

Original Article

# Advertising Posters in Cameroon Englishes: Perspectives from Construction Grammar and the Dynamic Model

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**Abstract** - This study set out to explore Cameroon Englishes on advertising posters (AP) in the country from the perspectives of Construction Grammar (see, for example, Hoffmann and Trousdale 2013, Hoffmann 2015, and Hoffmann 2017) and the Dynamic Model (see Schneider 2003, 2007, 2009, and 2011). The investigation, therefore, reveals that Cameroon Englishes, such as Cameroon English, Cameroon Francophone English, and Cameroon Pidgin English, are characterized by contextual entrenched linguistic constructions on AP in Cameroon. The Englishes occupy a unique evolutionary trajectory, and they have different places, functions, and cultural and identity implications exposed by advertisements in the country.

**Keywords** - Advertising posters, Cameroon englishes, Construction grammar, Dynamic model.

## 1. Introduction

There are, so far, a limited number of studies that have been carried out in the area of Linguistic Landscape (LL) in Cameroon in particular and in Africa at large, although the “society is flooded with all sorts and types of signage” (Forceville, 1999). Previous studies such as Ayafor (2004), Atechi (2006, 2008), Mbufong (2014), Kouega (2007, 2012), Ngefac (2008, 2011, 2022), Safotso (2012), Belibi (2013), Abondja (2014), Seino (2016), Ngefac and Fonteng (2016), Nkamta and Ngwenya (2017), and Abondja (2017) have diligently studied some sociolinguistic aspects of this heavily multilingual postcolonial nation. However, just a few of these studies have addressed advertisements (for example, Abondja 2014, Nkamta and Ngwenya 2017, Seino 2016, Ngefac and Fonteng, (2016), Abondja 2017). Though these studies have been conducted from the linguistic perspective, none of them has investigated Cameroon Englishes in the context of advertisements by combining two up-to-date approaches to World Englishes, namely Construction Grammar (Hoffmann and Trousdale 2013, Hoffmann 215, and Hoffmann 2017) and the Dynamic Model (Schneider 2003, 2007, 2009, and 2011). In fact, what previous investigations present is just the tip of the iceberg of the different types of sociolinguistic and linguistic information that characterize a complex multilingual postcolonial context like Cameroon.

As far as a few studies that have been carried out on new emerging Englishes in Cameroon are concerned, Ayafor (2004), Atechi (2006, 2008), Mbufong 2014), Kouega (2007), Ngefac (2008, 2011, and 2022), Safotso (2012), Mbufong (2014), and Belibi (2013) support the standardization of the Cameroon New Englishes. However, Essossomo (2015) stands against the standardization of the Englishes, especially CamE, justifying that it lacks codification and can obstruct international opportunities for its users. Despite Essossomo’s (2015) negative attitude



toward CamE, Ayafor (2004, p 928) and Ngefac & Todd (2019) describe another English used in Cameroon, Kamtok, as a fully-fledged language, as Ayafor (2004, p 928) even goes as far as suggesting that it should be used at the primary level for instruction in the country.

Similarly, Mair (2022) notes that local English-lexifier pidgins directly compete with English, especially in Nigeria and Cameroon, where the pidgins serve as additional informal lingua francas throughout the countries. For instance, buyam-sellam (informal market trader) is a common loanword in local French and English. Pidgin English has even moved to Europe and the rest of the world, as Nigerians and Cameroonians use it in Germany for communication, though with minimal differences. Some Africans living in Germany even teach the pidgin to their children for identity purposes (Mair 2022). He also observes that Pidgin English indexes several realities about the societies where they come from and about the world. These realities include identity, business, living together, etc.

According to Sala (2003), Mbangwana (2004), Ayafor (2004), Kouega (2019), new Englishes, involving Pidgin English have morpho-syntactic properties, which make them varieties of English on their own. For example, for Mbangwana (2004), English has been syntactically indigenized in Cameroon. Before studies on CamPE, CamE, and CamFE as separate varieties of English in Cameroon (see, for instance, Safotso 2012 and Ngefac & Todd 2019), Crystal (1997) simply called the variety of English spoken in Cameroon a pidgin, considering its mixed nature and unique features. In this study, however, pidgin is examined as a variety of English different from CamE and CamFE, even though Ngefac & Todd (2019) posit that pidgin is a language on its own in Cameroon and not a variety of English.

Schneider (2011, p.140) observes that pidgin is widespread and growing everywhere, coupled with the fact that Mair (2022) considers pidgin, especially Nigerian and Cameroon pidgins, as lingua francas in the regions where they are spoken. There is a need to investigate advertising posters using the principle of construction grammar and the dynamic model. These perspectives of study are relevant to this research in that advertising posters are made up of entrenched patterns of form-meaning pairings that covey context-specific sociolinguistic pieces of information about the LL of Cameroon. On top of that, the Dynamic Model (based on AP) provides another historical picture of Cameroon Englishes. From the above facts, no previous works have investigated advertising in Cameroon Englishes (Anglophone Cameroon English (CamE), Cameroon Francophone English (CamFE), and Cameroon Creole English (CamCE), let alone investigating it from the perspectives of Construction Grammar and Dynamic Model.

Language use on advertising posters results in fascinating pieces of sociolinguistic information and novel trends and aspects of World Englishes worth investigating. In addition, this study falls within the framework of Linguistic Landscape (LL). The LL of Cameroon is characterized by approximately 283 indigenous languages, which speakers speak from different ethnic groups that make up the country. Furthermore, there are two contact languages, Cameroon Creole English (Ngefac, 2016) and Camfranglais (Kouega, 2003). According to Landry and Bourhis (1997), LL is “the language of public road signs, and advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government buildings are combined to form the LL of a given territory, region, or urban agglomeration”. It is important to note that “advertising billboards” constitutes a significant aspect of LL, and thus, display many languages and language varieties in Cameroon, making the linguistic situation of the country complex. It is worth defining Advertising Posters (AP) and Cameroon Englishes. APs are public or private signs that carry messages or information about buying and selling goods and services. New Englishes coined by Platt, Weber, and Ho (1984, cited in Schneider 2011) are unequivocally limited to the newly grown second-language varieties, especially of Africa and Asia, like Tanzania or Indian English. “Postcolonial English”, used predominantly in Schneider (2007), unites all the varieties that have shared origins (mostly) British colonization activities, emphasizing this historical origin and the processes that have resulted from it. Therefore, it excludes British English but includes American or Australian English, the “New Englishes”, and English-related

creoles (Schneider, 2011, p. 31). Schneider (2011, p. 31) adds that these Englishes result in social distance or proximity, and they are developing and are accepted as symbols of belonging and identity in such young nations. Therefore, Cameroon Englishes or New Englishes in Cameroon are prototypes of indigenized varieties of English in the country, such as Cameroon English or Cameroon Anglophone English, and even Cameroon Creole English (in the sense of Schneider 2011). World Englishes is a broad term for varieties of English worldwide based on identities in English and the wide spread of the language (Kachru 2017) Because commerce is the primary social activity in Cameroon, it is vital to interpret messages related to this domain and the multimodal codes that pervade it, thus promising to have a considerable impact far beyond the field of linguistics.

Construction Grammar (see Hoffmann and Trousdale 2013, Hoffmann 2015, Hoffmann 2017, etc.) and the Dynamic Model (see Schneider 2003, 2007, 2009, etc.) are up-to-date approaches, which can provide another way of looking at the synchronic picture of Cameroon Englishes, especially about advertisement. This research has four objectives. First, it investigates the varieties of English used for adverts in Cameroon. Second, it reveals the places CamE, CamFE, and Cameroon Creole English are on the AP displayed in the country. Third, the Dynamic Model interprets AP messages from the perspective of Construction Grammar and the level of evolution of Cameroon Englishes. Fourth, the study points out the role of Cameroon Englishes in advertising in Cameroon.

## 2. Methodology

This section of the work involves the method of data collection, the method of data analysis, and the framework of the study. One thousand five hundred (1500) advertisement-related messages were collected from four Cameroonian cities: Buea, Yaounde, Douala, and Dschang. These cities were chosen because they are cosmopolitan, harbouring people from different cultural backgrounds who converge and carry out different commerce-related activities. These cities are the arena where political, economic, administrative, religious, and sporting activities are regularly carried out, thereby serving as fertile grounds for the display of AP. Seventy-three (73) interview responses were also gathered to ascertain the intended meanings of AP.

Data analysis is quantitative and qualitative, depending on the dimension of the study involved. The quantitative approach is used to determine the place of each English on AP by examining the frequencies and determining the extent to which the quantitative results obtained help in exposing the place of different varieties of English and the sociolinguistic landscape of Cameroon. Just knowing, for instance, that 70% of advertising messages are in CamPE, 20% in CamE, and 10% in CamFE, respectively, can provide some clues on the variety or varieties of English that are gaining ground in the communities investigated and Cameroon at large. At the same time, the qualitative approach is used to explore the morpho-syntactic features, functions, and the evolution of Cameroon Englishes.

The study is executed from the cognitive and the Dynamic Model perspectives. Construction Grammar is rooted in De Saussure's notion of the linguistic sign. One of the central concepts of linguistics is De Saussure's notion of the linguistic sign as an arbitrary and conventional pairing of the form (or sound pattern/*signifier*); see, for example, De Saussure ([1916] 2006:65-70 cited in Hoffmann and Trousdale 2013). Hence, the German sign *Apfel* and its Hungarian equivalent *alma* bear the similar underlying meaning 'apple,' but differ at the level of their conventional form ([apfl] and [alma]). Nonetheless, poststructural linguists started exploring the idea that arbitrary pairing of forms and meanings might not merely be a significant concept for delineating words or morphemes but that maybe all stages of grammatical description include such conventionalized form-meaning pairings.

This wide notion of the Saussurean sign has resulted in a 'construction' (which involves morphemes, words, idioms, and abstract phrasal patterns), and the different linguistic approaches studying this idea have been termed 'Construction Grammar.' Hence, instead of considering a clear-cut division of lexicon and syntax, Construction Grammarians take into account all constructions to be included in 'a lexicon-syntax continuum' (a 'constructicon,'

Fillmore 1988; see also Jurafsky 1992 and Goldberg 2003: 223, cited in Hoffmann and Trousdale, 2013). Examples from this continuum, as taken from (Hoffmann and Trousdale 2013), are presented in a-d below (applying a fairly informal explanation of the form and meaning parts for various approaches to the representation of constructions.

- a) Word construction: apple [æpl]- 'apple'.
- b) Idiom construction: for instance, X takes Y for granted [X TAKES Y fə gɪæntid] - 'X does not value Y'.
- c) Comparative construction: for example, John is taller than you [X BE Adj ðən Y] - 'X is more Adj than Y.'
- d) Resultative construction: for example, she rocks the baby to sleep [XYZ]- 'X causes Y to become Z by V-ing'.

The word in (a) is the Saussurean form-meaning pairing and, thus, known as a construction. The sense of the idiom in (b) is not totally 'schematic' and must, therefore, be registered in a speaker's mental lexicon. In addition, while (b) is an idiom that is partially substantive - that is, whose phonological form is frozen in many areas, i.e., [fə] and [gɪæntid]; it has 'slots' in its subject and object position that can be filled by various elements (for instance, many people take their friends for granted. / She takes him for granted. / John and Jill take each other for granted.etc.).

Constructions that have such slots are schematic constructions. As regards (c), it can, therefore, be termed as being more schematic than the idiom in (b), given that the former merely has a single substantive element ([ðən]) and several schematic slots (for the subject X, the form of BE, the comparative adjective and Y). Finally, the resultative construction in (d) is schematic, given that it only has slots for the cause X, the verb V, the affected complement Y, and the resulting state Z (and thus licenses such different structures as She kissed it better. / They wiped the table clean. / He colored his beard red./ etc. (Hoffmann and Trousdale, 2013).

Hoffman and Trousdale (2013) posit that Constructionist Grammar approaches give a uniform analysis of more idiosyncratic 'peripheral' and 'core' linguistic features. They get to this without recourse to transformations/derivations or the employment of empty elements. Instead, the mental grammar of speakers is said to be made up of a network of schematic and substantive constructions ('constructicon'), and it is the parallel activation of constructions that underlie a collection of particular utterances ('constructs'). This view of grammar as a mental network of constructions has recently received great empirical support from independent research on first and second language acquisition (see Hoffman & Trousdale 2013). Moreover, constructional approaches have also come up with significant new insights into the diachronic evolution of languages (see Hoffman & Trousdale 2013 and Barðdal 2011), as well as sociolinguistic and dialectal and discourse variation (see Ostman and Trousdale, Hoffmann and Trousdale, cited in Hoffmann and Trousdale, 2013).

In sum, the Construction Grammar approach is suitable for this study because it permits the study of new entrenched patterns of form-meaning parings ('constructions') that characterize advertising posters in Cameroon. It is worth noting that 'constructions' in this study are examined according to their peculiar social and physical context factors, as supported by usage-based construction grammar approaches (which consider contextual factors). Schneider's Dynamic Model (2003, 2007, and 2009) constitutes another perspective from which this investigation is carried out.

This model builds upon earlier developmental paradigms and argues that rising varieties of English in postcolonial settings have typically followed a fundamentally uniform dichronic process resulting from the social dynamics between the two parties involved in a colonization process. The model proposes that the identity development and accommodation process will reduce the social separation of these parties involved and will lead to the growth of new dialects as symbolic reflections of these social realignments and re-negotiations of social distance or proximity (Schneider 2011). The Dynamic Model is suitable for this research in that it scrutinizes the evolution of World Englishes through five stages:

- “Foundation”: English arrives in a new territory, which leads to nascent bilingualism, the loan of toponyms, and other minor processes.
- “Exonormative Stabilisation”: during a fixed colonial scenario, the politically dominant “mother country” controls the norms of linguistic behavior, and elite bilingualism extends amongst some representatives of the Indigenous people, with lexical borrowing continuing.
- “Nativization”: is the most lively and fascinating of all the phases. With links with the settlers’ country of origin weakening and interethnic contacts increasing, bilingual speakers forge a new variety of English, shaped strongly by phonological and structural transfer- through conversation, speakers resent such innovative usage.
- “Endonormative Stabilisation”: implies that, after independence and inspired by the need for nation-building, a new linguistic norm is increasingly acknowledged (and commonly perceived as remarkably homogeneous), is beginning to be codified and to be accepted in society, and is employed culturally in literary representations.
- “Differentiation” may come in the end, e.i. in a stable young nation, internal social group identities become more significant and are reflected in the development of dialectal differences (Schneider 2011).

Linguists have addressed CamE and CamFE according to Schneider’s Dynamic Model (2003, 2007, 2009). For instance, Safotso (2016) and Ngefac (2022) have investigated CamFE and CamE, respectively. Safotso (2016 quoting Kouega 2008; Safotso, 2012 & 2015, p.6) notes that CamFE emerges as a sub-variety of CamE and opines that CamFE respects just some of the phases of Schneider’s models, given that it “clearly follows its way” with its specific characteristics though research is still on. On the contrary, Nguefac (2022), banking on Schneider’s Dynamic Model (2003, 2007), places CamE at Phase 4 of the Endonormative Stabilisation model.

He maintains that: “The proliferation of literary works that are deeply rooted in the sociolinguistic and sociocultural realities of Cameroon are further signs that Cameroon English has evolved to Phase 4”. The desire of scholars such as Atechi 2006 & 2008, Nguefac 2008 & 2011, Safotso 2012, and Mbufong 2014, for the standardization of CamE also justifies this position of CamE. As far as Differentiation (phase five of the Dynamic Model) is concerned, Schneider (2009, p. 287), quoted by Safotso (2016, p.6), opines that this stage is not yet relevant in Africa.

This study, therefore, provides another emperical evidence from advertising posters in Cameroon to justify the evolutionary trajectory of New Englishes according to Schneider’s Dynamic Model (2003, 2007, and 2009). Exploring New Englishes in Cameroon by combining cognitive and dichronic approaches increases significant insights into the complex LL of Cameroon in particular and World Englishes in general.

### 3. Findings

This section focuses on Cameroon Englishes and their places on advertising posters in the country, advertising posters in Cameroon as the base of contextual linguistic constructions, Cameroon Englishes and the Dynamic Model, and the functions of New Englishes in advertising in Cameroon.

#### 3.1. Cameroon Englishes and their places on advertising posters in the country

The morpho-syntactic properties and the statistical assessment of Cameroon Englishes are examined in this part.

Table 1. Cameroon englishes in yaounde

CamE	CamFE	CamPE	Common features from all the Englishes
-Application to teach in the Jordan Bilingual Evening School Both the English and French Sections are Open (job vacancies)	-Club 88 Lounge Restaurant Yaounde	-You wan njoooh 10k? Dial #111*8#	-Back to school

-Traditional spices	-C&J Trading de Yaoundé	-Pass concours now!	-MTN Mobile Money (10X)
-Food tasting	-Vie at Snack Bar VIP Palace		-Professional Eagles Institute of Technology &business
	-Willy Fashion House Services		-Service traiteur (5X)
	-Tech-Republik		-MTN MoMo Cash deposit and withdrawal
	-Sure pre-inscription		-Swing Lounge Restaurant snack bark
	-Security		-Business and Career Microfinance
	-Practical computer training		-Best Concours preparatory classes
	-Alpha Communications		-Snack Bar Restaurant Raphia (3X)
			-National Institute of Youth and Sports
			-Jimit Higher Institute
			-MTN Momo
			-Together for more Football
			-Divine Favour Evening School
			-Special preparatory classes for concours
			-MTN Momo

Table 2. Cameroon englishes in douala

CamE	CamFE	CamPE	Common features from all the Englishes
-It is what is inside that counts	-Endure Successful IVF Treatments in India Natura	-May 2021 be better...	-MTN Mobile Money (5X)
-When Mutzig goes to Cameroon comes out (6X)	-The Douala Grand Life		-Online marketing assistance
-God wonder about Prophetic take-off	-Stay true		-Design center
-Beauty Arena Door to Door	-We care, treat, God heals (a translation from French)		-MTN PluS Talk more, pay less!
-Easy life	-Dynamik		-Office hours are Mondays and Fridays
-My Darling Chin Chin	-Dr. Dewah Santé free		-Smart College Douala

-Momo me	-Colorful Imaging View in color, even in darkness.		-Icon Higher Institute of Health & Management Sciences
-Glorious Love ministries	-Da-lyn Shopping		-Hipe University Institute
	-Samaritan Bay Practical Center de Douala		-Renaissance Bilingual School
	-The best infertility Treatment in India combined with the Alchemy of Ayurveda		-Fomic Polytechnic University Higher Institute of Science & Technology
			-Y'ELLO Shop MTN MoMo
			Douala hope and care center
			-Back to school (3X)
			-MTN Momo (2X)
			-Dreams nightclub
			-With YUP, life is up
			-RAS (Wedding Store)
			-Better together

Table 3. Cameroon englishes in buea

CamE	CamFE	CamPE	Common features from all the Englishes
-Who is behind my pains?	-pre-inscription ongoing	- Orange Everything na double double (2X)	-Biaka University Institute
-Hand-to-hand Building Materials		-Anyman helep ei self My Way Via Orange	-MTN MoMo (6X) Cash and withdraw here Life taste
-Finally, Stains have met their Watch		-Ma'am's Kitchen "Chop Lik Finga"	-The I am Insurance
-Theatre of dreams		-Joy overflows in Buea this tam	-Dine-in/Take-out/Delivery/Service Traiteur
-Nodel Restaurant Your African dish Eru & fufu garri Ekwang Ndole Kati khati Achu Pepper soup goat		-With MTN Wanda, you go talk sotey taya	-TACC Soppo City Cross over Night 2020 Low-cost center
-Jam Rock Fufu & Eru Gary eru, Gary soup Kati Kati Ndole plantain White beans, rice, chicken			-Redemption Higher Institute of Biomedical and Management Sciences
-Mummy, the Best Restaurant			-Higher Institute of Applied Medical Sciences and Extension Higher Institute of

			Applied Engineering and Business Studies
-Ecobank Send money fast, and now free			-VCID Beauty Saloon
-My Internet is back in my hands			-Dodo for sale
-Food is Available restaurant provides Bed & Breakfast Services, Catering services, Buffet on command, Varieties of dishes			
- Mpu fish			-Back to school in Buea (6X)
-Njakatu sauce and yam/plantains			
-Mpu and fish and plantains/yam			
-Yumlicks Restaurant- Sauce (snails/meat) and rice-dodo/fried yam and snails/sauce- Mpu fish and plantains/Yam- Porridge Cocoyams- pepper soup (snails/meat) and plantains- Okongobong and plantains/yam- Ekwang-Njakatu sauce and yam/plantains			
-General commerce			

Table 4. Cameroon englishes in dschang

CamE	CamFE	CamPE	Common features from all the Englishes
-Just MoMo it. (5X)	-Welcome to Atem Electronique		-Man live by man solution club
-Wisdom corner Book centre	-Vimto New look, Inegale (2X)		-Mobile money
-5 days of transformation by the spirit of God	-Direction of social affairs		-Mobile Money Shop

-Restaurant & Fast food QUICK'N CHEAP	-Est Saint BEBYS Service Traiteur		- Best Concours preparatory classes Pass concours now! (6X)
-The brains	-Platinum Lounge de Dschang Mix night		-Business and Career Microfinance
-Ndop in different models	-MCD et Bank'Up Ensemble pour sécuriser votre collecte quotidienne		-Institute of Higher Education Foyaguem
-Best Concours preparatory classes (4X)	-Watch. Listen. Feel. Dash Reportage		-Withdraw your quitus (10X)
	-Shopping PROMOTION		- Nails plug
	-Polygermie Print		-Fufu garri and eru
	-Do your pre-inscription here. (6X)		-Just momo it!
	-237 print		-We are preparing students for all concours (4X)
	-Le Kingdom Snack bar		-Do your online pre- inscription here
	-Repetition classes are ongoing (5X)		-Back to school -Business and Career Microfinance
	-Continent shop		-The continent print
	-Good phones on promotion		-Repetition classes (3X)
			-Martin's fitness
			-Mtn Njoh
			-Mtn Wanda
			-Aicha freestyle
			-Gatsby Relooking
			-Unik Fashion
			-Security

Table 5. Frequency table of AP messages in the Cameroonian cities under study

Various Englishes in Cameroon (03)	Frequencies according to various cities		Percentage	Rang
CamE	Frequencies in Yaounde	03	08.82%	4
	Frequencies in Douala	08	23.52%	2
	Frequencies in Buea	16	47.05%	1
	Frequencies in Dschang	07	20.58%	3
	<b>Total :</b>	34	100%	/
CamFE	Frequencies in Yaounde	09	25.71%	3
	Frequencies in Douala	10	28.57%	2

	Frequencies in Buea	01	02.87%	4
	Frequencies in Dschang	15	42.85%	1
	<b>Total :</b>	35	100%	/
CamPE	Frequencies in Yaounde	02	25%	2
	Frequencies in Douala	01	12.5%	3
	Frequencies in Buea	05	62.5%	1
	Frequencies in Dschang	00	00%	4
	<b>Total :</b>	08	100%	/

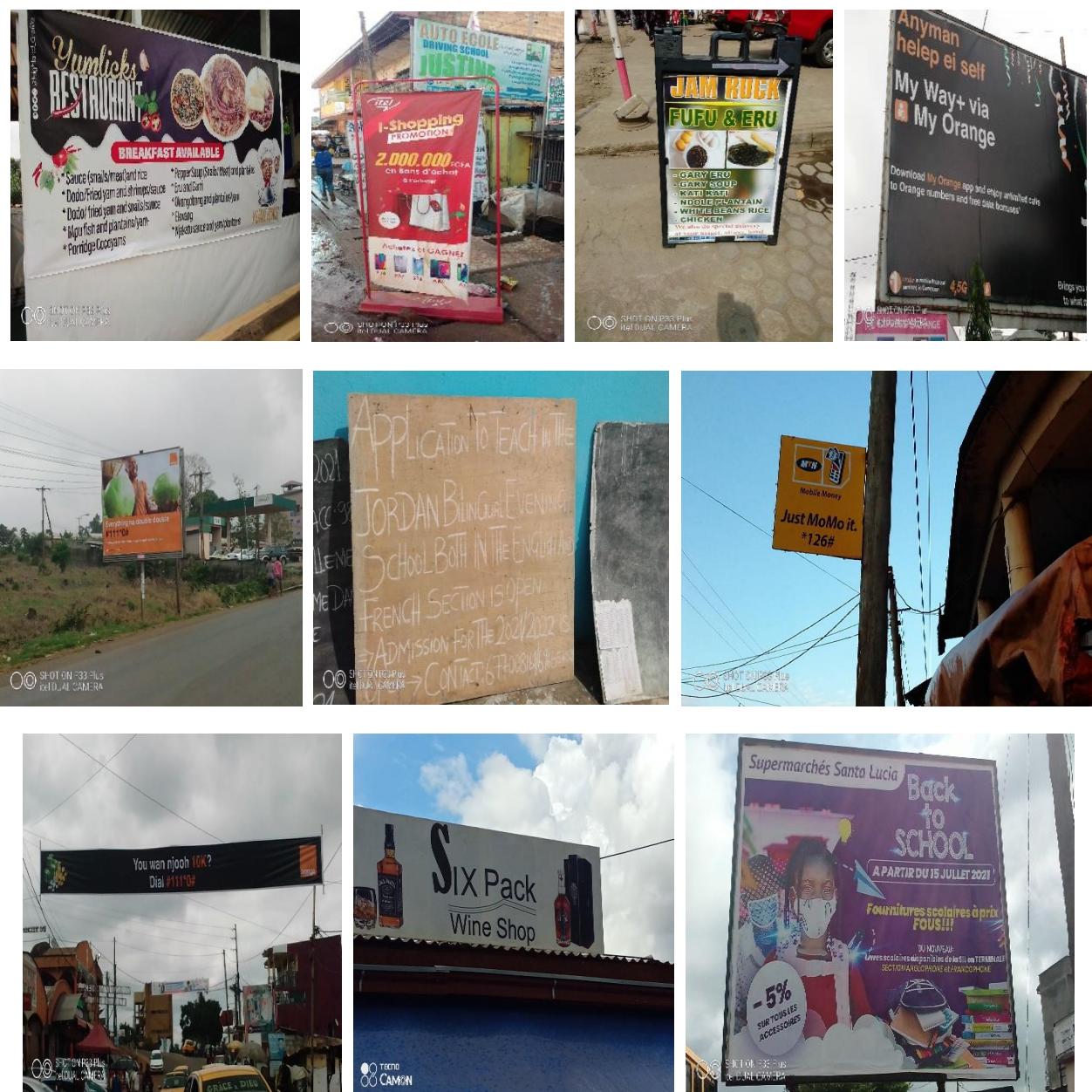


Fig. 1 Some images of AP carrying cameroon englishes

The three first columns of the tables present CamE, CameFE, and CamPE, respectively. The last column presents some standard features in CamE and CameFE or all three Englishes involving CamPE. Given that the common elements are general to all the Englishes, the statistical analysis focuses specifically on the columns concerning CamE, CameFE, and CamPE. According to Table 5, CamE (47.05%) is the dominant variety of English on AP in Buea, followed by CamPE (62.5%) and CameFE (02.87%), respectively. Concerning Yaounde, CameFE (25.71%) prevails, followed by CamPE (25%) and CamE (08.82%).

As regards Douala, the leading variety of English is CameFE (28.57%), followed by CamE (23.52%) and CamPE (12.5%), which is orderly. Moreover, as far as Dschang is concerned, CameFE (42.85%) is the dominant variety of English on AP, followed by CamE (20.58%) and CamPE (00%), respectively. It is therefore obvious that in Buea (English-speaking city), AP is mostly in CamE, characterized by influence from Cameroon Indigenous languages, whereas in Dschang, Douala, and Yaounde (French-speaking cities), CameFE, characterized by influence from French, is dominant in advertisement.

CamPE is also used in advertisements in Cameroonian cities, but only in a limited way. Therefore, it is worth noting that people mostly use Cameroon Englishes to advertise their goods and services in Cameroon. The fact that French influences CameFE (see, for instance, the literal translation of shopping auction into 'shopping promotion') and English and Cameroon indigenous languages influence CamE is reminiscent of the phenomenon of language transfer (the application of linguistic features from one language to another by a bilingual or multilingual speaker) in Cameroon, especially in advertisement.

### **3.2. AP in Cameroon as the Base of Contextual Specific Linguistic Constructions**

Looking at Tables 1 to 4 and the images above, it is obvious that New Englishes on AP are characterized by contextual-specific linguistic construction, as discussed below.

#### **3.2.1. Lexical Constructions**

Lexical constructions refer to constructions that function like words (both simple and compound words) or lexical items. Some lexical constructions that characterize Cameroon Englishes on AP are studied here.

<b>FORM:</b> Eru and fufu-garri [eɪə ənd fʊfʊ ɡærɪ]		<b>MEANING:</b> Semantics: a kind of vegetable in Cameroon dished with fufu (made out of tapioca or garri, which is a starchy food made from the cassava plant, used in puddings). Social identity: Business people in Buea, Douala, Yaounde, and Dschang. Usage constraint: Used in advertisements and for information.
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"Eru and Fufu garri" is a compound lexical construction and neologism (a newly coined word composed to define or name a new reality) in Cameroon Englishes. Restaurant owners in Cameroon use this construction to advertise their food.

<b>FORM :</b> Snack Bar Restaurant [snækba:.restərənt]		<b>MEANING:</b> Semantics: the fusion of snack bar and restaurant makes up a place where they sell both drinks and food. Social identity: Business operators and customers in Buea, Yaounde, Douala, and Dschang. Usage constraint: Used on AP for services and itinerary.
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"Snack Bar Restaurant" is another lexical Construction in CamE and CamFE. The form "Snack Bar Restaurant" pairs with the meaning of a double-service place (restaurant & snack bar). The meanings revealed by the authors of this message correspond to its literary meaning (Restaurant & snack bar).

The lexical constructions above correspond to the classical pairing of form and meaning and are thus licensed as constructions. However, contextual characteristics make them peculiar - they are specific to the Cameroonian setting and, therefore, cannot be generalized to all the Englishes across the world (involving Standard British English). The constructions also identify Cameroonians in the acculturation of English in the world characterized by

ethnicity. In addition, in Cameroon, the notions of CamE and CamFE tend to create new identities, as people who speak CamFE might be considered 'Francophones' and people who speak CamE 'Anglophones'.

### 3.2.2. Phrasal Constructions

<b>FORM :</b> Back to school Back to X1- [bæk tu: sku:l]		<b>MEANING:</b> Semantics: a moment where students and their parents buy school items and pay the school fees in preparation for school resumption in the context of CamE and CamFE, and even CamPE. Social identity: both French-speaking and English-speaking Business people in Douala, Yaounde, in Buea and Dschang. Usage constraint: used on AP.
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"Back to school" is a verb phrasal construction and morphological neologism used in Cameroon Englishes. This construction is schematic since it has a verb element [bæk tu:] and another schematic slot (for the adverb X1). At this level, various substantive elements, such as work the house, can also accompany the verb slot [bæk tu: ]. It is important to note that the phrasal construction "back to school" has a context-specific peculiarity in Cameroon. In addition to substantive elements that accompany the verb phrase "back to", as previously mentioned, the phrase can be accompanied by substantive elements such as 'responsibilities (back to responsibilities), 'troubles' (back to troubles) ', freedom' (back to freedom) etc. The substantive elements 'responsibilities', 'troubles', and 'freedom' come from an interviewee, a businesswoman from Douala, who reported that when she writes "back to school", she means "back to 'responsibilities', 'troubles', and 'freedom' because various parents need to prove that they are responsible by providing their children's school needs. It also means parents are back to troubles of expenditures and frees\* them from noise produced by children."

<b>FORM :</b> -Best concours preparatory classes [best kɔ̃kɔ:r p ɛpərətɔri kla:sɪ:s]		<b>MEANING:</b> Semantics: this phrase has to do with competitive exams, which are publicly launched to select the best candidates to serve in a particular government or private service after training. The adjective "best" (which is the superlative form of good) that precedes the word "concours" intensifies it, given that the aim of every advertiser is to draw the attention of his or her audience. Social identity: Both English and French-speaking Cameroonians who are eligible for the exams and individuals who sponsor them. Usage constraint: used on AP.
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"Best Concours preparatory classes" is a phrasal construction typical of CamE and CamFE, even CamPE. This construction is schematic since it has a substantive element [best kɔ̃kɔ:r] and another schematic slot (the noun Y). This noun Y -"preparatory classes" can be substituted by other nouns such as results, center, trainers etc. From the

phrasal construction “Best Concours preparatory classes”, we have the word “Concours”, which pairs with the meaning “competitive examinations” in Cameroon Englishes, as confirmed by the informants (“Concours means the exams that students register after their advanced level to enter into public service”). This word is, therefore, a false cognate’ from French, which influences Cameroon Englishes.

### 3.3.3. Sentential Constructions

FORM : Just momoit F MoMo -X1 [məuməu]X		<b>MEANING:</b> Semantics: From the emphatic sentence “Just momoit”, we have the acronym MoMo from Mobile Money, a service offered by two main communication companies involving MTN and Orange, which exist in and beyond Cameroon. This service is a money transfer one. The meaning of this sentence comes from the slot “momo”, which is substantive. Social identity: business people in Buea, Yaounde, Douala, and Dschang Usage constraint: used in advert.
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“Just momoit” is a sentential construction in all three Englishes under investigation. From the form “Just momoit”, we can have F momoit X - momoit X1 - send X1’. This helps to understand what “momoit” means. It can mean “send” since it is substantive and has slots that can be filled with other elements (for example, momoit her, momoit me, momoit John). One can also say that “momoit” is transitive. Its transitive nature aids in meaning construction, as we can ask: momoit who? or F momoit X. Therefore, some slots, those that precede or come after “momoit” together with momoit, constitute a construction, given that Construction Grammar has to do with lexico-syntactic continuum. From the construction “Just momoit”, we have the word “momoit”, which has two natures in the Englishes (a noun and verb at the same time). Concerning ‘momoit’ as a verb, it corresponds to the verb ‘to send’ or ‘send’ (e.g. an author of an AP containing this construction reported that when she says they should momoit her some money, it means they should send some money to her (e.g. as in “just momoit”, send it (‘it’ pragmatically referring to money)). About “Momoit” as a noun, it refers to a mobile money service (e.g. “MTN Momo”). Just like “preparatory classes”, “momoit” is also a neologism and an acronym, which has been coined to define a name or inform about a Mobile Money service offered by two leading communication companies, including MTN and Orange, which exist in and beyond Cameroon.

FORM : Withdraw your quitus here [wiðdri: juə kitus hɪə(r)]		<b>MEANING:</b> Semantics: the word “quitus” from the sentence “Withdraw your quitus here” refers to “voucher”, which means a paper that entitles the holder to a discount, or that can be exchanged for goods and services. It also means receipt. Social identity: Business operators and University students at the University of Yaounde, Douala, and Dschang. Usage constraint: Used for advert and information.
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“Withdraw your quitus here” is an imperative sentential construction in all the three Englishes under study. We can have F Withdraw X - Withdraw X1 - cash out X1’ from this form. This leads to understanding what “Withdraw” means in this context. It can mean print out since it is followed by the word ‘quitus’, which corresponds to ‘voucher’, and it is also substantive and thus has slots that can be filled with other elements (for example, withdraw your form, withdraw your document, and so on). “withdraw” is also transitive. Its transitive nature helps construct meaning, as we can ask: withdraw what? So, some slots, appearing before or after “withdraw” together with withdraw, constitute a construction since Construction Grammar is concerned with a lexico-syntactic continuum, just like in the previous case. From the imperative sentential construction “Withdraw your quitus here”,

there is the form “*quitus*”, which pairs with the meaning “Voucher”. According to this construction, some university students in Cameroon can print vouchers to pay their tuition fees. Therefore, given that French influences English at the University of Dschang, Douala, Yaounde, and other institutions in these towns, the construction “*quitus*” becomes a common noun or word used to mean ‘voucher’ in Cameroon Englishes. Some informants, especially English-speaking ones, reported that, since their arrival at the University of Dschang, they have never known that ‘*quitus*’ is not an English word. This is due to a conspicuous direct translation by some business people and students around the University of Dschang. The form “*withdraw*” is a direct translation of the French verb “*retirer*” (remove), as in “*retirez vos quitus ici*” (remove your *quitus*). The false friend ‘*withdraw*’ influences CamE and CamFE. Therefore, the meaning of the sentential construction, “*Withdraw your quitus here*”, comes from the morpho-syntactic relationship between the elements of the sentence. From the analysis, this sentence refers to “print out your voucher here”.

FORM :	↔	MEANING
Do your Pre-inscription online [do: juə pre mskriptʃən hla(i)]		Semantics: from the sentential construction “Do your Pre-inscription online”, we have the word pre-inscription with pairs with the meaning pre-registration” in British English, but literally translated from French and used in CamE and CamFE. Social identity: students and business operators in Dschang and Bafoussam. Usage constraints: Used in advertisements.

Like previous Examples, the form “pre-inscription” is a common noun or lexical construction corresponding to the word “pre-registration”. In Douala, Yaounde, and Dschang, online registration is required before submitting documents for admission into a university in Cameroon. It results from a literary translation from English into French. This word helps in the understanding of the entire sentential construction. It is typical of CamE and CamFE, given that both English- and French-speaking Cameroonians commonly use it in advertisements in Douala, Yaounde, and Dschang.

### 3.3.4. *Cameroon Englishes and the Dynamic Model*

This section assesses the diachronic paradigm of Cameroon Englishes, similar to previous studies (Ngefac 2022 and Safotso 2016). Considering that advertising signs are significantly displayed in Cameroon, it is important to examine them from the perspective of a usage-based approach like construction grammar alongside the dynamic model. Evidence from AP (such as the acculturation of new Englishes, identity realities, conventional constructions, etc.) shows that New Englishes are at stage four (“Endonormative Stabilization”) of Schneider’s Dynamic Model. This study provides evidence to demonstrate that Cameroon Englishes are at stage four of the Dynamic Model. It relies on the linguistic landscape of Cameroon (especially advertising signs). The investigation also combines Construction Grammar (an up-to-date approach to World Englishes) with the Dynamic Model to assess the evolution of Cameroon Englishes. At the same time, previous studies have primarily relied on the Dynamic model and other approaches to World Englishes. This investigation, therefore, complements Ngefac (2022), whose evidence comes from literary works to justify that Cameroon Englishes are at stage four of the Dynamic Model.

### 3.3.5. *The Function of New Englishes in Advertising in Cameroon*

New Englishes play significant roles in advertising in Cameroon. It is vital to note that various advertising posters in Cameroon are made up of indexicalities (which encompass the features of a language that refer directly to circumstances or contexts in which an utterance takes place), as each of them indexes (‘points a finger to’) a local or global reality. Blommaert (2010) observes that forms of indexical order sometimes have long histories of becoming. The histories are regularly connected to the histories of becoming nation-states and to their cultural and sociolinguistic ‘paraphernalia- the notion of ‘standard language’ and its derivative, a particular ‘national’

ethnolinguistic identity. Hitherto, they equally display an important degree of variability and change. As is evident, they can erupt and fade under the pressure of macro-developments, such as capitalist consumer fashions. If forms of semiotics are socially and culturally valued, these variation processes should display traces of power and authority.

Considering that New Englishes in AP index various realities in Cameroon, they have some functions.

- They simplify and contextualize communication, given that the codes are familiar to advertisers and their audiences. When Cameroonian from different cultural backgrounds read messages on AP, they understand them easily, even those who are not highly educated. For example, "Application to teach in the Jordan Bilingual Evening School Both in the English and French Section is Open" (this message has to do with a job vacancy or a call for applications); "repetitions are ongoing" (tutorial classes are taking place); and "Do your online pre-inscription here" (Cameroonians understand that the word 'pre-inscription' means pre-registration). These illustrations show the extent to which New Englishes facilitate communication between advertisers and their audience in the Cameroonian context. In other words, in the economic domain in Cameroon, communication does not depend on Standard British English or a particular Western variety of English; it relies on codes (CamE, CamFE, and CamPE) that are simple, contextual, and which are not influenced by a particular standard grammar. Every individual uses Cameroon Englishes on his or her AP freely; no government language policy controls how language should be used in advertising.
- Cameroon Englishes constitute symbols of identity construction in advertisements. Fought (2006) notes that there is a connection between ethnic identity and language, as Rampton (1995 cited in Fought 2006) observes that the development of "Mike's tough/urban identity" was supplemented by a shift in speech. For example, as Mike began crossing into AAVE (African American Vernacular English), he crossed into a new speech style. Messages displayed on AP in Cameroon form a new speech style patterning to the country's identity. For example, some typical dishes that identify Cameroonians are advertised on AP in Englishes (see, for example, "Eru", "khati-khati"; "Mpu fish and plantains", "Okongobong", etc.) and their description results in a new speech style (CamE). Cameroon gastronomy is not the only identity element found on AP in the country; there is also clothing. For instance, "Ndop in different models". "Ndop" here refers to a grass field (a cultural zone in Cameroon) and typical dress recognized throughout Cameroon. It identifies grassfield people in particular and Cameroonians at large. These features not only identify Cameroonians within the nation's landscape but also at the international level, as foreigners visiting Cameroon learn what is unique about them, like some aspects of the country's gastronomy and clothing. In addition, given that we are in the media epoch, Cameroonians are also recognized through the advertisement of their cultural artefacts in Cameroon Englishes on social media. In addition, Cameroon Englishes are characterized by Fought's (2006) linguistic resources that individuals have in constructing identity. The resources include "a heritage language", "code-mixing", "specific linguistic features", "suprasegmental features", "discourse features", and "using borrowed varieties". A heritage language: Cameroonians have heritage languages (English and French, and even local languages) that define their various ethnic identities (Anglophones, Francophones, etc.), but AP reveal that the heritage languages are getting contextualized and they interfere with each other to create new linguistic forms and identities in Cameroon such as CamE, CamFE, and even CamPE.
  - Code mixing: CamE, CamFE, and CamPE are characterized by code mixing in Cameroon (see, for instance, the mixing of "best", an English word and "Concours", a French word in the construction "best concours...").
  - Specific linguistic features: CamE, CamFE, and CamPE have specific linguistic features, namely: code-mixing; loan words from English (*buy your 'kwakoko'* - CamE), French ('concours', 'quitus'), local languages ('mpu', kati 'kati') etc.; compound nouns ('Snack bar restaurant').

- Suprasegmental features: speakers of Cameroon Englishes use syllable timing (e.g. fu.fu), which reveals their identity.
- Discourse features: users of Cameroon Englishes of AP, for example, are verbose in that they use more words to talk about their goods and services, even naming.
- Using borrowed varieties: a typical linguistic behavior in Cameroon Englishes is using borrowed words (e.g. 'mpu' from the Orok language).
- Cameroon Englishes picture the nation's day-to-day realities. For example, (gambling 1X bet, illegal activities - drugs selling "Your doctor who cures all the diseases" etc.).
- They function as the basis of linguistic creativity. The words "plug" in "your plug hairdresser" and "continent" in "continent shop" are semantic neologisms in Cameroon Englishes. Concerning the word "plug", it is an adjective in CamE that describes an expert or a master in an activity (e.g. "your plug hairdresser", who is an expert in hairdressing). So, "plug hairdresser" is a compound word in CamE. Regarding "continent", it is another semantic neologism in both CamE and CamFE. "Continent shop" is a compound noun and a neologism in these Englishes. It refers to a shop where everything is found, as the message's author reported. It is important to note that the word "continent" refers to Cameroon as a country. This new appellation of Cameroon has been trending these last few years because of the complex nature of this nation. While a continent originally meant a large contiguous landmass, it was considered independent of its countries, peninsulas, etc.

Morphological neologisms also prevail in Cameroon Englishes (e.g. "Unik Fashion", "secuti", etc.). The spellings of the words unique and security have been twisted in advertisements in Cameroon, as some people write "Unik" and "secuti" instead of unique and security on their AP. These forms are considered morphological neologisms in Cameroon Englishes in that they are new constructions, which, to an extent, can be seen as errors. However, their forms give a picture of what they mean, given that they are not entirely different from their original spellings and pronunciation. Therefore, AP contribute significantly to the development of Cameroon Englishes, as it serves as the base of linguistic creativity.

- Cameroon Englishes are used to describe products, goods and services. For instance, the message "ya plug hairdresser" in Cameroonian means a competent hairdresser or someone who has mastered hairdressing. The message describes the quality of the service the hairdresser in question renders. This linguistic behavior goes a long way toward alleviating the stigma toward local varieties of English, given that Fought (2006) opines that the inability to use a code associated with ethnicity is stigmatized.

In a nutshell, the economic domain in Cameroon promises to be an effective area of the development of Cameroon Englishes. In this domain, Cameroon Englishes simplify and contextualize communication, capture the identities and some realities about Cameroon, function as the basis of linguistic creativity, and play many other roles. Standard British English and American English, which used to dominate in almost every domain of activity in Cameroon, are gradually dominated by Cameroon Englishes in the advertisement domain. This situation even goes beyond the field of economy today.

#### 4. Conclusion

The investigation has focused on New Englishes in Cameroon as used in advertising from the perspectives of Construction Grammar and the Dynamic Model, exploring the Englishes and the place of each of them in the LL of Cameroon and the way they function. New Englishes in Cameroon are at their heyday. The Englishes display context-specific morpho-syntactic features and occupy a unique evolutionary trajectory (stage four of the Dynamic Model). Their places are also noteworthy, as CamE is the dominant English used in advertising in Cameroon,

followed by CamFE and CamPE, respectively. All these Englishes play a significant social role in Cameroon, symbolizing dynamic and simplified contextual communication.

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