



# Living Together, Biculturalism and Appointments in the Cameroonian Public Service: The Case of the University of Yaoundé II

**Moluh Yacouba**

University of Yaoundé II-Soa, Yaoundé, Cameroon

Email: yacoubamoluh@gmail.com

**How to cite this paper:** Yacouba, M. (2022) Living Together, Biculturalism and Appointments in the Cameroonian Public Service: The Case of the University of Yaoundé II. *Open Access Library Journal*, 9: e8126.

<https://doi.org/10.4236/oalib.1108126>

**Received:** January 13, 2022

**Accepted:** July 12, 2022

**Published:** July 15, 2022

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## Abstract

Two culturally different colonial territories came together in 1961 to form Cameroon, making it a bicultural country. Since then, the issue is being challenged mainly in its theoretical aspects. This article provides empirical and supportive evidence of the challenge of living together in a bicultural society. There is no doubt that such materials are important in strengthening our understanding of the ongoing socio-political crisis in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon. Proceeding from the socio-historical perspective, the data gathered through documentary sources and participant-observer framework show an overwhelming Francophone-centered logic of appointments at the state-owned bilingual University of Yaoundé II. Consequently, it is strongly suggested that this issue should be addressed for the living together policies to make more sense.

## Subject Areas

Politics

## Keywords

Biculturalism, Appointments, Public Service, University, Living Together, Cameroon

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## 1. Introduction

After World War I, when Germany, the first colonial power in Cameroon, was defeated by way of sanction, her Africa-based territories were shared between France and Britain for administration and independence facilitation purposes

within the frameworks of the League of Nations Mandate and the United Nations Trusteeship. In 1961, almost a year after the independence of French Cameroon, authorities of the two former colonial territories came together in Foumban within the framework of the constitutional Conference, to lay out the legal basis of the federal and bicultural Cameroon. This short narrative sheds light on some aspects of what Aband [1] refers to as the “Cameroon’s original sign”.

The term biculturalism seems to have been originally adopted in Canada, notably by the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (1963-1969). But in Schwartz and Unger’s [2] argument, the concept of biculturalism was originally derived from acculturation literature. Biculturalism can be facilitated by specific environmental conditions. That is to say, specifically, biculturalism is likely to emerge when the individual is embedded in a community that integrates the heritage and receiving cultural streams, and where comfort with both cultures is essential for day-to-day living [2]. Further building on the enabling context, these authors identify two factors that can facilitate the emergence of biculturalism. In their final argument, in essence, biculturalism can be said to emerge from one or both two factors. The first is a socio-cultural context characterized by ethnogenesis—where both the heritage and receiving cultural streams are emphasized and valued. The second involves active and intentional efforts by parents to socialize their children with the heritage culture. Discussions on the enabling factors are fundamental to cultural studies whose scope is very large and mainly focusing on the Western world. In Western societies, biculturalism addresses the issue of the relationship between immigrants and nationals. Such an approach may not be suitable for similar questions in the global South for at least two reasons. Firstly, South-to-South immigration is yet to be developed. Secondly, when practiced, the immigrants’ culture is hardly as important as challenging the receiving culture. Additionally, in Africa for example, the immigrants and the nationals generally, may have the same former colonial master. In fact, what is biculturalism? Most generally, as Schwartz and Unger [2] go on to write, biculturalism represents comfort and proficiency with both one’s heritage culture and the culture of the country or region in which one has settled. The New Zealand government refers to biculturalism as the presence of two different cultures in the same country [3]. This definition was probably inspired by the Canadian Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism. Biculturalism describes the co-existence, to varying degrees, of two originally distinct cultures, official policy recognizing, fostering, or encouraging it. Biculturalism can additionally be defined as the relationship between the states’ founding cultures, where there is more than one culture. New Zealand is one of the few countries with very challenging bicultural disputes. Biculturalism in that country is even synonymous with bilingualism. Following the way paved by the aforementioned Canadian Commission and the New Zealand government, biculturalism in this paper is the presence of two different cultures in the same country or region. From this standpoint, biculturalism emerges in different socio-cultural

and historical settings. First of all, a country may have a history of national or ethnic conflict in which neither side has completely defeated the other. If Rwanda and Burundi were bicultural countries, they would have provided a good example of this category. Secondly, biculturalism typically emerges in colonial settlements as a consequence of the prevailing conflict either between the colonizers and the indigenous people (as in New Zealand and Fiji) or between rival groups of colonizers (as in South Africa). Thirdly, it may also result from massive migration of nationals from one country to another (such as the Mexicans in the United States, notably in California) [4]. Finally, biculturalism can be subsequent to a deliberate desire to come together of two former colonial territories with different colonizers (as in Cameroon). Experiences of biculturalism generally include as many countries as South Africa where 60% of the White population can speak both official languages that are English and Afrikaans [5]; New Zealand which from Smith's [6] argument has become an increasingly multicultural society since the 1990s; Fiji Islands [7], Canada and Cameroon as well.

The interaction between biculturalism and appointments in public service remains largely uninvestigated in the global South. One of the main reasons behind this is that biculturalism is not a very common issue in the large majority of these societies. Moreover, all the relevant situations are not always politicized. For example, in Africa, Cameroon seems to be the only country where biculturalism is both politicized and even conflicting. It will do no harm to remind ourselves that biculturalism here is a colonial legacy, because two different entities (the former French territory and the former English territory) with different cultures came together to form the country. Consequently, for the institutional landscape to fit the bicultural policy, public institutions are francophone, Anglo-Saxon, or bilingual. The University of Yaoundé II was created in 1993 alongside Yaoundé I, Douala, and Dschang. As compared to the University of Buea where admission requirements are clearly restrictive, those of the University of Yaoundé II are opened as article 132 of Decree N°93/037 of January 29, 1993 to organize that public institution conditions admission to the mastering of French and English. From the bicultural policy perspective, this is because the practice of bilingualism in Cameroon is based on individual bilingualism, as Jikong was quick to note. But from the nation-building perspective, urban areas and notably capital cities depending on their size and the opportunities they offer, either are cosmopolitan [8] in the global politics jargon or at least heterogeneous as they shelter individuals and sub-national groups coming from diverse social and ethnic backgrounds. From this perspective, we can assume that making learning and training public institutions of Yaoundé bicultural is a deliberate policy of the Cameroon government.

As compared to New Zealand, another country managing biculturalism where the issue is being tackled from almost all the angles in abundant literature [9], recent research in Cameroon like many others earlier is limited to the exploration of the Fouban Talks. As Fonkem Achankeng goes on to comment, the Fouban Talks is the framework through which the two Cameroons were ex-

pected to negotiate a joint treaty following the United Nations Resolution 1608. He also argues that possible break up of present-day Cameroon can be linked to the nature of afore the mentioned Talks [10]. While one may share some aspects of this author's analysis, one may hastily underline its essentially theoretical perspective. This research area needs empirical and supportive evidence. Some of them can be found in the interplay between biculturalism and the distribution of material, immaterial and symbolic public resources. From this angle, can biculturalism be considered as a political paradigm guiding the appointments in public institutions of Cameroon, notably at the University of Yaoundé II with a bilingual status?

Proceeding from the socio-historical perspective, the empirical evidence in this article centrally suggests that notwithstanding the bicultural nature of the institution, biculturalism has hardly been considered as the guiding principle for appointments; whatever is the understanding of the living together in a bicultural society. To illustrate, two hypotheses are conceivable: firstly, two equal cultures came together to form a bicultural society and equal opportunity would have been the reasonable guiding principle of appointments in public institutions. Secondly, one of the two cultures is demographically more important than the other and appointments correlate with the cultural statistical distribution of the population.

The case study presented in this article may have methodological shortcomings, the most obvious being its monographic nature. It should be pointed out that in 2016, Anglophone lawyers and teachers went on a strike action to expose the absence of official legal documents in English and the inequitable practice of English and French in the educational system. Their strike action reflected the failure of Cameroon's bilingual policy. In Njume Ebong's own words, "the country's bilingual policy has now hit its assimilationist limits whereby the Francophone ruling majority, which monopolizes practically all the levers of state power, is suspected of insidiously seeking to swallow the Anglophone minority through a stealth 'Frenchification' process that gradually erases the Anglophones' historical and cultural specificities under the pretext of building national unity" [11]. It is common knowledge that Cameroon government responded authoritatively by pouring water and shooting gas at the strikers. From that end, the conflict escalated into an armed conflict with moderate Anglophones asking to return to the pre-1972 federal system while extremists demand separation and independence of each federate entity.

To assess how actual the Anglophones' grievances can be, perhaps a more promising approach would have consisted of identifying many bilingual public institutions and trying a sociological analysis or a cultural distribution of their members. Nevertheless, the case study of the University of Yaoundé II provides a suggestive empirical foundation for the breakup of the present day in Cameroon. To put it in another way, the study of cultural distribution of appointments at the University of Yaoundé II, though an examination of a single case, provides us with relevant issues for the comprehension of the Anglophone crisis. As such,

this article contributes to the recent debates on the gross marginalization of Anglophones in the state protocol [12] or in the University of Yaoundé II [13].

## 2. Related Literature on Biculturalism and Appointments in Public Service

Before addressing the interplay between biculturalism and appointments in the bilingual University of Yaoundé II, it is worthy to emphasize that biculturalism is not a natural phenomenon. Instead, it is a historical process or a construction.

## 3. Related Literature on Biculturalism and Appointments in Public Service

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### 3.1. The Road to Biculturalism in Cameroon

The biculturalism constructing process in Cameroon started a long time ago. But, there is no need going as far back as to the post World War 1 when Germany was defeated and by way of sanction, her Africa based territories shared between France and Britain for administration and independence facilitation purposes within the respective frameworks of the League of Nations mandate and the United Nation Trusteeship. Literature in this regard can be provided by Ngongo [14] and Ngoh [15]. Instead, scholars [16] overwhelmingly agree that the Fouban Talks constitute the most important starting point of a long process of questioning biculturalism.

Exploring the 1961 Fouban Talks from the historical accounts and the theoretical perspectives of negotiation, Fonkem Achankeng ([10], p. 129) lays emphasis on the lack of preparation of the parties, and particularly that of the former British Southern Cameroons. Borrowing from Saunders [17] who pointed out the link between many of the world's most intractable conflicts at home and abroad and the pre-negotiation period, he makes the claim that the Fouban constitutional Talks' outcome has "mainly been a consequence of false negotiation, the different visions of the parties, and the divergent influences of the conduct and implementation of the Talks between Independent French-speaking '*République du Cameroun*' and British Southern Cameroons"; as he goes on writing.

In the same vein, Fossungu [18] refers to the Fouban Talks as "historyless darken in Cameroon". According to him, the strategy at work during the "supposed negotiation" can "hardly help those who are now trying to understand what had actually happened to put them in the situation in which they find themselves today". As he goes on making fun on the Talks, the Fouban "intellectuals in politics" did not succeed in creating a "true federation that would have impeded secession" ([18], p. 69). Fossungu's argument here is consistent with that of Saunders as he is also laying emphasis on the lack of preparation of

the negotiators. And in his own words, the 1961 Federal Constitution “grossly betrayed the aspirations of the English-speaking because its architects exhibited a gross lack of self-control and of a sense of duty to the public they were purportedly representing” ([18], p. 244]). While I agree to a very large extent this author’s view, I would just emphasize the likely difficulty to evidence the preparation of the French-speaking representatives at the Constitutional Talks. But as I have discussed earlier, Fouban seems to be the beginning of a long confusing practice of biculturalism in Cameroon, involving also the aspect of language.

Further building on the foregoing point of view, Munang Ayafor [19] questions the reality of the policy of official bilingualism laid down by the 1961 federal constitution as its article 1 stipulated that French and English shall be the official languages of the nation. According to this scholar, the 1961 federal constitution already bore the seeds of an eventual rift in the orientations of the policy. As he persuasively argues, “some legislative evidence portrayed imminent preference for political concerns relative to an interest in achieving a centralized unitary state with Francophone ascendancy than giving the bilingual policy a chance to develop in linguistic principles”. The worry concerns article 39 of the same constitution as it indicated that “This constitution shall be registered and published in the gazette; the French version being valid”. Going beyond these considerations, Tambo [20] addresses the unbalance use of English and French as communicating tools at the University. According to him, after independence and reunification, the University programs were virtually and progressively transformed to correspond in structure and content to those in the French University system. The confusion surrounding the practice of biculturalism in Cameroon did not spare the administrative system.

### 3.2. Biculturalism and Appointments in Public Service

Appointments in administrative systems commonly follow two main pathways: they are either merit centered or politicized. Politicization [21] can be referred to as the action of giving a political tone or character to an activity. It is also the fact of addressing an issue giving preference to political considerations. As concerns the appointments in public institutions, it means that political considerations are put forward as defining feature of the professionalism of the candidates to appointments. This may suggest that politicization is merit free. Or, to put it in another way, all politicized appointed public servants are rascals. All of us would be very prudent to think likewise. Instead, politicization can be the opposite of the so-called neutrality in the Weber’s [22] administrative model. As Gregory [23] notes with characteristic insights, “the so-called ‘neutral competence’ does not mean, of course, that the work carried out by public servants is or should be value-neutral. All political engagement is value-laden, from policy formulation right through implementation and evaluation, and in this sense the politicians involved in the governing process may be divided into two groups: those who are elected and those who are appointed”. Coming back to politicizing appointments, Gregory goes on to remark that there are three types: the party or patro-

nage politicization and two other pejorative types that Mulgan [24] refers to as policy-related politicization and managerial politicization. In Gregory's ([23], p. 164) words, policy-related politicization occurs when individuals appointed have "well-known commitments to particular policy directions that may render them unacceptable to a future alternative government" while managerial politicization "involves the replacement of incumbent public servants, particularly on a change of government, when there is no good reason to question their competence and loyalty but simply in order to facilitate imposition of the government's authority".

It is very difficult to fit the practice in Cameroon exclusively into one of these theoretical frames. Instead, appointments here seem to follow the logic of belonging to diverse concentric identity circles that can cautiously be: ethnic, regional, political, religious, sexual, societies, friendship, buying power, and additionally qualification. For example, a friend of mine whose patron was appointed Minister went to his boss thinking that it was his own turn to join the preferential category of appointed civil servants. The Minister presented him the structuring of the ministry so that my friend could choose a position where he wished to be appointed. As my friend didn't want to impose or to limit the Minister's action, he identified two different positions or alternatives where he thought he was skillful enough for the job. Unfortunately for him, the Minister replied that for those positions, competence or qualification was not enough. This suggests that there is an additional criterion that my friend needed to fulfill before being eligible to the positions he identified. An individual may belong to one or several of these circles. These eligibility's criteria for appointment in public service that mainly characterize authoritarian, under developed, corrupt, and undifferentiated political societies may also provide logics of appointment in democratic polity as well. The difference between both types of society is at the level of the magnitude or the frequency to preferentially resort to those criteria or to that of merit in one or another.

#### 4. Methodology Design and Data

The University of Yaoundé II has two main types of administrative components: the Rectorate which can also be referred to as central services or central administration, and the composite institutions. The Rectorate has as varied positions as that of the Rector, three Vice-Rectors, a technical adviser, a secretary general and four directors. The associated institutions are the Faculty of Laws and Political Science (FLPS), that of Economics and Management (FEMS), the International Relations Institute of Cameroon (IRIC), the Advanced School of Mass Communication (ASMAC), and the Demographic Institute for Training and Research (IFORD). Each of the catalogued composite institutions is administrated either by a Dean or a Director, both of which, from the Cameroonian administrative perspective are equivalent. The peculiarity of IFORD is that it is an international institution. Consequently, the appointment of its top management is not made by the Cameroon government. They are not even its nationals. This is the reason why although it is perceived as a composite institution, IFORD is not taken into

consideration in this study. Also worth remembering is that the Cameroon's administrative system is theoretically linked to what Weber [25] referred to as bureaucratic organization. In such an organization, individuals are liable to a hierarchy. Or to put it simply, individuals are allotted positions following a clearly defined hierarchical structure within which the higher ranked agent is the more power he or she enjoys and the overall system is controlled by the top manager. Of course, this administrative model has generally been subject to criticisms [26] mainly because its strict hierarchical structure induces rigidity and heaviness. Going back to Weber and his administration model, just like the position of Rector, Deans and Directors of associated advance Schools are assisted by Vice-Deans and deputy directors respectively. Although the positions of Vice-Rector, Vice-Dean and deputy Director may enjoy considerable privileges, only Vice-Rectors are part of this study. Vice-Deans and deputy Directors are excluded from the count because their influence magnitude is limited. Consequently, our target population is made of the central administration as defined above, the Deans of faculties, and the Directors of the aforementioned schools. These are what we refer to as more influential of the positions in the University of Yaoundé II administrative system.

The empirical work has consisted of documentary analysis of the presidential Decrees that have been appointing individuals at the different catalogued positions since the creation of the University of Yaoundé II in 1993 till 2020. As a participant observer because I have been lecturing at the University of Yaoundé II since my recruitment in 1997, that is four years after its creation. As a matter of fact, I know most of the individuals who were given position in that institution. From the forgoing argument, I have classified the appointees into two categories: Francophone and Anglophone. When I had a doubt on the cultural identity of a position holder, I appealed to a colleague in order to overcome the obstacle. And making use of my elementary knowledge of descriptive statistics, I was able to come out with distributive and comparative figures of appointments between the Francophone and the Anglophones.

**Tables 1-12** show the distribution of high ranked Positions at the University of Yaoundé II among Francophone and Anglophones between 1993 and 2020.

**Table 1.** Distribution of rectors among Francophone and Anglophone (1993-2020).

Period in Office	Appointed	Linguistic Identification
1. January 1993-October 1993	Marcien Towa	Francophone
2. 1993-1995	D. Obounou Akon	Francophone
3. 1995-1998	E. Ngwafor Ndeh	Anglophone
4. 1998-2004	B. Bekolo Ebe	Francophone
5. 2004-2012	J. Tabi Manga	Francophone
6. 2012-2015	Oumarou Bouba	Francophone
7. 2015-2017	Ibrahima Adamou	Francophone
8. 2017...	A. Monkoa She	Francophone

Source: Designed by the author on the basis of the field work.

**Table 2.** Distribution of vice-rector positions among Anglophone and Francophone.

Period in Office	Appointed	Linguistic Identification
1. 1993-1996	Maurice Tchuenté	Francophone
2. 1998-2010	Paul Gérard Pougoué	Francophone
3. 1998-	Emmanuel Ekodeck	Francophone
4. 1998-2000	Jean Ongla	Francophone
5. 2000-2017	Adolphe Minkoa She	Francophone
6. 2010-2012	R. Joly Assako Assako	Francophone
7. 2012-2014	Guy Tsala Ndzomo	Francophone
8. 2012-2015	Magloire Ondo	Francophone
9. 2014-2015	R. Tsafack Nanfosso	Francophone
10. Since 2014	Mol Nang	Francophone
11. 2015-2019	Côme Ebana Mvogo	Francophone
12. 2017-2018	Jean Claude Tchouankeu	Francophone
13. 2018...	Edmond Biloa	Francophone
14. 2020...	Jean Emmanuel Pondi	Francophone

Source: Designed by the author on the basis of field work.

**Table 3.** Distribution of technical advisers among Francophone and Anglophone.

Period in Office	Appointed	Linguistic Identification
1. 1993-2006	Ntmark Yana Peter	Anglophone
2. 2008-2015	Joseph Marc Omgba	Francophone
3. 2015-2017	Jean Claude Tchouankeu	Francophone
4. 2017-2021	Nadine Machikou	Francophone

Source: Designed by the author on the basis of field work.

**Table 4.** Distribution of secretaries general among Francophone and Anglophone.

Period in Office	Appointed	Linguistic Identification
1. 1993-1998	Nicole Claire Ndoko	Francophone
2. 1998-2000	Lisette Elomo Ntonga	Francophone
3. 2000-2002	Jean Ongla	Francophone
4. 2002-2003	Touna Mama	Francophone
5. 2003-2006	J. Emmanuel Pondi	Francophone
6. 2006-2015	Lisette Elomo Ntonga	Francophone
7. 2015-2018	Alice Delphine Tang	Francophone
8. 2018-2020	R. Mevougou Nsana	Francophone
9. 2020...	T. Patricia Bissa Enama	Francophone

Source: Designed by the author on the basis of field work.

**Table 5.** Distribution of director of cooperation and academic affairs position among Francophone and Anglophone.

Period in Office	Appointed	Linguistic Identification
1. 1993-1998	R. Mevougou Nsana	Francophone
2. 1998-2012	Magloire Ondo	Francophone
3. 2012-2018	Vincent Ntuda Ebode	Francophone
4. 2018...	Germain Ntono Ntsimi	Francophone

Source: Designed by the author on the basis of field work.

**Table 6.** Distribution of director of administrative and financial affairs position among Anglophone and Francophone.

Period in Office	Appointed	Linguistic Identification
1. 1993-?	Emini	Francophone
2. ?-2005	Zambo Belinga	Francophone
3. 2005-2012	Simone Ongomo	Francophone
4. 2012-2017	Fridoline Ngo Nonga	Francophone
5. 2017-2020	Chrispin Pettang	Francophone
6. 2020...	Solange Abate	Francophone

Source: Designed by the author on the basis of field work.

**Table 7.** Distribution of director of infrastructural development and planning position among Francophone and Anglophone.

Period in Office	Appointed	Linguistic Identification
1. 1993-2004	Yaya Pouamoun	Francophone
2. 2004-2012	Paul Marcel Mayagui	Francophone
3. 2012-2015	Bitjong Ndombol	Francophone
4. 2015-2020	Franck Calvin Zo'Obo	Francophone
5. 2020...	Chrespin Pettang	Francophone

Source: Designed by the author on the basis of field work.

**Table 8.** Distribution of director of DCOU position among Francophone and Anglophone.

Period in Office	Appointed	Linguistic Identification
1. 1993-1998	Non existent	Non existent
2. 1998-2003	R. Mevougou Nsana	Francophone
3. 2003-2006	Placide Mballa	Francophone
4. 2006-2009	P. Bekolo Bekolo	Francophone
5. 2009-2017	Ghotard Nzie Nzie	Francophone
6. 2017...	Samuel Nten Nlate	Francophone

Source: Designed by the author on the basis of field work.

**Table 9.** Distribution of deans of the faculty of laws and political science among Francophone and Anglophone.

Period in Office	Appointed	Linguistic Identification
1. 1993-1999	Adolphe Minkoa She	Francophone
2. 1999-2004	Maurice Kamto	Francophone
3. 2004-2012	Victor E. Bokali	Francophone
4. 2012-2014	André AkamAkam	Francophone
5. 2014-2019	Magloire Ondo	Francophone
6. 2019...	Alain F. Ondoua	Francophone

Source: Designed by the author on the basis of field work.

**Table 10.** Distribution of deans of the faculty of economics and management among Anglophone and Francophone.

Period in Office	Appointed	Linguistic Identification
1. 1993-2003	Touna Mama	Francophone
2. 2003-2005	Seraphin Fouda	Francophone
3. 2005-2012	Georges Kobou	Francophone
4. 2012-2017	Henri Wamba	Francophone
5. 2017-2020	Claude Bekolo	Francophone
6. 2020...	Désiré Avom	Francophone

Source: Designed by the author on the basis of field work.

**Table 11.** Distribution of directors of ASMAC among Francophone and Anglophone.

Period in Office	Appointed	Linguistic Identification
1. 1993-2008	M. Joseph Omgba Etoundi	Francophone
2. 2008-2021	L. Charles Boyomo Assala	Francophone

Source: Designed by the author on the basis of field work.

**Table 12.** Distribution of directors of IRIC among Anglophone and Francophone.

Period in Office	Appointed	Linguistic Identification
1. 1993-1999	Lisette Elomo Ntonga	Francophone
2. 1999-2005	Jean Emmanuel Pondi	Francophone
3. 2005-2012	Narcisse Mouelle Kombi	Francophone
4. 2012-2017	Pierre Emmanuel Tabi	Francophone
5. 2017-2020	Salomon Eheth	Francophone
6. 2020...	Urbain Ndong	Francophone

Source: Designed by the author on the basis of field work.

## 5. Discussion

The tables above contain data that show an overwhelming domination of Fran-

ophone in high ranked positions at the bilingual University of Yaoundé II during our period of study. Out of 8 possibilities (Table 1), only Mr. Ephraim Ngwafor Ndeh enjoyed the position of Rector or Vice Chancellor, and out of 4 alternatives (Table 3) Mr. Ntamark Yana Peter had been appointed Technical Adviser. From the statistical perspective, the Anglophone representation in these positions can respectively be estimated at 0.08 percent and 0.04 percent. Notwithstanding the symbolic and marginal character of these representations, they are far better as compared to the 0 percent that characterizes the other influential or upper positions as defined above. That is to say, no other Anglophone has been appointed anywhere else in the positions catalogued as population of study in this article. This includes no Vice Rector (Table 2), no Secretary General (Table 4), no Dean of faculties (Table 9 and Table 10), no Director of the central services (Tables 5-8), no Director of advance schools (Table 11 and Table 12) attached to the University of Yaoundé II between 1993 and 2020 are filled by persons who identify as Anglophone. That is to say out of 76 opportunities in existence, only two individuals (out of 26) from the department of English law have enjoyed influential positions. We have no evidence that may link their appointment at those positions to their ability to master both English and French. In fact, there is room to wonder whether any law in Cameroon requires the mastery of both languages as a kind of prerequisite qualification for the appointment of senior officials. In a parallel direction, there is no sanction for language incompetence or deficiencies. Instead, what is clear enough is that the 1.56 percent estimation is consistent neither with logic of the two different cultural entities coming together nor with the 25 to 30 percent Anglophone weight in the overall national population of Cameroon. Maybe it would have been interesting to have the exact number of Anglophones appointed at all levels during this period in the administrative system of the University of Yaoundé II. Such a figure might have informed on the types of positions that are subject to discrimination: do discrimination and politicization concern only upper positions in the administrative system of the University of Yaoundé II? From the patronage analysis perspective, Mr. Ngwafor E. Ndeh is a militant and an expert of the Central Committee of the CPDM. In addition to that, he is the nephew of His Royal highness Fon Angwafor III who is the first deputy president of the CPDM ruling party. Later on, he was appointed Minister in charge of special duty at the presidency of the republic.

From the above, it seems clear that appointments may be influenced by belonging to a political party. Consequently, the appointment of Mr. Ngwafor can be interpreted as evidence of a party appointment to influential positions. By the same token, during the 1980s, Ntamark Yana Peter had been appointed dean of the Faculty of Laws and Economic Sciences when the whole country had only one University. He was also a former Director of the National Institute of research and former President of the Cameroon Football Federation. His bright carrier pursuit seems to imply that he had lot of political resources that we failed

to identify. Perhaps it is worth remembering that in the current understanding of who is an Anglophone, this person is not really considered as an Anglophone for at least two reasons? The first reason is that from the ethnological perspective, Mr. Ntamark Yana Peter was from the Bassa ethnic group. Members of this ethnic group are mainly distributed between the Center and the Littoral regions of Cameroon. It is common knowledge that in the process that led to the February 11<sup>th</sup> 1961 United Nations plebiscite, the government of the newly independent “*République du Cameroun*” purportedly sent Francophone voters in the former Southern Cameroons to take part in the elections and therefore, influence the results. Was he part of this category or how he got there is not a core concern in this article. Secondly, it is arguable whether Mr. Ntamark was an Anglophone in the historical understanding of who an Anglophone actually is. Scholars have evidenced the phenomenon of cross-region unidirectional migration that had drained people from elsewhere to the Southwest and Northwest provinces as they were referred to at the time. For example, according to Ndue [27], demographic realities and a historical pattern of cross-region migration have altered profoundly the cultural ecology of the above provinces, Southwest in the emphasis of the author. The author goes on to state that, with the intensification of cross-region migration in the postcolonial era, what is locally referred to as “stranger elements” are indigenes of Northwest and other provinces outnumbered the native born, and are the dominant economic force in the major centers in the Southwest. These developments simply suggest that, although Mr. Ntamark Yana Peter had English as main language, he was properly not an Anglophone. He simply went to English schools.

From the foregoing arguments, it is safe to say that out of 76 potential positions only Mr. Ngwafor E. Ndeh has occupied an influential position in the administrative system of the University of Yaoundé II. What about the 75 other possibilities of appointment? Does it mean that no other Anglophone had ever had such a political resource? Of course, appointments in the influential positions at the University of Yaoundé II had been politicized all through. But it is very difficult to provide evidence of their orientation: following the way paved by Mulgan [24], are they policy-related or managerial politicization as discussed above? One cannot exactly say. Instead, what is likely to be clear is that throughout the period of study; there had been no change of government in terms of alternative ideology. The same party had been providing different monolithically framed governments. This is because in 1966, that is immediately after the Fouban Talks that brought together the former French and English territories, allegation of waste of energy and resource led to authoritarian merging of political parties that were articulating and aggregating populations demands in the respective French and English territories. As a consequence of the merging procedure, the Cameroon National Union (CNU) was created. And as evidenced by article 1 of its status, the CPDM is the continuation of the CNU. That is to say, there had been no alternation in government that might have explained

the discrimination of Anglophone from the perspective of politicization. This suggests that perception of politicization is different depending on whether we are in a liberal or an authoritarian context. In the authoritarian context of Cameroon, politicization is tantamount to patrimonial or neo patrimonial rule and consists of prioritizing friends and tribe fellows in appointments. In divided and authoritarian societies, members of power affiliated ethnic groups are prone to capture administrative positions, because they believe “it is their turn”. With the cooptation-focused appointments, Francophone individuals of the Beti ethnic group have captured the administrative system of the University of Yaoundé II, just like interests groups do. Beti ethnic group is one of the many ethnic groups that exist in Cameroon. Its particularity is that it federates several sub groups among which that of the President of the republic and many other dignitaries in Cameroon. That is to say, it is a power affiliated ethnic group. From that end, in domestic political jargon, it is referred to as “pays organisateur” to mean that many ministers and top managements of influential state-owned corporations are drawn from the Beti ethnic group [28]. According to capture theory, government agencies are prone to being taken over by the regulated interests that agencies are charged with regulating [29]. In that same vein, academics from the local ethnic group of Yaoundé are generally prone to perceive relevant administrative positions of the area as “theirs”. This is because administrative positions distribution in patrimonial or neo patrimonial environment follows the same guiding principles as the public goods distribution. This assumption is consistent with the conclusions drawn by Habyarimana [30] and Edward [31] who provided evidence that leaders in Africa have the propensity to give preference to their region or to favor individuals from their ethnic group in public goods provision. This may explain why, in addition to the Francophone centered appointments, further analysis may show that the positions are dominantly held by individuals of the Beti ethnic group. But, as I have argued elsewhere [32], those hegemonic habits are evidence of poor leadership and poor governance.

From the above discussion, if the making of bicultural public institutions is a deliberate inclusive policy of the government, politicization of appointments at the University of Yaoundé II had consisted all through its existence of privileging Francophone academics from the local ethnic group. In a context of little administrative coordination, it is the responsibility of the person in charge of proposing the nominees to make sure that the inclusive policy is being observed. That is to say, in the context of Cameroon’s higher education system, since 1993 till 2020, either successive minister had not been having personal commitment to the government diversity and inclusive policy or they had been having a kind of hidden agenda consisting of discriminating the nominees. By the way, coincidentally, Mr. NGWAFOR, the only identified Anglophone to enjoy the position of Rector was appointed when an Anglophone (Peter AGBOR TABI) was minister of higher education. This type of practice is amenable to legitimize the perception of assimilation, of second zone citizens and exclusion that has fueled the

Anglophone grievances.

## **6. Improving Bicultural Representation in the Administrative System of the University of Yaoundé II**

Data analyzed above are neither natural nor definitive. They are social construct. That is to say, we are far from a deadlock situation. Biculturalism representation can become vivid if the government authorities in charge of proposing the nominees are really willing to. Of course they may not enjoy unlimited latitude. To put it in a different way, they may face latent resistance from the other social groups, particularly from the members of the Beti local ethnic group. The reason behind such an eventual opposition is that, as we noted earlier, in less differentiated and poorly integrated societies, ethnic groups compete to control the state's resources and generally they perceive resources of their area as theirs. That's why members of the Beti ethnic group who have overwhelmingly captured the administrative system of the University of Yaoundé II, may perceive the trends to bicultural equitable representation as a threat or as an insult to their social group. But as Gregory remarks "political criteria in appointments may be more important in safeguarding bicultural values in governing than are conventional merit values" ([23], p. 163). That is to say "sustainable peace comes from affirmative leadership, policies, laws, institutions, and an unwavering commitment to uphold the principles of justice, accountability, and equality for all".

## **7. Conclusion and Way Forward**

Addressing the issue of appointment in public institutions is likely to be of great importance for countries where the public sector overwhelmingly dominates jobs and wealth creation. Appointments are symbolic public goods. Their magnitude can be amplified in the context of two culturally different entities coming together to form a bicultural society whose nation construction process has not yet crystallized. As a consequence, some public institutions are labeled bicultural. Generally, appointments are either merit valued or politicized. The real test of arguments about the politicization of the Public Service comes with changes in governments. In the Cameroon context, there had been no ideological alternation in government. That is to say, instead of being mobilized as a diversity management tool, politicization has consisted of discriminating Anglophone in appointments at the University of Yaoundé II. Whatever be the weight of this national category in the population of the country, affirmative action would have been the priority. Of course, as Gregory ([23], p. 171) goes on to comment, affirmative action programs may have negative effects as they may postpone the generalization of the traditionally defined merit criteria. But in the context of intrastate conflict, the greed and grievance theory as developed by Collier and Hoeffler [33] and, Murshed and Tadjoeeddin [34] has provided meaningful insights into the origin of the conflict. According to these authors, greed and

grievance are new phenomena that have been used by rational choice analysts to explain the onset of conflict. While the former reflects elite competition over valuable natural resources rents, the latter argues that relative deprivation and the grievance it produces fuels conflict. Central to grievance are concepts of inter-ethnic or horizontal inequality [35]. From this perspective, it is important to revisit the policy of biculturalism as a whole and particularly to improve bicultural representation in public administrations with a specific focus on the University of Yaoundé II.

### Acknowledgements

MOLUH YACOUBA is the Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Yaoundé II. He is very thankful to Dr. MONO NGONO Christophe Aristide for the help in the fieldwork.

### Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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