is his second official language. Tah Protus on his part, is from Njindom, Momo Division of the North West Region of Cameroon. Meta (Niger-Congo, Atlantic-Congo, Volta-Congo, Benue-Congo, Bantoid, Southern, Wide Grassfields, Narrow Grassfields, Momo; North West Region: Bamenda subdivision, Bafuchu and Nja village areas; Momo division, east and southeast Mbengwi and east Batibo subdivisions) is his first language and like Bole Butake, English is also his first official language while French and Ffulde are the other frequently used languages in his linguistic repertoire. As evident, both authors are from the English speaking region of Cameroon where CPE is a language of wider communication (Schröder, 2003).

3. METHODOLOGY

This study employed content analysis to collect qualitative data from two literature texts discussed above. The data were non-Standard English words and expressions used in the texts. The literature texts at the time of this research were used in secondary schools in Cameroon and their authors are household names in Cameroon Anglophone literature. While Tah Protus' (2015) *The Immortal Seed (TIS)* is prose, Bole Butake's (1999) *Lake God (LG)* is drama. We chose prose and drama because they provide sufficient avenues for characters to interact and express their emotions spontaneously unlike in poetry where the authors' voices always dominate.

In all, a corpus of 113,625 words (100,295 in *The Immortal Seed* and 13,330 in *Lake God*) and 10,787 sentences (9,283 in *The Immortal Seed* and 1,504 in *Lake God*) were reanalysed. The data was collected

with the aid of an extendable checklist with themes such as code-mixing, code-switching, coinage, semantic extension and culturally dependent speech styles.

The resulting data was analysed quantitatively with the non-English words counted and classified as either lexical or semantic while non-English sentences were grouped as either syntactic or pragmatic modifications. Only complete sentences in non-English languages were computed under the section on sentences. The total number of non-English words per text were computed and percentages of multilingualism obtained. As for the meanings of the expressions extracted from the texts were concerned, we interviewed the speakers of these languages for their interpretation. This consisted first in identifying the language and thereafter contacting various members of the various speech communities to elicit the meanings of the expressions. For quality assurance, at least three members of each speech community were contacted at separate venues and times and corresponding answers were considered accurate.

4. RESULTS

The results are presented in two parts: Section 4.1 presents the qualitative results in which the strategies of multilingualism are discussed and illustrated and section 4.2 presents the statistics of the incidence of these strategies as gleaned from the data.

4.1. Strategies of Multilingualism in the Texts

In the two texts under study, multilingualism manifests lexically, syntactically, semantically and pragmatically. In the present study, some examples from the two texts have been identified and grouped under the four linguistic categories mentioned in the previous sentence. This section presents examples of this phenomenon in the texts under study.

4.1.1. Lexical Multilingualism

Examples 1 to 4 show that, lexical multilingualism is realised via code-mixing (intra-sentential switching) of English which is the main language in the texts, with Cameroon Pidgin English, French, Meta, Noone and Ffulde. In these subsections, the contexts in which the words are used in the literary texts are presented followed by Standard English equivalents. Then by some explanations about the words.

➤ *Code-mixing of English and Cameroon Pidgin English*

1. Coincidentally, Assi was the next beneficiary of the twelve man Ediki Police monthly *Njangi* (TIS, p.15).

The word *Njangi* means money contributed weekly or monthly by friends, family such that one person benefits during each meeting. The word is used freely in the text with no highlights.

2. If you had admitted that you sold without the knowledge of the *Fon*, we would not have gone where our return journey led us to the hideous deed your children carried out (TIS, p.132).

The *Fon* is used in the Cameroon Grassfields to refer to a powerful traditional leader, often considered divine. It can be roughly translated into English language as <king>.

3. *Ma* Kusham? *Ma* Kusham? I beg you to come forward and conduct the rite (LG, p.24).

Ma is a Pidgin English honorific expression used to address a woman either considered older than the speaker, or deserve respect.

4. When my parents told me “Don’t marry a *graffi* man, especially the son of a chief” I refused to listen (LG, p.35).

The word *Graffi* is once more a common Pidgin English expression derived from “Grass field” and used to refer to people who hail from the North West Region of Cameroon.

A close observation of the examples in 1-4 reveals that CPE is used in both texts – an indication that it is a language of wider communication and reflects daily linguistic habits of the majority of English speaking Cameroonians. The words *njangi*, *fon*, *ma*, *graffi* show social and cultural origins. As discussed above, *Njangi* is a type of meeting where people socialise and contribute money which

helps each member when he or she benefits; *Fon* and *ma* are honorifics use to address the king and woman, respectively. In using these expressions, the two authors do not only capture the linguistic realities of the society, but also portray cultures such as the traditional respect system that pervades the different cultural groups of the North West Region of Cameroon. As pointed out by Di Carlo & Neba (2020), respect for authority, elderly, twins and all that is considered divine is a common characteristic as one moves from one village in the North West Region to another. Similarly, the word *graffi* originally used to refer to origins of the North West and Western Regions of Cameroon, has acquired a somewhat derogatory connotation mostly used in South West Region. In using these expressions the authors stay natural and capture local realities while expressing the meanings they want to express in their writings. For anyone to understand these writings, they must have adequate background information about the context in which the works were scripted.

➤ *Code-mixing of English and French*

Examples 5 and 6 illustrate code mixing in English and French.

5. 'Into-o-o-o two lines, *a-a-aligné*' the constable ordered with a French accent. 'No more giggling!' (TIS, p.6).

Aligné is a French word which means "lineup".

6. *Arretez!* Segeant Atangana barked, while some recruits stopped jumping others jumped and swung their hands a few more times (TIS, p. 8).

The word *Arretez!* Means stop in French.

The switch from English to French portrays the official bilingualism practised in the context in which the novel is set (Cameroon) and confirms the fact that even though the Police Academy is in the English speaking region of the country, French is frequently used as the language of command in themilitary which shows a laxity in the language policy. In Cameroon Anglophone writing, every time a military character speaks, the authors use French. This is because French is the language of the military in Cameroon.

➤ *Code-mixing of English and Meta*

7. If I have accepted money from a second person, it is good and necessary that I refund what I accepted from the first person', Yeseb-Adang said as he returned the sum of 50.000 CFA francs to the uncle who acted in lieu of the late Tembi's father' *Ayene* Naffia replied. I thank you (p.34).

The expression *Ayene* means "so be it" in Meta.

8. His black *tongho'oh* was specially embroidered with red and yellow lions, the twin gongs, doubled headed snakes and two red moons, one at the back and the other at the chest (TIS, p.241).

In this sentence the author describes the *Tongho'oh* a traditional dress used by the people of the North West Region of Cameroon.

9. The boy and the girl shall be taken to the palace, *Teken* will pronounce judgement on them (TIS, p. 120).

The lexical item here is *Teken* which means a kind of masquerade that punishes and destroys people who commit crimes in the Meta village.

➤ *Code-mixing of English and Noone*

As it is the case with *The Immortal Seed* which uses English, French, Pidgin English and Meta, all languages in the repertoire of Tah Protus, *Lake God* also exploits Noone, Bole Botake's mother tongue. Examples 10-13 illustrate this.

10. He makes a round across the playing area and finally stops around centre stage with one last stroke on his *ngem* (LG, p.6).

The lexical item introduced here is *Ngem* which means "gong", a traditional musical instrument.

11. How will the *Kwifon* act? The *Fon* is unrepentant about the detention of *Kwifon* (LG, p.22).

The word *Kwifon* is a traditional men's secret society responsible for administration.

➤ *Code-mixing of English and Ffulde*

12. Running along and singing, he didn't look where he was going and ... Guess what! He ran right into the angry hungry *Foru* (TIS, p.175).

Foru means "Lion".

13. The Mbororo community rose like one man, waving their horsewhips, swords and other gadgets in the air, shouting 'Alarene! Alarene! Alarene! Alarene!' (TIS, p.244).

Alarene is an honorific expression in Ffulde used to greet an elderly person.

The discussion above reveals that the authors interlard English and Meta, English and Noone, English and Ffulde. This interlarding of languages shows the existence of community multilingualism in the context in which these texts are set. The words *ayene*, *tongho'oh*, *teken*, *ngem*, *kwifon*, and *alarene* reveal cultural and social realities: acknowledgement, traditional dresses, masquerades, traditional instrument, men's cult and respect to the elderly, etc. This resonates with the assertion that literature is a mirror of the society in which it is written. The authors use these words from their indigenous languages unconsciously or inevitably when there is no known equivalent for a word and to effectively portray their sociocultural and linguistic realities. Thus, the use of these words from indigenous languages depicts a new language, far removed from Standard English, maybe, a new English as demonstrated in Kachru (1986).

4.1.2. *Syntactic Multilingualism*

As mentioned above, syntactic multilingualism involves the use of whole sentences from other languages different from English, the main language of the text. Syntactic multilingualism in the two texts in question is realised through code-switching (inter-sentential switching) of English and Meta and English and Noone. Examples 14-20 illustrate this.

➤ *Code-Switching of English and Meta*

14. The most he knew in Menemo...*Iwo nga neb* 'He is in the house' (TIS, p.62).

The whole sentence *Iwo nga neb* roughly translates into English "he is in the house"

15. He is a danger to this clan! And the she-traitor going with him is food for the lion! '*Mbeh! Chamfor! Ngi-Nyam!* The people overtly approved in chants of praise and adulation (TIS, p.123).

The sentence *Mbeh! Chamfor! Ngi-Nyam* is a Meta way of acknowledging or confirming what the traditional ruler would have said.

➤ *Code-Switching of English And Ffulde*

16. The song was not new to the children for as soon as Adama sang each solo- line the kids spontaneously sang the chorus. In the cool windy night, one could hear: *Mi yidi goro. Ey mi yi di goro. Mi nyame goro*(p.173).

This sentence is literally translated from Ffulde which means <Do you want kolanut? Yes I want kolanut, I will eat kolanut>. This is a song sung by Gidado Jibo's children to entertain Bi and Tebene who escape from the wrath of Fon Jiggang and hide in this family.

17. So Jawugel went dancing across the hill." Allo Granny, *mi don wara!*" He was singing about his grandmother (p.175).

This utterance is roughly translated from Ffulde which means < I will be back >. This is a fable that Sadatu tells Tebene, Bih and his siblings about Jawugel (a lamb) who went across the hills alone and was almost eaten up by wild animals such as lion, tiger and fox but for his wisdom.

➤ *Code-Switching of English And Noone*

18. Then the women performed dance steps to such lyrical songs as *Kwessim kwe bo lang e banya* (LG, p.24).

Kwessim kwe bo lang e banya means the complaints has been given a deaf ear”.

19. Invoking the spirit and pouring libation. *Hiiiiii wong! Hi Bo Nyo! Hiiii Kwifon!* (LG, p.39).

The sentence: *Hiiiiii wong! Hi Bo Nyo! Hiiii Kwifon!* is a Noone traditional way of calling attention. It literally translates into English < Attention the word! Attention gods! Attention members of the cult. This sentence is uttered when an announcement from the gods or royalty is to be made.

It is deducible from the data above that the transfusion of English and Meta, English and Ffulde, English and Noone constitutes the strategies at the level of syntax and indigenization employed by the authors which reflect the socio-cultural typology of its settings. Examples 14 to 19 are so telling about this phenomenon. Thus, Anglophone literary writers are enriching the literary field with aesthetically innovative representation of unique voices, different in flavour thus subverting the ideas of linguistic purity and homogeneity through code-switching.

4.1.3. *Semantic Multilingualism*

In sociolinguistics literature, one strategy of lexical expansion is coinage which involves blending and semantic extension. According to Chumbow & Tamanji (1994), and Mutaka & Tamanji (1995) semantic extension is a strategy of lexical expansion wherein the target language coins new words by using its own resources to name new concepts. The target language simply extends the meaning of an existing word to cover the new concept. Blending on its part involves creating a new word from a blend of two morphemes: one coming from the source language and another from the target language. In the literature texts under study, the two authors actualise this strategy extensively. Apparently, these are products of the author's strategy of transliteration.

➤ *Coinage/Blending*

Protus and Butake create new words which are a product of word-for-word translation from Meta into English and Noone into English, respectively. Examples 20-23 illustrate this:

20. So great was his joy when his mother told him he would go to Tad. They set out before long break. Everybody on the road moved Tadward (TIS, p.15).

The word *Tadward* is a derivative of blending *Tad*, a locality in the village of Meta and *wards* from English “towards” to express the meaning “Towards Tad”.

21. When Tembi was old enough to be enthroned, the *caretaker- Fon* influenced some kingmakers with money and stories to manipulate the late Fon's will and enthroned himself instead of Tembi (TIS, p. 15).

The new expression *Caretaker- Fon* is a coinage from a translation of the Meta word for English “regent”.

22. But it looks like they are also making use of the other weapon, *hunger of the loins* (LG, p.28).

Similarly, *Hunger of the loins* means “sexual desire” which is a direct translation of the Noone referent for sexual desire.

23. I called her about three nights ago and she complained about *periodic sickness* (LG, p.28).

Periodic sickness means “menstruation” which is once more the translation of the Noone word for menstruation

➤ *Semantic Extension/Shift*

In this situation, the authors extend the meanings of Standard British words to accommodate local sentiments or concepts and the terms carry semantic properties of the authors' L₁ (Meta and Noone). Examples 24-27 illustrate these.

24. ‘Serves her right, if there were raw coco yams between her legs, she should have learnt to wait for the right man to scratch it for her’. The man said (TIS, p.127).

The expression, *raw cocoyams* is derived from a common tuber food crop characterised by excessive irritating effect when eaten raw. Its use here is metaphorical and refers to the character's sexual desire. The author compares the character's excessive sexual desire with the effects of the itchy cocoyam.

25. I had a previous husband...he *planted* the *seed* in my womb!' (TIS, p.164).

The author refers to the character's pregnancy as a seed and the husband becomes the planter.

26. So we put our heads together and said 'If Dewa says the Fon has... the Kwifon, the Fibuen which has been asleep all these years must come to our rescue (LG, p.15).

Heads- in this excerpt refers to "a meeting".

27. Lagham might have a point. This last night, I was gripped by desire my *friend* kept nodding like a lizard (LG, p.29).

The use of *Friend*- in this sentence is highly metaphorical. It is hard to directly understand that this word means "penis".

According to Alo (1998), the motivation for innovation in language is either creativity and originality or need feeling, to express new concepts. Examples in 24 to 27 illustrate these linguistic innovations. These examples cover such social domains as sex, menstruation and sexual desires, areas which are highly considered taboo in overt speaking in the various communities where the authors come from. By using such metaphorical language, they escape from the accusation of being vulgar and makes their works consumable to local audiences. For instance, *hunger of the loins* for sexual desire, *periodic sickness* for "menstruation, *plant a seed* for "pregnancy", *raw coco yams* and *friend* for the genitals avoid violating the taboo words. This is succinctly summed up by Tardzenyuy (2002:54) as follows: "You know that in our tradition, the language of love is often indirectly and euphemistic, we don't call a spade a spade."

4.1.4. Pragmatic Multilingualism

In this study, we use pragmatics to refer to the way stretches of language (sentences) are meaningful in context. In this case we looked at sentences in the text in relation to contextual background features. This is actualised via the theme of culturally dependent speech styles that are extendable to proverbs, idioms, concept of time, divination, native similes and native metaphors.

➤ *Proverbs*

28. A market place is not the best place to buy a hen that you intend to rear (TIS, 17).

This proverb roughly means< It is not good to meet a woman you will marry at the market place>. When Assi tells his mother that he wants to go to Tad market and look for a wife, his mother uses this proverb to advise him that if he marries a girl he has met in the market, the marriage will not last.

29. When the seven pillars of kwifon appear in broad day even the squirrel hides its face in the ground (LG, p.43).

This proverb is literally means< The men's cult is dreaded by everybody even the animals>. Shey Tanto uses this proverb to challenge the traditional ruler who refuses to lead the Kwifon to sacrifice to the god of the lake at the shrine but threatens to call the police to arrest them. Shey Tanto warns him that when the Kwifon comes out in the broad day nobody dares disturb their mission.

In this study, we refer to proverbs as 'folk wisdom' which contain general advice on how to act and live. And because they are folk wisdom, they often strongly reflect the cultural values and the physical environment from which they arise. Examples 28 to 29 show how the authors use their ecological realities to communicate. Hence, the use of proverbs in number 28 can hardly be deciphered by somebody who does not belong to this community. He or she might think of a hen that is bought at the market place not knowing that it is an advice to a young man to always study and understand a girl before asking for her hand in marriage. That is why the proverb can only be understood within the contexts of the world of the texts and the authors' environment.

➤ *Idioms*

30. I feared I had defecated in public, put in Asoh feeling vindicated (TIS, p.88).

This idiom is transliterated from Meta into English to mean < He feared he was not supposed to broke the bad news in the family meeting to the hearing of everybody.> Asoh uses this idiom when there is a family meeting at Late Pa Mujang's compound to discuss about his memorial ceremony. He informs the family that Tebo had connived with Mbaku and sold Assi's land to a business man from Mankon and has already taken part of the money which was bad news to the family.

31. No use to cast the cowries, no use to read the stars, *the water of the lake boil* (LG, p.40).

The idiom above is literally translated from Noone into English it roughly means< The god of the lake is angry>. Since Shey Bo-Nyo has the power to forecast what will happen in the future, he tells Shey Tanto using this idiom that he is not supposed to cast his cowries to know about the danger that is imminent, it is obvious in the boiling lake.

A close observation of these idioms reveal that they are created via the translation of indigenous languages. Like proverbs, these idioms equally provide insight to a people's way of life, their philosophy, criticism of life, moral truth and social values. For instance, in idiom 30, Asoh regrets the fact that he has voiced Mbanyam and Tebo's secret plan to sell Assi's land at Njimewi in the family meeting which is bad news to the culprits who feel uncomfortable to interact with the community. Meanwhile idiom 31 depicts the anger of the lake god which is a sign of an imminent danger that will befall the whole community.

➤ *The Concept of Time*

32. Tembi knocked at Assi's door after two cockcrows, his plan was clear in his mind. He was resolved to shoot two birds with a stone: avenge Ijang and return with Akwen as wife (TIS, p. 26).

The phrase after two cockcrows is used in this excerpt to mean 2:00 am mechanical time. Assi pleaded with Tembi to accompany him to his land at Njimewi with the intension to avenge what Tembi did to the girl he loved when they were young. Eager to reconcile with his enemy, they plan to meet at cockcrow.

32. Let me finish, sometime afterwards *when the sun was high in the sky*, I heard the noise of singing returning to the homestead from Ngangba (LG, p.20).

The phrase *when the sun was high in the sky* is used in this sentence to mean 12:00 pm mechanical time. Shey Tanto makes this utterance when he attests to Shey Bo-Nyo that he heard the women's secret cult singing and going towards the palace at noon.

Mbiti (1969) has discussed the African concept of time in the context of the religious thought system of Africans. According to him, the concept of time may help to explain beliefs, attitudes, practices and general ways of life. In this case, before the arrival of the mechanical clock, the Africans scheduled things with cockcrow, high noon and sundown though this type of scheduling lacked mathematical precision of mechanical clock, everyone understood what was meant and complied.

➤ *Divination*

33. Mbombog looked into the clay pot between his legs. He studied the contents for a while. Then shaking his head dejectedly, he declared, 'You have disconnected the branch from the tree, innocent branch! Unfortunate tree (TIS, p. 36).

This divination can roughly be translated into English which means that<You have killed a man, innocent man, unfortunate parents.>When Assi succeeds to kill Tembi, he marries his wife to be and takes her to Ediki where he works as a police officer. Immediately he reaches there, he goes to a medium to protect him from impending danger, but he tells him that he is a murderer.

34. Did you notice that all the cowries have been falling on their bellies? How many times did I throw? (LG, p.22).

This divination is transliterated from Noone into English it means<An imminent danger will befall the land.> When Shey Bo-Nyo casts the lot he predicts that the fact that all the cowries have fallen on their bellies shows that worse things are yet to come on the land because the traditional ruler has embraced Christianity and has refused to lead the sacrifice to the lake god.

The examples 33 and 34 above show that reflected in all techniques of divination is the principle that the real information you need to solve your problem lies in the network of relationships between the various peoples objects and dynamics that make your life. Thus, these diviners use objects such as trees and cowrie shells to foretell the future.

➤ *The Use of Native Simile*

35. God of Teghen-Tibi and Techwi, I call upon you to flow among us like water in the raffia grove. Cover us in the manner of the hen that protects her chicks (TIS, p.78).

He pleads with their ancestors to protect them because they believe they are still living. When the family of Late Pa Munja are about to have a family meeting in his compound, Tebo goes to the family shrine and uses this comparison to supplicate the ancestors to protect them from the dangers of the world.

➤ *The Use of Native Metaphor*

36. The *Lion* might arrest them! Bi explained (TIS, p.201).

The word *Lion* in this excerpt roughly means < the king>. Bi uses the praise term when she's still in hidings with Tebene from the Fon's wrath and she is afraid that if they come out the traditional ruler may arrest them. She uses this praise term because it is a taboo to call the traditional ruler by his name.

37. Here we are before the elephant that will trample on the shrubs in the forest while pretending to pull down the baobab! (p.16).

The word *elephant* in this sentence roughly means < King>. The women use this statement when Dewa whose cattle have destroyed their maize in Ngangba is brought to the Fon to send him and his cattle away. They compare their traditional ruler to an elephant which is a praise term (honorific) to acknowledge the fact that he is the most powerful in the community and its a taboo to call him by his name.

A close observation of examples 35-37 reveal that the authors use the ecology of the contexts in which these texts are set to compare characters and situations. The traditional rulers are metaphorically referred to as the *Lion/elephant* – an address term to show that they will power to arrest defaulters of the law in his community and even maltreat them.

The data presented on this section reveal that pragmatics takes a socio-cultural perspective on language usage which is relevant to the community of people who share the knowledge of the cultural background. Hence, the use of these expressions in the two texts is symptomatic of a people's daily living, morality and social values.

4.2. Statistical Results

The content analysis conducted yielded the findings in tables 1 to 4. The results demonstrate that multilingualism manifests lexically, syntactically, semantically and pragmatically. Lexically, 885 (0.2%) non-English words were attested while syntactically 54 (0.44%) non-English sentences were attested. Semantically, a total of 114 words (0.10%) were identified with a shift in meaning while pragmatically 130 sentences (1.21%) were reported. Going by these percentages, multilingualism is most recurrent pragmatically (1.21%) then syntactically (0.63%), lexically (0.2%) and lastly semantically (0.10%). The findings also reveal that the authors diffuse the English language with five other Cameroonian languages: Cameroon Pidgin English (CPE), French, Meta, Noone and Ffulde. Among these languages, one is a European language (French), three are local Cameroonian languages (Meta, Noone and Ffulde) and one is a lingua franca (Cameroon Pidgin English (CPE)).

The results in table 1 show that CPE is the only language common to both texts while Meta, French, Noone, and Ffulde are used exclusively in each of the texts. It also reveals that the language with the highest percentage of non-English words is from Noone with a total of 141 words (1.07%), followed by CPE with 273 words (0.36%), Meta with 210 words (0.21%), and French and Ffulde each totalling 59 words (0.06%). The overall percentage of the number of non-English words used in all the texts is 0.21% (885 words).

Table1. *Lexical Multilingualism: code-mixing*

Literature textbooks	Number of words in the texts	Languages	Number of words from different languages	%
1. The Immortal Seed (TIS)	100,295	Cameroon Pidgin English	273	0.27
2. Lake God (LG)	13,330		141	1.06
Total	113,625		414	0.36
1. The Immortal Seed	100,295	French	59	0.06
2. Lake God			-	-
Total	100,295		59	0.06
1.The Immortal Seed	100,295	Meta	210	0.21
2. Lake God				
Total	100,295		210	0.21
1. The Immortal Seed		Noone		
2. Lake God	13,330		143	1.07
Total	13,330		143	1.07
1. The Immortal Seed	100,295	Ffulde	59	0.06
2. Lake God				
Total	100,295		59	0.06
Grand Total	427,840		885	0.21

The findings in table 2 show syntactic multilingualism. Three languages are used at the level of syntax: Cameroon Pidgin English (CPE), Meta and Noone. Noone is dominating with 20 sentences (1.33%), followed by CPE with 14 sentences (0.93%) then Metawith 20 sentences (0.22%) and lastly Fufufulde with a total of 9 sentences (0.06%). The use of each of these languages alongside English revealed code switching at different levels.

Table2. *Multilingualism at the level of syntax: code switching*

Literature Textbooks	Number of sentences	Languages	Number of sentences from different languages	%
2. Lake God	1,504	Cameroon Pidgin English	14	0.93
Total	1,504		14	0.93
1.The Immortal Seed	9,283	Meta	20	0.22
-	-	Ffulde	9	0.06
Total	9,283		29	0.31
2. Lake God	1,504	Noone	20	1.33
Total	1,504		20	1.33
1. The Immortal Seed	9,283	-	-	0.00
2. Lake God	1,504	-	-	0.00
Grand Total	12,291	-	63	0.51

Table 3 presents the results of multilingualism at the level of semantics. Multilingualism is higher in *Lake God* which featured 20 words (0.15%) with contextual meaning from a corpus of 13,330 words compared to *The Immortal Seed* with only 94 words (0.09%) with contextual meanings from a corpus of 100,295 words. The overall percentage is 0.10% (114).

Table3. *Multilingualism at the level of semantics: coinages and semantic extension*

Literature textbooks	Number of words	Number of meaning of words in context	%
1. The Immortal Seed	100,295	94	0.09
2. Lake God	13,330	20	0.15
Grand Total	113,625	114	0.10

Table 4 presents evidence of multilingualism at the level of pragmatics. The percentage is higher in *Lake God* with 29 (1.93%) sentences from a corpus of 1,504 sentences. This is contrary to *The Immortal Seed* with only 101 sentences (1.09%) from a corpus of (9,283). The overall percentage is 1.21% (130 sentences).

Table4. *Multilingualism at the level of pragmatics: culturally dependent speech styles*

Literature textbooks	Number of words	Number of meaning of expressions in context	%
1. The Immortal Seed	9283	101	1.09
2. Lake God	1504	29	1.93
Grand Total	10,787	130	1.21

The chart below presents multilingualism at four linguistic levels: lexicon, syntax, semantics and pragmatics. The highest percentage is at the level of pragmatics with 1.21% followed by syntax with 0.63%, the lexicon with 0.21% and finally semantics with 0.1%.

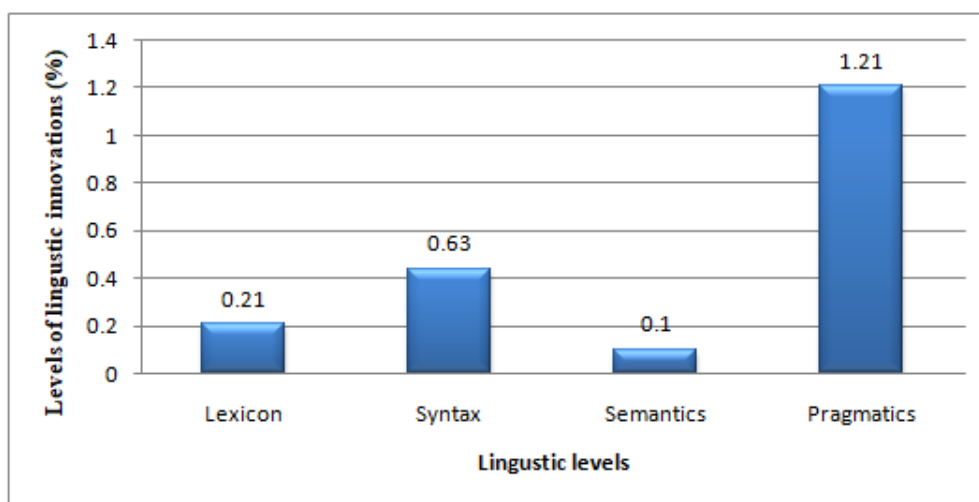


Figure1. Multilingualism at four linguistic levels

5. DISCUSSION

The findings in this study reveal a lot about the code of expression in Cameroon Anglophone writing in particular and literary writings in Cameroon in general. They converge and deviate from previous research findings in the field of multilingualism in literary texts. As revealed in this study, the languages that feature in the two literary texts studied include a European language (French), three indigenous languages (Meta, Noone and Ffulde) and one lingua franca (Cameroon Pidgin English (CPE) besides the dominant language of the text, English Language. Hence, the strategies of multilingualism presented in the previous section are a repository of the sociolinguistic dynamics of Cameroon and consequently the emergence of the Cameroonian variety of English. This finding converges with Foerster (2014) who identifies the use of several languages such as German, English, French, Hungarian, Turkish and Croatian in the literature texts she studied. It however, contradicts her findings which reveal that the linguistic configuration of the aforementioned languages makes up contemporary multilingual literature in German language. The use of indigenous languages in Literature in English texts aligns with Mbufong's (2013) conclusion that local languages like Lamso, Bafut, Eton, Mungaka, and Mokpe have influenced the use of English in Cameroon (spoken multilingualism). It equally converges with the moderates (gradualists) who advocate that English should be indigenised in order to authentically express African sensibilities. The study reveal that English and French are code-mixed, this contradicts the findings of Ojong (2018) who found out that in rural Lower Fungom, multilinguals exclude or use colonial languages minimally. Meanwhile, the fact that CPE was found to be the only language used in both texts is linkable to its status as a language of wider communication. According to Neba et al (2006), CPE is spoken and understood by many Cameroonians regardless of their cultural and linguistic backgrounds, hence, the need for it to be used as a tool for empowerment and national development.

The code mixing of English and French in *The Immortal Seed* portray the bilingual nature of the country in which the text is set. The fact that French is frequently used at the Mutengene Federal Police Academy based in the English speaking region of Cameroon where most of the recruits are Anglophones is a telling comment that French is a language of "commandement" in the military core, therefore there is a need for the language policy to be addressed. The manifestation of multilingualism

at the levels of the lexicon, syntax, semantics and pragmatics in this study is consistent with findings in a study on the syntactic aspect of multilingualism by Kamtchueng (2014) who reported that idiomatic expressions in some Cameroon Anglophone literary texts are obtained via translation of home language expressions, coined idioms and idioms obtained via the modification of Standard British English expression. He further deviates from the findings of the current study when he reports that these non-standard idioms can be counterproductive to the learning of English by learners as well as the intelligibility of the writers with their readership.

6. CONCLUSION

The content of Cameroon Anglophone literary texts is informed by the socio-cultural, socio-political and ecological realities of their contexts. Therefore, in writing these texts in the second language (L₂), the authors consciously or unconsciously extend the Standard English to accommodate local realities and borrow directly from indigenous languages. Consequently, this may be symptomatic of the characteristics of the new English emerging in Cameroon. Based on the findings of this study and previous studies, it is evident that if one does not have adequate background, one may not be able to read and understand Cameroonian literature because of the unique code in which it is scripted. It is therefore essential for policy makers and language planners to recognise and standardize this variety of English, if not because it represents the linguistic, cultural, pragmatics realities and pluralism of Cameroon but also for the understanding of these literary works.

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