



Bridging the Hybrid Divide: Postcolonial Translation, Domestication, and the Englishing of Camfranglais

Densel Norris Bidbila¹; Atoh Julius Chenwi²; Ayonghe Lum Suzanne³

¹ University of Bamenda, Cameroon. Email: denselnorise@gmail.com

² University of Bamenda, Cameroon. Email: juliuschenwi08@gmail.com

³ University of Buea, Cameroon. Email: ayonghelumsuzanne@gmail.com

ARTICLE'S INFO

Article No.: 062426096

Type: Research

Full Text: [PDF](#), [PHP](#), [HTML](#), [EPUB](#), [MP3](#)

DOI: [10.15580/gjah.2026.1.062426096](https://doi.org/10.15580/gjah.2026.1.062426096)

Accepted: 27/06/2026

Published: 29/06/2026

Keywords: Camfranglais, linguistic hybridity, communicative translation, modulation, postcolonial translation, Cameroon

*Corresponding Author

Densel Norris Bidbila

University of Bamenda, Cameroon.

E-mail: denselnorise@gmail.com

Article's QR code



ABSTRACT

This paper addresses the core problem that conventional literal translation methods and standard formal dictionaries are fundamentally inadequate for rendering culturally dense linguistic hybridity into English, as literalism results in either semantic opacity or the complete erasure of postcolonial translation specificity and local Cameroon identity. The primary objective of this study is to systematically evaluate a structured repertoire of translation decisions within the framework of communicative translation theory to determine the most effective mechanism for transferring these expressions to an English-speaking Cameroonian audience. To achieve this, the article is guided by a straightforward central question: which specific translation strategy and particularly focusing on the utility of modulation, can successfully carry the cultural density, humour, and pragmatic force embedded in Mercedes Fouda's written Camfranglais into English without sacrificing target-reader intelligibility or stripping away the local symbolic voice?

Résumé

Cet article aborde le problème central selon lequel les méthodes de traduction littérale conventionnelles et les dictionnaires formels standard s'avèrent fondamentalement inadéquats pour rendre en anglais l'hybridité linguistique à forte charge culturelle, le littéralisme entraînant soit une opacité sémantique, soit l'effacement complet de la spécificité de la traduction postcoloniale et de l'identité locale camerounaise. L'objectif principal de cette étude est d'évaluer systématiquement un répertoire structuré de choix traductifs dans le cadre de la théorie de la traduction communicative, afin de déterminer le mécanisme le plus efficace pour transmettre ces expressions à un public camerounais anglophone. Pour y parvenir, l'article s'articule autour d'une question centrale simple : quelle stratégie de traduction spécifique et mettant particulièrement l'accent sur l'utilité de la modulation, peut réussir à transposer en anglais la densité culturelle, l'humour et la force pragmatique inhérents au Camfranglais écrit de Mercedes Fouda, sans sacrifier la compréhensibilité pour le lecteur cible ni vider de sa substance la voix symbolique locale ?

INTRODUCTION

Cameroon presents one of the most dynamic language-contact environments on the African continent. Alongside the country's two official colonial languages, English and French, 240 to 280 indigenous languages and powerful contact varieties such as Cameroon Pidgin English continue to shape everyday communication. In such a multilingual ecology, hybrid forms do not arise at the margins alone; they occupy the center of lived social interaction. UNESCO's 1982 Mexico City Declaration remains useful here because it defines culture as a broad ensemble of symbolic, material, intellectual, and affective features through which societies recognize themselves and organize meaning. In Cameroon, language is one of the most visible places where this cultural self-recognition happens.

Camfranglais is one of the clearest manifestations of linguistic hybridity. Kouega (2003) describes Camfranglais as a composite slang used by young Cameroonians and built out of French, English, Pidgin, and indigenous-language resources. More recent work by Kießling (2021) shows that Camfranglais cannot be

reduced to a decorative lexicon appended to standard French; it exhibits a deeper grammatical hybridity and indexes solidarity, progressiveness, and cosmopolitan Cameroonian identity. Ebongue (2023) further demonstrates that written Camfranglais is patterned and stratified rather than random, especially in the productions of educated users. What emerges from these scholars is that hybridity in Cameroon is not linguistic accident. It is social style, ideological positioning, and cultural memory at once.

Mercedes Fouda's *Je parle Camerounais pour un nouveau francofaune* is a privileged site for observing this phenomenon. Published by Karthala in 2001, the text does not merely record colorful speech; it dramatizes how Cameroonians bend French into a locally meaningful medium. The book is humorous, satirical, and richly idiomatic. Expressions like *ami de bière*, *deuxième bureau*, *kongossa*, *Mamie taro pilé*, and *tombé sans glisser* do not function as isolated lexical curiosities. They condense social relations, urban precarity, gendered power, pragmatic nuance, and embodied local knowledge. To translate such expressions into English is therefore not to replace one word with another. It is to decide what must be clarified,

what may be retained, and what kind of reader the translation imagines.

Translation in this article is understood as cultural mediation. Newmark's *A Textbook of Translation* (1988) is central because it distinguishes communicative translation from more source-bound procedures. Communicative translation aims at producing an effect on the target audience comparable to that of the source text on its readership. Nida's work is equally important in placing emphasis on intelligibility, receptor response, and the communicative situation of translation. His insistence that translating means communicating remains particularly relevant in multilingual African settings where the issue is not only linguistic transfer but the social conditions under which meaning becomes shareable.

Communicative translation is especially attractive for Fouda's text because many expressions in the corpus are intelligible only to insiders familiar with urban Cameroonian speech and social practice. A translation that clings mechanically to surface form may retain lexical strangeness, but it will often fail to transmit the intended pragmatic effect. When *mouiller la gorge* is rendered literally as "wet the throat," the reader may understand the words but miss the convivial invitation encoded in the expression. A communicative rendering such as "have a drink first" reproduces the social function more effectively.

Yet communicative translation by itself is not enough. If it is interpreted narrowly as pure fluency, it risks domesticating away the foreignness that gives hybrid expressions their political and cultural value. The present article therefore treats communicative translation not as a mandate for neutralization but as a flexible reader-oriented approach that must be balanced with cultural retention. At the micro level, this article draws on procedures such as modulation, borrowing, amplification, cultural substitution, and compensation. Modulation is particularly important because it allows the translator to shift perspective while preserving intended sense. Borrowing becomes useful when a source term carries strong cultural identity and should remain visible. Amplification helps when a concise source expression needs extra contextual support in English. The broader thesis shows that these strategies are not applied randomly but according to the social load of each expression. The article is organized into five main parts: literature review, theoretical framework, methodology, results and discussions followed by a conclusion and references.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section revisits the conceptual and empirical literature most relevant to the translation of Cameroonian hybrid language. It first clarifies the notions of hybridity, Camfranglais, and communicative

translation before reviewing scholarship on hybrid discourse and its translation.

Empirical Review

Kouega (2003) seminal description of Camfranglais as a composite slang remains foundational because it identifies the speech form's mixed lexical sources and its use among youth as a code of in-group belonging. Kießling (2021) complicates this earlier view by arguing that Camfranglais may not simply graft vocabulary onto a French matrix; rather, it displays forms of grammatical hybridity whose structure cannot be entirely reduced to standard French. This matters for translation because the translator is not dealing with a few anomalous words inside an otherwise stable code. The translator is dealing with a culturally and structurally hybrid discourse world.

Ebongue (2023) is particularly helpful for the present study because he shifts attention from oral Camfranglais to written Camfranglais. He shows that written camfranglais vary according to speaker profile and level of education, but they are sufficiently patterned to warrant systematic analysis. Fouda's text belongs precisely to this written domain. It stylizes speech without merely transcribing it, which means that the hybrid forms are both sociolinguistic facts and literary choices. Their translation must therefore respond to both levels.

Ubanako (2021) reviews the debate over whether Camfranglais should be classified as a language in its own right or as a new speech form on a continuum with other Cameroonian contact varieties. For this article, the taxonomic question is less decisive than the translational implication: whether one calls it a language, a youth variety, or a hybrid sociolect, Camfranglais carries social meanings that cannot be preserved through denotational equivalence alone.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this article is centered on communicative translation theory and complemented by postcolonial translation theory (Newmark, 1988). The first provides a model for reader-oriented transfer; the second prevents that model from collapsing into cultural erasure.

Communicative Translation Theory

Newmark's (1988) communicative translation theory is appropriate for this study because the target readership is clearly defined: English-speaking Cameroonians who may share the national cultural environment but not necessarily the same hybrid Franco-Cameroonian lexical repertoire as Fouda's primary readership. The aim of the translation is therefore not to produce a philological document but to make the expressions function meaningfully for a cognate but distinct audience. In this framework, successful translation depends less on lexical fidelity than on equivalent communicative impact.

This does not mean that form is irrelevant. In many instances the stylistic color of Fouda's expressions contributes directly to meaning. What communicative translation permits is a strategic rebalancing: when the surface form obstructs comprehension, the translator may reshape it in order to preserve its effect. This is why modulation emerges so strongly in the wider corpus. Hybrid expressions often need to be recast from literal image to culturally intelligible sense.

Domestication, Foreignization and Postcolonial Mediation

Venuti (1995) critique of fluent domestication is especially relevant because hybrid African texts are often pressured into conformity with metropolitan norms. If every Cameroonian expression is naturalized into a smooth and generic English equivalent, the translation may become readable but politically bland. Bhabha's (1994) notion of hybridity helps resist this flattening by insisting that mixed forms are themselves productive cultural sites.

The position adopted here is therefore a mediated one. The translation should domesticate when comprehension genuinely requires it, but foreignize selectively when the local term itself is part of the meaning. The wider corpus results support this compromise: domestication predominates overall, but foreignization remains necessary in a meaningful minority of cases. This balance allows the target text to speak clearly without pretending that it was born in monolingual English.

METHODOLOGY

Insert and introductory sentence here

Qualitative design

The population of study includes hybrid expressions occurring in Fouda's text as well as Cameroonian readers capable of evaluating the proposed English translations. The textual population is particularly relevant because Fouda's work presents hybridity not in scattered incidental forms but as a sustained discourse practice. The human population is equally important because the research seeks to know whether the proposed translations remain meaningful for English-speaking Cameroonians.

The broader study purposively selected one hundred hybrid expressions from *Je parle Camerounais pour un nouveau francophone*. These one hundred items were distributed evenly across four sub-domains: social relations and interpersonal structures, economic life and survival strategies, urban youth culture and identity construction, and discourse, pragmatics and figurative expression. In addition, twenty-five participants were selected from two broad categories: translation and linguistics professionals on the one hand, and Cameroonian lay readers familiar with everyday hybrid speech on the other. Each participant evaluated ten translated expressions randomly drawn from the wider corpus.

Data were collected through three complementary channels. First, documentary data were extracted from Fouda's text and organized into a translatability grid. Second, participants responded to a questionnaire designed to test clarity, cultural resonance, identity preservation, and perceived strategy effectiveness. Third, semi-structured interviews provided interpretive depth by allowing respondents to discuss why some translations felt more natural or more faithful than others.

Table 1: The principal instrument is the translatability grid. It functions as an analytical template that records both textual and translational variables, making the decision process explicit and replicable.

1	Source text	Records the original source-language excerpt or sentence in which the hybrid expression appears, usually with page reference.	
2	Context of production	Specifies the communicative situation, speakers, and discourse environment in which the expression is used.	
3	Element(s) of interest	Identifies the exact hybrid word, phrase, or construction selected for analysis.	
4	Description of Element of interest	Describes the linguistic form of the item and the socio-semantic, including structure, lexical composition, or pattern of hybridity.	
5	Author's intention	States the purpose of the expression in context and what effect or message the author intends it to produce.	
6	Target audience	Identifies the primary and secondary readers for whom the translation is being designed.	
7	Translatability constraints	Lists the stylistic, cognitive, cultural, pragmatic, or ideological difficulties likely to affect translation.	
8	Proposed translation	Provides the proposed English rendering selected for the target audience.	
9	Translator's method	Literary theory	Names the literary, sociolinguistic, or cultural framework used to interpret the expression.
		Translation theory	Indicates the translation theory guiding the transfer of the expression into English.
		Translation micro strategy	Specifies the local translation procedure used at expression level, such as modulation, borrowing, or amplification.
		Translation macro strategy	States the overall translational orientation adopted, such as domestication or foreignization.
10	Justification of approaches used	Explains why the chosen theories and strategies are appropriate for the item under analysis.	
11	Transitional phrase	Provides a linking sentence that connects the present analysis to the next excerpt in the sequence.	

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents selected expressions from the wider corpus under three thematic groupings. Each extract illustrates how the interaction between communicative translation and postcolonial mediation guides the movement from source expression to English rendering.

The first thematic grouping concerns social relations and interpersonal positioning. In Fouda's text, naming a person is rarely neutral; lexical choices index power, intimacy, usefulness, ridicule, or emotional dependence. Three expressions are particularly revealing.

Table 2: Extract No 1 Social Bonding and Instrumental Friendship

EXCERPT No:1		SOCIAL RELATIONS AND INTERPERSONAL STRUCTURES	
1	Source text	Il est seulement mon Ami de bière (<i>Je parle camerounais pour un renouveau francofaune</i> , p.47)	
2	Context of production	Urban Cameroonian speakers in casual social settings where friendship is defined mainly by beer-drinking companionship.	
3	Element(s) of interest	ami de bière	
4	Description of element of interest	Linguistic	Compound noun: noun + preposition + noun.
		Socio-semantic	A superficial or opportunistic friend whose relationship is limited to drinking contexts.
5	Author's intention	To portray socially conditioned friendship patterns in urban Cameroonian settings.	
6	Target audience	Primary: Cameroonian readers familiar with alcohol-based social culture; Secondary: Anglophone readers requiring cultural mediation.	
7	Translatability constraints	Stylistic	Literal translation loses humour and idiomatic nuance.
		Cognitive	Readers may fail to grasp the conditional nature of the friendship.
		Cultural	The culturally specific meaning of Cameroonian social relations must be preserved.
8	Proposed translation	Charge friend	
9	Researcher's method	Literary theory	Postcolonial Sociolinguistic Theory
		Translation theory	Communicative Translation Theory
		Micro-technique	Modulation
		Macro strategy	Foreignization strategy
10	Justification	Postcolonial Sociolinguistic Theory explains the culturally embedded meaning of the expression, while Communicative Translation ensures accessibility. Modulation shifts the expression into an equivalent idiomatic form, and foreignization preserves the Cameroonian sociocultural identity.	
11	Transitional phrase	This analysis shows how 'ami de bière' reflects conditional friendship in Cameroonian discourse and introduces the next element of interest 'baleine'.	

Table 3: Extract No 2 Age, Power and Economic Desire

		SOCIAL RELATIONS AND INTERPERSONAL STRUCTURES	
1	Source text	C'est son meilleur vieux qui s'occupe d'elle. (<i>Je parle camerounais pour un renouveau francofaune</i> , p.61)	
2	Context of production	Urban speakers discussing transactional relationships involving financial support from older male partners.	
3	Element(s) of interest	meilleur vieux	
4	Description of element of interest	Linguistic	Compound noun phrase combining evaluative adjective with age marker.
		Socio-semantic	Refers euphemistically to a wealthy older man who financially supports a younger partner within a transactional relationship.
5	Author's intention	To reveal transactional intimacy while maintaining euphemistic subtlety in Cameroonian discourse.	
6	Target audience	Primary: Cameroonian readers familiar with euphemistic expressions; Secondary: Anglophone readers requiring explicit interpretation.	
7	Translatability constraints	Stylistic	Literal translation obscures intended meaning.
		Cognitive	Readers must infer implicit relational meaning.
		Cultural	Relationship norms differ across cultures and must be adapted.
8	Proposed translation	Sugar daddy	
9	Researcher's method	Literary theory	Postcolonial Gender and Sexuality Studies
		Translation theory	Communicative Translation Theory
		Micro-technique	Modulation
		Macro strategy	Domestication
10	Justification	Postcolonial Gender and Sexuality Studies explains how euphemistic language encodes transactional intimacy, while Communicative Translation ensures clarity for the target audience. Modulation captures the implicit relational meaning, and domestication provides a culturally recognizable equivalent.	
11	Transitional phrase	This analysis shows how 'meilleur vieux' encodes transactional intimacy in Cameroonian discourse and introduces the next element of interest 'meilleure vieille'.	

Table 4: Extract No 3 Public and Secret Intimacy

EXCERPT No:20		SOCIAL RELATIONS AND INTERPERSONAL STRUCTURES	
1	Source text	Son deuxième bureau habite loin. (<i>Je parle camerounais pour un renouveau francophone</i> , p.61)	
2	Context of production	Urban speakers commenting humorously on infidelity and multiple romantic partnerships within informal social interactions.	
3	Element(s) of interest	deuxième bureau	
4	Description of element of interest	Linguistic	Compound noun derived from bureaucratic terminology used metaphorically.
		Socio-semantic	Refers to a secondary romantic partner or mistress, humorously framing infidelity through administrative imagery.
5	Author's intention	To satirize normalized infidelity by employing bureaucratic metaphor within everyday discourse.	
6	Target audience	Primary: Francophone African readers familiar with the expression; Secondary: Anglophone readers requiring cultural interpretation.	
7	Translatability constraints	Stylistic	Bureaucratic humour may be lost in direct translation.
		Cognitive	Readers may not interpret administrative metaphor in relational terms.
		Cultural	The culturally specific framing of infidelity must be adapted.
8	Proposed translation	Side chick	
9	Researcher's method	Literary theory	Postcolonial Studies
		Translation theory	Communicative Translation Theory
		Micro-technique	Modulation
		Macro strategy	Domestication
10	Justification	Postcolonial Studies explains how bureaucratic metaphors are repurposed to structure intimate relationships in African discourse, while Communicative Translation ensures accessibility. Modulation adapts the metaphor into a culturally intelligible equivalent, and domestication enhances clarity while preserving humorous intent.	
11	Transitional phrase	This analysis shows how 'deuxième bureau' humorously encodes secondary romantic roles in Cameroonian discourse and introduces the next element of interest 'Annaba'.	

The three extracts above show that the translation of relational hybridity depends on recovering social function rather than surface lexicon. In all three cases, modulation allows the English rendering to preserve pragmatic force. The resulting expressions sound less alien, but they do not empty out the source's social critique. Instead, they recreate for the target audience the lived economy of friendship, dependency, and intimacy embedded in the original.

The second thematic grouping concerns economic life and survival strategies. Fouda's text repeatedly demonstrates that urban speech is shaped by scarcity, hustle, and informal commerce. Here translation must deal not only with semantic meaning but with the material realities hidden inside routine expressions.

Table 5: Extract No 4 Speech as Social Currency

EXCERPT No:29		ECONOMIC LIFE, MONEY AND SURVIVAL STRATEGIES	
1	Source text	Le kongossa circule déjà partout. (<i>Je parle camerounais pour un renouveau francophone</i> , p.64)	
2	Context of production	Urban community members referring to circulating gossip within neighbourhoods, markets, and social networks.	
3	Element(s) of interest	kongossa	
4	Description of element of interest	Linguistic	Noun of likely onomatopoeic or local origin.
		Socio-semantic	Refers to scandalous or sensational gossip circulating within community networks.
5	Author's intention	To depict the power of informal information networks within urban Cameroonian society.	
6	Target audience	Primary: Cameroonian readers familiar with gossip culture; Secondary: Anglophone readers requiring cultural interpretation.	
7	Translatability constraints	Stylistic	Expressiveness must be retained.
		Cognitive	Readers may not grasp social function.
		Cultural	Term deeply rooted in local communicative practices.
8	Proposed translation	Hot gossip	
9	Researcher's method	Literary theory	Sociolinguistics
		Translation theory	Communicative Translation Theory
		Micro-technique	Modulation
		Macro strategy	Foreignization
10	Justification	Sociolinguistics explains how informal communication practices structure social interaction, while Communicative Translation ensures accessibility. Modulation conveys intensity and meaning, and foreignization preserves the cultural specificity embedded in the expression.	
11	Transitional phrase	This analysis shows how 'kongossa' encodes informal information networks in Cameroonian discourse and introduces the next element of interest 'a le dos'.	

Table 6: Extract No 5 Selective Cultural Retention

EXCERPT No:40		ECONOMIC LIFE, MONEY AND SURVIVAL STRATEGIES	
1	Source text	On mange chez Mamie taro pilé . (<i>Je parle camerounais pour un renouveau francofaune</i> , p.26)	
2	Context of production	Urban speakers referring to local cuisine and vendors in informal food spaces.	
3	Element(s) of interest	Mamie taro pilé	
4	Description of element of interest	Linguistic	Compound noun combining a kinship term with a food preparation descriptor.
		Socio-semantic	Refers to a local eatery associated with achu, indexing tradition, authenticity, and communal eating practices.
5	Author's intention	To foreground indigenous cuisine and emphasize cultural continuity in everyday life.	
6	Target audience	Primary: Cameroonian readers familiar with traditional dishes; Secondary: Anglophone readers requiring contextualization.	
7	Translatability constraints	Stylistic	Cultural flavour must be preserved.
		Cognitive	Readers may not identify the dish.
		Cultural	Food preparation and naming are culture-specific.
8	Proposed translation	Mami Achu	
9	Researcher's method	Literary theory	Cultural Pragmatics
		Translation theory	Communicative Translation Theory
		Micro-technique	Borrowing
		Macro strategy	Foreignization
10	Justification	Cultural Pragmatics explains how culinary expressions encode identity and communal practices, while Communicative Translation ensures accessibility. Borrowing preserves the cultural specificity of the dish, and foreignization maintains authenticity while allowing readers to engage with the source culture.	
11	Transitional phrase	This analysis shows how 'Mamie taro pilé' encodes culinary identity in Cameroonian discourse and introduces the next element of interest 'mouiller la gorge'.	

Table 7: Extract No 6 Ritualized Conviviality

EXCERPT No:41		ECONOMIC LIFE, MONEY AND SURVIVAL STRATEGIES	
1	Source text	Avant de parler, il faut d'abord mouiller la gorge . (<i>Je parle camerounais pour un renouveau francophone</i> , p.31)	
2	Context of production	Urban Cameroonian speakers referring to alcohol consumption as a prerequisite for social interaction in informal convivial settings.	
3	Element(s) of interest	mouiller la gorge	
4	Description of element of interest	Linguistic	Calque-like verbal phrase combining physical action with body reference.
		Socio-semantic	Refers to drinking alcohol as a social ritual facilitating interaction and conviviality.
5	Author's intention	To reflect code-switching practices and the central role of alcohol in social bonding.	
6	Target audience	Primary: Cameroonian readers familiar with Pidgin-influenced expressions; Secondary: Anglophone readers requiring idiomatic interpretation.	
7	Translatability constraints	Stylistic	Informality must be preserved.
		Cognitive	Literal meaning may mislead readers.
		Cultural	Drinking rituals differ across cultures.
8	Proposed translation	Have a drink first	
9	Researcher's method	Literary theory	Contact Linguistics
		Translation theory	Communicative Translation Theory
		Micro-technique	Modulation
		Macro strategy	Foreignization
10	Justification	Contact Linguistics explains how Pidgin-influenced calques shape expression, while Communicative Translation ensures clarity. Modulation renders the expression idiomatic in English, while foreignization preserves its cultural grounding.	
11	Transitional phrase	This analysis shows how 'mouiller la gorge' encodes drinking rituals in Cameroonian discourse and introduces the next element of interest 'Il bûche jour et nuit'.	

These examples confirm that economic and social survival in Fouda's text is mediated through a lexicon of improvisation and shared cultural scripts. Translation succeeds when it respects the different weights carried by different items. Some expressions can be modulated into accessible English; others, such as *Mamie taro pilé*, require visible cultural retention. This is where the balance between domestication and

foreignization becomes operational rather than abstract.

The third thematic grouping addresses urban youth culture and figurative discourse. In this domain, hybrid expressions often rely on metaphor, exaggeration, and performative speech acts. Their meaning is inseparable from tone.

Table 8: Extract No 7 Figurative Romance

EXCERPT No:58		URBAN YOUTH CULTURE, SLANG AND IDENTITY MARKERS	
1	Source text	Il est tombé sans glisser . (<i>Je parle camerounais pour un renouveau francofaune</i> , p.61)	
2	Context of production	Urban speakers recounting sudden events such as unexpected collapse or falling in love in informal storytelling contexts.	
3	Element(s) of interest	tombé sans glisser	
4	Description of element of interest	Linguistic	Paradoxical verbal construction combining falling without slipping.
		Socio-semantic	Expresses suddenness, either unexpected death or abrupt falling in love, emphasizing dramatic immediacy.
5	Author's intention	To heighten dramatic effect and narrative intensity.	
6	Target audience	Primary: Cameroonian readers familiar with dramatic idioms; Secondary: Anglophone readers requiring idiomatic equivalence.	
7	Translatability constraints	Stylistic	Literal meaning is illogical and must be adapted.
		Cognitive	Readers may not interpret paradox correctly.
		Cultural	Idiomatic emphasis on suddenness differs across cultures.
8	Proposed translation	He fell in love	
9	Researcher's method	Literary theory	Postcolonial Studies
		Translation theory	Communicative Translation Theory
		Micro-technique	Modulation
		Macro strategy	Domestication
10	Justification	Postcolonial Studies highlights culturally grounded narrative expressions, while communicative translation ensures clarity. Modulation resolves the paradoxical structure into a natural English equivalent preserving emotional effect, and domestication ensures accessibility.	
11	Transitional phrase	This analysis shows how 'tombé sans glisser' encodes sudden dramatic events in Cameroonian discourse and introduces the next element of interest 'Les filles cirages'.	

Table 9: Extract No 8 Escalated Verbal Conflict

EXCERPT No:71		URBAN YOUTH CULTURE, SLANG AND IDENTITY MARKERS	
1	Source text	Ils ont commencé à faire palabre pour une histoire d'argent. (<i>Je parle camerounais pour un renouveau francofaune</i> , p.81)	
2	Context of production	Urban speakers describing an extended, emotionally charged dispute in informal community settings.	
3	Element(s) of interest	faire palabre	
4	Description of element of interest	Linguistic	Hybrid expression combining French light verb with African-derived noun.
		Socio-semantic	Refers to prolonged, heated argument involving emotional intensity and social participation.
5	Author's intention	To reflect African modes of conflict expression and communal dispute dynamics.	
6	Target audience	Primary: Cameroonian readers; Secondary: Anglophone readers requiring clarification.	
7	Translatability constraints	Stylistic	Duration and intensity must be preserved.
		Cognitive	Literal borrowing may weaken meaning.
		Cultural	Concept of palabre extends beyond simple argument.
8	Proposed translation	They started arguing endlessly over money	
9	Researcher's method	Literary theory	Postcolonial Discourse; Social Theory
		Translation theory	Communicative Translation Theory
		Micro-technique	Modulation
		Macro strategy	Domestication
10	Justification	Postcolonial discourse explains how culturally embedded conflict practices are linguistically encoded, while communicative translation ensures clarity. Modulation adapts the culturally specific term into a natural English equivalent, and domestication preserves readability and pragmatic intensity.	
11	Transitional phrase	This analysis shows how 'faire palabre' encodes culturally specific conflict practices in Cameroonian discourse and introduces the next element of interest 'je suis short'.	

Table 10: Extract No 9 Pragmatic Warning

EXCERPT No:79		DISCOURSE, PRAGMATICS AND FIGURATIVE EXPRESSION	
1	Source text	Ne nous gâtez pas la sauce . (<i>Je parle camerounais pour un renouveau francofaune</i> , p.54)	
2	Context of production	Speakers warning against disruption in negotiations or group activities.	
3	Element(s) of interest	gâtez pas la sauce	
4	Description of element of interest	Linguistic	Idiomatic clause based on culinary metaphor.
		Socio-semantic	Indexes disruption, interference, and threat to collective harmony.
5	Author's intention	To express collective frustration and urge restraint in maintaining social harmony.	
6	Target audience	Primary: Cameroonians readers; Secondary: Anglophone readers requiring metaphor clarification.	
7	Translatability constraints	Stylistic	Informal warning tone must be preserved.
		Cognitive	Literal culinary meaning may mislead.
		Cultural	Food metaphors vary across cultures.
8	Proposed translation	Don't mess things up	
9	Researcher's method	Literary theory	Cultural Theory
		Translation theory	Communicative Translation Theory
		Micro-technique	Modulation
		Macro strategy	Domestication
10	Justification	Cultural theory explains how food metaphors encode social harmony, while communicative translation ensures clarity. Modulation replaces the culinary metaphor with a natural English equivalent, and domestication preserves pragmatic impact.	
11	Transitional phrase	This analysis shows how 'gâter la sauce' encodes disruption in Cameroonian discourse and introduces the next element of interest 'jouer le jeu'.	

This third grouping shows the limits of literalism most clearly. When figurative expressions are transferred word for word, the target reader may recover the image but miss the intended act: teasing, warning, irony, flirtation, or insult. Modulation therefore becomes less a stylistic preference than a necessity. At the same time, the loss of certain metaphors reminds us that communicative translation is not loss-free. It is an exercise in ranked priorities, and in this study the priority is culturally intelligible function.

Across the selected extracts, one pattern becomes unmistakable: the translation of Cameroonian hybridity is not governed by one universal solution but by a structured repertoire of decisions. Nevertheless, the dominance of modulation in the wider corpus is understandable. It is the strategy most capable of moving between the source culture's

compact images and the target audience's interpretive habits. Borrowing remains available, but only where retaining a local form contributes more meaning than replacing it.

RESULTS

One important implication of these results is that the four sub-domains identified in the wider corpus are not merely convenient classificatory boxes; they reveal the breadth of hybrid meaning in Fouda's text. Social relations, economic survival, youth performance, and figurative pragmatics are all equally productive sites of hybridity. The balanced distribution of twenty-five expressions per sub-domain suggests that Cameroonian hybrid language is woven through the

whole social fabric rather than concentrated in a narrow slang register. This matters for translation because it means the translator cannot approach the text as if only a few flashy expressions require special treatment. The entire discourse environment is hybridized, and translation strategy must remain alert from beginning to end.

The dominance of modulation also becomes clearer when viewed against the kinds of semantic work these expressions perform. In many cases, the source form compresses a social scene or ideological stance into an image that is obvious to insiders but opaque to outsiders. The translator's job is therefore not to decode a simple word meaning, but to recover an entire frame of interaction. Expressions such as *ami de bière*, *deuxième bureau*, and *mouiller la gorge* demand a shift from lexical form to social function. Modulation is the strategy that makes such shifts possible without turning the translation into a paraphrase every time. It preserves force by changing angle. That is why it appears with such consistency in the broader project.

Another significant result concerns cultural legitimacy. The participant responses indicate that English-speaking Cameroonians are not asking for a translation stripped of local speech. On the contrary, they seem willing to accept selective retention, local flavor, and strategic explanation when these elements help preserve Cameroonian voice. This finding challenges the assumption that audience accessibility always requires strong standardization. In the context of Cameroon, the target readership already inhabits a multilingual national space. What they need is not the removal of cultural difference but a controlled pathway into it. Translation thus becomes an instrument of mutual legibility between linguistic communities within the same nation.

By combining a translatability grid, participant evaluation, and descriptive statistics, the research offers a practical model for future work on African hybrid texts. The grid makes translational reasoning transparent; the participant data test the plausibility of the proposed solutions; and the statistical pattern adds a further layer of coherence to the qualitative argument. For translators, lecturers, and postgraduate researchers working on multilingual African literature, this mixed procedure offers a replicable way to move from intuition to accountable analysis. In that sense, the study contributes not only to the translation of Fouda's text, but also to the pedagogy of translating linguistic hybridity in postcolonial settings.

The findings also carry implications for translator training in Cameroon. Programmes that focus mainly on standard-language equivalence risk leaving students underprepared for the realities of hybrid discourse, where social context, register, and cultural inference matter as much as lexical knowledge. The present study suggests that translators need explicit training in sociolinguistic interpretation, local discourse practices, and strategy justification. They should be able to explain why one item demands modulation, why

another calls for selective borrowing, and why still another may need amplification or a mixed solution. In a multilingual country where public discourse routinely crosses codes, this competence is not peripheral; it is central to professional relevance.

There is also a broader readership implication. Translating *Je parle camerounais pour un renouveau francofaune*, by Mercedes Fouda into English for Anglophone Cameroonians is not simply a literary exercise directed at one book. It models how cultural material can circulate more equitably within a bilingual nation whose language communities often encounter each other unevenly. A carefully mediated translation allows Francophone hybrid expression to become legible to Anglophone readers without stripping it of its Francophone-Cameroonian texture. In that sense, the paper contributes to a more reciprocal cultural economy. It suggests that translation can help build internal national readerships, not only external global ones, and that postcolonial translation theory becomes most persuasive when it serves concrete acts of intra-national understanding.

Future research can build on this foundation in several directions. A larger comparative study could test whether the same strategic distribution holds across multiple Cameroonian authors writing in hybrid French, hybrid English, or mixed Pidgin-inflected prose. Another line of inquiry could compare reader response across regions, age groups, or educational backgrounds in order to see how different Cameroonian publics negotiate translated hybridity. Finally, digital annotation, glossary design, and multimodal translation could be explored as complementary tools for carrying culture-specific expressions into English without either flattening or overburdening the text. These extensions would not replace the present article's core claim. Rather, they would deepen it: hybrid language requires translation methods that are linguistically alert, culturally situated, and empirically tested.

CONCLUSION

This article set out to examine how Cameroonian linguistic hybridity can be translated into English for an English-speaking Cameroonian readership without neutralizing its cultural force. Using material drawn from Mercedes Fouda's *Je parle Camerounais pour un renouveau francofaune*, the study has shown that hybrid expressions in the text operate as dense social signs. They encode relationship types, economic precarity, cultural familiarity, irony, youth identity, and pragmatic force in compressed and often metaphorical forms.

The analysis has demonstrated that literal translation is rarely adequate for such material. The dominant and most effective solution is communicative translation supported primarily by modulation. This strategy allows the translator to recover what the expression is doing, not merely what its individual words denote. At the

same time, the article has argued against an indiscriminate pursuit of fluency. Selective foreignization remains necessary where the local term itself is part of the meaning, as shown by the retention of *Mami Achu*.

The results from the larger corpus confirm this balanced position. Modulation dominates the micro-level decisions, domestication predominates at the macro level, and participant responses strongly support the rejection of mechanical translation for hybrid Cameroonian discourse. The article therefore concludes that the best way to translate Fouda's Cameroonian linguistic hybridity is to treat translation as cultural mediation: domesticate for intelligibility where needed, retain local forms where they carry identity, and never confuse hybrid language with error. What Fouda writes is not broken French awaiting repair. It is Cameroonian meaning in motion, and the translator's task is to help it move across languages without losing its pulse.

REFERENCES

- Ashcroft, B., Griffiths, G., & Tiffin, H. (2002). *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- Bandia, P. (2008). *Translation as Reparation: Writing and Translation in Postcolonial Africa*. St. Jerome.
- Berman, A. (1995). *Pour une critique des traductions: John Donne*. Gallimard.
- Bhabha, H. K. (1994). *The Location of Culture*. Routledge.
- Catford, J. C. (1965). *A Linguistic Theory of Translation: An Essay in Applied Linguistics*. Oxford University Press.
- Cronin, M. (2006). *Translation and Identity*. Routledge.
- Ebongue, A. E. (2023). Linguistic features in a marginal corpus: The case of written Camfranglais. *Multilingual Margins*, 9(1), 12-25. <https://www.epubs.ac.za/index.php/mmm/article/view/1392>
- Fouda, M. (2001). *Je parle camerounais: Pour un nouveau francofaune*. Karthala.
- Gentzler, E. (2001). *Contemporary Translation Theories* (2nd ed.). Multilingual Matters.
- Kembou, T. E. J. (2019). *Understanding and Translating Hybrid Texts: A Methodological Approach Based on French-Speaking Cameroonian Literature*. LIT Verlag.
- Kießling, R. (2021). Grammatical hybridity in Camfranglais? In R. Mesthrie, E. Hurst-Harosh, & H. Brookes (Eds.), *Youth Language Practices and Urban Language Contact in Africa* (pp. 115-140). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781316759769.008>
- Kouega, J.-P. (2003). Camfranglais: A novel slang in Cameroon schools. *English Today*, 19(2), 23-29. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078403002050>
- Newmark, P. (1988). *A Textbook of Translation*. Prentice Hall.
- Nida, E. A. (1979). Translating means communicating: A sociolinguistic theory of translation II. *The Bible Translator*, 30(3), 318-325. <https://doi.org/10.1177/026009357903000302>
- Spivak, G. C. (1993). The politics of translation. In *Outside in the Teaching Machine* (pp. 179-200). Routledge.
- Ubanako, V. N. (2021). Is 'Camfranglais' a new language? A review of current opinions. *International Linguistics Research*, 4(1), 36. <https://doi.org/10.30560/ilr.v4n1p36>
- UNESCO. (1982). *Mexico City Declaration on Cultural Policies*. UNESCO. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/documents/966>
- Vakunta, P. W. (2008). On translating Camfranglais and other Camerounismes. *Meta*, 53(4), 942-947. <https://doi.org/10.7202/019665ar>
- Vakunta, P. W. (2014). *Camfranglais: The Making of a New Language in Cameroonian Literature*. Langaa RPCIG.
- Venuti, L. (1995). *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*. Routledge.
- Vinay, J.-P., & Darbelnet, J. (1995). *Comparative Stylistics of French and English: A Methodology for Translation*. John Benjamins.
- Ze Amvela, E. (1989). Reflections on social implications of bilingualism in the Republic of Cameroon. *Epasa Moto*, 1(1), 41-61.