

Multilingual Practices in Presbyterian Churches in Cameroon

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines multilingual practices in Presbyterian Churches in Cameroon, paying special attention to the languages that are used to perform church activities and the factors that determine the choice of these languages in a given polity. The data are drawn from two parishes in Yaounde, Cameroon: the Oyomabang parish of the *Eglise Presbyterienne Camerounaise* and the Nsimeyong parish of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon. The framework for analysis is that used by Kouega (2008a) to describe language use in the Catholic Church in Cameroon. The analysis of the data collected reveals that a service in Presbyterian Churches can be broken into some 15 sections and the dominant languages used in Yaounde are English, French and Basaa, an ancestral language. Besides, one foreign language – Latin – and seven ancestral languages – Akoose, Bulu, Duala, Kenyang, Lamnso', Meta' and Mungaka – are used in the parishes. These languages are chosen for a variety of reasons including the historical background of these churches in Cameroon, the numerical weight of a group of faithful in a given parish and the degree of involvement of a given tribe in church activities.

Keywords: language in religion, language policy, language use, multilingualism, Protestant Church, Presbyterian Church

INTRODUCTION

This paper looks into the use of languages in Presbyterian churches in Cameroon, a country where close to 300 languages of different statuses – official, regional and indigenous – co-exist peacefully. The work is divided into four sections dealing with the language situation of Cameroon (1), background information on Presbyterian Churches in Cameroon (2), research methodology (3) and analysis and discussions of the findings (4).

Language situation of Cameroon

Cameroon is a multilingual country where, as reported by researchers who devoted book length works to the issue like Dieu and Renaud (1983), Kouega (2007) and Lewis (2009), close to 300 languages of different statuses are used on a daily basis. A synoptic look at these languages groups them into five categories: two official languages (namely, French and English), a few major minority languages like Fulfulde (codes 30 and 4 in Lewis 2009), a number of lesser minority languages like Duala (code 215), and one religious language (namely, Arabic). These languages are considered in turn.

Cameroon is the only African country that has adopted both French and English as its official languages. It happened in 1961 when East Cameroon with French as its official language and West Cameroon with English as its official language re-united as they were during German annexation in 1884. Besides these two official codes, major minority languages in the country fall into two broad categories namely major lingua francas and minor lingua francas. The major lingua francas, three in number, include: Pidgin English, which is spoken everywhere in the country and very actively in four

regions, namely, the Southwest, Northwest, Littoral and West; Fulfulde, which is spoken in the northern half of Cameroon and the area stretching from Senegal through Cameroon to Sudan; and lastly, Beti which is the group name of a cluster of mutually intelligible languages spoken in the forest zone in the southern half of Cameroon and in neighbouring countries like Gabon, Equatorial Guinea and Congo. Minor lingua francas which are so called because their speakers tend to be conversant with a major lingua franca, include some nine languages and language variants. These are: Shuwa Arabic (code 2) spoken in the Far North region of Cameroon and the south of Chad, Basaa (code 201) spoken in part of the Centre and Littoral provinces, Bulu (code 244) is spoken by both native and second language users in the South province and parts of the Centre and East provinces, Duala spoken along the Atlantic coast, Hausa spoken in parts of northern Cameroon and of northern Nigeria, Kanuri spoken in the Far North region of Cameroon, Mungaka (code 185) spoken in a few localities in the Northwest and West regions of Cameroon, Wandala (code 13) spoken in mountainous localities on the Chad-Cameroon borders, and finally Camfranglais (Kouega 2003 a, b) which is a French-based made up slang used by educated urban youths to interact among themselves. Lesser minority languages are between 200 and 300, with many of them having less than ten thousand speakers. The exact number is not known, as Government is reluctant to have them counted. As for religious languages, only one code – Arabic – is used exclusively for religious purposes; other codes like French, English and Pidgin English are used in church as well as many other domains. In brief, several languages co-exist in Cameroon and they are used for a variety of purposes.

Background information on Presbyterian churches

This section takes up the evolution of Presbyterian churches in Cameroon (2.1) and their church service practices (2.2).

Evolution of Presbyterian churches in Cameroon

The Presbyterian Church in Cameroon originates from two major sources. The first source is the German and Swiss Basler Mission with its headquarters in Buea and Kumba in the present Southwest Region of Cameroon and the second source is the American Presbyterian Mission with its headquarters in Rio Muni in Equatorial Guinea. These are considered in turn.

Christian religious work started in Cameroon in 1842 with the arrival of a team of missionaries of the Jamaican Baptist Mission Society and the London Baptist Mission led by John Merrick and Alfred Saker. Between 1843 and 1884, they created several mission stations along the coastal areas from Douala to Limbe. In 1884, their activities were halted by the Germans, who annexed the Cameroon territory and made it a German colony. As a result, the Baptist missionaries had to leave, after handing over the mission stations they created to their German and Swiss counterparts of the Basler Mission. The new missionaries continued the work their predecessors started and extended it by setting up new mission stations in various parts of the colony. In 1916, there was a sudden turn of event when the Germans lost the First World War and had to leave Cameroon. The colony was shared between the victors: East Cameroon was mandated to France and West Cameroon to Britain. Consequently, French and English pastors came in to replace their German counterparts, just as these Germans did in 1884. The British missionaries recovered their lost mission stations as well as those created in East Cameroon by the Germans and the various stations thus recovered evolved as Baptist or Presbyterian missions. The various Presbyterian missions adopted the appellation “Presbyterian Church in Cameroon”, and set up their headquarters in Buea. The Presbyterian Church in Cameroon obtained its autonomy in 1957, some 41 years after the departure of the Germans. Today, its workforce comprises 332 pastors, 1,284 parishes, 410,999 worshippers and over 800,000

members (CEPCA 2009: 20); in addition, it runs 35 kindergartens, 137 primary schools, 15 colleges, one teacher training school and one university.

The second source of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon is the American Presbyterian Mission, whose missionaries left Virginia in the United States in 1832, stopped over in Liberia, then in Gabon in 1842 and settled in Rio Muni in 1850. From this island, they moved to Cameroon and set up their first mission in Batanga near Kribi in 1879. In 1884, Cameroon became a German colony and, in 1916, a French territory. However, these changes did not affect the missionary work for one reason: the American missionaries were operating exclusively in Bulu, the indigenous language of the area of exploration. In other words, the missionaries learned the language of the targeted population and used it for evangelisation without interfering with the official language of the area – namely, German first and French later. Between 1889 and 1947, over 16 stations were set up in the Bulu area (Messina and Slageren 2005: 87). From the Bulu stronghold, these missionaries moved to the Basaa area, where the Basaa language was developed and used for evangelisation. Next, they went to the Bafia area, where the Bafia language was developed. Today, the church uses a total of 700 pastors who cater for some 2 million worshippers (CEPCA 2009: 20). As the Mission was evolving, some of its members had a different vision. For example, the Ngumba people in Kribi and Lolodorf broke away in 1934 on grounds that their language namely, Batanga – rather than Bulu, was to be used for evangelisation in their locality. They therefore set up a new church called *Eglise Protestante Africaine* (African Protestant Church). Another schism was observed in 1967 and the breakaway group set up a new church called *Eglise Presbyterienne Camerounaise Orthodoxe* – EPCO (Orthodox Cameroonian Presbyterian Church). Its workforce comprises 70 pastors who attend to over 100,000 worshippers (Messina and Slageren 2005).

In summary, the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon is an offshoot of the Basler Mission while the *Eglise Presbytérienne du Cameroun* is an offshoot of the American Presbyterian Mission. In 2009, both churches joined an organisation called *Conseil des Eglises Protestantes du Cameroun* – CEPCA (Council of Protestant Churches of Cameroon) (CEPCA, 2009a) which brings together 11 of the 23 Protestant congregations operating in the country. These 11 churches are listed below:

- Cameroon Baptist Convention (CBC)
- *Eglise Anglicane* (Anglican Church)
- *Eglise Baptiste Camerounaise* (Native Baptist Church)
- *Eglise Evangélique du Cameroun* – EEC (Cameroon Evangelical Church)
- *Eglise Evangélique Luthérienne Camerounaise* (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cameroon)
- *Eglise Fraternelle Luthérienne Camerounaise* (Brotherhood Lutheran Church of Cameroon)
- *Eglise Presbytérienne Camerounaise* (Cameroon Presbyterian Church)
- *Eglise Protestante Africaine* (African Protestant Church)
- Presbyterian Church in Cameroon (PCC)
- *Union des Eglises Baptistes du Cameroun* (Union of Baptist Churches of Cameroon)
- *Union des Eglises Evangéliques du Cameroun* (Union of Evangelical Churches of Cameroon)

Presbyterian Church service practices

The Church service of most of these 11 churches draws from the canonical liturgy structure of *Eglise Evangélique du Cameroun*, EEC for short, which seems to be the leading church of the CEPCA group. This canonical structure, which was adopted at the General Synod held in Foumban in 2002 (EEC, 2002) comprises some 15 sections outlined in *Synode General* (2002). As this church is still closely related to the Reformed Church of France, we shall reproduce the French appellations of the 15 sections as recorded in this material. The equivalent appellations are drawn from two sources,

namely, Abba (1957) and a mimeograph *Book of Divine Services* produced by the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon (n. d.). These 15 sections are: *Salutation* (Salutation), *Adoration* (Adoration), *Loi* (Invitation), *Prière de Repentance* (Prayer of Confession of Sins), *Parole de grace* (Act of Praise), *Annonces* (Announcements), *Prière d'Illumination* (Prayer of Illumination), *Lectures Bibliques* (Scripture Reading), *Prédication* (Sermon), *Confession de Foi* (Confession of Faith), *Actes Pastoraux* (Pastoral Acts), *Offrandes* (Offerings), *Prière d'Intercession* (Prayer of Intercession), *Exhortation* (Invocation) and *Bénédictio* (Blessing). Each section is signalled by a specific type of songs (joy, praise, repentance ...) and the posture of the faithful, who may be unambiguously asked to stand up or sit down. Below are short comments on the activities that take place in each of these 15 sections.

Salutation: while the congregation is standing and the choirs singing, the celebrant enters the church and greets the congregation in the name of the Lord.

Adoration: It is 'the humble recognition of God as God', 'the giving unto the Lord of the glory due unto His name'. Generally, the celebrant magnifies the grandeur of God and his divine mercy and kindness.

Invitation: It is the prayer calling upon God to assist the faithful in the worship they are offering. While the congregation remains seated, the celebrant reads out the code of conduct prescribed by God.

Prayer of Confession of Sins: It is an act of penitence which is 'sufficiently general for the congregation to make it their own'. The celebrant focuses on the weaknesses of humans, highlighting how they have erred and strayed from God's ways like lost sheep, how they 'have followed too much the devices and desires of their own hearts'.

Act of Praise: The celebrant announces God's forgiveness; the congregation stands up to welcome the news and the choirs sing songs of recognition of the holiness of God.

Announcements: The congregation is informed of the various activities that are to take place in the parish within the week or the days to come.

Illumination Prayer: The celebrant prays for the Holy Spirit to sanctify the forthcoming Scripture reading.

Scripture Reading: Carefully chosen extracts of the Scriptures are read.

Sermon: The celebrant preaches.

Confession of Faith: The congregation stands up to signal its commitment to follow the prescription of the scripture.

Pastoral Acts: Each act is a response to the call of the Scriptures and a commitment to serve God and fellow human beings.

Offerings: By contributing to the offertory, each member fulfils his commitment to his church and his parish.

Intercession Prayer: The celebrant prays for the church, its members and servants; he prays for the world, its officials and he presents situations of despair before God.

Invocation: The Holy Spirit is called upon to 'make effective the declaration of the Gospel in the hearts and lives of the hearers'. The celebrant recapitulates the message drawn from the Scripture texts read during the church service and recommends that this message orients the faithful's actions for the week to come.

Blessing: Also known as benediction, it gives the faithful the peace, comfort, and reassurance that they need in order to fulfil the mission assigned them by God.

The study will check what languages are used to realise each of these 15 parts.

METHODOLOGY

This section first describes the framework adopted for the study (3.1); then it considers the setting of the study, the informants contacted and the research instruments used to collect relevant data (3.2).

Framework of analysis

Works in the domain of language and religion are scarce and so are research frames for the analysis of this domain (Bitjaa-Kody, 2001; Spolsky, 2003; Pennycook & Makoni, 2005; Omoniyi & Fishman, 2006; Mühleisen, 2007). Sociolinguists have considered religion from the perspective of language contact, showing how it contributes to language spread, maintenance or revival. Applied linguists have focused on the translation of religious texts, showing how religion contributes to the codification and standardisation of chosen languages. There is therefore no linguistic frame underlying research in this domain, as far as we are aware. One proposed frame still under construction (Kouega 2008a) takes up language use in one denomination, the Catholic Church. As this frame is new, we will review it extensively. To begin with, this frame is based on a two-step procedure: first, it dissects a given religious service using the participant observation method; then using the questionnaire, interview, informal discussion and participant observation methods simultaneously, it checks what language is used in each of the constituent parts of the religious service and for what purpose. To collect data for his analysis, Kouega asked a total of 20 research assistants to attend at least three of the three to five Sunday masses celebrated in various Catholic parishes in the city of Yaounde. While attending the masses, these research assistants were to provide specific answers to some nine prepared questions, which are reproduced in Appendix 1 below. These questions focused on various aspects of language use in church such as the participants (the priests, the congregation and the choirs), the activities (like reading the epistles and making announcements) and the media proper (like French, English or Latin). Space was provided for these research assistants to jot down relevant responses and comments during discussions with people around the church premises (presumably the faithful) before or after a mass. The analysis of the data thus collected revealed, among other things, that several languages were used in the Catholic Church in Yaounde. These were:

- French, used for all activities including reading the Gospel, preaching, reading the epistles and singing;
- English was heard in a limited number of parishes – for example, Nsimeyong, Mvog-Ada – where it was used for gospel reading, sermons and singing;
- Latin was a liturgical language that surfaced mainly when certain rituals were performed, especially the recitation or singing of such prayers as 'Agnus dei', 'Gloria', 'Kyrie', 'Pater noster' and 'Sanctus';
- Beti, a Cameroon indigenous language group name represented by Ewondo coded 242 in *Ethnologue* (2005), was used in certain parts of the town for gospel reading and preaching, but in most parishes it was used for only singing;

- Basaa, a Cameroon indigenous language (code 241), was used in some four parishes for gospel reading and preaching as well as singing;
- Pidgin English (see Kouega 2001, 2008b), a vehicular language, was used in early morning masses in one parish and in songs in a couple of parishes;
- Bamileke, a Cameroon indigenous language group name which among Catholics in Yaounde, includes Fe'efe'e, Ghomala, Medumba, Ngiemboon and Yemba, was used mainly for reading the epistles and for singing;
- other Cameroonian minority languages - Bafia, Bamun, Banen, Guidar, Lamso', Mafa, Massa, Matakam, Mofou, Mundang, Yambassa etc. – were used mainly in songs;
- one African minority language, Igbo, was used for singing in the Mvogada parish, where a large community of Nigerians have been living for many decades.

Regarding the reasons underlying the choice of these languages in a given parish, it was found that a language was chosen when:

- there was at least one priest speaking that language in a parish (when there was no such priest, French was used as the default language);
- when there were devoted catechists and chaplains speaking that language in a parish; these catechists prepare the epistles to be read and help to choose potential readers within the community of speakers. In other words, catechists did the background work necessary for a mass to run smoothly;
- when the community speaking that language was fully involved in - and committed to - the activities of the parish (cleaning of the parish, financial contributions, active participation in masses reinforced by a dynamic choir and the like);
- when there were religious materials – the mass proper, hymns, the catechism and portions of scripture – available in that language.

The present study uses this same framework to describe language use in church services in the Presbyterian congregation.

Setting, informants and instruments

The setting chosen for this study is the Oyomabang parish of the *Eglise Presbyterienne Camerounaise* and the Nsimeyong parish of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon. The Oyomabang parish is located in the 7th Sub-division of Yaounde, the capital city of Cameroon. A look at the parish ledger shows that the parish comprises: 393 registered members, 26 elders, 27 deacons and six choirs. This ledger discloses details on some of the members including ethnolinguistic information. For example, elders and deacons are distributed ethnolinguistically as shown in Table 1:

Table 1. Ethnic composition of elders and deacons

	Basaa speakers	Other tribes	total
Elders	24	2	26
Deacons	23	4	27

A similar linguistic composition is observed among the members of the six choirs. This is outlined in Table 2.

Table 2. Ethnic composition of choir members

	Basaa speakers	Other tribes	Total
Francophone choirs (2)	26	4	30
ACF (Association Chrétienne des Femmes : Christian Association of Women)	28	4	32

JAPE (Jeunesse d'Action Protestante Evangélique : Evangelic Protestant Youth Group)	38	4	42
Sep Yehova (Faith in Jehovah)	27		27
Nyan Nton (<i>nyan</i> 'choir' and <i>nton</i> 'mother': mother choir)	50		50

A combination of Tables 1 and 2 shows that Basaa speakers are dominant by far in the parish. It can therefore be hypothesised that the Basaa language (code 201) will be dominant in the church activities of this parish.

The Nsimeyong parish of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon is considered next. This parish is located in the 6th Sub-division of Yaounde, the capital city of Cameroon; it is headed by two pastors, the one being a speaker of Akoose (code 203) and the other a speaker of Bafut (code 157). It comprises a total of 3,250 members, 20 elders, seven deacons and ten choirs. A grouping of these members into their respective ethnic groups indicates that no tribal group is dominant in the parish, even though impressionistically, one can identify a large number of speakers of Lamnso' (code 137). The same can be said about the ten choirs: five of them bring together members of related tribal groups, while five others include members who speak different minority languages, as the list below shows:

Bapresca Choir:	members speak mainly Akoose (code 203)
Bethel Choir:	members speak variants of the Duala language (code 215)
Hallelujah Choir:	members speak mainly Mungaka (code 185)
Lamnso Choir:	members speak mainly Lamnso (code 137)
Temple Choir:	members speak mainly Kenyang (code 175)
Christian Men Fellowship:	members speak different languages
Christian Women Fellowship:	members speak different languages
Christian Youth Fellowship:	members speak different languages
Holy Trinity Choir:	members speak different languages
The Praise Band:	members speak different languages

Given that the members of this church are mainly Anglophones and that they come from different ethnic groups, it can be hypothesised that English and Cameroon Pidgin English, the default common languages for Anglophones in Cameroon, will dominate the church activities of the parish.

As for the informants for this study, the pastors, a few church elders, choir leaders and congregation members were contacted. The instruments used were participant observation, interview and a questionnaire. The researchers attended a number of church services on Sundays in the year 2008 and jotted down the language practices observed in these two churches. After each service, they interviewed church participants and, using the information gathered, they devised the questionnaire reproduced in Appendix 2 and administered it themselves. At the end of each of the church services they attended, they approached a few participants, read out the questions to them, and wrote down their answers to each question. The choice of the informants was motivated by one major factor: they had to have attended the service on the day the questionnaire was administered; major sociolinguistic variables such as sex, age, level of education, occupation etc were therefore overlooked as they were less pertinent than attending a specific church service. In all, some 36 informants took part in the survey: 16 members of the *Eglise Presbyterienne Camerounaise* and 20 of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

As was pointed out in section 2.2 above, the Presbyterian Church service comprises some 15 key parts labelled: Salutation, Adoration, Invitation, Prayer of Confession of Sins, Act of Praise, Announcements, Prayer of Illumination, Scripture Reading, Sermon, Confession of Faith, Pastoral Acts, Offerings, Prayer of Intercession, Invocation and Blessing. These 15 parts are considered in turn, with the focus being on the languages that are used in the two parishes to realise them.

Salutation

Informants in the two parishes were asked (Q1) to indicate which languages were used to realise Salutation and their responses are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Languages used for Salutation in the two parishes

Parishes	PCC		EPC			
Languages used	English		French		Basaa	
Number of informants	20	100%	10	100%	6	100%

As Table 3 shows, the PCC offered one church service on Sundays and, as all 20 informants (100%) indicated, Salutation in this service was done in English. The EPC, on the contrary, offered two services called French service and Basaa service. In the French service, French was used for Salutation, as all 10 informants (100%) reported and in the Basaa service, Basaa was used, as all six informants (100%) reported.

Adoration

Informants were asked (Q2) to indicate which languages were used to realise Adoration and their responses are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Languages used for Adoration in the two parishes

Parishes	PCC		EPC			
Languages used	English		French		Basaa	
Number of informants	20	100%	10	100%	6	100%

As Table 4 shows, at the PCC, Adoration was done in English. Similarly, at the EPC, French was used in the French service, and Basaa in the Basaa service.

Invitation

Informants were asked (Q3) to indicate which languages were used to realise Invitation and their responses are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Languages used for Invitation in the two parishes

Parishes	PCC		EPC			
Languages used	English		French		Basaa	
Number of informants	20	100%	10	100%	6	100%

As Table 5 shows, at the PCC, Invitation was reportedly done in English. Similarly, at the EPC, French was used in the French and Basaa was used in the Basaa.

Prayer of Confession of Sins

Q4 focused on the languages were used to realise the Prayer of Confession of Sins and informants' reports are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Languages used for the Prayer of Confession of Sins in the two parishes

Parishes	PCC		EPC			
Languages used	English		French-Basaa		Basaa	
Number of informants	20	100%	10	100%	6	100%

As Table 6 shows, at the PCC, the Prayer of Confession of Sins was done in English. At the EPC, Basaa was used in the Basaa service. In the French service, there was code-switching, with French alternating with Basaa.

Act of Praise

Q5 dealt with the languages that were used to realise the Act of Praise and the following was reported:

Table 7. Languages used for the Act of Praise in the two parishes

Parishes	PCC		EPC			
Languages used	English		French		Basaa	
Number of informants	20	100%	10	100%	6	100%

As Table 7 shows, at the PCC, the Act of Praise was done in English. Similarly, at the EPC, French was used in the French service and Basaa in the Basaa service.

Announcements

Q6 took up the languages that were used to make Announcements and informants' responses are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Languages used for Announcements in the two parishes

Parishes	PCC		EPC			
Languages used	English		French-Basaa		Basaa	
Number of informants	20	100%	10	100%	6	100%

As Table 8 shows, at the PCC, Announcements were made in English. At the EPC, on the other hand, Basaa was used in the Basaa service. In the French service, there was code-switching, with French alternating with Basaa.

Prayer of Illumination

Informants were asked (Q7) to indicate which languages were used to realise the Prayer of Illumination and their responses are presented in Table 9.

Table 9. Languages used for the Prayer of Illumination in the two parishes

Parishes	PCC		EPC			
Languages used	English		French		Basaa	
Number of informants	20	100%	10	100%	6	100%

As Table 9 shows, at the PCC, the Prayer of Illumination was done in English. Similarly, at the EPC, French was used in the French service and Basaa in the Basaa service.

Scripture Reading

Informants were asked (Q8) to indicate which languages were used to read Bible extracts and their responses are presented in Table 9.

Table 9. Languages used for Scripture Reading in the two parishes

Parishes	PCC		EPC			
Languages used	English		French-Basaa		Basaa	
Number of informants	20	100%	10	100%	6	100%

As Table 9 shows, at the PCC, the Scripture was read in English. At the EPC, on the other hand, Basaa was used in the Basaa service. In the French service, there was duplication: the Scripture was read twice, the first time in French from a Bible in French by one reader and the second time in Basaa from a Bible in Basaa by another reader.

Sermon

Informants were asked (Q9) to indicate the languages in which the Sermon was made and their responses are presented in Table 10.

Table 10. Languages used for the Sermon in the two parishes

Parishes	PCC		EPC			
Languages used	English		French		Basaa-French	
Number of informants	20	100%	10	100%	6	100%

As Table 10 shows, at the PCC, the Sermon was delivered in English. At the EPC, on the other hand, French was used in the French service. In the Basaa service, the sermon was made in Basaa and then, at the end of the exercise, the celebrant provided a summary or gist of the message in French.

Confession of Faith

Informants were asked (Q10) to indicate which languages were used to realise the Confession of Faith and their responses are presented in Table 11.

Table 11. Languages used for the Confession of Sins in the two parishes

Parishes	PCC		EPC			
Languages used	English		French		Basaa	
Number of informants	20	100%	10	100%	6	100%

As Table 11 shows, at the PCC, the Confession of Faith was done in English. Similarly, at the EPC, French was used in the French service and Basaa in the Basaa service.

Pastoral Acts

Informants were asked (Q11) to indicate which languages were used to realise Pastoral Acts and their responses are presented in Table 12.

Table 12. Languages used for Pastoral Acts in the two parishes

Parishes	PCC		EPC			
Languages used	English		French		Basaa-French	
Number of informants	20	100%	10	100%	6	100%

As Table 12 shows, at the PCC, Pastoral Acts were done in English. Similarly, at the EPC, French was used in the French service; strangely enough, French was also used in the Basaa service.

Offerings

Informants were asked (Q12) to indicate which languages were used to announce Offerings (or Collects, Tithes) and their responses are presented in Table 13.

Table 13. Languages used for Offerings in the two parishes

Parishes	PCC		EPC			
Languages used	English		French		Basaa	
Number of informants	20	100%	10	100%	6	100%

As Table 13 shows, at the PCC, Offerings were announced in English. Similarly, at the EPC, French was used in the French service and Basaa in the Basaa service.

Prayer of Intercession

Informants were asked (Q13) to indicate which languages were used for the Prayer of Intercession and their responses are presented in Table 14.

Table 14. Languages used for the Prayer of Intercession in the two parishes

Parishes	PCC		EPC			
Languages used	English		French-Basaa		Basaa	
Number of informants	20	100%	10	100%	6	100%

As Table 14 shows, at the PCC, the Prayer of Intercession was realised in English. At the EPC, on the other hand, Basaa was used in the Basaa service. In the French service, there was code-switching: the message was passed on in French and Basaa, with the same speaker alternating from one language to the other.

Invocation

Informants were asked (Q14) to indicate which languages were used to realise Invocation and their responses are presented in Table 15.

Table 15. Languages used for the Invocation in the two parishes

Parishes	PCC		EPC			
Languages used	English		French		Basaa	
Number of informants	20	100%	10	100%	6	100%

As Table 15 shows, at the PCC, Invocation was done in English. Similarly, at the EPC, French was used in the French service and Basaa in the Basaa service.

Blessing

Informants were asked (Q15) to indicate which languages were used for Blessing and their responses are presented in Table 16.

Table 16. Languages used for Blessing in the two parishes

Parishes	PCC		EPC			
Languages used	English		French		Basaa	
Number of informants	20	100%	10	100%	6	100%

As Table 16 shows, at the PCC, Blessing was done in English. Similarly, at the EPC, French was used in the French service and Basaa in the Basaa.

Recitation of Prayers

Informants were asked (Q16) to indicate which languages were used for the Recitation of Prayers like the Lord's Prayer etc., and their responses are presented in Table 17.

Table 17. Languages used for the Recitation of Prayers in the two parishes

Parishes	PCC		EPC			
Languages used	English		French		Basaa-French	
Number of informants	20	100%	10	100%	6	100%

As Table 17 shows, at the PCC, Prayers were recited in English. At the EPC, on the other hand, French was used in the French service. In the Basaa service, Prayers were recited in French and in Basaa. Participant observation revealed that when the celebrant recited the first line of a prayer in one language, the next lines were recited "in chorus" by each member of the congregation in the language of his/her choice, which could be French, Basaa or any other language; one only needed to look at people's lips to realise that the languages they were reciting the prayers in were different. Besides, as some languages need more words to express a given idea than other languages, some people completed the recitation earlier than others, and the celebrant always waited for them.

Songs

Informants were asked (Q17) to indicate which languages were used for singing. To be specific, they were asked to name each choir and the language(s) in which it sang. The responses are presented in Table 18.

Table 18. Languages used for songs in the two parishes

PCC

English	Akoose	Duala	Kenyang	Lamnso'	Meta'	Mungaka	French	Total
40	32	32	32	32	32	32	8	240
16.67%	13.33%	13.33%	13.33%	13.33%	13.33%	13.33%	3.33%	100

EPC-French service

French	Basaa	Bulu	English	Latin	Total
42	22	4	2	2	72
58.33%	30.56%	5.56%	2.78%	2.78%	100

EPC-Basaa service

Basaa	French	Bulu	Total
56	12	4	72
77.78%	16.67%	4.55%	100

At the PCC, eight languages were cited, with English being the leading language (16.67% of a corpus of 240 songs). Next came the tribal languages of the worshippers (see Kouega 2008 for a complete list of indigenous languages in Anglophone Cameroon), with 13.33% each: Akoose, Duala, Kenyang, Lamnso', Meta' (code 184), Mungaka. Last was French, with 3.33%.

In the French service of the EPC, five languages were used with French being the leading one (58.33% of a corpus of 72 songs); Basaa came next (30.56%), followed by Bulu (code 244: 5.56%), English (2.78%) and Latin (2.78%). In the Basaa service, three languages were used, with Basaa being the leading one (77.78% of a corpus of 72 songs), followed by French (16.67% and Bulu (4.55%).

Languages and church activities

Q19 asked the informants to take up the various languages used in a church service and check what activities were going on when each language was used. It was found that:

- in the PCC:

- English, one of the two official languages of the country, was used in all activities;
- Akoose, Duala, Kenyang, Lamnso, and Mungaka were used exclusively for singing; they are the indigenous languages of fragments of the church members, who had constituted choirs, the list of which was provided above;
- French, the other official language of the country, and Meta', an indigenous language, were used exclusively for singing, with no specific choir attached to either of them;

- in the EPC:

- French was used in all activities in the French church service and so was Basaa, an indigenous language, in the Basaa church service;
- Bulu, an indigenous language, was used exclusively for singing;
- English, the other official language of the country, was used exclusively for singing;
- Latin was used exclusively for singing.

Factors motivating the choice of languages

Q20 enquired about the factors motivating the choice of each language used in church and the following reports were made:

- in the PCC:

- English was used because the congregation was made up mainly of Anglophone Cameroonians who came from different tribes and who shared one feature, that is, educatedness; if they did not share this feature, the default language would have been Pidgin English, as was noted in Kouega (2002)
- speakers of Akoose, Duala, Kenyang, Lamnso, Mungaka had constituted choirs and so their languages were used in church;
- speakers of Meta' had not constituted a choir but they seemed to have composed a few lively lyrics in their language and these lyrics were sung by choirs whose members originated from different ethnic communities;
- French was used for singing, especially by choirs whose members originated from different ethnic communities;

- in the EPC:

- French was used because the congregation was made up mainly of Francophone Cameroonians from different tribes, French being the default language Francophone Cameroonians from different tribes communicate in when they are together; incidentally, in indigenous language services, French is used to summarise messages and to perform Pastoral Acts;

- Basaa was used for all activities in the Basaa church service. Besides, Basaa was jointly used with French on various occasions including: the recitation of various prayers, Announcements, Scripture Reading and Sermon. On these occasions, the celebrants either code-switched between Basaa and French or summarised in Basaa, messages already delivered in French;
- Bulu was used for singing, probably because there already existed some popular songs in that language; in fact the Bulu community was the point of entry of this church in Cameroon;
- English was used for singing, probably because there existed some popular songs in that language that seemed to have been brought by American missionaries;
- Latin was used for singing (pastors could not tell why; neither could choir leaders).

CONCLUSION

The analysis of language use in the Presbyterian Church in Yaounde, Cameroon has shown that a typical church service can be broken into some 15 key sections. The languages used to realise these 15 sections are mainly English, French and Basaa. In the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon (PCC), whose members are mainly Anglophone Cameroonians from different tribes, English is used for all activities. In the *Eglise Presbyterienne du Cameroun* (EPC), whose members are mainly Francophone Cameroonians, French is used for all activities in the French service and Basaa is used for all activities in the Basaa service. Other languages, which may be foreign like Latin, or local like Akoose, Bulu, Duala, Kenyang, Lamnso', Meta', Mungaka are used exclusively for singing.

The dominant factor accounting for the choice of these languages is the historical background of this church in Cameroon: the PCC was started up in Anglophone Cameroon by British missionaries whereas the EPC was started up in Francophone Cameroon by Americans missionaries, who had to operate in francophone Cameroon in French in order to be accepted by French colonisers. Another factor is numerical weight: the more numerous the speakers of a given language in a congregation, the more that language is likely to be used in church: English is used in the PCC because Anglophones are numerous, French is used in the EPC because Francophones are dominant, and Basaa is used because Basaa speakers are more numerous among Francophone church members. A third factor is involvement in church activities, especially setting up a choir and composing lyrics: the more active in church issues the speakers of a given language are – they may set up a choir or compose lyrics – the more that language is likely to be used in church. A marginal but related factor is the availability of lively lyrics in a given language: some choirs whose members come from disparate ethnic backgrounds usually sing songs in different languages.

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