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THE PRINT MEDIA AS A RESOURCE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CAMEROON ENGLISH

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the contribution of the Cameroonian print media to the development of Cameroon English (CamE) and the English language as a whole. Insights are drawn from suppositions on new or world Englishes (Schneider 2003, 2007, 2008; Kachru 1986, 1992; Platt, Weber & Ho 1984) who maintain that factors such as the function, socio-cultural, educational and political factors motivate the spread of New Englishes. Analysis of some 200 issues of *Cameroon Tribune*, *The Herald* and *The Post* newspapers collected from 2008 – 2014 reveal that print media sources enrich CamE with loan words from mother tongues, borrowed nominal elements from Cameroon Pidgin English (CPE) and French, coinages, idioms, stylistic devices, deviant prepositions, etc. Cameroonians value these distinctive linguistic forms because it helps them construct their sense of reality and sustain their indigenous cultural values. The peculiar features are Cameroon's contribution to English as a global language.

Key words: Cameroon English; indigenous languages; French; print media; borrowed nominal elements; proverbs

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1. INTRODUCTION

Cameroon's media comprises print publications, television channels and radios that are both public and privately owned. The print media consist of several publications in English and/or French such as the bilingual *Cameroon Tribune*, *Le Messenger*, *Mutations*, *The Herald*, *La Nouvelle Expression*, *The Post*, *Le Jour* and *Dikalo*. Newspapers are an important part of Cameroonian life, and are found in almost every part of the country. As the years go by, the print media is gradually gaining influence on the masses. Newspapers attract more Cameroonians now than before because they report on certain sensitive issues in the country. In addition, they are affordable. Many Cameroonians rely on them for

information and ideas, and they use the facts as evidence even in courts of law. English in the Cameroonian print media is unique; it exhibits a lot of Cameroonian peculiarities as it varies according to the subject matter, context and message. This is in consonant with Simo Bobda (1994a:5) and Kachru (1992:38) who think that English in the outer circle is diverse and has distinct characteristics that reflect the functions and setting.

Cameroon is home to more than 200 indigenous languages besides English and French which are the official languages (Bilola 2004; Kouega 2007). The multilingual situation in Cameroon and the civilization or culture of the people makes the English in newspapers fascinating and even more enthralling. We find a lot of neologisms and markers

of cultural identity that have become part of CamE repertoire. Once the print media makes use of the expressions, they become widespread; individuals copy them and start using them to communicate with one another in the society. Through this, the Cameroonian print media is said to be a resource in the development of CamE and the English language as a whole. This study, therefore, examines the lexis, idiomatic expressions, proverbs, style and some grammatical peculiarities of some English language newspapers in Cameroon. The aim is to examine how the print media contributes to individuals' development of CamE and enrich the English language as a lingua franca.

2. Research on Cameroon English (CamE)

Drawing data from some speech and writing situations, researchers have investigated the effects of French and mother tongues on the English used in Cameroon (Anchimbe and other scholars 2012; Kouega 2005, 2006; Mbangwana 1989, 1992; Simo Bobda 1994b; Wolf 2001). Most of these studies bring out expressions from French (e.g. *rappel*, *vignette*, *mandat*) and mother tongues (e.g. *ekwang*, *nkpem*, *mvet*) found in CamE. The scholars hold that English in Cameroon is highly influenced by the other languages that are spoken in the country. In addition, new lexical elements that are derived from the Cameroonian context such as *born house*, *bush mango*, *red oil* and *bitter leaf* can be seen in research such as Anchimbe (2004) and Kouega (1998).

Some grammatical features of CamE are uncovered in Nkemleke (2005: 43-67, 2007, 2012: 29-62). The author's findings reveal that modals occur less frequently in CamE, the blurring of the distinction between formal and informal use of modals like *must* and *should*, and the divergence of the structure of questions in CamE from those in native English. According to the researcher, questions like "you will come when?" have some semblance with those of Cameroonian home languages of the Bantu origin. The author argues that interplay of the syntax of these home languages and English could be responsible for such questions. In other research, Nkemleke (2006a, 2006b: 166-184) found that texts such as Cameroon students' essays, dissertation acknowledgments and private

letters portray cultural-specific indicators which make them different from those in Standard English (SE). The scholar found nativised rhetorical style, expressions of difference and metaphor of "community" in some of the texts. Ngefacs (2010: 149- 164) explains that factors like age, native language, official language background and intimacy motivate the choice of language used by Cameroonians.

Some interest has been shown in the study and analysis of newspaper English in Cameroon though it is still insufficient. Abangma's (1975) examination of sentences and their internal structures in three Cameroonian newspapers reveal a high occurrence of complex sentences as markers of newspaper reporting. Menang (1990) studied the use of English in *Cameroon Tribune* from a non-native perspective and found forms of language usage that are peculiar to the context. Ayanji (1990) carried out an error analysis of some issues of *Cameroon Tribune*. He found that errors relating to Lexis were prevalent in the newspaper, and he regarded them as offshoots of language incompetence and poor translation of some expressions from French to English. Ubanako (2000) drew data from *The Herald* and *The Post* to make an inventory of cultural and institutional terms in CamE. According to him, the cultural and institutional terms are characteristic of CamE usage. Tabé (2001) analyses and compares the lexical and syntactic usages found in some Cameroonian newspapers vis-à-vis SE, and gave some recommendations on how "correct" English usage in the newspapers could be improved upon.

Furthermore, Anchimbe (2010) uses the interactive feature of *The Post*, online version, to illustrate how Cameroonians living in the diaspora indirectly construct their identity in online interactions as Anglophones from the North West and South West Regions of the country. He identifies history and heritage of the country, the geographical origins of the Anglophones and the use of English as their sources of motivation. He concludes that online identity construction is interrelated with real identities in non-virtual communities, although some differences may be imposed by the medium. After several years of my observation and with the

process of codification of CamE on its way (Kouega 2007; Wolf 2012: 63-76), it is clear that the specific features of CamE have come to stay. Moreover, there are new features in the Cameroonian print media that have spread into other domains of community life, but which have so far not been fully examined.

3. Data and method

Observation is one of the techniques used in gathering information for this study. I have been observing the impact made by newspapers in English language development in Cameroon from 2005 – 2014. A close look at the print media and the Cameroonian community shows that there is a lot of local flavour in the English of some popular newspapers in the country that are worth investigating.

Two hundred randomly selected issues of *Cameroon Tribune*, *The Herald* and *The Post* newspapers published between 2008 – 2014 form the primary source of information in this study. The data from *The Post* comprises issues published from 2008 – 2011 as issues of the newspaper after the stated period could not be found. The corpus from the major daily, *Cameroon Tribune*, is drawn only from reports done in the English language. Most of the papers used for this study were hard copies bought by the researcher, while a few were got from

colleagues and friends. Table 1 presents the number of issues that were collected per newspaper.

Table 1: Number of Newspapers collected

Newspaper	Number
<i>The Herald</i>	70
<i>The Post</i>	52
<i>Cameroon Tribune</i>	78
TOTAL	200

The three newspapers chosen for this study are the most prevalent and liked among the English-speaking population in the country, and they have online editions.

4. Analysis

Cameroon English is enriching itself from print media sources. The analysis is based on lexis, idioms, proverbs, style and grammar.

4. 1. Lexis

The lexicon of the Cameroonian print media that expands into other spheres of the society incorporates innovations from a variety of sources, especially borrowings and coinages. These are examined below.

4. 1. 1. Borrowed nominal elements

Table 2 presents the distribution of loan words in the three newspapers.

Table 2: The distribution of loan words in the three newspapers

Newspaper	No with loan words from indigenous languages	No with loan words from CPE	No with loan words from French
<i>The Herald</i>	52 (74.29%)	35 (50%)	38 (54.29%)
<i>The Post</i>	37 (71.16%)	37 (71.16%)	35 (67.31%)
<i>Cameroon Tribune</i>	45 (57.69%)	39 (50%)	40 (51.29%)
TOTAL	134 (67%)	111 (55.15%)	113 (56.5%)

The table above shows that in all the three newspapers under study, at least 50% of the issues have some loan words. It ranges between 50 and 74.29%. It could be observed that borrowed nominal elements from indigenous languages take the lead, as 134 (67%) of the 200 newspapers contain expressions from mother tongues. It shows the vitality of these languages in the country. The general trend seen in the table above appears to be a reflection of the multilingual nature of Cameroon where many languages are spoken. But these figures do not replicate all the realities on the field,

as many newspapers exist in the country and may need to be examined before definite statements are made. The borrowed nominal elements from indigenous languages, Cameroon Pidgin English and French are examined in detail below.

LOANS FROM INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES

Some of the new words that are found in the Cameroonian print media are in the form of borrowings from the many local languages that are found in the country. Language and culture cannot be separated. Newspaper writers try to marry the English they use with the life of its context. They

bring in expressions from home languages to refer to important people, places, cultural institutions, ceremonies, food, music, etc. Some of these local realities are specific to Cameroon and have no exact SE renditions to capture them in the real sense of their contexts. Writers therefore, resort to loan-words from mother tongues as instruments for the construction of reality. The vocabulary items have been assimilated into CamE, and they belong to it. Consider the following excerpts where the italicized expressions are resources from local languages (meanings are given in square brackets after the extracts).

- (1) Messages conveyed by the CPDM orchestra, traditional dances such as *Garaya*, the National Ballet ... focus on president Biya's ... achievements for Cameroon. (*Cameroon Tribune* No 9221/5420, November 07, 2008, p. 9) [a traditional dance in the centre region of Cameroon].
- (2) After thirteen years of silence ... *Nere* was finally launched. (*The Herald* No 963, February 4 – 6, 2008, p. 5) [Guzang royal dance in the North west region of Cameroon]
- (3) Visitors will be discovering more local Cameroonian meals with a pride of place given to *Akwakwa* ... (*Cameroon Tribune* No 9953/6154, October 21, 2011, p. 16) [a food processed from cassava].
- (4) The situation was worsened by the prediction of a *Nantang Mbam*, that another person was to disappear from the town. (*The Herald* No 1003, August 27 – 29, 2010, p. 6) [soothsayer/fortune-teller]

Garaya, *Nere*, *Akwakwa* and *Nantang Mbam* are expressions from indigenous languages in CamE. Some other new terms from local languages found in the Cameroonian print media, and which have become widespread in the society are given in appendix I with their meanings. It shows that Cameroonian mother tongues constitute a major source of borrowing for CamE. The native resources of the language do have power over the minds of those who identify themselves with such cultures. That is why Kachru (1986) and his followers emphasize the socio-cultural role of New Englishes. Kachru (ibid: 101) thinks that non-native varieties of

English are culture-bound codes of communication. The expressions from Cameroonian home languages act as a spice to CamE, and they find their way in the active vocabulary of school children and official texts even across ethnic and geographical boundaries. The words make more sense to Cameroonians than the SE renditions. This shows how responsive English is to its Cameroonian context. The loans from mother tongues are a necessity in CamE as they describe local realities that SE is not linguistically equipped to handle. Hence, in keeping with Schneider's (2007) phase 3, Cameroonians are taking some ownership of the language resulting in innovative English that emphasizes a new identity and diverges from Standard British/ American English.

BORROWED NOMINAL ELEMENTS (BNE) FROM CPE AND FRENCH

The transfer of linguistic elements from CPE and French into CamE is prevalent in the local print media. Individuals copy the expressions and use them to communicate with one another in the society and through this, CamE is enriched. The first part of this section examines BNE from CPE.

1. BNE from CPE

CPE is one of the lingua francas in the country. People started speaking it in Cameroon by 1919 (Schneider 2008: 296). In the Anglophone regions, it complements English "in informal settings and situations of social proximity. It is extremely common and widespread" (Schneider ibid: 297-298). Simo Bobda and Wolf (2002) note that CPE is encroaching upon long-established domains of Standard English. Likewise, Neba (2008: 66) reveals that "CPE is more and more a global intermediary language in Cameroon as it is the immediate option when children do not have access to indigenous Cameroonian languages". However, Atechi (2011) reports that Cameroonian educational authorities have made the citizens to understand that the coexistence of CPE and CamE is responsible for the falling standard of English in the country, as a result of which CPE should be banned. This attitude led to the stigmatisation and intimidation of CPE speakers. Nevertheless, my observation shows that the process of eradication of CPE has met with little success, as it is still being used for social or informal

interaction by all classes of people in all the regions of the country. Many Cameroonians consider it as a tool for development. It is employed in such spheres as trade, religion and intimate communication. In the same light, Hans (2012) shows how CPE has evolved in functions and varieties. The use of BNE from it in newspapers and in the society at large is very prominent and interesting. Consider the following italicized examples

- (1) The Government Delegate to the Bamenda City Council ... was most outspoken with appeals to commercial motorcycle riders, taxi drivers, *buyam-sellams*, trade unions and the entire population to stay calm ... (*Cameroon Tribune* No 9954/6155, October 24, 2011, p. 10).
[Petty traders, i. e, persons who buy and sell goods especially in small quantities]
- (2) In a place like Nigeria, for instance, a police officer at a road check will ask commuters in a bus whether they have *mimbo* to give him. (*The Post* No 0957, February 07, 2009, p. 4).
[drink(s) especially alcoholic or soft drink, e. g. beer, lemonade]
- (3) Mary, a veteran *akwara woman* from Nkambe, revealed that those of their customers who pay good money are contractors, SDOs, DOs, ...(*The Post* No 01085, June 30, 2011, p. 7)
[prostitute]
- (4) We have found a *matango* union which is responsible for the harvesting and sale of the back of prunus Africana. (*The Post* No 0457, February 07, 2008, p. 9). [white wine from raffia palm-tree]

The extracts above illustrate that *buyam-sellams*, *mimbo*, *akwara* and *matango* from CPE have been blended with English. More CPE words that are common in the print media English and the Cameroonian community are specified in appendix II. It is clear that CPE is another source of borrowing for CamE. The CPE expressions render the communication not only effective, but pleasing to the participants. It shows that users belong to a multilingual culture, and they get their vocabulary for CamE from the various languages they are in contact with. In this way, they express their own messages or views meaningfully without any

marginalization, and make sense of the world they live in.

2. BNE from French

Bilola (2004) holds that it is difficult to find one Cameroonian local language that has more speakers than the French language. French has an important role in the nation as a legacy of Cameroon's colonial past. The exposure to French as the dominant official language in the country influences the English produced by many Cameroonians (journalists of print media inclusive). This results in the mixing of French lexical items with their English as in the examples below.

- (1) This is said to be the sixth attack by the *coupeurs de routes* in the pipeline region. (*The Post* No 01028, July 5, 2010, p. 2) [Highway robbers]
- (2) Students of *grandes école* are civil servants in training. (*The Herald* No 1691, April 5 – 6, 2009, p. 2) [Great, renowned schools]
- (3) In this *arrête*, the emphasis is on finalizing the prunus inventory on mount Cameroon. (*The Post* No 01049, December 6, 2011, p. 9) [decree, decision, order, ordinance]
- (4) *Le come back d' Eto'o*? (Cameroon Tribune No 9948/6149, October 14, 2011, p. 29) [The return of Eto'o?]

The excerpts above indicate a mixture of French expressions like *coupeurs de routes*, *grandes école*, *arrête* and *Le come back d' Eto'o* in CamE. Additional expressions from French that are common in the English of the Cameroonian print media and the community are provided in appendix III. As Kouega (2005) rightly points out, the words from French are used when the English equivalents are less expressive, and also to ease rapid communication between Francophones and Anglophones in the country. This view is shared by Mbangwana (1989: 319) when he states that younger Cameroonians find this kind of language mixture natural, and this also makes CamE "more intelligible to French-speaking Cameroonians than Standard British English". In addition, the switching or mixing of the two official languages is found even in formal school settings in Cameroon. It was officially instituted in secondary

schools by the minister of secondary education in circular number 31/09/ MINESEC/ IGE/ IPBIL of 03 September 2009 (see Tabe 2011: 116-118, 333-334) aimed at promoting bilingualism. Following this decision, every teacher of every class has to use his/her second official language in the last ten minutes of every lesson and summarise what he/she has taught irrespective of the subject the teacher is teaching. Code switching in this case enables teachers and students to accomplish both academic and socio-cultural objectives. The context (history, participants, purpose) therefore, determines the language used by people. Cameroonian French constitute one of the greatest sources of borrowing for CamE. Authorities of the ministry of Secondary education are now trying to stop the bilingual game in schools. They hold that it retards the target language competence. However, this is meeting with slight success, and the phenomenon may not change easily as school children and other Cameroonians continue to mix English, French and other Cameroonian languages in their daily communication. In keeping with this, Anchimbe (2013) thinks that Cameroon's multilingualism is a tool for identity construction. Obviously, the many

languages spoken in the country is a resource as many journalists of the print media borrow words from them to write their articles. Through this, they are integrating Cameroonian culture into the English language of their media, as one of the strategies to enable them sell their newspapers to Cameroonians and also to cooperate with the people. Cameroonians in turn have a positive attitude towards the use of words from home languages, CPE and French in the print media. This is evident as they adopt the words they read from newspapers and make them part of their everyday vocabulary, thereby enriching the Cameroonian variety of English and make it to be distinct. This is in contrast to the view of Kouega and Somb Lingom (2013) who found that indigenous languages seem to be neglected in the spoken media in Cameroon.

4. 1. 2. Coinages

The words that are considered as coinages here are those formed from English and local usages, as well as journalistic coinages (words that are attention catching). The following table presents the number of issues of each of the newspapers that had coinages.

Table 3: The distribution of coinages in the three newspapers

Newspaper	No with coinages
<i>The Herald</i>	42 (60%)
<i>The Post</i>	40 (76.93%)
<i>Cameroon Tribune</i>	48 (61.54%)
TOTAL	130 (65%)

Statistics from table 3 reveals that 130 (65%) of the 200 newspapers studied had coinages; which is somewhat significant. A comparison of the facts per newspaper shows that *The Post* has the highest issues with coinages (76.93%), and *The Herald* has the least (60%). Nonetheless, the overall trend of 65% coinages found in newspapers seems to signal the interest in attention catching that the journalists are seeking from their readers.

Coining words from existing English lexis and suffixes or prefixes is part of the lexical development of new Englishes (CamE inclusive). In the case of CamE, some of the suffixes are from French or local usages. Look at the examples italicized in the extracts below. The SE renditions appear in square brackets.

(1) The rising Anglophone crisis according to Monono, was in consonance with Biya's *Anglophonisation* strategy. (*The Post* No 01077, May 29, 2010, p. 4) [anglo-saxon]

Here, the English word "Anglophone" and the suffix "isation" have been coined to form a new noun-*Anglophonisation*.

(2) Three of the five poles in Africa are becoming resourceful prime movers of people oriented agenda and *Africaphonie* sentiments. (*The Post* No 01097, June 28, 2011, p. 8) [African-union]

In this example, "Africa" and the French suffix "phonie" have been fused to come up with *Africaphonie* which is a new word.

(3) The same striker four minutes later, dismissed the last defence man of mount Cameroon F.C.

for the *chircher*. ...(*The Post* No 01067, April 17, 2011, p. 11) [winning goal]

In the extract above, “chirch” from a Cameroonian local language has been coined with the English suffix “er” to form *chircher*.

Further examples of coinages that are found in the data include the expressions in appendix IV. The coinages *Anglophonisation*, *Africaphonie* and *chircher* are closely related to neologisms because the words do not exist in English, they have been invented by Cameroonians for their own social functions. Many young Cameroonians have adopted the words and use them on a daily basis for communication exchanges. The following sub-section examines some instances of journalistic coinages.

JOURNALISTIC COINAGES

Some journalists of the Cameroonian print media coin words that are attention catching and have an emotional appeal. These coinages suit journalistic style because they draw the interest of readers to the stories reported. Some of the coinages are hybrids containing local/CPE words with SE expressions, and they contribute in shaping CamE. Examples are the items in italics below.

- (1) Cameroon now has the official status of a poor country; a heavily indebted and *beggarly* poor country ... (*The Herald* No 1071, October 16-17, 2011, p. 4)

“beggarly” means wretched or pitiable. It is an adverb that has been coined from the noun “beggar” and the suffix “ly”. It is neologism because it does not exist in SE.

- (2) The *mammy* tremor when it occurred, my kids fled towards the bed room. (*The Post* No 01127, June 28, 2011, p. 4)

“mammy” is used as an adjective in the above extract, and it means very immense and dreadful. The word has received semantic extension in this situation. In other contexts, it is a noun that refers to mother.

- (3) I wonder why some of your *pugnacious* newspapers have not carried the story. (*The Post* No 01085, June 30, 2010, p. 5)

“pugnacious” in the above extract is used to refer to newspapers that are always eager to write stories very convincingly

The journalistic coinages *beggarly* (adverb), *mammy* (adjective) and *pugnacious* (adjective) are lexical innovations aimed at arousing the interest of the public. Other instances of over-dramatic adjectives or coinages that go well with journalistic style in the data include the italicized words in the expressions: an *express* invitation, *rainbow* nation, *magnificent* Kaleidoscope, *Cosmetic* changes, a *rare* and *heralded* outing, magistrates are *pathetically* corrupt, *coveted* FECAFOOT top job, *cold-blooded* murder, *shocking* defeat, *palpitating* soccer final and *dismal* failure. Cameroonian writers of newspapers try to exaggerate certain situations and in doing so, they end up using journalistic coinages or over dramatic adjectives which are copied and used by other people in their everyday interactions thus enriching CamE.

The results on this section on lexis appear to be in conformity with Ahulu (1998a) and Schneider’s (2003, 2007, 2008) stage 3 (nativization), as a lot of lexical borrowings and coinages were found. The Cameroonian context seems to motivate these as speakers find themselves adapting the language to meet fresh needs.

4. 2. Idioms, proverbs and style

Idioms, proverbs and style help to season our language. Idioms and proverbs were particularly important in traditional African societies (Cameroon inclusive) and they continue to be held in great esteem even in some present-day African countries. Achebe (1976: 41) records this when he refers to Igwe and Green who say that:

a speaker who could use language effectively and had a good command of idioms and proverbs was respected by his fellows and was often a leader in the community. (Igwe and Green cited in Achebe 1976: 41)

The above quotation gives us an idea that Africans who speak using idioms and proverbs have a certain dignity in their society. Since journalists of the print media desire to sound more attractive to their readers and will want their papers to be the leading

newspapers in the print media landscape in Cameroon, they decide to flavour their English with some idioms, proverbs and figures of speech. Through this, their readers appreciate and understand the stories reported well. Table 4 below shows the number of newspapers with idioms, proverbs and stylistic devices.

Table 4: Idioms, proverbs and stylistic devices in the three newspapers

Newspaper	No with idioms	No with proverbs	No with stylistic devices
<i>The Herald</i>	35 (50%)	27 (38.57)	25 (37.71)
<i>The Post</i>	28 (53.85)	18 (34.62)	20 (38.47)
<i>Cameroon Tribune</i>	39 (50%)	33 (42.31)	38 (48.72)
TOTAL	102 (51%)	80 (40%)	83 (41.5%)

Statistics from Table 4 illustrate that the frequency of idioms, proverbs and stylistic devices in the newspapers is not high. 51% of the newspapers examined had some idioms, and the percentage of proverbs and stylistic devices is 40 and 41.5 respectively. This frequency is still significant. The rather not very high frequency of idioms, proverbs and stylistic devices could be attributed to the fact that young Africans are undermining their potency. In keeping with this, Achebe (1976: 42) rightly thinks that “contemporary societies in Africa and elsewhere have moved away from beliefs and attitudes which had invested language with such ritual qualities”. However, it is difficult for Africans to completely retreat from the use of idioms and proverbs. Cameroonian journalists of the print media are examples, as they still spice up their English with them. This contributes to the overall appeal of their newspapers.

Some of the idioms and stylistic devices found show that CamE is evolving by indigenization. Mufwene (2009: 354) defines linguistic indigenization such as the case of English in Cameroon as the “adaptation of the language to the [Cameroonian] local ecologies consisting of speakers and the broader geographical and cultural contexts in which they evolve, which vary geographically and

historically”. The Cameroonian newspaper writers report in English because of socio-economic reasons, but they have modified their English to suit some of the traditional communicative languages that are spoken in the country, and this brings about divergence and specification into CamE. Instances of such idioms, proverbs and stylistic devices are examined in detail below.

IDIOMS

An idiom is a group of words that have a particular meaning which is different from the meaning of each word understood on its own. Structural nativization has made substantial progress. In the Cameroonian print media, there are many idioms that portray indigenous ways of speaking. This shows that newspapers are reinforcing the process of nativization of English in the country. Idiomatic expressions characteristic of this are italicized as follows (the meanings are given in square brackets):

- (1) *The hunting is over and the animal has been caught.* Now is the time to sit back and reflect on the way forward. (*Cameroon Tribune* No 9955/6156, October 25, 2011, p. 11) [the searching for votes is over, the election has been won (in context)]
- (2) ... the technical staff only mask the depth of the malaise as it is tantamount to *treating the symptom and leaving the virus.* (*Cameroon Tribune* No 9952/6153, October 20, 2011, p. 30) [solving a problem superficially/ outwardly]

Idioms such as the ones above are measures for sustaining indigenous cultural traditions in a foreign language since language is a catalyst for nation building. Some of the idioms found in the data are not specific to Cameroon. This notwithstanding, they contribute to the features of CamE, and in spicing up the usage of Cameroonians. Examples are emphasized below.

- (1) ... while Zealand has waited 24 years for success; France will have to wait four years longer *to finally break the draught.* (*Cameroon Tribune* No 9954/6155, October 24, 2011, p. 30) [win/ become successful]
- (2) ...others who have taken chances with their national sovereignty in recent years have more than once *found themselves between the devil and the deep blue sea* ...(*Cameroon Tribune* No

9955/6156, October 25, 2011, p. 11) [to have two unpleasant choices]

- (3) For Cameroon, the new dispensation was *a tip of the iceberg* ...(*Cameroon Tribune* No 10577/6776, April 25, 2014, p. 10) [a small noticeable part of a problem]

Some other idioms that are prevalent in the data include the italicized expressions in appendix V. Individuals copy the idioms produced by writers of the print media and start using them in their communicative acts. This helps develop their language abilities and in the same way, develops the language itself. The analysis so far, is in keeping with the view of other authors (e. g. Kachru 1986, 1992; Platt, Weber & Ho 1984; Schneider 2003, 2007 and Simo Bobda 1994b, 2000) who hold that the chief lexical features of new Englishes include new words or borrowings from numerous language sources, word formations, coinages, and nativised idiomatic phrases.

PROVERBS

A proverb is a wise saying stating something commonly experienced or giving advice. In the Cameroonian newspapers, proverbs are used and become incorporated into CamE. Below are some italicized examples with their meanings provided in square brackets.

- (1) ...We will continue to engage by making constructive recommendations and assisting the people and government of Cameroon to implement them. He said, *a tree that does not know how to dance is being taught by the wind*... ... (*Cameroon Tribune* No 9948/6149, October 14, 2011, p. 8) [He who does not know something is taught or succeeds through legal or acceptable means].
- (2) ... He had a message of peace, unity and solidarity from the area with demonstrations that they are solidly behind party chairman, Paul Biya with great political achievements to show in recent times. Dingha said *he who started cooking first masters all the cooking utensils*... ...(*Cameroon Tribune* No 9221/5420, November 07, 2008, p. 5) [The first person to do or be something has (slightly) more experience or power than the others]

Other proverbs that are found in the print media are presented in appendix V. The use of proverbs is evocative of the context, and shows that the writers add a spoken touch to their written communication. Some people in the society imitate these proverbs from the print media and also use them to spice up their English, thus producing a positive effect.

STYLE

Journalists of the Cameroonian print media write in a way that is very captivating, interesting or enticing. Typical of the style is the use of figurative language. Devices such as the following are common in the reports.

(1) *Metaphors*

A metaphor is an indirect comparison. Cultural adaptation or indigenization of English to Cameroon is seen in some of the metaphors used in the print media. Examples of some metaphors that are characteristic of structural nativization are the italicized items in the extracts below.

- (1) The inspiration is great and Alhadji Baba Danpullo, Fru Jonathan, Achidi Acheu, S.N Tamfu respectively *coughed out* sums like cfa 500.000, ... for the project. (*Cameroon Tribune* No 9221/5420, November 07, 2008, p. 5) [contributed/ offered]
- (2) ... a CPDM central committee team were also conspicuous with calls to prevent the region from becoming another *laboratory of violence*. (*Cameroon Tribune* No 9954/6155, October 24, 2011, p. 10) [testing ground for war/ place for fighting]

The metaphors above show that CamE is being indigenized or adapted to the indigenous speakers. This phenomenon is observed in the daily communication of many Cameroonians. This is an indication of the desire of Cameroonians to belong to both the global and local cultures simultaneously, which is needed for a healthy linguistic world. Anchimbe and his followers (2012) even move the investigation of CamE forward by focusing on the emergence of native speakers and their role in shaping the norms and standards of CamE, CPE and other varieties of world Englishes. It stands in sharp contrast to Borjian's (2013) view about the inevitable tension between the globalization and the

domestication of the English language in post-revolutionary Iran.

(2) *Paradox*

A paradox is a term for a statement or situation that seems contradictory as in the example below:

Hepatitis C

A deadly, but curable disease! (Cameroon Tribune No 9950/6151, October 18, 2011, p. 18)

The paradox above is used to cover up the fact that Hepatitis C is a lethal disease.

(3) *Hyperbole*

A hyperbole is a deliberate exaggeration used either for serious or comic effect. For instance,

... it gives football authorities ample time to build a new conquering squad which *sends cool running through the spines of opponents.* (Cameroon Tribune No 9952/6153, October 20, 2011, p. 30) [Frightens opponents very severely]

The figures of speech act as a spice to the writings of the journalists. They are very interesting and readers transfer them to their own language use thereby enriching their usage and English as whole.

In addition to the above, some other attributes of the style of the Cameroonian print media are similar to those suggested by Hicks (1998: 59-61) which are *suitability, simplicity, precision* and *poise*. The stories written match the subject, mood and pace of the events described. Facts/ arguments are presented in a way that enables the reader to understand them quickly and easily. The statements are direct. Writers report exactly what they want to say. The writings are balanced, individual words fit the contexts and paragraphs convey the writer's meaning. All these show that Cameroonian newspapers are linguistically topical and provide readers with data that are adopted and used for language development.

4. 3. Grammar

Non-standard grammatical usages in the Cameroonian print media are seen at the level of prepositions, omission of some grammatical words and subject and verb agreement. The following table presents the number of newspapers with these deviances.

Table 5: Grammar in the three newspapers

Newspaper	No with deviant prepositions	No with omissions	No with non-standard concord
<i>The Herald</i>	28 (40%)	29 (41.43)	26 (37.2)
<i>The Post</i>	23 (44.24)	22 (42.31)	19 (36.54)
<i>Cameroon Tribune</i>	29 (37.18%)	30 (38.46)	27 (34.62)
TOTAL	80 (40%)	81 (40.5%)	72 (36%)

Table 5 above shows that the frequency of non-standard grammatical forms in the newspapers is low with no newspaper having up to 50%. The total percentage in all the three newspapers is 40%, 40.5% and 36% for deviant prepositions, omissions and non-standard concord respectively. This shows that grammar is not much of a problem to the journalists. They might have added some deviant forms in their reports to cooperate with the public. Examples of the deviations are given in the following sub-sections.

DEVIANT PREPOSITIONAL USAGE

This section gives some instances to show the carefree manner in which some Cameroonian journalists of the print media use prepositions. The words in italics below are examples of this deviance. The SE forms are given after the extracts.

- (1) Minister of Sports and Physical Education ... paid a visit *at* the construction site situated at the annex stadium... (Cameroon Tribune No 9948/6149, October 14, 2011, p. 29) [SE: *paid a visit to...*]
- (2) Elite from all the three provinces of the North had converged *in* Garoua for this important meeting ... (The Herald No 989, July 30-August 1, 2010, p. 4) [SE: *converged at/ on/ upon*]
- (3) Following this report, ... gendarmes laid siege *on* Ndog in the early hours of May 22... (The Post No 0885, June 30, 2010, p. 3) [SE: *laid siege to*]
- (4) The divisional officer blamed Nkwenti Pierre *of* conniving with security officials to extort money from Nigerian traders coming

into Cameroon ... (*The Post* No 0957, February 07, 2011, p. 6) [SE: *blamed ... for conniving with*]

- (5) The young doctors were charged *with* intentionally infecting 393 children with the virus that causes AIDS. (*The Herald* No 1691, April 5 - 6, 2011, p. 9) [SE: *charged of*]

The deviant prepositions are meaningful to the participants in their contexts. Scholars such as Platt, Weber and Ho (1984); Kachru (1992) and Ahulu (1998b) hold that new Englishes exhibit deviations in prepositions and phrasal verbs, non-standard number realization, problems of concord, word order and possession among others. Some of the authors (e.g. Platt, Weber and Ho 1984) think that these deviations reflect a failure to have acquired the complex grammatical and pragmatic processing involved in the English grammar system. However, Simo Bobda (2001:11) also cited in Tabe (2011: 12-13), has this to say about some 'deviations' in new Englishes:

A close look at these new forms shows that the native English forms which are changed are gross irregularities, features which are somewhat odd in terms of the general logic or patterning of the language, or features which may be perceived as unnecessary complications in the language.

It is this divergence that makes some of the writings in outer circle contexts interesting.

OMISSIONS

Some grammatical words such as prepositions and articles are often omitted in the writings of the Cameroonian print media. These are illustrated below.

- (1) Above all, he rejoiced that in the face controversies God is always by Ngoketungia. (*Cameroon Tribune* No 9221/5420, November 07, 2008, p. 5)

SE: *Above all, he rejoiced that in the face of ...*

- (2) The convention kicked off midday Friday with Fru Ndi presiding at a match past by SDF militants. (*The Herald* No 1047, April 19 - 20, 2009, p. 1)

SE: *The convention kicked off at midday on Friday ...*

- (3) T. M. Rose would be considered as having resigned her post if she fails to resume duty where she had been posted. (*The Post* No 0878, June 2, 2008, p. 2)

SE: *T. M. Rose would be considered as having resigned from her post ...*

- (4) In interview with *The Herald* in Njinikom recently, the mayor of the rural council noted ...(*The Herald* No 18805, November 24 - 26, 2011, p. 6)

SE: *In an interview with ...*

- (5) But who keeps the other between man and woman? Perhaps they both keep each other. (*The Herald* No 1079, September 10 - 12, 2009, p. 4)

SE: *But who keeps the other between a/ the man and a/ the woman? ...*

- (6) This will stop phenomenon of players failing to turn up for the national selections ... (*Cameroon Tribune* No 9952/6153, October 20, 2011, p. 30)

SE: *This will stop the ...*

The journalists omit little words in their write ups because they think they are not supposed to be too explicit. This does not pose any problems of intelligibility to the readers. Because of the role that communication plays in our society of today, Simo Bobda (2000) suggests that intelligibility is the condition for accepting or tolerating new Englishes. The omissions can be bore so long as they do not hinder intelligibility.

SUBJECT AND VERB AGREEMENT

Disagreement of subject and verb is found in some of the sentences of the Cameroonian print media. Consider the following examples:

- (1) ... muslim *faithful were* urged to refrain from and denounce all forms of religious fanaticism ... (*Cameroon Tribune* No 9948/6149, October 14, 2011, p. 3)

[SE: *faithful was/ faithfults were*]

- (2) For the General Manager of ANAFOR ... much has been done. Yet much still *have* to be done. (*Cameroon Tribune* No 9221/5420, November 07, 2008, p. 13) [SE: *has*]

- (3) As FIFA *prepare* to announce the results of its survey of players ..., opinions remain divided on who will come out on top. (*The Herald* No 1095, December 11 - 12, 2011, p. 15) [SE: *prepares*]
- (4) The overcrowding *were* said to have led to regular ... incarceration of violent adults. (*The Post* No 01061, March 06, 2011, p. 2) [SE: *was*]
- (5) He however, refuted accusations that his *actions was* based on party recommendations. (*The Post* No 0923, May 31, 2010, p. 2) [SE: *actions were*]
- (6) He said they have always *work* towards preserving the natural resources. (*Cameroon Tribune* No 9221/5420, November 07, 2008, p. 13) [SE: *worked*]

The non-standard subject-verb concord in the print media could be due to inappropriate knowledge of English grammar or aimed at simplifying the rules of grammar for proper understanding and co-operation with the public. This is in keeping with Simo Bobda (2001:11) who thinks that speakers of new Englishes are straightening up "unnecessary complications in the language". This, however, does not disrupt the meaning of the journalistic reports.

This section has examined grammar in the Cameroonian print media. It was found that some journalists break grammatical rules to foster friendliness, cooperation and simplification in language use. They do this by employing deviant prepositions, omission of some grammatical elements and unusual concord. It is the many possibilities of prepositions, concord and other grammatical constructions seen in this section that contribute in making CamE distinct.

5. Discussion

The study has shown that the print media is a resource to the development of CamE as it contributes loans from mother tongues, BNE from CPE and French, coinages, idioms, stylistic devices and grammatical shifts (non-standard grammatical forms) among others to it. Some percentages for local flavour (e.g. borrowed nominal elements from indigenous languages) in the newspapers is up to 74.29% and this is an indication that it is not negligible. Many Cameroonians are identifying themselves with it. They like and value the forms because it helps them construct their own sense of

reality, identity and values in ways that are most valid to them. That is why they reproduce the expressions in their intimate and other daily communications. Through this, CamE now assumes a wider role as it enters not only into newspaper reporting, but also into people's imaginative or emotional lives. This is in contrast to some negative evaluations that New Englishes are used only for a narrow range of purposes, and that they are the result of imperfect learning (Prator, 1968). The distinctive features of lexis (e.g. *garaya*, *kam-no-go*), metaphors (e.g. *coughed out sums*) and grammar (e.g. deviant prepositional usage) are Cameroon's contribution to the English language. Further observation in the future could lead to the exploitation of more innovative forms from the Cameroonian print media that may become prevalent in the community and thus, a positive development in CamE.

The analyses show that Schneider's (2003, 2007, 2008) components of the dynamic model can be identified in Cameroon. We find a lot of new features and local ways of writing English in the newspapers (nativization). The print media English examined here is a sub-variety of CamE (Schneider's phase five) which is a marker of cultural and social identity. This adds to research on sub-varieties of CamE (see Fonyuy 2012: 99-116 for ethnic varieties such as the Nso', Moghamo and Meta). Analysis reveals that a proportion of the vocabulary in the Cameroonian print media is tied to Cameroonian culture. The journalists are reporting Cameroonian stories in a global language. They have fashioned out English in a way that it is at the same time universal and able to carry their Cameroonian experiences. The English has what Schneider terms "settlers' strand" and the "indigenous strand". Achebe (1976:82) sustains this when he underscores that, "the price a world language must be prepared to pay is submission to many different kinds of use". He further echoes that if the English language will have to bear the power of African experience, "it will have to be a new English, still in full communion with its ancestral home but altered to suit its new African surroundings" (84). Atechi (2008: 264) is in keeping with this when he maintains that "it is unrealistic to try to make English a monolith across

the globe because each setting has its own realities that are reflected in the way the language is used". This view is supported in recent research on CamE (Anchimbe 2012, 2013). Many people think it is not rational to talk of British or American English as the 'best' (Tabe, 2011; Ngefac, 2008). 'Appropriateness in communication' should be given prominence because each society's language reflects its social reality. CamE is more comprehensible to many Cameroonians than Standard British or American English. Some authors (e. g. Simo Bobda 1994c) call for dynamism of English usages in the contemporary world that is global, yet remains diverse.

6. Conclusion

One of the questions that remain unanswered in this study is thus: is it only the print media that is a resource in the development of CamE? As a matter of fact, there are other resources such as radio and television channels with few programmes in mother tongues and CPE. Kouega and Somb Lingom (2013:19-37) report that non-official languages like CPE, Bassa, Ewondo and Bulu are used in some spoken media in Cameroon. The researchers underscore that limited time is devoted to the use of these languages, which is "less than 3.95% of 2506 hours of weekly broadcast time". According to the scholars, the domains of use of these non-official languages are equally highly restricted to education and entertainment programmes. Conversely, the use of local flavour in the print media is not very restrictive. It depends on the journalists and the story being reported. Besides, there has been a dramatic increase both in the number of newspapers and in the people who read them. In addition, many radios and television channels have slots where discussions on what the print media publishes daily or weekly are carried out, and many Cameroonians show a great interest in these programmes. This also encourages many people to read the papers and to adopt the English in them in their every day communication.

The claim made here, therefore, is not that the print media is the only resource in the development of CamE. It is one of the resources, a stronger and influential one since newspapers are now more numerous in Cameroon than radio and television channels, and people also read them

more. Some of the issues raised in this study (e. g. coinages, deviant prepositional usage) may be found in other newspapers or varieties of English around the world. However, their English may not have some of the specificities of CamE like loan words from indigenous languages. In addition, they may not influence the communication of the people in their regions on a daily basis to the extent that it is in Cameroon.

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Appendix I: terms from Cameroonian local languages in the English of the print media

Word from local language	Meaning
<i>mbuh</i>	palm - wine
<i>sanjas</i>	loin- cloths
<i>kaba ngondo</i>	loose dress
<i>miyendo, bobolo, eru, ndole</i>	popular dishes in Cameroon
<i>njangsa</i>	a type of tropical tree or its fruits. The fruits are brownish and are used in preparing sauce
<i>ekpe</i>	the highest traditional authority/association of the <i>bayangi</i> people in manyu division of the south west region
<i>mayangarow</i>	a title given to a woman who has been raised to the rank of a ruler like any other male ruler in the traditional association known as <i>ekpe</i> of the <i>bayangi</i> people in manyu division of the South West region
<i>beyin etok</i>	things of the community, concept of community property
<i>bongchutip</i>	a traditional dance group of the Ndu people of the North West region. It is made up of eight flutists, four instrumentalists and four dancers
<i>dimabola</i>	gifts
<i>kintache nu mungai</i>	a motto which means 'unity is strength'
<i>Nguon</i>	a traditional festival of the Bamouns from the Western region of Cameroon
<i>Nkumu Fed Fed</i>	a professional women group of the Bali Nyonga women resident in Yaounde
<i>nkane</i>	prostitute
<i>wose</i>	one of the three houses that make up the <i>Wofike</i> – Royal family in Great Soppo Buea
<i>Nfuh</i>	a traditional association of the Nkar people called 'warriors' society'
<i>nganako</i>	herdsman
<i>koki</i>	Beans or corn paste
<i>Epasa Moto</i>	god of mount Fako who is half- beast and half- man
<i>njangi(s)</i>	social gathering(s) where money transaction is involved
<i>Fon(s)</i>	traditional ruler(s) from the North west region of Cameroon
<i>Fondom(s)</i>	chiefdoms/ areas under the <i>fons</i>

Appendix II: vocabulary from CPE in the English of the print media

Word from CPE	Meaning
<i>njomba</i>	lover, boyfriend, girl friend
<i>graffi</i>	grass field
<i>kam-no-go</i>	people who come into a place and do not want to leave, they make themselves natives of the place
to make <i>langa-throat</i>	to whet/arouse (someone's) appetite
<i>chop don come</i>	food has arrived/come
<i>kontri fashion</i>	traditional rite(s)
<i>patch-patching</i> (e.g. Ketch is the company <i>patch-patching</i> the Buea road)	repairing (derogatory)
<i>juju</i>	masquerade
<i>fufu</i>	corn or cassava paste
<i>ashia/assia</i>	courage, empathy expression
<i>nchinda</i>	palace notable

Appendix III: Expressions from French in the English of the print media

French expression	Meaning
<i>démocratie avancée</i>	advanced democracy
<i>convocation</i>	summons
<i>palais des congres</i>	congress hall, conference centre
<i>Sortie</i> (e.g. Their last <i>sortie</i> to Morocco was fruitful)	outing
<i>Cameroun</i>	Cameroon
<i>Cote d'Ivoire</i>	Ivory Coast
<i>chef d'orchestre</i>	conductor, band master
<i>l'enfant chéri</i>	the cherished child
<i>La Republique</i>	The Republic
<i>commandement operationnel</i>	operational command
<i>Le Cameroun c'est le Cameroun</i>	Cameroon is Cameroon
<i>deuxième bureau</i>	a married man's girl-friend/lover (in context)
<i>procureur</i>	prosecutor, procurator

Appendix IV: coinages from the English of the print media

Coinage	Meaning
<i>Cameroonianness</i>	patriotism
<i>lapiroed</i> (e.g. You have been <i>lapiroed</i>)	deceived/misled. It has been coined from <i>Lapiro de Mbanga</i> (a Cameroonian artiste's pseudonym) and the past tense marker 'ed'.
<i>feyman/ feymen</i>	Conman/conmen
<i>feymania</i>	the act of deceiving people and obtaining money or property worth huge amount of money
<i>emceed</i> (e. g. The occasion was <i>emceed</i> by Mrs Elizabeth Mokam)	<i>emceed</i> is derived from M.C.- master of ceremony; but in SE we say superintended
<i>press-passed</i> (e.g. He <i>press-passed</i> into the cupboards in which men and women of doubtful credibility usually hide their skeletons).	trespassed
<i>oftentimes</i>	often

Appendix V: idioms and proverbs from the English of the print media

a) Idioms

1. The candidates *combed the nation* with some going abroad with mouth watery slogans [searched the nation for votes].
2. They would *make Cameroon an Eldorado* if given the chance [to make it a beautiful land].
3. Eyimba was predicted *to turn round a one goal disadvantage* on their home soil [change the situation so that they now have an advantage].
4. The implementation of the law on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women remains *a bone of contention* [point of argument/ disagreement].
5. Discipline has *to adopt a carrot and stick policy* [a system in which you are rewarded for some good actions and threatened with punishment for bad ones].
6. *To soak oneself in beer* and have a sound sleep [to drink a lot of beer].
7. To have *a barometer reading* of their level of popularity [how public opinion on them is developing/changing].
8. *Times without number* [often/ many times] .
9. To set up women empowerment centres in all the regions of the country *at the beck* [always willing to do whatever women ask; ready and waiting to serve women].
10. The conflict *has been pitting* some members of the board of wise men against those the general directorate [has been between].

b) proverbs

1. He who rides on a tiger can never get off.
2. Lightening never strikes twice in the same place.
3. He bit the hand that fed him.
4. There is no smoke without fire.