



SYNTACTIC FEATURES OF PREPOSITIONS AND PRO-FORMS IN CAMEROON FRANCOPHONE ENGLISH

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Abstract:

This paper examines the syntactic features of prepositions and pro-forms by Cameroon Francophone English (CamFE) users with a tertiary education level. Written and spoken data were drawn from 95 participants from various domains encompassing administration, education, sports, and politics. A corpus of 136,767 words was built and exploited following the corpus linguistics methodology. The AntConc analytical toolkit was used in sorting out data. Quirk and Greenbaum's (1973) structural approach to grammar was used as the analytical framework to establish the common core features (CCFs) and the interfered features (IFs). It was found that the English by Francophone Cameroonians is characterised by features that drift away from the common core features. Items were inserted, substituted, anticipated, delayed or clustered. The French language has impacted those features in a considerable degree. The conclusion that is drawn from the analysis is that CamFE is a francophonised non-native variety of English in Cameroon.

Keywords: features, prepositions, pro-forms, conjunctions, CamFE

1. Introduction

The introduction of standard British English to Cameroon led to Cameroon English (CamE) as a non-native English variety. Various studies by some scholars attest to the existence of this non-native variety (Masanga, 1983; Mbangwana, 1987; Bobda, 1994; Sala, 2005; Kouega, 1991; Anchimbe, 2006; Ngefac, 2008 as cited in Ngefac, 2010). CamE has, in turn, produced its sibling, referred to as Cameroon Francophone English (CamFE). This has happened despite many efforts made to promote the standard native BrE variety in respect of the official curricula and syllabuses for English Language teaching and learning in Cameroon. Years after independence, the State trained ESL (CamE) teachers to teach English nationwide irrespective of the learners geographical, linguistic or sociocultural backgrounds. Recently, also Cameroonians EFL (CamFE)

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teachers who are from the French background have become speakers of this language and have embraced the job of teaching it alongside their ESL colleagues. They teach English Language termed *Anglais* which is actually their foreign language, in addition to French, their second language. Problematically, there are two major points to address. The first is that Cameroon EFL teachers of French background often hold “I am to teach *Anglais* to Francophones, not *English* to Anglophones”. Their ESL colleagues of English background very often claim the reverse version “I am posted to teach *English*, so I cannot teach *Anglais*”. It should be known that in Cameroon, which is an English and French official bilingual country, for a purely pedagogic reason, the English Language taught in the Anglophone subsystem of education to Anglophone students is termed *English Language* while that in the francophone subsystem to Francophone students is *Anglais*. Even though it can be admitted that the training profiles of these English Language and *Anglais* teachers count a lot, their reverse claims tell that the two varieties of English in Cameroon are distant and different and that they have become opposing realms. Either side is reluctant to venture into teaching in other subsystems.

The second point stems from CamFE status denial. Very many scholars still remain skeptical as to the existence of what can be termed CamFE despite the body of knowledge so far made available on it. On this point, Atechi (2015) reports that they, the sceptical linguists, give no language variety treatment to CamFE. While citing Kouega (1999), he opines that “A Sub-variety of English in Cameroon known as Cameroon Francophone English (CamFE) has been hitherto treated dismissively as a performance variety (Simo Bobda, 1994) and in some cases not even recognized as a sub-variety of Cameroon English” (Atechi, 2015:23). The French and English bilingual status of Cameroon implies that the existence of Cameroon Francophone English (CamFE) will entail that of Cameroon Anglophone English (CamAE) formerly known as Cameroon English (CamE) (Apuge, 2023). Whatever the terminology to refer to Cameroon’s two varieties of English, there is a need of equipping such skeptic scholars with a further description of CamFE, the newer English variety. In fact, the grammar of CamFE has not been sufficiently described despite a few studies available (Safotso, 2012, 2015, 2018; Kouega, 1999, 2008, 2009, 2017; 2019; Kouega & Sonkeng, 2013; Simo Bobda 2013; Atechi, 2015). The hanging problem inherent to the status of CamFE is due to the limited documentation of its grammar. An extra knowledge contribution is like to enlighten those Cameroon English Language teachers and linguists and make them to reconsider their views and apprehensions.

2. Review of Literature

Considerable research works were undertaken on CamFE the salient of which focused on the phonological and morphosyntactic levels. At the phonological level, French traits attested in CamFE were revealed in a couple of studies. Safotso’s (2012) study reveals that this variety of English has some stable typical phonological features. He gathered data from oral readings of some selected words and sentences by 50 French-speaking Cameroonian respondents with tertiary levels of education from various sources, including radio broadcasts, TV debates, political speeches, casual conversations and seminar sessions. The study focused on the renderings of plural forms and 3rd person singular markers ‘-s, -es, -ies, -oes’, the simple past tense and past participle morpheme ‘-ed’, consonant clusters, word stress, and the reading of

some English words. The data were analyzed through contrastive analysis, as well as interlanguage and language transfer perspectives. It was found that this variety of spoken English has stable features; although the subjects have different levels of education and speak varied mother tongues, their oral productions are similar. It was concluded that despite some differentiating features by the subjects, there are aspects that are common to all Cameroonian learners/speakers of English from a French background. Those aspects should be considered as hallmarks proper to CamFE as it goes with many other world varieties of English. Vowel nasalization and vowel epenthesis processes in CamFE are French-induced and are stable and predictable. However, they are difficult to give a comprehensive explanation (Safotso, 2018). Kouega (2005), on his part, has shown that CamE from which CamFE developed is heavily influenced by the French Language with which it cohabits though CamE speakers do not have French as their L1 or L2. Language contact is the main cause. Atechi (2015) in his work entitled *The Emergence of Cameroon Francophone English* led to similar findings. Some of those hallmarks reported by previous researchers, including Kouega (2008), Safotso (2012), Simo Bobda (2013) which he recaps feature the H-dropping, the H-insertion, the nasalization of vowels, the dropping of the –s in regular noun pluralization and third person singular marking for the simple present tense as well as some other *Frenchified* pronunciations. In the same vein, (Kouega 2017) conducted a phonology study of Francophone English by studying the production of the sequence -UI- diagraph by Francophone Learners of English in Cameroon, Gabon and France. It was found that the subjects articulate the -UI- sequence in two different ways. Besides, both the L1 and L2 French-users tend to pronounce the sequence similarly. These findings attest that Francophone speakers of English irrespective of their linguistic backgrounds transfer more French features which is their L1 or L2 into their English. He drew a conclusion that for French L2 speakers, their L2 influences their foreign language more than does their L1 which may be any of their local languages.

A morphosyntactic study of *The English of Francophone Users in Cameroon* by Kouega (2019) revealed that this variety of English contains French traits. He found cases where the V forms of verbs are used instead of the V-en in combination with auxiliaries, the simple present tense is used in lieu of the present perfect tense. Also, there were instances of the double past tense where both the auxiliary and the main verb are inflected in the past tense form. Besides, the present tense is used in lieu of the simple past tense; there were cases of regularisation of the V-ED form of regular and irregular verbs. In noun phrase structures, there were instances of unnecessary insertions of articles, instances of pluralization with an –s addition to adjectives and to nouns as a generalization following the French rule. Pro-forms wise, relative pronouns are usually mixed up, personal pronouns are often chosen at random regardless of gender and even number, reflexive pronouns are omitted, and adverbs of manner, which are expected to be put last, are usually placed in other positions. Besides, word order with subject-verb agreement, nouns and attributive adjectives were highlighted as being typical of what goes for CamFE. Regarding prepositions, items were generally omitted when they were needed or replaced by other prepositions. The author drew a conclusion that Francophone learners have the tendency to think in French before translating their linguistic conceptions into English. The result is wordiness, which lacks the English natural linguistic taste.

The works reviewed encompass various levels of language analysis. Much has been done, especially on the phonology component. The knowledge of prepositions, pro-forms are likely to be extended using a more inquisitive methodology. Two hypotheses guided this study: (1) the English by Cameroonians users of French background is replete with considerable traits that make it to be different from the common core features by Quirk and Greenbaum (1973) at some point; (2) CamFE Grammar of prepositions and pro-forms contains traits that differ from the Quirkian and Greenbaumian common core features owing to its French induced coloration.

The theory of structuralism as developed by Quirk and Greenbaum (1973) was used to analyze prepositions and pro-forms as part of closed system words. The world of English is classified into six varieties, all of which are dominated by the “common core” or “nucleus” variety (Quirk and Greenbaum, 1973:8). No matter how esoteric a variety may be, it bears some characteristics that are common to all varieties. The authors establish a standard form of English made up of two sub-systems known as British English and American English, which they term national varieties. Other varieties are conditioned by such factors as region (regional English), education or social standing (standard and substandard English), subject matter (registers), medium (spoken and written English), attitude (formal and informal English) and interference. They further explain that each variety has many interrelated sub-varieties. In this way, we can talk of many regional varieties sharing some common features. The existence of varieties of English within varieties makes it hard to explain or consider certain forms as being typical of a given variety. The *common core* “which constitutes the major part of any variety of English” as termed by the authors, can be considered a reference frame to compare and contrast any variety of English. For this reason and in this work, any feature which is not identical to the *common core feature* (CCF) is termed *interfered feature or form* (IF). Interfered forms because they opine that French users will say “I am here since Friday” instead of “I have been here since Friday” as a result of their French language influence. Thus, in addition to the *common core* forms which cut across all varieties of English in the world and conditions their intelligibility, *interfered features or forms* owing to the trace left by someone’s native language can be found (Quirk and Greenbaum (1973:7). Given that Cameroon Francophone English is a variety of English by Francophones (French L2 users) in Cameroon, interfered forms are hypothesized to be characteristically peculiar. However, some forms may be hard to explain, the authors remark.

3. Materials and Methods

Corpus linguistics was used to conduct this study. The methodology comprises the research informants, the research materials, the research instruments, and the procedure of data analysis. The informants were English-speaking Cameroonians of French education background. These were Cameroonian users of English as a Foreign Language. They were relatively versed in their L2 French language which is their first official language and first means of education. They learn English as a subject. Those participants were 95 subjects, aged 23 upwards including both males (60) and females (35). For the spoken data, they were 60 in all, notably 04 lecturers and 17 Masters and DIPES II (Secondary and High school teachers’ diploma) candidates, 03 regional pedagogic inspectors, 16 secondary school teachers, 05 government ministers, 05 regional governors and 10 high ranking administrative officials. For the written data, there were 35 university students,

secondary school teachers and administration officials. They underwent the Francophone sub-system of education in the primary and secondary levels and took up various fields of study at the tertiary level. The fact that most of those subjects were known to the researcher made their identification easier. The research materials were of both spoken and written sources gleaned through both recording and documentation. The spoken materials yield a corpus of 58,319 words, while the written built corpus of 78,448 words. In total, a 136,767 words corpus was built for the conduct of this study. This was considered a large enough linguistic repository. The larger the corpus, the richer it is. With a small corpus, one will reach the expected results, but those results would be just limited (Sinclair, 1998 as cited in Anthony, 2013).

Instrument-wise, the recording of the respondents' oral productions was done using an 8 gigabyte Dictaphone, ENET M50 model. For the spoken data from government ministers, regional governors and high-ranking officials' radio talks and interviews, the collection was done through the recording function of the *Itel* android phone in part. Documentation-based data collection included both spoken and written texts. Documented spoken data were downloaded from social media platforms. The data collection period ran from 2018 to 2021.

Given that corpus linguistics is a scientific study of language based on written texts aided with computer analytical software, the 3.5.2w of the 2018 version of AntConc was used in sorting out data. The procedure was that once the hits were searched and found in the concordance lines, the analysis of data was done following Quirk and Greenbaum's (1973) structural approach to grammar spelt out in their reference grammar book *A University Grammar of English*. Following a comparative and contrastive analysis model, the syntactic features of the target items were considered. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches to data were used. In the first place, the syntactic description of the items in structures was done qualitatively. Then, when possible, the analyzed qualities were quantified and rated. Doing so enabled the possible demarcation lines between the common core features (CCFs) and the interfered features (IFs). Data excerpts are enclosed in suspension points (... *data excerpt* ...). Interfered features are preceded by an asterisk (*). Search items are followed by the asterisk (*item**) per the AntConc morpheme search task.

4. Results and Discussions

The English by Cameroonians users of French background is replete with considerable traits that make it different from the common core features by Quirk and Greenbaum (1973) as concerning prepositions and pro-forms was the first research hypothesis. This is discussed in the light of the below findings.

4.1. Syntactic Features Relating to Prepositions

From the data analysis of prepositions, as words complements, it was found that CamFE makes use of prepositions with a considerable degree of difference from the Quirkian and Greenbaumian structural approach to grammar. These were found in structures where a word is complemented by different prepositions on the one hand, and different words are complemented by the same preposition on the other hand, or in the use of paired prepositions.

4.1.1. Syntactic Features of a Word Complemented by Different Prepositions

- (1) ...Those are **interested** *in* learning language now ...
- (2) ...It means that they are **interested** **by* our beans...
- (3) ...The **interest** **of* investigating on this topic arouse from...
- (4) ...rather than personal profit, commitment to serve genuine **interest** **to* the profession." ...
- (5) ...that is why future researcher **interested** **on* this topic are...

The samples above show that *interest** takes as many as 5 different prepositions in its various derivatives like nominal, adjectival and verbal forms. In addition to the Quirkian and Greenbaumian CCF of *in*, the IFs are also glaring. *Interest* to* is used 06 times, *interest* of* 03 times, *interest* by* also 03 times and *interest on* 01 time are all IFs. The table below presents the statistics of some selected words and their prepositional complements.

Table 1: *Interest** and its prepositional complements

Prepositional words	Frequency of use	Percentage	Interfered features
<i>Interest in</i>	27	67.50%	<i>interest *to</i> <i>interest* by, interest* of</i> <i>interest* on</i> 13 (32.50%)
<i>Interest to</i>	06	15%	
<i>Interest by</i>	03	07.50%	
<i>Interest of</i>	03	07.50%	
<i>Interest on</i>	01	02.50%	
Total	40	100%	

In the Table 1 above, *interest* to*, *interest* by*, *interest* of* and *interest* on* are the IFs. The IF of *interest** and its derivatives amount to 13 hits (32.50%) out of the 40 tokens. That of *interest* to* (06 hits, 15 %) scores the highest frequency use and turns out a trend in lieu of the CCF *interest* in*. It is followed by the IF *interest* by* and *interest of* (03 hits each). The least IF is *interest*on* with only 01 hit (02.50%).

Similarly, another prepositional word is *reason*. It is complemented by *for* in its CC feature. The IF are plotted in the table as follows.

Table 2: *Reason** and its prepositional complements

Prepositional word	Frequency of use	Percentage	Interfered features
<i>Reason why</i>	12	57.14 %	<i>reason to,</i> <i>reason which,</i> <i>reason what.</i> 4 (19.94%)
<i>Reason for</i>	05	23.80 %	
<i>Reason to</i>	02	9.52 %	
<i>Reason which</i>	01	4.76 %	
<i>Reason what</i>	01	4.76 %	
Total	21	100	

Table 2 above is a synoptic presentation of *reason** and its various prepositional complements. The IFs are *reason to* (02 hits, 09.52%), *reason which* and *reason what* (01 hit, 04.76% each). The IF use of *reason** and its derivatives amounts at 19.94%. It should be noted that even *reason why* contains some IF trait and will be handled under relative pronouns. Below are the CC uses and the IFs of *contribut** and *purpos**.

Table 3: *Contribut** and *purpos** and their prepositional complements

Prepositional word	Frequency of use	Percentage	Interfered features
<i>Contribut* for</i>	01	5.26 %	<i>contribution *for</i> <i>contribution *in</i>
<i>Contribut* in</i>	04	21.05 %	
<i>Contribut* to</i>	14	73.68 %	
Total	19	100%	5 (26.31%)
<i>Purpose of</i>	20	64.51 %	<i>purpose *for</i> <i>purpose *in</i>
<i>Purpose for</i>	10	32.25 %	
<i>Purpose in</i>	01	3.22 %	
Total	31	100 %	11 (35.48%)

Table 3 above is a presentation of *contribut** and *purpos** with their relative prepositional complements. *Contribut* to* is the CCF with 14 hits (73.68%). Its IFs are *contribut* in* (04 hits, 21.05%) and *contribution *for* (01 hit, 05.26%). The overall IFs involving both *contribut* for* and *contribut* in* amounts to 5 hits (26.31%) out of 19 tokens. As to *purpos**, the CCF preposition is *of* (20 hits; 64.51%). Its IFs are *purpos* for* (10 hits, 64.51%) and *purpos* in* (01 hit, 03.22%). Thus, the IFs of *purpose** amount to 11 hits (35.48%) out of the total 31 hits. The next presentation is based on *investigat** and its prepositional complements.

Table 4: *Investigat** and its prepositional complements

Prepositional word	Frequency of use	Percentage	IFs
<i>Investigate+NP</i>	33	37.50 %	<i>investigate *on,</i> <i>investigate *for</i> <i>investigate *of</i>
<i>Investigate on</i>	27	30.68 %	
<i>Investigate in(to)</i>	23	26.13 %	
<i>Investigate for</i>	04	4.54 %	
<i>Investigate of</i>	01	1.13 %	
Total	88	100 %	32/88 (36.36%)

The table 4 above shows the different prepositional complements of *investigat**. *Investigat* on* (27 hits, 30.68%), *investigat* for* (04 hits, 4.54%) and *investigat* of* (01 hit, 01.13%) are the IFs. They amount to 36.36%. *Investigate on* (30.68 %) stands out as the highest IF instead of the CC *investigate in (to)* (26.13 %). This IF is more recurrent than its CC feature.

A synoptic presentation of the various words' prepositional complements so far presented and analysed is shown in the table below. It includes both the Quirkian and Greenbaum CC features and the IFs. The complemented words are *interest**, *reason**, *contribut**, *purpos**, and *investigat**.

Table 5: Words prepositional complements

Prepositional words	CCFs	IFs	Total
<i>Interest*</i>	27 (67.50%)	13 (32.50%)	40 (100%)
<i>Reason*</i>	17 (80.95%)	04 (19.94%)	21 (100 %)
<i>Contribut*</i>	14 (73.68%)	5 (26.31%)	19 (100 %)
<i>Purpose*</i>	20 (64.51%)	11 (35.48%)	31 (100 %)
<i>Investigate*</i>	56 (63.63%)	32 (36.36%)	88 (100 %)
Total	134 (67.67%)	64 (32.32%)	198 (100 %)

A look taken at the tabulation above helps see that the CCFs of a handful of the selected prepositional words are 134 hits (67.67%), while the IFs amount to 64 hits (32.32%).

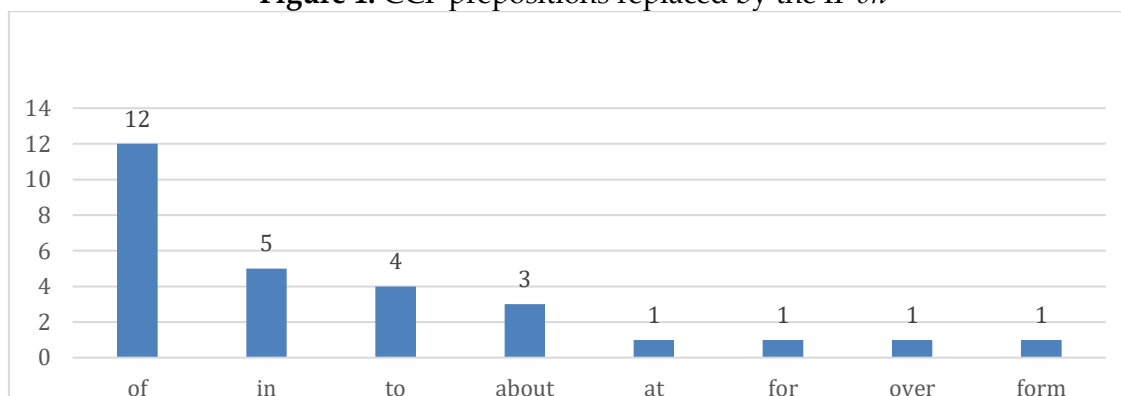
4.1.2. Syntactic Features of Different Words Complemented by the Same Preposition

It was found that a given preposition may complement various words. Let us consider *on*, *to*, *at* and *for* as simple prepositions and the range of words they complement from both CCF and IF perspectives. In its IF use, *on* replaces a wide range of prepositions in the CC positions as follows.

- (2) ...There was equally a *worry* **on* how we were going to deliver the lesson appropriately...
- (3) ...why a student-teacher is also expected *to be aware* **on* how to set exam questions...
- (4) ...Alternatively, attention is *paid* **on* how such expressions of hate speech...

The three hits above are quite indicative of how *on* is used in replacement of a multitude of other CCF prepositions. The CCF of the above would be: *worry about / for / to / over*, *to be aware of*, *attention is paid to*. Where the CCF favours a wide range of prepositions with various words, the IF systematically resorts to *on* across the board.

Figure 1: CCF prepositions replaced by the IF *on*



It was found that *on* is used IF wise 28 times in lieu of 08 different CCF prepositions (*of*, *in*, *to*, *about*, *at*, *for*, *from*, *over*). Out of the 28 IFs, *on* is used 12 times in lieu of the CCF *of* for a ratio of 42.85%. The IF *on* is, therefore, a sound substitute for the CCF *of* preposition. The CCF *in* is the second most substituted for the IF *on* (05 hits; 17.85 %), followed by the IFs of *to* (04 hits; 14.28%) and *about* (03 hits; 10.71%). The least CC prepositions substituted are *at*, *for*, *over* and *from*, which are replaced by the IF *on* once each.

Similar features were found with *for*, *to* and *of*. The syntactic positions in which they appear below are IF with regards to the Quirkian and Greenbaumian (1973:157) structural approach to grammar.

- (5) ...**For* respondents, I asked questions related to their personal implications in the promotion of ...
- (6) ...Attach that corpus **at* the end of the work. Right?...
- (7) ...Tchouape defended here under the supervision **of Prof Meutem*...
- (8) ...Fatemeh (2013) discovered that *the ...Interchange* **Books' lack DMs* and as such,...

(9) ...they should programme the defence... the period for the defence _ to **not* be sudden...

In (5), *for* actually complements the verb *asked*. It may be interpreted as 'I asked questions **for* respondents', which sounds IF. The CC version is 'I asked questions *to* respondents'. It was found that 05 different CC prepositions (*to, of, per, by* and *on*) are substituted 34 times for the IF preposition *for*. The IF *for* is a high substitute for the CC *to* (27 IFs; 79 %). *Of* (03 IFs; 08.82%) and *per* (02 IFs; 05.88%), *by* and *on* (01 hit; 02.94% each) are the least substitutes for the IF *for*. Similarly, in (6), we can have the CCF *attach to* which is substituted for 05 different IF prepositions (*at, of, on, in* and *for*) 09 times. IF wise, *at* amounts to 04 hits (44.44 %) as the highest substitute. It is followed by IF *of* (02 hits; 02.22%) while the IF *on, in* and *for* have 01 hit each (01.11%). In (7) the CCF should be the inflectional genitive in *-s* because it is chiefly reserved for humans and other species of some higher rank by virtue of their natural power conquest and possession. The prepositional *of genitive* highlights the irrelevance of gender, possession or higher natural ranking (Quirk and Greenbaum, 1973:96). A total of 141 IFs involving both genitive markings were found. Either genitive is used IF wise in lieu of the other. The IFs *of genitive* as in (7) are by far more used (111 hits, 78.72 %) than the IFs of the inflectional *-s* or *-s'* genitive as in (8) with 30 hits (21.27 %). There were cases where the negation adverb *not* sets off the infinitive *to* and its verb complement. *To* is therefore anticipated as in (9) 5 times as part of IF.

4.1.3. Paired Prepositions

Prepositional duality refers to two prepositions which have contrasting meanings. They may be simple or complex such as: *before* and *in front of*, *until* and *(up) to*, *between* and *among*, *in (the end)* and *at (the end)* etc. It was found that the IFs are used in lieu of the CCFs as contained in the excerpts below.

- (1) ...I am honoured to take the floor **before* this august jury today ahead of this defence to present the quintessence of my research topic...
- (2) ...When that young man or young lady has to come **until* Yaoundé, because of one paper...
- (3) ...to make a difference **between* the writing, the production and then the speaking production...
- (4) ...It means that, **at the end*, we are in towns...

Some prepositions with temporal meaning are sometimes associated with place meaning. Quirk and Greenbaum (1973: 155) hold that *before, after, since, until, till* are used almost exclusively as time prepositions. *Before* as used in (1) has very little to do with a temporal meaning. This is a situation where a candidate takes a seat *in front of* the jury to present or defend their academic work. When construed as a temporal preposition, *before* is to mean that the candidate takes the floor first; he / she speaks first, then allows the jury to do so, which is not the case. The data revealed 07 cases of *before* in lieu of the CCF *in front of*. In (2), *until* which is a temporal preposition is systematically used instead of *to* or *up to* per the CC (07 IFs). In (3), owing to the list of three elements enumerated at the end of the sentence, *among* would be preferred to suit the CCF (05 IFs). *Between* replaces *amongst* in the IF position, but never the other way round,

given that *among* is used appropriately 25 times to refer to more than two entities per the CC principle. Finally, in (4), the two prepositions *in* and *at*, though having the same NP complement *the end*, do not necessarily mean the same. *In the end*, it has got a metaphorical use to mean *finally*, whereas *at the end*, it is inclined to an empirical *end* part of something. From the analysis of the contexts in which the statements above were made, the construed meaning is a temporal delineation. This should warrant the use of *in the end*, which is synonymous to *finally*. There were 09 IFs of *at the end* instead of the CCF *in the end* out of the 31 hits.

These features of prepositions duality are in support of Kouega' (2019) findings that *during* and *for* are interchangeably used by CamFE speakers. About the trend in the use of prepositions in CamFE, Kouega (Ibid.) established some aspects of prepositions omissions and substitutions. This study complements that by Kouega in many regards. First, the drifting away trend in prepositions uses in CamFE is quantitatively determined. Second, some words like nouns, verbs and adjectives have their interferential prepositional complements established. Third, each of the selected prepositions has its CCF or IF substitution trends spelt out. These findings on prepositions in part validate the first research hypothesis that CamFE differs from the Quirkian and Greenbaumian structural grammar as regards prepositions. Findings related to pronouns and pro-forms and their discussion are next.

4.2. Syntactic Features of Pronouns and Pro-forms

Pro-nouns are words used in place of nouns. There are also some other words that replace words other than nouns. These are pro-adverbials and pro-predications. This section discusses findings related to demonstrative pronouns, relative pronouns, interrogative pronouns, indefinite pronouns, and reciprocal pronouns as well as some pro-forms. Let us consider the data samples below.

- (1) ...In G.B.H.S Maroua the bilingualism day *was celebrated on the first February 2019*. The activities of **this* celebration started on Monday 28th January 2019....
- (2) ...Attitude of **who?*...
- (3) ...A text produce by **who?*...
...-I can adapt it into **what?*
- (4) ...we have been able to blend the practical and the theoretical lessons to work out our weaknesses and strength *during the internship* **where* we also acquired more professional and personal...
- (5) ...It's just a kind of **indicative something* because it is just a ..., it is **quite something* interesting...

Sample (1) is the IF of the demonstrative pronouns *this*. Demonstrative pronouns can be used to perform either pronominal or determiner functions. The singular forms denoting near and far references *this* and *that* correspond to the plural forms *these* and *those* in both time and space (Quirk and Greenbaum, 1973: 107). IF wise, *this* is used to refer to a clearly past event in time. The verb phrase *was celebrated* as a past passive combined with temporal adverbial *on the first February 2019* are indicative enough of a past event to warrant the past demonstrative *that*, but interferential wise, *this* is used (30 IFs). Samples (2) and (3) show the IFs of the relative

pronouns *who* and *what*. Relative pronouns can be the personal (*who*, *whom*, and *whose*) or non-personal (*which* and *whose*). *Who* when preceded by a preposition becomes *whom* obligatorily (Quirk and Greenbaum, 1973:379). Another IF in these structures is the delaying of the interrogative pronouns *who* and *what* to final sentence positions. A total of 25 similar IFs of questions formations were found out of which only 01 involves *what*. Comprehensive enough, the sentence final positioning of *wh-* questions words is obtained chiefly with *who*. In sample (4), *where* as a pro-adverbial meant for places relates to time noun antecedents (Quirk and Greenbaum, 1973:380). *During the internship* refers to time, therefore *when* was needed per the CCF (10 IFs). Sample (5) is an IF of the indefinite pronoun *something*. The structural approach to indefinite pronouns including *some-*, *any-* and *no-* particles holds that they can be post-modified, but not preceded by an adjective in pre-modification position (Quirk and Greenbaum, 1973:392). In the above, the indefinite pronoun *something* is pre-modified by *indicative* and *quite*. Such pre-positioning anticipation of modifiers is disallowed in the CC structure. *Something indicative* and *something quite interesting* are the CCF (10 IFs).

Furthermore, indefinite pronouns show some sexist features are below:

- (6) ...When *somebody* is from the royal family, **he* is ehh... / ...Even if it's *somebody who* already *works* and who **have* a salary, it is not good to ask **him* something...
- (7) ...they can indeed make *one* to lose **his* temper...at times and *one* will at times loose *his* or *her* temper...
- (8) ...we have *all the three modals* follow the same order in a sentence...they can replace **each other*...

Indefinite pronouns, in their subjective use call for a V-s form in agreement per the CCF. In a bid of sexy language avoidance of the dual *he / she*, the third person pronoun plural *they* and its derivatives are used in other related co-references, notably in anaphoric positions as a new trend. IF wise as in (6), *somebody* agrees with the *he* and *him*. By this IF, one is made to understand that the person referred to is definitely a male one, which might not necessarily be the case. The IF use is therefore inclined to sexist language (08 IFs). Besides, *have* is made to agree with the indefinite pronoun instead of *has*. Again, in example (7), the indefinite *one* correlates with *his / her* instead of its own reflexive equivalence *oneself* (05 IFs). Sample (8) shows an IF of reciprocal pronouns for *each other* and *one another*. Though similar in meaning given that they involve plurality, they are not absolutely synonymous. Like the *between / amongst* pair analysed under dual prepositions, *each other* is used when two entities are involved while *one another* for more than two. However, some people use them interchangeably (Quirk and Greenbaum, 1973:105). Indicative enough, the more than two plurality is signalled by means of *all the three modals*. The CCF *one another* was substituted (10 IFs) for *each other*. *One another* was used only twice instead of *each other*. The IF favours *each other* as a trend.

The pro-adverbial *there* in existential sentences has some IFs, which are analysed as follows:

- (9) ...I encountered is that *there is no* **chairs* or **tables* in the classes for the teachers...
- (10) ...Now in your reference section *there* **are also missing information* hein...

- (11) ...*There was a *criteria* according to which whoever do not have or does not have blood...
(12) ...Until recently, *there *were only one processing unit* in Cameroon for thirty five thousand...

Existential sentences call for *there + be* forms. *There* in these kinds of constructions is also known as a dummy subject. The real subject is that which is delayed and appears after the *be* form and therefore agrees with it (Quirk and Greenbaum, 1973:416). Some IFs were found in agreements with the delayed subjects as in (9), (10), (11) and (12). In (9), the IF *there is* substitutes the CCF *there are*. In (10), the IF *there are* replaces the CCF *there is*. The same features are seen in (11) and (12) with the simple past forms *there was* and *there were* substituted for each other (15 IFs).

The interfered features inherent to *this, who, where, there, something, one* and *each other / one another* are quite complementary features to Kouega's (2019) findings of relative pronouns mixing up, the random choice of personal pronouns irrespective of gender and occasionally number, the reflexive pronouns omission as well as the use of assertive indefinite pronouns in lieu of non-assertive ones. These findings are indicative of CamFE's drifting away from the Quirkian and Greenbaumian structural grammar approach and concur to the validation of the first research hypothesis.

4.3. Clusters or Redundancies

Some two or more similar closed system items are used together to perform a single syntactic function where either or any one of them would be sufficient per the CCF. Below are some redundancies, including prepositions and pro-forms.

- (1) ...the Cameroon Anglophone Crisis **at from* the historical background of the problem till today...
(2) ...**When until* it is over, and we are going to see what the Head of State...
(3) ...**Then after when* we came back, we also did our test, and I can assure you that until now,...
(4) ...*That is reason *why* you are a parent... did not understand *the raison d'être *for *why* such a thing...
(5) ...Let them see how those who are already **here in Mamfe* are welcome by the Head of State...
(6) ...There was an academic seminar *in Yaoundé *there*...

In all the cases above, the italicized items share similar syntactic functions. In (1), a single preposition, notably *from*, will suffice for the syntactic and semantic functions to be sustained. The paired use of the prepositions *at from* sounds like pointing to the starting point by means of *at* then accounting for the stretch of time with *from* (05 IFs). In (2), *when* and *until* are time conjunctions with a similar temporal meaning, though with some semantic nuance. Either of the two items can be dropped with very little semantic infelicity. In (3), we have a cluster involving prepositions *after* and pro-adverbial *then* and *when* to yield *then after when*. Other clusters containing each *when* found include *and then when, then after when, then at the end when, and and now when* (12 IFs). Sample (4) is a case of redundancy as well. Both *reason* and *why* express the same thing in the first structure while *for* and *why* in the latter part are synonymous and incompatible syntactically (06 IFs). To avoid such a redundancy, many would resort to *this / that*

is + *why* (Quirk & Greenbaum, 1973). In (5) and (6), the pro-adverbials *here* and *there* in their pro-functions replace words for which they stand. The IFs show that these pro-forms function like 'relative forms' in that they are used along the words they are supposed to replace. While *here* is pre-posed in (5), *there* is postposed in (6). *Here* has 21 IFs with 18 cases (85.71%) in pre-positions and 03 cases (14.28%) in post-positions. *There* has 12 IFs with 08 cases (66.66%) pre-posed and 04 (33.33%) cases post-posed. Two features are therefore inherent to the pro-adverbials *here* and *there*: They function more like 'relative forms' and are more pre-posed than post-posed to their 'relative nouns'. In the quest for semantic completeness, CamFE speakers make use of more items than is necessary. The thought of failing to offer complete meaning causes them to resort to an extra-linguistic item therefore resulting in redundancies. Structurally viewed, these features show that the paradigmatic principle of words relationships is flouted. In fact, most of the items featuring in the clusters can be viewed as being mutually exclusive in syntactic slots. While Atechi (2015) found simplification of items he termed consonant clusters simplifications at the phonology level, the study at hand found grammatical items clustering involving prepositions and pro-forms. These findings show that CamFE is a variety of English with some considerable divergence in comparison to the Quirkian and Greenbaumian English Grammar model in some points.

4.4. CamFE: a *Francophonized English*

CamFE Grammar of prepositions and pro-forms differs from the Quirkian and Greenbaumian common core features in some points owing to its French induced coloration. Prepositions wise, the temporal *until* is used in lieu of the place (*right*) *to* as in '...When that young man or young lady has to come **until* Yaoundé...' This usage can be reckoned as influenced by the French. In fact, both *until* and *up to* can be translated as *jusqu'à* in French. Similarly, *in the end* which basically means *finally* is used across the board where *at the end* is needed. This is also influenced by French as both propositional phrases are rendered as " *à la fin*" or " *enfin*" in French. The prepositional *of* genitive is by far more used (78.72 %) than the inflectional -'s or *s'* genitive (21.27 %) owing to the French preposition *de* or *du*. In fact, 'Tchouape defended here, under the supervision **of Prof Meutem*' might have been induced from the French version structure 'Tchouape a soutenu ici sous l'encadrement *du* professeur Meutem' instead of 'Tchouape defended here under *Prof Meutem's supervision*'. The interfered version is a word verbatim translation from French given that the *of* prepositional genitive is closer to French than the -s inflectional one. The prepositional redundancy *at from* as in ...the Anglophone Problem in General, **at from* October 2006,... is tailored on the French Language style « Le problème Anglophone en général *à partir* de 2006 ». In fact, *at from* instead of *from* is the French calque of *à partir de*. Kouega (2019) on his part found serial verbs he exemplifies as " **Go do* this test and come back / **Come take* your result." He explains that such structures are framed following the French style of " *va faire*" and " *viens prendre*" where two lexical verbs can follow each other. One can buy Kouega's explanation that while using English, CamFE speakers nurture their ideas in French, which is their L2, before attempting its translation into English, their L3. In the translation course, they fail to reset the syntactic parameters at 100%.

Taking account of the French induced syntactic features found in this variety of English in Cameroon by Francophone users, CamFE can be viewed as a *francophonised* variety of English.

In fact, features induced from French were termed *frenchified* in previous research works (Kouega, 2008; Safotso, 2012 & Atechi 2015). By *Frenchified*, it purports that speakers of CamFE are *French* nationals, that is, French L1 users. *Francophonized* sounds more appropriate to account for French L2 users because these are Francophones even if French L1 and L2 users may have similar phonological traits (Kouega, 2017). This process of *Francophonisation* of CamFE is what makes it different from the common core English by Quirk and Greenbaum to some degree and, therefore, validates the second research hypothesis.

5. Conclusion

CamFE as a non-native variety of English spoken in Cameroon, has some syntactic features of prepositions and pro-forms that differ from the Quirkian and Greenbaumian common core grammar features. Such French-prone features, which attest to the drifting away of this non-native English variety to some considerable degree, are a result of the *francophonisation* of English. The implication is that CamFE is a new English variety which is quite unique and typical of its own status. It ought to earn the treatment given to any non-native English variety in the world. Sceptical linguists who give it no language variety treatment because of the seemingly limited documentation of its grammar can now have a cause for reconsidering their views. Besides, Cameroon ESL teachers (English Language) and their EFL (Anglais) colleagues who are reluctant to teach in the other subsystem of education can find this study a due contribution to their pedagogic endeavours. Taking these findings into account while teaching, evaluating, and marking can help in many ways. Language policymakers in the country can also find some interest in this study in case there is a need to choose and standardizing a non-native variety of English for the French sub-system of education. CamE has been facing the challenges of codification and documentation since its advent, in addition to the Standard BrE model adopted for education in the country (Mbibeh, 2013). The emergence and growth of CamFE would make the situation even more challenging. This is so because, in the promotion of official bilingualism in Cameroon, citizens go more for English than for French, owing to the fact that about 80% of the population are Francophones. The Francophonisation of English in Cameroon is, therefore, on the rise. It is suggested that more research be carried out so as to come up with more aspects to buttress this study. In addition to a replication study, other closed system items including adverbs and conjunctions are yet to receive thorough scrutiny. A comparative study of CamE and CamFE may also turn out insightful.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest regarding this study work.

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