A Nation Divided by Language

Anglophone Students and Bilingualism in a Predominantly Francophone Cameroon

UNIVERSITY OF BUEA

Arjun Swami-Persaud & Jelte Verberne - Utrecht University Bachelor Thesis

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Francophone Cameroon

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Word Count: 21.419

"The Anglophone Cameroonians whom I brought into the union have been ridiculed and referred to as 'les Biafrais,' 'les ennemies dans la maison,' 'les traîtres' etc., and the constitutional provisions which protected this Anglophone minority have been suppressed, their voice drowned while the rule of the gun replaced the dialogue which the Anglophones cherish very much."
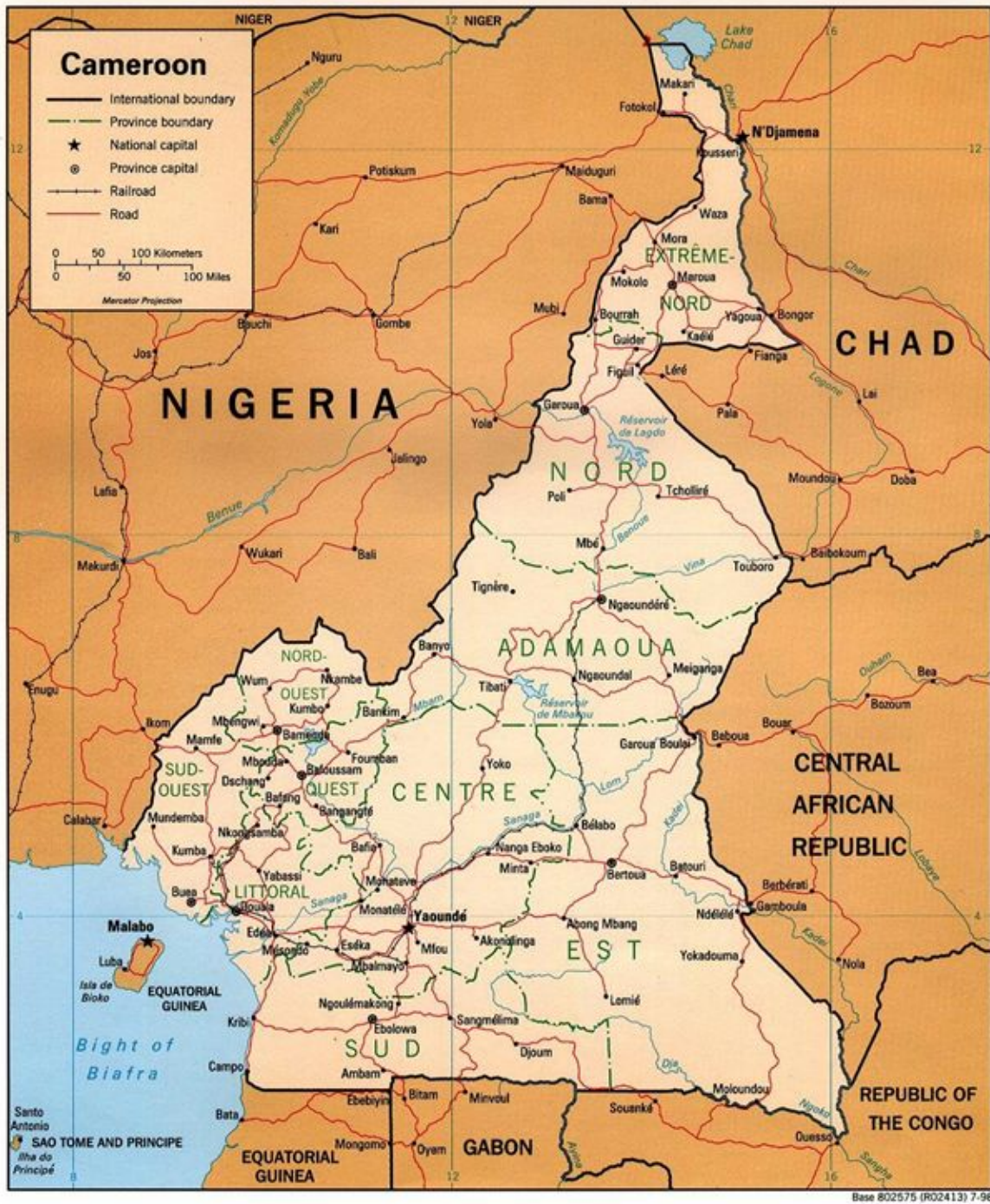
John Ngu Foncha[1]

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[1] John Ngu Foncha in his 1990 letter of resignation from the governing CPDM party; Anglophone architect / negotiator of the reunification (Konings and Nyamnjoh 2004:201)

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Topographical Depiction of Cameroon

Population:
23,130,708 (July 2014 est.)

(U.S.A. Central Intelligence Agency 2014)

Acknowledgements

It would have been impossible to successfully complete this thesis without the help of so many generous people living in Cameroon and the Netherlands. Therefore we would like to thank everyone who contributed to our research in whatever way.

We like to start with the kind people living in Buea who were incredibly hospitable from the very moment we arrived in Cameroon, specifically the students of the University of Buea who were always open to discussing the problems their country is facing. We also want to thank the staff and personnel of the Mount Mary Hospital complex, where we stayed during our three months of fieldwork. This all would not have been possible without the help and guidance of LiveBuild, an enthusiast NGO based in Utrecht, The Netherlands. LiveBuild focuses on sustainable development in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon through several inspiring projects involved with basic needs such as constant clean water supply. We would like to thank everybody from LiveBuild, based in Cameroon and in the Netherlands, who helped us with the preparations for, and guidance during our stay in Buea.

During the entire process from research design to fieldwork and the writing of our thesis we were lucky to have the guidance of two different mentors. Therefore we would like to thank Elke Linders as well as Marc Simon Thomas for their unreserved support and navigation throughout the entire project. Their judgement, intellect and understanding made it a thrill to write and research during the past eight months, for it created an inspiring and encouraging work environment.

Last but certainly not least we would like to thank each other. As we started our Bachelor programme we both were not expecting to finish writing a thesis in collaboration with someone else. This partnership raised the standard of our research to a higher level because of the constant dialectical process through which we were able to regularly feedback our writings, findings and ideas.

<div align="right">Arjun Swami-Persaud and Jelte Verberne</div>

Introduction

"I will tell you that bilingualism was a very good concept. The Southern Cameroon and La République du Cameroun were coming together and that sociocultural kind of merger, it would have been to the advantage of all citizens. Unfortunately, Cameroon is bilingual as a country, but Cameroonians are not bilingual. The French is used to the disadvantage of the English speaking. The French speaking use the French to the disadvantage of the English speaking..."[2]

Cameroon has two official languages: English and French. Within its contemporary borders, both Great Britain and France have exerted power as colonial rulers. This has caused a linguistic division inside the state: about one fifth of the country's inhabitants speaks English while the rest of its people speaks French as primary language. This bilingualism has caused notable political disunion in the country's fifty-years old history. A linguistic and cultural division has grown between the English-speaking (hereupon: 'Anglophone') and the French-speaking (hereupon: 'Francophone') population. Rather than simply Cameroonian, people started to identify themselves as either Anglophone or Francophone citizens (Konings and Nyamnjoh 2003). Our research is based in the city of Buea, the capital of the South-West Region, which was the administrative capital of the Anglophone region in the colonial era. It is home to the first Anglophone university in the country which attracts many ambitious Anglophone Cameroonians. For many of them, the language barrier makes it difficult to attend any of the six other state universities which are officially bilingual, but effectively Francophone. Only in 2011, a second Anglophone state university opened its gates, in Bamenda.

Cameroon is marked by politics of post-colonialism. Traces of the former colonial rulers extend all throughout Cameroon's institutions: the country's systems of education, jurisdiction and governmental administration at large are all formed after the example of their former colonial rulers. The national psyche of Cameroon is shaped by and within the framework of these institutions and thereby reflects schools of thought and mindsets originating from the 'old colonial masters'. These frameworks or

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[2] Bouddih Adams, unstructured interview: 27.03.2015

discourses shape the way people see the nation, as well as their approach to nationalism. Due to the presence of not one, but two colonial rulers, each triggering its own framework, Anglophone Cameroonian citizens tend to see their country through more than one lens. They are aware of the history of the country they live in, of the role they play as a minority, and of the different ways the country is perceived.

The idea behind any nation is rooted in nationalism. Ernest Gellner (1983:1) describes nationalism as "primarily a political principle, which holds that the boundaries of the nation and the state are congruent". Benedict Anderson (2006) considers nationalism to be the product of a political 'imagined' community. This means that in the ideal nation-state, everyone belonging to the nation fits within that nation-state, physically as well as symbolically. Ideally, everyone should share the national culture and speak the national language: this way, a community is created, defined by the nation, which shares and experiences its nationhood in the same way (Anderson 2006). This also implies the exclusion of those who do not belong. The ideal image is rarely, if ever, found in reality. In a multitude of countries, internal tensions and disputes based on lingual or ethnic differences are found. These differences are often officially acknowledged by the state: countries such as Belgium, Canada and South Africa are officially multilingual, attempting to expand the nation beyond borders of language to include people with different cultural, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds.

Many social problems in post-colonial nation-states in Africa can be traced back to multilingualism. Different ethnic groups have their own language within the borders of the nation-state; the language of the former colonial ruler commonly became the nation's superseding 'official' language (Mansour 1993). But what happens when the post-colonial nation-state consists of territories which were governed by different empires with different languages?

Cameroon is the only contemporary post-colonial country which was ruled by two empires. Therefore, it is a member of both the Commonwealth of Nations and the Francophonie. It provides us with a unique case in which not only to official languages are shared, but also two different discourses when it comes to governance, institutions and civics. According to the constitution, Cameroon has two equal official languages and a policy of bilingualism is promoted by the state (Constitution of The Republic of Cameroon 1996). At first glance, this discourse of bilingualism seems to be promoted

strongly by the central administration in Yaoundé. However, the bilingual nature of the Cameroonian nation-state is challenged by a powerful Francophone domination of the government and public sphere. Essentially a minority, the Anglophone Cameroonians find it difficult to identify with the Francophone majority, and many perceive a certain degree of discrimination. The Anglophone student population of the University of Buea has demonstrated itself to be quite vocative on subjects related to this matter. This, as well as the possible influence and critical reflection they have on the future of their country, has led us to choose to research perceptions on and experiences of bilingualism among Anglophone students in Buea. Therefore our central question is: *How do Anglophone students in Buea, Cameroon, perceive bilingualism in a predominantly Francophone post-colonial nation-state?* By researching this case in Cameroon, we wish to contribute to the broader debate on the power and implications of social boundary making in a larger context of post-colonial politics and nation-building and the ways these influence the perception of nations and nationalism. Language is the foundation on which we build our argument. We focus on the role of governance from national level to student unions and explore how exposure to certain practices, such as nepotism and favouritism, shapes ideas of governance, and may influence the future course of the country. By emphasizing the significance of different enforcements and perceptions of bilingualism, we want to show the power of social identification in Cameroon, how this results in two largely parallel societies, and how this leads to social exclusion and inequality.

Our central question consists of two components. The first component analyses and observes the implementation of bilingualism by the predominantly Francophone government in and around Buea. How is the governmental policy of bilingualism implemented in the Anglophone region? We then focus on how this implementation of bilingualism is perceived by the local Anglophone population. This element provides the framework for the other component, and is taken up by Jelte Verberne. The second component consists of a focus on perceptions of bilingualism among the Anglophone students in Buea. The idea behind this is that students think critically, and are likely to contribute to the development of the country. Using skills and ideas obtained throughout their education, students work towards the future of the country. To understand how they see Cameroon's future, this research focuses on how these

Anglophone students identify themselves and how their social, academic and political environment influences their ideas on the development of Cameroon. Attention is given to personal goals and aspirations and Cameroon's role in facilitating or denying these. In these contexts, the students' approach towards bilingualism and Anglophone identity is researched, emphasizing the students' view on the future of a bilingual Cameroon and the role that they, as Anglophones, play in that. This will be engaged by Arjun Swami-Persaud.

In Cameroon, we found that the dual history of colonialism fragmented language and culture. Under the patronage of a predominantly Francophone government, this resulted in a policy of bilingualism which leads to the subordination of the English language and the Anglophone community. When it comes to realizing their future, Anglophone students in Buea are facing obstacles because of this language barrier. Based on our findings in Cameroon, we will argue that language is an important identity marker when it comes to community building. The perception of the nation is influenced by the different language fields which it contains in the form of bilingualism. The power of language has its implications in a larger context of nations and nation-building.

This thesis is based on a three-month field research in Buea, Cameroon. In these three months we collected data through several qualitative research methods that we gathered from Hennie Boeije (2010) and Kathleen and Billie DeWalt (2011). We conducted informal conversations, semi- and unstructured interviews in the continuous context of participant-observation with the general Anglophone population of Buea and the Anglophone student population at the University of Buea. Participant-observation means to take "part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions, and events of a group of people as one of the means of learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their life routines and their culture" (DeWalt and DeWalt 2011:1). This is exactly the strength of anthropological fieldwork and therefore a good deal of our data exists of personal observations by us as researchers. We are in fact 'our own research instrument' (Boeije 2010; DeWalt and DeWalt 2011). Of course this method is not free of risks. It is important to realize that we were never able to become fully a part of the Anglophone community. Participant-observation in the field means a constant balancing of partaking and observing. We conducted interviews to complement and affirm our observations. Besides participant-observation and interviews, we also collected visual data and

artefacts such as visual manifestations of bilingualism in Buea, and articles from local Anglophone and national newspapers. Sometimes we used these as supporting data, but the local newspaper articles turned out to be data on their own and gave an interesting illustration of contemporary issues, concerning bilingualism.

Bilingualism and governmental policy can be a sensitive topic due to Cameroonian government's authoritarian nature. We experienced that as outsiders, people trusted us fairly quickly since they thought it unlikely that we were working for their government, which they might criticize. One informant told us that for a Cameroonian it would be far more difficult, if not impossible, to research this subject of bilingualism because he would be looked upon as a spy, employed by the government. To safeguard our informants' anonymity and protect their interests, we have chosen to use pseudonyms for most of our informants. Also, we have censored some of the specifics of job descriptions or fields of study of them to further guarantee anonymity. We judged each of these measures individually, relative to the sensitivity and vulnerability of their position in society. To fully understand what was going on it was essential to 'be there' for an extended period and our stay of three months was rather too short than too long. Nonetheless, we were able to collect an ample amount of data on which we founded this thesis.

In the first chapter we continue with an outline of the theoretical framework in which our research is founded. What is the anthropological perspective on social constructs, such as the nation-state and its underlying ideal of nationalism? Is an ethnic foundation necessary for a national identity? We then focus on the relation between national identity and power. What does it take to create a national identity? Who decides what this national identity looks like? We argue that nation-building is the key concept in the relation between national identity and power. We focus on nation-building in the post-colonial nation-state and the importance of language in the process. With these theoretical foundations in place, we draw the context of Cameroon and look at the country's history of post-colonial politics and language, which is essential to understand the current state of affairs. We conclude the context with a section on students and bilingualism in Buea, Cameroon.

The following empirical chapters are based on the data we collected in the field and start with a chapter on the implementation of the constitutional policy of

bilingualism by the predominantly Francophone government and the local Anglophone interpretation of this bilingualism. Jelte Verberne will analyse this by focusing on the history of Anglophone frustration and bilingualism in the fields of education, government institutions and national symbols. The second empirical chapter focuses on the Anglophone students' perception of bilingualism in Buea, Cameroon. Arjun Swami-Persaud will approach this issue by analyzing the student's perception on the role of education, the importance of governance and corruption, and the availability of opportunities. We close with our conclusion and a discussion in which we bring together our most important findings and answer our main question: *How do Anglophone students in Buea, Cameroon, perceive bilingualism in a predominantly Francophone post-colonial nation-state?* In this section, we also relate this case to the broader theoretical discussion on social boundary making, post-colonial nation-building and the role of language.

[Theoretical Framework]

Nations and Nationalism (Arjun Swami-Persaud)

The boundaries of the social categories that serve as the foundation of contemporary societies are being recreated constantly through processes of social interaction. Groups and ethnicities are the product of social contact (Eriksen 2010:5;14-15) and are therefore by definition fluid, rather than static. The criteria to belong to a given group are defined by identity markers which, due to this fluidity, change through time. Identifiable groups grow more abstract when size and scale increase. The nuclear family, however culturally defined, is typically considered to be one's first social reality; from here, the scope increases and includes more people with each step: extended family ties, the town of origin, university, a field of profession, etc. Within this scalar hierarchy, the nation is one of the most extended and influential: someone might identify himself with his family as well as with his national football team, even though he does not know the majority of the nation that the team claims to represent (Hobsbawm 1990:143). Understanding the essence and recognizing the significance and power of the nation, and therefore nationalism, is crucial when approaching matters of identity and language in contemporary societies.

To understand when nations started and why they exist, we have to understand the profound role modernity has on nationalism and understand its meaning for nationalists as well as for academics. We highlight two key theorists in this field of study: Ernest Gellner (1983;1997) and Benedict Anderson (2006) and conclude with Anthony Smith (1996). Ernest Gellner has been of great influence in the debate on nationalism and provides a functional framework in which nationalism can be explained. The political theorist Benedict Anderson is largely congruent with Gellner, but emphasizes the need to "understand the force and persistence of national identification and sentiment", rather than just the political or theoretical aspects (Eriksen 2010:120). Smith, then, explains the alleged 'resurgence' of nationalism in the current era. These approaches combined provide a comprehensive anthropological perspective on nationalism.

According to Gellner (1983:1), nationalism is "a political principle which holds that the boundaries of the nation and the state are congruent". His analysis on nationalism starts with the description of two elements of social life: cultural diversity and organization. The notion of 'culture' is explained as a "shared style of expression" (Gellner 1997:1): social similarities which enable the possibility of identification with people without personally knowing them, simultaneously dismissing others for being different. Organizational capacity is essential because human groups are relational associations "within which members have a [meaningful] social position" towards each other (Gellner 1997:2). These two elements combined provide a framework for societal organization, laying the foundations for nationalism and ultimately leading to the creation of the nation-state. Gellner however does not explain *why* nationalism has proven to be such a powerful and important force. Benedict Anderson's notion of imagined communities attempts to answer this question.

Benedict Anderson (2006) considers nationalism to be the product of "an imagined political community", using Hobsbawm's (1990:143) reading of 'imagination': although someone can identify with his nation, he will never know most "fellow-members (...) yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (Anderson 2006:6). This illustrates a (political) community that exists because people *imagine* it to be a community. The boundaries of the geographical and social nation mean that the group is also defined by the boundaries of the other groups; groups and nations are relational. Groups serve as identifiable communities and these can lead to the development of strong us/them dichotomies and provide incentives to think and act accordingly.

There is a profound difference in the approach to and understanding of nationalism between academics and nationalists. In this context, 'nationalist' refers to the citizen of a nation rather than an advocate of the nation. Nationalists tend to see their nation as 'universal, perennial': it is 'simply natural' (Gellner 1997:7). As an academic, Gellner argues that nationalism is 'neither universal nor necessary' and is the product of modernity (Gellner 1997:10-13). Nationalism 'expresses status through culture': a possibility that only exists because technological developments allowed society to be more egalitarian. Modernity created a 'baseline equality' which led to the principle of 'homogeneity of culture' as the 'pre-condition of political, economic and

social citizenship' (Gellner 1997:20-9). This homogeneity of culture and its corresponding boundaries are the foundation on which nationalism is built.

Similarly, Anderson (2006:5), recognizes modernity as the prerequisite for nationalism. He argues that modernity and capitalism provided technological developments as well as economic incentives which enabled and facilitated virtually unlimited printing. Printing coincided with vernacular 'language fields' which together enabled the imagining of a nation in an 'empty, homogeneous time'. This emphasizes the importance of language in the facilitation of nationalism from an early age. Rather than approaching nationalism as merely functional, Anderson (2006:6) considers it to be a product of 'imagining and creation' and accuses Gellner of equating it to 'fabrication and falsity'. For anthropologists specifically, it is important to recognize the enormous (subjective) meaning that nationalism holds for the nationalist, and the influence it has on the development of personal and social identities. It would be narrow-minded to dismiss nationalism as a 'falsity' or 'fabrication' as this would exclude subjective truths and blind the anthropologist to the power the nation can wield.

Anthony Smith adds an important voice to the debate by emphasizing the rise of nationalism in the post-colonial era. He defines nationalism as "an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity for a human population deemed by some of its members to constitute an actual or potential nation" (Smith 1996:578). He argues that there are wave-like patterns in the appearance of nationalisms worldwide, such as after the fall of states and empires. New states seek to "create 'the nation' out of various ethnic communities (...) that had been incorporated, usually accidentally, by and into the domains of the state", and become unitary. To overcome such ethnic diversity and to represent the 'ideal of cultural distinctiveness and social cohesion', the state seeks to create a national identity on which the nation is to be built. This national identity exists of ethno-symbolic resources, among which are memories of a collective history, 'ethnic election' and territorial attachments (Smith 1996:582-590).

In the next section we look further at the relation between the concepts of nationalism and ethnicity before we move on to further discussing national identity. We mapped the different approaches towards nationalism in this section and will examine

the concept of ethnicity in the next. A single ethnicity is often considered to be a necessary foundation of nationalism, but to what extent is this really the case?

Nationalism and Ethnicity **(Jelte Verberne)**

As described above, according to Gellner (1997) nations are build upon the homogeneity of culture. Because of this, a single ethnicity is often seen as a necessary foundation of nationalism (Eriksen 2010). Therefore it is important to fully understand what ethnicity is before we move on to discussing national identities. The first step is to examine ethnicity; after this we show how it is an important concept in the debate on nationalism.

Fredrik Barth (1969:14) defines ethnicity as "organisational vessels that may be given varying amounts and forms of content in different sociocultural systems". He sees a person's ethnic identity as his or hers most general identity, fundamentally based on his or her background. Abner Cohen (1974) argues that Barth's view on ethnicity too much suggests that ethnicity is a natural and static phenomena and proposes to define ethnicity as "a particular form of informal political organisation where cultural boundaries are invoked so that the group's resources or 'symbolic capital' can be secured" (Cohen, cited in Eriksen 2010:63). Cohen moves away from Barth's perspective on ethnicity and uses an approach that focuses more on the fluid and social constructivist aspects of ethnicity (Eriksen 2010). These social constructivist aspects are perfectionalised in a definition of ethnicity given by Kevin Yelvington (1991:168): "[ethnicity is] an aspect of social relationship between persons who consider themselves as essentially distinct from members of other groups of whom they are aware and with whom they enter into relationships. It can thus also be defined as a social identity characterised by metaphoric or fictive kinship". Ethnicity is a social identity constructed in a group that is fundamentally created and defined in relation to other groups and is therefore 'created' and 'recreated' in social life. Without the other there can be no us. Barth (1969) was the first to point out in his widely praised boundary model that the essence of a group is defined at its boundaries. The boundaries of the group determine who is and who is not a member in both a physical and symbolic context. Ethnicity is a matter of who is inside and who is outside an ethnic boundary. These boundaries can be

based on characteristics or identity markers such as language and this is where ethnicity starts to relate with nationalism.

Ethnicity can easily be compared with nationalism as it is constituted in social relations with other groups and therefore at the physical and symbolic boundaries of the group, just like nationalism. But is ethnicity a necessary foundation of nationalism? As we described above, a nation can be defined as a socially constructed 'imagined' political community. Eriksen (2010) shows that when Gellner (1983:1) states that "nationalism is a theory of political legitimacy, which requires that ethnic boundaries should not cut across political ones", he implies that there is a strong link between ethnicity and nationalism. Gellner (1983) also argues that a nation-state is dominated by an ethnic group. The identity markers of this group, such as language, religion and traditions are, according to him, often embedded in national policy. But what if a nation-state contains a great variety of ethnicities or has no clearly dominant ethnic core? Eriksen (2010) argues that although nationalisms tend to be ethnic in character, it is debatable whether ethnicity is actually an essential or indispensable foundation for a national identity. He explains that there are several nation-states that convene an identity formation along non-ethnic lines where the focus is rather on similarities than on the differences. He gives the example of countries in the Caribbean, where the nation is imagined as a mosaic of ethnicities instead of an entity where the nation and one ethnic group are congruent. This shows that a shared ethnic identity is not always enough – nor a necessary prerequisite – to build nationhood. "The metaphoric kinship ideology on which national identification rests can be imputed to shared (biological) ancestry, but it can also attach itself to shared historical experiences or territory" (Eriksen 2010:142).

Nationalism and ethnicity often seem to overlap but to say that all nationalist ideologies are based on a single ethnicity is incorrect because there are many nation-states that base their nationalism on a supra-ethnic or polyethnic ideology. This is also part of the difference between civic nationalism and ethnic nationalism which we will elaborate on in the next section. Ethnicity and nationalism are both social identities but the underlying will of nationalism to form one 'imagined' nation within the borders of a state often transcends ethnic boundaries. Nationalism, and thereby the creation and recreation of a national identity, is often a matter of power. In the next section we take a

closer look at the connection between national identity and power. What is the relation between the two and how do they manifest themselves within the nation-state?

National Identity and Power (Jelte Verberne)

As described above, nationalism is not always related to ethnicity, but national identity and ethnicity are both social identities. The difference is that nationalism has the underlying ideal that everybody within the territorial borders of the nation-state enjoys the same national identity and that ethnicity is not always linked with physical borders or an assimilating nature. This underlying ideal that lays in the foundations of nationalism has a lot to do with power. The creation and recreation of a national identity is always accompanied by processes of power.

According to Karl Wolfgang Deutsch (1966:3) "a nation [containing a national identity] can be built according to different plans, from various materials, rapidly or gradually, by different sequences of steps, and in partial independence from its environment". The building of a national identity is thus based on a constructed model and a process often regulated by the state. The state uses its power to connect its citizens through something called 'nation-building'. Deutsch (1966) defines nation-building as an 'architectural or mechanical model' that uses the power of the state to construct a national identity. He argues that nations are to be built, and to him, cultural assimilation in the form of language absorption is the main characteristic of nation-building.

Anthony Smith (1986) criticized Deutsch's, and his contemporary colleagues', view on nation-building for being ethnocentric. This is because of their preoccupation with the successful creation of nation-states in early modern Europe, where the nation could be built upon a dominant ethnic core, sharing more or less the same language. Smith (1986) shows that in modern times this is often not the case as countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America are to create a national identity without a dominant ethnic core. According to Smith (1986) nationalism can be ethnic in character (nationalism based on ethnicity) and civic in character (nationalism based on citizenship). In modernity, states can only be legitimized if they contain a nation and therefore states proceed to the process of nation-building. This process of

nation-building can only be effective when state institutions work to homogenize and "do not stir up ethnic antagonisms" (Smith 1986:263). Due to the high diversity in ethnicities in these new-born nations, as well as corresponding conflicting interests, many of these new post-colonial states feature the presence of a centralized and powerful, authoritarian administration so that the state does not fragmentize or collapse into chaos or civil warfare. Governments maintain a strong monopoly on the distribution of power. To avoid stirring up ethnic antagonisms, these states often build their nation upon civic nationalism.

Nation-building is the defining concept in the relation between national identity and power. It is the nation that legitimizes the state and therefore states engage in nation-building. The process of nation-building is problematic in post-colonial states where there is often no dominant ethnic core to build a national-identity on. In this case the nation can be built on the foundation of other common identity markers such as language or a shared history. In the next section we take a closer look at nationalism and nation-building in postcolonial nation-states and the power of language.

Post-Colonial States: Nation-Building and Language (Arjun Swami-Persaud)

Processes of nation-building started synchronically with the conception of nationalism. There has not been one 'right' way of nation-building: the paths that led towards nationhood in Western Europe are hardly comparable to those in the Americas, the Russian Federation, Asia or Africa. For centuries, European colonial rule explicitly exerted power on the rest of the world and this has left its marks. It takes only a glance at Africa's geopolitical map to realize that the formation of its states were established by colonial yardsticks and drawing tables, rather than by processes of internal nation-building. Previously, we described nation-building as the construction of a national identity using the power of the state. Post-colonial nation-states often provide straightforward cases concerning this power and clearly demonstrate corresponding complications. First, we take a look at the characteristics of nation-building in post-colonial countries and experienced difficulties and particularities, contrasted to nation-building in Western Europe. We then emphasize the role and importance of language.

The conditions setting the stage for nation-building in post-colonial countries, are vastly different from those of the Western-European nations. The latter are shaped by century-old processes of internal and external warfare, igniting societal transformations which, through constantly increasing egalitarianism, are reflected in the cultures of today's corresponding nation-states (Bendix 1977:3). By contrast, colonial state borders were upheld by force –"the domains of [colonial] influence [could] not shrink" (Wimmer 2004:6)– and different ethnicities were expected – by force – to set aside their differences and create one nation-state, under the flag of civic nationalism. Languages, ethnic groups or (unrecognized) nations were vigorously split over different state borders. Connor (1972) argues that in fairness, these processes could not be leading towards nation-building: it would be more accurate to call it state-building, and correspondingly, nation-destroying. After all, most 'new' states contained a number of old nations, "(…) and since the transfer of primary allegiance from these nations to the state is generally considered the *sine qua non* of successful integration, the true goal is not 'nation-building' but 'nation-destroying" (Connor 1972:336). Be aware that by arguing thus, Connor assumes that a 'new' civic nationalism wouldn't be able to replace the destroyed 'old' nations.

Contrasting, civic nationalism is recognized by Andreas Wimmer (2004:5), who argues that in post-colonial African countries, nation-building "was meant to overcome 'tribal' or 'ethnic' particularisms" by "creating a community of citizens" and "was complemented by upholding the territorial boundaries of the new states, usually corresponding to former imperial provinces". Ethnic homogeneity was not to be one of the foundations of the nation. This notion of civic nationalism was imposed by the colonial powers upon their former colonies. Wimmer describes (2004:6) that the former rulers considered the violent conflicts that followed independencies as "birth pains" and a "matter to be settled by the elites of the new countries themselves– as long as the winning parties and groups remained loyal to the former colonial power". New nations were to be independent, but only within the limits and requirements set by the former colonial ruler.

We have established that, because of these external power relations, nation-building in post-colonial Africa has been fundamentally different from that in Western Europe. We now move on to the new nation-state's contemporary issues, most

importantly language, which consequently leads us to the introduction of our research setting: Cameroon.

The plurality of cultures and nations provides significant challenges, mostly related to good governance and language. Good governance is not a given: due to the strong centralization of power and its uneven distribution, combined with poverty and limited access to resources, government officials are often susceptible to corruption and favoritism. Through his concept of *habitus*, Bourdieu (1980:53) argues that exposure to such habits of bad governance and corruption leads to the reproduction of these same practices (Ekelund 2000:231). Although this view has a structuralist perspective, the combined reality of top-down nation-building and limited opportunities might indeed leave inhabitants with little room to imagine less authoritarian systems of governance. Bureaucratic and corrupt systems of administration are often shaped by their bureaucratic and corrupt predecessors, leaving little room to bring stuctural change, maintaining status quo.

Language is another key challenge for many post-colonial governments. Related to governance and power, language can be used by elites as a tool to maintain their own power through exclusion of other language groups within the national system. Gerda Mansour (1993:2) defines multilingualism in the 'third world' as a phenomenon whereby "countries (...) have considerable internal linguistic diversity with one super-imposed official language". Language serves as a prominent identity marker which is strongly linked to nationalism, and which indicates and reproduces cultural and ethnic boundaries (Bauman 1991; Bucholtz and Hall 2004:369), language is a powerful, defining factor in the process of nation-building. Recapitulating Benedict Anderson (2006) and it is one of the main prerequisites needed for people to imagine their community; without language as common denominator, nationalism wouldn't be such a strong force. The presence of several languages, and therefore communities, in one national system, therefore poses specific challenges if the aim is to create one national society with one shared identity: a nation is by definition a community based on shared traits; internal linguistic and cultural fragmentation potentially undoes this community. This issue is explained through the notion of civic nationalism: basing the nation on citizenship, rather than ethnic, linguistic or cultural homogeneity. Connor (1972) argues that forcibly combining languages in one system 'destroys' nations. But,

as Smith (1996) argues, wouldn't it be possible that several nations, each with their own unique identity and language, are integrated into one 'national' system?

This is the main challenge presented to many post-colonial states. Burdened by a history drawn by external forces and aiming for self-sufficiency and full independence, the goal is to create a stable society and to enable nationhood among people who might otherwise not identify with their neighbours. To illustrate the power of language differences as identity markers in post-colonial states, we will take a look at the short life-history of the Senegambian Confederation. The Federation, founded 1982, had its origins in two colonies, one under English rule (Gambia) and one under French (Senegal). After independence in 1965 and 1960, attempts were made to create a sort of pan-African union, where policy focused specifically on embracing shared ancestry, culture and interests (Paye 2012:48). The colonial powers however, left indelible traces and had created two 'countries', each wielding its own "different vision of the world: Anglophone or Francophone"; English attained a 'nationalistic' and 'anti-Senegalese' status and became a strong identity marker (Paye 2012:52). The population of the two countries continued stereotyping of the 'other' by reinforcing their differences through language. French was used pejoratively and specifically as a language that was non-Gambian. This strong aversion between languages eroded French as the 'universal' language and led directly to the demise of the Confederation in 1989 (Paye 2012:2;52). The French-English dichotomy and its colonial heritage, combined with the aim to form a united nation-state, bears great resemblance to the situation in Cameroon in 1961, during its independence. In Cameroon, comparable circumstances have led to the country which it is today. The next section focuses on how the interplay of politics and language shaped the contemporary Cameroonian nation-state.

Post-Colonial Politics and Language in Cameroon   **(Jelte Verberne)**

When it comes to postcolonial nation-building and language, Cameroon is a very interesting case and it is important to know Cameroon's historical background in order to understand why English and French have become such a significant identity markers. When colonialism ended in 1961, in what is now known as the Republic of Cameroon, former English and French colonial territories shaped the Federal Republic of Cameroon. The constitution of this Federal Republic stated that the two official languages of the country would be English and French (Constitution of the Federal Republic of Cameroon 1961). Eric A. Anchimbe (2011) appoints the end of Franco-British colonialism as the beginning of the Anglophone - Francophone problem in Cameroon, because during that period the English-speaking and French-speaking provinces were united into one state. 'The Anglophone Problem' was first described by Konings and Nyamnjoh (2003) and can be seen as the sum of all the complaints made by Anglophone citizens about their subordinate role in Cameroon. We elaborate more on the 'Anglophone Problem' after we briefly described the relevant sociopolitical history of Cameroon.

In 1961, the population of the Anglophone region chose to join the Francophone region as a separate federal state within the Federal Republic of Cameroon. This moment has been characterized by the Cameroonian government as the 'reunification' of the country. This is remarkable because the Cameroonian nation never existed and was immensely fragmented before Germany initially colonized the region (Konings and Nyamnjoh 2003). This is clearly an act of creating a shared history in service of the imagining of the nation. Initially the Anglophone region kept autonomy over their own policies but in 1972 the federal states were united into one republic. From that point on a one-party system, dominated by people from the Francophone region, governed the united Republic of Cameroon. Positions of responsibility in the Anglophone provinces were appointed to Francophones and the Anglophones were merely made their assistants. This happened mainly because the state institutions of the united Republic of Cameroon became of French origin and tradition. The Anglophones were used to the

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governing institutions being of British origin and were thus not familiar with French administrative practices (Awasom 2007). For decades, it was a public secret that the Anglophone minority was being treated as second-class citizens in Cameroon. Oben Mbuagbo (2010:431) argues that the Francophone majority serves as a "cultural and economic road map", leading to "the continuous marginalisation of the English speaking minority in Cameroon". Most of the natural resources such as oil, timber and minerals are all extracted from grounds in the Anglophone area. This area is overall less developed than the Francophone zone though, leading Anglophones to conclude that the Francophones depend on the Anglophones and keep them 'weak'. There was not much that could be, or would be done to improve the Anglophone situation until the political liberalization in the early 90s. With the reintroduction of a multiparty system came an explosion of Anglophone frustration. This is what what Konings and Nyamnjoh (2003) call the resurgence of 'the Anglophone Problem'. This has been continuing until the present day even though the massive protests of the early days have diminished. One of the most important moments in the past two decades has been the proclamation of the 'Buea declaration'. It was issued after the first All Anglophone Conference in 1993 and called for the restoration of the in 1961 constituted Federal Republic (Konings 2009).

The above described historical processes have created a tension between the national Cameroonian identity and the local Anglophone identity in the North-Western and South-Western province of Cameroon. The national government has not succeeded in uniting its citizens under one strong national identity. In the next section we will take a closer look at the effect the government policy of bilingualism had and has on national and local Anglophone identity in Buea, Cameroon. We will focus on the substantive student population living in the university town of Buea.

Students and Bilingualism in Buea, Cameroon (Arjun Swami-Persaud)

In its effort to create a strong and unitary Cameroonian identity, the government stresses bilingualism as a trait that helps furthering the country while respecting its linguistic diversity. The city of Buea, capital of the South-West province, serves as an important scene for the country's linguistic politics. Buea consists of about 90.000 inhabitants (BUCREP 2005:20) out of which a substantive part, over 12.000 people, are

students attending Buea University (Vice Chancellor of the University of Buea 2014). The city was the capital of German Kamerun until the end of World War I, when the League of Nations mandated the North-West and South-West provinces to England and the rest to France; Buea became capital of the Anglophone region until the creation of the Republic in 1961 (Konings & Nyamnjoh 1997).

Buea played an important role in Cameroon's politics of language and nation-building. As described earlier, after the political liberalization in the early 1990's, Anglophone frustration resurged which resulted in the emergence of many activist- or lobbying groups. Opposed to the national government, but under aegis of the Catholic Church, these groups, counting over 5000 people, gathered under the flag of the first 'All Anglophone Congress' (AAC) in April 1993 at the Mount Mary Clinic in Buea (Konings & Nyamnjoh 2003:135). They issued a declaration known as the 'Buea Declaration on the Marginalisation of Anglophones' which, among others, called the 1972 unification of the country 'unconstitutional and illegal' and called for all (Anglophone) Cameroonians to work towards a federal state (Konings & Nyamnjoh 2003:84). The declaration spoke in strong us-them dichotomies and seemed constructed as a way to vent off frustration, rather than as a genuine political approach in search for consensus (Konings & Nyamnjoh 1997:219;225). The AAC created a 'delegation' of representatives which eventually transformed into the South Cameroonians National Council (SCNC) (Konings & Nyamnjoh 1997:220). In 1999, the SCNC 'took over' the Radio Buea broadcasting station and declared independence from Cameroon (Anyangwe 2009:8). From then on, the group has been declared illegal and still faces repression by the national government (Amnesty 2012; 2013), such as by mass arrests during assemblies (Africa Review 2012).

President Paul Biya collaterally highlighted Francophone - Anglophone divisions in Buea recently. In February 2014, he visited Buea to celebrate the 50-year anniversary of Cameroon's 'reunification'; this anniversary is considered by Anglophone activists to be the date at which they were illegally and unconstitutionally denied statehood (SCNC 2013). The national anthem was sung in French, and Biya held a speech in French, not addressing the Anglophone Problem. Reactions to his visit were as could be expected: Anglophone activists in Buea again "challenge[d] the legality of [the] reunification" and felt like they were being 'annexed' or 'assimilated' (Standard Tribune 2014). The display

of Francophone symbolism found little resonance among the Anglophone community in Buea and highlighted the lack of national unity.

The effects of bilingualism and Anglophone-Francophone relations are well visible in the University of Buea. This university is the first of two Anglophone universities in Cameroon and attracts students from all over the country. Six other state universities in Cameroon are constitutionally bilingual but effectively Francophone; therefore these are harder to attend by Anglophone Cameroonians, once more illustrating the boundaries upheld by language differences (Gam Nkwi *et al.* 2012:4). The Buea University provides Anglophone students with a platform to discuss, exchange views and reflect over their position in Cameroon. These students have chosen for the Anglophone option in a predominantly Francophone country, which could indicate stronger identification with Anglophone Cameroonians. To further illustrate this point, we will now take a look at the history of the university.

The university of Buea opened its gates in 1993 and was to be run according to Anglo-Saxon principles, rather than following the Francophone model. This meant that the university was to be less authoritarian, hierarchical and centralized than other universities in the country and would instead enjoy 'a large measure of academic freedom' and a 'democratic management style'. In practice this promise turned out to be difficult to uphold. The university opened at a time that the region was in a "hotbed of rebellion against the ruling regime", so control was held tightly in order to secure order and 'loyalty' to the government (Gam Nkwi *et al.* 2012:3-4).

In 2005, a student strike erupted at one of the universities of Yaoundé; the goals set by the students were mainly about university facilities and infrastructure. Buea's students soon joined the protests out of 'solidarity'. However, the protests in Buea were more militant, and students started using the Anglophone framework in their protests, pleading against marginalization of the Anglophone population. The Anglophone student population became another advocate of Anglophone rights, autonomy or even secession (Gam Nkwi *et al.* 2012:3).

As the historical capital of Anglophone Cameroon, Buea has played a symbolically and politically significant role in Cameroon's politics of language. It holds a large highly-educated, socially involved and predominantly Anglophone student population which is actively engaged in regional and national policy: this student population is

exposed to the predominantly Francophone state and its interpretation of bilingualism. The students have witnessed a violent history of student unionism and corruption, which seems to be a reflection of larger-scale national politics. We have chosen to conduct our research among the Anglophone students in Buea because they actively reflect on their minority position in the country and see the hiatuses between policy and practice. Because of this position, we wanted to learn how they perceive their country and its future.

In the next two chapters we present the results of our field research in Buea, Cameroon. We show what our findings reveal about nationalism and bilingualism in Anglophone Cameroon and what they mean for the broader debate on post-colonial nationalism and language. In the first chapter, Jelte Verberne focuses on the government implementation of its policy on bilingualism and the local Anglophone interpretation of this bilingualism. In the second chapter, Arjun Swami-Persaud concentrates on the perceptions of bilingualism among Anglophone students of the University of Buea. These empirical chapters serve as the foundation to the answer of our main question: *How do Anglophone students in Buea, Cameroon, perceive bilingualism in a predominantly Francophone post-colonial nation-state?*

State Bilingualism and the Marginalization of Anglophones in Buea, Cameroon

(Jelte Verberne)

"*(3) The official languages of the, Republic of Cameroon shall be English and French, both languages having the same status. The State shall guarantee the promotion of bilingualism throughout the country. It shall endeavour to protect and promote national languages.*"

(Constitution of The Republic of Cameroon 1996)

This fragment from the constitution of the Republic of Cameroon says it all. On paper the country is perfectly bilingual. Both languages sharing the same *status* and the state shall *guarantee* the promotion of this bilingualism. However, in practice things seem to be quite different; the two official languages do not share the same status and bilingualism is not always promoted by the government. In national government institutions and everyday public life, French emerges as the dominant language. This imbalance affects the way French-speaking and English-speaking Cameroonians interact, in a negative way. The result is that French-speaking citizens identify themselves as Francophones and English-speaking citizens as Anglophones. In this way, the citizens of Cameroon are divided because of the bilingual nature of the country. This shows how language as an identity marker has the power to split a nation (Anderson 2006) and because of it, the Cameroonian nation is split into two. According to the constitution, bilingualism is supposed to unite the people of Cameroon but the government failed and neglected to implement a sustainable policy on bilingualism. Therefore, the Cameroonian nation was not built upon bilingualism and French remains the dominant language.

In this chapter of our thesis I am going to take a closer look at how the constitutional form of bilingualism is implemented by the national government in the Anglophone regions and I show how this bilingualism impacts the daily life of the Anglophone citizens. This will eventually help answering questions such as: What is the role of language in Cameroon's nation? How does bilingualism affects nationalism in

Cameroon and what is the role of the state in this process? How is language in a post-colonial nation-state an essential identity marker for the nation? My findings confirm Anderson's (2006) argument that a shared language enables the imagining of a community. Language is an important prerequisite needed for people to imagine their nation. Internal linguistic fragmentation, bilingualism in Cameroon's case, is a potential danger to a nation's unity. The power of the state is used by the Cameroonian government for nation-building, as Deutsch (1966) and Smith (1986) would expect. But the Cameroonian national identity is in fact not built on bilingualism as the constitution would perceive; it is rather built on a Francophone identity. Cameroon's case confirms Mansour's (1993) notion on how language can be used by an elite or the state to maintain power through exclusion of other language groups within the national system. This chapter reveals the relation between language, bilingualism and nationalism in Cameroon. This provides an useful and detailed framework of bilingualism in Anglophone Cameroon that we need to understand before we continue to focus on Anglophone students.

The framework is twofold. The first part of my analysis focuses on how the predominantly Francophone government implements a policy of bilingualism within the Anglophone provinces. The government's failing bilingual policy signifies that the state failed to fully unite all Cameroonians under one nation and the Anglophone minority feels disadvantaged because of this failure. The way bilingualism is implemented by the predominantly Francophone government called for a local Anglophone interpretation. This interpretation is expressed as a feeling of frustration and marginalization. Therefore my second analytical focus is on the local Anglophone interpretation of bilingualism in the city of Buea. As discussed in the introduction of this thesis, my argument is based on the data I collected throughout a three-month fieldwork period in Cameroon.

I begin with the history of the 'reunification' and feeling of frustration and marginalization among Anglophones. In this paragraph I also cover two important issues that influence the government's policy on bilingualism: multilingualism and tribalism. By then, I am ready to analyse the predominantly Francophone government's reading of bilingualism and its local interpretation in Anglophone Cameroon. I do this in three segments. First, I look at bilingual education. Second, the important role

bilingualism plays in government institutions. Finally, I move on to the obstacles that occur with bilingualism in national symbols. After this I am ready to conclude this chapter with a brief review, theoretical implications and a preview of the next chapter.

A History of Reunification and Anglophone Frustration

As illustrated above, Cameroon has English and French as its official languages due to a colonial heritage. Therefore the country is officially bilingual, but Cameroon is also extremely multilingual. Abraham, a middle aged Anglophone government official, working for the local municipality, explained this to me:

"*Cameroon has about 200 ethnic groups and each of this ethnic groups have separate languages. (...) I dare to say, maybe 80 percent of the Cameroonians are capable of speaking [three languages. For example:] English, their dialect and then pidgin.*"[3]

Before Cameroon was under colonial rule, society was organized in what is now described as a 'traditional tribal system'. This system of tribes is still rooted deeply in the culture and traditions of the citizens of Cameroon. Therefore politics in Cameroon are often claimed to be tribal in nature; if you do not know someone you will not get anywhere. Knowing someone or having a certain name is believed to be very important. Diba, a man working for an international anti-corruption agency demonstrated this:

"*Tribalism is just one of the compounding factors. (...) You have for example, in those days, [during the presidency of president Ahidjo, who came from the Far North region,] they used to do military recruitments. Mostly the names of ethnic northerners would appear on the list. So you would have Abdullah Hassan Moesha, Moesha Hassan Abdullah, Hassan Mousey Abdullah.*"[4]

Issues such as tribalism and multilingualism show that problems between Anglophones and Francophones, as well as the unity of the Cameroonian nation are not always the

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[3] Abraham, unstructured interview: 02.04.2014
[4] Diba, unstructured interview: 09.03.2015

result of the fact that the country was founded on two different official languages. They do however widen the gap between Francophones and Anglophones and therefore they are important to keep in mind.

When the Anglophone and Francophone parts of Cameroon were 'reunified' in 1961, the harmonization of two very different systems and institutions started. But not everything was unified; different regions still enjoy different law systems. For example, in Francophone Cameroon there is a civil law system while the Anglophones use a common law system. Because of a government policy of Regional Balance which I will elaborate more on later in this chapter, French judges are now working in the English region. This created objections among Anglophone lawyers, because some Francophone judges in the Anglophone region made their submissions in French. A fragment from an independent local Anglophone newspaper, The Post, on the matter:

"…the [Anglophone] lawyers are demanding for the Magistrates of French expression which are civil law trained to express themselves in English. They maintained that, the English common law system is one and indivisible and whatever threatens the system, threatens the stability and interest of litigants and common law advocates in general."[5]

The use of French in the Anglophone region's law system initiated protest among Anglophone lawyers. This example shows that it is not just about the language, itself it is also about the culture and tradition that is behind the language. A professor at the University of Buea explained this in The Post newspaper in an open letter to the North West Attorney General, in support of the lawyers' protests:

"Contrary to held views, Cameroon is not a bilingual country. Rather, it is a bi-cultural country. Language does not have autonomy of existence. It is part of a culture. You cannot think of the English language in isolation from Anglophone culture and the French language away from Francophone culture. The Cameroonian nation is, therefore, bi-cultural. On the other hand, the Cameroonian State, whose duty it is to serve this bi-cultural nation is duty-bound to be bilingual. A civil servant posted to a given part of the

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[5] The Post newspaper No. 01611: Monday March 16, 2015 / Full article in Attachment II

country will not and should not expect that those people be the ones to make the effort to communicate with him."[6]

According to this professor, Cameroon is not bilingual, but bicultural. But because of the bicultural nature of the country, the state and government institutions that need to be bilingual. If they are not, the bicultural nature of Cameroon is denied by the state, and this will upset the part of the country whose identity is threatened; look at the judge's example for instance.

These kind of disputes have been happening in Cameroon ever since the unification and therefore the frustration among the Anglophone population of Cameroon originates from these early days of the union. Ever since the unification, there has been frustration among Anglophones about the way they, as a minority, are being treated by the predominantly Francophone government. Francis, A young man working for a local charity organization:

"*I think the English minority group has been suffering from since independence.*"[7]

According to Anglophones, this process of marginalization by the predominantly Francophone government has been going on since the unification, especially when it comes to economic and infrastructural issues. Jim, an elderly Anglophone man who experienced the 'reunification' of the country as a government administrator illustrated:

"*After the unification, West Cameroon [Anglophone Cameroon] lost a lot of economic strengths. Most of the country's airports were in Anglophone Cameroon but the unification closed them all. Limbe had a deep sea port, but is was closed and all economic activity went to Douala. (...) Because of the closures there was a lot of unemployment in Anglophone Cameroon. Ports were also closed in Tiko and Mamfe. This all was a gradual process and happened also in for example, banks and electricity. (...) This all is a way of controlling.*"[8]

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[6] The Post newspaper No. 1612: Friday March 20, 2015 / Full article in Attachment II
[7] Francis, semi-structured interview: 06.03.2015
[8] Jim, unstructured interview: 19.03.2015

The Anglophone frustration and feeling of marginalization is clearly a result of the reunification. English and French, as the official languages, were supposed to build a bridge and unite the immensely diverse population into one nation. The government was therefore supposed to use both official languages equally. In reality French is the more dominant language and because of this Anglophone Cameroonians feel frustrated and marginalized, resulting in a divided nation.

Now I will move on to how this frustration is experienced present-day and how the government's implementation of bilingualism is still the source of this frustration. My analysis focuses on how bilingualism is implemented by the predominantly Francophone government and in what ways this impacts the daily life of the Anglophone citizen in Buea, Cameroon. I will do this in three segments starting with the false promise of bilingual education, followed up by bilingualism and inequality in government institutions and concluding with the fragility of bilingualism in national symbols.

The False Promise of Bilingual Education

I start with the question if Cameroonians are really as bilingual as the state claims they are, or should be. This is interesting because in reality most Cameroonians do not fluently speak both official languages, as the ideal form of bilingualism would prescribe. Abraham, the local government official, confirmed this:

"If you follow what the constitution says strictly, (...) The ideal form of bilingualism, would be for every Cameroonian to be able to speak English and French perfectly. To be able to write English and French fluently. But this of course is not the case in Cameroon. I think a good majority of the population either speaks one language or the other. Very few Cameroonians are perfectly bilingual in both languages."[9]

The reason that people are not fluently bilingual is twofold. First, the educational system fails to educate students to be bilingual. Second, there seems to be some reluctance to

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[9] Abraham, unstructured interview: 02.04.2015

speak the *other* language. I will start with the educational system. There are a lot of bilingual schools in Cameroon and especially in Buea. One of these schools is the Bilingual Grammar School or Lycee Bilingue De Molyko.

This is a government school and one of the oldest bilingual schools in the country. One of its slogans is *'The Cradle Of Bilingualism'* or *'Le Berceau Du Bilinguisme'.* At first sight this looks great and you wonder why the people in Cameroon, who went to such a bilingual school, are actually not bilingual. Jafa, a young man working as a local government official explained me why:

"…There you have three thousand students on roll. (…) Grade one and grade two they shall have done those separate studies. Anglophone or Francophone studies. Now at grade three they take the best students and put them in a bilingual section. So grade three, grade four they are learning all subjects in English and all subjects in French. But it is only those select few. 80, in a school of 3000, that actually learn the ideal bilingual, the ideal bilingual education. So the rest, you see that the rest of the school just does not know about. They either learn in English or in French. That is what happens. And then at the end of grade [four], they separate again. Everybody now goes back to his initial domain. (…) They have only two years to learn ideal bilingualism."[11]

So even in a bilingual government school, only a select few of the students are taught the ideal form of bilingualism, and only for two years. This has been the case since independence and therefore most Cameroonians are in fact, not able to speak both

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[10] Bilingual Grammar school / Lycee Bilingue De Molyko - Buea
[11] Jafa, unstructured interview: 02.04.2015

official languages. This is a clear example of the state failing to use bilingualism as an common identity marker in their effort towards nation-building, for education is key in the process of building the nation. If every Cameroonian would learn both languages fluently, the ideal form of bilingualism would be met. Some changes do appear, especially in the academic world and primarily because of globalization. This will be further elaborated on in the next chapter of this thesis during the focus on students.

Related to the fact that the educational system fails to form all Cameroonians to be bilingual, and therefore part of one united nation, there also seems to be some reluctance to speak the *other* language. The Anglophones often blame the Francophones for this. As an Anglophone news reporter stated in an article on the 50th celebration of bilingualism in the Anglophone newspaper The Sun:

"*Francophones remain snobbish whenever English is spoken to them.*"[12]

Abraham explained to me how, according to him, Francophones see bilingualism in Cameroon:

"*…So this [bilingualism] has always been the excuse for most of our French brothers who come here and who want to impose the French language on the English speaking Cameroonians. They will always be 'Cameroon is a bilingual country' which means 'if I am speaking French and you don't understand what I am saying, you in the first ought to understand both languages' which means that 'if I am speaking French you ought to understand what I am saying'. I think this is the major flaw that bilingualism has in Cameroon.*"[13]

It seems to Anglophones as if bilingualism in Cameroon only applies to them, since French is the superior language. The Cameroonian nation is not unified because the government failed to use bilingualism as an identity marker to build one unified nation and to promote bilingualism through education. This created a strong segregation of the Anglophone minority and bitterness between the Anglophone and the Francophone

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[12] The Sun newspaper No. 0303: Monday February 16, 2015 / Full article in Attachment II
[13] Abraham, unstructured interview: 02.04.2015

parts of Cameroon. The Anglophone population feels disadvantaged because to them, it is as if they are using a subordinate official language.

Bilingualism and Inequality in Government Institutions

Even in the highest government institution, the presidency, bilingualism poses a problem. The president of the Republic of Cameroon, Paul Biya, who should be a president for all Cameroonians, often behaves as a president only for the Francophone people in Cameroon. For example, he usually gives his speeches in French. He even did this at a summit of the Anglophone Commonwealth in Yaoundé, the capital of Cameroon. [14] The fact that the president rarely speeches in English and even neglects to do so when speaking in front of an Anglophone community such as the Commonwealth makes people who are Anglophone in Cameroon feel as if they are second-class citizens in their own country and as if the president does not represent them. Diba elaborated:

"*…it was a shame for English speaking Cameroonians and the English speaking community that the president of Cameroon addressed the Commonwealth in French. (…) It sends a message to the English speaking world and English speaking community, that the leadership does not value English that much. (…) if our leadership keeps on projecting an image of being a French speaking country it suppresses this Anglophone identity that Cameroon has. Which is by constitution of equal status with the other. (…) Cameroon is an English and French speaking country. Our leaders should represent us. But if they keep on projecting one identity that is always how it is going to be and people are always going to feel second-class citizens in their own country.*"[15]

The president's choice for French demonstrates the government's preference for French as official language. In this way Cameroon is portrayed as a Francophone country to the rest of the world. This image of a Francophone national identity in a government institution is also an issue when it comes to national security. At this moment, national security is a big issue in Cameroon, because in the North, the military is fighting against

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[14] Cameroon is part of the Commonwealth because of the Anglophones British colonial history.
[15] Diba, unstructured interview: 09.03.2015

Boko Haram. The military and the recently founded B.I.R.[16] are officially, like the whole of Cameroon, bilingual. In reality all commands and communication within the military are in French. When approaching a soldier or even a local policeman it is always better to start talking in French. This also happens a lot at checkpoints when people travel. To Anglophones, the military in the Anglophone regions sometimes even seems like an alien force because they speak a different language. This is not helpful for the unity of the Cameroonian nation. Dr. Thomas, a lecturer at the University of Buea, and Jim who endorsed this, said:

"You meet an English speaking policeman on the highway, he stops you and he speaks French to you. You look at his name here {points at his chest}, and you realize that he is from the English speaking part of the country. You see. The same thing with French speaking police officers. Sometimes you meet them on the road and they speak French. You will say that you do not understand what he is saying and he will not turn to speaking English."[17]

"When you see them they are always speaking French. But if they were speaking English. When you see an English speaking gendarme, as an English speaking Cameroonian you will feel like you have a sense of belonging a sense of identification."[18]

The government also fails to guarantee bilingualism, and therefore the equality of its citizens, in other public institutions such as national and regional public offices. Here, the language of communication is often French and is frequently accompanied by the maltreatment of Anglophones. I experienced this myself, together with Francis, during a visit to the immigration office in Buea. This is how he himself described the events of that day in a following interview:

"I quietly remember, when I was going with you guys to do your certification. I cannot believe that a fellow Cameroonian, of which is serving at the immigration office. Of which

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[16] Battalion Intervention Rapid or Rapid Intervention Force; but still always abbreviated B.I.R.
[17] Dr. Thomas, unstructured interview: 31.03.2015
[18] Jim, unstructured interview: 19.03.2015

it is taxpayers money that is being used to pay them. Of which I pay my own portion of the tax. She will sit and be talking in French that I am 'a slave to the white people that come in this country' or the white people coming to Buea. (...) Her colleague was laughing. I really felt bad. In that light for me I was frustrated at some point because if we are talking about unity, that is not what an officer, a lady, should sit and be talking. So it is very bad."[19]

Besides the fact that Anglophones often are and feel mistreated by Francophones in public offices, the use of French, in an Anglophone region, makes them feel like they are not free to speak their official language of communication. The reluctance Francophones seem to have towards speaking English also plays a role in the public offices and this causes a feeling of inferiority among Anglophones. Jafa explained:

"We have stories that [Anglophone] people have gone into public offices on the other side [Francophone Cameroon] and they were not attended to. Because the person that is there in the public office does not understand English, because bilingualism in Cameroon is in such a way that it is mostly the Anglophone that needs to be bilingual, but not the French speaking Cameroonian. (…) You can even go to France and order in English and you will still be served. But you do that in Cameroon, there is sort of this repulsion, that people feel. When you speak English you speak it with a bit fear."[20]

The reason why French is often the lingua franca in public offices, is because a lot of people working for the government are originally from the Francophone part of Cameroon. This is the case because of a government policy called 'Regional Balance'. There are ten provinces in Cameroon: eight Francophone and two Anglophone regions. According to this policy of Regional Balance, all job opportunities that the government sends out should be distributed equally among people from the ten different regions. So when the government needs one hundred people, twenty should come from the Anglophone regions and eighty from the Francophone. This seems like a fair arrangement, but in practice it looks as if it is used more to sustain tribalism and the marginalization of Anglophones.

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[19] Francis, semi-structured interview: 06.03.2015
[20] Jafa, unstructured interview: 26.02.2015

Regional Balance is, for example, often applied at public exams that give entry to government administration schools, and therefore jobs within the government. The results of these exams are often in favour of those in power and their peers. Besides that, the exams on themselves already pose a problem for Anglophones. Let me give a recent example of a public exam held during my stay in Cameroon for the recruitment of policemen. This case caused a lot of protest in the Anglophone independent press, to begin with the suspected corruption of the results. A fragment from an article written by Bouddih Adams, an Anglophone reporter, in The Post newspaper:

"*Candidates for the recruitment into the police force have sat for the exams. Check out the number of candidates that will be recruited from the chosen tribe [President Paul Biya's tribe] and you will know the place where the balancing act should rather go to.*"[21]

Bouddih Adams states that the upcoming exams will probably be corrupted because most of the candidates that will appear on the final list will originate from the President's tribe. This corruption of the results under the cover of Regional Balance stems from a system based on tribalism, nepotism and favouritism but Anglophones feel especially disadvantaged, and shed light on the situation through mediums such as independent newspapers, in this case an Anglophone newspaper called 'The Post'. The reason why Anglophones ring the bell, might be that these bilingual exams often entail faulty English translations. This also happened during the police recruitment exam. Another fragment from Bouddih Adams in The Post, one week later:

"*We even warned that Anglophone candidates, for the ongoing exams for recruitment into the police force, will be disadvantaged because the questions would be set in French and poorly translated into English. (…) read Question 8 (a) (…) that goes thus: Qui chaque depute représente-t-il? Translation: Who shall represent each member of the National Assembly? (…) Question 8 (a) is supposed to read: Who or what area does a member of the*

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[21] The Post newspaper No. 01615: Monday March 30, 2015/ Full article in Attachment II

National Assembly represent? (…) From the above examples, the Anglophone candidate who hasn't any reading knowledge or understanding of the French language has failed – a priori."[22]

If it is not the faulty translation that holds them back, Regional Balance will do it. Bouddih Adams elaborates on this in his article in The Post, 'Police Recruitment Exam: Anglophone Candidates Deliberately Disadvantaged?':

"*…Because of such experiences, most Anglophone children struggle to learn French. And, behold, many of them do pass such exams. And after earning 'in French tears' as it were, they usually pass such exams. That is when Regional Balance sets in, to fail them. Which means that after making it difficult for Anglophone youths to write such exams, (…) the Francophone authorities bring in Regional Balance and replace their names with names of family members and children of friends who failed or did not write the exam at all. That is what has been happening with entrance exams into schools or into the public service.*"[23]

As shown, the government policy on Regional Balance makes it seem to Anglophones that they are not being treated equally. Combined with the failure of the state to correctly translate the public exams and thereby implementing their own policy of bilingualism, shows that the government is capable nor willing to unite its citizens as one united nation using two different official languages. The policy of bilingualism and Regional Balance were implemented to promote equality but in practice, Anglophones feel and are disadvantaged by it.

The Fragility of Bilingualism in National Symbols

The problem with faulty translations are not only faced when it comes to public exams. According to the constitution, all official government documents need to be published in English and French. This would ensure the equality of both official languages, but in reality this is rarely the case. Ministerial decrees, informational forms and governmental

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[22] The Post newspaper No. 01616: Friday April 3, 2015/ Full article in Attachment II
[23] The Post newspaper No. 01616: Friday April 3, 2015/ Full article in Attachment II

application forms are often only published in French or in faulty English translations. This results in problems because not all Anglophone citizens are bilingual and therefore cannot read French. In the case of faulty English translations people may interpret the message differently. Kuba Nije, who works for a local NGO that focuses on rural development explained this problem with faulty English translations to me:

"...*at the local level, you realize that the message from the French documents (…) is distorted because it is not a professional who does the translation, from the French document to a English document. (...) But it is just a local person who understands French a bit. (...) Every document that comes out has certain jargons that needs a professional to translate. But those jargons, at times, are being avoided, but they are the keywords of a certain statement or activity that comes out.*"[24]

This translation problem even goes as far as the 'reunification' monument in Buea. This monument was unveiled in 2014 and celebrates the 50th anniversary of the 'reunification' of Anglophone and Francophone Cameroon. On the monument there are several cases of wrong or poor translations. It even happened to the logo, central to the monument.

[25]

On the outer ring of the logo, '*Cinquantenaires Indépendance et Réunification du Cameroun*' is translated to '*50th Anniversaries Independence and Reunification of Cameroon*'. Diba, who is a fluently bilingual Anglophone living in Buea commented on this as follows:

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[24] Kuba Nije, unstructured interview: 03.03.2015
[25] The Independence and Reunification Monument in Buea

"…it shows that it maybe was Google translated. Or the services of an English interpreter or translator were not consulted. As you will not have something like that on a national monument that has to stand there for a eternity. (…) Then on the level of the pillars, there are ten pillars around that seal. Some people now say the two pillars in front are the North-West and South-West regions, why are they the shortest pillars. If the whole country was equal. People look past architecture, because that thing is a architectural design, it is something that should be beautiful for the eye. But to show how divided people are, how self-conscious people are about Anglophone and Francophone identities. They even now go on a monument like that, they say those ten pillars are not equal."[26]

The fact that these faulty translations even happen on a monument that celebrates the 'reunification' of the Anglophone and the Francophone parts of Cameroon and the way local Anglophones interpret the symbolism of this monument, shows a division between the two parts of the country. Besides the monument there are also some difficulties with national unity in other national symbols. For example the national anthem (*Cameroon o Cameroon, Thou Cradle of our Forefathers – Cameroun Ô Cameroun berceau de nos ancêtres*) is not the same in English as in French. Someone sang a few sentences for me to make it clear. For this example, I give the first four sentences of the anthem:

Official English version	*Official French version*
Cameroon, Thou Cradle of our Fathers, Holy Shrine where in our midst they now repose, Their tears and blood and sweat thy soil did water, On thy hills and valleys once their tillage rose.	Ô Cameroun berceau de nos ancêtres, Va debout et jaloux de ta liberté, Comme un soleil ton drapeau fier doit être, Un symbole ardent de foi et d'unité.

The French one is the original and after reunification they could not literally translate it because it would not fit on the melody. Therefore they wrote a new text that would fit on the melody. This is the correct translation of the official French version to English:

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[26] Diba, unstructured interview: 09.03.2015

English (French translation)
Cameroon cradle of our ancestors,
Go, upright and jealous of your freedom.
As the sun, let your flag be proud,
A symbol of ardent faith and unity.

There are some crucial differences between the two national anthems. The French version talks about freedom, pride for the flag, faith and unity. The English version talks about tears, blood, sweat and soil. Therefore they both send a different nationalistic message. Diba demonstrated this to me:

"*As you go down the anthems now they have different words. Different messages of nationalism. (…) they sound the same, but they do not carry the same message. (...) And all through the years, even before the head of state addresses the nation, or it opens on national television. (...) but the chorus is always the French chorus: 'Chère Patrie, Terre chérie, Tu es notre seul et vrai bonheur'. But we have never heard the English version: 'Land of Promise, land of Glory! Thou, of life and joy, our only store!' we have not heard that being played in public.*"[27]

The French national anthem is the only one sang at official national occasions. These differences in national symbols makes Anglophones feel like they are not fully a part of the Cameroonian nation, because they do not speak the dominant language that seems to represent the nation in the national anthem. This goes all the way up to the national football team. John, a hospital nurse and big football fan explained:

"*It carries itself right up to the national team. Because there has always been this debate that Anglophone players are not given the chance to play on the national team. Even for those that are there, it is hard to get on the pitch. We have the recent case of Clinton J. at the last nations cup. Despite the fact he was a star player. One of the main goal scorers who qualified the team for the African nations cup. He was benched for the majority of the*

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[27] Diba, unstructured interview: 09.03.2015

tournament. So Anglophones say that he was treated this way, despite he has the talent [and] he has the skill, they are saying it was because he was a Anglophone that he was benched. So you see the English language is a limitation to people now."[28]

Divided because of Bilingualism, A Nation Lacking Unity

All the above explained examples show how the predominantly Francophone government's implementation of bilingualism differs from their own constitutional policy. On paper everything seems to be working perfectly, the state guards the equal status of the two official languages and guarantees the promotion of bilingualism in Cameroon. In practice, French is the more dominant language and this has negative consequences for the Anglophone citizens. It creates a division between the Anglophone and Francophone people of Cameroon and out of this divide appears a clear Us and Them dichotomy. You are either a Francophone or an Anglophone. While talking to Anglophones about Francophones or the Francophone part of Cameroon they often use words such as 'they', 'them' or 'the other side'. This division is the result of the 'reunification' of the Anglophone and the Francophone parts of Cameroon in the 1960's.

In the past three sections I explained how in three areas; education, government institutions and national symbols, the predominantly Francophone government was not able nor willing to sufficiently implement its policy of bilingualism and how this is interpreted by the Anglophone population of Buea. A clear division was created that is apparent throughout Cameroon's society, and the Anglophone population feels marginalized and frustrated because of it. This case of bilingualism in Cameroon shows the importance of language as a shared identity marker in the process of post-colonial nation-building, since language is one of the main prerequisites needed for people to imagine their community (Anderson 2006). The Cameroonian government's policy of bilingualism could be seen as the use of the power of the state to unite its citizens under bilingualism, as Deutsch (1966) and Smith (1986) would expect them to. However, the failed implementation of this policy shows how Cameroon's Francophone elites use language to maintain power through the exclusion of other language groups as Mansour (1993) would foresee.

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[28] John, unstructured interview: 13.02.2015

One of the slogans of the Cameroonian national government is 'Unity in Diversity' and the two official languages are supposed to unite the immense diverse multilingual nation. But in reality Cameroon as a nation is divided because of its bilingual nature. The Francophone manifestations of the government in the Anglophone provinces are interpreted by the local Anglophone population as the marginalization of the Cameroonian English language and culture. This is the result of the government's failed use of bilingualism as an identity marker to build a national united identity based on two official languages. The Anglophone population is the victim of this reality. As the minority they are not considered as, nor consider themselves as a complete part of the Cameroonian nation and their government's failed implementation of bilingual policies contributes to this. In this chapter I have thus sketched the framework of Cameroon as a divided nation due to its government's failed policy on bilingualism and in the next chapter Arjun is going to focus on the Anglophone students of the University of Buea.

The Perception of Cameroonian Bilingualism by Anglophone Students in Buea

(Arjun Swami-Persaud)

Now that Cameroon's politics on bilingualism and its local Anglophone interpretation are outlined, we zoom in on a specific group: the Anglophone students at the University of Buea. Using the previous section as a framework, we now explore how these students approach bilingualism, as well as the effects the bilingual system has on them, on Cameroon, and on both of their futures. Although, as with many other aspects of Cameroonian society, Buea's Anglophone student population is not ethnically homogeneous, their common linguistic denominator serves as a strong identity marker and provides an equally strong sense of community. This chapter provides a profile of the Anglophone student population of Buea while researching the importance of 'being Anglophone' in Cameroon. I have found that language, through the implementation of the policy of bilingualism in Cameroon, emphasizes social and ethnic boundaries such as described by Barth (1969), Bauman (1991) and Bucholtz and Hall (2004:369). My findings confirm the social constructivist approach that 'being Anglophone' is a social identity which is strongly embedded in a relationship to the Francophone 'other' and which is created and recreated through social interaction (Barth 1969; Eriksen 2010; Yelvington 1991:168). The issue of being Anglophone is therefore only understood in the greater framework of national history and politics, and is part of a mosaic of issues revolving around tribalism and corruption.

The chapter is divided into three main sections and ends with a prospect. First, I focus on education: how are Anglophone students impacted by the policy of bilingualism and Cameroon's educational system, and why is the University of Buea of such importance in this matter? What is the effect of education and the university on the perception and sustenance of Anglophone identity? Secondly, I cover the importance of governance. How are Anglophone students' ideas of governance and leadership shaped by their academic and political surroundings? How are these ideas expressed? And what does this imply for the future of Anglophone students in Cameroon? This brings us to the third section, which focuses on Anglophone opportunities in a bilingual system. How does 'being Anglophone' change available opportunities, such as jobs and access to government resources? How do these opportunities change the way students seek to

reach their goals and aspirations? The chapter concludes by presenting the students' outlook on the future of Cameroon and the value they attach to Anglophone identity.

The Myth of Bilingualism Dividing Students in Buea

In this section, I outline the relationship between bilingualism, education and the sustenance of Anglophone identity and demonstrate the boundaries which are drawn by and maintained through the use of language and which result in 'us/them'-dichotomies.

Students in Buea generally consider bilingualism to mean the following:

"*To be able to speak two languages fluently. A country having two national languages.*"[29]

However, there's also a broadly accepted consensus among students concerning the reality and implementation of bilingualism in Cameroon:

"*Bilingualism in Cameroon is a concept, not reality.*"[30]

People growing up and living in the South-West and North-West provinces of the country are raised speaking three languages: their vernacular, Pidgin English and English. In daily life, they converse with other Anglophones in these languages. An increasing number of English-French bilingual schools is appearing, although as mentioned earlier, many of these schools don't educate truly bilingually but rather have separated French and English classes, so that pupils are still only exposed to 'their own' language. Bando, who recently obtained his graduate in Anthropology told me that:

"*The signs in Buea saying 'bilingual' are more of a business strategy than an actual depiction of reality and usually mean they speak English.*"[31]

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[29] Aaron, unstructured interview: 10.04.2015
[30] Alan, semi-structured interview: 08.04.2015
[31] Bando, unstructured interview: 04.02.2015

Primary and secondary education in Cameroon does not succeed in promoting a strong national Cameroonian identity, if it even tries. Children are taught that the country has two communities or societies: 'the Anglophones', as contrasted to 'the Francophones'. Also among later generations, none of the students I have spoken with could confirm that they primarily identified themselves with a unitary 'Cameroonian identity': affiliation with the village of origin or language is more common. Students do describe themselves as 'patriotic' however: the land itself is loved and students are motivated to make it a better place. Cameroonian identity as such however, seems to be tainted by corrupt politics and institutionalized inequality in the country.

Many Anglophones only start to be actively aware of the language differences and the implications they carry, when they have finished their high school and start looking for either a job or a university. Cameroon has eight state-run universities; six of these are situated in the Francophone provinces. Although the national constitution claims that these universities are bilingual, education at these universities is often exclusively French, and therefore effectively excludes prospective Anglophone students. The two remaining state universities are Anglophone and therefore accessible to Anglophone students: the University of Buea (hereupon: UB) and the recently-founded University of Bamenda.

The decision to study at the UB is an important one. The university is known among its students for being the best university of Cameroon, a trait contributed to its use of the Anglo-Saxon sub-system of education, rather than the French sub-system. The Anglo-Saxon system adds a stronger emphasis on academic merit and achievement than the French system, which is traditionally more based around values of civil service, focusing on governmental administration. Despite considerable flaws and shortcomings, on which will be expanded later, students' appreciation of the university is remarkably high. Especially when compared to other universities in the country, students enrolled at the UB value their university higher than any other. Students in Buea profile themselves through their enrolment at the UB and sharply contrast it with the biggest university in the country, Yaoundé I. The following citations are by Aaron and Alex respectively, two students who spent a year or more at Yaoundé I and then decided to switch to Buea instead:

"*My expectations [at Yaoundé I] were to move forward (…) [but] I was actually being taught things I studied at the elementary level of the secondary school in the Anglophone section (…) I was learning nothing there, I was learning nothing.*"[32]

and

"*The university itself is hell. There is a class which fits 1000 students, but there are 3000 students. Everybody is standing everywhere; nobody can hear what is being said. But the lecturer doesn't care. (…) I think that many Francophones who come the University of Buea, they come here because the conditions in the university here are so much better. The conditions there are very bad.*"[33]

The University of Buea also contrasts with other universities by allegedly not being as corrupt and prone to bribery as the other universities. Ben, another ex-student of Yaoundé I:

"*If you have a big grade (…) you have a greater chance of your name being taken out. To put somebody who had a 5 or a 6 [out of 20], whose parents had seen the lecturer or whatever authority (…) so the more you pass, the more you have chances you're beat.*"[34]

Although nobody denies that there have been cases of bribery at the UB, the compared incidence is very low, and the UB has become popular among prospective students from all over Cameroon. It is known to be the state university with the strictest and most competitive admission policy in the country; whereas many universities in the country admit students with relative ease, the UB sets high demands to its prospective students. This was explained to me by Gérard, who received education at Francophone as well as Anglophone schools:

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[32] Aaron, semi-structured interview: 10.04.2015
[33] Alex, focus group interview: 06.04.2015
[34] Ben, unstructured interview: 03.04.2015

"(…) each department has certain criteria. Like you have to have a certain amount of points in your A-levels. Like A would be five points, B would be four points, (…). And for the specific department they may say, department X wants you to have 20 points to get into this faculty. And if you don't have it then you go look somewhere else."[35]

Additionally, some faculties require entrance exams to be admitted. The results of these exams are often subject to the previously explained government practice of Regional Balance. This is disadvantageous for Anglophones, since it means that even though an Anglophone student who met all requirements and passed, still has a large chance of being surpassed by a Francophone student. The already limited choice available to Anglophone students is thus restricted further and makes it disproportionately difficult for many Anglophones to get admitted into the University of Buea. A undergraduate in Agriculture illustrated:

"The government is only making the demarcation stronger with the policy of Regional Balance. People are complaining, because most who are entering schools and passing exams are Francophones. In effect, the government takes care of its own people, which is tribalistic, not bilingual."[37]

Prospective Anglophone students who are unfamiliar with French see their choices severely limited, and may have to reapply several times before being admitted. Alternatively, they need to learn French, try to find work, or try to go out of Cameroon. Gérard explained:

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[35] Gérard, unstructured interview: 26.03.2015
[36] Left: students standing in line to register for courses. Right: a crowd just before the start of lectures.
[37] Matthias, focus group interview: 06.04.2015

"Everyone is like '(…) I'm going to go to Buea', no one's like Plan B, what if I don't get to Buea? And then when they get to the Francophone area, it's like you know, you're learning twice. You're in a lecture hall, listening to a lecturer, and when you get back home you have to like, translate, try to translate your notes, you know the technical terms of whatever it is you're studying."[38]

The reasons why the UB has such a high level of education, and why there are seemingly less incidents of bribery and corruption at the UB, are again found in the Anglo-Saxon roots of the university. According to the interviewed students, Anglophones are considered to have higher ethical standards than Francophones; the university is mostly run by Anglophones. Corruption is seen to be something 'typically Francophone'. According to Smith (1996:587), this notion of moral superiority is a of consequence and coping mechanism for perceived injustice.

Once inside the university, differences between the groups do not suddenly disappear. An increasingly large percentage of Francophones is being admitted to the UB: estimates by students and staff range up to 60% each year; no official statistics are published however. There are multiple explanations for this influx of Francophones. One, as mentioned before, is the higher quality of education at the UB. The other is that the Francophone population has realized that English is the the world's leading business and academic language. To prepare for the international community, students choose to attend an English-speaking high schools and universities: the incentive for Francophones to learn English is simply bigger than vice versa[39]. Anglo-Saxon high schools are considered to be more modern than Francophone high schools and prepare students for the international community[40]. At the university level, linguistic boundaries are often still kept in place. During a focus group interview at the university campus, students agreed:

"When they are in a small group, it is typically often because of the language. Because among them, they can communicate. So how do we know there's a barrier? Well just pick

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[38] Gérard, unstructured interview: 26.03.2015
[39] Gideon, unstructured interview: 02.03.2015
[40] Gérard, unstructured interview: 26.03.2015

any group you like. They speak either Pidgin or English or French. Just walk up to a group when there is no class and talk to them, or just stand next to them and determine their language. The French students move together, and the English students move together."[41]

In class, students might be have to work together on projects and are dependent on each other. This does not break down barriers either. Charlotte, an Anglophone student of English literature, criticized Francophone students for this:

"*You realize that even in school where we study and meet the Francophones, he or she studies in English, you have English people around you, but they still communicate among themselves in French. And they always want to stay just within themselves. They don't want to mingle.*"[42]

This sentiment is shared by Paul, a graduate student in the field of natural sciences:

"*They are not trying to learn at all. And they have one slogan that they always use. 'Cameroun est bilingue'. When you want to express yourself in English with them, they will tell you 'Cameroun est bilingue'.*" [43]

Some people find that the increasing Francophone presence at the university is just another example of how the Francophone majority of Cameroon is marginalizing the Anglophone minority. Anglophone students consider the Francophones to have easier access to resources, such as education. Paul again:

"*I always feel that way. That we are like a shadow by their French presence. (…) [And] the admission procedure is biased, so more Francophones are admitted than Anglophones.*"[44]

Dr. Lucy, a senior Anglophone lecturer in social sciences emphasized this sentiment of being subject to the will of the Francophones:

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[41] Walter, focus group interview: 06.04.2015
[42] Charlotte, unstructured interview: 02.04.2015
[43] Paul, unstructured interview: 05.03.2015
[44] Paul, unstructured interview: 05.03.2015

"I have this suspicion that the government might be thinking of converting the Anglophone universities into bilingual universities. (…) Because in as much as they'll tell you they are struggling for decentralization, most of the decisions are still taken by the politicians out there."[45]

According to the Anglophone students, the Cameroonian system of education and its conditions disadvantage the Anglophones. This fuels the Anglophone perception of the Francophone majority as insolent and patronizing and reinforces sentiments of cultural and ethnic differentiation. The perception of being subordinated to the Francophone majority has been a recurring theme in many conversations with Anglophone students. It facilitates an 'us/them' dichotomy in which, rather than one academic community, two separate communities are imagined: the Anglophone Cameroonian students parallel to the Francophone Cameroonian students. This linguistic division involves more than just language: moral and cultural assumptions are determined along the same lines. This confirms Anderson's (2006) argument that language enables the imagining of communities and is a clear-cut example of Bauman's (1991) and Buchold and Hall's (2004:369) theory that, to withstand subordination (Smith 1996:587), linguistic boundaries are used to produce and reinforce ethnic, cultural and moral differences.

Anglophone students who made it into the University of Buea despite the opposing forces are aware of their secondary position, and therefore possess a strong motivation, perseverance and a proven high degree of academic competence. Once inside, students are driven to fight for their rights which has resulted in student unions and activism, which brings us to the second section of this chapter.

The Impact of Bad Governance on Student Politics in a Context of Marginalization

Despite its relative young age, founded in 1992, the UB played a central role amidst a powerful history of student activism, strikes and riots. Most of these were aimed directly at the country's or the university's authoritarian administration. The reason that the

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[45] Dr. Lucy, unstructured interview: 20.03.2015

University of Bamenda does not have such history is likely to be found in its short lifespan; it was founded only in 2011.

Many of the students I have spoken with proclaimed ambitions of changing the country socially, economically or politically. When asked how these changes should be initiated, many agreed that it would be dependent on good leadership.

It is at university that many students start to consciously experience active and passive styles of leadership. Exposure to certain types of leadership and governance influences ideas and concepts of future leadership; social practices and institutional models are often reproduced by those people exposed to them (Bourdieu 1980:53; Ekelund 2000:231). Students are aware of the political realities which shape Cameroon and criticize the nepotism and lack of freedom of speech that characterize the country under the leadership of President Paul Biya. Therefore, it is interesting to see how students organize themselves and how they put their ideas into practice. It is also interesting to note that many of the criticized malpractices have been copied at a small scale in students' university politics, both in-between students themselves as well as between students and the university.

At the University of Buea, there is a wide range of student clubs, associations and organizations. Nowadays, each of these is centered on a given area of expertise or interest, sports, civic society, debating, art, dance, literature, study, etc. Students usually organize in a traditional student fashion, creating a board which exists of a president, vice-president, treasurer, secretary general, etc. This system demonstrates mechanisms of governance in place among peers. It does not guarantee that these mechanisms are working as intended however, and there are reports of students who have put a lot of effort into bending the organizational structures to fit it for their own (financial) benefit, at the expense of their peers. When it comes to more hierarchical organizations, which include unequal actors, things get more complicated, as will be explained next.

The now-banned University of Buea Student Union, or UBSU is an example of the process of corruption of an otherwise beneficent student organization. Between 2005 and 2013, the atmosphere at the University of Buea was characterized by a series of student strikes and riots. When students would have grievances, they would go and complain at the UBSU. UBSU would organize talks with the university board, looking for

solutions. If these solutions were not satisfactory, UBSU would resort to strikes. Because the UBSU was the only way through which students could effectively vent their complaints, the UBSU gained power and influence. This influence was noticed by the university administration, which then started to try and use UBSU for its own means. For example, messages from the central administration were communicated through UBSU to students. Over time, the frequency and intensity of strikes increased, and UBSU became a powerful and influential actor at the university. Every student enrolled at the UB paid a mandatory annual fee which directly went to the UBSU[46]. The students of the UBSU were in a position of extreme power and wealth. This led to an image of them to be greedy politicians, rather than exemplary students. Because of UBSU's power, university staff also tried having their (personal) interests secured through them. This facilitated further corruption, further increased UBSU's power and created a shadowy network of 'dirty' politics. Kifuna, an Anthropology graduate who was studying during UBSU's heyday, explains the incentives for the UBSU-board not to graduate:

"*Most of the UBSU, the guys they saw the association as a means of employment. (…) you cannot be a leader and yet you spend about five years in university, you don't pass a course, you are only there. Just because they pay you.*"[47]

Bando, who was member of another student council during UBSU's presence, further explains:

"*Because of this student union politics, they refused to graduate (…) So imagine 2000 francs times [13.000] people. To be controlled by the president of student union. At times they found themselves with a budget of close to 30 million francs.*"[48]

Alan, a student who is currently in a position of student representation, mentions:

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[46] Bando, unstructured interview: 10.03.2015
[47] Kifuna, unstructured interview: 09.03.2015
[48] Bando, unstructured interview: 04.02.2015; 2000 francs equals ~three euros; 30 million francs equals ~45.000 euros.

"*UBSU had all powers and abused it (…) they had a 12 million budget (…) but there is no positive physical evidence that they existed.*"[49]

This is not to say that the UBSU did not have genuine grievances. Bando sums up:

"*The students had some grievances which were genuine. For example toilets, no running waters in toilets (…) Electrification at certain spots at campus, the bolts were not changed (…) They said some lecture halls mics were not working. Okay some lecturers were selling marks to students, and sleeping with girls, especially to the girls…*"[50]

In 2008, the situation started to escalate when the results of the entrance exams for the newly opened Medical Department in Buea were issued. A list containing the names of 60 successful candidates was published by professor Lambi, the university's then-Vice Chancellor; the highest ranking post before the minister. This list consisted of 55 Anglophones and five Francophones; however shortly after publication, that list was retracted by the central administration in Yaoundé and a new list was presented. Under the pretext of Regional Balance, only three Anglophones were left on the list. Students, rallied by UBSU, got angry and started rioting. Professor Lambi was blamed by the governmental administration for the issuance of the first list and was dismissed from his position. Bando explains:

"*That was a clear sign of marginalization. (…) And then some people now, still among the university administration, went behind it, capitalized on it, and sent communiqué to Yaoundé, that this is what this man [Prof. Lambi] had done. And then these same people went now behind the student body, gave this list to the students, influence them, give them reasons why they should strike, and then it was a total strike. In the process I think five students were killed.*"[51]

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[49] Alan, unstructured interview: 08.04.2015; 12 million francs equals 18.000 euros
[50] Bando, unstructured interview: 04.02.2015
[51] Bando, unstructured interview: 04.02.2015

This illustrates the influence of several actors on the UBSU. The UBSU organized the strikes to make known that they disagreed with the results, but were also motivated to do so by certain people who felt they would gain if Professor Lambi would leave. Paul, who is supportive of UBSU and Professor Lambi and against the central administration, described it as follows:

"*So that is when the strike came to be. Brutal even, because parents, and brothers and sisters who were not even students, saw the impartiality, really if I can say, so the strike was that the list must be maintained. And the government used the slogan that they are doing 'Regional Balance'.*"[52]

Although it was the most violent, it wasn't the last strike, and it was in 2013 that UBSU and all student associations that could serve as political unions were disbanded by the new Vice-Chancellor. Every remaining student union is now restricted to contribute only educationally, and is to not be involved in politics of any kind. Every group using the word 'union' got disbanded or changed its name; there has been no central representation of students since. On faculty and departmental level, small student councils have been facilitated by the university. Alan is an authority in one of these student councils:

"*The UBSU's absence has caused some kind of dictatorship. The administration can do what it likes (…) The university should also regard us, but they don't (…) Since UBSU is gone they feel 'now we're victorious, let's overpower them'.*"[53]

The everyday reproduction of hierarchical authority is exemplified in university life. Teachers are often 30 to 60 minutes late, or do not show up at all. When a student wants his or her grades or schedules, he or she is sent from pillar to post, resembling the bureaucracy encountered at public offices. When students complain to teachers, an often-heard response is that back in their teacher's student days, teachers were also late

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[52] Paul, unstructured interview: 05.03.2015
[53] Alan, unstructured interview: 08.04.2015

and that students have not yet earned the right to complain[54], or the complaint is waved away as nonexistent[55]. When waiting for class Gideon, a student, remarked that he himself was late 30 minutes deliberately, because he was sure the lecturer wouldn't be there yet anyway. It was 30 minutes after Gideon's arrival that the lecturer indeed showed up. Rather than apologizing, the lecturer announced that he was leaving again; gave one single handout of the lecture for all students to copy, and left while suggesting that students should come extra during the holidays to make up for the lost time. Gideon briefly remarked that the Head of Department was much more authoritarian[56].

Just as it is at the national level, checks and balances are in place in documents and in official discourses. In practice however, it is difficult to find these certainties. A professor at the university points out:

"*The mechanisms are there. But the problem is that people are not working the way they're supposed to work. And everybody is at fault.*"[57]

In this same conversation, Charlotte responds by saying that the real problem is found higher up in the hierarchal tree:

"*Those in authority always impose (...) they ask your opinion then they go behind and do what they think is right. They really don't take what you say. Just do what you think is wrong.*"[58]

It is obvious that the ban on the UBSU or any other student union does not comply to guidelines of good governance; nor is it a sustainable way to keep the 'peace' at the UB; the absence of a means to channel criticism or discontent probably only leads to more unrest. It can be expected that if the current state of affairs is continued, more unrest will eventually arise. Dr. Lucy describes her expectations:

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[54] Aaron, informal conversation: 30.03.2015
[55] Charlotte & Joseph, unstructured interview 02.04.2015
[56] Gideon, informal conversation: 08.04.2015
[57] Prof Joseph, unstructured interview: 02.04.2015
[58] Charlotte and Joseph, unstructured interview: 02.04.2015

"What is going to happen is that it's going to be more explosive. Because when people have a way of speaking out, things are handled faster. (…) But when they allow it to accumulate because they don't have a valve, to send it out, what is going to happen is that it's going to accumulate and explode."[59]

Exposed to authoritarian practices on university- as well as national level, there are few opportunities for students to learn about, or copy, processes of good governance. Examples of bad governance are found throughout systems of administration in Cameroon. As demonstrated by the history of UBSU, practices of corruption, self-enrichment and dirty politics already infiltrated and heavily influenced student organizations, despite initial idealism and opposition against those very habits. It demonstrates the reproduction of social realities to which people are exposed: from teachers to students, all seem to copy the dominant ways of governance and social hierarchy, following Bourdieu´s model of social reproduction (Bourdieu 1980:53; Ekelund 2000:231). When extrapolated to Cameroon at large, the continuation of these structures are especially problematic to the Anglophone minority in the country. The marginalization of Anglophone students, as well as the Anglophone Problem at large, is embedded in politics of corruption. It is challenging for a young generation to set about the positive change that they so desire, when it is realistically easier and more commonplace to submit to the existing system. This brings us to the third section of this chapter, where the impact of existing structures on Anglophone students' opportunities is covered.

The Impact of Poorly Executed Government Policies on Opportunities and Marginalization of Anglophone Students

In Cameroon ethnic, tribal and linguistic origins do not just tell your background: they also determine your future. Rather than fading away, cultural boundaries seem to be emphasized when placed together in a classroom, public office, or job market. Issues of inequality, discrimination, and marginalization are often-heard grievances among the

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[59] Dr Lucy, unstructured interview: 20.03.2015

Anglophone population, and the student population is far from an exception in this matter. Earlier in this chapter, I discussed how many Anglophones suddenly realized after high school that they are confined to the Anglophone area of the country. This restriction is - again - not limited to language alone, and is not only imposed in the field of education. This section explores various other occurrences in which Anglophone students perceive disadvantages vis-à-vis the Francophone majority.

"*A cousin of mine who graduated from the University of Buea, he was looking for a job, looking for a job, but he did not get a job. Because there was no money to buy the position where he wanted to.*"[60]

Above citation is said by Veronika, a first year undergraduate at UB. It is exemplary of the conviction that in Cameroon, if you do not know the right person, you will not get where you want. This seems particularly problematic to the Anglophone minority in the country. The main economic centers are based in the Francophone regions of the country and are dominated by Francophone Cameroonians. Due to social and cultural boundaries, as well as physical distance, an Anglophone graduate from Buea is, regardless of skill or merit, quite unlikely to possess the right Francophone contacts to find a job. There are many occurrences of such Anglophone frustration, and usually the only way to get a job then is by paying someone a large sum of money.

Corruption is present among market players as well as state officers. In order to graduate from the UB, each student must have passed mandatory courses in French. While to an outsider, this seems to be an effective way of actualizing bilingualism, many Anglophones perceive this as an assimilating practice through which the Francophone majority shows its dominance once more. Indeed, it is necessary to know French in order to get a decent job, since the main economic centers are based in the Francophone regions and companies require their employees to have a good knowledge of French. Jobs in the government also require French as the main language. Kifuna, who actually got employed by the government, confirmed this:

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[60] Veronika, unstructured interview: 08.04.2015

"If you are in the military, you have to speak only French. You must learn the language. Anglophones they just like, speak only French. Because if you talk in English, or other, then the Francophones will know… So that's one of the instances when marginalization comes in. Because the Francophones dominate the Anglophones."[61]

This citation refers to the need to assimilate to the Francophone majority: if you speak French, then speak French among Francophones: you might not be accepted if you do not. This view is shared by Gérard:

"When I'm in Yaoundé I actually don't even want people to know that I'm Anglophone."[62]

An illustration of French domination in the public sphere is given by Walter, a student in Agriculture:

"I was in a public office not long ago. (...) So the person in the office, she talked to me in French. I responded in English. I was immediately asked to get out. She was just waving with her hand, turning her face away, and said I should go. (…) The next time I walked into that office, the same office, I spoke French. Everything went very well, fast and smooth."[63]

However, just speaking French does not change one's background or name, and the tribalistic and favoristic nature of politics and the market mean that it is still unlikely for an Anglophone to be granted a position, when there is Francophone competition.

Most interviewed students note that their education is in service of the country at large and consider themselves patriotic. This patriotism seems to be largely unconnected to appreciation of the government. Cameroon is seen as a country full of opportunities, resources and possibilities, whereas the government is described as corrupt, bureaucratic, oppressing and tribalistic and by being so, actively denies future generations the chance to develop themselves. Students have ideas to set about positive

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[61] Kifuna, semi-structured interview: 09.03.2015
[62] Gérard, unstructured interview: 26.03.2015
[63] Walter, focus group interview: 06.04.2015

change but when asked how realistic these ideas would be given the current circumstances, the responses are outright negative. The implementation of new ideas would require structural and systematic changes into educational systems and society to, for example, create more societal and institutional equality. This equality would not be in favor of the governmental elite who would lose power, and therefore those changes are highly unlikely to be realized. Gérard explains this issue:

"Change coming within Cameroon? That's gonna be very difficult. (…) Because the elites are not gonna forego the lifestyle they live for equality. They're not gonna accept that. And you know, the underprivileged would not want to remain where they are. So if pure democracy was to ever come through, then it would be through heavy bloodshed."[64]

Because of high levels of corruption, it is considered impossible to realize big ideas in Cameroon: this will only attract unwanted attention by the state, resulting in corrupted charges or taxes. These circumstances change the way students approach the goal of building up the country. Instead of choosing conventional political ways, students often choose to consciously use their educational expertise in a grassroots way to contribute to the development of the country. Hugo, an ambitious undergraduate student of Agriculture is a good example:

"At the university we do have a radio programme, (…) which is organised by the university students and the faculty of Agriculture (…) the main objective is to educate farmers in the programme. And then they learn things and then people can know more about opportunities in agriculture."[65]

Paul shares the same idea:

"One thing that I'm hoping to do in the nearest future too is to open up an NGO that can really meet people in that direction, especially based on [specific field of study]. (…)

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[64] Gérard, unstructured interview: 26.03.2015
[65] Hugo, unstructured interview: 02.03.2015

Basically, you know you have your dreams, small ideas keep piping in, and slowly you start building them (…) That is what I'm hoping for, bringing life to the people of Cameroon."[66]

Aaron also seeks to contribute to Cameroon's future through his own expertise:

"As an education psychologist, I can be able to build a platform for a child. (…) What does the child want? What is the child actually good at? (…) If you can build a foundation for a child, you are ready to help up a full-blown citizen."[67]

Many students are pursuing an education or career abroad, often in Europe or the US. Reasons given are that in these Westerns societies, chances and opportunities are distributed on the basis of merit and achievement, rather than on tribal backgrounds or deep pockets. Charlotte explains:

"One things about Cameroon that is very interesting is that, no matter how intelligent you are, you never become what you want to be. Your intelligence does not even determine what you can do."[68]

This is an explicit reference to the corruption within the government. The reason to go abroad should explicitly not be sought in a lack of appreciation of the country itself though: most students say that when they are abroad, they can learn skills, develop themselves or make enough money to create a small capital. This would then all be transferred back to Cameroon and be put to use to further help Cameroon develop. If Cameroon would provide the opportunities, most students wouldn't leave. Alex, another student of Agriculture told me:

"To be honest, if after I have finished my studies the conditions are promising, I will stay. But if they are not, I have no choice but to leave. So that is not because I really want to

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[66] Paul, unstructured interview: 05.03.2015
[67] Aaron, semi-structured interview: 10.04.2015
[68] Charlotte, unstructured interview: 02.04.2015

leave, but simply because there is no other option. I have schooled for 23 years by then, I want to earn more than 100.000 [monthly]. I have no choice."[69]

The closed nature of politics impedes students to dream and plan big for Cameroon, something which is often cited as an important attribution to the country's lack of development. The Anglophone students face institutional, structural and societal obstacles when they try to realize their goals. Their ambitions and aspirations are modified and scaled down because Cameroon's society and political realities significantly disadvantage and delimit the Anglophone population and its opportunities. Anglophone students attempt to bypass Anglophone marginalization and Francophone domination by creating grassroots organizations and other small-scale initiatives. These initiatives are established with the goal to bring change; this change is embedded in an idea of what would be good for the country in the long term. Therefore, we now conclude with a short recapitulation using the students' ideas on the future of Cameroon and their role in it.

Concluding: Frustrations on Bilingualism and a Look at the Future

Second-tier citizens or not, Anglophone students love Cameroon, feel patriotic, and would rather see equality throughout the country, where they can be 'Cameroonians', rather than the 'Anglophone Cameroonian' minority. Anglophones are aware of their role in the country and feel that if anything, the Francophones should be appreciative of them: the issue of the extraction and unequal redistribution of natural resources is an often-heard example. Anglophone students don't think that this power distribution can be changed overnight. They say that opportunities are being withheld from them deliberately, to favour those who are already in power. Walter is convinced that there is no possibility to quickly change power distributions:

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[69] Alex, focus group interview: 06.04.2015; 100.000 francs equals 150 euros

"Nothing will happen, there is nothing you can do about it. Those people are powerful, they can kill you, nothing will happen. It's politics in Cameroon. There is virtually no reason not to accept it, because there is no other option. The one thing that is important is hope."[70]

Among the students, there is a wide consensus that the future of Cameroon lies within their own hands. They create no illusions concerning their own limited capacity, but agree that even the smallest positive change is worth the effort. Students use their education to achieve their goals for Cameroon as a whole but are often hindered by malpractices of bad governance. As pointed out, these practices are often copied and implemented among themselves, following Bourdieu's model of social reproduction (Bourdieu 1980:53; Ekelund 2000:231). The efforts are being made nonetheless, and within the limited frame of opportunities that they have at their disposal, the Anglophone students do their best to get maximum results. These efforts are motivated by the view that regardless of internal differences, Cameroon is one nation which can be united and where everybody should have equal opportunities. This sentiment goes beyond Gellner's (1997:2) notion of the nation as merely a functional organizational relation, but brings us back to Hobsbawm's (1990:143) definition of the nation: a political communion that exists because people believe it to be a community. It confirms Smith's (1996) argument that a nation is built upon a national identity, which is not always salient but exists nonetheless.

Despite harsh political realities, Anglophone students believe that their contribution to the creation of more equality and awareness can impact many people in the long run. It is a long and slow process however, that starts bottom-up, from the individual level. 'Being Anglophone' is basically one problem within a framework of favoritism and inequality. Solving the Anglophone Problem is therefore merely a step towards a much greater goal: to achieve true bilingualism and equal representation, and to diminish tensions between Anglophones and Francophones. Few students believe that the Cameroonian government is wholeheartedly promoting developments towards those goals: if so, those goals could be achieved by now. Therefore, students acknowledge that they have to start themselves. Discrimination and marginalization feed the notion of Anglophone identity however, which in turn reinforces ethnic and

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[70] Walter, focus group interview: 06.04.2015

cultural boundaries. This also demonstrates that for many Anglophone students, Anglophone identity is a construct which is directly related to the interaction with Francophone Cameroonians (Barth 1969; Bauman 1991; Bucholtz and Hall 2004:369; Eriksen 2010; Yelvington 1991:168). It is a functional tool to withstand otherwise assimilative power of a strong majority and the expectation is that in the future, roles will be reversed (Smith 1996:587) and that Anglophones, and with them all other Cameroonians, will be able to achieve their goals in unity and equality. Alex and Walter articulate their expectations and hopes for the future of Cameroon:

"We should teach them [Francophones] the way. We learn their language, lose our pride, and instead love them. (…) We must receive them well and change them. Nothing is impossible. One day, we as Anglophones will be in power. And when we are in power we can make good changes and solve the disparity. Nothing is impossible."[71]

"True bilingualism unites. Just imagine what would happen then. Then Cameroon would be a wonderful place."[72]

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[71] Alex, focus group interview: 06.04.2015
[72] Walter, focus group interview: 06.04.2015

Discussion and Conclusion

Before we start discussing our final conclusion, we need to make a critical note. It is important to realize that our research took place only in the Anglophone part of Cameroon, more specifically the town of Buea. This research is designed to fit within the framework of the Anglophone perspective on bilingualism in Cameroon, which means that it inherently misses another important perspective, that of the Francophone population; more specifically the perspective of Francophone students who study in the Francophone region of Cameroon. These students live in an entirely different paradigm than the Anglophone students in Buea, and therefore their experience of bilingualism is completely different. This perspective is lacking in our research; it would however be very interesting to compare the views of these Francophone students with the perceptions of the Anglophone students.

In the past two chapters we examined the government's implementation of bilingualism, its local Anglophone interpretation in Buea, Cameroon and the Anglophone students' perception on these issues. Due to its unique history, Cameroon as a post-colonial bilingual nation-state is highly interesting when it comes to the theoretical discussion on nationalism, social organization of society and group dynamics. The duality of its colonial past makes Cameroon a unique case among other post-colonial nation-states. Most Western-European nations are found on a shared ethnicity, language and culture; the post-colonial nation is often designed by an external power. Contemporary Cameroon has been drawn by both Great Britain and France. This is the cause of the bilingual and bicultural nature of the country, and therefore of the division between the Anglophone and the Francophone citizens. Therefore, Cameroon provides a proper case for research focusing on post-colonialism, language and the construction of social boundaries, as well as the implications this has on the unity of the nation. Anglophone students in particular are an interesting case, because this young generation will eventually influence the course of the country's future.

Language is a strong identity marker and is used to demarcate between different social groups. The student population can be considered to be mirroring processes which happen at the macro-political level in Cameroon. The complications which came along with the conception of nation-building, such as tribalism, favouritism and for this

research particularly; the bilingual nature of the country are also found among students. At the UB, students used to unionize which manifested and implemented ideas of governance. These practices were influenced by previous experiences of favoritism and corruption. Now that the UBSU is banned, there is even fewer space to channel grievances, which is likely to make way for unrest again, still not paving the way for instances of good governance, even though students generally agree that good governance is needed to realize the much-aspired goal of development in Cameroon. The inability to bring forth this change is explained through theories of reproduction of social structures (Bourdieu 1980:53; Ekelund 2000:231) and the highly centralized governmental power structures that so often characterize post-colonial countries in the process of nation-building.

In our theoretical framework we showed that contemporary states can only be legitimate if they contain a nation, and therefore states use their power to build one if they lack unity (Smith 1986). This is often the situation in post-colonial states. In the case of Cameroon, the government tried to use its power to control an immensely diverse nation in order to earn this legitimacy. Officially, according to the constitution, bilingualism is one of the uniting components. In reality, the bilingual nature is dividing the nation. The government is able nor willing to acknowledge the division caused by this bilingual nature and as we demonstrated, this becomes evident in areas such as education, government institutions and national symbols. This linguistic division is also visible among students at the University of Buea: generally speaking, the Anglophone student population does not mingle with the Francophone student population, even though they share classes, projects and ideals. The government says that it wishes to unite the citizens of Cameroon with bilingualism as a shared identity marker but in reality it is dividing the nation because of it. The Cameroonian national identity often seems to be a Francophone identity.

Cameroon as a post-colonial nation had no potential to be built upon a shared ethnic background due to the immensely diverse population. As demonstrated in our theoretical framework, a shared ethnicity is not a necessary foundation for a nation (Eriksen 2010) and post-colonial nations often know significant internal cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity. In Cameroon, and specifically at the University of Buea, this is also the case. The post-colonial nation-state of Cameroon was not built upon a

single ethnicity, but rather used the notion of civic nationalism to create a national identity out of a mosaic of ethnicities and two official languages: this is described by Wimmer as a strategy to "overcome 'tribal' or 'ethnic' particularisms" by "creating a community of citizens" (2004:5). Connor (1972) argued that the creation of such a state would only result in the destruction of nations, rather than that it would unite people. However, Cameroonians feel connected to their country. Many students want to use their educational background for the benefit of the country; they see the problems and divisions, but consider it worthwhile to work for a united Cameroon. This brings us to the broader theoretical discussion on nations and nationalism.

Benedict Anderson (2006) argues that a shared language is a necessary prerequisite for the imagining of a community which is the base for a nation. Ernest Gellner (1983:1) argues that nationalism is "a political principle which holds that the boundaries of the nation and the state are congruent". We found that the bilingual nature of the Cameroonian nation indeed poses a challenge to its unity. The Cameroonian nation is congruent with the boundaries of the state. The nation however is divided alongside linguistic lines: Anglophone Cameroonians live alongside Francophone Cameroonians and interaction between both is limited. Smith understands nationalism as "an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity for a human population deemed by some of its members to constitute an actual or potential nation". In Cameroon, the national identity is dominated by a Francophone elite. Although the Anglophone population identifies itself as Cameroonian, the linguistic barrier created a division between the two. Therefore, the nation of Cameroon is not united. The fragmentation of history, language and culture within the state resulted in a form of bilingualism which impedes the possibility of imagining a community and therefore the nation.

Now it is time to start answering our main question: *How do Anglophone students in Buea, Cameroon perceive bilingualism in a predominantly Francophone post-colonial nation-state?* To do this, we recapitulate the two empirical chapters. We learned from these past chapters that bilingualism in Cameroon is more of a theoretical concept, perhaps an ideal; it is however not implemented in reality and the government is not willing to make a sincere or substantial effort to move the country's institutions and its citizens towards full bilingualism. This has been the case since the early days of

reunification. The Anglophone population has been the minority ever since, and the government has always been predominantly Francophone.

In the first empirical chapter we showed in which government institutions, as well as areas of everyday life, the Francophone dominance becomes evident. In spheres such as education, government institutions and national symbols the government is not treating English and French equally, and is not always guaranteeing bilingualism. At times it seems as if the predominantly Francophone government is actively impeding a successful implementation of bilingualism. Mansour (1993) argues that the elite of a country can exclude other language groups to remain in power. Also, the government can use the power of the state to build a national identity (Deutsch 1966; Smith 1986, 1996). This is happening in Cameroon. The government, by mainly using French, is excluding Anglophones from participating. We learned that this practice results in a feeling of hardship among the Anglophone population of Buea. The long history of underrepresentation and marginalization since the independence and 'reunification' of the country has made the Anglophone citizens feel like they are second-class citizens. This feeling of frustration and marginalization is rooted deep into their identity and 'being Anglophone' is an important part of it. Having a shared language enables the imaging of the nation (Anderson 2006); with the current form of bilingualism in Cameroon, language is dividing the nation.

In the second empirical chapter we learned how the governmental policy of bilingualism sharply divides the University of Buea's student population alongside linguistic lines. The limited interaction between the Anglophone and the Francophone students lays the groundwork for negative stereotyping. Francophones are judged for their lack of moral values: whether it's the lack of interest to their neighbours or the ubiquitous corruption in the country, most Anglophones consider them to be negative traits that have originated primarily from 'the Francophones'. Negative stereotyping and the projection of moral superiority is mentioned by Smith as a consequence and coping mechanism of perceived injustice (Smith 1996:587). Contrasting, Anglophones note that if the they themselves would be leading the country, people would have more equal opportunities and the country would be functioning better. An often-heard example of this is found at the Anglophone University of Buea, which is generally considered, also by Francophones, to be the best university in the country. The division alongside these

linguistic lines has come to contain various cultural and moral aspects too, and is an example of the social constructivist idea of approaching ethnicity: a socially fluid concept, the meaning of which changes constantly through processes of social interaction (Eriksen 2010; Yelvington 1991:168).

We found that Anglophone students in Buea perceive bilingualism as a concept that promised to provide the means for a united Cameroon, but is rather functioning as a tool to sustain social inequality and subordination of the English language and culture; the predominantly Francophone government is using bilingualism to remain in power. The bilingual situation in Cameroon and the marginalization of Anglophones clearly is the result of its colonial history combined with tribalism. The state of Cameroon contains a nation in which the Anglophone minority lives alongside the Francophone majority.

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[Attachments]

Attachment I   Newspaper Articles

The Post newspaper No. 01611: Monday March 16, 2015

LAWYERS DARE BIYA!
Ask Him To Check Audacity Of Francophone Magistrates

(Cont'd from P1)

The ultimatum was arrived at on Friday, March 13, 2015, following an emergency meeting grouping executive members of lawyers associations in the Southwest Region that held in Kumba.

According to Barristers Stanislaus Ajong, President of the Fako Lawyers Association, FAKLA, the advocates were meeting, following repeated complaints from their colleagues in the Northwest Region about the attitude of Francophone Magistrates delivering court judgements in the French language while at the same time compelling lawyers to do their submissions in french.

Ajong said that, the lawyers of the Southwest are adding their voice to those of the Northwest in demanding for immediate action to be taken to preempt further tension. He said the lawyers are demanding for the Magistrates of french expression which are civil law trained to express themselves in English.

The FAKLA President said that, the practices of the french speaking Magistrates go against the Criminal Procedure Code, CPC. He pressed for an end to payment for bail and prosecution.

Emerging from the crisis meeting, Barrister Blaise Sedvidzem told reporters that the situation at hand was an impeachment on the English common law jurisdiction. Sedvidzem said the over 600 lawyers in the Southwest Region took cognisance of the happenings in the Northwest and discovered that if allowed to continue, the "canker worm" may eclipse the common law practice, the bi-jural heritage of Cameroon and violate many international conventions to which Cameroon is a signatory.

"Canker worm" already in Southwest

Taking the queue, the President of the Meme Lawyers Association, MELA, Barrister Philip Awutah Atubah said that, the attempt by Government to eradicate the common law practice is already visible at the Southwest Court of Appeal in Buea. Traces of the same complaints Awutah said, have also been reported at the Limbe Magistrate's Court and in Tombel.

Awutah said french Speaking Magistrates are forcing advocates to rob before the legal department and the court of first instance, which is against the law.

Citing Judgment No oo5/2014/SWAC/DTF/001/2013 of 17 November 2014 in the case of Leke Theodore versus the state of Cameroon, in which the ruling was done in french, the MELA President said it deviates the understanding of even the litigants.

Awutah explained that very few issues about laws in Cameroon have been harmonized, reason why Magistrates of french expression and civil law background should not be appointed to Regions practising common law. He described the situation as gross injustice and violation of human rights at a time when the world over, the common law system is triumphing.

Quizzed on the strength of the resolutions, the advocates said that, they are functioning as officials duly elected by their colleagues to represent their interest when need arises.

They maintained that, the English common law system is one and indivisible and whatever threatens the system, threatens the stability and interest of litigants and common law advocates in general.

The memorandum from the advocates is expected to be forwarded to the Head of State by the Minister of Justice and Keeper of the Seals Laurent Esso. Copies have been sent to international bodies and diplomatic missions.

OPEN LETTER TO NORTHWEST ATTORNEY GENERAL:

Harmonisation Is Not Francophonisation

I have followed with keen interest the twists and turns of your interaction with the Northwest Judiciary since a Presidential decree appointed you there as Attorney General. The Post newspaper No. 01609 of Monday, March 9, 2015, carries a cover-page story titled; "Attorney General Snubs Lawyers' Protests", in which I gathered the following observations:

1) The Attorney General of the Northwest Court of Appeal, Justice Oyono Mbah, has said magistrates are free to make submissions in French or English because President Biya in appointing them never cared whether they were of English or French backgrounds.

2) Justice Oyono made nonsense of the resistance mounted by Anglophone lawyers against the liberty allowed French judges to present submissions in French in a purely Common Law set-up.

3) During the same (Higher Judicial Council) meeting I was appointed Attorney General of the Northwest Court of Appeal with other French-speaking magistrates. (…) I have taken note that these Presidential decrees do not make any distinction between French-speaking and English-speaking magistrates. In other words, there is no Francophone or Anglophone magistrate. We have magistrates who can serve all over the country whether they are bilingual or not, as stated in the Constitution of Cameroon.

These are all very strong positions that speak to the heart of Cameroon's identity. That is why I have thought it necessary that we reflect on them, if you don't mind. Cameroon has a cultural map. This is a fact that no honest citizen can doubt. That map reveals to us that the country is made up of two distinctive postcolonial cultures: a francophone culture which you issue from, and an Anglophone culture which you are called upon to serve in your capacity as Attorney General of the Northwest Court of Appeal. In claiming that language background does not inform the President's appointment of

magistrates, you are settling a rather serious charge on him as embodiment of the State.

The President does care about the language background of his functionaries. What he knows, for sure, is that those functionaries are bilingual and can, therefore, serve anywhere in the country. You were, therefore, not sent to Bamenda as a francophone but rather as a bilingual Cameroonian. In that capacity, the duty is yours to respect the cultural specificities of your place of work. That same Presidential decree that appointed you to Bamenda also appointed Anglophone magistrates to the francophone part of the country. Those magistrates know that they are in the francophone part of the country where the language of communication and administration is French. These are simple civic principles they do not need to be reminded of.

This brings me to say a thing or two about the whole business of bilingualism in Cameroon. Contrary to held views, Cameroon is not a bilingual country. Rather, it is a bi-cultural country. Language does not have autonomy of existence. It is part of a culture. You cannot think of the English language in isolation from Anglophone culture and the French language away from Francophone culture.

The Cameroonian nation is, therefore, bi-cultural. On the other hand, the Cameroonian State, whose duty it is to serve this bi-cultural nation is duty-bound to be bilingual. A civil servant posted to a given part of the country will not and should not expect that those people be the ones to make the effort to communicate with him.

Let us take the case of an Anglophone police constable posted to Nguelmedouga. Is he going to expect the farmer in that distant village to speak to him in English because Cameroon is bilingual? Of what essence is that bilingualism to the farmer? He is in his village where he has always lived. The civil servant who has come to meet him in his element is supposed to have been handed the proper communication

tools by the State to make intercourse with his new environment possible.

The Head of State knows that his civil servants are bilingual and will, therefore, not take delight in hurting the feelings of their countrymen through improper reading of our language codes. And so, Mr. Attorney General, your claim that magistrates are free to work in French or in English anywhere in Cameroon is untenable. They are not free to work in French in Bamenda; they are not free to work in English in Bertoua or Mouloundou.

You express surprise at the fact that Anglophone lawyers still refer to Common Law even after the two judicial systems have been harmonised. I am ready to go some way with you on this. If our native genius can produce something authentic, then, by all means, let us be proud of that product. Our new code should, therefore, supersede all other codes. However, I disagree with you, rather sharply, when you leave the impression that the harmonisation has put an end to the bi-cultural nature of the country, so that, in Cameroon today, there are no Francophone magistrates and no Anglophone magistrates. You cannot sweep a people's identity overboard that simply. I do not see how else you can identify Cameroonians if not as Anglophones or Francophones.

Finally, by seeking to impose French as a working language in an Anglophone jurisdiction, you are trying to force down unready throats the impression that harmonisation is synonymous with francophonisation. Of course, the temptation to take that road is strong, especially since nothing on the other side seems able to deter you. But it is my considered opinion that the times militate against any such move, not least because our history is still too fresh and still too charged with bitterness.

Prof. George D. Nyamndi, Vice-Dean
Faculty of Arts, University of Buea

THE Sun
EDITORIAL
Bilingualism at 50

There is an aphorism which states that a fool at forty is a fool forever. This is how far the scientific study of the development of the mentality of the human being can be determined in his interaction with the rest of society.

This is how far the mentality or mindset of Cameroonians in embracing bilingualism seems to conform with the aphorism that a fool at forty is certainly a fool forever.

This our blessed country, has lived through the bilingualism experience for more than half a century, time enough for the human mind to assess the value of whatever nature or circumstances have deposited at the doorsteps of our lives as a people!

In our situation, bilingualism came to us under a circumstance we could hardly avoid, the way it came at the time it came. At independence 54 years ago, it sounded like a silent revolution that was bound to change the new nation into a bright star on the dark skies of the African continent. The one and only bilingual country in Africa, and one among very few in the world!

If today cynics see our bilingualism experience as a failed project, it is because it is still being treated in official circle as an ordinary event to be commemorated every year, or like an issue which people have to be reminded about.

Bilingualism at fifty ought by now, to have become the culture of Cameroonians of which no Cameroonian should feel embarrassed, when either of the two languages, English or French is spoken to him or her and one is unable to understand.

We have just marked another edition of the bilingualism week in Cameroon. The Minister of Secondary Education Bapes Bapes was on the field launching the week. We wonder what expression he must have gathered as he performed his official duties on this matter.

The truth is that bilingualism has failed to make its intended impact to be felt. As it continues to seem obvious to everyone who cares, bilingualism in Cameroon, is leaning more on the Anglophones. Francophones remain snobbish whenever English is spoken to them. Not only this. Most sign posts on public highways are in French.

The constitution itself has not helped the situation either, especially when it states clearly that French has to take precedence over English when both come in conflict. The French version is usually considered authentic. This however only leaves the French speaking Cameroonians with a strange pride. Most official documents are usually in French and when you express yourself in English to a Francophone, you see the bewilderment in his face.

Out of the country, Cameroon is seen more as a Francophone country. At the last commonwealth parliamentary summit in Yaounde, the President of the country who is expected to be an embodiment of the culture of bilingualism addressed the summit in French.

At this point, we are at a loss to find where the fault lies, except that we are pushed even harder by the turn of events to believe that bilingualism in Cameroon is a deliberate ploy to impose the French language on English.

Otherwise we would expect, not only the Ministry of Secondary Education, but a concertation of all the Ministries involved in education, as well as the Ministry of Public Service and that of Culture to come up with a blue-print on our bilingualism.

Bilingualism should be made more practical and consumed as a culture that must be embraced by all Cameroonians, including the holder of the president of the country.

OPINION/NEWS

ROUGHSHOD

By Bouddih Adams

Regional Balance Or Regime Imbalance

Regional balance as used recently in the entrance exam into the International Relations Institute of Cameroon, IRIC, is a subterfuge for influence peddling, nepotism or outright corruption.

The word 'balance' is a very tricky one as it can be used or interpreted by anyone to suit his or her position, station, or situation. Just like the devil can use the Good Book to serve his whims and caprices.

In Camerounese, balance is used by taxi drivers as the amount they handover to the owners of their cab; by the Ministry of Commerce and Trade as tool for measurement of goods; it is also used to mean change or difference when the buyer has offered an amount higher than the price of a good and service; it is used by economists and countries to indicate international trade differences like in 'balance of trade'; it is used in good governance as in "checks and balances" and so on and so forth.

It is even used by our Creator in the axiom; "When God closes the door, He opens the window." I stand corrected if I am wrong to state that He, the Almighty, also uses it to check or make for deficiencies. For example, you can shout the name of a deaf person within arm-length to the point of breaking your voice, he/she will not hear, but stamp your feet on the ground, s/he will turn and give you the required attention. In this instance, wouldn't you agree with me that God has taken from him one of the five senses, sound, and given or amplified his or her sense of touch or feeling? Before I quit this philosophising; I hope you will agree with me that 'balance' in all domains and dimensions, is used towards equity or equality.

Allow me to paraphrase Winston Churchill, British wartime Premier [2nd World War] by saying, "Never have so few owed so much to so many." The Biya team or regime, put together, plus those on the substitute bench, are not up to two percent of the rest of Cameroonians. They, put together with the chosen tribe, are not a tenth of the populace.

But, after they have taken all the top jobs, orchestrated underdevelopment and impoverishment by emptying the peoples treasury, and lorded it over them for a period of 12 regime-changes under other climes, what balance do they want again from the people?

If the people of the deprived Regions get the divine 'balance' of being intelligent and are excelling in academics, can't you let them be? When they pass entrance exams, let them be trained, so that when you fail them in appointments, they can fend for themselves elsewhere.

In other words, since you have taken all, the only thing they are left with is their intelligence. You can give all the positions and money siphoned to your family and friends. Rather balance the equation by letting them the places they have earned by passing exams. Otherwise, why organise exams and take those who have failed or have not sat for the exams. You could jolly well appoint your friends and family into the school without organising the exams. Or are the exams used to scam Cameroonians through the registration fees they pay to write them?

The people from these other regions know that they cannot be appointed or placed in jobs, or called up into the national team, at their individual levels, so, they put their best in everything they do. That is why they excel in things like mountaineering or other individual sports, trades and craft, the arts or academics. They do excel, because, in these fields, there is no stopping them. Yet, when they come first in any of these, somebody wants to replace them with mediocre family members and friends because he is in Government. This has been going on and on.

Around 2001-2003, Prof Gervais Mendo Ze reportedly presented a list of seven people who never wrote the exam into the National Advanced School of Posts and Telecommunications, Yaounde, 40 days into the school year. When the then Director, Nji Tumasang, refused to admit them, Mendo Ze used the Minister of Posts and Telecommunications, Kwe Kongo, who intimidated Tumasang and he obliged.

In 2007, out of the 6,000 people recruited into the police training school in Mutengene, 4,000 came from the South alone. The remaining 2,000 places were first distributed to the grand North, followed by the other Regions with influential people in Government. Of course, the last were the Northwest and the Southwest, who had a sprinkle of less than 50 each. If, actually, there was regional balance, simple logic and arithmetic would have required that, since there are 10 regions, every region should have 600 places out of the 6,000.

I remember vividly the scandal of the entrance exam into the University of Buea Medical School in 2006, when the list of successful candidates was published by Prof. Lambi. Prof Fame Ndongo was very angry because Prof. Lambi did not wait for him to inject the names of relatives of members of Government Ministers and Directors. He came up with another list that included many people who did not even sit

the exams. Prof Lambi said no. Following the pressure from Fame Ndongo for his list to be respected; the student deemed that it was going to dilute the prestige of the place to be and went on the rampage. The then Governor, Ejake-Mbonda, ordered the police to fire at the unarmed students and this led to the death of three people, including 2 postgraduate students.

The same Fame Ndongo, was exposed this time around by the entrance exam into IRIC. So, the issue of 'Regional Balance' is a subterfuge for nepotism, influence peddling and corruption. In the so called Regional Balance, those who sat for exams and passed are failed and their names replaced with the names of relatives, friends and those the authorities had taken money from.

Examples of people who never sat for ENAM entrance, but are civil servants today abound. Besides those who have godfathers, I hear, others pay FCFA 1.5 million for ENS; FCFA 2 million for IRIC; FCFA 3 million for ENAM and so on.

Soon, Regional Balance will be used in the GCE, the Baccalaureate and even in sports like the Mountain Race. It would soon apply in music, movies, business and other personal endeavours.

Those who have the head or aptitude for something should be allowed to do it and those who do not should find it elsewhere. For instance, at every given time, the National Team is dominated by the Bassas, who has complained, about that?

Why is Regional Balance not applied where it should rather be applied? For example, why is regional balance not also applied in the appointment of Ministers, Directors and other Government functionaries? Of course, you are not getting it from me that almost half of the Government is from the 'chosen tribe'.

However, when payback time comes, whether it was regional balance or balancing the regions in appointments, we will know. Find out which Regions have the highest number of appointees in Kondengui, and you will know that during payback time, the Region that had the lion's share in appointments, will have the lion's share in disappointments; that is, in Kondengui as it is today.

Candidates for the recruitment into the police force have sat for the exams. Check out the number of candidates that will be recruited from the chosen tribe and you will know the place where the balancing act should rather go to.

Are We Together?

POLICE RECRUITMENT EXAM:
Anglophone Candidates Deliberately Disadvantaged?

By Bouddih Adams

Some people might not have believed us *(The Post)* when we wrote that official documents, including questions for exams into the public service are conceived, drafted and published in French; the Francophone officials who produce them do not give them to Anglophones to translate, but do the translations themselves. Anglophone translators are, thus, ignored.

We even warned that Anglophone candidates, for the ongoing exams for recruitment into the police force, will be disadvantaged because the questions would be set in French and poorly translated into English. That is what has obtained, as, barely days after our publications (see The Post No. ---- and ----), we have been vindicated.

Question 1 (a) on the questionnaire for the recruitment of 760 student police inspectors reads (in French): Qui élit le Président de la République? Translated as: "Who does elect the President of the Republic?" It would have read; who elects the President of the Republic.

Or, the President of the Republic is elected by who? The import of misunderstanding in this question might be mild because any smart Anglophone who has a nodding knowledge of French candidate might perceive the sense therein.

But read Question 8 (a) and (b) that goes thus: Qui chaque député représente-t-il? Translation : "Who shall represent each member of the National Assembly ? Qui chaque senateur represente-t-il? Translation: "Who shall represent each Senator?" Is it the people that represent the members of the National Assembly or Senators, as the questions imply? Or is it the members of the National Assembly or Senators that represent the people or a constituency? Question 8(a) is supposed to read: Who or what area does a member of the National Assembly represent and 8(b): Who or what area does a Senator represent?

From the above examples, the Anglophone candidate who hasn't any reading knowledge or understanding of the French language has failed - a priori.

Because of such experiences, most Anglophone children struggle to learn French. And, behold, many of them do pass such exams. And after learning "in French tears" as it were, they usually pass such exams. That is when regional balance sets in, to fail them.

Which means that after making it difficult for Anglophone youths to write such exams, but they do and are successful, the Francophone authorities bring in regional balance and replace their names with names of family members and children of friends who failed or did not write the exam at all. That is what has been happening with entrance exams into schools or into the public service.

Thus, Anglophones or Southern Cameroonians who posit that Cameroon is a French Bilingual country are being vindicated by the authorities that argue against that position. This college of thought holds that, Cameroon is, de jure bilingual in French and English, but de facto, bilingual in French. Put otherwise, the two languages that make Cameroon to be called bilingual are French and French. And the Francophone authorities seem not to care.